

PRESS RELEASE

In the context of the Review of the Consumer Acquis and the debate on Flexicurity, a new Ipsos MORI study* provides insights into opportunities offered by the direct selling industry to consumers and workers

The Federation of European Direct Selling Associations (FEDSA) is announcing the results of an Ipsos MORI pan-European study on the positive socio-economic impact of the direct selling industry. It reveals how direct selling contributes to the objectives of the Lisbon agenda.

Direct selling – a 20 billion euro channel of distribution with 1,300 businesses ranging from large to small companies in the EU and a steady growth (9.6% in 2006) – is a dynamic sector providing modern consumers with interesting choices beyond traditional retail shopping.

The industry has nine million direct sellers in Europe and gives them opportunities to develop their business and entrepreneurial skills, to start their own business activity, earn extra income and improve their quality of life. Women are largely represented (83% of direct sellers are women); most direct sellers choose part time (77% of direct sellers are part timers) as a flexible solution that fits their life objectives and needs.

Mr. Richard Berry, Chairman of the Federation of European Direct Selling Associations (FEDSA) has welcomed the results of the study and stated: *'The study demonstrates the alternative opportunities that direct selling can offer the European consumer away from traditional retailing stores as well as to new entrepreneurs especially women interested in setting up their own business at a low cost. Europe needs more entrepreneurs and more self employment. Direct selling companies, with the lessons they have learned, can later on create other, totally different, businesses. This can only be to the benefit of national economies.'*

He adds in conclusion: *'FEDSA supports the current efforts of the European Commission to revise the consumer acquis taking into consideration the changing needs of millions of European consumers. It is important to ensure a well functioning retail internal market in the EU, lower compliance costs-especially for SMEs- while creating a level playing field for the different distribution channels. This will increase cross border trade and consumer confidence in the European markets.'*

Note to the editors:

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(*) About the Ipsos MORI study:

- Extensive socio economic study on the sector by Ipsos MORI in 2007
- Carried out in 7 EU Member States - UK, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Czech Republic and Finland (represent 80 % of EU Direct Sales activities)
- Surveys completed by 43 direct sales companies and 2800 direct sellers
- Builds on PriceWaterhouseCooper analysis conducted in 2000
- Supported by industry data compiled by FEDSA on an annual basis in 32 European countries.

About FEDSA

FEDSA represents 25 European, national, Direct Selling Associations (DSAs) and, directly and indirectly through its corporate members, also represents over 1,000 direct selling businesses with annual sales of 20.0 billion Euro and nine million, independent, direct sellers working with those businesses. The latter range from men and women of all ages selling high-value household appliances and home improvements, on a full-time basis, to many more with their own part-time businesses marketing a wide range of personal and consumer products to those in their local communities. Direct selling provides virtually unlimited self-employment opportunities and has no discrimination with regard to gender, age, ethnicity or disability. Direct selling is a nursery for entrepreneurs and a significant number of those who have created substantial businesses in other trade sectors gained their first business experience with a direct selling company.