



“The voice of SMEs in Europe”

Press Release

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SMEs expect coherent policies from new Commissioners

Brussels, 14 September 2004 SME owners across Europe will be paying close attention to the European Parliament hearings for Commissioners-designate to find out if the team of new Commissioners is committed to small businesses and to the Lisbon goals. In this perspective UEAPME, the European SMEs employers' association, sent a document to MEPs that should help assess the new Commissioners' loyalty to Europe's number 1 employer: SMEs.

“What European SME owners want to learn from the hearings is whether the European Commission as a whole is committed to creating a better framework for small enterprises by legislating coherently to the benefit of competitiveness” said **Hans-Werner Müller**, Secretary General of UEAPME today.

In recent years, legislative initiatives proposed by the Commission often lacked coherence to the point that some beneficial measures for SMEs were promptly choked-up by proposals from other Commission services that added burdens for small enterprises. Therefore, the association calls for the new Commissioners to live up to their promise by increasing the capacity of DG Enterprise and by better co-ordinating the work of all General Directorates.

According to UEAPME, the fulfilment of the Internal Market has been one of the major victims of incoherent policy-making. Twelve years after its start, the Internal Market is still not a reality for SMEs, especially in the services sector. In order to reverse this trend the association urges the new Commission to revise its proposal on the Internal Market for Services so as to adapt it to the needs of high quality standards for services in all sectors and to eliminate the barriers created by the different national taxation systems.

The association also demands more comprehensive consultations and independent business impact assessments for legislative initiatives in the field of environment and social affairs. Recent Commission proposals in these fields failed to take into account the voices of entrepreneurs because of short and unsuitable consultations procedures. Finally, because small businesses cannot cope with these regulations as well as big enterprises, the new Commissioners should foresee business impact assessments focused on SMEs.

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Note to editors: For further information, please contact Gerhard Huemer on tel +32 2 230 7599.
Read the document: http://www.ueapme.com/docs/pos_papers/2004/040903_EP_Hearing_COM.doc

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