

# UEAPME Newsflash

## First Training Committee chaired by Vice-President Wollseifer

Vice-President Hans Peter Wollseifer (ZDH President) chaired his first meeting of the Vocational education and Training (VET) Committee. His first task was to adopt the committee's work priorities 2017 that have a strong focus on apprenticeship as well as on Higher VET for more relevant skills for Crafts and SMEs. The committee was listed as part of the [VET week](#) activities and a lively exchange took place on the New Skills Agenda for Europe with EC Director General Michel Servoz (Employment). The Chair and members welcomed the priorities of the Agenda (notably to promote VET as a first choice), discussed the migrants' integration on the labour market through VET support, but challenged the skills guarantee, the revision of EQF and EUROPASS Framework. They also adopted the UEAPME [position](#) on the Skills Guarantee and are currently finalising the one on the Skills Agenda.

Contact: [Liliane Volozinskis](#)

## MED focusses on conditions for investments and on EFSI

At the technical meeting of the Macroeconomic Dialogue, DG ECFIN presented its current analysis of the economic situation, which is very much in line with the [UEAPME SME Barometer](#) outcome. According to the EC, ongoing deleveraging, access to finance and increasing uncertainties (BREXIT, backlash in globalisation) are the reasons for low private investments. In the discussion with social partners, Economic Policy Director Gerhard Huemer warned against wage increases above productivity and insisted on improving competitiveness to attract investments. As regards the Stability and Growth Pact, Mr Huemer asked for the inbuilt flexibility to be used, but rejected the questioning of the Pact as such as it would create further uncertainty for private investors. He also welcomed the proposed EFSI increase and prolongation (including the SME Finance Window from €5bn to €10.5bn) as a timely, well targeted measure to help SMEs finance their investments.

Contact: [Gerhard Huemer](#)

## EMCO and social partners discuss their involvement in EU Semester

In the context of the EU efforts to strengthen social dialogue and in line with the joint statement "[A new start for social dialogue](#)", the Employment Committee (EMCO) organised a first thematic review of social partner's involvement in the EU Semester at national level. The 28 Member States were invited to explain the way they involve social partners in the semester process (National Reforms Programme and Country Specific Recommendations). Employers and trade unions expressed their views and debated the different practices and requested improvements. UEAPME participated with 6 representatives (AT, FR, IT, LU, PL and SI). One of the main conclusions of the event was that, despite obvious diversity, a solution-oriented social dialogue and a renewed tripartite partnership are essential for more ownership of reforms all over Europe. Furthermore, in many Member States this will not be a reality without further support for social partners' capacity building.

Contact: [Liliane Volozinskis](#)

## Secretary General Peter Faross hands over prizes at Romanian Top 2015

In the presence of the Romanian Prime Minister and Ministers and CNIPMMR President Florin Jianu, Secretary General Peter Faross addressed the "National Top of Private Enterprises from Romania 2015" – the most important yearly event of member organisation CNIPMMR. Mr Faross presented the results of the [UEAPME SME Barometer](#) and underlined that the Romanian GDP growth rate for 2016 is more than double the EU growth rate. Furthermore, he handed out the prizes for the most innovative entrepreneurs and reminded all entrepreneurs present to make better use of the EFSI fund possibilities. Indeed, both Malta and Romania have the lowest absorption rates and this needs to change.

Contact: [Peter Faross](#)

### News from UEAPME Projects

## East Invest 2 holds its Annual Conference in Yerevan

In the framework of EU4Business week in Yerevan (Armenia), Enterprise Policy Director Luc Hendrickx spoke at the Annual Conference of the East Invest 2 (EI2) project. The [event](#) was opened by Armenian Minister Vache Gabrielyan (International Economic Integration & reforms and gathered representatives from [EBRD](#), [OECD](#), [ITC](#), 100+ participants from 6 Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries and 30 EU Business Support Organisations (BSOs). It was an opportunity to get insight into the EI2 project, seek cooperation with other business support organisations, share best practices, as well as launch the work on a regional position with recommendations by the EaP BSOs to the EaP policy makers. Participants identified the challenges, opportunities and possible recommendations on the topics 'access to markets', 'access to finance' and 'skills & innovation' to be summarised in the draft position to be presented at next year Business Forum (2017 EU-EaP summit).

Contact: [Doris Rabetge](#)

### News from UEAPME Sector Fora

## Transport: an EU interoperable tolling system is needed

The Transport Forum published its [position paper](#) on the review of the directive and decision on the European Electronic Toll Service (EETS) by highlighting the importance of establishing an interoperable tolling system at EU level. Indeed, this

system would greatly facilitate the payments for using roads. The Forum mainly supports the separation of accounts between toll chargers and EETS providers, and the definition of toll domains in compliance with the needs of the local market. A higher level of harmonisation of the tolled framework is also needed as well as the application of the EETS to passenger cars. The Forum members support the idea to set up an EU mechanism responsible for the exchange of data on toll offenders, meanwhile stressing the binding role of the European Commission with regard to scrutinising the tolling system at EU level.

Contact: [Patrizia Di Mauro](#)

#### EVENTS AHEAD:

- Co-operative banks & innovation in SME Financing (09.11, contact [Gerhard Huemer](#)) - ([Registration](#))
- UEAPME-HOTREC event on "How to make SMEs drivers for job creation in the EU: the example of the tourism sector" (30.11, contact [Chiara Aprea](#))

#### SUBSCRIBE / UNSUBSCRIBE / PAST ISSUES

To subscribe to, unsubscribe from or read and download all the issues of the UEAPME Newsflash, please visit the following link: <http://www.ueapme.com/spip.php?rubrique14>

*UEAPME Newsflash*  
Compiled by: [Jenny Manin](#)  
Press and communications officer  
Phone: +32 2 230 7599  
Mobile: +32 496 520 329