

European Commission
DG Enterprise and Industry
Unit D.4
SME Policy Development and Small Business Act

entr-sba@ec.europa.eu

10 December 2014

Dear Sirs,

A strong European policy to support Small and Medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and entrepreneurs 2015-2020 – Public Consultation on the Small Business Act (SBA)

Introduction

We are the Quoted Companies Alliance, the independent membership organisation that champions the interests of small to mid-size quoted companies. Their individual market capitalisations tend to be below £500m.

The Quoted Companies Alliance is a founder member of EuropeanIssuers, which represents over 9,000 quoted companies in fourteen European countries.

Our ID number for the European Commission's register of interest representatives is 45766611524-47.

Response

We welcome the opportunity to respond to this consultation.

A successful return to economic health in the European Union can only be brought about by encouraging and promoting investment in the areas where sustainable jobs can be created. We believe that small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) are the engine for economic growth and jobs and are key in driving European economic recovery.

Companies find it difficult to access bank loans and as many businesses need to recapitalise, access to public equity markets for SMEs is paramount. This involves re-examining barriers to obtaining a listing and the ongoing requirements and ensuring that public equity markets for SMEs have a strong investor base and liquidity.

We have welcomed the European Commission's efforts so far in taking accounts of SMEs' needs, particularly the Communication on Long-Term Financing of the European Economy published earlier this year. However, the Commission should not stop short of taking a complete and holistic review of the burdens on quoted SMEs. It should examine overall what is appropriate and beneficial in terms of a regulatory approach for primary markets, rather than examining measures in a piecemeal approach. As such, we urge the Commission to develop a joined-up approach to reviewing SMEs' access to public equity finance.

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We would highlight that we encourage the simplification of regulation for SMEs, not necessarily the creation of new regulation.

We view SME access to finance as vital to encouraging economic growth and sustainable employment opportunities throughout Europe and we would welcome a strong, integrated European Union policy to support SMEs.

If you would like to discuss our response in more detail, we would be happy to attend a meeting.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'TW', is positioned above the typed name and title.

Tim Ward
Chief Executive