

8 March 2001

UNICE OFFERS NEGOTIATIONS ON TELEWORK

Today, UNICE announced its decision to offer negotiations on a non-legally binding agreement on telework to ETUC.

"Telework responds to the needs of workers and companies. It is a necessary component of modern labour markets" stressed UNICE President Jacobs.

Almost 7 million European employees work, on a regular basis, at a distance from their employer's premises, using information technology. They represent approximately 4.5% of the workforce, compared with nearly 13% in the USA. Home-based telework is still the most common form, but mobile telework is on the rise and telework can take the form of a variety of other arrangements responding to the specific needs of individual employers and employees.

"Facilitating the development of telework is part of the answer for turning Europe into the most competitive knowledge-driven economy in the world" added President Jacobs. "Telework is a way of working, not a legal status. It is not a theme for regulation at EU level but we think that voluntary negotiations could help develop telework in Europe. Having reached that conclusion, UNICE decided that there was no reason to wait for the second consultation of the European Commission to make its decision known. We hope that European Trade Union Confederation will give a positive reply to our offer", concluded President Jacobs

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