

Question for written answer E-002103/2026
to the Commission
Rule 144
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Subject: Think Small First

‘Think Small First’ has been a guiding principle in EU policy on small businesses for quite some time. It stipulates that the implications for SMEs must be analysed and taken into account at an early stage in the legislative process, and that rules and regulations must be clear, transparent and easy to apply, even for small businesses that do not have access to specialist legal expertise.

The Commission communication entitled ‘A Simpler, Clearer and Better Enforced EU Rulebook’ (COM(2026)0380) confirms that the principle should continue to apply and that the needs of SMEs should be taken into account in the drafting of new legislation. Despite this, however, the Commission is still bringing forward highly complex legislative proposals that are often difficult to grasp, with multiple layers of secondary legislation – in the shape of implementing and delegated acts – being laid on top of basic acts that are already inscrutable.

With the above in mind:

1. How does the Commission make sure that the day-to-day concerns of SMEs are taken into account at an early stage in the legislative process?
2. In addition to the general SME test, what specific mechanisms does the Commission intend to use to prevent disproportionate burdens being placed on SMEs and to ensure that legislation is comprehensible, including for SMEs?
3. Does the Commission intend to change its approach when it comes to new legislation, so that the situation of SMEs is taken as a starting point, and any additional requirements for larger companies are justified separately?

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