



"The voice of crafts and SMEs in Europe"

Horizon Europe: Innovation Council needs adequate budget to deliver

SMEs welcome focus on innovation and ask for simplified access to the different actions

Brussels, 7th June 2018 – Europe's SMEs very much welcome the strong focus on innovation in today's Commission proposal of for Horizon Europe, the next framework programme for Research and Innovation. With the creation of a European Innovation Council, which supports start-ups and SMEs during the whole cycle of market creating innovation, Europe will get a fully fledged programme that aims to turn first class research into business opportunities. However, the budget allocated to this part of the programme does not match its high objectives and should be increased. Furthermore, the definition of research and innovation missions for societal challenges and industrial competitiveness has the potential to break up traditional re-search silos and to increase the impact for businesses and people in Europe by providing new solutions, products and services. However, these results will only be achieved if businesses, and especially SMEs and start-ups, that want to participate are not faced with unnecessary administrative burdens.

"UEAPME very much appreciates the European Commission's acknowledgement that spending for research and development will only lead to positive results for the society if the results are turned into innovation and business opportunities", said **UEAPME President Ulrike Rabmer-Koller** in a first reaction to today's proposal for Horizon Europe.

"Both, the mission oriented approach for applied research and the creation of a European Innovation Council, which aims to support market creating innovation, will increase the interest of innovative SMEs to participate in and to deliver on the objectives of Horizon Europe," argued Ms Rabmer-Koller. However, as regards the budget allocation, she regrets that *"the share available for the Innovation Council is lower than expected and needed to fulfil the ambitious objectives defined by the Commission itself and should be increased."*

In order to achieve the high expectations raised with this programme, Ms Rabmer-Koller asks to ensure that *"companies be able to participate without unnecessary administrative burdens and reasonable success rates to avoid frustration if qualified projects cannot be finance due to lack of finance."* Therefore, UEAPME welcomes the streamlining of Horizon Europe with national innovation programmes and innovation support provided by the European Regional Development Fund.

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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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