



EUROCHAMBRES SUCCESS STORIES

Last 12 months

Examples demonstrating EUROCHAMBRES' ability to influence a legislative outcome, revise an institutional procedure or propose a new programme, measure, or activity.

Last update: 26/02/2018

- **EUROCHAMBRES Economic Survey 2018 (November 2017)** – The EES 2018 was released the 8th of November. The main findings of the 25th edition of the survey suggest bright prospects for businesses in the coming year, but concerns about access to skilled workers are rising. With the help of the Chambers' networks, media exposure has been better than in previous years, as the EES has been mentioned in numerous national and European media outlets. Both the infographic and the analysis of the results can be found in ECH's website.
- **Services e-Card (October 2017)** - The European Parliament rapporteurs for the Services e-Card in both their draft reports have taken on board our suggestion for an amendment underlining that e-Card must not, contrary to its objectives, in fact be used to legitimize unwarranted and unnecessary obstacles that member states should already have removed in compliance with the provisions of the Services Directive. Both rapporteurs have used the idea behind this as well as directly copy/pasting parts of our proposal for amendments in their draft reports (AM 2 in the regulation and AM 6 in the directive).
- **Commissioner Hahn highlights the importance of the East Invest 2 regional position paper for improving the business climate for SMEs (October 2017)**. At the 4th Eastern Partnership (EaP) Business Forum in Tallinn on 26 October the European Commissioner for European neighbourhood policy and enlargement negotiations J. Hahn has underlined the importance of the East Invest2 regional position paper (RPP) for the discussions at the 4th EaP Business Forum and for future work. He highlighted the main challenges for SMEs identified in the RPP – business climate, capacity to innovate, access to markets, finance and skills and taxation and customs procedures, as well as the promotion of digital solutions in all these areas. The 4th EaP Business Forum in Tallinn is the most substantial business event in the official program of the Estonian Presidency of the EU Council and the key side event of the forthcoming EU - EaP Summit in November in Brussels. East Invest 2 project is implemented by EUROCHAMBRES led consortium with UEAPME
- **EU - Latin America Business Forum in Mexico and EU-US 8th annual SME dialogue (October 2017)** - EUROCHAMBRES co-organized the EU-Latin American Business Forum in Mexico City this 12th of October, being the only EU business representative present, cementing Chambers prominent role and visibility in EU -Latin American business relations. The event brought together mayor Latin American Business associations as well as Eurochams in the region to promote the bi-regional economic agenda resulting in a concrete recommendations from both sides which will be presented to key decision makers on both sides. Moreover EUROCHAMBRES was represented the voice of Eu business at

the EU-US SME dialogue in Wichita Kansas, exploring avenues to boost transatlantic SME trade in a challenging political context with key EU and US government officials for small business.

- **Single Market Information Tool (October 2017)** – The Single Market Information Tool, presented by the Commission in May, is currently being discussed by the Council and the European Parliament but is already starting to show signs of bad health. Following EUROCHAMBRES' advocacy efforts and repeated warnings to policy makers on the lack of purpose and legitimacy of the instrument, 12 Member States have adopted a non-paper in which they ask the Commission to *“reassess the necessity and added value of this proposal.”* No final decisions have been taken yet, but this bodes ill for the Commission's initial plans.
- **European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships (October 2017)** – On 3rd October, the European Commission adopted a proposal for a Council Recommendation on the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeship. The EC document proposes a right balance between quality for apprentices and quality for companies (cost-effectiveness) as advocated by EUROCHAMBRES and includes a quantitative target which sets that at least half of the apprenticeship duration should be carried out in a workplace. EUROCHAMBRES had pushed for several years for an EU quantitative target on work-based learning.
- **SME Test Benchmark 2017 (October 2017)** – EUROCHAMBRES was invited to present the result of the study on the application of the SME Test by the Commission at the SME Envoy Network meeting. The Commission recognised the value of the study and the importance of thoroughly assessing the policy impacts on SMEs. Several of the recommendations put forward in the study are reflected in the new Better Regulation guidelines.
- **EP report on the New Skills Agenda for Europe (September 2017)** - The report (co-rapporteurs Martina Dlabajova (CZ, ALDE) and Momchil Nekov (BU, S&D) put a strong emphasis on elements for which EUROCHAMBRES has been advocating for years: a European-wide skill forecasting tool, work-based learning and in particular apprenticeship (even encouraging Member States to set target in this area), entrepreneurial education (at all levels of education) and enhanced cooperation between business and education providers, including University. The report was adopted at the EP September Plenary.
- **Energy Market Design (September 2017)** – After meeting the rapporteur for the Electricity Market Regulation, Mr. Krišjānis Kariņš (LV, EPP), he integrated a major element of EUROCHAMBRES position in his draft report: necessity test for capacity mechanisms. Subject to approval by the EP and the Council, these tests will guarantee that costly capacity mechanisms will be applied as last resorts only.
- **East Invest SME Roadshow Facility brings concrete results for business.** Over the last 3 years, 400 SMEs from 5 Eastern Partnership countries (AM, AZ, GE, MD, UA) have participated in 24 Roadshows in 17 different EU countries (PL, UK, BE, AT, SK, NL, DE, GR, HU, LA, LT, EE, IT, RO, CY, DK, ES). The EaP SMEs were offered technical training and engaged in B2B meetings with more than 1000 EU companies. Overall, more than 60 contracts were signed between the EaP and the EU companies and 37 new jobs were

created. This success was possible due to the involvement of 9 EaP and 22 EU Chambers of Commerce, who selected the companies and organised the matchmaking.

- **East Invest 2 (August 2017) contribution to the high level Business Forum in Tallinn (26-27 October) organised by the Estonian EU Presidency** - EUROCHAMBRES as the lead partner in the East Invest 2 project is contributing to the Business Forum in Tallinn (26-27 October) organised by the Estonian Presidency of the EU Council featuring the President of Estonia and the Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations as key note speakers. **East Invest 2 will present at the closing session of the Tallinn Business Forum the Regional position paper developed under the project with recommendations to policy makers in the Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries to improve the business climate.** East Invest 2 project is also contributing to the selection of EU and EaP business support organisations (BSOs) and SMEs to be invited, as well as with financial support for the EU BSOs and SMEs participants.
- **Global Climate Summits (August 2017)** – EUROCHAMBRES was officially granted observer status under the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC). Consequently, EUROCHAMBRES is now eligible for accreditation and can also facilitate the accreditation its members for climate summits (COPs) from 2018 onwards.
- **Youth & Migrants (June 2017)** EUROCHAMBRES has successfully joined 2 new EU programmes; the EMEN project (financed under EASME) will promote **Migrants Entrepreneurship**, whereas the **European Solidarity Corps** will support mobility and social entrepreneurship for young people. In both cases, our aim will be to promote the role of Chambers of Commerce in supporting these target groups in the economy.
- **High-level principles on feedback given by banks on declined SME credit applications – (June 2017)** EUROCHAMBRES has supported this European Banking Federation initiative with the objective of improving SMEs' financial knowledge and enhancing access to finance. ECH has pushed for a clear implementation plan and benchmarks. Deputy-President Ian Talbot attended a signing ceremony on 6 June, with the participation of Commission Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis, as well as the banking and SME associations involved.
- **Integration of migrants in the European labour market (May 2017)** EUROCHAMBRES is actively participating in the creation of the European Alliance for Integration. This initiative led by DG HOME will be a platform for economic and social stakeholders to work together to facilitate the labour market integration of the migrants. EUROCHAMBRES stressed the key role played by Chambers in this social and economic integration in the context of the 2nd EU dialogue on skills and Migration on 23 May in Brussels.
- **Unitary Patent – (May 2017)** the snap UK general election delayed ratification of the Unified Patent Court Agreement by a key country (despite Brexit). EUROCHAMBRES teamed up with the British Chambers of Commerce before the 29-30 May Competitiveness Council discussion to [urge the UK to proceed](#) and also encouraged other member states to contribute to progress where possible. This lobbying was well received by the EU institutions and also gained valuable general/specialist media coverage. Commissioner Bieńkowska indicated that provisional application of the Agreement should now start in the summer, with the patent then entering into operation in early 2018.

- **SMEs and Trade:** In line with its position as a leading advocator for small and medium sized enterprises in the EU's trade policy, EUROCHAMBRES continues to exert its influence on the way SMEs are included in the EU's FTAs and in the EU's international trade agenda at the global level. For the former, EUROCHAMBRES has recently managed to strengthen the role of SME's and their representatives in the institutional set up of all EU trade agreements, including in the Japan FTA. This will enable SMEs and Chambers to have a more direct say in making sure trade deliver for SMEs. Internationally, EUROCHAMBRES has been the initiator at EU level of an initiative at the WTO for SMEs propelled through EU leadership. Commissioner Malmstroem is now set to make his one of the EU' s priorities for the WTO Ministerial in Buenos Aires and the post-Doha negotiation agenda at the WTO. EUROCHAMBRES is also the key driving force behind discussions for DG Trade to enable a rules of origin calculator free of charge for all EU enterprises in order for them to calculate preferential origin of their products and accordingly make better use of EU FTA's.
- **SME definition – (April-May 2017)** EUROCHAMBRES effectively collaborated with Chamber-affiliated European Economic & Social Committee Group 1 members to limit calls for a revision of the SME definition in a EESC forthcoming Opinion on EU policies for SMEs.
- **Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs - (March 2017)** EUROCHAMBRES has been awarded once again the management of the **Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Support Office**. This demonstrates our capacity to manage an extensive network of 600+ Intermediary Organisations who promote the programme in their respective regions, and to generate visibility at policy level for this European flagship initiative. The new contract will kick off in May 2017.
- **60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome - (March 2017)** It is said that imitation is a form of flattery, so we should feel very flattered at the moment, as several of **EUROCHAMBRES recent external communication actions have been replicated in the framework of the 60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome:** the #EU60 Citizens Parliament in the hemicycle on 21 March replicated the European Parliament of Enterprises concept, our 5 scenarios online poll was duplicated by the most prominent EU level publication, POLITICO, while the European Commission adapted our '60 seconds for Business' video clip idea to '60 seconds for the EU'.
- **SME Envoy Network – (March 2017)** EUROCHAMBRES features prominently in a new '**SME Policy Action Plan**' prepared by the Network of SME Envoys. EUROCHAMBRES is the only business organisation to edit one of the chapters (on Access to Markets) of this extensive report and also wrote the sub-chapters on Access to 3rd Country Markets and the Only Once Principle. Various projects in which EUROCHAMBRES is involved are also referred to as best practices in a number of chapters.
- **B20 Groups on SMEs and Trade - (March 2017)** EUROCHAMBRES successfully lobbied the **B20 Cross-Thematic Group on SMEs** to include in its recommendations to the G20 the adoption of the "Think Small First" principle in all trade negotiations with a view to strengthening the SME voice in trade agreements. Also included was the need of support for measures to enhance financial skills among SMEs. EUROCHAMBRES and the Global

Chamber Platform (GCP) significantly influenced the **B20 Trade Taskforce** paper, namely in the field of capacitation, lifelong learning and awareness raising of trade agreements, as well as proposing concrete measures for SME in the WTO post Doha agenda in both papers.

- **Union Customs Code - (March 2017)** The European Commission and Member States adopted an amendment to an article in the implementation articles of the **Union Customs Code** (UCC) to find a practicable solution to the duration of long term supplier declarations. The amendments leads to mayor cost savings for companies thorough the Union.
- **Project Management excellence – (February 2017)** Some existing programmes in the Neighbourhood & Enlargement area have been praised for their effectiveness: the **EU-Turkey Chamber Forum (ETCF)**, co-managed with TOBB, has been audited by an independent evaluator for being “*highly relevant*” and “*very effective*”. This assessment will pave the way for a continued effort in promoting EU-Turkey Chamber cooperation in 2017. Also the **Euro-Med Invest programme**, co-managed with ANIMA, has been praised by South Mediterranean government officials as a best practise to promote the EU-Mediterranean economic partnership.
- **Trade Declaration - (February 2017)** EUROCHAMBRES issued the **Declaration on the European way to free, fair and inclusive trade** to all mayor players in brussels, member state ministries and all EU delegations in third countries. President Juncker praised the engagement of Chambers and the declaration is particularly contributing to a more targeted approach to the implementation of trade agreements, given its proposed preference utilization target.
- **EU Emissions Trading System - (February 2017)** In the plenary vote on the reform of the **EU Emissions Trading System** (ETS), the European Parliament followed two voting recommendations, EUROCHAMBRES promoted to MEPs. The linear reduction factor will remain at 2.2% instead of 2.4% and there will be a certain flexibility for the auctioning share.
- **Launch of the European Financial Learning Platform - (February 2017):** EUROCHAMBRES joined this initiative with the purpose of establishing a platform in which partners pool their strengths to advance responsible financial literacy in Europe with – as ultimate goals to improve financial education in in all European jurisdictions. More info in a [press release](#).