

UEAPME Newsflash

Work-Life Balance will create high burdens and costs for SMEs

UEAPME [showed](#) disappointment regarding [EU Pillar of Social Rights Package](#). The main focus should be on better implementation and enforcement of the existing rules, instead of creating additional rights. UEAPME disagrees with repealing the social partner agreement on parental leave and strongly warns against the additional cost for companies created by the proposed compulsory payment for parental, paternity and care leave. Furthermore, UEAPME welcomes the consultation on access to social protection, but recalls its request to the EC to launch a mapping exercise about the current situation of self-employed. Finally, UEAPME appreciates the commitments to strengthen social dialogue, but it is not enough to build capacity of SME organisation from a bottom-up approach.

Contact: [Liliane Volozinskis](#)

SG Véronique Willems highlights UEAPME priorities at EESC

At the EESC Employers' Group, Secretary General Véronique Willems outlined the [priorities](#) in the different policy areas UEAPME is involved in: economic and fiscal, enterprise and legal, social, and sustainable development. Moreover, Ms Willems asked to better take into account the business reality of micro-companies as well as of traditional and family SMEs. For this, she recalled the importance of the 'Think Small First' principle being applied in all policy. She also highlighted that the aim is to attain a holistic approach for traditional sectors and for a new economy. Finally, she put forward the need for a horizontal SME policy taking into account the specificities of small businesses.

Contact: [Véronique Willems](#)

Transparent and simpler rules needed for coordination of social security

UEAPME published its [position](#) on the EC's proposal to revise legislation on the coordination of social security. UEAPME recognises the complexity of the topic and welcomes the modernisation of rules for mobility of the European workforce, such as the rights of economically inactive EU mobile citizens, frontier, and posted workers. The proposed requirement of three months of employment in a second Member State before a person receives entitlements in that country is fair, and ensures a link with that labour market. Some proposals however will be difficult to implement and require further clarification or impact assessments. Extending the minimum period in which workers can take unemployment benefits across borders is not a good idea, since this hampers the ability of Member States to apply (re)integration measures to job seekers. A sensible and careful approach is necessary in order to support a positive perception of mobility in the Internal Market.

Contact: [Arnold de Boer](#)

SMEs need support for developing trade with third countries

Secretary General Véronique Willems participated in the [conference](#) "EU Strategy for developing trade with third countries", to voice the key issues for SMEs and what they need from the EU Trade Strategy to support their internationalisation. The challenges SMEs encounter are access to information, contacts with foreign authorities and supporting initiatives at different levels. Currently, the EU has different databases and information portals but these should be gathered in one place. UEAPME advocates to set up a "train the trainer program" for representatives of business organisations, in order to maximise results and reach out to a much higher number of SMEs, informing them about the available instruments and financing opportunities. European measures should not lead to duplication of existing national instruments and supporting services.

Contact: [Luc Hendrickx](#)

REACH & SMEs: ECHA and UEAPME continue to raise awareness

Furthering the long fruitful cooperation, UEAPME and ECHA have once again joined forces to raise awareness on the 2018 third REACH registration deadline, mainly impacting SMEs. To inform as many SMEs as possible of their obligations under REACH in this case, UEAPME contacted ECHA in order to develop a short but precise warning instrument. As a result ECHA wrote an article, [translated](#) into all EU languages, aiming at: (i) making SMEs aware that they might be subject to the upcoming third registration, and (ii) providing them with reference points at EU and national level to ask for more information. This article is intended to be used and disseminated in various ways by UEAPME members to their networks so as to reach their own SMEs.

Contact: [Guido Lena](#)

SMEs on board for Labour Market Integration of migrants

At the "Networking Building Conference" of the Labour-INT project in Turin, Social Affairs Director Liliane Volozinskis recalled that labour market integration of migrants is not only an economic necessity but is also needed for the stability of our societies. UEAPME is a partner of the ETUC-led [project](#) promoting the labour market integration of asylum seekers and refugees. Ms Volozinskis called for a multi-stakeholder approach and strong partnerships at all levels between actors. She explained that small businesses are most active at local level, integrating refugees either through on-the-job training, apprenticeship or work, and strongly supported by their intermediary organisations. She also mentioned migrants' potential to become entrepreneurs. However, an important remaining challenge is the initial skills assessment, which is at the heart of the project, and crucial in determining the right training and integration path of migrants.

Contact: [Liliane Volozinskis](#)

eID card: challenges, principles and guidance for online platforms

In the framework of the European Commission's initiative on eID interoperability for online platforms, DG Connect organised a [workshop](#) on principles and guidance. In the panel on the users' perspective, Enterprise Policy Director Luc Hendrickx stressed that access to the information on the eID card should be gradual and limited to what is strictly necessary for the service. As it is about sensitive information, privacy is also one of the main concerns for entrepreneurs and has to be fully guaranteed. Last but not least, Mr Hendrickx insisted that all public services should remain accessible without eID and advocated for awareness raising, especially on security issues.

Contact: [Luc Hendrickx](#)

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

Construction Forum discusses energy and services e-card

The Construction Forum, chaired for the first time by Philip van Nieuwenhuizen (MKB), discussed the current key dossiers affecting the construction sector. DG Growth representatives presented the European services e-card and its supposed effects. The Forum members voiced several concerns regarding its non-suitability to eliminate the real obstacles SMEs are facing in the cross-border trade of services. Furthermore, DG Energy representatives gave an update on the revised Energy Efficiency and Energy Performance of Buildings (EPBD) Directives. The Construction Forum will shortly approve the position paper on EPBD, which will then be dealt with by the Sustainable Development Committee. Other topics discussed at the meeting were the current developments in standardisation, posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services and the circular economy package.

Contact: [EBC](#)

EVENTS AHEAD:

- Brussels Economic Forum (01.06, contact [Gerhard Huemer](#)) - [Registration](#)
- AECM: Global Conference on Guarantee Institutions for SME Financing (02.06, Madrid, contact [Gerhard Huemer](#)) [Registration](#)
- East Invest 2 Annual Conference (21.06, Kyiv, contact [Luc Hendrickx](#))

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