ITRE

Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

European Parliament

Words by the Chair

J. BUZEK

Dear colleagues,

Our March meeting will have a well-balanced mix of topics, ranging from digital issues, to Euratom and SMEs. The focus on digital issues will include the exchange of views on the "Cybersecurity Act" regulation that deals with the renewal of the mandate to ENISA, the "EU Cybersecurity Agency", and a new European certification system for cybersecurity. The ITRE ambition is an effective coordination between the European, national, public and private actors to enhance cybersecurity in Europe and to create a tool - certification - that can create trust and avoid internal market fragmentation. We will also consider a draft opinion on Language equality in the digital age aiming at eliminating barriers in a multilingual Europe. We also scheduled an exchange of views with the European Commission on the occasion of the launch of the WIFI4EU platform. The WIFI4EU regulation was adopted on 25 October 2017 and the portal for the first call for projects is about to be launched.

Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2019-2020) complementing the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation

Exchange of views

Rapporteur: Rebecca Harms

ITRE will be holding a first exchange of views on the proposal to extend the Euratom Research and Training Program. In line with the Euratom Treaty, the current Euratom programme is bound by a five-year timeframe (2014-2018). This proposal extends the programme to 2020 in order to ensure the seamless continuation until the start of the next programme. The primary aim of Euratom-funded fission research is to enhance the safety of nuclear technologies. Parliament has been consulted on the matter by the Council and will present its position before the Council adopts the proposed extension.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

- *Consideration of draft report: 23 April 2018*
- *Deadline for tabling amendments: 26 April 2018*
- *Vote in ITRE: 10 July 2018*
- *Vote in Plenary: September 2018*

Regulation on ENISA, the "EU Cybersecurity Agency", and repealing Regulation (EU) 526/2013, and on Information and Communication Technology cybersecurity certification ("Cybersecurity Act")

Exchange of views

Rapporteur: Angelika Niebler

ITRE will hold a first exchange of views on the recent Commission proposal on the "Cybersecurity Act". The Commission's proposal has two distinct and independent parts. The first part aims at reforming the European Union Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA) with a permanent mandate, making it more operational, giving it a central role in achieving cybersecurity resilience and updating its role under the NIS Directive. The second part aims at establishing a EU cybersecurity certification system, for which ENISA would have a central role in order to increase the cybersecurity of products and services in the Union while avoiding market fragmentation.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

- *Consideration of draft report: 24 April 2018*
- *Deadline for tabling amendments: 26 April 2018*
- *Vote in ITRE: 19 June 2018*
- *Vote in Plenary (mandate): July 2018*

There will be an exchange of views on the proposal to extend the Euratom Research and Training Program to 2020 so that the seamless continuation of the programme can be guaranteed. Its primary objective is to boost safety of nuclear technologies. Members will also consider the question for oral answer and motion for a resolution on the Definition of SMEs. This is an important topic, as we need clearer definitions, in order to protect true SMEs, and ensure large corporations do not create structures similar to SMEs to take advantage of instruments intended for SMEs.

The Committee will also vote on a draft report on the Common rules for the internal market in natural gas; its main aim is to ensure that all pipelines to and from third countries comply with the core principles of already existing EU energy legislation, primarily the Third Energy Package; we will also decide upon a mandate to open interinstitutional negotiations on this matter. Further votes scheduled concern a draft report on the European business statistics, and a draft opinion on the Implementation of the Ecodesign Directive.

Besides these items, we will have an Exchange of views with Mr Maroš Šefovi, Vice-President for the Energy Union, on the latest developments with regard to Russian Gas supplies to the Ukraine.

ITRE will also be debriefed on three missions, and namely, the mission to Chile, which took place in December last year, the mission to the 12th Meeting of Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in Geneva, Switzerland which also took place in December last year and the mission to Austria which took place in February this year.

And last, but not least, ITRE will also be debriefed on the ongoing interinstitutional negotiations.

Jerzy Buzek

The definition of SMEs

Consideration of question for oral answer and motion for a resolution

Rapporteur: Markus Pieper

ITRE will be considering the draft resolution on the Definition of SMEs. This resolution accompanies an Oral Question to the Commission which is being prepared on the same topic. In his proposal, Mr Pieper (EPP) touches upon various aspects related to the definition of SMEs, including the need to re-evaluate the current definition of SMEs, the need for a clearer definition of Mid-cap companies, which are currently often grouped with SMEs and the need to ensure that large corporate organisations do not create structures similar to SMEs simply in order to take advantages from instruments meant for true SMEs.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

- *Deadline for tabling amendments: 26 March 2018*
- *Vote in ITRE: 16 May 2018*
- *Vote in Plenary (mandate): July 2018*

Language equality in the digital age

Consideration of draft opinion

Draftsperson: Marisa Matias

The ITRE rapporteur, Ms Matias (GUE), will present her draft opinion on the CULT own initiative report on Language equality in the Digital age. The INI builds on the findings of the STOA study on language equality in the digital area, presented in ITRE on 25 January 2017.
The rapporteur highlights the importance of Human Language Technologies and the need for coherent investment in research for the purposes of cross-border and cross-language communication, economic growth and social stability. She also notes that language makes up a very large part of the continuously growing Big Data treasure and that it could enable a wide range of innovative IT products and services in industry, commerce, government and administration.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

- *Deadline for tabling amendments: 21 March 2018*
- *Vote in ITRE: 24 April 2018*
- *Vote in lead Committee (CULT): 16 - 17 May 2018*

Common rules for the internal market in natural gas

Adoption of draft report

Rapporteur: Jerzy Buzek

ITRE is expected to adopt a mandate for negotiations on the proposed revision of the Gas Directive which foresees to extend the applicability of the Directive's provisions to pipelines entering the EU from third countries. A majority of political groups have agreed on a set of 15 compromises covering all major issues such as definitions, conditions for derogations as well as their maximum duration.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

- *Vote in Plenary (mandate): April 2018*

European business statistics, amending Regulation (EC) No 184/2005 and repealing 10 legal acts in the field of business statistics

Adoption of draft report

Rapporteur: Janusz Lewandowski

The European Parliament has repeatedly stressed the need for more accurate and timely data and statistics at a Union level, both through resolutions and own initiative reports. The Commission has responded to these demands with a proposal for a new framework Regulation which aims to integrate statistical requirements and legal acts for business statistics by streamlining and simplifying them. By amending Regulation (EC) No 184/2005 and repealing 10 existing legal acts, the Commission uses the Regulatory Fitness and Performance (REFIT) programme to create a common legal framework for the production and compilation of European Statistical System (ESS) business statistics, while at the same time extending the system to include services that were previously not covered.
ITRE will vote on 133 Amendments and 8 compromise amendments and will most probably give the mandate to enter interinstitutional negotiations leading to a first reading agreement.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

- *Vote in Plenary (mandate): April 2018*

Implementation of the Ecodesign Directive (2009/125/EC)

Adoption of draft opinion

Rapporteur: Michèle Rivasi

ITRE will vote its opinion on the own-initiative report on the Implementation of the Ecodesign Directive for which ENVI is the lead committee. 62 amendments have been tabled. Political groups have agreed on 15 compromise amendments.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

- *Vote in lead Committee (ENVI): 25 April 2018*

Exchange of views with the European Commission on the occasion of the launch of the WiFi4EU platform

Exchange of views with Commission representatives

Regulation (EU) 2017/1953 amending Regulations (EU) No 1316/2013 and (EU) No 283/2014 as regards the promotion of internet connectivity in local communities (WIFI4EU regulation) was adopted on 25 October 2017 and now the portal for the first call for projects is being launched (portal website and webinar linked to the launch). The purpose of the WIFI4EU project is to bring free Wifi to Europeans in public spaces. Public administrations and other bodies with a public mission will be able to promote local digital services: e-Government, e-Health, e-Tourism. This programme is a step towards the creation of the Digital Union and promoting digital inclusion.
This event takes place in the framework of Parliament's scrutiny over Commission's implementing powers.

Exchange of views with Mr Maroš Šefcovic, Vice-President for the Energy Union, on the latest developments with regard to Russian Gas supplies to Ukraine

Exchange of views with Commission representatives

Commission Vice President for Energy Union, Maroš Šefcovic will appear before the ITRE Committee to discuss the latest developments with regard to Russian gas supplies to Ukraine, the implications for the EU's energy security and possible measures by the EU to address the situation.

ITRE mission to Chile (18-20 December 2017), Debriefing

Members of the mission to Santiago, Chile, will debrief the ITRE Committee on the mission which took place between 18-20 December 2017.

ITRE mission to the 12th Meeting of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in Geneva, Switzerland (19-21 December 2017), Debriefing

The IGF is a forum for multi-stakeholder dialogue on public policy issues related to key elements of Internet governance issues, such as the Internet's sustainability, robustness, security, stability and development.

The 12th Annual Meeting of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) took place from 18 to 21 December 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland with the theme: "Shape Your Digital Future!".

The European Parliament delegation worked side by side with the European Commission delegation arguing strongly for:

- Open and independent internet as a global, common resource, together with non-discriminatory access to knowledge;
- The necessity to develop digital skills and competences;
- The protection of fundamental freedoms and human rights both online and offline, including the right of users to control their personal data;
- Increased privacy and security of devices and software; there is no place for cryptographic "backdoors" in a secure and trustworthy Internet;
- The need to find solutions related to cybersecurity and cybercrimes, ranging from: (i) solutions to improve the security of critical infrastructures; (ii) giving the appropriate tools for secure communication to individuals and small businesses;
- The need for human accountability for decisions that are the results of algorithms;
- The need to work with partners in other regions to maximise the development potential of the Internet, increasing its access to population and reducing inequality.

ITRE mission to Austria (14-16 February 2018), Debriefing

An ITRE delegation visited Austria between 14-16 February 2018 on a fact-finding mission related to ITRE competences. The delegation, chaired by Mr Paul Rübig (EPP) and composed of Mr Werner Langen (EPP), Mr Theodor Dumitru Stolojan (EPP), Mr Flavio Zanonato (S&D), Ms Angelika Mlinar (ALDE) and Ms Barbara Kappel (ENF) visited Vienna and its surroundings, going through an intensive programme that included meetings with various stakeholders. The main aim of the mission was to get an overview of preparation of national and implementation of European legislation on electricity markets and renewable energy, operation of gas networks and future of the gas industry, oil refining technology, research on quantum technology and waste management. For this reason the delegation made various on-site visits including an oil refinery in Schwechat, a gas hub in Baumgarten, an electricity production site in Vienna, a power grid control centre in Vienna and a quantum research lab in Vienna. The programme also included a meeting with Members of the Austrian Parliament, as well as exchanges of views with three Austrian ministers in their respective policy fields. Throughout these three days, the delegation met with various stakeholders in policy fields relevant to the ITRE committee, offering a profound and versatile view to the implementation of various European policies. The mission helped to collect important first-hand information directly from the stakeholders and the beneficiaries of the legislation for which ITRE is responsible and this information will be used to improve the work of the ITRE Committee in the future.

Feedback from ongoing negotiations

ITRE members will be debriefied on ongoing negotiations on the following files:

- Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC) (recast) - Rappoteur: Pilar del Castillo Vera

- Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources (recast) - Rapporteur: José Blanco López

- Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency - Rapporteur: Miroslav Poche

- Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Governance of the Energy Union, amending Directive 94/22/EC, Directive 98/70/EC, Directive 2009/31/EC, Regulation (EC) No 663/2009, Regulation (EC) No 715/2009, Directive 2009/73/EC, Council Directive 2009/119/EC, Directive 2010/31/EU, Directive 2012/27/EU, Directive 2013/30/EU and Council Directive (EU) 2015/652 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 - Rapporteur: Michèle Rivasi/Claude Turmes

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