



## **“The voice of SMEs in Europe”**

### **Press Statement**

FOR IMMEDIATE ISSUE

#### **Plenary vote on Waste Directive increases red tape for SMEs**

- **Burdensome bureaucracy on companies occasionally transporting waste totally unnecessary**

**Brussels, 14 February 2007.** The European Parliament’s plenary delivered once again mixed results for SMEs when voting on the Jackson report on the Waste Directive in Strasbourg yesterday (Tuesday), according to UEAPME, the European SME employers’ organisation. MEPs cast their vote in favour of a clearer meaning of “by product”, but failed to introduce clauses simplifying bureaucracy for small businesses dealing with non-hazardous waste on an occasional basis.

“A distinction between undertakings regularly managing large quantities of waste and those that occasionally transport waste in small quantities is just plain common sense”, said **Guido Lena**, UEAPME Director for Environmental Affairs. “However, the Parliament decided by a small majority to apply the same rules and obligations to all companies, regardless of a relevant number of MEPs who understood and indeed supported this basic distinction. This will result in extra burdens on small businesses, particularly in the construction sector.”

On the other hand, UEAPME was pleased to see the Parliament clarify the definition of “by product”, thereby spelling out a crucial question that was left unsolved by the Environment Committee. “MEPs rejected external guidelines on this issue in favour of a clearer explanation in the Directive itself. This will increase legal certainty and provide SMEs with a comprehensible timeframe for the adoption and enforcement of the new rules”, continued Mr Lena.

Finally, UEAPME welcomed the introduction of rules ensuring that the forthcoming Environmental Waste Code is understandable and accessible to SMEs and calling for the maximum involvement of stakeholders in the future technical decision-making process. “Small businesses will suffer from increased red tape and disproportionate requirements introduced by the Waste Directive in its current wording. We trust that the EU Member States and the European Commission will work to improve the text and find workable solutions for SMEs”, concluded Mr Lena.

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**EDITORS’ NOTE:** UEAPME is the employers’ organisation representing crafts, trades and SMEs from the EU and accession countries at European level. UEAPME has 81 member organisations, which represent crafts and SMEs across Europe, covering over 11 million enterprises with 50 million employees. UEAPME is a European Social Partner.

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