



“The voice of crafts and SMEs in Europe”

Social Partners have to tackle competitiveness for growth and jobs

Investing in growth and jobs will only occur if Europe becomes competitive and attractive for private investors

Brussels, 19th March 2015 – Today, the troika of the Heads of State, the President of the European Council and of the European Commission along with the European Social Partners met at the Spring Tripartite Social Summit to discuss how social partners can contribute to investments in growth and jobs. UEAPME President Gunilla Almgren insisted on the role social partners should play in improving competitiveness, which is the only way to trigger the necessary investments for Europe to boost growth and jobs. For SMEs, a major competitiveness component is a new Small Business Act which should be the yardstick for an effective SME policy.

At the Tripartite Social Summit and directly following the High-Level Conference on a new start for Social Dialogue, UEAPME President **Gunilla Almgren** recalled that *“the European economy, and in particular the private sector, suffers from low investments level which has a direct impact on low growth and high unemployment levels”*.

Furthermore, she insisted that *“Improving competitiveness in all of its aspects to make investing in Europe more attractive has to be seen as a precondition for growth and jobs. Tackling the current crisis and aiming to create growth and jobs require actions and measures going beyond only labour markets and macroeconomic aspects”*.

Ms Almgren also added that *“Social Partners should work together to increase competitiveness, as this is the best way to foster investment and create additional jobs and growth in the private sector. They should get a common understanding and should cover all aspects of competitiveness for tangible results in growth and jobs such as skills needs, efficient administration and public services, access to finance, innovation and a better business environment”*.

Finally, in this context, Ms Almgren recalled the need for a new Small Business Act, which should become the yardstick for an effective SME policy included in the European Semester.

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EDITORS' NOTES: UEAPME is the employers' organisation representing crafts, trades and SMEs from the EU and accession countries at European level. UEAPME has 80 member organisations covering over 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.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Gerhard Huemer, Economic Policy Director, Tel. +32 (0)2 230 7599, Email: g.huemer@ueapme.com
Liliane Volozinskis, Social Affairs Director, Tel. +32 (0)2 230 7599, Email: l.volozinskis@ueapme.com
Jenny Manin, Press and Communications Officer, Tel. +32 (0)496 520 329, Email: pressoffice@ueapme.com