
STATEMENT

STATEMENT

15th September 2004



“The Voice of SMEs in Europe¹”

DECISION TO LIBERALISE CAR PARTS MARKET IS A BOOST FOR SMEs, SAYS UEAPME

The European craft and SME association welcomes the decision of the EU Commission to adopt the so-called repairs clause, but will push for shorter transition period.

“This decision is a major breakthrough for competition in the EU car parts and automotive repairs market” **Peter Vesterdorf**, Chairman of UEAPME’s Legal Affairs Committee said today. “The first beneficiaries of this decision will be the European consumers and SMEs. Indeed, consumers will be able to enjoy wide choice and fair prices whenever they have to repair their vehicles and SMEs will finally be able to exploit a huge market that had been restricted to car manufacturers in 14 EU countries so far.”

“We are happy to see that the Commission came to the conclusion that having a situation where the consumer can only buy spare parts made by Car manufacturers is unacceptable and anti-competitive” he continued.

UEAPME, which represents over 11 million small and medium sized enterprises across the EU, now hopes that the EU Parliament and the Council will come to the same conclusion as the Commission and back the clause.

“However, we think that SMEs and consumers should not have to wait for an additional period of two years to finally benefit from liberalisation. For this reason, we will lobby the Parliament and the Council to reduce the transition period before this clause can come into force” Mr. Vesterdorf concluded.

Note to editors: For further information, please contact Maria Cimaglia on tel +32 2 230 7599
and Karel Bukholczer on tel : +31 252 565 222

UEAPME are part of ECAR, an alliance of 11 independent EU organisations representing vehicle parts, producers, distributors, independent repairers, the European motor insurance industry, a large cross section of small and medium-sized enterprises as well as the 235 million motorists in the European Union.

¹ UEAPME (**U**nion **E**uropéenne de l'**A**rtisanat et des **P**etites et **M**oyennes **E**ntreprises / **E**uropean **A**ssociation of **C**raft, **S**mall & **M**edium-sized **E**nterprises) is the European Social partner representing craft, trades and SMEs in Europe (EU and countries applying for accession to the EU). It represents, through 75 national and European sectoral federations, over 10 million small enterprises, which employ over 50 million people.