IAFEI Weekly Update

Knowledge, Resources, News, and Announcements

Valued All IAFEI Board members, ExCom members & Advisory Committee members:

This is an issue of **IAFEI Weekly Update** for the week of **March 9, 2026**.

My heartfelt thanks go to Conchita (CLM), Piergiorgio (PGV), Oba san, and Nobu (NTA) for their continued support and for consistently recommending various kinds of content to the editorial team.

Please feel free to circulate this Weekly Update within your organization. I am hoping that this Weekly Update may increase the value of IAFEI membership. If you have any suggestions, or recommendations, or would like to participate to provide articles, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your continuous support and I would love to hear from you.

Tsutomu Mannari (TMA)
Chairman of IAFEI

(Total 6 pages)

Upcoming Events (Tentative)

Date	Time	Event
End Mar.- Apr.		IAFEI Quarterly #61 Issue
End Apr.		Technical Committee Webinar
May. 12 (Tue)	6PM Hanoi, 7PM Beijing/Manila/Taiwan, 8PM Tokyo, 1PM CET	Q2 Ex Com Meeting
Mid Jun.		Technical Committee Webinar
End Jul.		IAFEI Quarterly #62 Issue
Aug. 3 (Mon)	6PM Hanoi, 7PM Beijing/Manila/Taiwan, 8PM Tokyo, 1PM CET	Q3 Ex Com Meeting
End Aug.		Technical Committee Webinar
Mid Oct.		IAFEI DAY
Nov. 10 (Tue)	6PM Hanoi, 7PM Beijing/Manila/Taiwan, 8PM Tokyo, 12 PM CET	Q4 Ex Com Meeting + BOD Meeting
Dec. 10 (Thu)		IAFEI Quarterly #63 Issue

You are welcome to visit our **official website** www.iafei.org

To Table of Contents & Summary

SELECTED CONTENT & EDITORS'S PICKS

01 BUSINESSEUROPE | Headlines | February 19, 2026

Stepping up EU simplification efforts in the field of social affairs

To explore how to advance EU simplification efforts in social legislation, we hosted an event yesterday in Brussels together with our member federations the Confederation of German Employers' Associations (BDA) and the Confederation of Danish Employers (DA), featuring Roxana Mînzatu, Executive Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for Social Rights and Skills, Quality Jobs and Preparedness. In his opening remarks, our Director General Markus J. Beyrer underlined the urgency of action: "Regulatory burdens, together with energy costs, are the top factors deterring investment in Europe. European companies are spending as much on compliance as they do on innovation. This is undermining future growth and jeopardising the creation of quality jobs." The panel discussion with EVP Roxana Mînzatu, Steffen Kampeter (CEO of BDA), Delphine Rudelli (Director General of Ceemet), moderated by Mattias Dahl (Chair of BusinessEurope Social Affairs Committee), focused on reducing regulatory burdens, improving the implementation of existing rules and ensuring that the upcoming Quality Jobs Act delivers on simplification. The discussion emphasised the importance of social dialogue and simpler legislation to preserve Europe's social model, enabling companies to invest and create quality jobs. Alongside the event, we also published concrete ways to simplify EU social legislation while preserving workers' rights. Our goal: facilitate compliance through more competitiveness-friendly social legislation to sustain Europe's social model in a particularly challenging period for European companies. (… …)

Other Headlines

- **Outcomes of EU leaders informal retreat**
  EU leaders recently met for an informal retreat at Alden Biesen to discuss how to deepen the Single Market, reduce economic dependencies, and boost competitiveness. In this video, our President Fredrik Persson shares his thoughts on the outcomes.

- **Did you know?**
  €291 billion in EU GDP lost between 2021 and 2025 for not having the EU-Mercosur Agreement in Place.

- **Quote of the Week**
  "If the system starts slowing down… companies start losing interest in participating in standardisation." (Our Senior Adviser Jan Rempala quoted by Euractiv on 18 February regarding the EU standards system)

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(↑ Recommended by PGV)

02 BUSINESSEUROPE | Headlines | February 13, 2026

Call for action at meeting with António Costa and Antwerp Summit with von der Leyen

Ahead of the EU Leaders' Retreat in Alden Biesen, our President Fredrik Persson met on Wednesday with EU Council President António Costa to discuss our proposals on competitiveness. "The EU is at a crossroads. Unity and urgent delivery are essential to put the European economy back on track," he said. "Companies need strong actions that are felt on the ground, and we are not there yet." Also on Wednesday, at the Antwerp Summit alongside European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, Persson set out concrete proposals to take the EU From Ambition to Delivery in 2026. These include reducing barriers within the single market, removing excessive regulatory burden, lowering energy costs, mitigating geopolitical risks, diversifying trade partnerships, and securing market access for European businesses globally. We call for clear commitments and a concrete roadmap to accelerate the delivery of the EU competitiveness agenda. (… …)

Other Headlines

- **Espresso Briefings podcast - episode 4**
  In this episode, our President Fredrik Persson explains why urgent and united action from European leaders is needed now, not just to keep pace, but to take the lead. "Only in the last few weeks have we seen how global pressure is intensifying. Europe must act decisively to stay competitive," he points out. Tune in to hear the full discussion on what Europe needs to go from ambition to delivery.

- **Making the General Data Protection Regulation more effective**
  Our new paper is out! Europe has shown that it can lead globally on data protection. The GDPR became a benchmark because it combined strong fundamental rights protection with ambition for innovation. Today, the question is not about lowering protection. The real challenge is how to make the rules clearer, more workable and genuinely risk-based in a fast-changing digital economy. Our paper argues for focusing regulatory attention where individuals face real harm, while avoiding unnecessary burdens in routine low-risk situations. It also highlights the need to enable responsible data use for research and AI, where Europe's competitiveness is at stake. A key proposal is to clarify the treatment of pseudonymised data, in line with EU case law, to improve legal certainty and better align obligations with actual risk. The proposed clarifications are an invitation to a cooperative discussion on how to make Europe's data protection framework stronger, smarter, and more resilient for the future.

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03 BUSINESSatOECD | Special Update: Cutting Complexity | February, 2026

A Simplification Agenda for Growth, Productivity, and Competitiveness

Today, business leaders from our global business network presented priorities for Cutting Complexity: A Simplification Agenda for Growth, Productivity, and Competitiveness to the OECD's Ambassadors and leadership, including the Secretary-General Mathias Cormann. The meeting served as the 2026 edition of our Annual Consultation with the OECD Council — a longstanding tradition which delivers business priorities for the OECD's policymaking agenda at the outset of the year.

Setting the scene, leadership from our national member organisations – specifically the United States, Japan, Germany, and Mexico – each provided a regional perspective of what a thriving private sector requires, jointly underlining the challenges that excessive policy complexity brings for the private sector. Led by our Chair Rick Johnston, our business network called on the OECD to champion a simplification agenda for growth, productivity, and competitiveness providing key recommendations in three priority areas:

- Cutting Red Tape: Simplifying the Way of Doing Business
- Clearing the Path: Unlocking Innovation and Economic Participation
- Dealing with Distortions: Addressing Government Intervention in Global Markets

Our recommendations set the tone for future business advocacy with the OECD and its 38 Member States throughout the year. The meeting also laid the foundations for our upcoming contribution to the annual OECD Ministerial Council Meeting, which Finland will chair in June. As the OECD's unique strength lies in its evidence-based analysis, ability to drive policy coherence across disciplines, and close institutional relationship with Business at OECD, we look forward to working with the OECD to deliver smarter regulation, better conditions for doing business, and a level global playing field.
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04 BUSINESSatOECD | February, 2026
Competitive Through Connections - 2025 Annual Report -

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05 The Word Bank Group | New Report | February, 2026
Women, Business and the Law

The World Bank Group's Women, Business and the Law (WBL) is a global benchmarking project that measures how laws, regulations, and policies shape women's economic opportunities and private sector development across 190 economies. WBL data and analysis guide countries in identifying opportunities for reforms that unlock women's economic potential and drive job creation and economic growth. (… …)

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06 The Word Bank | Blogs | February 18, 2026
How to create jobs for the world's 1.2 billion new workers
By Ajay Banga

The world moves on different wavelengths. Some are high-frequency shocks—wars, emerging technologies, market panics—that spike quickly and dominate our attention. Others are low-frequency forces that move slowly but relentlessly: demographics, globalization, water and food scarcity.

The high-frequency waves feel urgent. The low-frequency waves reshape the system. That is not to say crises don't matter. But we cannot become casualties of the slow burn simply because the immediate crisis burns hotter or dominates more headlines. Ignore the slow burn long enough, and it becomes an inferno.

One of those forces is already in motion. Over the next 10 to 15 years, 1.2 billion young people in developing countries will come of working age—a scale the world has never seen. On current trajectories, these economies are expected to generate only about 400 million jobs over that same period—leaving a gap of staggering proportions.

This is often framed as a development challenge, and it is. It is also an economic challenge. And it is increasingly a national security challenge.

What was striking at the Davos conference was how easily this issue was brushed aside—overshadowed by the urgency of the issue du jour. It must not be ignored at coming forums like the G-7 and G-20.

If we invest early in people and connect them to productive work, this vast new generation can build lives of dignity and become a foundation for growth and stability. If we do not, the consequences are predictable: pressure on institutions, irregular migration, conflict, and rising insecurity as young people reach for any path available to them.

The World Bank Group is pursuing the first path with urgency, bringing together public finance, knowledge, private capital, and risk management tools around a jobs strategy built on three pillars.

First, creating infrastructure—both human and physical. Without reliable power, transportation, education and healthcare, private investment and jobs never materialize. While the role of physical infrastructure is well understood, investment in people is equally critical. For example, a skills center in Bhubaneswar, India that is supported in partnership with the government and private sector trains nearly 38,000 people each year. Because the preparation is aligned with real market demand, nearly all graduates secure employment—or go on to create jobs themselves, supported by engineering, manufacturing, and intellectual property training.

Second, creating a business-friendly environment. Clear rules and predictable regulation reduce uncertainty and improve the ease of doing business. Jobs are generated when entrepreneurs and firms have the confidence to invest and expand. Public resources can help unlock that process, but job creation at scale depends on the private sector—especially micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises that generate most employment.

(… …)

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