



WORKSHOP

SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES – THE ENGINE OF THE EUROPEAN INDUSTRY

24 FEBRUARY 2015

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises – The Engine of the European Industry

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are of central importance to the European economy. They play a key role as providers of employment opportunities and serve an important function for the wellbeing and economies of local and regional communities. Moreover, they are at the core of value networks and creation of added value. As a regional network, ECRN is committed to enhancing cooperation and exchange of experiences across regions. We want to draw attention to what can be achieved by leveraging regional competences and bring concrete examples and experiences to the European policy discussions.

In the workshop, we will focus on important role of SMEs not only in the chemical industry but as an integral part of the overall European economic fabric. We will bring together policy makers and practitioners to discuss how local authorities can design more efficient strategies to encourage the development of innovative SMEs. In particular, we will provide concrete examples on how SMEs can be supported at the regional level and focus on the success factors and potentially transferable elements of such strategies or initiatives.

Date and time: Tuesday, 24 February 2015, 14:00-17:00

Venue: the Committee of the Regions (Room JDE63), Rue Belliard 99-101, Brussels

Registration: via ecrn@ecrn.net by 19 February 2015

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Programme

1. Opening and setting the scene

- Hartmut Möllring, ECRN President / Minister of Science and Economic Affairs, Saxony-Anhalt, Germany
- Karl-Uwe Bütof, ECRN Vice President / Director, Ministry of Economic Affairs, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany - *moderator*

2. Key role of regional authorities in supporting SMEs

- Thomas Wobben, Director of Horizontal Networks and Studies, Committee of the Regions

3. Importance of SME policy at all levels – European, national, regional

- Joanna Drake, Director of Entrepreneurship and SMEs, DG Growth, European Commission

4. Chemical SMEs – making it happen

- Cristina Gonzalez, Feique / SusChem

5. Good practice examples from European chemical regions

- *Cross-sectoral SME cooperation in Global Value Chains*
Daniel Gottschald, Chemie-Cluster Bayern (Bavaria)
- *From theory to practice: the SBA implementation in Wallonia*
Daniel Collet, Competitiveness & Innovation Department, SPW (Wallonia)
- *Supporting SMEs in resource efficiency – a regional approach for a complex topic*
Michael Niemczyk, Effizienz-Agentur NRW (North Rhine-Westphalia)
- *What do SME's have to do to be successful in REACH?*
Karine Van de Velde, KV Consulting Services BVBA (Flanders)

6. Discussion and Q&A

7. Closing remarks and further steps

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