



Wednesday, 6 December 2006

No. 2006-39

FUTURE IN THE SPOTLIGHT IN HELSINKI

UNICE's Council of Presidents met in Helsinki on 1 December 2006 to discuss a number of priority dossiers. The future of Europe and the urgent need to solve the governance problem were debated, as well as climate change and energy policies, with a repeated appeal to more formal cooperation between the Competitiveness, Environment and Energy Councils. On the latter, UNICE's Presidents had the opportunity to meet Mr Enestam, Finnish Minister for Environment, at its gala dinner on 30 November. At the end of their meeting on 1 December, Presidents had an exchange of views with Mauri Pekkarinen who, on behalf of Finnish Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen, shared achievements of the Finnish Presidency. UNICE's Council of Presidents also endorsed the business message to German Chancellor Angela Merkel. Contact: [Maria Fernanda Fau](#)

UNICE PRESENTS EUROPEAN BUSINESS EXPECTATIONS TO CHANCELLOR MERKEL

In view of the German government's six-month Presidency of the European Union from 1 January 2007, UNICE President Mr Ernest-Antoine Seillière, accompanied by BDA and BDI Presidents Dieter Hundt and Jürgen R. Thumann, by UNICE Secretary General Philippe de Buck, and BDA and BDI Directors General Reinhard Göhner and Ludolf von Wartenberg, had a meeting on 4 December with German Chancellor Angela Merkel to present her European business expectations from the German Presidency. In a [letter](#) addressed to Mrs Merkel and endorsed by UNICE's Council of Presidents, Mr Seillière presented the three main issues of importance for UNICE and its member federations for the months to come: the governance problem, climate change and energy policies and the better regulation dossier. In a background note annexed to the letter, UNICE also presented more details about other dossiers also with relevance for the European business community such as SMEs and entrepreneurship, internal market, research and innovation, European social policy, EU international relations and corporate taxation. [Read more](#) or contact: [Philippe de Buck](#)

IMPLEMENTATION OF REACH: A DEMANDING CHALLENGE FOR EU INDUSTRY

After long negotiations in triologue meetings, including the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission, a deal on REACH was struck on Tuesday 30 November. On the whole industry recognises the balanced and open approach of the institutions, which have taken into account the divergent interests of the various stakeholders. However, departing from a risk-based approach, the compromise agreement on authorisation now requires the submission of a substitution plan for all the substances where a suitable alternative exists and an R&D plan where no alternatives exist, even if the substances are adequately controlled. These additional and strengthened requirements will further challenge European's industry's ability to implement REACH. Industry is still of the opinion that the twin objectives of REACH – to protect health and environment while maintaining EU competitiveness – could have been achieved with a more risk-based and more workable approach. [Read more](#) or contact: [Nadine Toscani](#)



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TRADE DEFENCE POLICY: LEGITIMACY, TRANSPARENCY AND PREDICTABILITY IS THE WAY FORWARD

On 6 December, UNICE reacted to the Green Paper published by EU Commissioner Mandelson. The globalisation of the economy combined with insufficient bilateral and multilateral trade rules to remove competitive distortions makes trade defence policy relevant for European industry. Consequently, UNICE expects the Commission to pursue the Green Paper consultation process on trade defence instruments in a balanced and objective manner that takes account of the realities of international competition. UNICE will participate actively in the forthcoming debate to address concerns about the transparency and predictability of trade defence measures for European business.. [Read more](#) or contact: [Adrian van den Hoven](#)

TV WITHOUT FRONTIERS: EUROPEAN BUSINESS RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the plenary vote on 13 December regarding the revision of the “TV Without Frontiers” directive, UNICE has sent a letter to Members of the European Parliament highlighting some issues that are of importance to business. In particular, the country of origin principle is key to ensure that audiovisual service providers do not face 25 different legal frameworks when delivering a service across borders. The success of the original directive was based on this principle and it is vital that it remains in place. [Read more](#) or contact: [Miriam Munnich](#)