

PRESS RELEASE

EU Chambers urge Commissioner McCreevy to police spirit of Services Directive

Charlie McCreevy, EU Commissioner for Internal Market and Services, addressed EUROCHAMBRES' Plenary Assembly in Brussels today. Mr McCreevy represents a key Directorate for Chambers whose members, primarily SMEs, belong to both the industry and the services sectors.

Commenting on the Services Directive, Mr McCreevy said: *"I am delighted that Ministers were able to reach political agreement on the proposal for a Services Directive. The result is a balanced and workable text that will deliver substantial benefits to the services sector. The important thing now is to work to finish the second reading as soon as possible. The earlier this happens, the earlier we will be able to reap the economic benefits in terms of growth, competitiveness and jobs."*

As for the ongoing review of the single market, Mr McCreevy added: *"Despite the achievements of 1992, when all barriers would come down, the internal market is never quite finished. However, I do not think the way forward is to embark on yet another ambitious programme of legislative reform. I rather believe the way forward is to ensure that what we have, functions better. We must do less but do it better."*

Addressing the Commissioner, Pierre Simon, President of EUROCHAMBRES, said: *"Chambers would have wished to see a more comprehensive final text, but are pleased that the political process has been concluded nevertheless. What we now ask to your Directorate and to the European Commission as a whole, is to act as a guardian of the spirit of the Directive. To realise its potential, it is crucial that the Directive is properly interpreted and implemented by Member States. We encourage the Commission to act strongly against any Member States that fail to respect the philosophy of the Directive, and who hinder the opening of their markets."*

EUROCHAMBRES requested the Commissioner to take on board the following points in the implementation of the Directive:

- To ensure that single points of contact deliver full benefits;
- To improve clarity and legal certainty;
- To maintain commitment to pre-notify;
- To carry out a full impact assessment;
- To conduct a comprehensive ex-post assessment of the Directive.

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EUROCHAMBRES has member organisations in 44 countries representing a network of 2,000 regional and local Chambers with over 18 million member companies.