

# UEAPME Newsflash

## FP 9 needs stronger impact on innovation

In a [letter](#) to Commissioner Carlos Moedas, UEAPME outlined the main considerations of SMEs as regards the current discussion about the future framework programme for research and innovation (FP 9). UEAPME fully supports the objective that Europe has to do more to turn knowledge into economic activities to create growth, jobs and welfare. This means a stronger focus on innovation in all areas of the future programme. More concretely, UEAPME asks that (i) the different instruments in Pillar 2 (global challenges) rather aim for solutions and business opportunities than follow a pure scientific approach, (ii) the Commission dedicate more than 15% of the resources to Pillar 3 (European Innovation Council), and (iii) all SMEs and start-ups aiming for market creating innovation and having projects with a European dimension have access to the European Innovation Council.

Contact: [Gerhard Huemer](#)

## UEAPME priorities 2018 presented at EESC Employers' group

At the meeting of the EESC employers' group, Secretary General Véronique Willems presented UEAPME priorities for 2018. She indicated that working in a comprehensive manner on digital transformation for SMEs will be at the core of activities. Additionally, UEAPME will build on a bottom-up approach based on visits to member organisations to start developing key elements for the upcoming European elections. Finally, she reiterated the importance of specific files for SMEs, e.g. VAT, digital contracts, implementation of the EPSR and the transition to a circular economy.

Contact: [Véronique Willems](#)

## Social protection for self-employed needs careful approach

At a meeting on the social situation of self-employed in Europe, organised by Eurofound and the Social Observatory, Social Affairs Adviser Arnold de Boer expressed concerns regarding the strict focus on social legislation to enhance the security of self-employed in the digital economy. Self-employed should not be confronted with increased mandatory social security contributions without having their say. Entrepreneurs need a degree of freedom to choose their level of social protection, through tailored and affordable offers and incentives to be socially protected. As regards B2B contract, awareness of rights and obligations would help self-employed better capitalise on the opportunities and feel more confident. Entrepreneurship education is crucial to achieve this. On the upcoming Social Fairness package, UEAPME calls for a careful approach since Member States need enough room to explore various policy options.

Contact: [Arnold de Boer](#)

## SMEs need to be involved in disaster prevention

The think tank [SMEs Academy Avignon](#) organised a [European Workshop](#) in Naples (IT) on "Improving Preparedness Response to EU natural and man-made disasters". Enterprise Policy Director Luc Hendrickx welcomed the Commission's recently published communication on "Strengthening of the EU Disaster Management" as an excellent example of European added value. However, mechanisms should be foreseen to avoid that EU funds are unconditionally spent for disasters due to criminal acts, speculation or proven negligence of public authorities or individuals. He stressed that SME organisations should be involved in prevention and disaster management: they play an important role in the communication strategy and in mitigating the effects of disasters. Last but not least, he highlighted the importance of the exchange of best practices.

Contact: [Luc Hendrickx](#)

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

## Standardisation: experts exchange views and experiences

More than 40 experts participating in European and International Standardisation Technical Committees and working groups on behalf of SBS met to be updated on standardisation issues and exchange experiences. Speakers from CEN-CENELEC (European standardisation bodies) and the European Commission gave an insight into the European standardisation procedures and presented the latest developments. Additionally, a representative from the British Standards Institute discussed the implications of Brexit on standardisation with the participants.

Contact: [Doris Rabetge](#)

## Consumer Law Ready website is now online

The English version of the Consumer Law Ready [website](#) is now operational. Consumer Law Ready is the EU project run by BEUC, in cooperation with UEAPME and EUROCHAMBRES. Due to complex, multi-layer legislations, SMEs struggle to know what their rights and obligations are towards administrations, their competitors and also towards consumers. To stimulate their compliance with consumer and marketing law, the European Commission is funding this two-year project as of 2017 to develop and organise trainings on consumer rights with a focus on SMEs that offer their products or services through digital media (websites or Apps). The information pertaining to the different training modules for SME-advisers and SMEs themselves can be found on the website and will be soon available in all EU languages.

Contact: [Luc Hendrickx](#)

**EVENTS AHEAD:**

- UEAPME Workshop at Industry Day - [Registration](#) (22.02, [Gerhard Huemer](#))

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