



PRESS RELEASE

11 June 2008

MIXED ASSESSMENT OF DEAL ON AGENCY WORK AND WORKING TIME

Reacting to the political agreement reached during the Social Affairs Council meeting on temporary agency work and working time, BUSINESSEUROPE's assesses the deal on agency work as a step backwards, while that on working time is a major step forward which will secure flexibility in working hours for companies.

BUSINESSEUROPE welcomes the fact that the Slovenian EU Presidency has been able to reach a deal on these two long-standing proposals but regrets that labour market flexibility has not prevailed to the same extent in both agreements.

With respect to agency work, European companies insist that all Member States should be able to establish a qualifying period for equal treatment. In addition, companies are disappointed that the provisions of the Directive do not sufficiently reinforce Member States' obligation to discard restrictions to temporary work.

By contrast, by retaining the opt-out in the working time directive, a vital tool for the flexibility of European companies is preserved, although a set of new conditions could make it more difficult to use in practice. In addition, the Council rightly decided to consider only time actually worked as working time.

Philippe de Buck, Secretary-General of BUSINESSEUROPE said: *"Labour market flexibility is essential for more growth and more jobs. The compromise on working time shows that pragmatism has prevailed. The European Parliament should not jeopardise the fragile compromise reached in its second reading"*.

NOTE TO THE EDITOR

BUSINESSEUROPE – the Confederation of European Business represents more than 20 million small, medium and large companies. Active in European affairs since 1958, BUSINESSEUROPE Members are 39 central industrial and employers' federations from 33 countries, working together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe.

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