

# UEAPME Newsflash

## UEAPME discusses SME priorities with Bulgarian Presidency

In cooperation with UEAPME's new Bulgarian member "Made in Bulgaria Union", President Ulrike Rabmer-Koller and Secretary General Véronique Willems met Minister of Economy Emil Karanikolov, Deputy Minister of EU affairs Monika Panayotova and Economic Policy Committee Chair at the Parliament Petar Kanev. During the meetings, Ms Rabmer-Koller put forward SME priorities (access to finance and skills, reducing bureaucratic burden, digital transformation) and how the Bulgarian Presidency could further an SME-friendly business climate. Moreover, Ms Rabmer-Koller and MS Willems met with Made in Bulgaria Union board members to discuss their challenges and how the European Union can support them.  
Contact: [Véronique Willems](#)

## UEAPME fully supports Quality Apprenticeships

Invited by the EESC as expert for a study group, Social and Training Policy Director Liliane Volozinskis explained how relevant the Commission proposal for a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships. She emphasised the necessity of having social partners and SME organisations fully embedded in the governance at all levels so as to shape successful apprenticeships. Only in systems where employers are co-leaders in designing and managing apprenticeship can the content be qualitative and effective for all. They provide the best reply to employers' skills needs and learners' employability. Such systems are attractive and open ways for promising careers, including as entrepreneurs. Finally, Ms Volozinskis highlighted support for SMEs as a major criteria proposed by the Commission that has to be fully implemented at national level to ensure a strong continuous SME commitment to provide apprenticeship places.  
Contact: [Liliane Volozinskis](#)

## GDPR certification should respect SME needs

On behalf of both UEAPME and SBS, Enterprise Policy Director Luc Hendrickx participated in a workshop on Data Protection Certification Mechanisms and Standards. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) supports the use of certification mechanisms in demonstrating compliance with the new rules. The aim of the workshop, which is part of a study commissioned by the EC, was to collect needs and views of the industry. Mr Hendrickx stressed that the democratic nature of the European Standardisation System should be respected. He also highlighted the difficulties SMEs face in participating in ISO standards. Finally, he explained the key principles of certification for SMEs: proportionality of verification, reduced formalism, need for implementation guides (e.g. check-lists), gradual approach and self-certification.  
Contact: [Luc Hendrickx](#)

### News from UEAPME Projects

## SG Willems opens standardisation event in Greece

Secretary General Véronique Willems opened the SBS-GSEVEE [national seminar](#) in Greece to promote the involvement of SMEs in standardisation. In her speech, she gave an overview of UEAPME, its role in defending SMEs at European level, and its priorities. Furthermore, she underlined the added value of standardisation for SMEs and the need for small businesses to be involved in the process. During her visit to Greece, Ms Willems also met with the Presidents of both Greek member associations EVEC and GSEVEE.  
Contact: [Doris Rabetge](#)

### News from UEAPME Sector Fora

## Transport Forum appoints new chair & talks Mobility Package

At the Transport Forum meeting, [UETR](#) Secretary General Marco Digiola was appointed as new chair of the Forum. He is a long-term expert in the field of transportation and logistics and succeeds to former chair Lode Verkinderen. Additionally, Sectoral Policy Director Dieter Grohmann took over as coordinator from Patrizia Di Mauro. The Transport Forum members discussed a draft position paper commenting on both the Commission's current Mobility Package and European Parliament and EESC's draft reports.  
Contact: [Dieter Grohmann](#)

### EVENTS AHEAD:

- The Belt & Road Initiative (30.01, contact [Luc Hendrickx](#))
- Co-creating WEGate 2018 Seminar (31.01, contact [Doris Rabetge](#))
- UEAPME Workshop at Industry Day (22.02, [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