

# UEAPME Newsflash

## Brainstorming on a new Start of Social Dialogue

At the [conference](#) on “Promoting and Reinforcing the EU Social dialogue”, organised by the cross-industry EU social partners, participants discussed the Quadripartite Statement signed on 27<sup>th</sup> June with the EC and the Dutch Presidency on “a New Start for Social Dialogue”. At the high-level round table with the Slovak Presidency and the EC, Secretary General Peter Faross insisted on the social partners’ role at all levels in tackling the democratic deficit and regaining citizens’ confidence in Europe. The precondition to translate words into actions is to enhance the social partners’ capacity at EU and national level. This is the first priority for Craft and SME organisations representing the real economy embedded at local level. Indeed, implementing the commitment to involve more social partners in policy making, economic governance and EU Semester requires strong and representative actors.

Contact : [Liliane Volozinskis](#)

## Online sale of tangible goods needs well-balanced solution

UEAPME published its [position paper](#) on certain aspects of contracts for online and other distance sales of tangible goods. It highlights the fact that the combination of the provisions – especially on burden of proof and remedies for the lack of conformity – will lead to an unbalanced and unjustified situation to the detriment of traders. The position therefore contains concrete amendments to the EC’s proposal. In particular, UEAPME strongly advocates to limit the burden of proof on the seller to six months. Moreover, UEAPME regrets that this proposal comes without a prior assessment or proper evaluation of the Consumer law already in place and ahead of the Fitness Check on Consumer Law. The proposal as it now will not boost e-commerce among traders and hence a well-balanced solution taking into account the needs of both sellers and consumers is necessary.

Contact: [Chiara Aprea](#)

## Insolvency: 1<sup>st</sup> consideration should be preventive measures

After a final discussion at the Legal Affairs Committee, UEAPME adopted its [position paper](#) on an efficient insolvency framework within the EU. UEAPME emphasises that preventive measures should be priority and should focus on businesses in difficulties that can be helped without having to resort to restructuring measures. Within insolvency proceedings, the primary consideration must be restructuring to help viable companies survive. Measures that offer assistance for debtors in financial difficulty are particularly crucial for small enterprises and entrepreneurs. Developing better and uniform proceedings that facilitate the assessment of companies’ viability in the event of insolvency, both nationally and at EU level, is also an appreciated objective.

Contact: [Luc Hendrickx](#)

## Regions discuss dual education at EU level

The Handwerkskammer Frankfurt Rhein-Main (DE) organised an [international conference](#) on Dual Education with the participation of three other European partner regions – New Aquitaine (FR), Emilia Romagna (IT) and Wielkopolska (PL). The aim was to explain the German dual system in a simple manner and to look for new avenues for further regional cooperation. Training Policy Director Liliane Volozinskis insisted on the role of dual education for better skills and higher employability of young people. However, small companies need support and guidance best delivered by strong intermediary bodies such as Crafts Chambers, one of the German system’s strengths. While respecting the diversity of systems, a key success factor is to put in place the right framework and governance to enhance ownership of employers. The EU political momentum for work-based learning should now be further prolonged at regional and national level.

Contact: [Liliane Volozinskis](#)

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

## Standardisation training session on Single Market and standardisation tools

Last week, SBS organised a training session for its members. The objective was to strengthen the members’ knowledge on issues related to the Single Market. The Head of Unit in charge of [SOLVIT](#) (a European Commission funded tool helping citizens or businesses when their EU rights are breached by public authorities across EU countries) generated much interest from participants. Moreover, the participants exchanged views on the Joint Initiative on Standardisation with the European Commission and on instruments to support SMEs in standardisation with CEN-CENELEC. In an effort to strengthen the relations with EFTA, a representative was invited to speak about mutual recognition. Finally, there was a presentation on the IPR Helpdesk, a tool recently developed to help SMEs as regards Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs).

Contact: [Christel Davidson](#)

## East Invest 2: SME Academy in Armenia

In the framework of the East Invest 2 project, UEAPME organises training sessions in collaboration with a local partner. The series of SME Academies on export related issues continued with the training of nearly 30 highly motivated SMEs in Yerevan (Armenia). In 2013, Armenia decided not to sign the Association Agreement with the EU but to join the Eurasian Economic Union with Russia. However, negotiations on a new overarching agreement with the EU are expected to be finalised by the end of this year. The SME Academy was followed by a seminar organised in the framework of the Public Private Dialogue activities of the East Invest 2 project.

Contact: [Doris Rabetge](#)

----- News from UEAPME Sector Fora -----

## Food Forum reviews technical and regulatory matters

At the Food Forum [meeting](#), DG SANTE explained the new upcoming guidance on safety management systems for food business operators. UEAPME participated in the third phase of the flow charts of this guidance for the production process of certain foods. The guidance will be published in all EU languages and provides feedback, especially for the Member States where the implementation still remains an obstacle. The UEAPME Code of Practice to reduce acrylamide in the frying and baking process for craft, micro and small business operators will be finalised by September and is part of the draft regulation on the reduction of acrylamide. Other topics on the agenda were the ongoing negotiations on the official controls regulation. This regulation keeps the costs under the subsidiarity system at Member States' level. The report on the refit exercise of the general food law is expected in the coming weeks.

Contact: [Birte Day](#)

### EVENTS AHEAD:

- Conference on insolvency (12.07, contact [Luc Hendrickx](#))
- Workshop on franchising (12.07, contact [Luc Hendrickx](#))
- [ACCA-Barclays-UEAPME event](#) "CMU : delivering new opportunities for SMEs through venture capital" (13.07, contact [Gerhard Huemer](#))
- European Forum on eco-innovation - Tallinn, Estonia (26-28.10, contact [Guido Lena](#))

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