



“The voice of SMEs in Europe”

Press Statement

FOR IMMEDIATE ISSUE

Green paper on labour law sets the tone for debate at EU and national level

Brussels, 22 November 2006. UEAPME, the European SME employers’ organisation, took note of the Green Paper “Modernising labour law to meet the challenges of the 21st century” presented by the European Commission today (Wednesday). The latest version of the long-awaited and highly controversial paper presents a fine-tuned and more balanced analysis of the key policy challenges ahead, and can be the starting point of a useful debate.

“The text of the Green Paper is now based on a reasonable approach towards employment issues in Europe, for instance as far hybrid and new forms of work are concerned”, said **Liliane Volozinskis**, UEAPME Director for Social Affairs and Employment Policy. “It also specifically deals with SME-related questions and with the way labour law affects small businesses in Europe. The wording on self-employment, for instance, is now much more positive and recognises the importance of encouraging entrepreneurship in Europe”, she continued.

According to UEAPME, the consultation must be seen as an integrating part of the debate on flexicurity in Europe (1), at a time when European social partners are already working on their own analysis of the key challenges facing Europe’s labour markets (2). UEAPME and its members will now focus on the 14 questions put forward in the document, with a view to providing a small business angle to the debate.

Ms Volozinskis stressed the need to focus discussions at national level, in addition to the EU-wide dimension. “While the European Commission’s initiative may be of added value, the crucial decisions on how to modernise labour law in Europe will be taken at Member State level. We look forward to reading the contributions of other stakeholders, and we hope that this debate will start a real modernisation process to tackle the employment challenges in Europe”, she concluded.

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EDITORS’ NOTE:

(1) UEAPME’s views on flexicurity: http://www.ueapme.com/docs/press_releases/pr_2006/061020_tripartite_social_summit.pdf

(2) Read more: http://www.ueapme.com/docs/various/2006/061030_employers_analysis_labour_mkts.pdf

UEAPME is the employer’s organisation representing crafts, trades and SMEs from the EU and accession countries at European level. UEAPME has 81 member organisations, which represent crafts and SMEs across Europe, covering over 11 million enterprises with 50 million employees. UEAPME is a European Social Partner.

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