

MRPQ directive – emerging UK views

Andrew van der Lem – Deputy Director – Europe,
Trade, International Directorate

Growth in the European Economy

- Annual Growth Survey - growth in the EU will be around 1.5% per annum over the coming decade
- The World Bank predicts that GDP growth in 2012 will be 3% in the United States and 8.2% in China.
- Productivity in business services is 43% below US level

UK perspective

- UK Growth review is looking at professional and business
- Important role of the professions
 - Reduce barriers
 - Promote excellence and exports
 - Reform (Legal Services Act)

Role of the single market in growth

- Single Market is the main lever for growth at 27
- 31% of UK businesses trying to trade across the EU encounter legal or regulatory barriers to trade and only 44% of business report the existence of no barriers to trade within the EU (UKTI figures)
- Existing regulatory system for services is unclear
 - Interaction between MRPQ and services
 - Differentiated approach (PSC, IMI)
 - Clear barriers to free movement, some unavoidable?

The differentiated approach to the professions

- Many regulated professions have important duties. Need for quality and integrity
- Commonality across EU in many areas, but not all
- Healthcare, lawyers
- architects, surveyors
- Photographers...
- Is a blanket approach to reserved activities the right approach?

Conclusions – ideas not solutions

- Need to have an evidence base
- Need to understand the European system (mutual evaluation)
- Different approaches to firms (eg multidisciplinary activities)
- Different approaches to professional bodies (eg codes of conduct)
- Different approach to reserved activities (eg sectors)
- Different approaches to “what regulated means” (eg professional titles)