



### **UNICE COUNTS ON VICE-PRESIDENT VERHEUGEN TO PURSUE MUCH NEEDED ENTERPRISE POLICIES**

On 9 January, meeting with Peter Tempel, head of cabinet for Vice-President Verheugen, to discuss vital competitiveness issues for European business, UNICE focused on the importance of the High Level Group on Competitiveness, Energy & Environment; strengthening Community policies that foster the growth and development of small and medium-sized enterprises; delivering on the Commission's promise to adopt "better regulation"; and improving market access for EU business in third-country markets.

### **RELOCATION: CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY**



Contributing to the relocation discussion, which has recently received a great deal of media attention, UNICE points out in a newly published brochure that relocation of production activity to other countries creates benefits for everyone. To what extent and when these benefits appear strongly depends on the flexibility of economic structures, and in particular on a well-functioning labour market. [Read more](#)

### **UNICE AND ETUC DISCUSS WAYS TO RELAUNCH GROWTH IN EUROPE AT EUREN CONFERENCE**

On 11 January, UNICE hosted the conference of the European Economic Network, where its winter forecast report was presented followed by a debate between UNICE and ETUC. During this debate, UNICE objected to the claim that restrictive fiscal and monetary policy rules could explain the underperformance of the European economy, and emphasised instead the reform deficit in some member states which has become increasingly costly in the face of accelerating economic changes. [Read more](#)

### **UNICE DOES NOT SEE A CASE FOR REVISION OF EU PRODUCT LIABILITY RULES**

In reply to a questionnaire by the European Commission, UNICE states that the existing directive strikes a fair balance between industry and consumer interests and harmonises product liability laws ensuring a level playing field across Member States. It establishes a common standard of responsibility in the area of product liability which guarantees that producers throughout the EU actually face effective liability rules and are thus encouraged to market only safe products. [Read more](#)

### **COMMISSION POLICY PLAN ON LEGAL MIGRATION 2006-2009**

On 21 December 2005, the Commission announced five directives on economic migration. For UNICE, EU rules should lead to administrative simplification to allow a better response to unfilled vacancies due to skills shortages. However, they should respect national competences to grant work permits. They should not deal with workers' rights which are already adequately covered by existing legislation. UNICE is preparing its reaction to the policy plan.



### **HOW CAN EU TRANSPORT POLICY CONTRIBUTE TO LISBON OBJECTIVES?**

Commenting on the mid-term review of the Transport Strategy 2001-2010, UNICE is concerned that the EU transport policy does not appear to have a “competitiveness” agenda guiding it. Business proposes an alternative focus (i.e. competitiveness) rather than the Commission’s top-down modal shift policy.

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