



*"The voice of crafts and SMEs in Europe"*

## **EU Industry Strategy has to be supported by next MFF**

***President Rabmer-Koller at Industrial Roundtable: SMEs in industrial sector are crucial for Europe's success***

Brussels, 27<sup>th</sup> June 2018 – Today, UEAPME President Ulrike Rabmer-Koller participated in the second meeting of the High-level Industrial Roundtable chaired by Commission Vice-President Katainen and Commissioner Bieńkowska, who advises the European Commission on a new European Strategy for Industrial Policy. Ms Rabmer-Koller highlighted the essential recognition of the specific situation and needs of SMEs, which represent more than 99% of the manufacturing sector and 59% of its employment. The integration of SMEs in all actions of the renewed policy is crucial for the success of a new strategy. Furthermore, such a strategy needs an encompassing approach and has to be reflected in the next multiannual financial framework and integrated within the European Climate Strategy.

At the meeting, **UEAPME President Ulrike Rabmer-Koller**, representing the European SMEs, stated that *"the industrial sector plays an important role for the economic and societal development of Europe, which goes far beyond its share of the economy."* The industry is crucial for innovation, growth, employment and the overall competitiveness of Europe and UEAPME fully supports the common target to increase the share of industry to 20% of the whole European economy. In times when the dynamic of economic growth is shifting to other parts of the world, Europe needs a policy framework to improve the competitiveness its industry and make it fit for the future.

*"However, this goal can only be achieved if the strategy aims to activate SMEs' full potential"*, explained Ms Rabmer-Koller as she referred to areas for improvement like access to finance, support for digitalisation and greening, supply of qualified personel and a regulatory framework, allowing SMEs to react fast and be flexible towards a changing environment. In order to strengthen the capacity for innovation, better cooperation between traditional SMEs and start-ups should be promoted.

*"The next multiannual financial framework and its specific programmes for financial instruments, research and innovation, qualification, digitalisation, energy efficiency and regional development have to support such a new industrial strategy and have to be accessible to SMEs"*, underlined President Rabmer-Koller regarding the central role of Europe's future budget for the success of Europe's industry and economy at large.

\*\*\*\* END \*\*\*\*

**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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