



**20th October 2015**

## **First European Microfinance Day**

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**“What if we could turn job seekers  
into job creators?”**

**Brussels**



With financial support from the:



The Microfinance Centre (MFC) and the European Microfinance Network (EMN) are proud to announce and invite you to the celebration of the first edition of this initiative in the EU.

The 1<sup>st</sup> European Microfinance Day (EMD), 20<sup>th</sup> October 2015, aims to raise awareness of microfinance as a tool to fight social exclusion and unemployment in Europe. A central European event will be held in Brussels and a multitude of workshops, debates, expositions, meetings, etc. will take place at local level all across the EU-28, in collaboration with the members of both networks.

## Concept

Microfinance in Europe is quickly becoming a relevant tool to reduce social & financial exclusion through the provision of financial (microcredit, **microinsurance**, etc.) and non-financial services (trainings, mentoring, etc.). The European microfinance sector offers solutions to the under-served to help them become self-employed and to create jobs across the continent.

Nevertheless, to further enhance the development of the sector and its impact, several questions need to be considered by stakeholders all over Europe:

- Is the current Microfinance definition appropriate for the sector?
- Are the EU programmes for Microfinance conveniently designed and implemented for the sector's needs?
- How could the different regulatory frameworks at national level be better adapted to the development of the sector?
- Should the EU programmes reinforce specific support measures for the provision of all the non-financial services offered by the sector?

This 1<sup>st</sup> European Microfinance Day will try to answer these questions but it will also serve as framework to achieve the following:

- Raise awareness among European citizens of the existence of microfinance and of how it is different from the mainstream financial sector.
- Explain to the political decision makers the benefits of microfinance and present them some lines of a policy agenda for the development of the sector.
- Draw the attention of European media to how microfinance actually works in Europe and to how it supports European citizens, unemployed or excluded from the traditional financial sector.
- Exchange experiences within the European microfinance sector by giving visibility to the performance of EMN & MFC members.
- Allow local members to increase awareness of their achievements and mission at local level.

## Programme Overview

### *Official Opening followed by a Cocktail Reception*

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Monday, 19th October 2015 – 5pm  
European Economic Social Committee (EESC), Brussels

Under the aegis of the Luxembourgish Presidency of the EU, the European Microfinance Day will be inaugurated on the **19<sup>th</sup> October** with a high level opening session addressed to European economic and political decision-makers from the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Investment Bank, the European Economic and Social Committee, and EU stakeholders in general.

The opening session will be honoured by the presence of **Her Majesty Queen Mathilde of Belgium** and will welcome the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, Ms **Marianne Thyssen**, as keynote speaker.

Mr **Patrick Sapy**, General Manager at microStart and President of EMN will chair the session, which will be hosted by the President of the ECO section from the European Economic and Social Committee, Mr **Joost van Iersel**. The speakers' panel will be composed of:

- Luxembourgish Minister of Labour, Employment and the Social and Solidarity Economy, Mr **Nicolas Schmit**;
- MEP, Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats), Dr **Paul Rübzig**;
- Vice-President of the EIB, Mr **Pim Van Ballekom**;
- Former Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and President of the Steering Committee on the use of funds (COSEF) for the Social Cohesion Fund in France, Mr **Michel Camdessus**;
- Former President of the European Investment Bank (EIB) and President of microStart, Mr **Philippe Maystadt**;

The event will be followed by a cocktail.

To register, please fill in and submit the [registration form](#).

*Workshop on Regulations and laws for microfinance in the EU: Current situation and opportunities for improvement*

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Tuesday, 20th October 2015 – 10am  
European Economic Social Committee (EESC), Brussels

On the first European Microfinance Day itself, **20<sup>th</sup> October**, EMN and MFC, together with the **EIB Institute** invite you to a Brussels-based workshop on **Regulations and laws for microfinance in the EU: Current situation and opportunities for improvement**.

The speakers' panel will be composed of:

- Head of Social Business (Social Entrepreneurship) and Microfinance at BNP Paribas, Ms **Claudia Belli-Jeanteur**;
- Head of Microfinance at European Investment Fund, Mr **Per-Erik Eriksson**;
- Of Counsel at Arendt & Medernach, Ms **Anne Contreras**;
- Team leader, DG EMPL Unit C2 - Sectorial Employment Challenges, Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship at European Commission, Ms **Andrea Maier**;
- Habitat for Humanity International and Board member of the Microfinance Centre, **Lucija Popovska**;
- President at Permico and Secretary General at European Microfinance Network, Mr **Corrado Ferretti**.

Mr **Per-Erik Eriksson**, Head of Microfinance at European Investment Fund (EIF), will moderate the session.

On the occasion of the first European Microfinance Day, Ms **Maria Nowak**, Founder of Adie and President of Adie International, will present the investment fund Helenos, as preamble of the session.

The workshop will be followed by an informal lunch.

To register for the workshop, please fill in and submit the [registration form](#).

More events, organised by the members of both networks, will be held all across Europe addressed to local stakeholders.

## Some figures about the Microfinance sector in Europe

A minimum of 121,270 microenterprises and start-ups were supported in 2013. Assuming that, on average, two jobs are created/preserved in the supported microenterprises and start-ups, the resulting number of jobs created by microfinance activity in 2013 reaches, at least, 250,000 throughout Europe. If analysis is limited to EU member states, the calculation has an impact on at least 150,000 jobs created or maintained per year (in 2013: 75,707 microenterprises and start-ups were supported).

At the same time, Microcredit also helps stimulate local economies and contributes to the generation of tax revenues. These benefits are not always computed. According to the "social return on investment" tool, each Euro invested in a microfinance institution generated 3.6 Euros in the United Kingdom (Department of Business, Innovation & Skills). This leverage potential enhances the role of Microfinance as one of the main options to be included in the plans for re-launching investment in Europe.

The data obtained from the last edition of the "EMN Overview of the Microcredit in the EU 2012-13" confirms this growing role of the sector, as follows:

1. **390,000** microloans disbursed in 2013 (vs. 204,000 in 2011)
2. **79% & 21%** business/personal loans (vs. 74% / 26% in 2011)
3. Average loan **EUR 8,507** (vs. 5,135 in 2011)
4. Approximately **EUR 1.5 bn.** in loans in 2013 (vs. 1 bn. in 2011)
5. **121,270** microenterprises & start-ups supported with financial and non-financial services (2013)

The previous figures highlight the importance of the Microfinance sector in order to tackle some of the most important challenges in our current societies: employment, social inclusion, youth unemployment, entrepreneurship, etc.

## Context

EMN and MFC will celebrate the 1st European Microfinance Day, and will do so in cooperation with the 180 members of both networks in the European Union. The 1<sup>st</sup> EMD will be held on 20th October 2015 all across the EU.

The [European Microfinance Network's \(EMN\)](#) mission is to build up universal and open access to appropriate financial and complementary support services suited to society's needs at affordable prices allowing people to deploy their talents in order to create wealth and value while having a positive social impact. EMN is empowering its members to become acknowledged actors and partners in the financial sector that reach out to a large number of enterprising people who, in turn, create jobs and contribute to sustainable growth. EMN primarily focusses its activities in European Union and EFTA/EEA member states.

The [Microfinance Centre's \(MFC\)](#) mission is to contribute to poverty reduction and the development of human potential by promoting a socially-oriented and sustainable microfinance sector that provides adequate financial and non-financial services to a large numbers of poor families and micro-entrepreneurs. MFC primarily focusses its activities in Central and Eastern Europe and in the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The event is supported by:

- The [Luxembourgish presidency of the EU](#)
- The European Commission - [DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion](#)
- The EIB Group: [European Investment Bank \(EIB\)](#), [European Investment Fund \(EIF\)](#) and the [European Investment Bank Institute \(EIBI\)](#)
- The [European Economic and Social Committee \(EESC\)](#)
- [MEP, Dr Paul Rübig](#)
- [HAVAS](#)
- SME Europe (tbc)



European Economic and Social Committee



LE GOUVERNEMENT  
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG  
Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et  
de l'Économie sociale et solidaire



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