

The role of the SME Envoy

The mission of the SME Envoy

The SME Envoy is an active interface with the SME business community, considering their specific interests and needs in EU programmes and policies. The main objective of this function is to establish a close, direct link between the Commission, SMEs and their representatives.

Thanks to the SME Envoy, SME interests and needs can be better identified at an early stage and highlighted to the relevant Services, so ensuring that their concerns are taken into consideration and that adequate and efficient measures are implemented and overall the EU and National Policy is more SME-friendly.

Particular attention is given by the SME Envoy to the craft sector, small businesses and sole traders because of their specific needs.

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Inside the Public Administration

The SME Envoy aims to reinforce SME interests in the European Union as well as at National level, in particular to:

- ensure a “watchdog function” to monitor policies and actions affecting SMEs originating in services throughout the Administration and ensuring potential impacts on SMEs are properly assessed; specifically develop and refine the "SME test" and assist/monitor its application
- develop methodologies how to reduce over-proportional administrative and regulatory burdens on SMEs – in particular small businesses – with a view to offering them to other services to use them in the legislative proposals,
- organise an "SME network" inside the Public Administration, composed of the SME contact points of all Ministries / Directorates General / Services with relevant policies in order to increase awareness about SME issues; regularly discuss their on-going SME-initiatives; specifically promote and provide guidance on the application of the "Think Small First principle" in all Community and national initiatives
- communicate and support the dissemination and application of the many identified good practises in Entrepreneurship and SME Policy through the funding programs in various policy domains, specifically the cohesion and education policies
- intensify contacts between SME organisations and other public services whose action can either benefit or have an impact on SMEs. The SME

Envoy will also, where appropriate, provide guidance to SMEs about the right department to contact.

Towards the Outside World

The SME Envoy acts as a visible contact person for small or medium-sized companies and SME organisations in the broad sense, i.e. business organisations, sectoral federations, Chambers of commerce and Chambers of crafts. This implies:

- conduct direct dialogue through meetings and visits with SME organisations, at EU and national and regional level;
- inform SMEs and SME representatives regularly about new legislative initiatives and programs currently being developed, which have a potential impact on SMEs or could be of interest to them
- provide a focal point for complaints from SMEs and answer them with the help of the other Public Services
- collect feedback from the SME business community on issues of interest to them, especially on legislation and access to support programmes;
- facilitate access of SMEs to information on programs and initiatives