

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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*Session document*

20.11.2008

B6-0617/2008

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to Question for Oral Answer B6-0485/2008

pursuant to Rule 108(5) of the Rules of Procedure

- Nicole Fontaine and Giles Chichester, on behalf of the PPE-DE Group
- Edit Herczog, on behalf of the PSE Group

on the step towards improving the environment for SMEs in Europe – Small Business Act

**European Parliament resolution on the step towards improving the environment for SMEs in Europe – Small Business Act**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its Oral Question B6-0485/2008 to the Council,
  - having regard to the Commission communication of 25 June 2008 entitled "'Think Small First" - A "Small Business Act" for Europe' (COM(2008)0394) and the accompanying impact assessment,
  - having regard to the European Charter for Small Enterprises,
  - having regard to Rule 108(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas SMEs are crucial to Europe's economy, providing over 100 million jobs, contributing to economic growth, being a major source of innovation and promoting gender equality and regional development,
- B. whereas the proposal for a 'Small Business Act' (SBA) for Europe is to be warmly welcomed but will only be effective if there is concrete commitment at national and European level to its implementation,
- C. whereas the current financial market crisis has made the shortcomings of the present framework for SMEs even more obvious and has heightened the urgency of having their needs better taken into account and of the provisions contained in the SBA being effectively implemented,
1. Calls on the Council to confirm that it intends to formally approve the Small Business Act at the European Council in order to ensure the necessary high visibility, and calls on the Council, when adopting the Small Business Act, to make its provisions binding, in order for it to have a significant positive effect on the environment for SMEs;
  2. Emphasises the need for the Member States to be fully behind the implementation of the SBA's provisions in order for them to be effective and calls for concrete measures to be taken both at Member State and regional level, to complement measures adopted at EU level; asks the Member States, therefore, to announce how and within what timeframe the elements of the Think Small First principle will be incorporated into the national regulatory frameworks;
  3. Recalls that, to ensure that the SBA's measures are effective, a screening system should be set up to monitor its progress and its implementation by the Commission and the Member States; urges that the progress made in the implementation of the SBA principle be included in a stand-alone chapter in the annual reports on the Lisbon Strategy national reform programmes;

4. Calls on the Commission and the Member States not to forget the 'real economy' when tackling the current financial crisis, by providing concrete support for SMEs by ensuring their access to finance in this critical moment; welcomes, in this respect, the new package of the European Investment Bank envisaging €30 billion for SME loans as agreed by the ECOFIN; takes the view that the amount will not be sufficient to solve the current problems of SME financing;
5. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.