

04 October 2001

**GREEN PAPER ON CONSUMER PROTECTION IN THE EU  
UNICE APPRECIATES “KICK-OFF” TO DEBATE**

UNICE welcomes the launch of a broad debate and open consultation on consumer protection that “will set the stage for the next ten years of policy development with respect to business-to-consumer commercial practices and consumer rights” as underlined by Commissioner Byrne. It is crucial to maximise the effectiveness of and confidence in the Internal Market for both business and consumers.

UNICE welcomes the fact that the Green Paper presents its strategy in the form of options not only seeking to upgrade the regulatory framework for consumer protection but also reflecting on governance for tomorrow.

UNICE takes particular note of the proposed use of alternatives to regulation including self-regulation and co-regulation, in order to address industry’s and consumers’ needs as adequately as possible. The Green Paper poses challenges for those involved in both regulation and self-regulation.

As an organisation that has actively supported dialogue between consumers and business, UNICE is keen to ensure that informal dialogue between stakeholders is further encouraged. UNICE encourages development of new regulatory models which do not undermine industry’s involvement and investment in self-regulatory schemes. Ways to improve the effectiveness of self-regulation should be considered before embarking on any new initiative.

UNICE considers it essential that the options presented in the Green Paper serve as a “kick-off” seeking to encourage the debate and do not exclude other choices or alternatives from the discussion.

UNICE looks forward to contributing to this debate with all the parties concerned.

Note to the editor:

UNICE is the official voice of more than 16 million small, medium and large companies active in Europe, employing over 106 million people. Active in European affairs since 1958, UNICE’s members are 33 central industrial and employers federations from 26 countries, working together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe.

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