

## About UEAPME

UEAPME is the employers' organisation representing the interests of European crafts, trades and SMEs at EU level. UEAPME is a recognised European Social Partner. It is a non-profit seeking and non-partisan organisation.

As the European SME umbrella organisation, UEAPME incorporates 81 member organisations consisting of national cross-sectorial SME federations, European branch federations and other associate members, which support the SME family.

UEAPME represents more than 11 million enterprises, which employ around 50 million people across Europe.

The main objectives of UEAPME, as the voice of crafts, trades and SMEs in Europe include:

## UEAPME's aims

- Monitoring the EU policy and legislative process and keeping its members informed on all matters of European Union policy of relevance to crafts, trades and SMEs;
- Representing and promoting the interests, needs and opinions of its member organisations to the EU institutions and other international organisations. UEAPME is currently represented in more than 40 consultative committees set up by the European institutions, including several High Level Committees and Working Groups;
- Supporting its members academically, technically and legally on all areas of EU policy;
- Supporting the idea of European integration and contributing to European co-operation.

## SMEs in Europe

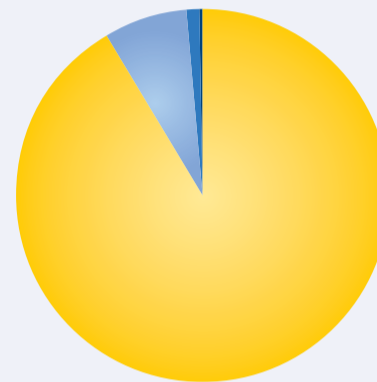
According to the official EU definition, SMEs are classified into three main categories: micro-enterprises employing fewer than 10 persons, small enterprises employing fewer than 50 persons, and medium-sized enterprises employing fewer than 250 persons. The official definition also foresees ceilings for the annual turnover and/or balance sheet.

## Definition of SMEs according to size and turnout

Enterprise category	Headcount: Annual Work Unit (AWU)	Annual turnover	Annual balance sheet total
Medium-sized	<250	≤E50 million (in 1996 E40 million)	≤E43 million (in 1996 E27 million)
Small	<50	≤E10 million (in 1996 E7 million)	≤E10 million (in 1996 E5 million)
Micro	<10	≤E2 million (previously not defined)	≤E2 million (previously not defined)

SMEs can also be classified as "autonomous" enterprises, "partner" enterprises or "linked" enterprises, according to their structure in terms of capital, voting rights and dominant influence over other SMEs.

There are around 23 million SMEs in the EU, representing more than 99% of all businesses. It is estimated that they provide around 75 million jobs in the EU, accounting for two thirds of total employment and creating almost 60% of the EU's economic output. SMEs are the 'backbone' of Europe's economy – being key generators of growth and jobs and crucial to driving innovation in the EU.



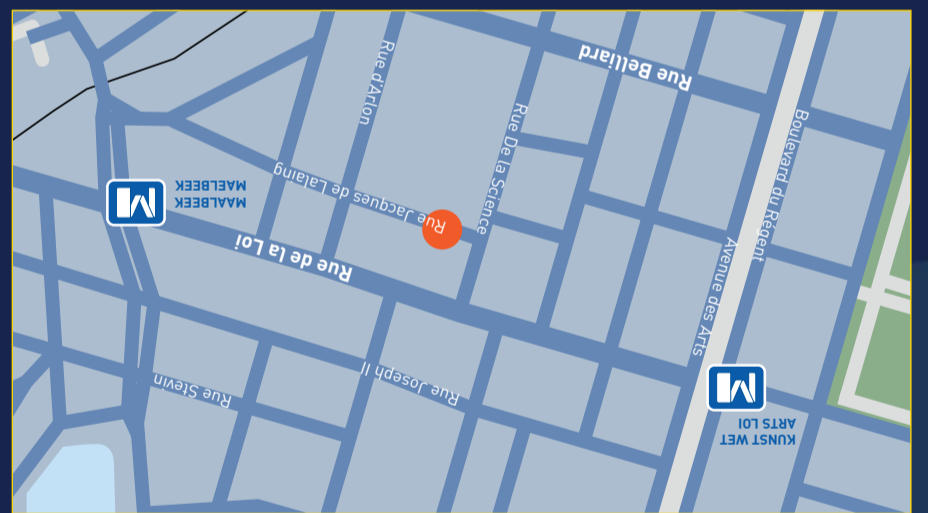
## Breakdown of European enterprises by size class

- micro 91,5%
- small 7,2%
- medium 1,1%
- big 0,2%

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The Voice of SMEs in Europe

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION of CRAFT, SMALL and MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES



For more information about our activities, please visit our website at [www.ueapme.com](http://www.ueapme.com) or contact us at the following address:

**UEAPME**  
Maison de l'Economie Européenne  
Rue Jacques de Lalaing, 4  
B - 1040 Brussels  
Tel.: +32 2 230 75 99  
Fax: +32 2 230 78 61  
E-mail: [info@ueapme.com](mailto:info@ueapme.com)

