



"The voice of crafts and SMEs in Europe"

Irish referendum: crafts and SMEs urge Member States to avoid deadlock and suggest enhanced cooperation

Brussels, 14 June 2008 – UEAPME, the European craft and SME employers' organisation, deplored the negative results of the referendum on the Lisbon Treaty in Ireland. President Georg Toifl offered the following analysis:

"As a supporter of the Lisbon Treaty and as European Social Partner, UEAPME is deeply concerned about the negative outcome of the Irish referendum, which is a setback for Europe at a time when its most productive businesses should reap the benefits of European integration. We cannot afford another institutional deadlock."

"18 countries out of 27 have already expressed their willingness to adopt the Lisbon Treaty as the new legal basis for the European Union. All Member States must now work to assess possible solutions to the institutional crisis opened yesterday. If some of them are willing to continue working towards more integration, while others clearly are not, enhanced cooperation can and should be used. In a Europe of 27, one-State blockades are not an option."

"In the meantime, we welcome President Barroso's statement that the European institutions must keep delivering on Europe's key priorities, particularly on the Lisbon agenda for growth and jobs. The functioning of the whole Union cannot fall prey to a handful of naysayers."

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EDITORS' NOTES: UEAPME is the employers' organisation representing exclusively crafts, trades and SMEs from the EU and accession countries at European level. UEAPME has 86 member organisations covering over 12 million enterprises with 55 million employees. UEAPME is a European Social Partner. For further information: <http://www.ueapme.com/>

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