



### HEADLINES

#### **EU/Small Business Act: 'Mr/Ms SME' appointed at Member State level**

On 25 May 2011, Vice President Antonio Tajani announced the creation of a new EU network of national "Ms and Mr SMEs" to advocate for small businesses. The main aim of these 'national SME envoys' will be to ensure that EU legislation is applied correctly on SMEs and to ensure an SME friendly policy environment on national, regional and local level. Their mission furthermore implies a continuous dialogue with SME representative organisations as well as the EU's dedicated SME Envoy, Mr Daniel Calleja Crespo, on whom the new national position is based. Aiming to exchange best practices and to develop an SME friendly environment throughout Europe, all the Member States but two have nominated a National SME Envoy. Slovenia's and Belgium's Mr or Ms SME has yet to be appointed.

The instalment of the national SME envoys followed the nomination by European Commission Vice President Antonio Tajani of EU SME Envoy Mr Daniel Calleja Crespo in February 2011. Mr Crespo's main task is to ensure that EU policies are in accordance with the "Think Small First" principle and to maintain a constant dialogue between the European Commission and SMEs and their representative organisations. Lastly, he functions as a guardian of proper implementation of the Small Business Act for Europe. The SME envoys held their first official meeting in Gödöllő.

#### **ESBA opinion:**

**ESBA welcomes the newly inaugurated national SME envoys. The European Union can be a faraway place for the small business owner in the Member State. Having a single point of contact in the person of a Mr or Ms SME has the potential to become an important step towards bringing the actual businesses closer to the EU. It is now up to the new SME envoys, in cooperation with Mr. Calleja Crespo, to create and uphold a strong dialogue with SMEs and their representatives, national and European, to achieve a common goal of a highly improved regulatory environment for SMEs.**

For the list of national SME Envoys, please click [here](#)

To read the SBA review, please click [here](#)

To read ESBA's position regarding the SBA review, please click [here](#)

### IN BRIEFS

#### **EU/SMEs: Hungarian Presidency says SMEs need a political support**

On 25 May 2011, Zoltán Cséfalvay, the Hungarian Minister of State for Strategy of the Ministry of National Economy, advocated for more political support to SMEs at the "Mobilising SMEs for the Future of Europe" Conference. During his speech, Mr Cséfalvay stipulated that the Hungarian Presidency has taken actions in order to ameliorate the environment in which small businesses operate, mainly by alleviating taxes and by reducing administrative burden on SMEs. Further actions are needed regarding SME access to the Internal Market and access to financial resources.

To learn more about the Hungarian Presidency, please click [here](#)

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### **EU/Road Transport: Trialogue meeting shows progress**

On 24 May 2011, Vice-President of the European Commission in charge of transport Sliim Kallas welcomed the progress achieved by the European Parliament and the Council in trialogue meeting in order to reach agreement on the review of the so-called Eurovignette directive, enabling Member States to put a charge on the external cost of air and noise pollution created by heavy goods vehicles. The Vice-President welcomed the Parliament and Council's progress on the sensitive subject of how the revenues generated by this policy are to be used. A vote in second reading in the European Parliament scheduled for June 2011.

To learn more about the directive, please click [here](#)

### **EU/Intellectual Property Rights: Prototype launched**

On 24 May 2011, the European Commission announced the launch of an archetype concerning Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). The internet evolution implies the need for modernisation of the operational environment of IPR, thus the modernisation of EU Law. The Commission plans to take action in the field of patents, trademarks, geographical indications, multi-territorial copyright licencing, digital libraries, IPR violations and IPR enforcement by customs. The final objective is to create an environment where it is attractive to SMEs to invest in innovation.

To read more about Intellectual Property Rights please click [here](#)

### **EU/ Funding: Commission and London Stock Exchange collaborate on SME Funding**

On 19 May 2011, the European Commission's dedicated SME Envoy, Mr. Daniel Calleja Crespo, announced the Commission's cooperation with the London Stock Exchange on SME funding, during the European Business Summit. The Cooperation between the European Commission and the London Stock Exchange focuses mainly on formulating solutions to access to funding for SMEs. Following these statements, SME representatives (envoys) from all 27 Member States have met in Budapest to discuss matters further at a conference entitled "Mobilising SMEs for the Future of Europe."

To learn more about the London Stock Exchange please click [here](#)

## **PUBLICATIONS**

### **EU/ESI: Economic Sentiment Indicator (ESI) remains at the same level in the EU but decreases in the euro area**

On 27 May 2011, the European Commission's Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs issued a Business and Consumer Survey regarding the economic sentiment in the EU and the euro area. The document contains tables and figures for confidence indicators in multiple areas such as services and industries. Overall, the economic sentiment was balanced in the EU however it decreased in the euro area due to decreasing confidence in all business fields.

To access the publication please click [here](#)

## CONSULTATIONS

### NEW:

#### **Public Consultation: Small Business, Big World-A new partnership to help SMEs seize global opportunities**

*Closes: 12 July 2011*

The European Commission has launched an online consultation which aims to support SMEs that are willing to have trade relations with non EU countries. In particular, the Commission plans to offer guidance to entrepreneurs during the process of making their business operate at an international level.

To access the online consultation, please click [here](#)

#### **Consultation on the EU corporate governance framework**

*Closes: 22 July 2011*

The European Commission, following the adoption of a Green Paper has launched a consultation on relevant areas to corporate governance. These areas are the boards of directors, shareholders engagement and the “comply or explain” approach.

To access the publication, please click [here](#)

#### **Public Consultation on Cloud Computing**

*Closes: 31 August 2011*

The European Commission launched a public consultation aiming at gathering opinions and recommendations from interested stakeholders, regarding the use of cloud computing. The feedback will be used for the shaping a European Cloud Computing Strategy under the scope of the Digital Agenda.

To access the consultation, please click [here](#)

### CURRENT:

#### **Consultation on the 'Green Paper on the future of VAT- Towards a simpler, more robust and efficient VAT system'**

*Closes: 31 May 2011*

The European Commission has launched a consultation which aims to assess the current VAT system at the European and national level. The intention is to transform it into a more efficient and transparent system that would respond to the needs of the European single market.

To access the online consultation, please click [here](#)

### ONGOING:

#### **Online consultation on administrative burdens reduction**

*Ongoing*

The European Commission has launched an online consultation on the reduction of administrative burdens. Inspired by examples of Best Practice in Belgium and the Netherlands, the consultation invites entrepreneurs to identify unnecessary red tape in order to help the EU improve the quality of its legislation. The consultation is part of the Action Programme to reduce admin burdens on businesses in the EU by 25% in 2012.

To access this consultation, please click [here](#)

## COMING UP

### EU Institutions: Important dates

31 May 2011 – Competitiveness Council  
1 June 2011 - Weekly meeting of the College of Commissioners  
6 to 9 June 2011 – European Parliament Committee Meetings (Strasbourg)  
6 to 9 June 2011 – European Parliament Plenary Session (Strasbourg)  
7 June 2011 - Weekly meeting of the College of Commissioners  
14 to 16 June 2011 – European Parliament Committee Meetings (Brussels)  
16 and 17 June 2011 – Digital Agenda Assembly

### Other SME-related events

#### **ICT Finance Market-Place Venture Academy and Investment Forum for SMEs 15 – 16 June 2011**

##### **Brussels, Belgium**

The Venture Academy is a one day training event where experienced coaches will provide help to ICT SMEs to improve their access to finance. The day after, the investment forum will offer SMEs the opportunity to present their businesses in front of different corporate investors. An award for the best investor presentation will be given by Commissioner Kroes during the Digital Agenda Assembly.

To learn more about this event, please click [here](#)

#### **Digital Agenda Assembly**

##### **16 – 17 June 2011**

##### **Brussels, Belgium**

The first Digital Agenda Assembly will take place in Brussels on 16 and 17 June 2011. This assembly, organised by the European Commission will bring around the table industry representatives, researchers, representatives from Member States government, EU institutions and NGOs. The two days will be organised around workshops on specific topics.

To learn more about this event, please click [here](#)

#### **ESBA Annual Event**

##### **23 June 2011, 8.30 am – 17.00 pm**

##### **Brussels, Belgium**

The ESBA annual event will take place at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Brussels on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June. This event will take place in two parts. The morning session will deal with the question, should all SMEs take their business online? The second half will consist of a panel debate involving Commission, Parliament, business representatives and other stakeholders and will tackle the issue of 'how to improve communication from EU to the actual small business'.