

The European Commission

EU2020@ec.europa.eu

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Response to the Commission consultation on the future EU 2020 Strategy, COM(2009)647/2

The Danish Chamber of Commerce would like to thank the Commission for this opportunity to comment on the working document on the future EU 2020 strategy.

The Danish Chamber of Commerce is the second largest professional business organisation in Denmark and represents 20,000 Danish companies and 100 trade associations in service sectors such as trade, tourism, business services, IT, welfare services and transport. The Chamber is a private non-profit organisation whose goal is to improve the competitiveness and growth potential of Danish companies and the economy in general.

General remarks

A more clear focus on the Service Sector

First of all the service sector and its growth potential deserves a clearer role in the Strategy. For the EU as a whole, the service sector already delivers 70 percent of GDP, 68 percent of employment, 96 percent of new jobs and 30 percent of exports. It has an equally important role in Denmark. The service sector has performed relatively well during the financial crisis in comparison to industry and manufacturing, and it is clear that future growth and jobs will be generated by the service sector. The Commission's paper suggests a "modern service sector" (p. 4). While the industry needs to improve its competitiveness (p. 4), the Danish Chamber believes that the service sector also needs to be strengthened and increase its competitiveness. In a global perspective the sector is exposed to competition and many jobs will be outsourced in the years to come due to weak competitiveness if targeted initiatives are not put forward.

Therefore, the Chamber generally seeks more attention on the added value created by the synergy between the service sector and traditional manufacturing. The Danish Chamber of Commerce encourages the Commission to prioritize the development of a European industry and enterprise policy targeted at the sector to a larger extent than is seen today.

Better delivery

The Lisbon Strategy has initiated a process throughout Europe aimed at growth and job creation. Ambitions have been great, but unfortunately delivery on these ambitions and concrete results have lacked behind. The financial crisis holds of course some explanation for this unsatisfying development, but cannot give the entire reason. The Danish Chamber of Commerce can identify a low degree of commitment for the goals set in the Lisbon Strategy.

Therefore, the Chamber invites the Commission to take this as an import lesson and in the future work with the EU2020 Strategy focus on ways to create a sense of commitment among the stakeholders. Generally speaking, there is a need to develop a better method and tool for realizing the goals set in the future strategy.

Realistic and quantifiable targets

The working document on the EU2020 Strategy delivers many visions and ambitions for the future EU. The ways to reach these visions are not sufficiently clear. Furthermore there is a need to make more concrete *what* is to be reached. The Danish Chamber of Commerce therefore invites the Commission to include realistic, quantifiable and measurable targets for the key priority areas. This will increase the chance of delivery at national level. Recognizing that the different member states has different points of departure the targets may be differentiated.

Stronger focus on better regulation and business environment

In the working document low productivity growth as well as low GDP growth is identified as major challenges for Europe in the years to come (p.2 + 8). Addressing this issue the Danish Chamber of Commerce emphasises the importance of taking into account the framework conditions for the service sector in Europe. The objective should be EU framework conditions that ensure competitiveness, fair competition, and harmonised and enforced implementation of all legislation in all member states. Therefore, the Chamber suggests an increased focus on better regulation and stronger attention in the strategy on improving the business environment in general.

Best Regards
Danish Chamber of Commerce

Ole Schmidt
Head of Globalization Department
OSC@danskerhverv.dk