



*"The voice of crafts and SMEs in Europe"*

## **EFSI 2.0 will give further push for investment and innovation**

*UEAPME welcomes final decision on EFSI 2.0, prompting increase of SME finance support to 10.5 billion Euros*

Brussels, 12<sup>th</sup> December – UEAPME President Ulrike Rabmer-Koller welcomes today's final approval of EFSI 2.0 at the European Parliament. The prolongation and extension of the European Fund for Strategic Investments will increase the volume of the Fund from 21 to 33.5 billion euros and aims to initiate investment of up to 500 billion euros. This initiative is especially important for the financing of investments and innovation in smaller companies and up to now, financial support for the extra 88 billion euros investment has been approved and more than 500,000 SMEs will benefit from it. With these figures, the EFSI's SME finance window ends up being the most successful one and it contributes to the current recovery of SMEs all over Europe.

*"Today's decision is a big success for SMEs in Europe", said UEAPME President Ulrike Rabmer-Koller, "SME finance is already now the most successful part of the European Fund for Strategic Investments." Indeed, it offers financial instruments in forms of loan guarantees and equity finance to benefit more than 500,000 SMEs. "With today's prolongation and extension of the funds for SME finance to 10.5 billion euros, EFSI will be able to continue its support for investments in innovation, growth and job creation", explained Ms Rabmer-Koller.*

UEAPME fully supports the work of EFSI and the European Investment Fund, which implements the SME Finance Window of EFSI. In order to increase the impact of EFSI for European SMEs even more, Ms Rabmer-Koller asked *"for a strong focus on long term finance and more risk taking to help SMEs restart investments after the crisis, to allow SMEs to invest in digitalisation and in greening their business as well as to support innovation."*

*"SMEs are confronted with difficulties to access finance from banks and with an insufficient supply of equity and alternative forms of finance", stated Ms Rabmer-Koller, "EFSI gives the right policy answers for millions of SMEs seeking external finance to invest in their competitiveness."*

Finally, President Rabmer-Koller asked *"to improve the European Investment Advisory Hubs by better integrating them with existing support structures to support SMEs with the design and implementation of investment projects."*

\*\*\*\* END \*\*\*\*

**EDITORS' NOTES:** UEAPME is the employers' organisation representing Crafts and SMEs from the EU and accession countries at European level. UEAPME has 64 member organisations covering about 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.

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