

In a nutshell

A two-year dialogue, with workshops around the European Union, to build a strategy for Europe's industry.

- **Independence:** a multi-stakeholder approach to ensure a frank and constructive dialogue between representatives of EU institutions, member states, regions, industry, NGOs and academia;
- **Innovation:** a multi-disciplinary bottom-up process with workshops around the European Union;
- **Impact:** an action plan presented to the new Commission at the end of 2019.

Context

European industry needs to transform to become future-proof. Increased competition over natural and human resources, volatile prices for energy and raw materials, climate change, digitalisation and automatisisation are affecting businesses across industries. At the same time, rising mercantilist practices take the form of dumping strategies or restricted access to public procurements under the umbrella of industrial flagship initiatives (e.g. 'Made in China 2025', 'Make in India', 'America First').

Citizens and governments across Europe often feel they lack the tools to respond to these challenges. As populism prospers on people's fears of globalisation and technological change, EU member states are under pressure to support their industrial champions and protect local jobs. However, the resurgence of uncoordinated industrial policies across Europe could distort the single market and undermine the EU's competitiveness and prosperity.

While the EU aims to promote industrial competitiveness across sectors and policies, arguably more could be done to coordinate member states' action to ensure successful industrial transformations. The EPC is thus launching a Task Force to develop a pan-European 'Industry Action Plan for the European Union'.

Goals

Through this project, the EPC aims to shape the policy discussion on a revamped strategy for the European industry. During the project the EPC will engage with member states and other stakeholders to:

- (1) Evaluate the drivers of the ongoing industrial transformation (identify and quantify);
- (2) Review the innovative ways businesses, regions and member states carry out industrial transformations and respond to the challenges;
- (3) Define a European vision for the continent's industry and identify common objectives;
- (4) Provide evidence of the added value of a coordinated action plan at the EU level;
- (5) Develop a strategy with concrete measures to be implemented across member states;
- (6) Suggest 'carrots and sticks' to keep member states committed to the Action Plan.

Activities and outputs

The Task Force started its work at the end of 2017. To ensure a pan-European discussion and a bottom-up approach, workshops and seminars are held in Brussels and in several EU countries. The EPC has extended experience in facilitating such multi-stakeholder dialogues.

Through **country seminars**, the EPC will seek to review member states' perspectives on industrial policies, identify possible areas for EU action and gather preliminary feedback on the findings and recommendations of the Task Force.

Complementary **workshops** will be organised at the EPC. They will focus on how existing EU regulatory and financial tools could help implement the common strategy for Europe's industrial transformation. This includes looking at the role of the single market, investment, trade, competition policy, taxation, R&D/innovation, education and the skills agenda, digital instruments.

In the course of the Task Force, the EPC will provide input to ongoing EU debates, including, for example, on how the post-2020 multiannual financial framework could help foster the competitiveness of Europe's industry. At the end of the project, the EPC will present the **Action Plan** and discuss it with senior **EU and national policymakers** at a **high-level event** in Brussels. The Action Plan will form a part of a **final publication** that comprises the main findings of the project and proposes concrete policy recommendations for action at EU and member state level.

Country seminars: the added value of EU action?

The EPC is inviting partners from the national level to join its efforts to develop an EU Industry Action plan. It is looking for partners to organise **country seminars**, which would provide a platform to discuss national perspectives on industrial policy, and the role for EU collaboration. The input of the discussions would contribute to defining a European vision for the continent's industry, common objectives among member states (and regions), and areas where coordinated EU action could bring greatest added value.

The partners would identify and invite speakers and participants, and be responsible for logistics of the event (venue, possible catering, registrations). The EPC would present the project and its findings at the event, and could provide assistance with designing the event and identifying speakers from the European level, if so desired.

In return, the EPC would acknowledge the partner's logo and support in Task Force related communication, including the final publication. Partners can also take part in all meetings of the Task Force and will have the possibility to actively contribute to the project, thereby helping in setting the framework for the way forward.

Current project partners:



Contacts

Annika Hedberg
Senior Policy Analyst
A.Hedberg@epc.eu

Robin Huguenot-Noël
Policy Analyst
R.Huguenot-Noel@epc.eu