



“The voice of crafts and SMEs in Europe”

EP/ENVI includes SME support in Environmental Action Programme

UEAPME welcomes the vote on the Environmental Action Programme and the positive measures in favour of SMEs

Brussels, 24 April 2013 – UEAPME, the European craft and SME employers’ organisation, welcomed to a large extent the voting of the amendments of the EAP by the European Parliament’s Environment Committee. In particular, UEAPME is satisfied that their demand for a more favourable framework for SMEs was included by the EP in the final text voted today. SMEs are the key players in the transition towards the green economy and should therefore see their role strengthened within the EAP, according to UEAPME. Adopting a “favourable framework for SMEs” within the EAP would enable them to improve their environmental impact and remain competitive on one hand. SMEs will accordingly be able to greatly contribute to the resource efficiency and low-carbon goals on the other. Diversely, UEAPME noted that Green Public Procurement is still an area where SMEs will be discouraged

Considering SMEs represent 99% of all European companies and therefore provide 67% of all jobs, they are the key players in the transition towards a resource efficient and low-carbon-economy, UEAPME favours the strengthening of their role through the EAP’s compromise amendment which was supported by all political groups. *“For UEAPME, this is a step in the right direction as the need for specific measures for SMEs are recognised in the main EU environmental programme and will therefore strengthen their role.”*, said Sustainable Development Director **Guido Lena**.

The EAP will be the main guiding programme on Environmental Policy until 2020 so UEAPME truly embraces the progress on the matter, in particular the emphasis given to the implementation of the environmental acquis. *“UEAPME welcomes the progress made today on the Environmental Action Programme at the Environment Committee of the European Parliament by including a favourable framework for SMEs. This will provide the basis for supportive measures such as awareness raising, access to finance, technical expertise and appropriate skills, targeted towards SMEs and especially micro-enterprises”*, continued Mr. Lena.

UEAPME also addressed the subject of Green Public Procurement as an area for improvement, *“Regarding the GPP, the text as approved today and in particular the target of 50% for public tenders on which the green procurement criteria will apply puts SMEs in a considerably difficult situation as it will make it harder for them to access these public tenders”*, concluded Mr. Lena.

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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 please visit <http://www.ueapme.com/> or follow [@UEAPME](https://twitter.com/UEAPME) on Twitter.

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