



10.12.2014

B8-0356/2014

## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the steel sector in the EU: protecting workers and industries  
(2014/2976(RSP))

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Andor Deli, Elisabeth Morin-Chartier, Angélique Delahaye,  
Elisabetta Gardini, Frank Engel, Markus Pieper, Herbert Reul,  
Fulvio Martusciello, Jerzy Buzek, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Wim van de  
Camp, Siegfried Mureşan, Esther de Lange, Franck Proust,  
Constance Le Grip, Angelika Niebler, Viviane Reding, Remo Sernagiotto,  
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on behalf of the PPE Group

**B8-0356/2014**

**European Parliament resolution on the steel sector in the EU: protecting workers and industries  
(2014/2976(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the fact that the EU Treaty has its roots in the ECSC Treaty,
  - having regard to the Commission communication of 11 June 2013 on the Steel Action Plan, entitled ‘Action Plan for a competitive and sustainable steel industry in Europe’ (COM(2013)0407),
  - having regard to the Commission staff working document of 24 June 2014 entitled ‘State of play on implementation of the Commission Communication Action Plan for a competitive and sustainable steel industry in Europe of 11 June 2013 (COM(2013)0407)’ (SWD(2014)0215),
  - having regard to its resolution of 4 February 2014 on the Action Plan for a competitive and sustainable steel industry in Europe<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to its previous resolutions on the steel industry, and on the restructuring, transfer and closure of companies in the EU,
  - having regard to the European Council conclusions of 21 March 2014 and of 24 October 2014,
  - having regard to the question to the Commission on the steel plant Acciai Speciali Terni (AST) in Italy (O-000087/2014),
  - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the steel industry is essential for growth and prosperity in Europe and whereas there is a crisis in this sector;
- B. whereas one of the European Union’s objectives is to support the steel industry and to make it competitive and responsive to changing European and non European market conditions;
- C. whereas the European steel industry is suffering from a substantial drop in demand, which is causing a continuous loss of jobs and competitiveness in the industry;
- D. whereas it is in the interest of the EU as a whole to preserve activities that make up the industrial fabric of the Union itself and to ensure security of energy supply through domestic production;

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<sup>1</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2014)0069.

- E. whereas the steel industry has a key role in the European economy, and whereas a competitive European steel industry is the backbone for the development and value creation of many major industrial sectors;
  - F. pointing to the fact that this sector is facing strong competition on the global market mainly from non-EU countries that count on different regulations and standards, and is also facing difficult access to raw materials and higher costs;
  - G. whereas the EU steel industry is an important employer, accounting for 350 000 direct jobs and several million more in related industries, including the recycling supply chain;
  - H. underlining the fact that in recent years the steel industry has faced challenges in terms of restructuring and industrial mergers;
  - I. whereas the current crisis is creating enormous social hardship for the workers and regions affected, and whereas those companies involved in restructuring should act in a socially responsible manner, as experience has shown that successful restructuring cannot be achieved without appropriate social dialogue;
  - J. whereas high-technology industries have – as illustrated in the steel sector – been taken as a model of technological know-how that must therefore be protected, with immediate action thus being taken to avoid their outsourcing outside the EU territory;
1. Requests that the Commission provide, in the short term, a clear picture of the situation in terms of major changes occurring in the steel industry in Europe; stresses that it is important for the Commission to carefully monitor the ongoing developments to safeguard the industrial heritage and the workforce involved;
  2. Recalls that the Commission is entitled, following the expiry of the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community, to address the economic and social impact of developments in the European steel industry;
  3. Calls on the Commission to develop a careful reflection on medium- and long-term initiatives to support the steel industry;
  4. Believes that the Commission should attach greater importance to industrial policy in order to revive the competitiveness of European industry in a global market and to secure an effective level playing field;
  5. Believes that European economic recovery also depends on a stronger manufacturing industry, where steel plays a key role and that the need for investment in research and innovation is crucial for its renewal; stresses, in this connection, the need for investment in innovative production processes and in energy efficiency, various EU funds being available, including the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF);
  6. Welcomes and fully supports the Commission action plan for the steel sector presented in June 2013 and the subsequent staff working document of June 2014 on the implementation of that action plan; considers, however, that, given the continuation of the crisis, an annual report on its implementation should be presented every year in

order to build on the positive achievements of this past year and not to lose the momentum;

7. Welcomes, and considers essential, the High Level Group on steel meetings; calls for more regular meetings and for closer involvement of regional and local authorities, facilitating and encouraging the participation of European regions in which steel companies are based in the work of the High Level Group on steel in order to promote cooperation, exchanges of information and best practices among major stakeholders in the Member States;
8. Calls on the Commission to convoke the High Level Group on steel as soon as possible, with the participation of Parliament, as has been done in the past, to discuss the most important and pressing closures or restructuring cases in the EU;
9. Calls on the Commission to organise a thematic meeting once a year with other energy-intensive industries dedicated, for instance, to competition, trade, energy or climate policies, given that some of the steel sector's concerns are also relevant to other energy-intensive industries;
10. Calls on the Commission to hold, wherever appropriate or possible, High Level Group meetings at suitable times so that its work can feed into Competitiveness Council discussions;
11. Calls on the Commission to take concrete measures to reduce energy costs in the medium and long term, especially for energy-intensive industries, such as the steel sector; reaffirms the importance of the EU internal energy market as a means of ensuring stable, competitive and affordable energy prices, and calls on the Member States to finalise the establishment of the market as a matter of urgency;
12. Stresses the need to review EU competition rules, which in many cases may be outdated and do not reflect the changing global environment; points out that, in many production areas, the competition is now coming from outside, and no longer from within, the EU, that the geographic scope is no longer confined to the EEA, and that this is having a further adverse impact on the EU steel sector, which is, bit by bit, losing its most advanced plants such as AST;
13. Calls on the Commission to fully monitor the situation of many European plants such as Gandrange, Florange, Elefsina, Magnesia, Thessaloniki, Liège, Dunaújváros, Galați, Schiffange, Piombino, Câmpia Turzii, Rodange, Oțelu Roșu, Taranto, Trieste, Silesia, Reșița, Târgoviște, Călărași, Hunedoara, Buzău, Brăila, Borlänge, Luleå, Ijmuiden, and Oxelösund, which has involved the closure or sale to global competitors of many European jewels;
14. Calls on the Commission to closely monitor the future development of the AST plant, as requested several times by Parliament, in order to ensure that the competitiveness of the European stainless steel sector and employment within the sector are not threatened;
15. Calls on the Commission to streamline relevant EU funds, such as the European Globalisation Fund (EGF) and the European Social Fund (ESF), and policy instruments

to alleviate the social costs of adjustment and ensure that the relevant skills are retained and developed for the future competitiveness of the industry;

16. Calls on the Commission to continue supporting and implementing as soon as possible the SustSteel initiative, as proposed in the Steel Action Plan and fully supported by Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions; considers that this would be a positive way of competing with outside competitors, showing that steel products from the EU meet higher social, environmental and economic standards than those from anywhere else, as it would highlight the quality of EU steel producers and would facilitate relations with consumers interested in the quality of products;
17. Calls on the Commission to take a more comprehensive approach to the steel sector and to ensure that industrial competitiveness is mainstreamed across all Union policy areas;
18. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.