

UEAPME Newsflash

Waste: interface between chemical and product legislation

UEAPME [replied](#) to the public consultation addressing the interface between chemical and product legislation. Among other things, SMEs believe that products should not be banned without a comprehensive analysis regarding the impact on waste treatment and the overall economy. Such an analysis should also verify whether or not substances to be banned can be replaced. In any case, there should always be exceptions for specific uses that are important for the society and/or the economy. Moreover, UEAPME thinks the Commission should develop end of waste criteria for all relevant waste streams, in order to prevent different interpretations of the status of a material being considered as waste or not. The end of waste criteria should be developed one after the other based on the importance of a stream and the quantities of a stream.

Contact: [Guido Lena](#)

EU Semester should better target SME challenges

As part of the yearly European Semester cycle, the Commission consulted the European Social Partners on the key employment and social challenges of the Annual Growth Survey. Despite some new political uncertainties, UEAPME agreed with the overall positive economic outlook. Due to a continuous GDP growth, employment rate is back to pre-crisis level at 6.8%, benefitting all workers and reducing poverty rate. However, the positive trends are endangered by the lack of qualified workforce, a major concern for SMEs. For further progress, national structural reforms are needed in education and training, active labour market policies and social protection systems to better cope with rapidly evolving labour markets. SMEs' competitiveness for job creation requires that reforms enshrined in the future Country Specific Recommendations be designed and implemented with the full involvement of national social partners and in particular of SME organisations.

Contact: [Liliane Volozinskis](#)

Sustainability, inclusion & competitiveness need balance

The "European Greens" invited UEAPME and other stakeholders to discuss their draft manifesto for the election to the European Parliament. The draft includes a strong plea for a sustainable and inclusive Europe, but fails to argue for strengthening the competitiveness of Europe's economy, which is the precondition to increase welfare for all. Economic Policy Director Gerhard Huemer argued that sustainable production can only be achieved with companies, allowing them to upgrade and get greener. On social inclusion, he underlined that being employed is the best way to avoid poverty, which has to be accompanied by fair wages in line with productivity and social protection measures. Finally, Mr Huemer welcomed the request for more fairness for SMEs in tax and trade policy.

Contact: [Gerhard Huemer](#)

News from UEAPME Projects

Early Warning: possibilities & challenges of machine learning

As partner of the [Early Warning Europe](#) (EWE) project, UEAPME organised the fourth Expert Network Meeting to discuss the possibilities and challenges of machine learning in insolvency prediction. Secretary General Véronique Willems presented the project to the participants and moderated the discussion on machine learning. Moreover, the Danish Business Authority (partner of EWE) introduced the [tool](#) developed for the identification of companies in distress based on publicly available big data. The model will be tested in the four target countries to support the implementation of early warning mechanisms in identifying SMEs in difficulty. To broaden the scope of best practices in early warning, [Ellisphere](#) presented the role of Business Information Providers across Europe in detecting insolvency warning signs, and the [European Central Bank](#) highlighted how the AnaCredit data model will be able to assist enterprises in assessing its credit risk.

Contact: [Kata Porganyi](#)

News from UEAPME Sector Fora

UEAPME is for change in date marking to avoid food waste

UEAPME adopted its [position](#) on date marking to reduce the level of food waste. The dates marked on a food label often read "best before" and can induce the misconception that the product must be consumed before that date indicated on the label. This leaves a rather short shelf life for certain fresh products. For SMEs and craft food business operators, this cannot be the case because food is precious and very often remains edible for several days after the marked date. UEAPME hence recommends the use of "best before end" indicating that food can still be safely consumed until the end of marked day. Furthermore, UEAPME advocates for clear information to consumers as well as targeted information to food business operators explaining how the food has to be handled. In cases where the food still remains unconsumed, companies need assistance in recycling these edibles, either by facilitating donations to social restaurants or socially oriented organisations.

Contact: [Birte Day](#)

Food: tackling the issue of Unfair Trading Practices

The European Parliament's Committee for Agriculture adopted the report on Unfair Trading Practices (UTPs) in the food supply chain of rapporteur De Castro. The initial proposal was to protect small food business suppliers, such as farmers and small companies, from unfair practices from their larger counterparts and buyers. The food sector is one of the largest areas where unfair trading practices are encountered through late payments, unilateral change of contracts and unfair conditions. As a solution to UTPs is crucial, UEAPME sees this legislative act as a step in tackling the issue of better trading practices in the food sector which should be extended to all sectors.

Contact: [Birte Day](#)

EVENTS AHEAD:

- Collaborative economy & new business models' challenges (16.10, contact [Luc Hendrickx](#))
- EREK Workshop, Vienna (22.10, contact [Guido Lena](#))
- Early Warning Europe Expert Network Meeting (24.10, contact [Kata Porganyi](#))
- Digital Innovation Hubs - Annual Event, Warsaw (27-28.11, contact [Liliane Volozinskis](#))

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