

UEAPME Newsflash

EFSI SME Window just in time to support SME recovery

The EFSI Steering Board invited stakeholders, the EIB and EIF chairmen and the EFSI Managing Director to a [consultation meeting](#) about the [implementation](#) of EFSI and its future [strategic orientations](#). Economic Policy Director Gerhard Huemer highlighted the big success of the SME finance window in the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) and welcomed the decision to shift another €500 million from infrastructure investments to SME finance. This measure comes just in time to support the current recovery of SMEs in Europe. Furthermore, he underlined the importance of risk financing for innovation and investments in SMEs. This should not only be supported in form of venture capital, but also via sub-ordinated loans. Finally, Mr Huemer raised concerns that, due to frontloading of COSME and H2020 resources, the programmes will not be able to run until the end of 2019. On this point, the EIF representatives and EFSI Board Members reassured the attendees that additional money will be made available. Contact: [Gerhard Huemer](#)

Energy Efficiency labelling: SMEs need less burdens & obligations

Since the plenary of the European Parliament adopted the compromise amendments on the revision of the energy labelling in July, trilogue negotiations on this topic have started. To channel these negotiations into a more SME friendly direction, UEAPME already [expressed](#) its concerns in July about the current legislative proposal to the responsible Representatives of five Member States. UEAPME hereby aims to decrease administrative burden, which the new product database may cause, and also reduce the general swift of obligations to dealers. Contact: [Guido Lena](#)

New bank regulation should facilitate SME finance

At an event in the EP, organised by the [Kangaroo Group](#), Economic Policy Director Gerhard Huemer discussed the upcoming review of the Capital Requirement Regulation for Banks with Klaus Wiedner (DG FISMA Head of Unit), MEP Othmar Karas (Rapporteur) and representatives from the banking sector. The current banking regulations (Basel III) puts unjustified burdens on smaller local banks specifically and makes it difficult for them to lend to small companies. Therefore, Mr Huemer requested a continuation and extension of the SME Supporting Factor, more proportionate rules for smaller banks mainly active on deposit and lending business and a legal framework which deviates from Basel for local credit institutions like credit unions and cooperatives. Finally, he welcomed the fact that the Basel Committee recognised the lower risks of lending to real businesses, but warned once again against additional burdens for small banks. Contact: [Gerhard Huemer](#)

Pillar of Social Rights has to balance economic and social dimensions

In the context of ongoing national and European consultations, UEAPME experts met for further brainstorming on the European Pillar of Social Rights. For Crafts and SMEs, the Pillar requires a better integration of economic and social dimensions in order to tackle the real challenges Europe is facing. These challenges include lack of growth and jobs and of competitiveness in a globalised economy which have an impact on inequalities and poverty. Boosting employment and job creation (through SME competitiveness and entrepreneurship) and enhancing workforce employability are the necessary conditions for higher social cohesion and inclusion. Instead of addressing gaps in the EU social legislation, as announced by the EC, the Pillar should better contribute to improving competitiveness, productivity and jobs in order to finance social expenditures, as well as establishing a sound welfare system. Contact: [Liliane Volozinskis](#)

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

Food Forum adopts code of practice on reduction of acrylamide

UEAPME Food Forum published its [position](#) on the draft proposal for an EC regulation on the reduction of acrylamide in food. Certain baking and frying processes affect food in such a way that the crust turns to a darker colour (sign of acrylamide, i.e. potential cancerological dangerous substance). Food business operators were hence invited to provide indicative levels in form of the [code of practice](#) (CoP) for their type of enterprises. UEAPME submitted such a code of practice (CoP) and a position paper highlighting that small food business operators should not be burdened with additional scientific tests but that they can follow the simple guide (CoP) to help them understand the recommended practices regarding baking/cooking. To further emphasise the position, UEAPME also published a [joint position paper](#) with HOTREC. Contact: [Birte Day](#)

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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