



*“The voice of crafts and SMEs in Europe”*

## **SMEs cast doubts on the consequences of “SMIT”**

*The procedure should be voluntary and SMEs should be exempt from the scope of the Regulation*

Brussels, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2017 – UEAPME is critical of the proposal for a Regulation on a Single Market Information Tool as it is unclear what the consequences will be for SMEs and there is a lack of crucial safeguards. Therefore, UEAPME asks for more detail on what is meant by “measures of last resort” and insists that the procedure remain voluntary for the enterprises. Furthermore, SMEs should be clearly exempt from the scope of the Regulation.

UEAPME is highly concerned with the proposed Single Market Information Tool (SMIT) currently discussed in the Council. The so called “SMIT” will allow the Commission to request defined and readily available data (such as cost structure, pricing policy or product volumes sold) in cases of serious difficulties with the application of EU Single Market legislation. The Single Market Information Tool fundamentally targets businesses while it is the Commission and the Member States that are responsible for abolishing barriers and ensuring that the Single Market functions effectively.

Commenting on the safeguards, **Secretary General Véronique Willems** said that *“although the Commission states that such requests would be a “measure of last resort” and the information would be handled subject to strict confidentiality requirements, this is not mentioned in the text of the Regulation.”* The proposal also fails to indicate what other means to obtain information can and will be used or when and on which basis the Commission will decide that the “SMIT” request for information is a measure of last resort.

Ms Willems emphasised that *“in UEAPME’s view the procedure should remain in any case voluntary for the enterprises. Consequently there is also no reason to impose sanctions to enterprises. The proposal fails to give any argument and justification for imposing sanctions.”*

Despite the fact that the Commission states that it will not issue requests for information to micro companies, to “avoid imposing disproportionate administrative burdens on them”, they can be indirectly affected by the SMIT. *“That is why UEAPME insist to clearly exempt SMEs from the scope of the Regulation,”* concluded Ms Willems.

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**EDITORS’ NOTES:** UEAPME is the employers’ organisation representing Crafts and SMEs from the EU and accession countries at European level. UEAPME has 64 member organisations covering about 12 million enterprises with 55 million employees. UEAPME is a European Social Partner. For further information please visit <http://www.ueapme.com/> or follow [@UEAPME](https://twitter.com/UEAPME) on Twitter.

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