



"The voice of crafts and SMEs in Europe"

Tripartite Social Summit: Put competitiveness first, including in Climate Policy

Focus on growth and jobs means on private investments, implementation of structural reforms and access to finance

Brussels 23rd October 2014 – On the eve of the European Council, at the Tripartite Summit, European Social Partners met with the Heads of State, the European Union President Van Rompuy and the EU Commission President Barroso on the topic "how to stimulate investments to create more jobs". UEAPME – the European Craft and SME association – insists on the need to make best use of the growth momentum by putting SMEs' competitiveness at the forefront. A job rich recovery can only happen with strong SMEs as they mean growth and jobs. This has to mainly come from investments in the private sector. Competitiveness therefore has to be increased in order to make investments in Europe more attractive.

On this subject UEAPME offers in addition the following quotes from **Gunilla Almgren**, President

"In the current phase of a fragile recovery for SMEs, it is high time for a post crisis approach focusing on competitiveness. The new EU policies should rapidly step up efforts in providing easy and real access to finance for SMEs and encouraging Member States to fully implement structural reforms including in labour markets necessary for higher competitiveness. If these conditions are not fulfilled, there will be no increase in investments from the private sector and no additional jobs created letting the current high unemployment situation unsolved."

"Despite timid optimism from SMEs confirmed by our SME Barometer, European decision makers cannot ignore certain real downward risks, notably too tight lending conditions from banks that will hamper investments and the overall political situation could also lead to serious consequences on Europe's economy."

"Last but not least, the Heads of State should be aware that their decision towards the 2030 climate and energy targets may have a crucial impact on SMEs' competitiveness. Shifting the burden on SMEs alone, by exempting energy intensive large enterprises, would have a negative impact on SMEs' competitiveness, further postponing real job creation perspectives. Therefore, Europe's 2030 climate targets have to be defined in relation to the commitments of others at the Paris 2015 conference."

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

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Liliane Volozinskis, Social Affairs Director, Tel. +32 (0)2 230 75 99, Email: l.volozinskis@ueapme.com
Jenny Manin, Press and Communications Officer, Tel. +32 (0)496 520 329, Email: pressoffice@ueapme.com