

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3465/01

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to the Commission

Subject: Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the Decopaint study on the potential for reducing emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) due to the use of paints and varnishes

The Decopaint study on the potential for reducing emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) due to the use of paints and varnishes, published by the Commission in July 2001, envisages the possibility of regulating the percentage of solvents in decorative paints and varnishes and the use of solvent-based paints. In view of the importance of paint-producing SMEs for the European economy, the potentially extremely negative impact of a legislative proposal on employment in the sector must be seriously assessed.

Does the European Commission intend to carry out a cost/benefit analysis of the impact of the proposed rules on SMEs?

Will the Commission take due account of the needs of SMEs and the effects on the SME paint sector when it assesses the regulatory options in this area?