

# UEAPME Newsflash

## Macroeconomic Dialogue: no need for interventionism

Secretary General Andrea Benassi spoke at a meeting of the Macroeconomic Dialogue in Brussels on 12 February. Despite the growth slowdown, high inflation rates and the worldwide financial crisis caused by the crumbling US sub-prime market, Europe's economic foundations remain solid and do not require the kind of interventionism that we are seeing on the other side of the Atlantic, said Mr Benassi. According to UEAPME, stabilisation is more important than activism at this stage. Mr Benassi encouraged the ECB to pursue its policy to limit inflation and provide sufficient liquidity, and stressed that UEAPME sees no need for an immediate interest rates cut. On the wage debate, UEAPME fully supported the arguments made in favour of wage moderation by other business organisations and by the ECB, against trade unions' calls for salary increases.

➤ [Read more](#) or contact [Gerhard Huemer](#)

## Employment Strategy: flexicurity must be prioritised

Secretary General Andrea Benassi spoke today at a high level conference on "Job flexibility, not job insecurity" in Turin, Italy. The event was organised by the Ministry for Employment and Social Affairs, and featured speakers from the Italian Government, the European Social Partners and the European Institutions. Mr Benassi's session focused on the European Employment Strategy. He acknowledged the success of the EES since its adoption in 1997 as a unique tool for a better coordination and convergence of national employment policies. Despite the undeniable progress made since 1997, when unemployment was as high as 10% on average in the EU12, he stressed that much remains to be done at national level for better ownership and implementation of the strategy. Moreover, further reforms at national level must be undertaken through the application of the flexicurity principles and a higher involvement of national social partners.

➤ [Read more](#) or contact [Liliane Volozinskis](#)

## EESC study group to analyse developments in retail

Enterprise Policy Director Luc Hendrickx recently participated to the first meeting of a study group of the European Economic and Social Committee on the developments in the retail industry in Europe and their impact on suppliers and consumers. The study group, chaired by Mr Claudio Cappellini from UEAPME's Italian member CNA, is part of the EESC's Consultative Commission on Industrial Change (CCMI). The group will concentrate in particular on the recent merger trends in the large scale retail sector, which has major consequences for other companies operating in the sector and their employees, as well as for suppliers and consumers. In addition, the European Parliament adopted last week a [written declaration](#) calling upon the Commission to investigate and remedy the abuse of power by large supermarkets operating in the EU.

➤ Comments on the issue can be sent to [Luc Hendrickx](#)

## PIN-SME to organise event at next CeBIT

The Pan European ICT & eBusiness Network for SMEs (PIN-SME) will organise a conference on "ICT SMEs – better, faster, more competitive" in Hannover, Germany, on 5 March. The event will take place at CeBIT, the world's largest ICT fair. Speakers will include Rudolf Strohmeier, Head of Cabinet for Commissioner Viviane Reding, Andreas Naonin of SAP, Johann Steszgal, PIN-SME President, and Secretary General Andrea Benassi. Topics for discussion will include better regulation, i.e. how to provide SMEs with a burden-free legislative framework; ICT standardisation, its benefits and opportunities for small players, and eSkills, the need to increase the ICT profession's attractiveness in Europe.

➤ [Read more](#) or contact [Sebastiano Toffaletti](#)

## From Andrea Benassi's agenda: MEPs, APCM, DG ENTR

Secretary General Andrea Benassi met this week with two leading MEPs, travelled to Paris for a meeting organised by APCM and exchanged views on some key dossiers with DG Enterprise's SME Director and Deputy SME Envoy Maive Rute.

**12/02:** Mr Benassi met **G rard Onesta** MEP, Vice-President of the European Parliament, to discuss the "Citizens' Agora", which will gather representatives from civil society organisations at the European Parliament in Brussels on 12-13 June. UEAPME and its members will actively participate in this important initiative.

**12/02:** On the same day, the Secretary General met **Othmar Karas** MEP, President of the Parliament's SME Intergroup. The meeting highlighted the common views of UEAPME and the Intergroup on the need for a workable Small Business Act.

**12/02:** Mr Benassi then joined representatives from the French Government, the European Commission and UEAPME members APCM, CGPME, UPA, ZDH and Confartigianato in Paris to discuss the upcoming **European Crafts Conference** that will take place in Tours, France, on 30-31 October. Participants agreed on the need to link the event with the upcoming Small Business Act priorities and outlined a first set of topics for discussion. Further information on this event will follow.

**13/02:** Back in Brussels, Mr Benassi met Ms **Maive Rute**, Head of the SME Directorate at the EC's DG Enterprise and Deputy SME Envoy. Items for discussion included standardisation, environmental rules and the "Erasmus for apprentices".

➤ For questions on Mr Benassi's agenda, please contact the [UEAPME Secretariat](#)

**FORWARD PLANNING****KEY EVENTS AHEAD:**

- EU Social Partners meeting with the French Social Dialogue Committee (19/02, contact [Liliane Volozinskis](#))
- Business-University Forum (Brussels, 28-29/02, contact [Liliane Volozinskis](#))
- Public audience on the EU strategy to deliver market access for European companies (Brussels, 04/03, contact [Luc Hendrickx](#))
- Conference on Migrant Entrepreneurship – Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship (Brussels, 05/03, contact [Luc Hendrickx](#))
- PIN-SME Experts Forum at CeBIT (Hannover, 05/03, contact [Sebastiano Toffaletti](#))
- European Commission conference on the European Private Company (Brussels, 10/03, contact [Maria Cimaglia](#))

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