

The EU SME Strategy one year on: Challenges and Opportunities

EUROCHAMBRES and Committee of the Regions online webinar

Wednesday, 10 March 2021, 15:00 – 16:15 (CET)

The SME Strategy came out on 10 March 2020, just days before confinement measures were imposed across Europe in response to COVID-19 crisis. One year on, it is worth reviewing the implications of the pandemic on SMEs and – by logical extension – on the EU SME Strategy. How has the strategy been pursued and implemented in the intervening 12 months? Is the SME Strategy still fit for purpose?

While SMEs, as engines of economic growth and social development, have had a crucial role in overcoming challenges in the past, they are in dire need of more financial and non-financial support to better prepare, respond, and recover from Europe's worst peacetime crisis. More access to information, markets, technology, and financial resources could help unlock their potential to become increasingly productive, efficient, and resilient.

As COVID-19 continues to test the viability of millions of SMEs in Europe, it is important to look forward and consider not just the shift in the economic context, but also the recovery and the EU's ambitious policy programme. Invited guest speakers will discuss and exchange views on a range of concrete issues relating to digital and sustainable transitions, capacity building, regulatory burdens, market access, and SME-support measures necessary to drive and ensure a robust recovery.

Agenda:

15:00	<p>Welcome and introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gilbert Stimpflin, Co-Chair of the SMEs and Economic Policy Committee of EUROCHAMBRES
15:05	<p>Panel discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hubert Gambs, Deputy Director General of DG GROW, European Commission Josianne Cutajar, MEP (MT, S&D) and shadow rapporteur of the European Parliament's report on the EU SME Strategy Eddy Van Hijum, Member of the Council of the Overijssel Province, rapporteur of the Committee of the Regions opinion on the EU SME Strategy Wolfgang Grenke, Vice-President and Co-Chair of the SMEs and Economic Policy Committee of EUROCHAMBRES <p>Moderated by Ben Butters, CEO of EUROCHAMBRES</p>
15:45	<p>Discussion with audience and Q&A session</p>
16:10	<p>Concluding remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Michael Murphy, Chair of the Commission for Economic Policy, Committee of the Regions
16:15	<p>Close</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ben Butters

Please register [here](#) by 8 March 2021 the latest. Link and instructions will be sent to the confirmed participants right after registering to the event.