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UNICE WELCOMES REFOCUSING OF LISBON STRATEGY ON GROWTH AND JOBS

UNICE supports the proposal of the Commission Communication for the Spring EU Council to refocus the Lisbon Strategy on growth and employment, given the current situation in Europe of low growth, an ageing population and intensifying global competition.

UNICE President Dr Strube: *“Europe is at the forefront concerning social policy and environmental protection but clearly behind when it comes to economic performance. An unambiguous refocusing of the Lisbon Strategy on growth and jobs will underpin Europe’s position in the world and provide the means for long-term sustainable development.”*

Apart from acting in a focused way, a crucial success factor for the Lisbon Strategy is the commitment of national governments to reform. The proposed partnership for growth and jobs must extend to national actors. National action programmes, to be developed by the Member States, will be the centrepiece for the follow-up of national action. At the request of UNICE, member federations have already launched their own national initiatives for competitiveness, urging their governments to start or accelerate national reform programmes.

Furthermore, the Competitiveness Council must achieve a key role in the revitalisation of the Lisbon Strategy, becoming the guardian of competitiveness.

“There is absolute urgency for Europe to retrieve its path for growth and jobs. UNICE hopes that every party involved will share that sense of urgency and will make every effort to put Europe back on track”, added Dr Strube.

UNICE calls on the Spring European Council meeting on 22-23 March to take up the spirit of the Commission Report to make the mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy a success.

Note to the editor:

UNICE is the voice of more than 20 million small, medium and large companies. Active in European affairs since 1958, UNICE's members are 38 central industrial and employers federations from 32 countries, working together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe

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