



HEADLINES

EU/Admin Burdens: ECON Committee votes against the exemption of micro entities from certain accounting standards.

On Monday 19 October, the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON) voted on the European Commission's Proposal amending Council Directive 78/660/EEC on the annual accounts of certain types of companies as regards micro-entities. The aim of the proposal is to simplify the business environment and to relieve Micro entities from strenuous financial reporting requirements resulting from the 4th company law directive since they form an unnecessary administrative burden to the smallest enterprises.

Cutting red tape by simplifying the EU's regulatory environment was one of the key elements of both the Lisbon Strategy and the Small Business Act. Commission President Barroso has invited the European Parliament and Member States to adopt all remaining Commission proposals to cut red tape, following a Commission report which states that EUR 30.7 billion can be saved if all pending proposals are adopted

In its compromise opinion the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs calls on the Committee on Legal Affairs which is the Committee responsible, to reject the Commission proposal and to ask for a general revision of the 4th and 7th Company Law Directives in 2010. Furthermore, ECON suggests considering the inclusion of an additional requirement, dictating that cross-border activities within the European Union may not exceed 10% of the annual turnover of micro businesses in order to be exempted.

ESBA OPINION

ESBA fully supports these views and urges the European Parliament to adopt the Commission's proposal to exempt micro entities from burdensome accounting rules. Waiting for the Commission's revision of the 4th and 7th Company Law Directive in 2010 leaves micro enterprises with an insecure future, as no-one can predict the outcome of the revisions and the effect it will have on micro enterprises. Furthermore, the proposed consideration by ECON Committee to add the requirement that micro businesses may not generate more than 10% of their turnover from cross border trade in order to be eligible for exemption should be dismissed. The vast majority of micro enterprises do not engage in cross border trade. The European Union must ensure a healthy business environment for its smallest and most vulnerable businesses to enable them to get our economy back on track.

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

IN BRIEF

EU/ e-Commerce: EU Initiative to Boost the Single Online Market

On 22 October, EU Consumer Commissioner Meglena Kuneva presented a communication on the development of a single cross-border online market in the EU, forming the basis for a new strategy to release the full potential of European cross-border e-commerce. An earlier report, published in March 2009, identified the key obstacles to cross-border trade, such as regulatory barriers, language,

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access to proper redress mechanisms and issues of trust, concluding that the EU online market is fragmented along national lines. To improve the situation, the European Commission will develop the harmonisation of consumer rights through the Consumer Rights Directive, enforce consumer protection legislation and simplify the regulatory environment. The communication is part of the Single Market Review, promised by Commission President Barroso in the framework of the agenda for the next European Commission.

To read the communication on cross-border e-commerce, please click [here](#)

To read the Commission report on cross-border e-commerce in the EU, please click [here](#)

EU/Energy Efficiency: Commission's Efforts to Save Energy and Create Jobs

In October 2009, the European Commission published a draft version of its revised Energy Efficiency Action Plan, entitled '7 Measures for 2 Million New EU Jobs'. The proposal calls to impose mandatory energy-efficiency goals on EU member states, in order to achieve the reduction of 20% by 2020 in European energy consumption. Moreover, the Commission suggests that 15 million buildings undergo green refurbishment by 2020, which would help create more than a million new jobs. Other measures proposed include a group of smart cities to pioneer green technologies and the establishment of a white certificate scheme for the power sector. The draft forms the basis for the mid-term revision of the Commission's 2006 Action Plan for Energy Efficiency, which is being prepared amidst speculations that the EU will be unable to meet its energy-efficiency targets.

To read the draft review of the Action Plan for Energy Efficiency, please click [here](#)

Publications

OECD: "Government at a Glance"

The new biennial OECD publication presents over 30 indicators to evaluate the performance of OECD governments. The indicators span across political, institutional, economic and social agendas, and include assessment of such new policies as e-government and achievements in integrity. All figures are accompanied by links to the corresponding data.

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

European Commission: "Clearer rights for free movement of goods within the EU"

The European Commission published a revised manual with regards to the terms of the free movement of goods in the EU. The publication clarifies the case law of the European Court of Justice, and explains the EU legal instruments created to enforce Articles 28-30 of the European Community Treaty. The publication follows a package of reforms to the rules administering the Internal Market proposed by the Commission and adopted earlier.

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

European Commission: "Firm's experiences in accessing finance"

The European Commission, together with the European Central Bank, have commissioned the Eurobarometer Access to finance survey, with the aim of analysing experiences of enterprises accessing finance in the aftermath of the crisis. Around 9,000 enterprises of various sizes from the EU, Croatia, Iceland and Norway participated in the survey in June and July 2009. One of the main findings established that access to finance deteriorated for almost half of small businesses.

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

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Consultations

NEW:

Public consultation on the review of the Financial Regulation

Closes on 18 December 2009

The European Commission has launched a public consultation on the review of the Financial Consultation with the aim of simplifying the financial rules and procedures as regards project funding by the EU budget. The Commission particularly welcomes contributions from EU funds recipients, NGOs and various public and private bodies.

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

ONGOING:

Public consultation on Community innovation policy

Closes 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](#)

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](#)

COMING UP:

28 October: the European Commission is organising EU Finance Day for SMEs in Riga, Latvia. The event aims to inform SMEs about different EU tools to access finance and is part of a series of events taking place in the Member States.

To learn more about the event, please click:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemshortdetail.cfm?item_id=3738

29 October: the European Commission is organising EU Finance Day for SMEs in Bratislava, Slovakia. The event takes place one day after an analogous event in Riga, Latvia and aims to raise awareness among SMEs as regards access to finance in the EU.

To learn more about the event, please click:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemshortdetail.cfm?item_id=3739&lang=en

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2 – 3 November: The Swedish Presidency is organising the ‘Eco-Efficient Economy - Towards innovative and sustainable competitiveness’ conference in Linköping, Sweden, with the aim of promoting the development of sustainable policies with regards to industry.

To learn more about the event, please click:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemshortdetail.cfm?item_id=3211

20 November: the European Commission and the European Economic Social Committee, together with CEPIS and the e-Skills Industry Leadership Board, are organising the European e-Skills conference. The event will analyse the importance of ICT for EU economy and look at future developments.

To learn more about the event, please click:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item_id=3691&lang=en

9 December: The European Commission is organising the conference ‘MACHINERY IN EUROPE, Perspectives and challenges for the European machinery industry’ to take place in Brussels, Belgium. The aim of the conference is to bring together various stakeholders and politicians in order to analyse current trends in the sector and discuss solutions for the future.

To learn more about the event, please click:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item_id=3522&lang=en