



**HELLENIC REPUBLIC
MINISTRY OF ECONOMY, COMPETITIVENESS &
SHIPPING
GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF INDUSTRY
DIRECTORATE FOR INTERNATIONAL
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**

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Address : 119, Mesogeion Avenue
P.O. Box : 101 92

Information : Christos PAPAVALASILEIOU
Evangelia SOLOMOU

Telephone : 00 30 210 69 69 205
number : 00 30 210 69 69 896
Fax number : 00 30 210 69 69 738

TO:
European Commission – DG
Enterprise and Industry
(EU2020@ec.europa.eu)

C.C.:

E-mail : PapavasileiouX@ypan.gr
solomou_e@ypan.gr

- Permanent Representation of Greece to the EU
Substitute Permanent Representative
Mr. Leonidas Rokanas
- Attention to: Mr G. Kapantaidakis
g.kapantaidakis@rp-grece.be
- European Commission – DG
Enterprise and Industry.
(ENTR-EPG-DIRECTORS-GENERAL@ec.europa.eu)

SUBJECT: “CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE << EU 2020 >> STRATEGY”

We are sending you herewith attached our written contribution to the public consultation on the content of the future «EU 2020» STRATEGY, as a result of coordination with the different directorates and supervised institutions of the General Secretariat of Industry/Ministry of Economy, Competitiveness and Shipping of the Hellenic Republic.

ANSWER:

A. INTRODUCTION

In principle and in general, we agree with Commission’s main observations. As is known, the Lisbon Strategy has three dimensions which are interdependent and complement one another:

- The social dimension, referring mainly to social cohesion,
- The economic, referring mainly to levels of economic growth &

- The environmental, referring mainly to quality of life with emphasis on environmental protection.

Today, speaking in terms and conditions of primarily economic globalization, both challenges and opportunities have been created which exert significant pressure **(a)** on European businesses on one hand leading them to their specialization and strengthening of their innovative dynamics aiming at increasing their competitiveness and **(b)** on the other hand on employers for greater mobility and specialization.

Generally, we support the strengthening of European competitiveness through an action plan aiming at smart investments, support of innovation, green development, transition to an economy of low carbon emissions, promotion of clean technologies and increase of energy efficiency. At national level, short-term objectives are the enlargement of productive base and the taking of a series of measures for coming out of the financial crisis while mid-term objectives are the productive reorganization of the economy that will create new jobs and improve citizens' living standards.

B. INDUSTRIAL POLICY

In the framework of the new Lisbon Strategy, the great significance of industry in development and employment has been recognized. Special care should be given by public authorities, both at European and national level, to the consequences of international competition and to the facilitation of the necessary structural changes that will enable successful adjustment to today's globalized economy. Important factor for the success of the above is to find the optimal balance among the three aforementioned pillars of sustainable development during strategy re-planning.

In parallel, we support an integrated approach for a competitive and sustainable industrial policy in the European Union that cannot be formed and realized autonomously but complementary to the overall economic EU strategy. We are positive towards the general directions of a new industrial policy:

- The safeguarding of industrial adjustment and recovery of industry in order to ensure European economy competitiveness,
- The understanding of the benefits that might emerge from the transition to a low carbon emissions economy and
- The ensuring of more and more benefits by Internal Market.

C. ARCHITECTURE OF FUTURE EU 2020 STRATEGY

We are positive to the proposals of the European Commission regarding the three topics of the future EU 2020 strategy:

- **The creation of added value through knowledge support**

Transition to an economy of knowledge presupposes the planning and promotion of knowledge-intensive activities but also the formation of conditions for the development of innovations and their incorporation into production of goods and services. In this framework, “fifth freedom” is emerging, that of free movement of knowledge and innovation. Regarding innovation and European policies, a balanced mixture should be formed, aiming at:

- Meeting the needs of customers and users (demand side),
- Enabling the creation of new markets with products and services and strengthening of competitiveness (supply side),
- Strengthening opportunities in businesses (SMEs), in internal market.
- Encountering the global social challenges such as environmental protection etc.

SMEs are called to play an important role in the achievement of the above objectives and in this context, the tool for further action is the initiative for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises “Small Business Act”.

- **The provision of possibilities and opportunities and development of citizens’ skills in an inclusive society.**

We support a combined strategy that creates more and better jobs where employees will feel at the same time useful and productive, while working in a stable economic and social environment.

- **The creation of a competitive, cohesive and green economy.**

We are for the efficient use of energy in buildings, industry, transport, energy production and agricultural economy, the use of Renewable Energy Sources as well as the realization of investments that support an integrated sustainable development. Both European and national public policies that will be designed for facing climate change, the counterbalance of consequences on citizens’ everyday life and the support of a “green” development, concern choices and parameters interwoven with important investment initiatives as well as motives that will be provided in order these to be realized. Moreover, they concern resources that have to be engaged or found by other activities and sectors.

We support the provision of motives mainly to SMEs for the use of more environmental-friendly products and production methods as well as the restriction of obstacles that limit their development in internal market. Enterprises and especially SMEs constitute the place for the creation of new wealth, place for exploiting professional skills, meeting point between the traditional ways of operation and innovation, starting point for the professional way out of young people as well as a significant factor for migrants’ inclusion. Finally, environmental-friendly technologies and eco-innovation can provide added value to enterprises, but also constitute a future pillar of development of European economy.

D. IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISM/GOVERNANCE

The objectives of the future EU 2020 strategy will be achieved through a better, more mature and more cohesive political coordination, better synergies via a more and more effective implementation of the principle of subsidiarity and strengthening of partnership among EU, member-states, regions, local communities and social partners during public policy formation, for development and employment.

Finally, we suggest the publication of the above answers in the Internet.

General Secretary of Industry
(signed)

Alexandros Furlas

Εσωτερική Διανομή

- Γρ. κ. Υπουργό Οικονομίας Ανταγωνιστικότητας & Ναυτιλίας
- Γρ. κ. Υφυπουργό Οικονομίας Ανταγωνιστικότητας & Ναυτιλίας
- Γρ. κ. Γενικό Γραμματέα Βιομηχανίας
- κα Γενική Διευθύντρια ΙΙ Στήριξης της Βιομηχανίας
- κο. Γενικό Διευθυντή Ι Βιομηχανικής Πολιτικής και Εποπτευόμενων Φορέων
- Δ/ση ΜΜΕ
- Δ/ση Οργάνωσης
- Δ/ση Βιομηχανικών Επενδύσεων
- Δ/ση Βιομηχανικής Χωροθεσίας & Περιβάλλοντος
- Δ/ση Πληροφορικής
- Δ/ση Πολιτικής Ποιότητας
- 1^η Δ/ση Κ.Β.Π
- 2^η Δ/ση Κ.Β.Π
- 3^η Δ/ση Κ.Β.Π
- 4^η Δ/ση Κ.Β.Π
- Δ/ση Βιομηχανικής Πολιτικής
- Α.Γ.Δ.Κ.Π Γ.Γ.Β
- Δ/ση Πολιτικής Προμηθειών
- Δ/ση Υποστήριξης Βιομηχανιών
- Δ/ση Επιθεώρησης
- Δ/ση Οικονομική
- Δ/ση Διοικητικού
- Ειδική Γραμματεία για την Ανταγωνιστικότητα
- Δ/ση ΔΒΣ (Αρχείο Φ. Α' 84) – Χρονολογικό Αρχείο