



### **Network of SME Envoys**

**Meeting on 22 September 2015 - Brussels**

**Discussion on the renewed Single Market Strategy**

**Statement by Mrs Marta Marti Carrera,  
Chair of BUSINESSEUROPE's "Entrepreneurship and SMEs" Committee**

#### **Introduction**

Finding new customers is the Nr 1 issue for most SMEs, and it is made difficult because single market rules are not being implemented or applied in a uniform way.

The Commission should therefore push for a better implementation and application of the principles and rules that are at the core of the single market.

#### **Better implementing of the mutual recognition principle in the area of goods**

In the single market for goods, the principle of mutual recognition should be applied much more effectively to:

- Member State testing processes,
- Documentation drawn up according to Member State rules.

There are too many cases where national authorities require – without clear justifications – specific proof of lawful marketing, or where they simply refuse access to their national market.

*Action needed:*

The new Single Market Strategy should enable the Commission to act as a more active guardian of the mutual recognition principle. Businesses also need a more effective mechanism to inform the Commission when mutual recognition is being restricted.

#### **Better implementing of the mutual recognition principle in the area of services**

In areas such as energy, research, waste treatment or transport, specialist business services often require experts to be duly accredited according to EU rules. Today we have a situation of insufficient mutual recognition (between Member States) of the processes for expert accreditation or for authorisation(s) granting. This affects negatively specialist services that want to expand cross-border.



*Action needed:*

The Commission should push for more mutual recognition. Business should have the possibility to provide their services in another Member State without additional formalities or heavy procedures as long as they comply with the essential national and European requirements (in the areas of safety, health, consumer protection, etc.).

**Summary message on action needed for progressing mutual recognition for goods and services**

A mutual recognition clause should be introduced in *new* EU legislation to provide stronger legal certainty for businesses.

This clause should clarify the general architecture that national implementation rules must respect when transposing given EU legislation (so as to avoid too divergent national implementation approaches). If Member States want to introduce additional “home-made” provisions, they should give an explanation to the Commission, which should check it.

**Market surveillance**

Distortions of competition exist in the single market due to the growing number of illegal and non-compliant products.

*Action needed:*

The renewed Single Market Strategy should lead to more efficient coordination between the national authorities that are responsible for checking products. More resources must be secured in order to put in place the facilities and skilled officers that are needed for market surveillance.

**The need to improve support tools such as the Points of Single Contact (PSCs)**

As part of the 2006 Services Directive, Points of Single Contact (PSCs) have been introduced in each Member State as a tool to facilitate the cross-border provision of services. BUSINESSEUROPE has always asked that the PSCs function not only as databanks providing information on national rules, but also as support tools offering companies all the assistance they need to operate across borders. Today, the vast majority of PSCs are only delivering a very basic assistance to SMEs interested to trade or to invest in a foreign market. Most of the PSCs comply with the basic requirements laid down by the Services Directive, which are insufficient to meet business needs.

A PSC Quality Charter was agreed in 2013, laying down performance requirements in the area of assistance provision, going beyond what the Service Directive defined. This Charter was offered for voluntary adoption by the Member States, but it has been implemented by only a few of them.



*Action needed:*

BUSINESSEUROPE calls on the Member States to transform their existing Points of Single Contact into true online business portals not only for services, but also for goods. They should offer SMEs all the information and assistance they need to operate across borders and on the home market, in multiple languages.

In order to define in a more ambitious way the level of service that should be provided by PSCs, a new legislative instrument (a Regulation) might be necessary to complement the text of the Services Directive. BUSINESSEUROPE is open to discuss about such a new Regulation.

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