



“The voice of SMEs in Europe”

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

SPORT results confirm SMEs hardest hit under REACH proposals

- **Report underlines need to amend the legislative text if REACH is to work**

Brussels, 05 July 2005 UEAPME, the European small and medium business association, has welcomed the recommendations of the SPORT partnership, which confirm the need to amend the proposed REACH regulation to make it workable, particularly for SMEs, following the publication of the final report today (Tuesday).

“From the outset it has been clear that the REACH proposal would have a disproportionately damaging effect on small businesses, not only manufacturers and importers, but also the large number of downstream users. It is encouraging that the Commission and Member States now share our view that the regulation be adjusted to reduce the potential damage,” said **Guido Lena**, UEAPME Director of Environmental Policy.

The SPORT process clearly demonstrated that REACH does not take account of the specific situation of SMEs and, in their joint recommendations, the SPORT partners urged the ‘simplification of processes’ in REACH if the regulation is to be workable for small firms.

“The partnership found that the registration process was over-complicated even for large manufacturers and importers, which means that the process would definitely be too burdensome and costly for SMEs, which naturally find it more difficult to cope with complicated legislation,” continued Mr Lena.

UEAPME calls for REACH to be amended to reflect the following recommendations of SPORT:

- The need to support data sharing with firms not obliged to register or only obliged to register at a later stage, both to reduce costs and avoid duplicating animal testing.
- The need to avoid overlaps and conflicts with existing legislation.
- Developing less burdensome practises for registration, including standardisation of formats and user-friendly IT tools.

SPORT also highlighted the serious implications that REACH will have for downstream users, particularly due to lack of awareness of regulatory requirements, poor communication in the supply chain, confidentiality issues and problems with foreign languages and expert jargon.

“Small downstream users will find it particularly difficult to comply with the complicated procedures set out in the proposal. There is a need to carry out more awareness-raising and to ensure that the provisions and duties under REACH are simplified and clarified if these businesses are not to be seriously penalised,” stated Mr Lena.

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