

**Question for oral answer O-000050/2018
to the Commission**

Rule 128

Markus Pieper

on behalf of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

Subject: The definition of SMEs

SMEs account for 99 % of European enterprises, providing over 90 million jobs and generating EUR 3.9 trillion in value added.

SMEs remain disproportionately affected by administrative and regulatory burdens and must deal with challenging conditions including market failures. The Commission therefore introduced Recommendation 2003/361/EC, which lays down criteria for defining SMEs. About 100 subsequent EU legislative acts refer to that definition, setting out rules for specific support for SMEs, such as financing opportunities, simplified procedures and exemptions.

The Commission is asked to answer the following:

1. In view of the rulings of the Court of Justice of the European Union of 15 September 2016 (T-675/13 and T-587/14) which pointed out problems with the definition of 'linked' and 'partner' companies, how does the Commission plan to deal with these rulings, given the considerable number of legislative acts containing the SME definition?
2. Is the Commission planning to adapt the definition according to inflation and productivity growth since 2003 while respecting the principle of proportionality and also taking into consideration the specificities of microenterprises and SMEs in terms of access to human, financial and technical resources?
3. In addition, will the Commission come forward with a new recommendation for a separate definition of Mid-Caps, a term that already figures in several EU legislative acts, taking into consideration their specificities through criteria other than staff headcount and either turnover or balance sheet total, without negatively affecting the current beneficiaries of SME schemes?

Tabled: 16.5.2018

Forwarded: 18.5.2018

Deadline for reply: 25.5.2018