



*Business Support on Your Doorstep*

# EU Alert

network  
enterprise europe

20th November 2009

## **FREE Workshop - Birmingham Chamber of Commerce**

### **'New 2010 VAT rules for Importing and Exporting'**

**Friday 11th December 2009, 7.30am - 10.30am**

**From January 1st 2010 new rules aimed at modernising and harmonising cross-border VAT rules will come into force throughout the European Community.**

The following businesses WILL be affected by the changes:

- Any business supplying services to overseas businesses
- Any business receiving services from overseas businesses
- Any business supplying goods to other EC countries
- Any business wanting to reclaim VAT incurred in another EC country

The January 1st changes to cross-border VAT rules represent a dramatic reform of the current VAT regime that applies to the supply of services whilst simultaneously introducing important changes to the intra-eu reporting regime for goods.

Midlands Enterprise Europe Network and Midlands World Trade Forum invite you to join us for this FREE workshop focused on explaining the implications of the new VAT rules and procedures and the necessary steps businesses should take in order to comply with them.

To book your place at this workshop simply complete the booking form provided (attached to this email) and fax/email it back to **Enterprise Europe Network** on **0121 607 0130** or by email at **p.meikle@birminghamchamber.org.uk**

## 70% of Ringtone-Scam Websites Cleaned Following EU Investigation

70% of websites investigated for miss-selling ringtones, wallpapers and other mobile phone services have been corrected or closed, following an 18 month EU consumer crackdown carried out by 27 Member States, Norway and Iceland. Since June 2008, when initial checks took place, 301 websites were investigated by national enforcement authorities for serious breaches of EU consumer law. 70% of the 301 cases investigated, have now been resolved. 52% (159 websites) have been corrected and 17% (54 websites) have closed. The three main problems found were: unclear pricing (for example, information was missing or incomplete); failure to provide complete trader information; and misleading advertising, in particular, advertising ringtones as "free" where the consumer is in fact tied into a paying subscription. In Italy, in February and May enforcement authorities, as a result of the sweep, imposed large fines of around 2 million Euro on 9 major companies found to be in breach of the law.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1725>

## Commission Welcomes Landmark Step Towards a Truly Global Internet

At the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in Sharm El Sheikh (Egypt), the European Commission welcomed a landmark step towards a truly global (and local) internet: the announcement that "Internationalised Domain Names" will be introduced at the top level. Until now, internet domain names were either fully or partly in the Latin "a to z" alphabet. ICANN (the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers), which manages the internet's core directory, has announced that a fast track process would be launched today to open up country code top level domains (like ".eu" of europa.eu) to non Latin characters.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1717>

## EURES: Matching People With Jobs for 15 Years

The European network of employment services (EURES) celebrates 15 years of helping people find a job in another European country. EURES brings together public employment services from 31 European countries and offers direct online access to over 700,000 job vacancies every day. In parallel, job mobility experts from around the EU are gathering in Brussels to discuss the future shape of the service and its role in tackling unemployment in Europe.

"Every month, EURES helps thousands of people find a job in another European country. It is the only Europe-wide job service, matching jobseekers and employers across 31 countries," said Employment Commissioner Vladimír Špidla.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1714>

## EU and Egypt Step Up on Employment and Social Affairs

Vladimír Špidla, EU Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities Commissioner, will travel to Egypt to discuss cooperation with the EU on employment and social issues. The two sides will exchange experiences on tackling the social impacts of the economic crisis and discuss progress towards social and employment objectives under the EU's neighbourhood policy.

"Egypt is a key partner for the EU in the Mediterranean region and we want to step up our cooperation on employment and social issues while promoting social justice," said Commissioner Špidla. "We call on Egypt to continue its reforms in line with the employment and social objectives agreed under the European Neighbourhood Policy. Through our cooperation we can help transform the Mediterranean into an area of peace, democracy, cooperation and prosperity."

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1706>

## 150 Sports Organisations get Financial Support from the Commission

The Commission is providing financial support to 18 sport-related projects in the European Union, involving 150 sporting organisations. The grants awarded amount to a total of € 4 million, and are part of the 2009 Preparatory Action in the field of sport, which was approved by the European Parliament as a step towards the implementation of the new EU competence for sport enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty.

Maroš Šefčovič, the European Commissioner responsible for sport, noted, "Expectations of sport stakeholders are high. The enormous interest in this first call for proposals clearly demonstrates the need for support for transnational sport projects in the EU. The selected projects offer sport organisations an opportunity to exchange good practices and expand their networks, illustrating the added value the EU can bring to sport. This first wave of projects will also allow the Commission to gather information and experience which can be used in the implementation of the new EU-level competence for sport under the Lisbon Treaty."

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1705>

## Manifesto for Creativity and Innovation in Europe

The "Manifesto for Creativity and Innovation in Europe" is one of the key outcomes of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009. The document is the result of a collective work of the Ambassadors of the Year, who are leading European personalities from the fields of culture, science, business, education and design. With its 'Seven Commandments', the Manifesto will help shape the EU's strategy for promoting creativity and innovation for the next decade. The Ambassadors are handing the Manifesto over to Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso at a ceremony in the Commission's press room.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1702>

## **Consultation: European Citizen's Initiative**

The Lisbon Treaty introduces a new form of public participation in European Union policy shaping, the European citizens' initiative, which enables one million citizens who are nationals of a significant number of Member States to call directly on the European Commission to bring forward an initiative of interest to them in an area of EU competence.

Before citizens can start exercising this new right, a few ground rules and procedures have to be laid down in an EU regulation.

Given the importance of this new tool for citizens, civil society and stakeholders across the EU, the Commission has opened a broad public consultation in order to seek the views of all interested parties on how the citizens' initiative should work in practice.

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat\\_general/citizens\\_initiative/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/citizens_initiative/index_en.htm)

## **Consultation: Financial Conglomerates Directive**

Obtaining information from market participants on the necessity to improve the provisions of the Financial Conglomerates Directive in a way that would better serve the Directive's objectives, aimed at the control of the so-called group risks (contagion, complexity, concentration, conflicts of interest) and the detection of multiple use of capital i.e. double gearing in groups that are regarded as financial conglomerates.

[http://ec.europa.eu/internal\\_market/consultations/2009/fcd\\_review\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/consultations/2009/fcd_review_en.htm)

**If you have any queries about the EU Alert bulletin, or would like some more information about any of the topics in this edition, please contact Enterprise Europe West Midlands on 0121 455 0268**

[www.een-midlands.org.uk](http://www.een-midlands.org.uk)

