

Employment Council: **EUROCHAMBRES deploras ‘two for the price of one’ deal**

EUROCHAMBRES expresses its frustration at the agreements reached in yesterday's Employment Council on the Agency Work and Working Time Directives.

Having consistently called for a longer qualifying period, EUROCHAMBRES is dismayed that the Agency Work directive foresees no qualifying period at all where social partners can't reach agreement. Instead of enhancing flexibility, this will place a greater administrative and financial burden on SMEs. EUROCHAMBRES recalls that SMEs are the main source of employment and job creation in Europe and workforce flexibility is a vital element in their ability to succeed in an increasingly competitive global economy.

EUROCHAMBRES' Secretary General, Arnaldo Abruzzini, commented: *“Both of these dossiers are crucial in providing the flexible labour markets that businesses desire and deserve to be considered separately. It's therefore disappointing that the Council has struck a cheap ‘two for the price of one’ deal, responding to national needs rather than addressing common social and economic challenges. Once again, the Council has shown its inability to see the bigger picture and its appetite for horse trading.”*

Attention will now turn back to the European Parliament. EUROCHAMBRES will be urging MEPs to consider these distinct and complex directives individually and to demonstrate a greater understanding of the needs of SMEs.

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