



HEADLINES

EU/ State of the Union: Commission President Barroso presents ‘Decisive Deal for Europe’

On 12 September 2012, President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso presented his State of the Union address to the European Parliament in plenary session. Mr Barroso called for a ‘Decisive deal for Europe’, reiterating that investments in areas such as research, innovation, green growth, education, and energy efficiency are crucial to boost EU competitiveness. He acknowledged that 4 million jobs are created annually by start-ups and pointed out that the EU is not optimising its potential to foster growth and employment. President Barroso stated it is important to provide a better environment for businesses and investors through a new industrial policy, a simplified taxation environment and a reform of the banking sector. The latter should make banks redirect their focus on financing businesses, in particular SMEs.

ESBA Opinion

The European Small Business Alliance can only support the claims made by Mr Barroso. However, these phrases have become standard issue within EU political rhetoric and are not sufficiently backed up by actions. SMEs are suffering the most from the crisis and the current economic instability. At the same time, this part of the economy represents 99.8% of all companies, is responsible for 67% of private sector employment and creates 85% of new jobs. The EU rightfully looks at small businesses to propel us out of the crisis. However, if we want any progress to be made in restoring the EU’s competitiveness, it is imperative that the EU starts delivering on the objectives as set out during this year’s state of the union and the many before.

To read the State of the Union address by the President of the Commission, please click [here](#)

To learn more on the proposals for a single supervisory mechanism for banks in the euro area, please click [here](#)

EU/ Business Climate: EU legislation prevents small firms from thinking big

On 28 August 2012, the EU-funded project “European Firms in a Global Economy”, issued a report stating that “large companies contribute disproportionately more to a country's economic performance than smaller ones”. The report identifies barriers to trade and research and development; making small business grow less than their large counterparts, and making them less productive and less profitable. The report finds a clear relation between both export costs and obstacles to innovation on the one hand and firm growth on the other. Furthermore, the report lists issues such as taxation, regulation and enforcement as obstacles to growth having a disproportionate effect on small business. A large market is noted as imperative for a business to expect returns on innovation expenditure. Export opportunities thereby relate directly to business investment. Next to this, high investment costs hamper a firm's growth as well, indicating that R&D expenditure is crucial for business expansion.

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ESBA Opinion

ESBA President David Caro said: “There is a paradox to be found here. We all agree that SMEs are the ‘backbone of the European economy’ and we look to our small companies to get us out of the crisis, yet large businesses still contribute disproportionately more to our economy. Unfortunately, this reaffirms the message that we have been voicing for years: cut down on the regulatory and administrative burden for SMEs, improve access to and cost of finance and allow small businesses to prosper, innovate and grow. The one-size-fits-all approach does not work; small businesses cannot deal with the same rules and regulations as their large counterparts, which is why we need to fully implement the *Think Small First* principle once and for all. Less than one percent of EU businesses are large companies. The EU institutions have a responsibility to maximize the growth potential of the remaining 99 percent of European businesses, in order to become truly competitive”.

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

To read an ESBA article from 31 August 2012, written as a response to the report and published by Public Service Europe, please click [here](#)

IN BRIEF

EU/ Research and Innovation: Parliament Committees to vote on opinion reports Horizon 2020

On 17-20 September 2012, Horizon 2020, the new Framework Programme for Research and Innovation of the European Union, will be put to a vote in the European Parliamentary Committees responsible for delivering their opinion to the lead Parliamentary Committee on Industry, Research and Energy. Horizon 2020, with an envisaged budget of 87.7 Billion euro, will determine the EU’s research agenda for the period 2014-2020. Horizon 2020 contains a commitment to ensure strong participation of SMEs, including enhancing the participation of micro-enterprises. The fall of 2012 will be decisive for the shape and form of the programme, especially regarding the participation of SMEs.

To read more about the EU’s future programme for research and innovation, please click [here](#)

EU/ Taxation: Debate still raging on the Financial Transaction Tax

On 7 September 2012, in an opinion piece on the Parliament Magazine website, Member of the European Parliament Ms Nessa Childers (S&D, IE) reopened the debate on the controversial Financial Transaction Tax (FTT). She pointed to the millions of jobs that were lost across Europe in the aftermath of the financial crisis and argued that the FTT would provide Member States with the revenues needed to finance social expenditures. Opponents to the FTT are worried that it FTT could lead to a drain of liquidity from the real economy. In June 2012, the ECOFIN Council could not reach common agreement on the establishment of the FTT, making enhanced cooperation the only option to go ahead for the Member States in favour.

To read the article written by Ms Nessa Childers MEP, please click [here](#)

For more information on the Financial Transaction Tax, please click [here](#)

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EU/ Taxation: Ruling of the Court of Justice of the European Union on the VAT Directive

On 6 September 2012, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) provided clarification on how the VAT Directive needs to be interpreted. The ruling involved a case where a Hungarian company did not charge VAT on the goods it sold as it was under the impression that the goods would be exported. The Hungarian fiscal authorities stated that the company was liable for VAT as the goods in the end were not brought over the border. The CJEU ruled that the company in this case acted “in good faith”, not being liable to pay VAT; however, it left the scrutiny of the principle of acting in good faith to the Member States.

To read the full text of the judgment, please click [here](#)

To read Directive 2006/112/EC on the Common System of Value Added Tax, please click [here](#)

EU/ Education and Skills: Commission pushes for better recognition of ‘non-formal’ and ‘informal’ learning

On 5 September 2012, the European Commission issued a proposal for a Council Recommendation to encourage Member States to better recognise skills and competences acquired outside of the formal educational system. The Recommendation aims at improving people’s employability by pushing for the establishment, at national level, of credible systems for the validation of informal learning experience. Only four Member States currently apply such systems. The proposal will now be debated in the Council and is expected to be submitted to a vote in the Education and Youth Council on 23/24 November 2012.

To learn more about the Commission’s Proposal for a Council Recommendation, please click [here](#)

EU/ REACH: Stakeholders invited to give to help identify hazardous chemicals

On 3 September 2012, the European Chemicals Agency launched a public consultation on 54 chemicals which are considered to be classified as Substances of Very High Concern due to their potential carcinogenic, mutagenic and/or repro-toxic nature. Once identified as such and in accordance with the REACH Regulation, these substances are meant to be phased out and substituted by a safer alternative. The European Commission is currently reviewing the REACH Regulation including its impact on innovation and its compliance cost for businesses. Identification of substances of high concern is a precarious issue, especially as phasing out of certain chemicals can have considerable effect on business’ production processes.

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

For more information on REACH, please click [here](#)

EU/ Transportation: Commission disappointed with the implementation of a European-wide electronic toll payment system

On 30 August 2012, the European Commission issued a Communication taking stock of the progresses made by Member States in the deployment of a common European Electronic Toll Service (EETS), foreseen by Directive 2004/52/EC. The creation of a single electronic device, available under a single service contract, was deemed to facilitate cross-border travelling for lorry drivers and more generally all road users. The Communication mentions poor results in the implementation of the Directive, highlighting a persisting lack of interoperability despite the implementation deadline

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coming closer. The Commission criticises in particular the lack of cooperation between toll chargers and EETS providers.

To read the Commission's Communication, please click [here](#)

To access Directive 2004/52/EC on the Interoperability of Electronic Road Toll Systems in the Community, please click [here](#)

EU/ Gender Equality: Draft proposal imposes mandatory gender balance in corporate boards

On 3 September 2012, the Financial Times reported that, according to an early draft proposal, the European Commission will propose that companies in the EU will be required to have 40% of their non-executive director board seats filled by women. Vice-President of the European Commission Vivianne Reding, responsible for this dossier, already stated earlier that evidence shows more women in the boardroom leads to more objective assessments and better quality decisions. While the European Parliament earlier spoke out in favour of quotas, many Member States, as well as business organisations, emphasise that self-regulation and codes of conduct are more appropriate since quotas do not take into account differences between sectors and businesses.

To access the European Commission's webpage on Gender Equality, please click [here](#)

PUBLICATIONS

EU/ Eurostat: EU27 current account surplus of 4.6 Billion euro

On 7 September 2012, Eurostat published the first current account estimate for the second quarter of 2012. A surplus of 4.6 Billion euro was recorded, compared to a deficit of 37.1 billion euro during the same period in 2011.

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

EU/ Commission: Policy brief on youth entrepreneurship

On 6 September 2012, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion released a document it has produced in cooperation with the OECD on youth entrepreneurship. The report highlights how European youth has been affected by the rise in unemployment, and proposes policies to foster youth entrepreneurship as part of the solution for youth unemployment. These policies include developing entrepreneurial skills and improving financial support.

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

EU/ ECB: ECB staff macroeconomic projections for the euro area

On 6 September 2012, the ECB published projections for macroeconomic indicators in the euro area for the coming year. The ECB notes these projections are subject to a high level of uncertainty because economic developments depend on a range of policy decisions that still have to be taken. Nonetheless, GDP growth is expected to be between -0.6% and -0.2% in 2012 and between -0.4% and 1.4% in 2013.

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

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EU/ Eurostat: Euro area GDP down by 0.2% and EU27 GDP down by 0.1%

On 6 September 2012, Eurostat published its second estimate of GDP growth during the second quarter of 2012. In the euro area and in the EU as a whole, GDP decreased by 0.2% and 0.1%, respectively. Compared to the second quarter of last year, GDP decreased by 0.5% in the euro area and 0.3% in EU27.

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

OECD: Global Economic Outlook- Interim Assessment

On 6 September 2012, the OECD published its September interim assessment for the Global Economic Outlook due in December. It notes the European recession is dragging down global growth, the euro area sovereign debt crisis continuing to present the biggest risk to the global economy.

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

EU/ Eurostat: European exports 2000-2007: direct and indirect effects on employment and labour income in the EU27 and euro area

On 5 September 2012, Eurostat published an analysis of developments in the euro area and in the EU as a whole regarding employment in the export sector. Among others, the analysis concludes that two-thirds of jobs in export are in manufacturing. It also states that in the export sector, euro area workers have a higher income than workers from the EU27, and this difference has been increasing since 2003.

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

EU/ Eurostat: Volume of retail trade down by 0.2% in euro area

On 5 September 2012, Eurostat published monthly statistics on retail volume in the euro area. In July of this year, retail volume decreased by 0.2% compared to June's volume. Compared to July of 2011, sales fell by 1.7%. In the EU as a whole, July's retail volume was equal to June's.

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

EU/ Eurostat: Industrial producer prices up by 0.4% in both euro area and EU27

On 4 September 2012, Eurostat published its monthly statistics on the industrial producer price index. In July 2012, industrial producer prices increased by 0.4% in both the euro area and the EU27. In June 2012, prices declined by 0.5% and 0.8%, in the euro area and EU27 respectively.

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

EU/ Eurostat: Euro area inflation estimated at 2.6%

On 31 August 2012, Eurostat published its flash estimate of inflation in the euro area for August 2012. Annual inflation was estimated to be 2.6%, up from 2.4% in July.

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

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EU/ Eurostat: Euro area unemployment rate at 11.3%

On 31 August 2012, Eurostat published the seasonally-adjusted unemployment figures for July 2012 in both the euro area and the EU as a whole. Euro area unemployment was at 11.3%, while unemployment in EU27 was at 10.4% , both rates have remained stable compared to June 2012 .

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

EU/ EIF: Working Paper 2012/15 – "The importance of leasing for SME finance"

On 22 August 2012, the EIF published a working paper on leasing as an alternative form of debt financing for SMEs. The paper describes how SMEs traditionally have difficulty in accessing credit and reviews three case studies to explain in what ways SME leasing could be supported.

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

CONSULTATIONS

NEW:

Consultation on Improving Network and Information Security in the EU

Closes: 15 October 2012

Network and Information Security (NIS) incidents are on the rise and have serious consequences for society and the economy when affecting critical sectors such as finance, health, energy and transport, and erode public trust for activities online in general. This public consultation is addressed to all actors affected by NIS in the EU (governments, businesses, citizens) with a view to identifying strategic actions. It also contributes to the Commission's impact assessment regarding possible future risk management and security breach reporting requirements that would affect businesses in particular.

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

Consultation on State aid (de minimis Regulation 1998/2006)

Closes: 18 October 2012

The Commission adopted Regulation (EC) 1998/2006 on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the Treaty (now Articles 107 and 108 TFEU) to *de minimis* aid, applicable since 1 January 2007. This Regulation set the *de minimis* ceiling at EUR 200 000 per undertaking granted over any period of three fiscal years, and thus considerably simplified the granting of small amounts of support. It will expire on 31 December 2013 and will therefore be reviewed.

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

Consultation on potential substances of very high concern

Closes: 18 October 2012

The European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) launched a public consultation on 54 potential substances of very high concern (SVHC) on Monday 3 September. The chemicals, nominated by the European

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Commission and member states, would face restrictions or a possible ban in the future. They are thought to be carcinogenic, mutagenic or toxic for reproduction, and one substance was nominated on the basis of having endocrine disrupting properties.

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

Consultation on regulatory regimes for trans-Atlantic trade

Closes: 31 October 2012

EU and US senior officials are asking for concrete suggestions on how to make regulatory regimes more compatible across the Atlantic. Most businesses want to limit regulatory costs and red tape. Reducing non-tariff and behind the border barriers is therefore a key issue in trans-Atlantic trade and two public consultations have previously been conducted on this subject. The High Level Working Group on Jobs and Growth is looking into these issues and would welcome more detailed input.

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

Consultation on charging the use of road infrastructure

Closes: 4 November 2012

This public consultation is part of the preparatory work of the European Commission's services to explore the scope for possible new European Commission initiatives on road charging along the lines outlined in the 2011 White Paper on Transport.

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

Consultation on tax problems linked to cross-border venture capital investment

Closes: 5 November 2012

The European Commission has launched this public consultation in order to collect factual evidence of the direct tax problems that arise when venture capital is invested across borders. In this respect the Commission needs not only to collect factual evidence of the problems, but also to find out why the problems arose, the Member States involved, the amount of money involved and the costs to investors, Member States and the EU's SMEs.

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

Consultation on "Opening up Education - a proposal for a European Initiative to enhance education and skills development through new technologies"

Closes: 13 November 2012

The objective of the consultation is to explore the perceived need - mainly but not exclusively among education and training stakeholders - for EU action to promote the use of Open Educational Resources (OER) and of ICT in education.

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

Consultation on the future of transnational company agreements

Closes: 31 December 2012

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With its new staff working document "Transnational company agreements: realising the potential of social dialogue", the Commission takes stock of the TCA expert group's work and outlines options for further steps. The Commission now invites all interested parties to share their views on the challenges and opportunities faced by TCAs and on the specific options put forward.

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

ONGOING:

Consultation on a Possible Framework for the Regulation of the Production and Use of Indices serving as Benchmarks in Financial and other Contracts

Closes: 29 November 2012

The integrity of benchmarks is critical to the pricing of many financial instruments, such as interest rate swaps, and commercial and non-commercial contracts, such as loans and mortgages, and risk management. Any doubts about the integrity and accuracy of indices may undermine market confidence, cause significant losses to investors and distort the real economy. The changes proposed by the Commission to its market abuse and criminal sanctions proposals alone will not improve the way benchmarks are produced and used.

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

Consultation on List of projects submitted to be considered as potential Projects of Common Interest (PCI) in energy infrastructure

Closes: 20 September 2012

The objective of this consultation is to seek views on the list of all the projects that have been submitted to be considered by the ad hoc working groups as potential PCIs. Stakeholders may also suggest projects to be added to, or removed from, the list. The input from this consultation will feed into the PCI evaluation process.

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

Consultation on Smart Regulation

Closes: 21 September 2012

In its 2010 Communication on "Smart Regulation in the EU", the Commission set out a strategy to improve the way it designs, enforces, evaluates and revises European policies and regulations to ensure they benefit citizens and businesses. Nearly two years later, the Commission is taking stock of the progress made and drawing lessons from its experience. This stakeholder consultation aims to collect your views and proposals to inform a Commission Communication reporting on Smart Regulation implementation.

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

Consultation on demand-side policies to spur European industrial innovations in a global market

Closes: 23 September 2012

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The Commission is therefore calling for ideas for potential new policy measures and focus areas for future targeted demand-side innovation actions at EU level, to enable faster uptake of innovations and to create a better environment for creating innovations in order to maintain the value and business investments in Europe.

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

Consultation on the Implementation Report of the Environmental Noise Directive (END) and on the EU Noise Policy

Closes: 25 September 2012

The objective of the consultation is to gather views and additional information on the effectiveness, strength and weaknesses of EU environmental noise legislation, in particular as regards Directive 2002/49/EC (END) relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise. This consultation is part of a follow up process to the first Implementation Report on the END published in June 2011. It serves to gather views also on the data and information published in the Report focusing on the issues for further consideration.

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

Consultation on the Draft Guide on Human Rights for SMEs

Closes : 26 September 2012

The European Commission, DG Enterprise and Industry, has ordered a guide that will provide advice to European SMEs on how to meet the expectations of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. It is meant to transpose the UN Guiding Principles to the European context, whilst avoiding its complex terminology. It is related to other European Commission initiatives on Corporate Social Responsibility. The European Commission is looking for commentary on the draft guide that can was drafted by a consultancy on CSR. It is particularly interested in comments on the consistency between the UN Guides and the Commission Guide, and the practical usefulness of the draft guides.

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

Public consultation on the future of EU-US trade and economic relations

Closes: 27 September 2012

This public consultation is intended to enable the gathering of detailed views relating to the future trade and economic relationship between the European Union and the United States. It aims at detailing and structuring the feedback of all relevant stakeholders. The results of both consultations will feed into the Impact Assessment DG TRADE is currently preparing. The Impact Assessment will help shaping the position of the Commission with regards to a potential bilateral initiative with the United States in the field of trade policy.

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

Code for Effective Open Voluntarism: Good design principles for self- and co-regulation and other multistakeholder actions

Closes : 30 September 2012

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In the CSR Communication COM (2011)681, about "A renewed EU strategy 2011-14 for Corporate Social Responsibility," under the fifth action of the action plan, the Commission has undertaken to seek to codify good practice in various voluntary, self- and co-regulation processes in order to improve the framework for achieving EU policy objectives. The prime goal of action 5 is to encapsulate, in a very short text, the core propositions that frame effective voluntary multistakeholder action. Hence this consultation.

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

Consultation on Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan

Closes : 1 October 2012

Europe lags behind its competitors in entrepreneurial attitudes and at the same time we know that SMEs are the biggest source of new jobs and related growth. A European Entrepreneurship Action Plan is therefore needed to address areas where entrepreneurial potential can be unleashed and where key bottlenecks can be overcome and obstacles to entrepreneurial activities removed. This consultation seeks reactions to a variety of possible measures which could be brought together under this Action Plan.

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

Consultation on the revision of the Guidelines on State aid to support SME access to risk capital

Closes: 5 October 2012

The purpose of the present consultation is to invite Member States and other stakeholders, such as investors, financial intermediaries and final recipients, to provide input for the revision of the Risk Capital Guidelines, notably information on market developments concerning the supply of equity and debt finance to viable SMEs, feedback on the application of the Risk Capital Guidelines and their effects in terms of facilitating SME access to risk capital.

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

COMING UP

EU Institutions: Important dates

17-20 September 2012 - Committee meetings of the European Parliament

18 September 2012 - Meeting COREPER II

24-27 September 2012 - Committee meetings of the European Parliament

3-4 October 2012 - Committee meetings of the European Parliament

8 October 2012 - Euro group Meeting

8-11 October 2012 - Committee meetings of the European Parliament

9 October 2012 - Meeting Council of Ministers: Economic and Financial Affairs

10 October 2012 - Meeting Council of Ministers: Competitiveness

11 October 2012 - Meeting COREPER II

15-18 October 2012 - Committee meetings of the European Parliament

18 October 2012 - European Council

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22-23 October 2012 - Plenary Session of the European Parliament

Other SME-related events

EU-Sales Law: (No) Added Value for Consumers and Companies?

18 September 2012

Brussels, Belgium

The purpose of this panel discussion, organised by the Austrian Federal Chamber of Labour, is to discuss the future European Common Sales Law and in particular the practical implications for its users. Participants to the discussion will include Dirk Staudenmayer, Head of Unit at DG Justice, and MEP Evelyne Gebhardt, co-rapporteur at the Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee of the European Parliament.

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

Reforming financial sector taxation: what has been done and what challenges remain?

18 September 2012

Brussels, Belgium

The purpose of this workshop, organised by Bruegel and the Fiscal Affairs Department of the International Monetary Fund, is to take stock of the actions taken since the onset of the crisis, to revisit the debate on various financial sector taxes and to assess the challenges ahead.

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

Universities and Regional Innovation: From Policy to Practice

20 September 2012

Brussels, Belgium

The EU-DRIVERS annual conference, organised by the European Centre for the Strategic Management of Universities, will focus on cross-sectorial partnerships between academic, businesses and public agencies to support regional innovation.

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

The future of audit: towards more transparency, quality and independence

25 September 2012

Brussels, Belgium

During this informed roundtable organised by ACCA (the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) in partnership with ecoDa (the European Confederation of Directors' Associations), the various proposals linked to audit quality and transparency as well as those targeting independence and market structure will be discussed with MEP Sajjad Karim.

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

European Competition Day

2 October 2012

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Nicosia, Cyprus

The theme of the conference will be Effective Enforcement of the Competition Rules in the EU. The programme will focus on three main issues: Commission proposal for a Directive on actions for damages and recent experiences with Private Enforcement, Effective Competition in Food and Retail Markets and the Enforcement of competition rules in Member States.

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

EURES Meeting

9-11 October 2012

Limassol, Cyprus

The main aim of the meeting is to discuss strategies and initiatives for the EURES Network and get informed about the Commission's plans and initiatives in the field of workers mobility.

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

EuroCommerce SME Day

10 October 2012

Brussels, Belgium

This SME day is an opportunity for the commerce sector to exchange views with the European Commission, Parliament and stakeholders on three major challenges that our SMEs face in their daily business life: bureaucracy, access to appropriate markets and partners, and the promotion of entrepreneurship spirit.

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

Single Market Week

15-20 October 2012

Brussels, Belgium

A pan-European event will open the week on 15 October in Brussels. The 27 Member States, in collaboration with the EU representations, will organize national events and forums.

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

European SME Week

15-21 October 2012

Brussels, Belgium

The European SME Week aims to- provide information on what the EU and national, regional and local authorities are offering as support to micro, small and medium-sized businesses and to promote entrepreneurship so that more people, and in particular younger ones, seriously consider becoming an entrepreneur as a career option. Furthermore, the week seeks to give recognition to entrepreneurs for their contribution to Europe's welfare, jobs, innovation and competitiveness.

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

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European SME Week 2012 Summit: Conference of Women's Entrepreneurship

17 October 2012

Brussels, Belgium

The purpose of the Conference is networking among women entrepreneurs who have joined the two European networks of Ambassadors and Mentors, and exchange of views, experiences and expertise.

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

Conference for the 20th Anniversary of the Single Market

20 October 2012

Nicosia, Cyprus

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Single Market, the Cyprus Presidency shall organise a national Conference in Nicosia on 20 October 2012 for the civil society. The Conference will focus on general Internal Market issues as well as on specific actions of the Single Market Act. The Conference will effectively mark the end of the Single Market Week (15-20 October 2012).

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

Presidency Conference on Employment Priorities

22-23 October 2012

Nicosia, Cyprus

The priority on Youth Employment which is the theme of the Conference could include issues related to training opportunities like apprenticeships, traineeships, working conditions as well as the matching of the qualifications and expectations of young persons with the needs of the economy and the needs of enterprises.

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

Enterprise Europe Network

22-24 October 2012

Pafos, Cyprus

The Enterprise Europe Network Annual Conference is the major annual event of the network bringing together more than 800 network participants. It is expected to provide a global forum for network partners, EU Officials, SME managers and other stakeholders to exchange and share knowledge about emerging policies, changing dynamics, new methods and network activities.

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

Conference on the Exchange of Best Practices on the Gender Pay Gap

29-30 October 2012

Limassol, Cyprus

One of the aims of the conference is to highlight practices and measures which enterprises may implement in order to eliminate the gender pay gap and promote the principle of equal pay between men and women.

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

SME Assembly

15-16 November 2012

Nicosia, Cyprus

The Assembly will bring together business organisations, European, national and regional government, academia and the media to discuss how to help SMEs go for growth. The hope is that all participants will leave with new ideas, new targets or new partners; something tangible that they can immediately act on to facilitate or reinforce the key role SMEs can play in restoring growth in Europe.

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