



BUSINESSES CALL FOR A BOOST TO EUROPE

At a special meeting on 7 April in Paris to envisage the future of European integration, the Presidents of the national business federations that constitute the membership of UNICE mandated Ernest-Antoine Seillière to strengthen UNICE action and communication to promote essential objectives of companies. Worried about Europe's future, companies call for [measures](#) to be taken urgently to reinvigorate the European Union: reforms for growth and jobs must be implemented, not only talked about; the European market must be fully integrated; protectionist tendencies must be combated; the European Union must have effective governance; enlargement opportunities must be seized to the full; the European social model must be modernised in order to be preserved. [Read more](#) or contact: [Maria Fernanda Fau](#)

PRESIDENT SEILLIÈRE CALLS ON PASCAL LAMY TO ACHIEVE AMBITION IN THE DOHA ROUND

To urge for an ambitious Doha round leading to new market opening and global economic growth, UNICE President Ernest-Antoine Seillière met WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy on 12 April in Geneva. UNICE highlighted its concerns over the low-level ambition in the Doha Development Agenda and underlined that business support for the round is conditional on achieving real market access in both developed and emerging countries. UNICE would like to see ambitious results in its priority areas for the DDA: industrial market access, services and trade facilitation, but it strongly believes that there should be no exceptions to multilateral trade liberalisation – including areas such as agriculture. Contact: [Adrian van den Hoven](#)

THE EUROPEAN COMPANY STATUTE: A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE?

UNICE is organising on 31 May 2006 a seminar on the European company statute (*societas europaea* or SE). Join high-level representatives from the EU Commission, companies, the European Parliament and legal experts to find out directly from market players why they have chosen to adopt the statute (or not) and what are the decisive advantages that could make the SE statute the right choice for them. Is the SE statute the appropriate tool for strengthening European business competitiveness? Is the SE Statute an option for SMEs? If not, what should be the alternative? [Read more](#) or contact: [David Coleman](#)

BUSINESS VOICES ITS PRIORITIES IN THE BATTLE AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE

At a public hearing organised on 6 April 2006 by the European Economic and Social Committee on "Meeting the challenges of climate change – the role of civil society", Daniel Cloquet, Director of UNICE Industrial Affairs Department, clarified the general framework conditions that business wants to see established in order to be able to continue delivering significant achievements in the battle against climate change. He has also stressed the need to improve the Emissions Trading Scheme, and to have more consistency between the EU energy and environmental policies. Contact: [Daniel Cloquet](#)



UNICE ENDORSES COST-EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION OF DESIGNS

UNICE supports the Commission proposal for the EC accession to the Geneva Act of the Hague Agreement, since it provides a simplified, quick and inexpensive means of protecting designs in several countries with a single international application. This act would make it easier for EU industrial design owners to obtain protection in both the EU and the territories of the non-EU Contracting Parties to the Hague System, with considerable savings both at the time of filing for protection and during the subsequent management of the design rights. The issue is currently under discussion at the EP which is preparing an opinion on the Commission proposal. [Read more](#) or contact: [Ilias Konteas](#)

EUROPEAN BUSINESS SETS OUT ITS PRIORITIES FOR COMPANY LAW AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Responding to the European Commission consultation, UNICE indicated on 31 March that efforts should concentrate on correct implementation at national level of the recently adopted, or soon to be adopted, Commission proposals rather than on new proposals. After which we believe the EU should concentrate on initiatives that will provide optional means for companies to reap the benefits of the internal market as opposed to initiatives that would entail mandatory changes in company law and corporate governance. [Read more](#) or contact: [David Coleman](#)

UNICE DISCUSSES HOW TO IMPROVE THE EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

The Commission is preparing a recommendation on the creation of a European Qualifications Framework aimed at facilitating mobility, to be published in September 2006. Following a Commission consultation in December 2005, a new draft was prepared. It was discussed within UNICE, and jointly with European sectoral employers organisations and the European Commission on 5 and 6 April 2006. European business recognises the potential value of a such voluntary framework. Improvements were made. However, further work still needs to be done on the content in order to ensure its usefulness for European companies. Gordon Clark and Didier Herbert, who are in charge of the dossier in DG Education and DG Enterprise, highlighted that the European Commission was keen to work with business in order to develop pilot projects to test the system. Contact: [Jeanne Schmitt](#)

UNICE HEADLINES TAKES A WEEK OFF

We would like to inform our readers that there will be no UNICE Headlines next week. Our next number will be published on Wednesday 26 April 2006.