

CoR-OECD conference and annual meeting of EER regions:

Are EU SME policies fit for the new challenges?

The regional perspective

**CoR and OECD
26 March 2019, 9:30 – 16.15**

**European Committee of the Regions, Rue Belliard 99-101,
1040 Brussels | Room JDE 52, Lledra Street (afternoon)**

Interpretation: EN/FR/DE/ES/EL/PL

Background and objectives

The European Union needs a holistic and cross-cutting policy on SMEs and entrepreneurship, capable of responding to the major challenges of our times.

The morning part of the conference will examine how to make SME policies fit for purpose in the new EU political cycle, taking account of existing and emerging challenges and also megatrends such as globalisation, digitalisation, the new industrial revolution, the changing nature of work, demographic change, the circular economy and transition to a low carbon economy.

It will also look at the regional dimension of the policies that support start-ups, scale-ups and SME innovation, exploring how the development of strong and connected regional entrepreneurial ecosystems can contribute to spreading growth and prosperity across the EU.

The afternoon part of the conference, conceived as a **participatory session** for regional and local policy practitioners, will provide participants with an opportunity to discuss, in several thematic groups, different policy approaches to supporting SMEs and entrepreneurship for productivity growth and industrial renewal in their territories.

Programme

Are EU SME policies fit for the new challenges? The regional perspective	
9:30 – 9:45	Welcoming remarks and introduction
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olga Zrihen, Chair of the ECON commission, European Committee of the Regions
9:45 – 11:00	Panel 1: EU SME policies: state of play and outlook
	<i>This panel will examine how to make SME policies fit for purpose in the new EU political cycle, taking account of existing and emerging challenges and megatrends such as globalisation, digitalisation, the new industrial revolution, the changing nature of work, demographic change, the circular economy and transition to a low carbon economy.</i>
Speakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joaquim Oliveira Martins, OECD, Deputy Director of the Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Cities and Regions • Birgit Weidel, Head of Unit COSME Programme, SME Envoys and Relations with EASME, DG GROW, European Commission • Erik Stam, Professor of Strategy, Organization and Entrepreneurship, University of Utrecht • Veronique Willems, Secretary General, SME United • Arnaldo Abruzzini, Chief Executive Officer, Eurochambres <p>Moderated by: Richard Tuffs, former Director of the European Regions Research and Innovation Network (ERRIN) Q&A session with the audience</p>
11:00 – 11:15	Coffee break
11:15 – 12:30	Panel 2: Policies and tools supporting start-ups, scale-ups and SME innovation
	<i>This panel will look at the regional dimension of the policies that support start-ups, scale-ups and SME innovation. It will examine the enablers and hindrances that impact on entrepreneurship in different types of regional entrepreneurial ecosystems and how policies can respond. It will explore how the EU regions can maximise mutual synergies by working together, thus contributing to spreading growth and prosperity across the EU.</i>

<p>Speakers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter Berkowitz, Head of Unit for Smart and Sustainable Growth, DG REGIO, European Commission • Jonathan Potter, Head of Entrepreneurship Analysis and Policy Unit, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Cities and Regions, OECD, • Laura Roman, Senior consultant for innovation policies, Technopolis Group • Martyna Rompa, Head of the Innovation Development Division, Office of the Marshal of the Pomorskie Voivodeship • Pere Condom Vila, Director of the Catalunya Emprèn Programme <p>Moderated by: Andre Meyer, Policy Officer - SME policy, DG GROW, European Commission</p> <p>Q&A session with the audience</p>					
<p>12:30 – 13:45</p>	<p>Lunch break</p>					
<p>13:45 – 14:15</p>	<p>Afternoon session: setting the scene</p>					
	<p>Introduction by Bert Kuby, Head of Unit of the ECON commission, European Committee of the Regions</p> <p>Presentations of the EER 2019 Regions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linze Rijswijk, Province of Gelderland, • Ana Concejo Vasquez, Principality of Asturias, • Konstantinos Agorastos, Head of the Region of Thessaly 					
<p>14:15 -15.15</p>	<p>Participatory session: Enablers and obstacles to SME growth in EU regions</p>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion in groups: introduced and moderated by: Jonathan Potter, OECD <table border="1" data-bbox="371 1061 1492 1424" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td data-bbox="371 1061 935 1205" style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"> <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Facilitating access to finance for innovative start-ups and scale-ups </td> <td data-bbox="935 1061 1492 1205" style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"> <p>Entrepreneurship culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Building an entrepreneurship culture and mind set </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="371 1205 935 1424" style="text-align: center;"> <p>Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Building SME management capabilities ▶ Increasing the supply of skilled and entrepreneurial labour </td> <td data-bbox="935 1205 1492 1424" style="text-align: center;"> <p>University-SME knowledge exchange</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Promoting knowledge generation, transfer and exchange </td> </tr> </table>		<p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Facilitating access to finance for innovative start-ups and scale-ups 	<p>Entrepreneurship culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Building an entrepreneurship culture and mind set 	<p>Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Building SME management capabilities ▶ Increasing the supply of skilled and entrepreneurial labour 	<p>University-SME knowledge exchange</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Promoting knowledge generation, transfer and exchange
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<p>15:15-15:45</p>	<p>Report backs and plenary discussion from the group work</p>					
<p>15:45 – 16:15</p>	<p>Conclusions and next steps</p>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jonathan Potter, OECD • Tadeusz Truskolaski, Member of the ECON commission, European Committee of the Regions 					