



UEAPME joins pan-European campaign on risk prevention

Brussels, 28 November 2012 – UEAPME, the European craft and SME employers' organisation, has recently become an official partner of the "Healthy Workplaces Campaign 2012-2013" managed by the European Agency on Health and Safety at Work (OSHA). Crafts and SMEs support this important awareness-raising campaign, entitled "Working together for risk prevention". According to UEAPME, risk prevention is the key to healthy workplaces and developing a culture of risk prevention should be a priority and shared concern for companies and for workers. UEAPME intends to use the campaign to support the business case for healthy workplaces and to stress the need for SMEs and in particular micro-companies to implement the related legal requirements in a simple, non-burdensome way. The organisation also looks forward to working with the European Agency for Health and Safety at Work to ensure that SME specificities are taken into account for future initiatives.

Speaking in Brussels at a recent launch event organised by UEAPME, Secretary General **Andrea Benassi** said:

"We are delighted to join this campaign on risk prevention, which is the key to healthy workplaces and lies at the heart of the EU health and safety policies. There is a clear business case for healthy workplaces associated with higher productivity and competitiveness. However, this is also a more challenging task for small businesses. With their limited financial and human resources, these companies cannot benefit from economies of scale. Therefore, developing a culture of risk prevention should be a priority both for these companies and for their workers. It should be a shared attitude, concern and responsibility, in particular as risks are becoming more complex and work processes are intensifying."

"Sound guidance, adapted risk assessment methods and user-friendly tools such as the online interactive risk assessment tool (OiRA) are also needed to help SMEs carry out their duties in a simple way. In addition, strong partnerships and integrated policies are required to support small companies, especially at regional and local level. Business organisations, social partners, occupational health and safety services, labour inspectorates and more broadly public authorities all have a role to play."

"Small business entrepreneurs are socially responsible actors. In a small company, the owner-manager works on a daily basis with employees and takes a personal responsibility towards them. This should be better recognised. As partners of the 'Healthy Workplaces' campaign we look forward to cooperating with OSHA and to making sure that SME specificities are effectively taken on board in all future initiatives in the best possible way."

**** END ****

EDITORS' NOTES: UEAPME is the employers' organisation representing exclusively crafts, trades and SMEs from the EU and accession countries at European level. UEAPME has 80 member organisations covering over 12 million enterprises with 55 million employees. UEAPME is a European Social Partner. For further information: <http://www.ueapme.com/>

The pan-European Healthy Workplaces Campaign 2012–13 "Working together for risk prevention" encourages managers, workers and other stakeholders to join forces to improve safety and health. The campaign is co-ordinated by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (OSHA), with partners in the EU 27 Member States and beyond. More information: <http://www.healthy-workplaces.eu>

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Liliane Volozinskis, Director for Social Affairs and Employment Policy, Tel. +32 (0)2 230 7599, Email: l.volozinskis@ueapme.com

Helen Hoffmann, Advisor for Social Affairs, Tel. +32 (0)2 230 7599, Email: h.hoffmann@ueapme.com

Francesco Longu, Press and Communications Officer, UEAPME, Tel. +32 (0)496 520 329, Email: pressoffice@ueapme.com