



European Confederation of Worker Cooperatives, Social Cooperatives and Social and Participative Enterprises

To all Members of the European Parliament

14 February 2006

Dear Member of the European Parliament,

CECOP groups around 83 000 co-operative and participative enterprises employing 1,3 million workers across Europe, more than a third being in services, a proportion which is growing steadily.

Generally speaking, CECOP agrees with the proposed amendments based on the EPP-ESP consensus, and in particular with the replacement of the principle of the country of origin by the principle of free movement. Indeed, our enterprises, in which the workers are both owners and employees, observe high labour standards, whereas labour standards in the EU still need further harmonization. In turn, we consider that the principle of free movement of services can contribute to improving competitiveness, which in turn should favour higher quality of delivery.

As for the criteria of inclusion or exclusion of a given sector from the scope of the Directive, we consider that they should include the importance of such sector on the EU GDP and therefore its impact on EU competitiveness, the difficulty of implementing controls, and the existence of other specific normative instrument for that sector. On this basis, we propose the scope exclusion of health and social services, as well as of services of general economic interest. Such scope exclusion should be mentioned not only in art 1 and recitals, but also in art 2.

Those modifications, in our view, are critical to ensuring that the Directive foster, rather than hamper, the implementation of the Lisbon II objectives, and in particular the development of a highly performing service economy together with high levels of labour standards and protection.

Finally, we note that the European Parliament is presently considering the

Communication from the Commission “Restructuring and Employment” COM(2005) 120, which is closely linked to this Service Directive (such as the proposed measures in the annex, and in particular points n. 6 to 12), and mentions some essential requirements such as the “consistency between various policies”, the “participation on the part of all the stakeholders”, and attention “to the local dimension”. CECOP asks that our requests drafted above be equally taken into consideration at the moment of examining this Communication.

Our organisation remains available, as always, for any debate and consultation, and is ready to assist you in your work with any further information that you may consider necessary.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bruno Roelants', written in a cursive style.

Bruno Roelants
General secretary