



Resolution 798 (1983)¹

1983, "European Year of the small and medium-sized enterprises and craft trades"

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Recalling its [Recommendation 895 \(1980\)](#), on the future of small and medium-sized businesses in Europe, which remains pertinent today ;
2. Regretting the disappointing reply to this recommendation given by the Committee of Ministers as well as to Written Question No. 242 ([Doc. 4825](#)) ;
3. Considering the importance of small and medium-sized enterprises and craft trades (SMEs) in guaranteeing balanced economic development and market structures and in creating employment ;
4. Expressing its support for the initiative taken by the European Parliament in proclaiming 1983 "Year of the small and medium-sized enterprises and craft trades", and for the Action Programme on a Community policy for small and medium-sized enterprises and craft trades, drawn up at the opening session of the Year held on 20 and 21 January 1983 in Brussels ;
5. Stressing the importance of associating all the Council of Europe member states with this initiative ;
6. Considering that, while recognising the efforts already made in certain countries, there is still ample scope for action by governments and the competent international organisations in order to meet the specific needs of SMEs and to improve the environment in which they have to operate ;
7. Considering that the European Year of SMEs should serve to encourage initiatives to be taken at the European and national levels to promote SMEs ;
8. Expressing its firm belief that the Council of Europe can also make a significant contribution to the development of SMEs in the fields for which it is particularly well-suited, for example vocational training, legal, fiscal and social matters, as well as the promotion and protection of craftsmanship ;
9. Recalling, in this connection, its [Resolution 782 \(1982\)](#), on craftsmanship, calling for European and national action to support or promote urban and rural craftsmanship ;
10. Considering that action in favour of craft trades is a way of placing greater value on manual work in modern society and is also of positive benefit to the European cultural heritage,
11. Expresses the hope that the Committee of Ministers will reconsider the follow-up to be given to [Recommendation 895 \(1980\)](#), on the future of small and medium-sized businesses in Europe ;
12. Calls on the governments of the Council of Europe member states :
 - 12.1. to make further efforts in the course of the European Year of SMEs to improve the conditions in which SMEs can be created and operated, in particular by action in the following fields : the abolition of excessive paperwork and red tape, improvement of access to capital markets and lending facilities

1. Assembly debate on 29 April 1983 (8th Sitting) (see [Doc. 5055](#)[Doc. 5055](#), report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development). Text adopted by the Assembly on 29 April 1983 (8th Sitting).



particularly for young people to help them set up craft enterprises, the setting up of special training schemes and programmes for managers and staff, and the adaptation of fiscal, social and social security legislation to the needs of SMEs ;

12.2. to make a special effort to eliminate administrative and technical barriers to trade which place SMEs at a particular disadvantage ;

12.3. to set up or broaden existing schemes of advisory services for the counselling of SMEs in fields such as investment, business co-operation, training, research and innovation, export promotion and legal and fiscal questions ;

12.4. to promote the innovative capacity of SMEs by reinforcing their technical competence, by helping to solve financial problems, and by taking measures to improve infrastructures for consultation, training and technical research and development ;

12.5. to co-operate in the financing of employment creation by SMEs in those countries faced with the problem of returning migrant workers ;

12.6. to take further action at national level in the framework of the European Year of small and medium-sized enterprises, in consultation with the professional organisations concerned, in order to explore possibilities for fresh initiatives designed to facilitate the creation and improve the functioning of SMEs ;

12.7. to make a particular effort in the course of this year to implement the principles contained in Recommendation No. R (81) 13 of the Committee of Ministers on action in aid of certain declining craft trades in the context of craft activity ;

13. Decides to resume study of the future of small and medium-sized enterprises and craft trades in Europe, with a view to making further practical recommendations to the Committee of Ministers, directed in particular towards increased industrial co-operation between the twenty-one member states of the Council of Europe in a spirit of economic and social progress ;

14. Expresses the wish to be associated with the events organised in the framework of the European Year of the SMEs, and resolves to formulate proposals for further action as may appear appropriate ;

15. Invites its members to take advantage of the results of the European Year of the SMEs in their national parliaments.