



"The voice of crafts and SMEs in Europe"

Heads of State urged to provide better financial instruments for a recovery

UEAPME requests adequate financial instruments, strict rules for convergence supports and more involvement of Social Partners

Brussels, 24 October 2013 – At the Tripartite Social Summit today, President Gunilla Almgren aimed to remind Heads of State of their responsibility in making an economic recovery phase possible. The results of the EU SME Barometer conducted by UEAPME, the European Craft and SME employers' organisation, were briefly presented to underline the main concerns UEAPME has in this delicate transitional period. Heads of State have to be aware that companies need additional financial instruments available to allow SMEs to finance their investments needed to start such a recovery. On the discussion about social dimension of EMU and a European solidarity mechanism, Ms. Almgren stated that they should not be used without conditionality elements and strict contractual arrangements for boosting structural reforms. Finally, UEAPME repeated its request for a stronger involvement of Social Partners in governance not only in implementing reforms, but also in the design of policies and recommendations.

In the latest [EU SME Barometer](#) presented publicly last week, the results showed that recession peaked in the first semester of 2013 and that we are now in a critical stage regarding recovery; there still are many risks regarding whether or not an up-swing will actually happen in the next few months. *"Following our SME Study, we are mainly concerned with the ability of our companies to finance the investments needed to start such a recovery,"* said UEAPME President **Gunilla Almgren**. *"Member States' governances therefore must be aware that they have to contribute so as to make a recovery possible. If private companies are not able to finance investments to create growth and jobs, there will be no such recovery. That is why I very much welcomed the financial instruments co-financed by the EU Programmes and Structural Funds in June."* Indeed, new financial instruments will have to be financed by structural funds or national means, both in the hands of Member States. Ms Almgren therefore urged Presidents Herman Van Rompuy and José Manuel Barroso to get the urgency of this message across to all Heads of State at the European Council which took place after the Tripartite Social Summit.

On the social dimension, Ms. Almgren stated that *"European solidarity mechanisms, such as Convergence and Competitiveness Instruments, should not be implemented without conditionality elements and strict contractual arrangements for boosting structural reforms,"* more employment and social policy convergences at EU level are needed.

Last but not least, President Almgren commented on the renewed social dimension of EMU, *"As stated in the [joint declaration of Social Partners on economic governance](#) and presented today, we request a stronger involvement at all adequate levels and to be better consulted and more involved in the whole process. The only way to more ownership and better commitment for implementation of reforms by social partners is to undeniably already be consulted in the design of policies and in the preparation of recommendations."*

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EDITORS' NOTES: UEAPME is the employers' organisation representing 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](#) on Twitter.

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