

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Session document

18.3.2009

B6-0155/2009

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 103(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by Martin Schulz and Robert Goebbels

on behalf of the PSE Group

on the future of the automotive industry

B6-0155/2009

European Parliament resolution on the future of the automotive industry

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Presidency Conclusions of the Lisbon European Council of 23 and 24 March 2000,
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 2 February 2005 to the Spring European Council, ‘Working together for growth and jobs – A new start for the Lisbon Strategy’ (COM(2005) 24 final),
- having regard to the final report issued by the High-Level Group in 2006, ‘CARS 21 – A Competitive Automotive Regulatory System for the 21st century’,
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 7 February 2007, ‘A Competitive Automotive Regulatory Framework for the 21st century – the Commission’s position on the CARS 21 High-Level Group Final Report’ (COM(2007) 22 final),
- having regard to the Presidency Conclusions of the Brussels European Council of 15 and 16 October 2008,
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 29 October 2008, ‘From financial crisis to recovery: A European framework for action’ (COM(2008) 706 final),
- having regard to the Commission Communication to the European Council of 26 November 2008, ‘A European Economic Recovery Plan’ (COM(2008) 800 final),
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 4 March 2009 for the Spring European Council, ‘Driving European Recovery (COM(2009) 114),
- having regard to the Presidency Conclusions of the European Council of 11 and 12 December 2008,
- having regard to its resolution of 15 January 2008 on CARS 21: A Competitive Automotive Regulatory Framework (2007/2120(INI)),
- having regard to the Council and Commission statements of 4 February 2009 on the impact of the financial crisis on the car industry,
- having regard to its legislative resolution of 17 December 2008 on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council setting emission performance standards for new passenger cars as part of the Community’s integrated approach to reduce CO₂ emissions from light-duty vehicles (COM(2007)0856 – C6-0022/2008 – 2007/0297(COD)),
- having regard to its position adopted at first reading on 17 December 2008 with a view to

the adoption of Regulation (EC) No .../2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council setting emission performance standards for new passenger cars as part of the Community's integrated approach to reduce CO₂ emissions from light-duty vehicles,

- having regard to its position adopted on 11 March 2009 with regard to the European Economic Recovery Plan (A6-0063/2009),
 - having regard to the conclusions of the meeting of the European Ministers for Industry with the Vice-President of the Commission, Mr Günter Verheugen, on the situation in the automotive sector, held in Brussels on 16 January 2009,
 - having regard to the Commission Communication of 25 February 2009, 'Responding to the crisis in the European automotive industry' (COM(2009) 104 final),
 - having regard to the conclusions of the informal meeting of the European Council of 1 March 2009,
 - having regard to the conclusions of the Internal Market, Industry and Research Council meeting of 5 March 2009,
 - having regard to the statistics published on 29 January 2009 by the Association of European car manufacturers on vehicle sales in 2008,
 - having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the recent financial and economic crisis is hitting the European economy with full force and in particular, sectors such as the automotive industry and its suppliers, who are severely affected by the crisis in economic, social and employment terms, resulting in unemployment along with large-scale severance payments,
- B. whereas on 26 November 2008 the European Commission launched a package of measures asking Member States and other European Union entities, particularly the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), to support this new industrial challenge to the economy and the EU during this difficult time with a view to improving energy efficiency and saving existing jobs,
- C. whereas the legislative package on renewable energies and climate change, adopted last December under the French Presidency, will play a fundamental role in encouraging green investments aiming at energy savings in the automotive industry sector and in the other sectors concerned, providing indisputable advantages for these sectors,
- D. whereas the automotive industry is one of the most important sectors in the European Union, producing 19 million vehicles per year and representing 2.3 million direct jobs and more than 10 million indirect jobs, essentially linked to SMEs, many of which are highly skilled jobs which should not be lost,
- E. whereas the European automotive sector is the strategic industry for the European economy and the largest private investor in R&D in the European Union, and the

European passenger car and commercial vehicle manufacturers must sustain high levels of investment in the light of regulatory and market requirements, in particular with regard to ensuring the transition to a low-emission fleet,

- F. whereas car sales in Europe declined by 7.8 % in 2008, and by 19.3% in the fourth quarter, and registrations of commercial vehicles declined by 7.7 % between January and November and by 30.8 % during the month of November alone,
1. Draws attention to the importance of coherent and coordinated initiatives for the European automotive industry by the EU Member States; underlines the fact that the crisis is at European level, and that the proper coordination of national measures, and clear EU guidance and standards, should therefore avoid unfair and discriminatory competition between Member States regarding state aid, so as to produce the best result possible for the sector as a whole;
 2. Insists that all financial or fiscal initiatives must support and accelerate the necessary technological transformation of the sector, particularly in the area of the energy efficiency of engines and the reduction of emissions in full compliance with recent adopted legislation, including in the field of fundamental research; invites the Commission to monitor the situation and inform Parliament as to whether these conditions are being fulfilled;
 3. Points out that irrespective of the crisis the sector is facing overcapacity, for the reduction of which the industry must itself develop a coherent business strategy in consultation with the trade unions;
 4. Welcomes the CARS 21 process setting out a long-term industrial policy at European level; calls on the Commission to continually implement, monitor and review this long-term strategy plan with a view to ensuring the future competitiveness of the European automotive industry, with the objective of maintaining sustainable employment in this strategic segment of the industry;
 5. Welcomes the Commission's efforts to give an efficient political response to the difficulties of General Motors Europe and its suppliers by coordinating the efforts of the Member States concerned, including the organisation of the ministerial meeting of 13 March 2009 and the search for an equitable and fair solution to the issue of the intellectual property rights;
 6. Highlights the crucial importance of pro-active training and re-training schemes at an early stage for workers threatened by job losses in this industry;
 7. Asks the Member States and Commission to ensure that potential production capacity restrictions and restructuring plans must be developed with full information for and in close consultation with workers' representatives; accordingly underlines the need to fully associate the trade unions with the discussions in progress and to develop the plans for support at national and European level; asks the Commission to support a real European social dialogue during the next weeks and months;
 8. Asks the Commission to put forward proposals as a matter of urgency on the best use of

the European Funds available in support of jobs, within the context of the balanced implementation of all the 'Lisbon priorities' (Cohesion Fund, Structural Fund, Social Fund or Globalisation Fund);

9. Urges the Commission, in particular, to ensure that the available European funds, such as the European Social Fund and the European Globalisation Fund, are made available to contribute to training and retraining schemes for workers at an early stage, wherever and whenever working-time restrictions are to be applied;
10. Asks the EIB to make available all the necessary resources within the framework of its mission as soon as possible, notably in support of green and sustainable jobs; insists that the EIB gives sufficient attention to the SMEs interconnected with the automotive sector in order to maintain their access to credit;
11. Calls on the Council and Commission to speed up, simplify and substantially increase financial support for the automotive industry, notably through the EIB and the European Central Bank, and by allowing state guarantees for low-interest loans;
12. Urges the Member States, in this respect, to increase the EIB's capital in such a way as to ensure that its lending capacity matches the mid-term financial needs of the automotive industry, and other industries where necessary;
13. Invites the Member States, according to their respective economic situations, to take various possible and temporary measures to revive the European economy by appropriate incentives, such as nationally-based car scrapping schemes which may usefully be extended to the whole of the EU and for which best practices should be exchanged, and measures aimed at re-invigorating the car and truck leasing market and related access to credit for consumers;
14. Asks the Council and the Commission to encourage an international dialogue on the future of the global automotive sector with the United States and other vehicle-producing countries, to ensure a level playing-field and fair competition on open global markets;
15. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and national parliaments of the Member States.