

# European SME Action Programme

## Summary of recommendations at EU level

### 1 Better Regulation

- Maximise opportunities available through REFIT
- Foster greater transparency and partnership for the SME Envoy Network with the Regulatory Scrutiny Board
- Identify particularly burdensome areas for SMEs and encourage national contribution to Commission consultations
- Establish reduction targets in particularly burdensome areas
- Pursue a continuous monitoring of progress in identified reduction areas
- Support the cross-border implementation of the “Only Once” principle

### 2 Access to Markets

- Enshrine the “Think Small First” principle across EU trade agreements
- Create institutional mechanisms for effective participation of the SME community in European trade policy
- Create single access points for information on applicable rules and regulations in foreign markets
- Increase synergies between relevant stakeholders on EU and Member State level to boost SME internationalization
- Evaluate barriers for scaling within the „SME Test“ and better regulation guidelines
- Target EU funding programmes more specifically towards scale-up support

### 3 Access to Finance

- Maintain the SME-Supporting-Factor for bank loans on EU and Member State level
- Make European state aid policy law less restrictive for innovative forms of SME financing
- Strengthen guarantee institutions to facilitate SMEs’ access to finance
- Reduce regulatory barriers to stimulate alternative financing across borders
- Establish Fund-of-Funds for alternative equity and debt financing
- Create an expert group on alternative finance to offer inspiration and guidance
- Improve and enhance the activities of the European Microfinance Network
- Increase the knowledge on the impact of microfinance activities and analyse the need for target group-specific microfinancing
- Offer long-term, stable and affordable funding patterns for microfinance providers while implementing closer monitoring of their financial and socio-economic performance

## 4 Entrepreneurship

- Support the establishment of a European Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning
- Create an Entrepreneurial Learning group within the EU SME Envoy Network
- Create a legacy of high quality research, instruments and tools by improving knowledge sharing on entrepreneurship education between Member States
- Boost cross-border cooperation of start-up ecosystems in the EU
- Provide finance for new projects of rebounding entrepreneurs
- Raise awareness for the importance of business transfers and improve the dissemination of good practices among Member States
- Monitor and review the legal, administrative, and fiscal environment of business transfers
- Encourage Eurostat to compile accurate yearly data on the situation of business transfers in the EU
- Continue to closely monitor new developments in the area of the sharing economy

## 5 Skills and Training

- Consider financial support for SMEs which engage in vocational education and training (VET)
- Promote the equal value of VET and academic education and raise awareness for the good employment outcomes among young people
- Establish a common methodology for a long-term outlook for jobs and skills in each industry in order to forecast the training and labor needs of SMEs
- Use the European Social Fund to finance digital skills training for SMEs
- Use best practice sharing to identify innovative ways to provide and adapt digital skills for elderly business owners
- Ensure adequate and easily accessible funding for cross-border training
- Establish an EU-wide electronic qualifications platform to support the exchange of information
- Help to develop reliable instruments to recognise individual skills and qualifications of refugees

## 6 Digitisation of SMEs

- Support the establishment of broad band infrastructure
- Develop an international regulatory framework
- Produce a beginner's guide for SME-digitisation
- Offer help for SMEs on digital regulation
- Use SME Envoy Network to share experiences and discuss policy-making
- Provide good practice sharing opportunities for project managers across Member States, e. g. for developers of digital learning tools