



DET KONGELIGE  
NÆRINGS- OG HANDELSDEPARTEMENT  
*The Royal Ministry of Trade and Industry*  
*The Minister*

Mr. Laurens Jan Brinkhorst  
Ministry of Economic Affairs  
P.O. Box 20101  
NL-2500 EC The Hague  
The Netherlands

Your ref

Our ref

Date  
29.11.2004

**Norwegian comments to the draft directive on services in the Internal Market**

Please find attached comments from the Norwegian Government on the draft proposal for a directive on services in the Internal Market, which we discussed at our meeting in The Hague in August.

As I said in our meeting in August, Norway welcomes the proposal for a comprehensive regulatory framework for improving the free movement of services in the Internal Market. Reports suggest that there are still barriers to trade in the European market for services, and this hamper the potential for growth in this important sector of the economy, and accordingly the employment.

Carefully balancing the interests of cross-border service providers with the interest of safeguarding existing health and safety standards, the environment and consumer protection is a key to the successful regulation of the important market for services in Europe.

The proposal for a Directive on services in the internal market relates to an area governed by the Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA). Hence, we take a great interest in the discussions on the draft directive. The provisions on freedom to provide services in the EEA Agreement should be amended following the final adoption of a new directive in the EU. With a view to facilitating an expedient adoption of the directive and thereby safeguarding the homogeneous development of the market for services in the EEA, we trust that the comments attached to this letter will be duly reflected in EU's decision-making process.

Moreover, Norway would like to point out that certain special arrangements may be called for when incorporating the directive into the EEA Agreement. Reference is made to tax provisions in this context. Norway would like to participate in the committee, which is to be established pursuant to Article 42. We would also like to mention that the provisions of Article 25 relating to posting of third country nationals are not fully covered by the scope of the EEA Agreement, and certain adaptations should be considered.

I will also send these comments to the responsible rapporteur in the European Parliament, Ms. Evelyne Gebhardt, as well as to Commissioner for the Internal Market, Mr. Charlie McCreevy.

Yours sincerely,

  
Børge Brende

Attachment

Copy (including attachment):

Permanent representation of The Netherlands, Ave Hermann Debroux 48, B-1160  
Brussels, Belgium

Permanent representation of Luxembourg, Av. de Cortenberg 75, B-1000 Brussels,  
Belgium

Permanent representation of The United Kingdoms, Av. D'Auderghem 10, B-1040  
Brussels, Belgium