

PRESS RELEASE

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Regarding the Industrial Policy Communication of the EU Commission

VCI: “Industrial renaissance” should not remain mere lip service

The German Chemical Industry Association (VCI) welcomes that the European Commission is taking position on the industrial policy. The VCI’s director-general Utz Tillmann states: “The Commission shows that it is taking industry’s ever falling share in value creation seriously; this is seen as dangerous development. However, like so often the Commission makes very few concrete proposals on how to give consideration to industrial competitiveness in the future European policies. If relevant measures are not laid down more firmly in the EU legislation, the goal of re-industrialising Europe cannot be achieved.”

Bearing this in mind, the VCI has elaborated a discussion paper and proposes, inter alia, to widen the role of the Industry Commissioner who should assume the part of a “competitiveness watchdog”. Furthermore, from the VCI’s perspective it would make sense to strengthen the coordinating role of the Secretariat-General of the Commission, as regards EU legislation. This approach could achieve better coherence of regulation and give more thought to the cumulative effects on industrial competitiveness. Moreover, in this discussion paper the VCI identifies the most suitable political instruments for a re-industrialisation of Europe: creating a genuine common market for energy, promoting innovation and liberalising trade. Tillmann: “We have brought forward our proposals. Now it is up to the Commission to let deeds follow.”

Against this backdrop, the VCI deplors that the European Council on Industrial Competitiveness, which was scheduled for February 2014, has been cancelled. Therefore, the heads of state and government of the Member States should take the chance of their March meeting to stop the trend of de-industrialisation: by setting the right course in the energy and climate policy. Tillmann warns that overly ambitious climate targets without a global framework put at stake the competitiveness of industrial companies in Europe. In its Communication the Commission, too, emphasises that industrial competitiveness needs to be taken

into account in the energy and climate strategy to 2030. But according to the VCI, concrete proposals on how to do this are once more lacking.

The VCI represents the politico-economic interests of some 1,650 German chemical companies and German subsidiaries of foreign businesses. For this purpose, the VCI is in contact with politicians, public authorities, other industries, science and media. The VCI stands for over 90 percent of the chemical industry in Germany. In 2013 the German chemical industry realized sales of more than 187 billion euros and employed ca. 436,000 staff.

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Please note:

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