



Plenary sitting

B9-0349/2023

10.7.2023

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 132(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the State of the SME Union
(2023/2750(RSP))

Evžen Tošenovský
on behalf of the ECR Group

B9-0349/2023

**European Parliament resolution on the State of the SME Union
(2023/2750(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Article 3(3) of the Treaty on European Union,
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 10 March 2020 entitled ‘A New Industrial Strategy for Europe’ (COM(2020)0102),
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 10 March 2020 entitled ‘An SME Strategy for a sustainable and digital Europe’ (COM(2020)0103),
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 5 May 2021 entitled ‘Updating the 2020 New Industrial Strategy: Building a stronger Single Market for Europe’s recovery’ (COM(2021)0350),
 - having regard to Directive 2011/7/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 on combating late payment in commercial transactions¹ (Late Payment Directive),
 - having regard to the annual report on European SMEs 2022/2023 of 27 June 2023,
 - having regard to the Commission work programme for 2023,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are the backbone of our economy, as they make up 99 % of all businesses in the EU, employ around 100 million people and account for more than half of Europe’s GDP;
- B. whereas Article 3(3) of the Treaty on European Union refers to the single market, sustainable development and the social market economy;
- C. whereas European SMEs have faced significant challenges and hardships because of the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, both of which have led to disruptions of global value chains and persistent inflation;
- D. whereas digitalisation is crucial for SMEs and contributes to strong economic growth and job creation within the single market;
- E. whereas SMEs face challenges in accessing finance and require a tailor-made approach at European and national levels;
- F. whereas there is a need to significantly reduce the regulatory and administrative burdens imposed on SMEs as a result of over-regulation, complex administrative procedures and

¹ OJ L 48, 23.2.2011, p. 1.

reporting obligations;

- G. whereas the Commission work programme for 2023 refers to putting forward an SME Relief Package and states the intention to revise the Late Payment Directive to reduce burdens for SMEs;
1. Calls on the Commission to assess the impact of EU legislation on SMEs and to propose simplifications where needed in order to create favourable conditions in the EU for SMEs to be created, be competitive and be able to grow;
 2. Reiterates the importance of applying the SME test during Commission impact assessments in order to analyse the possible effects of EU legislative proposals on SMEs; stresses that impact assessments should be carried out during the preparations for all draft legislation;
 3. Strongly supports the Commission's addition of a 'competitiveness check' to its preparations for new legislative proposals with a view to strengthening the international competitiveness and the resilience of the European economy;
 4. Urges the Commission to pursue an ambitious approach to simplification and to aim to apply the 'one in, one out' principle in legislation; encourages the Commission and the Member States to streamline procedures and implement the 'once only' and 'digital by default' principles, thereby facilitating administrative processes for SMEs and cutting red tape;
 5. Underlines the need to prevent excessive bureaucracy and gold-plating and to minimise the regulatory burden for SMEs while maintaining the highest standards across different fields;
 6. Stresses the importance of introducing simplified requirements for SMEs in legislative proposals in order to facilitate compliance; calls for systematic engagement between the Commission and Parliament in preparations for secondary legislation, which would ensure responsiveness to SMEs' needs;
 7. Emphasises the importance of skilling, upskilling and reskilling employees of SMEs; calls for the EU and its Member States to work to improve access to skilled labour; calls for the European Social Fund Plus, the Just Transition Fund and the European Skills Agenda to adequately address the specific needs of SMEs;
 8. Highlights the importance of an efficient single market for capital in order to mobilise the necessary funds to address the EU's immediate and long-term challenges, and thus to improve the resilience of the EU's economy; emphasises, in particular, that the capital markets union improves opportunities for SMEs to access funding and therefore contributes to meeting the objectives of the EU's SME strategy;
 9. Welcomes recent legislative proposals to ensure that the market for payment services remains fit for purpose and is capable of adapting to the ongoing digital transformation; considers that the integrated EU payments market should let citizens and businesses make cross-border payments as easily and safely as they would in their own countries;

10. Underlines the importance of the timely adoption of a revised Late Payments Directive in order to provide SMEs with a predictable legal framework to address payment delays; notes that late payments remain a major threat to the survival of SMEs, particularly in the current climate of high inflation and increased energy costs;
11. Calls for further incentives to encourage SME participation in Horizon Europe funding calls; recalls that the European Innovation Council is a unique European funding programme to support the growth and scaling up of European start-ups and SMEs;
12. Stresses the importance of engaging SMEs in dedicated programmes and resources within the Green Deal Industrial Plan, particularly in clean tech development;
13. Calls for the innovation principle to be applied to all new and revised legal acts proposed by the Commission in order to encourage innovation activities; recalls that the innovation principle entails the Commission analysing the potential negative impact of new proposed legal acts on developing and bringing innovations to the market;
14. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.