



Wednesday, 15 November 2006

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AUTUMN 2006 ECONOMIC OUTLOOK: LET'S NOT SQUANDER THE RECOVERY!

At a press conference on 13 November 2006, UNICE presented the Autumn edition of its Economic Outlook, a survey it conducts twice a year among the leading business federations in the 25 member states to assess economic prospects and policies across the EU. Europe is currently enjoying a period of strong and broadly based growth across sectors and countries, which UNICE estimates for the EU as a whole to translate into real GDP growth of 2.9% in 2006 and 2.3% in 2007. The current economic recovery offers a unique chance to move ahead with, and build consensus around, the reforms needed to ensure self-sustaining and balanced growth in the years ahead. We cannot afford to repeat the mistakes of the past and delay necessary measures as soon as the economy is doing better. [Read more](#) or contact: [Marc Stocker](#)

EU TRADE POLICY A KEY DRIVER OF COMPETITIVENESS

On 13 November, UNICE President Ernest-Antoine Seillière participated in the [Global Europe Conference](#) organised by Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson. After highlighting why competitiveness should become the leitmotiv for EU Trade Policy, President Seillière called on the Commission to continue to press the case for the Doha Round and to come to an agreement with the US on the difficult agricultural issue. He also clarified UNICE's position on bilateral free-trade negotiations, reiterating the need for 100% liberalisation of industrial products, full services liberalisation and the coverage of important issues such as investment and IPR. Finally, President Seillière underscored the importance of completing the single market and adopting better regulations to strengthen the international competitiveness of the EU's industrial and services base. [Read more](#) or contact: [Adrian van den Hoven](#)

UNICE IN STRASBOURG FOR EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT PLENARY VOTE ON SERVICES

In Strasbourg on 14-15 November 2006, Philippe de Buck expects real benefits derived from the freedom of establishment but regrets the reduced scope of the directive and the legal uncertainty of certain provisions on cross-border provision of services. "After a complicated adoption, it is now up to national governments to transpose the directive in such a way that it is a success", he said. [Read more](#) or contact: [Carlos Almaraz](#)

BETTER REGULATION: UNICE WILL JUDGE ON CONCRETE RESULTS

UNICE President Ernest-Antoine Seillière welcomed the strategic review of the better regulation project, presented by Vice-President Verheugen on 14 November. Strong political support for better regulation is crucial and the review should give renewed impetus to the cutting of red tape and enhance the effectiveness of the better regulation programme. There is an urgent need for concrete results since only these will boost confidence in the overall worth of the project. [Read more](#) or contact: [Erik Berggren](#)

PHILIPPE DE BUCK WITH UNICE'S SLOVENIAN MEMBER ZDS

In a two-day visit to Ljubljana on 9-10 November organised by the Association of Employers of Slovenia (ZDS), member of UNICE, Mr Philippe de Buck met the board chaired by its President, Mr Borut Meh, and Secretary General, Mr Samo Hribar Milic, for an in-depth discussion on the current European and Slovenian situation. Mr de Buck also had the opportunity to meet two members of the Slovenian government, the Minister of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Mr Janez Drobnic, and the Minister of Economy, Mr Andrej Vizjak. Contact: [Philippe de Buck](#)



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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POST-2012 INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

In view of the UNFCCC Ministerial meeting in Nairobi (6-17 November 2006), UNICE calls for the establishment of a long-term, well functioning, market-based policy framework with participation of all large emitter nations extending through to 2030. That will give investors in climate change mitigation confidence in the long-term value of their investments. Such a framework has to be economically feasible, based on respective capabilities and fair in order to avoid leakage and to safeguard the level playing field for all the actors competing on the same global markets. Furthermore, public support for research, development and demonstration to encourage solutions to climate change, including public-private partnerships and the removal of barriers to market-driven innovation are needed. [Read more](#) or contact: [Daniel Cloquet](#) or [Miriam Munnich](#)

NEED FOR SPEEDY JUDICIAL REVIEW OF COMPETITION DECISIONS

In response to an inquiry of the UK House of Lords into the need for a special EU Competition Court to speed up judicial review of competition decisions, UNICE has submitted its evidence. The existing system of judicial review should be improved and the best solution would be the creation of a special Competition Court. However, since this will take some time, a sensible interim solution would be to establish a specialist chamber within the Court of First Instance for competition cases. [Read more](#) or contact: [Erik Berggren](#)

UNICE SUPPORTS FIGHT AGAINST CARTELS

UNICE Secretary General Philippe de Buck has written to Competition Commissioner Neelie Kroes to support the Commission's efforts to devise an effective programme for granting companies immunity from fines for cooperating with the Commission to uncover harmful cartels. UNICE regrets though that there is still no real one-stop shop across the EU where a company can apply for immunity. [Read more](#) or contact: [Erik Berggren](#)

REVIEWED PRIORITIES IN COMPANY LAW AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

UNICE has updated its priorities on the "Future of the Commission Company Law and Corporate Governance Action Plan". This new version aims at addressing recent developments and feeding into the current discussion in EU institutions. UNICE's position stresses the need for a statute for private companies, the issue of proportionality and the business request for a directive on the transfer of a company's seat. [Read more](#) or contact: [Marta Alegrias](#)

CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS: COMMISSION PROPOSAL WILL HAVE MAJOR, COSTLY IMPLICATIONS

Regarding the law applicable to contractual obligations (Rome I), UNICE has sent a letter to the Council, Parliament and Commissioner McCreevy in order to defend business interests. Substantive changes in the existing law on business-to-consumers contracts, as well as in other areas, are the main concern for business and particularly SMEs. [Read more](#) or contact: [Marta Alegrias](#)