Summary
Micro-enterprises frequently face disproportionate uncertainty when minor, purely technical issues trigger formal GDPR proceedings. One recurring example is when a business intends to send a message to a general business address such as **info@company.be**, but the message is internally forwarded by the recipient to **bob@company.be**, causing the communication to appear "personal" despite being B2B in nature. When authorities do not disclose the original email, headers or evidence, organisations cannot provide an informed response. Mediation requests are sometimes converted into complaints without explanation, and no clear information is given about possible fines—creating unnecessary fear, cost and disruption.

Problem Description
In several real-world cases, micro-enterprises were investigated even though:
– the intended addressee was a general business mailbox (e.g. **info@company.be**);
– the appearance of a personal address (e.g. **bob@company.be**) was caused by internal forwarding at the recipient side;
– the authority did not share the original email or headers;
– the complainant could not supply .eml/.msg evidence;
– the communication was demonstrably B2B and the case later closed without sanction;
– yet the organisation spent extensive time responding under fear of sanctions starting from €5,000, which is existentially threatening for micro-firms.

This illustrates a systemic need for clearer procedural information and predictable enforcement.
The EDPB itself recognises the need for *"timely, concise and practical guidance for micro, small and medium organisations"* (Helsinki Statement, p.1)

edpb-statement-20250702-enhance…

.

Proposed EDPB Template: "Procedural Transparency & Fine Predictability Sheet"

1. Mandatory Information to be Provided at Case Opening

Supervisory authorities should provide, at minimum:

- the copy of the complaint (anonymised);
- the exact content of the email under investigation;

- the original .eml/.msg file and headers (or confirmation these were not provided by the complainant);
- clarification whether the issue concerns a *business* or *personal* address, including when the personal address appears only due to internal forwarding (**e.g. intended: info@company.be → visible: bob@company.be**);
- explanation of why a mediation file is elevated to a formal complaint;
- confirmation whether the matter is categorised as minor/technical.

2. Predictable Fine Range Overview

A short standardised table showing:

- the applicable fine band for the case type;
- the minimum / typical / maximum amounts;
- criteria under which the likely outcome is:
  • no sanction,
  • an advice,
  • a warning,
  • or a corrective action without fine.
  This prevents unnecessary psychological and business pressure on very small organisations.

3. Template for Technical Context Assessment

Authorities should use a uniform checklist to acknowledge:

- internal email forwarding by the recipient (e.g. info@company.be → bob@company.be);
- the B2B nature of the communication;
- missing evidence from the complainant;
- SMTP and spam-filter limitations;
- the absence of the original message in .eml/.msg format;
- public registration of the recipient as a business entity.
  These factors must be assessed before escalating to formal investigation.

4. Proportionality Safeguard for Minor Issues

Minor mistakes (typing errors, internal forwarding, missing headers, lost unsubscribe emails) should be resolved via:

- clarification,
- guidance,
- or closure without escalation,
 unless there is clear evidence of wilful misconduct.

Outcome Expected

This template will:

- reduce unnecessary investigations,
- increase legal certainty and trust,
- protect micro-enterprises from disproportionate pressure,
- harmonise procedures across DPAs,
- and support the EDPB's mission to deliver simple, predictable tools for small organisations.

Contact for clarification (not for publication):