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<p><b>UNICEF URGES EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS TO BOOST ENTREPRENEURSHIP</b></p>
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UNICEF launched today its new Benchmarking Report. This major study builds on last year's "Competitiveness Report" and focuses on ways of boosting entrepreneurship in Europe.

The Report clearly illustrates low levels of entrepreneurship in Europe relative to other leading economies, especially the USA. This is one of the main reasons of weaker economic growth and higher unemployment in Europe. The main obstacles to more dynamic entrepreneurship in Europe stem principally from inflexible goods and factor markets, excessive state involvement in the economy and heavy overall tax burdens.

UNICEF's President, Georges Jacobs, said: "Europe needs more jobs. Entrepreneurs create jobs. Therefore, Europe needs more entrepreneurs, especially thriving SME's". The Report shows a systematic policy failure by European governments to promote a business environment more favourable to entrepreneurship. "We should learn lessons from other parts of the world", Mr. Jacobs concluded. European governments should take action promptly:

- To reduce the size of the public sector and the overall burden of taxation;
- To remove regulations that restrict competition and development of new markets;
- To reform labour market regulations that restrict new forms of work organisation;
- To promote the spirit of enterprise throughout Europe.

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