



HEADLINES

ESBA: ESBA urges new European Parliament to “Think Small First”

On 14-17 September, ESBA has sent a delegation of small business representatives to the first Strasbourg plenary session of the new European Parliament to advocate the continuing importance of a proper and thorough application of the *Think Small First* principle during the next legislature.

In an effort to ensure that MEPs will take serious consideration of the impacts of new legislation on the SME sector, ESBA has presented to MEPs 8 fundamental ‘golden’ rules for MEPs to apply the ‘*Think Small First*’ principle in EU regulatory initiatives. Amongst these rules is the absolute necessity for any new EU legislation to be accompanied by a thorough impact assessment, including a properly executed ‘SME-Test’, to ensure that small business will not suffer unnecessary administrative burdens. Another crucial point is the development of a cost and time-effective EU intellectual property regime to stimulate the huge innovation potential of SMEs. MEPs in Strasbourg have reacted positively to ESBA’s efforts and acknowledged the importance of ‘thinking small first’. ESBA will continue its efforts to instill the application of the ‘*Think Small First*’ principle in the EU legislative process.

The ‘8 Golden Rules for MEPs to apply the “Think Small First” Principle in EU Regulatory Initiatives’ are available on the ESBA website: <http://www.esba-europe.org/>

To read more about the “Think Small First” principle and its application in EU legislation and programs, please click [here](#)

Better Regulation: Smart regulation as ‘*Leitmotif*’ for the new Commission

On 18 September, European Commission President José Manuel Barroso underlined his commitment for the reduction of red tape for businesses in the EU. Guided by the ‘*Leitmotif*’ to ensure ‘smart regulation’, the better regulation services of the new European Commission, notably those in charge of reducing red tape, will act under his direct authority, together with impact assessments and ex-post evaluation. Edmund Stoiber, the chair of the High Level Group (HLG) on the reduction of administrative burdens, confirmed his willingness to prolong his personal engagement for the next two years as chair of the group. It is said that 40 billion Euro’s of the total yearly burden of 360 Billion could be saved if the High Level Group’s proposals for legislation, such as the creation of an online system for VAT invoices, were adopted by the European Union.

ESBA OPINION

ESBA welcomes President Barroso’s decision to back the anti red-tape agenda. Having delivered one of its own members to the High Level Group, ESBA is particularly happy to see the project bearing fruits. President Barroso’s claim of making the reduction of administrative burdens a “high political priority” is an important step in the right direction to getting the European Union’s economy back on track. Still, more needs to be done in order to provide a favorable business environment for SMEs in the EU. ESBA urges Member States to follow the HLG recommendations on red tape reduction, and stresses the need for a swift adoption and implementation of the proposed measures at Member State level. Further delays in the adoption process will have a

ESBA Bulletin of 25 September 2009 – Volume 11 – Number 14

negative impact on the economic performance of SMEs - the backbone of the European economy - especially in light of the current crisis.

To read more about the Commission's Action Programme to cut red tape, please click [here](#)

IN BRIEF

EU/ EU ministers to introduce changes to rules exempting micro enterprises from accounting directives

European Union enterprise Ministers seem determined to amend a European Commission Proposal, dating from February 2009, which aimed at the exemption of small businesses from burdensome accounting standards. Amongst the objections mentioned is the belief of a fallback on national company law if micro enterprises are exempted from the accounting Directives.

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

EU/ Commission proposal to strengthen financial supervision in Europe

On 23 September, the European Commission adopted a set of legislative proposals, aiming for increased supervision of the European financial sector. The proposals are anticipated to bring about more financial stability, a harmonized use of technical regulations, early risk assessment and to better facilitate European wide cooperation in cases of emergency. A 'European Systemic Risk Board (ESRB)' will be established, a risk detection mechanism, enabling the issuing of early warnings. The ESRB will consist of three EU Supervisory Authorities, as well as national supervisors.

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

EU/EIT: New director appointed

On 18 September, the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) has appointed its first Director. For a term of four years, the French Gérard de Nazelle will head the European Institute of Innovation's headquarters.

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

PUBLICATIONS

Knowledge Web on SMEs and entrepreneurship: "Ambitious entrepreneurship, high-growth firms and macroeconomic growth"

The study "Ambitious entrepreneurship, high-growth firms and macroeconomic growth", assesses the impact of ambitious entrepreneurship and high growth firms on subsequent macroeconomic growth for a sample of countries. According to the study, ambitious entrepreneurship – entrepreneurs expecting to grow their firm – has a positive impact on macroeconomic growth. The study reveals that the effects of ambitious entrepreneurship are stronger than that of entrepreneurship in general. Moreover, its effects are stronger in low-income countries than in high-income countries. In particular, established high-growth firms do not seem to drive macroeconomic growth.

To download the full study on ambitious entrepreneurship, high-growth firms and macroeconomic growth, please click [here](#)

ESBA Bulletin of 25 September 2009 – Volume 11 – Number 14

EU/SME financing: Access to finance major problem for SMEs

On 21 September, the Commission published the results of the new “Flash Eurobarometer: SMEs’ access to finance”. The survey, conducted with 9071 firms in 27 EU Member States, Croatia, Iceland and Norway, was set up to assess EU companies’ use of various sources of finance, to get a picture of the magnitude of companies’ difficulties in getting access to finance, and to obtain an overview of companies’ expectations for financing their future projects and developments. Overall, the survey revealed that businesses face difficulties in accessing finance, as almost half of them have problems to access bank loans. Despite the fact that availability of bank loans has deteriorated over the last six months for 46% of SMEs, over 70% of small businesses were able to receive all or part of the bank loan they wanted, and only 15% were fully rejected.

To get a deeper insight into EU companies’ situation is accessing finance please download the full report [here](#)

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

CONSULTATIONS

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

Public consultation on Community innovation policy

Ends on 16 November 2009

The European Commission has launched an online consultation to explore new ways to address challenges for a better European innovation policy. The consultation seeks to follow-up the findings of the Commission Communication "Reviewing Community innovation policy in a changing world" and two previous consultations, one on the effectiveness of innovation support in Europe and one on design as driver of user-centered innovation.

To read more about the consultation and to access the questionnaire to be filled in by stakeholders, please click: [here](#)

COMING UP

EU Institutions: Important dates

1-2 October 2009

Informal meeting of Finance Ministers, Göteborg, Sweden

6 October 2009

EU-Brazil Summit, Stockholm, Sweden

European Small Business Alliance – Brussels Office

rue d’Idalie 9-13, B - 1050 Bruxelles

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ESBA Bulletin of 25 September 2009 – Volume 11 – Number 14

6 October 2009
European Competition Day, Stockholm, Sweden

14 October 2009
Informal Meeting of Competitiveness Ministers, Umea, Sweden

Other SME related events

10 September - 30 November: The European Commission is organizing capacity building seminars in several European Union Member States to help SMEs to gain maximum benefits from the Environmental Compliance Assistance Programme (ECAP).

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

18 September 2009 - 9 February 2010: DG Enterprise and Industry will visit several European Union Member States to present the New Toys Safety Directive (2009/48/EC). The Roadshow, organized by the Toy Industry of Europe, is aimed at SMEs, importers and all economic actors in the toy industry.

To read more about the event, please click: [here](#)

1 - 2 October: The second International CIRIEC Research Conference on the Social Economy will take place in Osterund, Sweden. Discussions will be held between researchers from different parts of the world, policy makers and academics.

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

5-6 October: The European Commission is organising the next Charter conference "From the European Charter for Small Enterprises to the Small Business Act" in Stockholm, Sweden, focusing on the exchange of best practices.

To read more about the conference, please click: [here](#)

8 - 9 October: The European Commission is organizing the European Tourism Day and the European Tourism Forum in Brussels. Experts will meet to discuss on the actual situation of tourism and to suggest improvements.

To read more about the European Tourism Day, please click: [here](#)

14 October: DG Enterprise and Industry will organize the 'World Standards Day Conference 2009'. The event, instigated by the international standardisation organisations, ISO, IEC and ITU, will this year focus on the draft report on 'EXPRESS' (Expert Panel for the Review of the European Standardisation System).

To read more about the event, please click: [here](#)

To read more about EXPRESS, please click: [here](#)