

Press Release

For immediate release  
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**Mixed news for business on 'opt-out' decision**

Business leaders reacted with concern over the EU's revision of the UK's opt-out from the Working Time Directive, announced today. The Institute of Directors (IoD) said that although it was pleased to see the opt-out remain it regretted the decision to provide unions with a voice in negotiating opt-out agreements between employers and employees.

The EU plans to curtail Britain's flexible approach to working time smack of a 'back to the 1970s' approach to labour market policy, the IoD said.

Of additional concern the IoD said, was the EU's decision to prevent an employer asking a new member of staff to sign an opt-out agreement at the time of signing their employment contract.

Graeme Leach, Chief Economist at the IoD, said:

"Today's announcement by Brussels really will be a blow to the flexibility of many small UK firms. Employers should be allowed to negotiate opt-out agreements with employers to suit the needs of their business."