

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

PROVISIONAL
2005/2146(INI)

11.10.2005

DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

for the Committee on Constitutional Affairs

on the period of reflection: the structure, subjects and context for an assessment
of the debate on the European Union
(2005/2146(INI))

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy calls on the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Suggests that the most appropriate criteria for a rational assessment of the issues currently at the fore in the reflection period on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe are those of *greater effectiveness* in promoting the competitiveness of the EU sectors and the endowment of the EU society with *tools and instruments* capable of coping with the challenges brought about by globalisation;
2. Is of the view that, beyond the consideration of the institutional questions, a Europe-wide dialogue on the substance of the policies as set out in the Constitution should seek to demonstrate the added value of the Community and, especially, the Constitution for Europe's citizens; suggests that, in addition, the up-coming EU presidencies could nominate high-ranking personalities with European experience to promote in-depth debate on the purpose of a European Constitution;
3. Considers that intensified contacts between the European Parliament and national parliaments should contribute to that debate;
4. Considers that the reflection period should be used not only to explain to citizens the chances that the Constitution could bring, but also to explain that the effectiveness of the Union is dependent on close and efficient cooperation between the Union and the Member States in decision making and implementation;
5. Is of the view that the Constitution improves the decision-making process as regards space, energy and research policy, and that this could be an important contributory factor in ensuring a more prominent role for the Union in the construction of a secure and sustainable environment;
6. Welcomes the fact that, under the Constitution, energy policy is endowed with a legal base of its own, which prescribes the co-decision procedure with qualified majority voting (Article III - 256), and that it falls within the shared competence of the Union and the Member States; considers that this gives the Union the opportunity to complement national energy policy by introducing effective measures concerning security of energy supply, energy saving, energy efficiency and the promotion of alternative forms of energy, especially renewables;
7. Considers it desirable that the reflection period is used to discuss with the public the necessary contribution of an EU-wide industrial policy as a means by which to support the Member States' efforts to restructure their country-specific industrial bases in order to create new jobs in a drastically changed environment;
8. Supports the view that a well structured policy on research and innovation could give a fresh boost to European industry - especially insofar as concerns small and medium-sized industry;

9. Proposes that, even now, in the early phases of the reflection period, the Parliament demand that Research and Development be properly funded, given the oft-cited importance of research in meeting the targets of the Lisbon strategy.