



*SME2B Business Forum Europe 2023:*

## *New Energy for SME and Mid-Caps*

*For an SME- and Mid-caps-friendly European Green Transition Policy, Geostrategic, Innovation and Business dialogues for viable ways forward*



**Sparks Meeting, Rue Ravenstein 60, 1000 Brussels**

In December 2019, the then new European Commission had proposed its strategic vision of the **European Green Deal**, followed in 2020 and 2021 by the adoption of significant law acts (“Fit for 55”), accompanied by other legal initiatives like Taxonomy, Corporate Sustainability Reporting (CSR) and Due Diligence in Global Supply Chains, as recently approved by the European Parliament.

This took place while a **global pandemic** – that until the first half of 2022 – caused enormous economic costs, rising inflation and strong market imbalances. And when **Russia invaded Ukraine**, energy prices skyrocketed to levels 10+ times higher than in 2021. Although in May 2023 energy prices have lowered again to pre-invasion levels, they are still double than in 2019, also because of the Fit for 55 package: the reduction of carbon emission certificates in order to rise costs for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, which logically affects energy prices. In addition, **inflation** is reducing only slowly, while **supply chains** are disrupted and a dramatic **lack of skilled workers** in the industry, as well as of **strategic raw materials** are all issues hard to be solved. Experts say, we are facing a **poly-crisis**, that will impact on the next elections, in particular the EU-elections in 2024.

All this induces currently political leaders in the European Parliament, in the Member states as well as the same **European Commission President von der Leyen** to reason about a “moratorium on further burdens for the economy” (Macron), or a reduction of “bureaucratic burdens by 25%” as EC-President von der Leyen proposed. The **US-Inflation Reduction Act** offering interesting tax credits for a green industry production in the United States was a **final wake-up call for the EU**:



the **European real economy, which are mainly the SME and Mid-Caps, needs urgently** that leaders reflect on how our economic, energy and climate policies can be re-tuned and adapted in the coming years, in order to avoid a heavy loss of competitiveness of hundreds of thousands of European SMEs and Mid-Caps, and with them the loss of millions of jobs: **#andcompetitive!**

The SME2B Business Forum Europe 2023 **“New Energy for SME and Mid-Caps”** organised by **European Entrepreneurs CEA-PME, AMAZON** and **SME Connect**, on June 28<sup>th</sup> 2023 intends to **facilitate dialogues** about political options, geostrategic priorities and technological solutions that can help to achieve an SME- and Mid-Caps-friendly European Economic and Climate Policy, as well as to **stimulate fruitful cross-border cooperation** of sustainable businesses.

## **Wednesday, June 28<sup>th</sup> 2023**

h 09:00 Registration of participants, welcome breakfast

### h 09:30 **Opening Addresses**

**Mr. Markus Jerger**, President European Entrepreneurs CEA-PME and Executive Chairman of Der Mittelstand.BVMW e.V. (D)

**Mr. Othmar Karas**, First Vice-President of the European Parliament (Video-message)

**Mr. James Waterworth**, Amazon, Director EU Public Policy

### h 10:15 **Dialogue 1 – #andcompetitive: a Green Deal also for SME and Mid-Caps**

Opened by: **Mrs. Outi Slotboom**, Director Strategy & Economic Analysis of the Directorate General Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs of the European Commission

**Mr. Paul Rübiger**, Member of the Governing Board of the European Institute for Innovation and Technology, Member of the Employers Group at the EESC, former long-time MEP

**Mr. Michał Boni**, Senior Research Associate Martens Centre for European Studies, former Polish Minister of Labour and Social Policy (1991), and Minister of Public Administration and Digitalisation (2011-2013), former MEP in 2014-2019

**Mr. David Osimo**, Research director at The Lisbon Council, co-author of “Green, Digital and Competitive”

**Mrs. Annalisa Guidotti**, Director Public Affairs, CONFAPI (Italy)

**Mr. Markus Jerger**, Co-President European Entrepreneurs CEA-PME and Executive Chairman of Der Mittelstand.BVMW e.V. (Germany)

**Mr. Alexandre Montay**, Executive Delegate of the Movement of Middle-sized Enterprises M-ETI (France)

**Moderator: Mr. Stefan Moritz**, Secretary General European Entrepreneurs CEA-PME



h 11:45 Coffee break

h 12:00 **Dialogue 2 – Geopolitical Energy Strategies for a competitive Europe**

Opened by: **Dr. Horst Heitz**, Secretary General of SME Europe

**Mrs. Marina Kaas**, Vice-President European Entrepreneurs CEA-PME & Vice-President EVEA (Estonia)

**Mrs. Svitlana Mykhailovska**, Deputy Director General of European Business Association Ukraine

**Mrs. Wincate Muthini**, Programme Director of the Pan-African Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Ethiopia)

**Prof. Simone Tagliapietra**, Senior Fellow Bruegel, Professor of Energy, Climate and Environmental Policy at the Catholic University of Milan and at The Johns Hopkins University – School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) Europe\*

*Moderator: Dr. Horst Heitz, Secretary General of SME Europe*

h 13:00 Walking Lunch

h 14:00 **Dialogue 3 – GreenerSMEs: Innovative Technologies for the Green transition**

Opened by: **Mrs. Anette Galskjøt**, CEO of Danish Export Association

**Mr. Jürgen Tiedje**, Head of Unit Industrial Transformation of the Directorate-General Research and Innovation

**Mrs. Algara Castle**, Head of EU Affairs, eFuel Alliance

**Mr. Walter Hueber**, Chief Operating Officer Kitepower (NL)

**Mr. Wouter IJzermans**, Executive Director of BEPA, BATT4EU Partnership

**Dr. Arthur ten Wolde**, Executive Director of Ecopreneur.eu, European Sustainable Business Federation

**Mr. John Braeckveldt**, Chairman EBA Georgia, Advisor belinus Solarpanels Belgium

*Moderator: Mrs. Anette Galskjøt, CEO of Danish Export Association*

h 15:30 Coffee break



## h 15:45 **Dialogue 4 - Showcasing SME-centred Digital Solutions for the Green transition**

**Opened by: Mrs. Anna Klissouras**, Principal EU Public Policy - SME Ambassador @ Amazon

**Mr. Brando Benifei**, Member of EP-Committees on Internal Market and Consumer Protection, and on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, Rapporteur of the AI-Act

**Mr. Lukas Mandl**, Chair of the European Parliament Delegation for the relations with the Korean peninsula

**Mr. Stephan Blahut**, Secretary General of the Austrian Business Association (A)

**Mr. Frank Riemann**, CEO Fairdoy Ltd. (IRL/D)

**Mr. Tomas van der Heijden**, Co-Founder & CEO at Briink (B/D)

**Prof. Marcello Colledani**, Professor Polytechnic University Milan, Coordinator of Digiprime (I)

*Moderator: Mrs. Iris Brokamp, Secretary General Eurojuris International*

\* Final confirmation pending

## **BUSINESS FORUM - from 9 (am) to 5 (pm):**

*“Meeting successful businesses for a real economy’s green deal in Europe”*

**B2B Marketplace** in the break-out room 3 “THE STAGE” (Sparks Meeting) for business owners and managers about green and digital solutions to raise competitiveness of SME and Mid-Caps in Europe.

Organisation through the **Matchmaking Platform [SME2B](#)** of European Entrepreneurs CEA-PME.