

UEAPME Newsflash

UEAPME elects its representatives for Europe's SMEs



Ulrike Rabmer-Koller was unanimously [re-elected](#) for a second two-year mandate as President of UEAPME. In her acceptance speech, Ms Rabmer-Koller stated that she would continue her efforts to strengthen the organisation as the “Voice of SMEs in Europe” and put forward her policy priorities (better regulation, access to finance, skills shortage, and digitalisation). Furthermore, the General Assembly elected representatives for its Board of Directors and Administrative Council from the member organisations. Ahead of the election, Ms Rabmer-Koller welcomed Commission Vice-President Frans Timmermans at the General Assembly to discuss the progress made so far with better regulation and reducing administrative burdens for SMEs.

Contact: [Gerhard Huemer](#)

Consumer law: the impact on SMEs needs to be considered

Secretary General Véronique Willems attended the kick-off event on the New Deal for Consumers, organised at the initiative of Commissioner Věra Jourová. The meeting gathered the Trio Presidency, key MEPs, and business and consumer stakeholders to discuss how to ensure European consumers get the best protection within this new deal with Commissioner Jourová. The Consumer Package is one of EC President Junckers' priorities for next year and the Commission is looking into coming up with a proposal on collective redress and the injunction directive. Ms Willems stressed the need to take into account the cumulative effects of consumer laws SMEs must comply with. Alongside this, she emphasised the need for better training regarding consumer law within the New Deal for Consumers.

Contact: [Luc Hendrickx](#)

EU Semester paves the way for more growth and jobs

At a joint meeting of the Employment Committee and Social Protection Committee, Social Affairs Director Liliane Volozinskis supported the Annual Growth Survey 2018 focused on investments, structural reforms and fiscal responsibility as the right basis for a sustainable recovery and welcomed the new objective to tackle tax avoidance. Regarding the Joint Employment Report, she insisted on the major role of SMEs and self-employed for job creation and reducing further unemployment. On wage increase, a crucial driver for internal demand, she recalled the need to adjust it to productivity which varies across countries, regions and sectors and to respect social partners' autonomy. She also put forward skills shortages and the need to invest in VET and in modernising social protection systems to adequately cover new forms of work. She concluded with the need for capacity building of SME organisations to fully play their role in the EU semester process.

Contact: [Liliane Volozinskis](#)

Social partners deepen work on ESF support for capacity building

The EU social partners met in Rome for their second seminar on the use of the European Social Fund (ESF) to support social dialogue through capacity building at national level. Based on an exchange of good practices illustrated by examples from Slovenia, Malta, Romania, Italy and Croatia, they showed how the ESF support to capacity building is crucial for SME organisations as social partners. They also covered the implementation of the partnership principle with the Italian and Maltese examples. The involvement of social partners in the management and use of ESF is an obligation, but insufficiently respected by many public authorities. Social Affairs Director Liliane Volozinskis concluded that fully applying the partnership principle in the management of these funds is the first step in guaranteeing efficiency of structural funds. But first, social partners need adequate support for skills and human resources.

Contact: [Liliane Volozinskis](#)

e-ID card: principles and guidance for online platforms

In the framework of the European Commission's initiative on e-ID interoperability for online platforms, DG Connect organised a workshop on principles and guidance on ID Interoperability. The discussion included the feasibility of the draft principles for the platforms. Enterprise policy Director Luc Hendrickx stressed the need to inform and raise awareness among SMEs on the e-ID's possibilities for their business and about the different available features.

Contact: [Luc Hendrickx](#)

CETA & SMEs: how to profit and avoid problems

Enterprise Policy Director Luc Hendrickx and Advisor Chiara Aprea met the Mission of Canada to the EU to discuss how enterprises on both sides will profit from CETA and whether there are specific common concerns for European and Canadian SMEs on how to work in the framework of agreement. The discussion revolved around the implementation of CETA and how to help Canadian companies investing in the EU as well as on supporting European investments in Canada. The meeting was also an occasion to present and informally discuss the activities and mission of both parties. UEAPME and the Mission of Canada will remain in contact and explore ways of collaboration.

Contact: [Chiara Aprea](#)

Företagarna Board visits Brussels and UEAPME

Secretary General Véronique Willems welcomed the Företagarna Board members during their two-day visit to UEAPME and the European Institutions. Ms Willems gave an overview of UEAPME's role, functioning and activities and spoke about regulatory monitoring, advocacy and lobbying, and networking with experts from other SME organisations. Moreover, she covered the priorities for the upcoming year, i.e. VAT package, new deal for consumers, social protection of self-employed, greening of the economy, skills development and legal migration.

Contact: [Véronique Willems](#)

----- *News from UEAPME Projects* -----

Vice-President Almgren re-elected as SBS President

At the SBS General Assembly, Vice-President Gunilla Almgren was re-elected as President of SBS. Standards and the standardisation world is crucial for SMEs and their business and hence for UEAPME members. Moreover, several UEAPME member organisations were elected in the process of the Board renewal.

Contact: [Véronique Willems](#)

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