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### **PRO-SME POLICIES IN EUROPE: GOOD RESULTS COEXIST WITH WORRYING LAGS**

The purpose of the Small Business Act (SBA) agenda was to pay more attention to improving the economic and regulatory environment of SMEs. Two years after adoption, the implementation of the SBA can be regarded overall as work in progress. However, good results coexist with worrying lags.

BUSINESSEUROPE is pleased that the European Commission calls today for reinvigorated efforts to implement the SBA, and proposes concrete approaches for reaching tangible results. The following issues are high on BUSINESSEUROPE's priority list:

- Enhanced targets for reducing the administrative burden linked to EU legislation should be adopted by this European Commission. SME tests should be introduced in the decision-making process of all Member States, as has been the case at European Commission level;
- It is vital that the Council agrees on the proposal on a European Private Company (EPC). The EPC Statute will make it possible for SMEs to substantially reduce the costs of going across borders within the EU;
- The European Commission should develop a more articulated strategy towards the internationalisation of SMEs, bringing increased added value compared with existing initiatives;
- The problem of tighter SME access to credit since the crisis needs to be solved, and not made worse by imposing disproportionate financial regulations on banks, resulting in starving SMEs of financial support.

BUSINESSEUROPE Director General Philippe de Buck said: *"The competitiveness of the EU depends on the competitiveness of its SMEs. The growth of SMEs should be our first priority. This means that the 'Think Small First' principle should be at the centre of decision-making"*.

#### **NOTE TO THE EDITOR**

BUSINESSEUROPE represents small, medium and large companies. Active in European affairs since 1958, BUSINESSEUROPE Members are 40 central industrial and employers' federations from 34 countries, working together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe.

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