

P7_TA(2012)0510

A new sustainable and competitive steel industry

European Parliament resolution of 13 December 2012 on a new sustainable and competitive steel industry, based on a petition received (2012/2905 (RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Petition 760/2007, from an Italian citizen, on the ILVA steel plant and the dioxin alarm in Taranto,
 - having regard to the judgment of the European Court of Justice of 31 March 2011, which declared that Italy had failed to fulfil its obligations under the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) Directive,
 - having regard to Article 191(2) of the TFEU and Directive 2004/35/EC on environmental liability,
 - having regard to its deliberations in committee with the petitioners concerned, most recently on 9 October 2012, and the Commission Vice-President responsible,
 - having regard to Rule 202(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the petitioners have forcefully expressed their concerns about the extremely elevated levels of dioxin emissions from the ILVA steel plant in Taranto, which have had, and continue to have, a significant, harmful and enduring impact on the health of the local population, where 20 000 families have members who have worked in, or in association with, the steel industry, and where contamination rates among the local population have led to unacceptable and intolerable levels of sickness and chronic illness;
- B. whereas parts of the ILVA steel plant were recently closed down by the Italian authorities in order to avoid further pollution, and whereas the authorities and the existing plant owners have a pressing legal obligation to secure a further drastic reduction in the harmful emissions;
- C. whereas the precarious and dangerous situation of the ILVA steel plant is also causing serious environmental degradation and damage and grave social and economic problems in the south of Italy, and whereas the privatisation of this plant has not led to any improvement in the environmental security of the sector;
- D. whereas the steel industry, which employs some 360 000 workers, is a crucial economic sector of the European Union and whereas Parliament has a duty and a responsibility to clearly demonstrate its solidarity with the workers of the ILVA steel plant and their families, who have been affected by this totally unacceptable situation;
- E. whereas, in terms of EU industrial policy, it is strategically essential to prevent the further relocation of steel plants and production outside the European Union and to ensure the security of the workforce, and whereas, in terms of EU environment policy, it is equally essential to ensure that the polluter pays and that the ecological balance is enhanced and, where necessary, restored, as required by Article 191(2) of the TFEU and Directive

2004/35/EC on environmental liability;

1. Calls on the Commission and the Council to develop a new policy for the steel industry which will boost growth and employment during the economic crisis and is compatible with the health and safety of all EU citizens and residents;
2. Calls on the Commission and the Council also to work together with all the parties involved in order to ensure that this policy coherently integrates economic objectives with social and environmental priorities, so as to build a modern, competitive and sustainable European steel industry which fully complies with EU environmental law;
3. Calls on the Italian authorities to ensure the environmental rehabilitation of the polluted steel plant site as a matter of extreme urgency, while at the same time ensuring that the costs incurred in relation to the preventive or remedial action taken are covered in accordance with the polluter pays principle, as required by Article 8 of Directive 2004/35/EC on environmental liability;
4. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.