

Press Release 01/2014
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EP vote on Public Procurement Package: freedom of authorities to organise SGEI recognised in secondary law.

Today's EP vote on the two Directives on public procurement and on the new Directive on the award of concession contracts crystallise important achievements of CEEP lobby action. *"After two years of intense discussions with the European Commission and with Members of the European Parliament, significant improvements have been made to the original proposals, in particular when it comes to simplification and flexibility"* stated Valeria RONZITTI, General Secretary of CEEP.

The main achievement for public services' employers and providers is the recognition of the freedom of authorities to define, organise and finance SGEIs. This is a major improvement from the initial drafts of the Directives and should give authorities the necessary room for manoeuvre when choosing the adequate tool for the provision of essential services to citizens. *"This is also a first good implementation of the new Lisbon Treaty provisions on SGEI which should inspire any future legislative initiative or trade agreement that would impact public services in Europe"* continued Valeria Ronzitti.

The clear recognition of public-public cooperation and the move from a strict application of the ECJ Case Law is also a major step in the right direction, for a better use of this tool by public services providers. Nevertheless, it appears that the formulation could have been clearer, that is why *"CEEP will be very attentive to the future application of the definition"*.

It is now up to providers of public services to adapt to those new rules. *"After having discussed with our members, the picture seems to remain quite complex for some actors. This is why we will accompany our members in best using the new opportunities and managing changes springing from the new public procurement rules"* concluded Valeria Ronzitti.

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CEEP gathers enterprises and organisations from across Europe, both public and private, at national, regional and local level, which are public employers or providers of services of general interest. CEEP members contribute to more than 26% of EU GDP and employ 30% of the EU workforce: CEEP is one of the three general cross-industry European Social Partners.