

# UEAPME Newsflash

## President Rabmer-Koller handed over the 2018 EEN award

At the [Enterprise Europe Network](#) (EEN) Award ceremony in Vienna, President Ulrike Rabmer-Koller [handed over](#) the award to Nova Innovation Ltd, a world leader in tidal turbine technology and project development. The Network is the world's largest support system for SMEs with international ambitions, a network that brings together 3000 experts from more than 600 organisations. This is why UEAPME asks for a continuation of long-term financial support to the Enterprise Europe Network via the future Single Market Programme. On its 10th anniversary, the Network organised this special event to celebrate excellence by announcing the winner among five shortlisted finalists. Nova Innovation Ltd was the SME that most successfully benefited from the EEN's services in the last decade.

Contact: [Luc Hendrickx](#)

## Dangerous substances: a real cause of work-related illnesses

In the context of the European Week for Safety and Health at Work, UEAPME [welcomed](#) the raising awareness actions related to the campaign managed by OSHA. As an official partner of the "Healthy Workplaces Campaign - Managing Dangerous Substances", UEAPME is engaged in promoting health and safety measures towards SME organisations. UEAPME hence supports its member organisations so SMEs can practically reduce the effects of exposure to carcinogenic substances. Aside from promoting continuous awareness raising at EU and national level, UEAPME supports establishing realistic and proportionate minimum standards and limit values for these substances at EU level.

Contact: [Liliane Volozinskis](#)

## Coalition expresses doubts on REACH database

UEAPME joined forces with 11 other business organisations in a coalition that issued a [position](#) on ECHA's proposal for the database foreseen in REACH. This database has become a legal requirement in the Waste Framework Directive (WFD). The organisations deemed that the database would not achieve its intended objective to support the circular economy nor would it be workable for industry, since it is based on a "one-size fits all" approach. Furthermore, it will be a source of more costs and red tape, due to the proposed additional information requested by ECHA. The coalition also suggested that making use of and optimising existing solutions (e.g. the Waste Catalogue) would be more rational than developing new approaches (i.e. the database).

Contact: [Guido Lena](#)

## UEAPME welcomes aims of the Single Market Programme

UEAPME issued a [position](#) on the proposal for the so-called Single Market Programme welcoming the aims of the proposal, such as improving the functioning of the internal market, improving the competitiveness of businesses with a focus on SMEs, increasing the level of standardisation by streamlining, and finding better synergies between different funding mechanisms for SMEs. However, UEAPME also points out that the proposal, at its current stage, is very general in nature, hence the activities carried out and the distribution of finances need to be further elaborated with the involvement of the relevant stakeholders. The Programme encompasses a wide variety of arrays, including consumer protection interests. Measures taken under the aim of "ensuring a high level of consumer protection" need to prove that they also improve the functioning of the internal market and do not increase bureaucratic burdens for enterprises.

Contact: [Luc Hendrickx](#)

## Joint request for a workable Single-Use Plastics Directive

UEAPME signed a [joint letter](#) with Eurochambres, EuroCommerce, and Independent Retail Europe prior to the European Parliament Plenary [vote](#) regarding the proposal on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment (SUP). The four organisations pleaded for a clear definition of Single-Use Plastics, pointed out that extended producers' responsibility schemes are not an appropriate tool to deal with end-user misbehaviour, adding that companies should not be made responsible for actions completely outside their control. They also expressed their concerns on the unintended consequences of an EU-wide 90% collection target for bottles and requested a science-based approach supporting alternative materials to plastics.

Contact: [Guido Lena](#)

## ECOFIS: current economic situation and future SME policy

The UEAPME ECOFIS Committee discussed the main policy messages for the upcoming political meeting of Macroeconomic Dialogue. A presentation of the latest EU SME Barometer and a discussion about the current economic situation were followed by an exchange of views on the SME policy priorities for the next European Commission and European Parliament. In addition, participants were updated by Economic Policy Director Gerhard Huemer on pending taxation files, the Multiannual Financial Framework, financial instruments and support for innovative SMEs. Finally, members were informed about the upcoming EU Industry Days 2019 and UEAPME's contribution for the next meeting of the High-Level Industrial Roundtable "Industry 2030".

Contact: [Sofia Bernardini](#)

## Alternative Dispute Resolution and impact of digitalisation

UEAPME Croatian member organisation HOK organised the [9<sup>th</sup> International Conference](#) "Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) – Cooperation of Public Administration and Judiciary with the Economic Sector" in Zagreb. Enterprise Policy Director Luc Hendrickx [spoke](#) on "SMEs - ADR in a changing environment", specifically on the digitalisation of the industry and its impact on family businesses. He insisted on the need for equal access to data for all stakeholders as well as on the need of awareness raising towards SMEs by the public authorities on cybersecurity. The digitalisation of the public services will facilitate the introduction of the "Once-Only" principle, but this must be accompanied by well-functioning and cybersecure one-stop-shops, helpdesks and websites. Finally, Mr Hendrickx stressed the importance of mediation services in the fight against late payment.

Contact: [Luc Hendrickx](#)

## Eurofound & social partners brainstorm on capacity building

As part of its work-programme 2018-2019, [Eurofound](#) is conducting a study exploring how to contribute to capacity building of social partners based on identification of barriers, capacity gaps, and solutions. During the first phase, social partners and researchers discussed the definition and objectives of capacity building and the existing diversity of activities at European and national level. It notably comprises institutional aspects (e.g. legislative capacity, collective bargaining), but also structural capacity (e.g. financial resources, expertise, analytical or negotiation skills). Social Affairs Director Liliane Volozinskis explained the importance of a sustainable and forward-looking capacity building approach. She emphasised its very relevance for SME organisations to fully play their role in social dialogue at all levels and in the European Semester process.

Contact: [Liliane Volozinskis](#)

### News from UEAPME Projects

## Early Warning: how to best communicate to entrepreneurs

UEAPME coordinated the fifth Expert Network Meeting of the [Early Warning Europe](#) project in Athens (GR). The event addressed relevant aspects of early warning mechanisms: how to raise awareness and communicate to encourage entrepreneurs in difficulties to seek support as early as possible. The discussions highlighted the fact that best practices on communication about early warning in the four target countries (Greece, Italy, Poland and Spain) are influenced by national and local characteristics, there is no 'one size fits all' approach.

Contact: [Kata Porganyi](#)

### News from UEAPME Sector Fora

## Transport: Mobility Package – on the move?

UEAPME Transport Forum Chairman Marco Digiioia and Sector Policy Director Dieter Grohmann met with DG MOVE Director Elisabeth Werner to discuss the developments of the 1<sup>st</sup> mobility package in view of the recent activities in the European Parliament TRAN Committee. Specific topics discussed were social and market aspects, road haulage market, shortage of drivers in Europe, digitalisation in road transport and charging schemes of heavy goods vehicles. The mobility package 1 is expected to pass the European Parliament plenary vote still this year and therefore ahead of the 2019 European elections.

Contact: [Dieter Grohmann](#)

## Need for a holistic approach for new technology in transport

In a meeting with MEP Claudia Schmidt, UEAPME Transport Forum Chairman Marco Digiioia stressed the fact that, on one side, new technology must be introduced and enforced in road transportation. E-freight papers should be standard as soon as possible to avoid bureaucratic burden. Language issues can also be solved easily with means of digitalisation. On the other hand, road transport must take place on a level playing field. New technology and the adaptation has its costs, which are therefore proportionally larger for SMEs. Additionally, there is a demand for a neutral digital platform which does not depend on or is driven by certain preoperatory software and technology in order to avoid non-compatibility issues as known in other fields.

Contact: [Dieter Grohmann](#)

### EVENTS AHEAD:

- Digital Innovation Hubs - Annual Event, Warsaw (27-28.11, contact [Liliane Volozinskis](#))
- Training SMEs in Consumer Law (27.11, contact [Luc Hendrickx](#))

### SUBSCRIBE / UNSUBSCRIBE / PAST ISSUES

To subscribe to, unsubscribe from or read and download all the issues of the UEAPME Newsflash, please visit the following link: <http://www.ueapme.com/spip.php?rubrique14>

**UEAPME Newsflash**  
Compiled by: [Jenny Manin](#)  
Press and communications officer  
Phone: +32 2 230 7599  
Mobile: +32 496 520 329