

UEAPME Newsflash

SMEs ask for an alternative scenario for the Future of Europe

Ahead of Jean-Claude Juncker's speech in the European Parliament on the State of the European Union, President Ulrike Rabmer-Koller [addressed](#) the Commission President to share her [considerations](#) on the Future of Europe. She put forward the SMEs' point of view for the crucial debate initiated with the White Paper on the topic. SMEs expect to see the debate to aim for progress in improving the conditions for growth and job creation, improving fairness, and ensuring a stable political and societal environment. UEAPME is asking for an "SME scenario" to be integrated and has underlined that the EU needs to better deliver to achieve the aforementioned expectation.

Contact: [Gerhard Huemer](#)

SG Willems speaks to SMEs in Finland

At the yearly seminar for local and branch organisations of member organisation Yrittäjät (Federation of Finnish Enterprises), Secretary General Véronique Willems presented the keynote speech on SMEs and the Future of Europe. Putting forward the main challenges and achievements of the European Union, she also tackled specific issues on social and economic affairs. During the discussion with Yrittäjät representatives, administrative burdens, standardisation and SMEs, and policies for early warning and second chance were raised.

Contact: [Véronique Willems](#)

SG Willems talks bankruptcy & 2nd chance at OECD

Secretary General Véronique Willems spoke at the OECD Regional Policy Dialogue Meeting on "Bankruptcy and Second Chance Policies". The process starts with a good preparation before setting up a company. If an entrepreneur, during the life of the company, faces difficulties, he/she should be able to turn to accessible and affordable support services. The "Early Warning" mechanisms developed in the pilot project (co-funded by the COSME programme of the EU) can be an example for that. Insolvency proceedings need to be well balanced so as to avoid a snowball effect: relieving debt for the entrepreneur in distress should not create difficulties with his/her creditors. Finally, entrepreneurs have to be supported in picking up their life after bankruptcy and hence get a second chance. She concluded by saying that the OECD discussion gives hope to the unfortunate entrepreneurs who will also be able to count on support and second chance solutions.

Contact: [Véronique Willems](#)

Data Economy: need for legal certainty and equal access

Reacting to the EC communication "Building the European Data Economy", UEAPME published a [position](#) highlighting the need to ensure legal certainty and avoid monopolies of companies holding data by ensuring equal access to data for all stakeholders. Indeed, contractual freedom must be accompanied by initiatives to enhance fair competition, allowing access to data for all relevant parties, even weaker players. The adoption of model contractual clauses could serve as a guide for fair contract design. Moreover, UEAPME stated its support for the abolishment of data localisation restrictions within the EU. Hence, UEAPME welcomes the EC proposal for a regulation on a framework for the free flow of non-personal data which asks to abolish restrictions for storage or processing of non-personal data within the European Union.

Contact: [Chiara Aprea](#)

UEAPME co-signs business statement on Accessibility Act

Ahead of the vote in plenary of the IMCO report on the European Accessibility Act, UEAPME and other European organisations co-signed a [statement](#) asking the European Parliament to maintain the compromises found in the report. The report proposed a certain proportionality between ensuring accessibility and the impact of the new accessibility rules on European businesses. Therefore, UEAPME welcomes the plenary's approval to keep the exception for microenterprises as requested in the joint statement. Microenterprises should be allowed to grow at their own pace, and scale up without excessive burdens. However, UEAPME regrets the vote against the notification exception for SMEs. While UEAPME is convinced that a sensible European Accessibility Act is in the interest of all actors involved, there is fear of additional burdens on SMEs.

Contact: [Chiara Aprea](#)

Assessment of the EPBD presented to MEPs

UEAPME contacted the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) rapporteur Bendt Bendtsen and shadow rapporteurs regarding the assessment UEAPME carried out on the draft Compromise Amendments currently discussed among MEPs. UEAPME presented its scepticism about the introduction of new instruments such as the building renovation passport. Likewise, UEAPME advocates for the directive to introduce regular maintenance of heating and air-conditioning systems along with inspections.

Contact: [Rosa Solanes](#)

Undeclared Work Platform: the results deserve more visibility

After a year of intense activity, the [EU Platform tackling undeclared work](#) (UDW) organised a seminar to discuss strategies for better use of its results. UEAPME acknowledged the work done so far on the first formal objective, i.e. "enhancing cooperation between authorities and other actors", but more efforts are required on communication. The work focussed on data-mining for predicting and detecting undeclared work, benefits of a holistic approach, developing sectoral tools in the construction sector, tackling falsely declared employment, and developing bilateral agreements among countries. The platform must continue, more efforts should be put on improving awareness of stakeholders. Communication is central for enhancing collaboration between and among national authorities as well as with social partners at all levels including SME organisations.

Contact: [Liliane Volozinskis](#)

UEAPME recommendations for Post 2020 Cohesion Policy

The 10th meeting of the HLG on simplification of ESIF (European Structural and Investment Funds) focussed on recommendations for post 2020 Cohesion policy. Regional Development Senior Advisor Hubert Delorme [presented](#) UEAPME's three main [priorities](#): give more responsibility to regions, increase partnership as counterpart of flexibility, and support the SME organisations. In the exchange of views, Mr Delorme underlined the need to continue to support SMEs, to systematically apply the "Once-Only" and "Think Small First" principles, the importance of multi-level and multi-actor governance (in particular in shared management), the need of single audit, as well as the principle of continuous monitoring in two stages and the creation of alternative dispute systems to solve litigations. Despite their relevance, compulsory partnership and balanced governance in shared management provoked debates and disagreements regarding feasibility of implementation.

Contact: [Hubert Delorme](#)

EVENTS AHEAD:

- Information Day: "Legal & Financial aspects of H2020" (21.09, contact [Gerhard Huemer](#))
- Regions & Cities for Sustainable & Inclusive Growth (10-13.10, contact [Birte Day](#))
- SBS Annual Conference (10.10, contact [Christel Davidson](#))
- CoR Workshop on Work-Life Balance (11.10, contact [Arnold de Boer](#))
- 4th Eastern Partnership Business Forum (26-27.10, Tallinn, contact [Doris Rabetge](#))

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