

BUSINESSEUROPE



1<sup>st</sup> European SME Week  
6-14 May 2009

***BUSINESSEUROPE cares about SMEs***






## The voice of European companies

- The Confederation of European Business
- The voice of more than 20 million small, medium and larger companies
- Recognised as social partner
- Mission: Work together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe
- Purpose: Influence EU policies to create a business-friendly environment



# BUSINESSEUROPE

## 40 members in 34 countries

 INDUSTRIELLEN VEREINIGUNG	 FEB Federation of Employers of Belgium	 BULGARIAN INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATION Union of Bulgarian Business	 CROATIAN EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION	 CIP	 sp	 DA	 Confederation of Danish Industry
Austria	Belgium	Bulgaria	Croatia	Cyprus	Czech Republic	Denmark	Denmark
 TÖÖANDJATE KESKLIIT ESTONIAN EMPLOYERS' CONFEDERATION	 EK	 Association des Employeurs de France ADEF	 BDA DE ARBEIDSGEEN	 BDI	 SEV hellenic federation of enterprises		 LÍÐINGAR SAMUNGLINGUR ASSOCIATION OF ICELANDIC EMPLOYERS
Estonia	Finland	France	Germany	Germany	Greece	Hungary	Iceland
 SI Federation of Icelandic Employers	 IBEC	 CONFINDUSTRIA		 PK	 Fedil Business Federation Luxembourg	 MALTA FEDERATION OF INDUSTRY	
Iceland	Ireland	Italy	Latvia	Lithuania	Luxembourg	Malta	Montenegro
 NHO	 Lewiatan	 AIP ASSOCIAZIONE INDUSTRIAL PORTUGUESA OCC. CÁMARA DE COMÉRCIO E INDÚSTRIA	 Confederação de Indústrias portuguesa	 ASSOCIAZIONE ITALIANA DELL'INDUSTRIA SAMMARINESE REPUBBLICA SAN-MARINO	 AGP Alianta Comerciarilor Patronale din Romania	 RUZ	 ZIDS Zvečanjski inštitut za delodajalce Zvečanjski inštitut za delodajalce
Norway	Poland	Portugal	Portugal	Rep. San Marino	Romania	Slovakia	Slovenia
 COE	 SVENSKT NÄRINGSLIV	 economyline	 SCHWEIZERISCHER ARBEITGEBERBUND DES CH. PATRONAL SUISSE	 VNO NCW	 TUSIAD	 TUSIAD	 CIBIL THE TRADE OF ITALY
Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	Switzerland	The Netherlands	Turkey	Turkey	United Kingdom



## The Entrepreneurship & SME Committee

*At the heart of our SME strategy*



# **BUSINESSEUROPE – active for you!**

---

- We defend the needs and expectations of Europe's entrepreneurs
- We advocate for SME-friendly EU policies
- We push for a coherent implementation of the “Think Small First” principle
- We create synergies thanks to our large network of member federations all over Europe



## and the “Small Business Act”

- We called for and obtained the highest political backing
- We insist on effective implementation at European, national, regional and local level
- We will closely monitor and assess implementation progress together with our member federations



## *Campaigning for an environment supportive of SMEs*



## Create conditions for economic recovery

- 16 recommendations to restore credit channels and improve business cash flow:
  - expand guarantees for trade finance
  - accelerate access to EIB funds
  - speed up VAT reimbursement
- Implementation: active advocacy through high-level taskforce, bilateral meetings with key policy-makers, conferences





## A powerful tool to support European SMEs

- Spending €347 bn over 2007-2013
- Direct initiatives for SMEs
  - Direct investments in firms: R&D, technology transfer, environmentally friendly production (€42.8 bn)
  - Entrepreneurship: provision of services, adaptation of workers and enterprises, ICT (€44.7 bn)
  - Human capital and access to employment: increasing the qualification level of the regional and local workforces (€48.8 bn)



# Future Lisbon Strategy and EU Budget

---

- Restore political commitment towards Lisbon goals
- Improve ownership at national and regional level
- Focus on areas where EU role is undeniable
- Re-establish a benchmarking culture
- Overhaul of EU budget: shift resources from CAP in support of R&D, infrastructures, mobility and training
- Encourage leverage effect of EU budget through financial engineering, co-financing and PPP



# A modern and efficient taxation

## Helping SMEs grow

---

- Simplification: cut compliance costs
  - equal treatment of paper and e-invoices
  - faster re-imburement of VAT
- One-stop shop: single market for taxation
  - better coordination of corporate tax laws
  - one-stop shop for EU-wide application of VAT
- Certainty: limit risk exposure
  - ensure proportionality of anti-fraud measures
  - enhanced relationship with tax authorities



## *Enabling SMEs to thrive in the Internal Market*



# The Services Directive

## A real opportunity for SMEs

### **BUSINESSEUROPE helps realise the internal market for services, fighting for:**

- a uniform and timely transposition by 28 December 2009
- the simplification and modernisation of national legislation
- points of single contact providing relevant information and complete formalities effectively
- information campaigns explaining opportunities and benefits particularly for SMEs
- better consultation with leading European and national business federations



# European Private Company Statute

## A boost for cross-border activity

**BUSINESSEUROPE is a strong supporter of the European Private Company Statute which should:**

- be an optional instrument suitable for SMEs' needs
- be accessible to natural and legal persons
- be possible to set up from scratch
- be a genuine European label on international markets
- simplify cross-border mergers and transfers of seat



## Freeing SMEs from suffocating red-tape

**BUSINESSEUROPE** helps to make Better Regulation a reality across Europe, asking for:

- concrete steps to reach the 25% target for reducing administrative burdens by 2012
- assurance that new legislation does not undo past achievements
- implementation of the “Think Small First” principle and measurement of all business costs
- yearly reports on better regulation progress and to benchmark performance



## *Ensuring that SMEs successfully master climate change and innovation*





# Climate change and environment

## Challenge and opportunity for SMEs

- Reducing greenhouse gases with SME-friendly policies
  - Emission Trading: opt-out for small installations
  - energy efficiency: information transfer, product standards and labels
- Securing internationally competitive electricity prices
  - Internal Market for electricity and gas
  - energy security
- Protecting the environment without imposing excessive costs and administrative burdens
  - REACH, industrial pollution control, waste legislation



# Research and innovation

## The key for SMEs' future success

**BUSINESSEUROPE supports the development of innovative businesses in Europe, calling for:**

- an increased participation of SMEs in European programmes for R&D and innovation
- the development of European support schemes for SMEs in R&D and innovation



## *Helping SMEs cope with the social fallout of the crisis*



## Making SMEs' specific needs heard

---

- Increasing labour market flexibility
  - variety of contractual arrangements
  - working time flexibility (short-time)
- Reducing non-wage labour costs
- Narrowing the skills gap
- Upgrading skills and lifelong learning of workers and managerial staff



# Mobilising the European Social Fund (ESF)

- Call to improve the effectiveness of EU financial instruments to cope with the challenges of the crisis
- Social partners' joint recommendations at the Employment Summit on 7 May:
  - use ESF resources for start-up of new businesses and hand-over of small existing businesses
  - speed up national procedures to enable rapid accessibility, particularly for SMEs



*Helping European SMEs to succeed  
around the globe*



## A world of new opportunities for SMEs

### Opening markets and reducing trade barriers is essential for SMEs' expansion

- WTO Doha Development Agenda
  - lower tariff and non-tariff barriers
  - simplify burdensome customs requirements for SMEs
- Free Trade Agreements
  - remove non-tariff barriers
  - harmonise standards to ease SMEs' internationalisation
- Market Access Strategy
  - tackle barriers with Commission, Member States and business



# Intellectual property

## A key asset for SMEs

---

- Improve current patent system in Europe in terms of costs and legal certainty
- Complete legal framework in Europe to improve IPR enforcement
- Set global standards of IPR enforcement worldwide through Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement
- Reinforce action through bilateral dialogues to address IPR enforcement challenges





# Further information

---

[www.business europe.eu](http://www.business europe.eu)

