Question for oral answer O-000057/2016

to the Commission

Rule 128

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on behalf of the S&D Group

Subject: Review of the SME supporting factor

SMEs account for 99.8% of European enterprises, generating 55% of the overall European GDP, and are responsible for the employment of around 75 million European citizens. One of the main obstacles to their growth is access to finance.

SMEs remain largely reliant on bank-related lending to finance their activities. For this reason, and given the increased regulatory burden following the financial crisis, a capital reduction factor for loans to SMEs – the so-called SME supporting factor (SF) – was introduced in the Capital Requirements Regulation (CRR) to allow credit institutions to enhance lending to this particular group of companies.

In view of the periodic revision of the SF, the European Banking Authority has recently concluded a call for evidence on its impact on bank lending to SMEs. The final document, which is supposed to advise the Commission’s report on the impact of own funds requirements on lending to SMEs, is due to be published in the first quarter of 2016.

In light of the above, the Commission is asked to answer the following:

1. Can it already provide an interim assessment concerning the impact of the SF on bank lending to SMEs?

2. Will the report also examine the interaction of the SF with other regulatory requirements with a view to reducing any superfluous burdens in the application of the instrument?

3. Will the report also assess the calibration of the SF, including in terms of size and threshold, and will the Commission give a clear answer to the question of whether the instrument will be extended on a temporary or permanent basis?

Tabled: 4.4.2016