



“The voice of SMEs in Europe”

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UEAPME: Commission’s new definition of SMEs more in line with their reality in Europe

Brussels, 08th May 2003. UEAPME, the European craft and SME association, warmly welcomes the new definition adopted by the Commission on micro, small and medium sized enterprises. The new definition corresponds better to the reality of SMEs across the European Union.

The SME association particularly welcomes the inclusion of an official definition for micro-enterprises, which are one of the main drivers of innovation, employment as well as social and local integration in Europe. “The new definition is very positive“ **Hans Werner Müller**, UEAPME’s secretary General commented today, "but now it must be matched with more targeted Community programmes for these enterprises.”

UEAPME further welcomes the new turnover thresholds set for small enterprises - below EUR 50 million- and micro- enterprises - maximum EUR 2 million-, which takes their situation better into account. However, the association argues that this threshold remains arbitrary, as it is not based on an in-depth analysis and it is variable from case to case. UEAPME also backs the new definition of "enterprise" adopted by the Commission, as this new definition now covers all entities engaged in economic activities, regardless of their legal form.

Finally, UEAPME welcomes the Commission’s effort to reduce the administrative burden for SMEs by allowing enterprises to use simple solemn declarations to certify certain of their characteristics and to speed up the administrative handling.

***** End *****

Note to editors: For further information, please contact Luc Hendrickx on tel +32 2 230 7599

Raphael Anspach, Press officer
Tel: +32 2 230 7599/ Fax: +32 2230 7861
Email: pressoffice@ueapme.com
Web: www.ueapme.com/pressroom