

Industrial policy: right aims, weak strategy

EUROCHAMBRES expressed its doubts about the added value of the European Commission's Industrial policy communication update, presented today. While addressing the right starting points for improving competitiveness of Europe's manufacturers, the package lacks a clear strategy.

Lack of substance

While endorsing the focus on innovation, investment, market conditions and human capital, EUROCHAMBRES is unconvinced that the approach set out in the paper will deliver improvements in these areas for Europe's manufacturers.

"Basically, the Commission seems to have presented a pale imitation of Europe 2020 focused on manufacturing. While Europe's industry certainly needs to address many of the same issues as the wider economy, the communication lacks substance and without this, we question whether such a broad approach will deliver any tangible benefits," said Arnaldo Abruzzini, EUROCHAMBRES' Secretary General.

The choice of targets is also confusing. *"What can be measured can be improved, but the mixture of targets set out in the communication – some manufacturing-specific, others economy-wide – offers little scope for assessing the impact of this initiative and adds to the general sense of confusion. But we take this document as the starting point of a discussion that must go much beyond this initial contribution,"* explained Mr Abruzzini.

Narrow focus for action

Chambers consider the focus on six priority areas for immediate action necessary, but at the same time warn the Commission not to concentrate only on some pioneer projects whose marketability is highly uncertain.

"Europe's future competitiveness will not only depend on so-called 'green' industries, but on a successful transformation of all industrial sectors, which must also be able to benefit from the right framework conditions for enhancing their competitiveness, including the 'green' aspect," concluded Mr Abruzzini.

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