

WELCOME AND PRESENTATION

Dear JEUNE Friends,

We are pleased to announce you that 2007 is a very important year for our organisation since JEUNE will see how its activities and contacts increase throughout Europe.

The year has started well for JEUNE with the entry of new 4 associations.

A very important event for JEUNE and all the SME family has been the « **4th Conference on Crafts and small business : Challenges and opportunities for craft and small enterprises in the European Single Market** » that has taken place in Stuttgart



4TH EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON CRAFT AND SMALL ENTERPRISES

(Germany) on 16, 17 April.

This conference was organised by the European Commission and crafts and SME partners like UEAPME were strongly involved in its organisation.

A JEUNE Delegation attended this event. Likewise, JEUNE held its Administra-

tive Council in the framework of this meeting. And last but not least JEUNE's President was the rapporteur of Workshop 1: « Skills for the future ». Commission Vice-President Mr Günther Verheugen and German Chancellor Ms Angela Merkel were present at this conference.

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NEWS FROM BRUSSELS

JEUNE Administrative Council met in Brussels on February 9th. At this meeting, Ludger Fischer presented the last news on the LIPS project and Stefanie Steyer of UEAPME presented the Business Support Project (BSP) III, a project funded by the European Commission in which JEUNE will participate.

The first Administrative Council was special because 4 new organisations joined JEUNE:

- The Young Entrepreneurs Association of Romania (YEAR), YEAR was represented by its president, Mr. Iulian Groposila and vice-president, Ms. Diana Cojaru.
- Jeunes Entrepreneurs de France (JEF). The Secretary General of JEF attended the meeting, Mr. Majid El jar-



Some members of the Administrative Council

roudi presented his association, founded in 2002. JEF's main objectives are the promotion to create enterprises and the guidance to young entrepreneurs on the path towards the creation of their enterprises.

- PIMEC Joves i Emprendors has just been founded within the Catalan Association of SMEs, PIMEC. This association is

currently electing its representatives.

- Association of Young and Novice Entrepreneurs of Hungary (EFKE). Its president, Mr. Gabor Hegyi was not able to join the meeting in February. Instead he provided JEUNE with extensive information on EFKE's objectives and activities.



FRANCESCA UNGARO VISITS THE UNIVERSITY OF TRANSILVANIA

In the framework of the European University Industry Network (EUI-Net) Project and in view to prepare the following project of the Thematic Network, some pilot actions took place. Among them, the practical placements of two entrepreneurs in the University of Transilvania in Brasov, Romania.

One of the entrepreneurs who participated at this pilot action was Francesca Ungaro from Italy. Francesca visited the University of Transilvania from the 24th to the 26th January 2007.

Francesca is very glad to have participated in this pilot action and thinks that having a professor as a reference person was very important because it enabled her to learn about the country, culture and history of Romania.

Concerning the agenda of her placement, the first day Francesca visited the University of Transilvania and met with a local entre-



Preparatory meeting in Vienna, December, 2006

preneur, who was interested in her business sector: stair-lifts.

The same day, she met a University student. Francesca invited him to spend some months in Centaurus, her enterprise in Italy. In this way, the student could learn how the stair-lift market works and perhaps later on start the same business in Romania. After these meetings, she visited the city of Brasov accompanied by Doru Talaba. During her second

day, Francesca met the manager of a big Canadian company in Romania and entrepreneur. According to her, their exchange was very rich and interesting. He will visit Francesca's company in the following months, to see if it is worth setting up a company.

Francesca wants to thank Doru Talaba, coordinator of the EUI-Net project for his professionalism in organising the programme and for his kind hospitality.

Compulsory reporting on CSR activities was rejected by the European Parliament. However, the situation is not clear when it comes to CSR criteria for public procurement.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR SMES

The Member of the European Parliament, Richard Howitt presented a report that demanded enterprises to state their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities. Following the strong opposition to this report from important SME stakeholders, MEPs accepted CSR as a purely voluntary activity.

SME do not want to be faced with inquiries regarding their CSR activities. They believe this would be discriminatory, above all when SMEs participate in public tenders. On this area, the report as voted in the EP's plenary does not provide clear solutions on the CSR

criteria for public procurement.

Maria Panayotopoulou-Cassioutou (EPP-ED, Greece) stated that « the success of CSR comes from its voluntary, un-binding nature and therefore any moves to make CSR compulsory, including the publishing of assessment reports, would be counterproductive and incompatible with the EU's efforts to reduce red tape.

According to a UEAPME 's press release published on March 13, UEAPME welcomes the inclusion in the report of the official EC definition of CSR and the deletion of com-

pulsory reporting clauses on CSR activities. The EP urges the Commission, Council, businesses and other stakeholders to re-define CSR aims and methods. The EP defines CSR as "*the voluntary integration of environmental and social considerations into business operations, over and above legal requirements and contractual obligations*".

The EP also wants small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to be involved in corporate social responsibility with the help of the European Commission.

DRAFT STANDARD ISO26000 ON SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

In September 2005 a Working Group was established within ISO, to develop an International Standard providing guidelines for social responsibility (SR). The objective is to elaborate a guidance document, written in plain language, which is understandable and usable by non-specialists, and not a specification document intended for third party certification.

NORMAPME has asked JEUNE to give its opinion on the Draft Standard ISO26000 on Social Responsibility, being currently drafted by the International Standardisation Office (ISO).

ISO is now at the second working draft stage, the publication is foreseen for 2009. ISO is taking action to ensure that the standard will benefit from broad in-

put by all those with a serious interest in social responsibility. The document will apply to all kind of organizations, including SMEs. NORMAPME thinks that this standard is likely to have a wide acceptance on the market and consequently, many SMEs will be forced to adopt ISO26000.

Problems at stake

The document remains quite generic and SME participation in national mirror committees and the strong interest of developing countries in internationally recognized standards on CSR are likely to lead to a favourable vote for the ISO26000.

Possible threats for SMEs

- SMEs do not have enough representation in the drafting process. NORMAPME and the Malaysian SME Association are the

only associations representing SMEs.

- Consultants and certifiers are well represented in the drafting process. It seems they prefer complexity and abstractness of the text, rather than simplicity and concreteness.
- Only member states have the right to vote, liaison organizations are excluded.

What NORMAPME is claiming for: The insertion of a clause of exclusion for companies with less than 50 employees.

Sebastiano Toffaletti of NORMAPME will attend the JEUNE's Administrative Council in Stuttgart in order to present this issue. He will invite JEUNE to prepare its position on this relevant issue.

ISO is drafting a Standard on Social Responsibility. NORMAPME complains about the little SMEs' representation in the drafting process.

REQUIREMENTS FOR BETTER STANDARDS FOR SME

NORMAPME participated in the EIM study by providing a small but critical input. This study analyses the effectiveness of accompanying measures for the participation of SMEs in standardisation in the EU. NORMAPME believes that the successful actions are few in numbers and have just reached a few thousand SMEs at best.

NORMAPME has proposed new ideas on how to improve the standardisation system.

Standards not adapted to SME needs: Big players influence the standardisation system more strongly than SMEs. However, the standards are applicable to all.

Balanced representation: A balanced representation in standardisation instances by officially limiting to a reasonable percentage (for example 25%) the maximum total representation of any type of stakeholders i.e. large companies, SMEs, governments, consumers, certifiers, etc.

Too much emphasis on certification: Certifiers and notified bodies have seen their role in the standardisation process increased. They are gradually dominating most of the technical committees of interest and they claim for more certification.

Accreditation system: Present accreditation systems

resist to apply simplification schemes for SMEs. Micro-enterprises are forced by the market to complex systems based on voluminous manuals conceived for multinationals.

Simplification of standards: make standards easily accessible to SMEs and applicable in their everyday operations by using a simpler wording.

Other NORMAPME's requests are: low cost standards, free voting system at CEN, construction products and the role of EOTA, CE marking adapted to small series of production.



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MEMBER'S SECTION: JONGHANDWIËRK LETZEBURG (JHL)

Jonghandwiërk Letzeburg (JHL) is the group for young craftsmen set up in 1978 in the framework of the Fédération des Artisans, the organisation representing craftsmen's interests in Luxembourg. The Group has the objective to promote solidarity among young craftsmen and to carry out their interprofessional association with a view to their national and international representation.

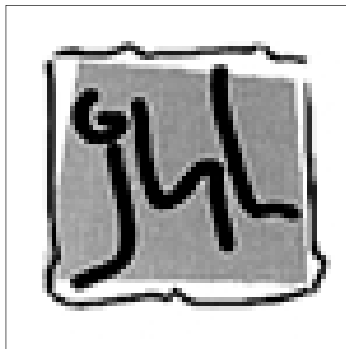
It is also committed to social promotion, professional ethics and the typical values of craft. The type of members of JHL are entrepreneurs under 40 years old. The enterprises represented by JHL are: crafts.

An important part of the members are family enterprises. The services JHL offers to its members are: social security advices, organisation of common activities (craft related and leisure activities), etc.

Jacob is president of JHL since 2005. The General Assembly ta-

kes normally place in the first half of the year and there is one board meeting a month.

The Board is made up of: Jacob, president. Martin Antony, vice-president, Constantin Jacques: Secretary General; Norbert Thorn, treasurer/ Members: Hannibal da Cruz, Patrick Wester, Pietro Marchione, Georges Nesser, Laurent Reiche.



Oliver Jacob at one of the JEUNE's Administrative Council

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2 Circuit de la Foire Internationale BP 1604 L-1347 Luxembourg –Kirchberg Tel. 424511-1, Fax. 424525; www.jhl.lu (not yet active)

EVENTS ORGANISED BY JEUNE AND ITS MEMBERS

PAST EVENTS:

February

2nd February: Meeting EUI-Net, organised by the European Commission, Brussels. Attended by Elena and Francesca.

7th February: Board Meeting of JHL in Luxembourg.

9th February: JEUNE Administrative Council, Brussels.

22nd February: Board Meeting Företagarna Skaraborg and Företagarna Västra Götaland, Sweden.

March

5th March: 1st Partner Meeting of the EU-funded project: Business Support Programme III, Vienna.

29th-31st March: Annual meeting with elections - Företagarna Skaraborg, and Företagarna Västra Götaland

April

3 April: "JEUNE Entrepreneurs eve-

ning" organised by Jeunes Entrepreneurs de France (JEF), Paris.

15 April: JEUNE Administrative Council, Stuttgart.

16, 17 April: 4th European Conference on Craft and Small Enterprises in Stuttgart.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

May

3rd May: Responsible Entrepreneurship Exchange meeting, organised by DG Enterprise and Industry of the European Commission, Brussels.

3rd May: NORMAPME « PROTYPOS – Personality of the year award » (18.00-21.00h), Brussels.

9th May: EUI-Net Meeting in Rome (Italy), attended by Elena.

23rd May: NORMAPME Board Meeting, Brussels, attended by Elena.

June

4th, 5th June: Conference on the European Charter for Small Enterprises, or-

3rd-10th June: European Youth Week « Social inclusion and diversity of young people in Europe », organised by Directorate General Education and Culture of the European Commission, Brussels.

11th June: JEUNE Administrative Council, Brussels.

August

30th August: JEUNE Administrative Council, Brussels.

30th August: LIPS Final Conference, Brussels.

September

27th September: NORMAPME Board Meeting, Brussels, attended by Elena.

End September (date to be confirmed): Youth Event organised by the European Commission, Porto.

November

29th November: NORMAPME Board Meeting, Brussels, attended by Elena.