Access to finance for SMEs (Dimension 6): Facilitate SMEs' acc

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Access to finance for SMEs (Dimension 6): Facilitate SMEs' access to finance and develop a legal and business environment supportive to timely payments in commercial transactions (Small Business Act Principle 6) (SME Policy Index: Eastern Partner Cou...

Access to finance is one of the main challenges faced by enterprises of the EaP region. According to BEEPS 2009, it is perceived as either the first or the second most important obstacle to doing business. Bank lending, the main source of external funding for SMEs, has been significantly affected by the recent country-specific and international crises. Other external sources of finance such as leasing have yet to be developed. This chapter focuses on government policies and instruments to facilitate development of and access to external sources of finance by SMEs, according to the Small Business Act for Europe. Dimension 6 contains two main sub-dimensions: sources of external finance for SMEs and the legal and regulatory framework that supports their development. Policies to support general financial literacy, which affects both the demand for credit by SMEs and the supply of finance by financial institutions, is considered in the third sub-dimension.

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