



“The voice of crafts and SMEs in Europe”

EU patent: SMEs warmly welcome hallmark proposal on translation arrangements

UEAPME in favour of suggested translation system, calls on Belgian Presidency to ensure progress on the file

Brussels, 1 July 2010 – UEAPME, the European craft and SME employers’ organisation, warmly welcomed the proposal on translation arrangements for the future Community patent presented by the European Commission today (Thursday). UEAPME fully backed the Commission’s suggestion to build on the official languages of the European Patent Office for filing patent requests, while reimbursing applicants for the costs of translation from another idiom into an official EPO language and providing machine translation for all other EU languages if need be, the results of which must be of high quality, warned UEAPME. This will dramatically reduce filing and translation costs and provide innovative SMEs in Europe with a cost-effective method to protect their intellectual property rights, stressed the SME organisation. UEAPME also called on the Belgian Presidency of the EU, which starts today and has put the Community patent at the top of its priority list, to ensure that the EC proposal is swiftly adopted in order to make progress on this crucial file.

Secretary General **Andrea Benassi** offered the following comments:

“Today’s proposal by the European Commission is in line with our repeated calls to reduce the number of languages and has the potential to inject new momentum into the Community patent. The system proposed by Commissioner Barnier will dramatically reduce translation costs, which are often more than half of the total expenses when applying for a patent, while ensuring the possibility of submitting patent requests in all the official EU languages. Reduced costs will be particularly beneficial for innovative SMEs, which have been hampered for too long by excessive filing expenses. More affordable patents will act as a driver for innovation and foster competitiveness in the single market and beyond. This will allow Europe to catch up on R&D and innovation with its international competitors.”

“The Belgian Presidency of the EU, which starts today, has put innovation at the forefront of its programme. We hope that it will strive to achieve unanimity on today’s proposal and make progress on all the aspects of the Community patent, also based on the breakthrough conclusions adopted under the Swedish Presidency last year. Europe cannot afford any longer a single market in which the same invention is subject to up to 27 different legal systems. The Belgian Presidency has all the elements on the table to put an end to this dysfunctional system. We trust that it will work to do so as of today.”

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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 85 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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