



## **“The voice of SMEs in Europe”**

### **Press Release**

FOR IMMEDIATE ISSUE:

#### **Services Directive: UEAPME calls on MEPs to support Gebhardt compromise**

**Brussels, 3 October 2005** UEAPME, the European small and medium business organisation, is calling on MEPs to support the compromise amendments proposed by the rapporteur Evelyne Gebhardt in advance of the crucial vote on the Services Directive in the Internal Market committee tomorrow (Tuesday).

“Completing the internal market for services is a vital step in enhancing the competitiveness of the EU but this must not come at the expense of the high standards in the services sector. The compromises being proposed by the rapporteur strike the right balance between the opening up of the services sector and maintaining the quality of services and consumer protection,” said **Luc Hendrickx**, UEAPME Director of Enterprise Policy and External Relations.

The proposals to clearly limit the application of the country of origin principle to specific areas of business regulation overcome many of the problems inherent in the initial proposal. Ensuring that the regulation of standards for service provision remains the domain of the country of destination will prevent the undercutting of service quality in the EU.

UEAPME also welcomes the general acceptance that the country of destination must be responsible for supervising the service providers operating within their jurisdiction. This is clearly the only effective way to ensure that these businesses will comply with applicable rules.

“The exclusion of the references to the Posting of Workers Directives from the Services Directive will remove any legal uncertainty in this area and it is important that MEPs support this proposal,” stated Mr Hendrickx.

“While not the ideal solution to this over-complicated legislative text, the rapporteur’s compromise offers a rational approach addressing key concerns associated with the original proposal,” concluded Mr Hendrickx.

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**EDITORS’ NOTE:** UEAPME is the employer’s organisation representing the interests of crafts, trades and SMEs from the EU and accession countries at European level. UEAPME has 78 member organisations, which represent crafts and SMEs across the whole of Europe, covering over 11 million enterprises with nearly 50 million employees. UEAPME is a European Social Partner.

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