

23 March 2005

**BUSINESS REACTION TO THE EU SUMMIT ON 22-23 MARCH  
GROWTH AND JOBS: WHAT EUROPE NEEDS**

**The EU Heads of State and Government have met over the last two days to debate and take decisions on how to dynamise Europe. Europe needs to shake itself out of its lethargy and increase its growth potential. Faster growth will translate into more jobs and the resources we need to sustain the European social model. European policy-makers need to refocus their efforts on growth and jobs.**

UNICE expected from the European Council the relaunch of the Lisbon Strategy in order to create confidence for citizens and business. UNICE therefore strongly supported the Commission initiative for growth and jobs. However, it is disappointing that the European Council has not taken the opportunity to strongly relaunch the Lisbon Strategy focusing on growth and jobs. Nevertheless, as most of the work ahead will have to come from the Member States, business trusts that the 2005-2008 National Action Programmes agreed at the summit will help identify priority actions for reform.

Concerning services and climate change:

- UNICE supports liberalisation of the services market, a centrepiece of the EU economy and employment picture. The Services Directive remains an essential element to enhance growth and jobs. UNICE agrees that the Directive must not undermine existing legislation on posting of workers. However, the EU urgently needs a functioning internal market for services.
- UNICE is disappointed that the European Council has agreed to specify quantitative greenhouse gas emission reduction targets for developed countries for 2020. As this move has not been developed alongside other global partners, it is likely to further complicate negotiations on achieving truly comprehensive global cooperation to combat the risks of climate change.

*“A growth and jobs strategy is what Europe needs. It will allow companies, regardless of their size, to create employment in all Member States. It is now up to European and national political leaders to translate words into action”* said Philippe de Buck, Secretary General of UNICE.

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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