



"The voice of crafts and SMEs in Europe"

UEAPME President Rabmer-Koller: A strong Europe needs strong SMEs - and vice versa.

UEAPME General Assembly: Concrete SME policy is the order of the day

Sofia, 15th June 2018 – At the UEAPME General Assembly in Sofia today, SME representatives from all over Europe gathered. They discussed key topics for SMEs with the President of the Republic of Bulgaria Rumen Radev, amongst others their competitiveness, innovation capacity and the EU Budget post 2020. To ensure SMEs can operate in a level playing field, the UEAPME General Assembly insisted that the SME definition is still fit for purpose, emphasising the 250 headcount in the current definition should be maintained.

"Right now, with growing international challenges and competition, we need a strong Europe. Strong SMEs can contribute to a strong Europe", emphasised President Rabmer-Koller. "Thus, a concrete policy for our SMEs is the order of the day. Our companies need concrete answers on how to master the current challenges", emphasized Rabmer-Koller. "The discussion with President Radev allowed our members to address their key priorities and challenges. We need to ensure that SMEs can persist their important role as drivers of the European economy" UEAPME President Ulrike Rabmer-Koller concluded after the meeting.

In order to ensure SME specificities are adequately taken into account, the General Assembly adopted a resolution on the SME definition, stating that the definition is still fit for purpose and calling to maintain the headcount at 250. **UEAPME President Ulrike Rabmer-Koller** stated that *"The SME Definition serves its purpose well in addressing the market failures SMEs are facing (e.g. access to finance) and in creating favourable framework conditions for SMEs considering their specific size-related challenges."* UEAPME requests that the consequences of the two General Court judgments of 15 September 2016, in cases T-675/13 (Chimica) and T-587/14 (Crosfield), be examined to increase legal certainty while maintaining the simplicity of the SME definition. Finally, mid-caps (undertakings that are too large to meet the SME Definition) should not be dealt with under the current SME Definition. Ms Rabmer-Koller concluded by saying that *"If a separate definition or initiative is considered to cover mid-caps, it should be without any negative impact on the existing definition, in particular it should use exclusively new funding and no resources reserved to SMEs."*

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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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