



I Press Release

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Better Regulation: Low Level Group celebrates burdens reduction success

The same day the European Commission presents its third Strategic Report on Better Regulation, the "Low Level Group to fight Administrative Burdens" (LLG) takes the opportunity to assess its own achievements.

"Eight months after the presentation of its 21 suggestions representing a saving potential for companies of approximately 2.5 to 3.5 billions of euros, the LLG has achieved impressive outcomes, which will bring considerable savings of time and money for European businesses," said SME UNION President Christoph Leitl. *"Three suggestions have already been implemented, thirteen of our proposals are currently being examined at EU institutional level and this without spending a single euro on advice and opinions from consulting firms."*

As far as the European Commission's report is concerned, the LLG acknowledges the progress made, but stresses that a lot of work still needs to be done to simplify life for small and medium enterprises.

"In economically tough times, small enterprises should receive all support possible. They should not have to waste their time with endless procedures and burdensome regulations," said Pierre Simon, President of EUROCHAMBRES.

Examples of the Low Level Group's achievements

The Low Level Group is particularly satisfied that its suggestion on the European Small Business Act (SBA) was well received and that the December European Summit fully endorsed this important SME package. For example the modified Commission's proposal of the European Private Company, already approved by the EP Legal Affairs Committee, as part of the SBA, will support internationally oriented SMEs saving time, money and red tape.

Other successful examples:

- The revision of the EU Battery Waste Directive – with the aim to clarify and modify certain aspects of its scope – is already fully implemented. That means that European entrepreneurs have now saved huge logistical costs of recalling batteries which already have been placed on the market.
- The suggestion concerning the Emissions Trading Directive has been positively taken up by the European Parliament and the Council and will soon be published. *"We see it as a big achievement for European small companies and industry that best-practice enterprises exposed to carbon leakage will get emission certificates for free in the future,"* explained Mr Leitl. The SME opt-out of 25,000 tons and a capacity threshold of up to 35 Megawatt were agreed. Therefore EU member states are now allowed to exempt their SMEs from the costly administrative monitoring and reporting compliance costs of the EU Emission Trading System. 63% of all installations (i.e. 2.4% of all installations emissions) have now the possibility to opt-out. The reduction of the administrative burden is EU-wide estimated with a minus of EUR 94.5 million.
- The urgent suggestions to cut red tape for EU structural funds were taken up by the European Commission. That means that money should be more easily and rapidly accessible to enterprises in the regions.

"The LLG will continue its fight for the implementation of all proposals presented, at all legislative levels," concluded JADE President Thomas Barthelet.

The “Low Level Group”

The “Low Level Group” was created at the end of 2007 to support and encourage the European Commission’s “High Level Expert Group” to fight against administrative burdens. It was set up by the SME UNION of the European People’s Party, EUROCHAMBRES (the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry) and JADE (the European Confederation of Junior Enterprises). It is made up of seven SME entrepreneurs from the grass root level and seven SME experts providing background support.

The full report of the Low Level Group’s achievements can be downloaded from www.eurochambres.eu/Content/Default.asp?PageID=1&DocID=1582 or www.sme-union.eu/docs

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