

# UEAPME Newsflash

## Start-ups & growth are linked to a real Single Market

UEAPME published its [position paper](#) on the Start-up Initiative highlighting that a genuine Single Market for SMEs entails a market for Start-ups and growth. One cannot and should not separate these two sides of the same coin. Financing start-ups and growth is a bottle neck which calls for improvement. The regulatory environment has a significant impact on business start-ups, the smart regulation agenda is therefore also relevant for them. It is crucial that policy makers see and take note of the need for an all-encompassing SME policy at local, regional, national and EU-level. Finally, UEAPME stresses the importance of information and support of start-ups by the representative SME organisations.

Contact: [Luc Hendrickx](#)

## Services passport: UEAPME is sceptical about the proposal

UEAPME issued its [position](#) on the proposal to introduce a Services Passport. According to UEAPME, the regulatory framework for the free movement of services should be further developed in order to create a level playing field and to reduce unnecessary administrative burdens and obstacles for enterprises. However, as the European Commission's plans are still very vague at this stage, it is nearly impossible to give a final assessment on the proposal. In addition, UEAPME has serious doubts about the added value of the proposed services passport. Indeed, there is a great risk of cross-border fraud and disruption of the effectiveness of controls undertaken by labour inspectorates.

Contact : [Luc Hendrickx](#)

## VAT Action Plan: SMEs expect simplification

Economic Policy Director Gerhard Huemer was invited to speak at a [hearing](#) of the European Parliament Economic and Monetary Committee on the [VAT Action Plan](#). He explained that the current VAT systems are one of the most important barriers for SMEs to do cross-border business and rank in top five of the most burdensome regulations for SMEs. Therefore, UEAPME expects simplification for businesses and more efforts to fight fraud. More specifically, he supported the extension of the One-Stop-Shop model to all e-commerce activities if easy access for SMEs to applicable VAT rates is granted. Furthermore, he explained the concerns of SMEs related to reversed charge systems and rejected a temporary application by some Member States because of high administrative burdens and legal uncertainty for SMEs. Finally, he argued against more national flexibility as regards reduced VAT rates and exemptions, because of negative effects on the single market.

Contact: [Gerhard Huemer](#)

## SMEs need support on the Data Protection Regulation

The [Article 29 Working Party](#) (i.e. the European group of Data Protection Authorities) organised a meeting with stakeholders to collect their operational feedback on the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Enterprise Policy Director Luc Hendrickx urged the working party to concentrate on easily understandable and clear guidelines for the SMEs. He also underlined that the GDPR is not an employment measure and should not lead to unnecessary costs. It should also enable the owner/manager to fulfil the tasks of the Data Protection Officer. Thanks to UEAPME's interventions, the working party concluded that SMEs need specific support and guidance.

Contact: [Luc Hendrickx](#)

## Improving the relation between banks and SMEs

Alongside other business organisations, UEAPME met with the European Banking Associations (EBF, ESBG, EACB and EMF) to exchange first ideas on how to improve the feedback banks are providing to SMEs when a credit application has been declined. Economic Policy Director Gerhard Huemer underlined that this feedback has to be understood by SMEs to allow for improvement. In addition, SMEs should be better informed of what banks expect from them when applying for a loan and should have the possibility to improve their application during the evaluation process. However, Mr Huemer agreed with the banking associations that there is no need for a European one-size fits all solution, but national approaches adapted to different banking and institutional structures at national level are necessary. Finally, he pled for a Commission initiative to kick-start national processes of elaborated solutions jointly agreed upon by banks and SMEs and also suggested that the Commission should monitor national progress on the subject.

Contact: [Gerhard Huemer](#)

----- News from UEAPME Sector Fora -----

## CNA Alimentare & CGAD visit UEAPME

In the context of a visit to Brussels to deepen their knowledge of the European Institutions and law making process, a delegation from CNA Alimentare (Italy) and CGAD (France) visited UEAPME. Advisor Birte Day gave an overview of UEAPME's priorities and structure as well as a more detailed picture of the Food Forum. The discussion went from European issues to the national situations regarding the daily work of food business operators and the differences encountered from country to country.

Contact: [Birte Day](#)

## In Memoriam Lorenzo Accardo

UEAPME deeply regrets to announce that [Lorenzo Accardo](#) passed away in August. With nearly 10 years of experience in the consulting and project sector, he started working at NORMAPME in 2008. In 2013, he joined UEAPME as Project Manager and Financial and Administrative Officer. He did not like to be in the spotlight but, through his efficient management of projects, he significantly contributed to UEAPME's success and was one of the driving forces behind the creation of SBS. Despite his progressing illness he did not give up and continued to work until recently. We will remember him as a great, humble, caring colleague, always optimistic with a passion for life. Being a great communicator, his presence was never unnoticed. Condolences can be sent to [Lucia Zucchi](#) who will forward them to the family. Donations can be made to Fight Against Cancer (IBAN BE53 0688 9242 2053, BIC GKCCBEBB – Lorenzo Accardo)

### EVENTS AHEAD:

- UEAPME/UNIEP seminar "Building an innovative and sustainable future for the painting sector" (16.09, contact [Patrizia Di Mauro](#))
- SBS Annual conference (19.10, contact [Tessa Delville](#))
- European Forum on eco-innovation - Tallinn, Estonia (26-28.10, contact [Guido Lena](#))
- East Invest 2 Annual Conference - Yerevan, Armenia (27.10, contact [Doris Rabetge](#))

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