

PRESS RELEASE

Services Directive: Chambers welcome end to politics and beginning of implementation

EUROCHAMBRES, the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry, welcomes today's vote on the Services Directive, and praises the European Parliament for holding to the compromise text agreed by the internal market committee last month.

Pierre Simon, President of EUROCHAMBRES, said: *"Chambers applaud the maturity of the EP in reaching a decision on the Directive. While we might disagree with a number of the compromises made, we appreciate the Parliament's success in finding a compromise at all. Some, if not all, of the benefits of the original Directive can still be realised."*

"The passage of this Directive through the EU decision-making machinery has been tortuous and painful, and has been marked by misinformation and misrepresentation at every step. It seems incredible that this piece of legislation – with the potential to bring so much value and benefit to citizens, businesses and the economies of Europe – could have been so maligned and so feared."

Mr Simon then added: *"Our thoughts now turn to the practical implementation of the Directive. Business is concerned that the text is made operational in a quick and effective manner. In particular, we must ensure that the single points of contact in each Member State are accessible and consistent from country to country. According to our Member Chambers, there appears to be little or no coordination between national administrations. Potentially, this could lead to very different support systems in each country, which would detract from the potential benefits. The Commission has a continuing role to play, in helping to guarantee a coherent implementation across all Member States over the coming 3 years."*

Chambers of Commerce, being physically close to business – with 2,000 'branche offices' around Europe – also commit to playing their part, in seeking to maximise the benefits and advantages of the new legislation.

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EUROCHAMBRES has member organisations in 45 countries representing a network of 2,000 regional and local Chambers with over 18 million member companies.