



CEBRE - Czech Business Representation to the EU

- Protects the interests of Czech business community vis-à-vis the EU institutions
- Informs Czech businesses about EU legislation affecting them
- Trains Czech entrepreneurs and managers in Brussels
- Represents Czech business associations at European business federations

PRESS RELEASE

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Single Market can't develop further without mutual efforts of both, PA and businesses

Over 80 representatives of European institutions, Member States, European businesses and businesses associations agreed that Single Market can be strengthened only through proper implementation of the Services Directive and through continuous efforts to implement the Single Market Act measures. Nine months after the implementation deadline, European businesses evaluate the results of implementation encouraging, but there is still a lot to be done highlighting the functioning of the electronic Points of Single Contact (PSC) and pointing to the often informative nature of the PSCs.

This gathering on the implementation of Services Directive followed a Czech seminar on PSC that took place in Brussels in February 2010. H.E. Milena Vicenová, Czech Permanent Representative recalled the motto of 2009's Czech Presidency, "Europe without Barriers". "Being pragmatic, it is not up to us, the public administration, to evaluate the implementation of the Services Directive, but to the business sector," said Vicenová.

Francois Arbault, Member of Cabinet of Commissioner Barnier, excused the Commissioner's absence and emphasised the Commission's firm determination to bring the Single Market closer to citizen's and SME's, through the recently adopted "Single Market Act" "We need to make sure that the Single Market for services works better on the ground, in particular for small businesses, and monitor its functioning from a "user-perspective". More integrated services markets resulting from the proper implementation of the Services Directive can already boost European growth by 1.5% of GDP, but there is still potential for more," stressed Mr. Arbault. The hosts acknowledged the audience with the way Services Directive was implemented in the Czech Republic. "Productivity gap in services between EU and US is 30%" mentioned Martin Tlapa, Czech Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade, "therefore tools to boost the services sector, including the PSC, have to provide added value and be client oriented."

Business perspective was presented by number of speakers. Jérôme Chauvin, Director for the Internal Market department of BUSINESSEUROPE recalled that 9 out of 10 new jobs are created in the services sectors. Nonetheless, services account for only 20% of intra-EU trade. Preliminary assessment of the data gathered from the national business federations show that we are on the right track, but there is still much room for improvement, in particular with regard to the functioning and the user-friendliness of the PSCs. Ben Butters, Director of European Affairs Department of EUROCHAMBRES acknowledged that the PSC are fully operating in a limited number of Member States only. "The feedback we receive from Chambers network is very positive on the information side, but the procedural side still seems to have significant space for improvement". Luc Hendrickx, Director for Enterprise Policy of UEAPME, stressed that the performance of the "single points of contact" foreseen by the directive has been "quite disappointing" so far. Authorisation schemes for domestic enterprises must also be simplified. More attention must be given to enforcement. Cooperation among Member States must be increased and standardised forms must be developed. Tina Sommer, President of ESBA raised another important aspect – to what extent do businesses know about the PSC and the help they can get from them? "Only 5% of websites of competent authorities in the UK are fully in line with the spirit of the Services Directive, in particular local authorities are not sufficiently aware of the service they need to provide to businesses" added Ms. Sommer. The Secretary General of the European Council of the Liberal Professions (CEPLIS). Dr. Koutroubas has underlined the importance of the article 37 of the Directive, relating to European Codes of Conduct for the Liberal Professions. He has saluted the fact that most of the request of CEPLIS were taken into consideration by the Commission and the European Parliament at the time of the debate of the Directive proposal

Looking towards challenges ahead, Maria Martin-Prat, Head of Unit at the, European Commission, DG Internal Market, stressed the need to consolidate and to build upon the significant results achieved under the Services Directive. "Implementation does not end here, and we will need to further push for administrative simplification and better functioning PSCs in the years to come", stressed Ms. Martin-Prat. The Czech Deputy Permanent Representative and moderator of the debate Jana Reinišová urged strengthening of the Internal Market shall follow the principle of 3 "Cs" - communication, coordination and confidence. "No legislation is perfect when adopted, because it is a result of a compromise. But we have to make the best use of it," concluded Reinišová.

The debate was organised by Czech Permanent Representation to the EU, Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic and CEBRE – Czech Business Representation to the EU. Shall you be interested in more information, see www.cebrecz.cz/docs/services or contact Michal Kadera, Director of CEBRE at Michal.Kadera@cebrecz.cz.

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