



## ***“The voice of SMEs in Europe”***

### **Press Statement**

IMMEDIATE ISSUE:

#### **Commission President praised for scrapping silly sunlight rules**

**Brussels, 15 September 2005** UEAPME, the European small and medium business organisation, has praised Commission President Barroso for proposing the withdrawal of unpopular rules on the exposure of workers to solar radiation\*.

“By scrapping these absurd sunlight rules the Commission will bring an end to this long running joke. Small businesses and their workers can breath a sigh of relief that reason has ultimately prevailed. President Barroso has sent a message that the EU does listen to its citizens and will not force through unpopular laws; this will help restore the credibility of European legislation,” said **UEAPME Secretary General Hans-Werner Müller**.

“The question has to be asked: would employees really be better protected by making a small café owner or building contractor responsible for assessing the medical risk they face from exposure to solar radiation and taking technical measures to protect them? Surely they would be better served by national governments taking responsibility and providing workers and employers with the adequate information they need to protect themselves from the sun. It is to its credit that the Commission has finally accepted this.”

\*\*\*\*\* End \*\*\*\*\*

**EDITORS’ NOTE:** Commission President Barroso has confirmed that the proposal to make employers responsible for the exposure of their workers to sunlight, under the Optical Radiation Directive, will be one of the rules to be shelved as part of Commission proposals on better regulation. Employment Commissioner Spidla, responsible for the dossier, reaffirmed on 14 September that the proposal would be withdrawn.

UEAPME has led the campaign for scrapping the proposed EU rules on exposure to sunlight. Further information can be found on our website: <http://www.ueapme.com/>

**EDITORS’ NOTE:** UEAPME is the employer’s organisation representing the interests of crafts, trades and SMEs in the EU and accession countries at European level. UEAPME has 78 member organisations, which represent crafts and SMEs across Europe, covering over 11 million enterprises with nearly 50 million employees. UEAPME is a Social Partner.

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