

Emergency Resolution adopted at the EPP Congress, Dublin (Ireland), 6th -7th March 2014

EPP Priorities for reducing bureaucracy and cutting red tape in Europe

Regulation is a necessary part of modern society and good governance. Light and smart regulation should set the right framework for people and businesses to interact with each other in order to succeed in their endeavours and be protected against abuses and undesirable developments. However, experience shows that regulation sometimes constitutes an obstacle, rather than an enabler to fruitful activity. Increased bureaucracy hinders economic activity and affects entrepreneurs and SMEs. The EU economy relies on SMEs. 99.8% of the businesses in the EU are SMEs; EPP recognises their key importance for the economy and employment.

The EPP stands for smart regulation, pioneering continuous efforts in cutting red tape, making rules simpler and promoting subsidiarity. We want a simple, clear and predictable regulatory framework.

We believe the citizens of Europe expect that the EPP proposes a concrete set of measures aimed at reducing bureaucracy. Our objective is to reduce the cost burden generated by red tape by 30% before the year 2020. Therefore, we will continue and intensify our efforts to secure a European regulatory framework which matches the needs of citizens and companies. The path to red tape reduction has two challenges that we are willing to address – the completion of the Single Market and the Digital Single Market.

Cutting red tape in Europe

- We want EU legislation and programmes to be implemented by national and regional authorities in such a way that additional administrative burdens are avoided.
- We will make it easier to start a company in any EU Member State.
- We will reduce the regulatory burdens for SMEs by introducing simplified European standards in public procurement, professional qualifications, posting of workers in another EU Member State and a standard VAT declaration meant to facilitate the activity for SMEs active in more than one EU Member State. We support a gradual transition to e-procurement and e-governance as a further method of simplification and transparency.
- EU legislation shall strike the right balance between, on one hand, retaining confidence in the actions of individuals, companies and institutions and, on the other hand, in the control by the government. In this regard, the EPP also calls on the European Parliament, as a budgetary control body, to strike the right balance when giving budgetary discharge to European institutions.
- We are committed to cutting red tape for researchers, entrepreneurs and innovators. We want to make it easier for creative people to turn their ideas into reality. We want to facilitate new products' access to markets so that creative ideas find their way to consumers without needless burdens.

- We propose that in the next mandate of the European Commission a Vice President is also given the task of being a “red tape watchdog”, responsible for continuously scrutinising EU legislation in all areas, and evaluating the practicality and necessity of existing legislation. He should coordinate proposals on what legislation should be repealed, simplified or updated, including its implementation on national and regional level

Simpler rules

- We will call for the verification of reporting obligations and evaluation frameworks and identify possibilities for reducing the administrative burden in this respect.
- We will continuously evaluate the effects derived from the simplification of rules and stay alert to emerging risks. We will act without delay if new risks for consumers, businesses or public authorities appear.
- EPP representatives in all EU institutions will act to secure that the benefits of reduced bureaucracy will reach the consumers and businesses, especially family businesses, SMEs and entrepreneurs and have a positive impact upon their activity.
- The EPP is of the opinion that legislation should have an expiry date by default and should include an obligatory review clause to determine whether or not it should be continued. Regulation shall respond to current needs, not to the needs of the past, and its usefulness shall be periodically evaluated.
- We will ensure the full implementation of the EU Services Directive aiming at eliminating unjustified and disproportionate national regulation.

Subsidiarity

- European regulation shall only be proposed in line with the principle of subsidiarity. Subsidiarity is one of the core values of the EPP. We stand for decisions being made as close to the citizen as possible. The European Union shall only intervene where action by individual countries is insufficient. European regulatory proposals also need to take into account the diversity of Europe.
- We underline that all new legislation proposed by the next European Commission must be consistent with the four fundamental freedoms of the EU: free movement of people, goods, services and capital. During its next mandate the European Commission should centre its activity around the objective of creating sustainable economic growth and high quality jobs by unleashing the potential of the EU Single Market, as the largest economic bloc worldwide.
- The EPP is ready to lead a European debate considering the adequate competences and capacities of public authorities at each administrative level, in order to facilitate the design of policies and their implementation.