

UEAPME Newsflash

Entrepreneurship supports social mobility

Secretary General Véronique Willems was [invited](#) to discuss the influence of taxation on social mobility and entrepreneurship at the EC's [Tax Fairness Conference](#). She highlighted that entrepreneurial spirit includes competences which empower people and foster social mobility. Therefore, taxation should incentivise the creation of jobs and new businesses by removing taxes from labour and investments and replace them with less burdensome tax bases for economic activities. SMEs expect that everyone should pay their fair share on taxes and tax collection has to be made less burdensome and less costly.

Contact: [Gerhard Huemer](#)

Social dialogue and Pillar of social rights are still priorities

The legislative part of the EU Pillar of Social Rights was the main topic debated by social partners in their Social Dialogue Committee with EC Director General Michel Servoz. On a possible revision of the Written Statement Directive, UEAPME [declared](#) its readiness to have a dialogue with counterparts. Regarding a new initiative on access to social protection for all workers, UEAPME asks for full respect of subsidiarity principles and is therefore opposed to any EU legislative initiative but supports benchmarks on access to social protection and take-up by self-employed. On the work-life Balance package, UEAPME expressed its strong concerns on the costs of the new catalogue of leaves and would like more focus on childcare. Furthermore, UEAPME addresses the insufficient impact assessment on micro-companies as they will face serious difficulties. These three issues were thoroughly deliberated beforehand in the Social Affairs Committee.

Contact: [Liliane Volozinskis](#)

SME priorities for post-2020 cohesion policy

In a [position paper](#) on the future of post-2020 cohesion policy, UEAPME puts forward the SME political priorities for the next programming period and proposes a set of policy and operational measures to facilitate SMEs' access to structural funds and financial instruments. In particular, UEAPME highlights the need for: support for coaching/mentoring actions of SME intermediary organisations, multi-stakeholder governance at all levels, strengthening of the partnership, greater flexibility with an increased role of the regions in the choice of priorities and eligible areas, as well as harmonisation and simplification of administrative and financial rules, improving communication and to open technical assistance to SME organisations.

Contact: [Hubert Delorme](#)

Suggestions to improve VAT SME Scheme for SMEs

Following a public consultation by DG TAXUD, UEAPME has put forward a [position paper](#) with joint suggestions for the review of the VAT SME Scheme. This review is part of the [VAT Action Plan](#) and has been announced for later this year by the European Commission. The SME Scheme should become mandatory for Member States. All SMEs should have to register for VAT purposes, including occasional traders. Simplified VAT obligations should also become mandatory and open to all SMEs. This is especially the case for the frequency of VAT returns – for which UEAPME recommends to do so every 12 months – and cash-accounting schemes, which are of high importance for SMEs suffering from late payments. However, in all these cases SMEs should have the right to opt out and to apply the normal VAT rules.

Contact: [Gerhard Huemer](#)

Geo-blocking: still more legal clarity needed for SMEs

Enterprise Policy Advisor Chiara Aprea attended a breakfast meeting on “Geo-blocking & SMEs”, organised by [SME Europe](#). The discussion, chaired by MEP RózaThun, focused on the need to ensure legal clarity and the possible pragmatic solutions for SMEs resulting from the regulation. Ms Aprea pointed out that the debate on ensuring legal clarity and defining the applicable law is still very relevant for SMEs. Further clarification and common understanding of the definition of passive and active sales is necessary, as this will have implications for SMEs falling under the regulation. While SMEs are committed to non-discriminations of consumers, they will also bear additional costs if provisions are not clear enough. The meeting took place after the third dialogue negotiation failed to reach an agreement, due to the discussion on whether to include non-audiovisual content protected by copyright. The negotiations will therefore continue under the Estonian Presidency.

Contact: [Chiara Aprea](#)

Financial instruments should cover different needs of SMEs

The European Entrepreneurial Regions' [annual conference](#) discussed the future of the COSME programme. At a panel on supporting access to finance, Economic Policy Director Gerhard Huemer explained the different SME needs depending on the risk of their projects. Therefore, COSME should keep its flexibility to support a wide range from classical loans to venture capital. However, a specific focus should be given to quasi equity finance like subordinated loans, which allow risk taking for innovation without losing the control over the company to external investors.

Contact: [Gerhard Huemer](#)

----- News from UEAPME Projects -----

SG Willems talks SMEs at Committee on Standards

Secretary General Véronique Willems participated in the Committee on Standards for the first time and started by introducing the importance of standards for SMEs. She also put forward her aim for the next five years of ensuring that traditional SMEs be put back at the centre of policy making, especially considering they provide day-to-day needs and ensure social cohesion. Ms Willems then focussed on the fact that standards are essential as they can open or close the markets for SMEs. It is therefore very important that SMEs know how to use standards properly and that standards be simple and easily applicable.

Contact: [Véronique Willems](#)

East Invest: SME trainings end but definite interest for more

The last round of SME trainings in the framework of the East Invest 2 project, given by experts from the EU and the Eastern Partnership countries, were organised in Armenia, Belarus and Azerbaijan. These three countries have not signed the DCFTA (Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement) but are members of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) and would like to intensify their trade relations with the EU. To support SMEs improve and explore their export potential, groups of SMEs from the agro-food sector were trained on EU trade relations, marketing, export readiness, participation in trade fairs and technical standards. Due to their success, there is a high demand for further trainings and activities, also targeting other sectors, regions, topics etc. Although proper preparation of export is a long-term exercise, the first positive developments in the export of the EaP SMEs can already be seen.

Contact: [Doris Rabetge](#)

EVENTS AHEAD:

- Research & Innovation - Shaping our Future - High-Level Group Pascal Lamy (03.07, contact [Gerhard Huemer](#))

SUBSCRIBE / UNSUBSCRIBE / PAST ISSUES

To subscribe to, unsubscribe from or read and download all the issues of the UEAPME Newsflash, please visit the following link: <http://www.ueapme.com/spip.php?rubrique14>

UEAPME Newsflash
Compiled by: [Jenny Manin](#)
Press and communications officer
Phone: +32 2 230 7599
Mobile: +32 496 520 329