



## **Services of general interest:**

### **In favour of European framework regulations that bind together economic, social and regional criteria**

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The Internal Market must be part of a foundation for an EU, in which people can live their lives and companies can produce goods competitively. Therefore the following points can be derived:

- Defining Services of general interest and the manner and means by which they are provided is more than anything a question of subsidiarity, in which the European level is the last, not the most important, link in the chain.
- Provision of these services can undoubtedly occur via the markets and competition; indeed, this should be the preferred route. In the end, however, responsibility for securing the offer as well as the standards lies with the State as the protector of the common good.
- Thirdly, as well as the price that has to be paid for Services of general interest, their selection also has other criteria: These include the insurance of a regional as well as qualitative supply.

**On this basis, it follows that it could be necessary for the Internal Market to create a framework for Member States' activities in this area which deals with questions of securing and ensuring the quality of 'Services of general interest'.**

However, for the reasons mentioned above, this framework must view internal market criteria as only one element amongst many: All regulations applicable to the internal market, competition and State aid must in the same way aim at avoiding protectionism as at ensuring that the public and the economy are provided with these services at a high level of quality and at affordable prices.

Only then will the goal be achieved, to which the EU Convention also aspired: the European Union as a community of peoples, an area in which people live their lives together. More than an internal market - a community of common values.

**The European Union of Christian Democratic Workers (EUCDW) is made up of 22 workers' organisations from 16 countries and is an association of the European People's Party (EPP). Officially responsible for the EUCDW is Christoph Weisskirchen, the General Secretary. Tel 0032 2 285 4164, fax 0032 2 285 4141, e-mail: [eucdw@epp.eu](mailto:eucdw@epp.eu), Website: [www.eucdw.org](http://www.eucdw.org)**