

**Question for oral answer O-000111/2012
to the Commission**

Rule 115

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on behalf of the PPE Group

Subject: Evaluation of the SME definition

The SME definition as established in 2003 has proved to be a successful tool for identifying those enterprises which are confronted with market failure due to their size. The current ceilings encompass more than 99 % of enterprises in the EU, and almost three-quarters of the EU economy in employment terms. Currently, an evaluation of the SME definition is under way.

1. Bearing in mind the fact that the definition currently covers more than 99 % of companies in the EU, does the Commission share the view that to raise the employment ceiling would dilute the definition's effectiveness?
2. The ceilings of the SME definition have not been changed since its entry into force in 2005. Does the Commission believe that adapting the turnover and balance-sheet ceilings to economic developments and inflation would be appropriate?
3. The SME definition comprises three subcategories (micro, small and medium-sized companies). Could its effectiveness be improved if its subcategories were applied in a more differentiated manner, in particular when conducting the SME test?
4. In a number of industrial sectors (e.g. aerospace), mid-cap firms are facing handicaps in access to finance or markets because they exceed the ceilings of the SME definition. Does the Commission believe that the establishment of an intermediate category which is separate from the SME definition could aid adaptation to their needs?

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