



“The voice of crafts and SMEs in Europe”

Single Market Programme will continue to support SMEs’ competitiveness

UEAPME asks to improve Enterprise Europe Network & ensure financing of SME participation in standardisation

Brussels, 8th June 2018 – UEAPME welcomes the support specifically dedicated to SMEs proposed by the European Commission for the next Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027. As demanded by UEAPME, the European Commission has included the non-financial part of the current COSME programme within the new Single Market Programme. The Single Market Programme ensures a continuation of support measures for SMEs. Indeed, with an increased budget of € 2 billion for SME financial instruments, which will be implemented by InvestEU, the new programme structure will contribute to the competitiveness of SMEs in Europe and will support their access to the European Single Market and to third markets. For the implementation of the programme, UEAPME would like to see a specific focus on an improvement of the Enterprise Europe Network, which should work closely with SME associations. Finally, UEAPME insists that the new programme continue to finance SME participation in standardisation.

“UEAPME is glad to see that the European Commission has integrated the current programme for the competitiveness of SMEs (COSME) in the new Single Market Programme,” said **UEAPME President Ulrike Rabmer-Koller**. *“With the support for loan guarantees and equity finance (implemented by the InvestEU programme), the Single Market Programme will increase the support for SMEs to participate and benefit from the Single Market, and to access third markets.”*

UEAPME fully supports the continuation of the Enterprise Europe Network, but asks to improve it and bring it closer to SMEs in all Member States. *“The example from my home country Austria shows that the Enterprise Europe Network is better able to answer the concrete needs of SMEs if the Network is closely linked to an SME association”*, argued Ms Rabmer-Koller.

Finally, Ms Rabmer-Koller underlined that *“UEAPME insists that the financing of SME participation in standardisation be continuous”*, and showed her surprise that *“the programme already foresees financial support for collective redress in consumer protection, even if this instrument has not yet been decided.”*

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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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