

PRESS RELEASE

**Services of General Interest:
Chambers regret European Parliament's neutral
position on Framework Directive**

Commenting on the European Parliament's position on Services of General Interest adopted yesterday, EUROCHAMBRES highlights that a sector-by-sector approach, liberalisation and the avoidance of market distortions should be the main focus of any action of the European Union regarding services of general interest (SGI).

Arnaldo Abruzzini, Secretary General of EUROCHAMBRES, said: *"We regret the Parliaments' decision to opt for a neutral stance and not for an outright rejection of the framework directive as proposed by the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee. A clear message in favour of a sectoral approach and stronger call for further liberalisation would have been far more in the interest of consumers and European business. Liberalisation leads to more efficiency, innovation, quality and an increased competitiveness of the European economy, which is strongly influenced by these kind of services. The Parliament's position may even increase the danger of market distortions and in some cases even exclude competition upfront, like housing and education, without considering the advantages it could bring."*

According to Chambers, a "one-size-fits-all" framework directive is not meaningful and could even hamper the SGI's development as it is characterised by strong differences per sector and Member State. The current regulatory framework has proven to adequately govern the development of SGI in Europe. Liberalised sectors have largely benefited – such as the telecommunications and energy sector – ensuring high standards of quality and creating jobs.

Abruzzini said: *"Chambers defend the principles of subsidiarity and open und fair competition. There is no need for extending the Union's competences, as Member States and local authorities are acting successfully in this field."*

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