



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION - PRESS RELEASE

### **€2.5 billions to boost business competitiveness and SMEs 2014 - 2020**

Brussels, 30 November 2011 – Promote access to finance and encouraging an entrepreneurial culture, including the creation of new enterprises are the core issues of the new financial support programme, tabled by the European Commission in Brussels today. With a budget of €2.5 billions over the period 2014-2020, the *Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs, COSME* is a funding instrument, which is largely continuing the activities under the current Competitiveness and Innovation programme (CIP). The new programme targets in particular: 1) entrepreneurs, in particular SMEs, which will benefit from easier access to funding for their business, 2) citizens who want to become self-employed and face difficulties in setting up or developing their own business, 3) Member States' authorities, which will be better assisted in their efforts to elaborate and implement effective policy reform.

European Commission Vice President Antonio Tajani, responsible for enterprises and industry, said: "*Easing SMEs access to finance, markets and entrepreneurship policies, is key to overcome the crisis. This programme will help to unlock the growth potential of enterprises focusing on boosting the real industry. We will strengthen competitiveness of businesses and create new jobs, and ultimately reinforce the growth potential of the EU economy.*"

See the current [CIP programme](#) and the [Access to finance under the current CIP programme](#).

## Background

The **Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs, COSME** will focus on financial instruments and support to the internationalisation of enterprises and it will be simplified – to make it easier for small businesses to benefit from it. The Programme has the following general objectives:

- **Improve access to finance** for SMEs in the form of equity and debt: First, an **equity facility** for growth-phase investment will provide SMEs with commercially-oriented reimbursable equity financing primarily in the form of venture capital through financial intermediaries. Second, a **loan facility** will provide SMEs with direct or other risk-sharing arrangements with financial intermediaries to cover loans.
- **Improve access to markets** inside the Union and globally: Growth-oriented business support services will be provided via the **Enterprise Europe Network** to facilitate business expansion in the Single Market. This programme will also provide SME business support outside the EU. There will also be support for **international industrial cooperation**, particularly to reduce differences in regulatory and business environments between the EU and its main trading partners.
- Promote **entrepreneurship**: activities will include developing entrepreneurial skills and attitudes, especially among new entrepreneurs, young people and women.

The Programme is expected **to assist yearly 39 000 firms**, helping them create or save 29 500 jobs and launch 900 new business products, services or processes, yearly. Access to credit will be easier for entrepreneurs, particularly those willing to launch cross-border activities, with an anticipated €3.5 billion in additional loans and investment for European businesses. The financial envelope for implementing the Programme shall be EUR 2.5 billion, of which EUR 1.4 billion shall be allocated to financial instruments. The remainder will be spent for financing the Enterprise Europe Network, international industry cooperation and entrepreneurship education.

For further information:

[MEMO/11/852](#)

[IP/11/1475](#) and [MEMO/11/848](#) Horizon 2020

[IP/11/1479](#) and [MEMO/11/851](#) European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

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