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## The creation of European Painting Partners (EPP)

In recent years, a skills gap has existed between the education system and the needs of companies in many Member States that could significantly restrict the ability of our businesses and the EU to grow. It has become clear that our member associations will have to face two major problems in the future: the **shortage of young professionals** and a **deficit in the quality of training and education** in the painting sector.

Especially for the painting contractors in Western Europe, it becomes more and more difficult to find young people for a career in the painting sector and to keep them after they finish their vocational training. This trend could result in a rise of the price of labour in the future. Especially for UNIEP's Southern and Eastern European members, it is very difficult to establish a vocational training and education system for painters because of the lack of support by national authorities and a range of economic situations leading to unemployment in many areas. Furthermore, a gap in the education and training quality for painters creates an obstacle to mobility.



In light of the European Commission's commitment to the push for the EU2020 strategy and in order to combat the major problems in the painting sector, going forward UNIEP will focus on tackling the two most important issues facing the sector: the recruitment and the training of painters. UNIEP will promote the **quality of vocational training and mobility** by creating a European-wide and comparable work-based learning and training system in the painting branch in order to increase the mobility of apprentices and young craftsmen for the benefit of the painting SMEs.

As part of its new strategy, UNIEP promotes the creation of a European Alliance with manufacturers that will provide supranational services in education, training and mobility for the painting branch. After much dialogue, the UNIEP Board of Directors decided to create an association similar to that of the Club Alliance in France to facilitate a partnership with manufacturers. This new association, **European Painting Partners (EPP)**, will be located in Brussels and will include UNIEP and various manufacturers as partners. The object of this partnership is :

- To promote the recruitment of young people to the painting sector ;
- To organise vocational education and training ; and
- To encourage sustainable practices.

UNIEP believes that a partnership with paint manufacturers would be mutually beneficial to both parties and is necessary to serve the common interest of promoting the health and prosperity of the painting sector.

## EPP Upcoming Projects

The immediate projects that UNIEP wants to implement as part of EPP are the Teach the Teacher project and the Painters and Paint Bus project.

Currently there are many problems facing the painting industry:

- the gap between what people are taught and the expectations of the industry;
- the fact that teachers are isolated from manufacturers;
- teachers are unable to find up-to-date resources all in one place.

Using the current French project as a model, the **Teach the Teacher project** seeks to address many of these problems in two parts: a website and regional meetings. In addition to a website that allows for resources to be uploaded and teachers to easily access up-to-date information, regional meetings/conferences would also be held. These conferences would have demonstration workshops in which teachers/trainers are taught the most up-to-date techniques and equipment. These teachers would then return to their respective schools and pass on these new practices to their students.

EPP is also interested in recruiting more young people to the sector. One of the ways EPP will promote this is through the **Painters and Paint Bus project**. This project includes an educational bus that visits schools and informs young people regarding the possibilities of careers in the painting industry. It also aims to inform and train teachers. In order to inform on a career in painting, the bus would contain a film for students, training for teachers, and information for parents about a career in painting. The bus could also be used for events as well as for travelling to various schools for educational purposes.



EPP Strategy Web

## Economic growth is picking up among European SMEs

The **UEAPME SME Business Climate Index** shows that European SMEs express more confidence in their economic future: the index has increased by 2.7 percentage points, reaching 75 for the entire European Union. Furthermore, the confidence gap between countries in the South and Periphery and countries in the North and Centre of Europe decreased to the lowest level seen since the start of the sovereign bond crisis. The UEAPME SME Barometer shows that SMEs in the first semester of 2015 exceeded their expectations for each economic indicator. For the second semester, every single size class and sector of SMEs expects improvements.

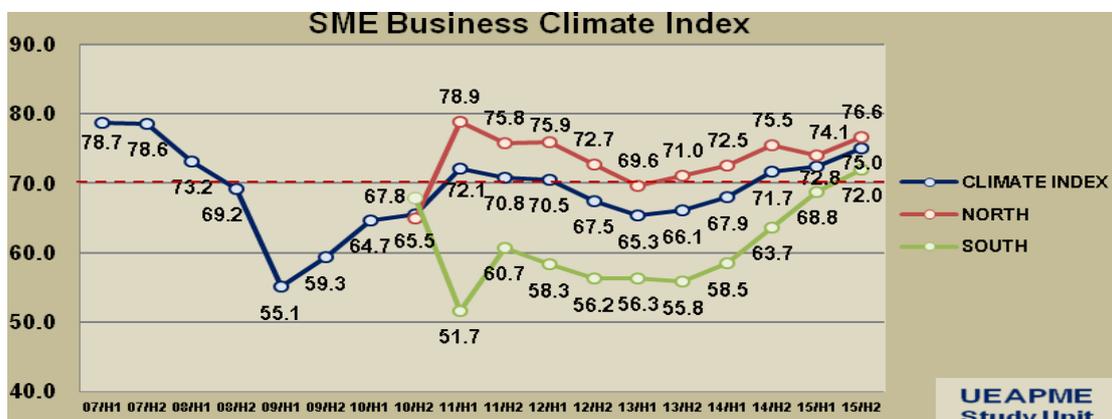
“The significant increase seen in the UEAPME SME Business Climate Index is a clear sign of that European economy is stabilising”, explained Gerhard Huemer, Director of the UEAPME Study Unit. “However”, he continued, “the large majority of enterprises are still reporting a neutral stance, outnumbering positive responses.” The main reason for the improvement seems to be an increase in internal demand, which now also gives more confidence to the local services providers, while larger manufacturing SMEs have already profited from a more export driven recovery since the second semester of 2014.

The survey indicates a steady expansion of the economy, particularly in the Eurozone, supported by both low prices for commodities and the recent depreciation of the Euro. “However”, warns Mr Huemer, “there is still not enough growth to sufficiently accelerate the creation of additional jobs or an increase in investments, which constitute the critical components to generate a long-term recovery.”

The gap between the North/Centre and South/Periphery is narrowing: during this semester, the difference between the two macro areas reached the lowest level since the beginning of the sovereign debt crisis. The level of confidence in southern Europe has grown by 5.1 percentage points in the first semester and SMEs expect to exceed the neutral level of 70 points in the second part of the year. According to Mr Huemer, “this is a clear sign that structural reforms are starting to pay off”.

Every economic indicator of the SME Barometer saw improvements for the first half of 2015 but, even more importantly, each of the six criteria exceeded expectations from six months ago, feeding into even higher expectations for the second semester of 2015. The real economy is close to a period of growth. At the same time, it seems that SMEs are still utilising existing capacities and do not yet see the need for new investments and for hiring additional personal in the foreseeable future – with the exemption of the manufacturing sector. For this reason, SMEs need a stable economic outlook and better lending conditions in order to transform these positive signals into a solid and sustainable long-term economic growth.

“The main takeaway of this UEAPME SME Barometer is that European SMEs are in a position to enter a path of economic growth in the forthcoming semester, but stability and further measures to support internal consumer demand are essential components to turn it into investment and job creation,” concluded Mr Huemer.

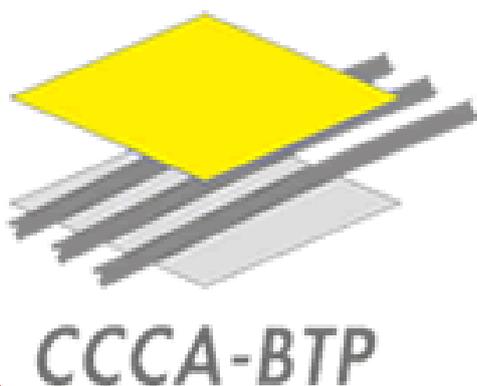


## UNIEP Partnership with CCCA-BTP

Following a meeting in Paris between UNIEP and representatives of the French Vocational Training and Apprenticeship Institute CCCA-BTP, the decision was made to join forces and work together on a **new Erasmus+ project « Strategic Partnership »**.

Leadership of this project could be taken by either the French Painters Association or a European partner from the REFORME network consisting of 10 national vocational training organisms in the Construction sector.

This new project could focus on the creation of a common basic structure of competences for painters in the European Union. This would include 3– 4 countries as project partners and the experimentation of formation in the interested countries and training of trainers. This project would last 3 years.



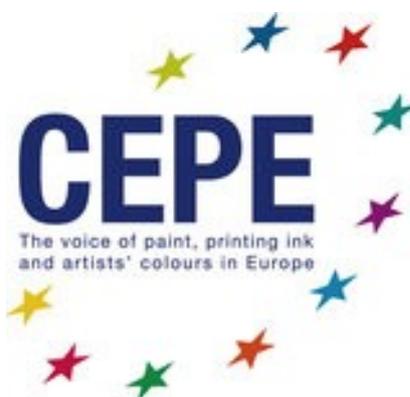
CCCA-BTP will support the drafting of this project, due to its expertise and contacts with its partners in the REFORME network. The steering and decision making concerning the objectives and the expected products will be up to UNIEP. UNIEP looks forward to this partnership with CCCA-BTP and hopes to foster prosperity and the improvement of vocational education and training throughout the Construction sector.

## 2015 CEPE Annual Conference and General Assembly

At the **2015 CEPE Annual Conference and General Assembly** held in Krakow, Poland, 140 leading experts of the coatings industry met to exchange ideas and discuss the changes facing the paints and coatings industry. These changes including legislation changes, the increase in customer demands, technological changes, and changes in employee attitudes affect the industry and must shape future strategy going forward. It is imperative that companies remain active and adapt along with the sector by restructuring business models and incorporating technological innovation. It was decided that it is necessary to develop new approaches and make processes more efficient in order to remain competitive.

The slowing down of the Chinese economy was also discussed at the conference, as well as the importance of sustainable practices and initiatives. During the General Assembly, the CEPE Board Members were also elected and re-elected.

UNIEP President Markus Straube and Secretary General Patrizia Di Mauro both presented at the CEPE conference. Mr. Straube presented on sustainability amongst painters and painting practices, and Ms. Di Mauro introduced UNIEP's focus on vocational education and training and the formation of the European Painting Partners (EPP).



## Erasmus+: Painting Skills Network

As part of the European Commission's educational program Erasmus+ and EU2020 strategy, the **PaintingSkillsNetwork** project was created to develop a strategic partnership for the design of a sustainable vocational education and training for the European painting trade. This project utilizes experts and is supported by the Commission in order to implement the EU goals of improving the quality of vocational training and the quality of teachers, trainers and other professionals working in the field and the better alignment of curricula to the labour market.



The European Training Alliance (European Alliance for Apprenticeships), of which UNIEP is a partner, continues to be an active participant in the efforts of the European Commission to combat high youth unemployment. The products of the project will help to ensure that better-educated painters will be made available for the companies of the painting trade in the future, strengthening the partnership between actors in the world of work and education.

The PaintingSkillsNetwork consortium met on 17-18 September 2015 in Hungary. This consortium was composed of vocational training institutions, facilities that have experience in the field of project management and the design of a learning outcomes-based training, professional associations and members of the completed projects ECVET Ma-Flo and Euro Painting Skills.

During the term of the Leonardo da Vinci program, two projects were funded which dealt with vocational training in the craft of painting: Painting Skills, coordinated by UNIEP, and MaFlo, coordinated by the Dresden painter master school at the SBG. The conceptual work/results of these previous projects act as the basis for the future activities of PaintingSkillsNetwork.

Going forward, the main focus will be on the drafting of a statute for a European network for vocational training in the craft of painting and institutionalization of the strategic partnership through the establishment of PaintingSkillsNetwork. Compared to previous projects, PaintingSkillsNetwork work will include the viewpoints of as many European countries as possible in the description of units of learning outcomes in order to achieve the actual implementation of the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy in the painting trade.

Preparations for methodology workshops and student camps for 2016 and 2017 are currently in the process.



# Erasmus+

## (CoRI) Coating Research Institute's Chiari Award

On 15th October, the **CoRI (Belgian Coatings Research Institute)** held the Giuseppe Chiari Award ceremony during the opening of the new building extension of the Institute. The **Giuseppe Chiari International Award for Coatings Sciences** aims to encourage scientific research projects through the patronage of the CoRI. All submitted award research projects are considered within the following overarching domain: “How coatings can have a positive impact on life conditions”.

It is the mission of CoRI to endeavour to help create new, sustainable functionalities and to provide advice and guidance for coating projects and superior products. Along with other companies in the sector, CoRI is dedicated to improving sustainability through active research on improving living conditions.

CoRI is also committed to developing its own initiative for quality projects that will create jobs; identifying with SMEs research topics with high economic potential; producing a real platform to pool current and upcoming manufacturing processes and technologies; and enabling companies to hold testing sessions that reflect real-life conditions.

Furthermore, CoRI pledges to continue enhancing its relations with universities, colleges, and training centres and institutes in order to support training and employment initiatives; to promote new ideas among students and trainees; to continue to award research in line with the realities and expectations of the sector through the Chiari Award; and to encourage all possible innovations in terms of volatile organic compounds, transition to solvent-borne paints, generations of water-based paints, etc.

This year, CoRI accepted and judged three project entries: “Naturally (nano) textured hydrophobic coatings” [Julie Hubert, ULB (BE)], “Nanostructured thermal barrier coatings for gas turbine applications” [Ashish Ganvir, Univ. West (SE)], and “TiO<sub>2</sub> nanostructures on g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> nanosheets for water and air treatment by photocatalysis” [Cedric Marien, Univ. Strasbourg (FR)]. Based on evaluations by the jury, **Cedric Marien** was awarded the Giuseppe Chiari Award for his submission.

UNIEP is proud to have been part of the jury and is convinced that the partnership between institutions like CoRI and UNIEP will help development of the profession and improve its attractiveness for a new generation. UNIEP stresses the importance of **tightening**

**the relationship between industry and research centres** with the aim to propose innovative and sustainable products, respectful of the environment and less energy consuming, and improving the quality of life conditions. UNIEP considers the Chiari Award to be the perfect example of the successful synergy of research adapting to the necessity of the sector. UNIEP thanks the talented researchers who have participated this year with their proposals and wishes them continued success on their professional path.



## UEAPME opinion on the Draft 2015 Joint Report on the implementation of the ET2020 Strategic Framework for EU cooperation in education and training

In response to the draft of the **2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the EU2020 Strategic Framework for European cooperation in education and training**, UEAPME has published a position paper in order to promote dialogue on these initiatives.

In this paper, UEAPME reiterates the importance of maintaining an integrated approach for education and training at the EU level with the focus of facilitating flexibility, permeability as well as transparency and comparison of qualifications and competences independently of the way they have been acquired. In light of the poor figures for basic competences recorded from the 2014 Education and Training Monitor, in particular the scores on literacy, numeracy, and lifelong learning, UEAPME maintains that a future-oriented approach is needed when designing education systems and curricula. Additionally, effective policies and education systems are needed to equip Europe's population for personal fulfillment as well as for labour market needs, sustained innovation and economic-growth.

To adapt to changes in the market, education and training systems should improve their effectiveness and efficiency to contribute to raising skill levels of the workforce, addressing skills mismatches, and anticipating and meeting the rapidly changing needs of the labour markets. To promote this, UEAPME recommends that efficiency of funding be directed towards the economic case of education and training policy, as well as cost-effectiveness. Furthermore, more emphasis is needed on entrepreneurship at all levels of education and training.

In order to facilitate the quality and relevance of learning outcomes for skills development, it is imperative that the quality of learning outcomes be formed with a **lifelong perspective**. This can be done with the implementation of early childhood education and care, measures to reduce early school leaving, the adjustment of Higher Education to meet the changes in the labour market, an emphasis on Vocational Training and Education, and the incorporation of up-skilling and re-skilling adult learning.

UEAPME also stresses the importance of facilitating learning mobility and strengthening and simplifying EU transparency and recognition tools. It is also necessary for education and training systems to adapt to the recent refugee crisis. These institutions will have a major role to play in transforming this new challenge into a real opportunity for the European society and economy. It is therefore crucial to prepare for supporting the successful integration of refugees and their children in the society and in the labour market.

Visit [www.ueapme.com](http://www.ueapme.com) to read the full UEAPME position paper.



## ProductInfoX

Using the same information tools as ChemXchange, ProductInfoX aims at **solving the information challenge for the construction sector** by making DoPs, installation guides, EPDs, SDS etc readily available. At a meeting held 21st October in Brussels, an overall assessment was communicated evaluating the positive progress of the project: it has fully achieved its objectives and technical goals for the period and has even exceeded expectations. Furthermore, progress indicates that the outcomes of ProductInfoX will be of high importance for the construction industry, users, administration, building control and society in general.

At the meeting, the current work and status of RTD activity performed by Teknologisk Institutt AS was presented. In Work Package 2 “Technical specification of construction product types” totally 53 technical standards are defined. The key functionalities defined in WP3 “System specification” is based on relevant EU legislation including Construction Product Regulation, REACH, and different EU legislation with regards to external environment, working environment and safety and product as well as relevant ISO standards. For WP 3, WP 4, and WP 5, new search and filter functionalities have been added and translations are still in progress.

Key functionalities of the ProductXchange system include important functionalities with regards to quality, health, environment and safety in the Building and construction industry. This project was funded by the European Commission and is projected to have a positive impact on the construction sector. Standards and product information were collected and translated into 11 languages. Final reports are to be presented in May 2016.



## RIGA Conclusions 2015

Ministers in charge of vocational education and training met in Riga on 22 June 2015 to renew efforts in raising the overall quality and status of VET in order to meet the ET 2020 strategic objectives and to reaffirm support for the wider European growth and jobs agenda. Conclusions were reached among the participating countries, EU level social partners and the European Commission on a **new set of medium-term deliverables for the period of 2015—2020**.

These deliverables include promoting work-based learning with special attention to apprenticeships, developing quality assurance mechanisms in VET and establish continuous information and feedback loops in I-VET and C-VET systems based on learning outcomes, enhancing access to VET and qualifications through more flexible and permeable systems by offering efficient and integrated guidance services and making available validation of non-formal and informal learning, strengthening key competences in VET curricula and providing more effective opportunities to acquire or develop those skills, and introducing initial and continuous professional development of VET teachers, trainers and mentors in both school and work based settings.



## European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO)

The European Commission project “**ESCO**” is a multilingual classification of European Skills, Competences, Qualifications, and Occupations. It will help to:

- enhance the functioning of the labour market,
- bridge the communication gap between the world of work and the world of education and training,
- improve cooperation between public and private employment services and education and training institutions,
- reduce skill gaps by finding the jobs matching the skills of people- across borders and language barriers.

ESCO identifies and categorises skills, competences, qualifications and occupations in a standard way, using standard terminology in all EU languages and an open format that can be used by third parties’ software. It enables users to exchange CVs and job vacancies stored in different IT systems.

ESCO covers all economic areas clustered in 27 sectors, 11 of which are already finalised. To develop the remaining 16 sectors, the European Commission launched an online consultation. This online consultation platform is a collaborative meeting space where sector experts can suggest and improve the content of ESCO. Experts can also endorse and rate the content. ESCO will benefit jobseekers, employers, education/training institutions and online job portals.



## REFORME: Network for the vocational education and training in the construction sector in Europe

In 1986 several recognized organizations from various European countries dealing with vocational training in the building sector established a common network in order to promote collaboration and non-profit projects. The partners of **REFORME** have shared their interests and experience in order to develop best practices at national levels and to transfer them into the larger European context. Through the creation of the specialized network, REFORME is able to contribute both knowledge and experience to the dialogue within the construction sector.



The focus of REFORME has been the development of projects and participation in international vocational training workshops and debates, promotion of mobility projects, definition of professional competences, development of pedagogical methods and training programmes and valorization and dissemination of the common achievements.

The partner organizations of REFORME have decided to follow up their collaboration to strengthen attractiveness and excellence of the vocational education and training aiming at construction crafts in Europe.

Today, the REFORME network includes eleven organizations from nine European countries. For more information about REFORME, visit their website at [www.reforme.org](http://www.reforme.org)



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## EVENTS

## UNIEP

## AGENDA

**27 November 2015** — Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia's Painting Skills Legacy Event

**29 January 2016** — UNIEP meeting in Brussels with all UNIEP's members to present the new association EPP (European Painting Partners)

**3 March 2016** — UNIEP's General Assembly in Munich in the framework of Farbe Ausbau & Fassade Fair (2nd-5th March)

## MEMBERS' MAGAZINES & PUBLICATIONS

PDA (UK) - [The Decorator](#), bi-monthly magazine

The Construction Confederation BOUW (B) -

[Les aventures de l'Entreprise de peinture Robert](#)

UPMF (FR) - [Reflets & Nuances](#)