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USSP demands affordable public services and calls for strengthened subsidiarity in the upcoming constitutional treaty

With regard to the green paper expected to be published in short time the Association of the Public Sector Trade Unions (USSP) of the CESI in its meeting of 19th March 2003 dealt with the public services in Europe.

In a resolution (rapporteur: Klaus Geiser, EULOS) the USSP demands, that European citizens should benefit from high quality public services at affordable prices. An important aspect would be that these **public services** should be organized by the administration according to **high quality standards** and **as cheaply as possible**.

Issues relevant to supply reliability, complete and fair access, quality guarantees, reasonable price setting, and respect for environmental concerns should – in the spirit of subsidiarity – continue to be matters which are solely the responsibility of member states, regions and local authorities. The USSP therefore calls for a **strengthening of subsidiarity and the inclusion of the right to local political autonomy in the upcoming constitutional treaty**.

„Being forced to open up to competition, the power to decide if public services should be provided by public or private companies must not taken out of national authorities’ sphere of decision”, says **Christian Chapuis, president of the USSP**.“ This would be prejudicial to the principle of subsidiarity.”

As pointed out in the resolution, the bodies responsible for public services must continue to decide themselves on public demand and establish the norms and content of the services provided themselves. The freedom of member states to organize themselves in terms of defining basic services should be recognized. This would include the introduction of basic services in the spirit of attaining social and territorial cohesion, in areas where the market alone does not guarantee the necessary level of supply.

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