



Fraktion der Europäischen Volkspartei (Christdemokraten) im Europäischen Parlament
Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) in the European Parliament
Groupe du Parti Populaire Européen (Démocrates-Chrétiens) au Parlement européen

Industry Policy and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)

The European economy is characterised by its 23 million SMEs (which is a share of 99% of all enterprises) representing 2/3 of private sector jobs and more than 80% employment in some industrial sectors like construction, furniture or metal products. The EPP Group is the only political group in the European Parliament which fully acknowledges the role of SMEs as a job generator in Europe.

The EPP Group has been the driving force behind the so-called Small Business Act (SBA) and its guiding principles to facilitate the life of SMEs in Europe. Legislation should be created in a way that even the smallest entity has the capacity to implement it. The EPP Group, for instance, called for an effective mandatory 'SME Test' and independent evaluation for each new legislation and in each policy field. We will continue our efforts to improve SME's access to finance, e.g. by reshaping the existing financial Community tools, sharpening instruments to combat late payments and by encouraging access to equity and venture capital. The Group further supports the efforts to improve the involvement of SME expertise in the legislative process (i.e. through extending the consultation periods).

Coping with administrative and regulatory burdens is a number one concern for European businesses. The EPP Group has constantly highlighted the commitment of the European Commission and the Member States to the 25% target on the reduction of administrative burdens for SMEs before 2012. The Commission has promised to withdraw, simplify or repeal a substantial part of existing EU legislation. The EPP Group is convinced that these reduction efforts have to be intensified and continued beyond 2012.

The EPP Group has championed the cause of innovative SMEs and has strongly advocated for a renewed innovation policy a European level including an open approach to innovation and effective renewed innovation indicators. We will continue our efforts to sharpen the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP) that has made €3.6 billion available from 2007-2013 to support investment in new products and IT systems. The CIP has to be strengthened and to be continued with a view to the EU 2020 strategy. The EPP Group is further committed to increase the share of SMEs benefitting from the Research Framework Programme by simplifying the procedures and by supporting special programmes to help SMEs access the Research Framework Programmes.

European Commissioner for Industry and Entrepreneurship Antonio Tajani:

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/tajani/index_en.htm

European Commission - DG Enterprise and Industry: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/index_en.htm