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**EU ENLARGEMENT – AN OPPORTUNITY FOR BUSINESS:
UNICE LAUNCHES BOSMIP**

Today UNICE launched a series of seminars in order to strengthen and support business organisations in the acceding countries in view of the enlargement of the European Union. The programme, called UNICE-BOSMIP (Business Organisations as Single Market Integration Players), is a joint partnership of UNICE and its member federations with the financial support of the European Commission.

European business is a strong supporter of enlargement. Enlargement is a unique opportunity to spread stability and sustainable economic growth and welfare across Europe. In order to support business organisations in the acceding countries, UNICE today launched the first in the series of UNICE-BOSMIP seminars. The programme is designed to help companies to implement business-related *acquis communautaire* in the acceding countries in Central and Eastern Europe. It will also strengthen the position of industrial and employer federations in these countries.

Philippe de Buck, UNICE Secretary General: *"It is of vital importance to strengthen and support the position of industrial and employers' federations in order for them to play their role successfully at national level."*

A first round of seminars will prepare experts from federations in the acceding countries for their subsequent role as advisers and trainers in the following areas:

- Social Affairs
- Lobbying and Communication
- Membership, Organisational Issues and Customer Relations
- IPR
- Environment
- Public Procurement
- Competition
- Taxation Policy

In the second round, these experts will disseminate acquired knowledge and experience to a wider audience in their respective countries, such as national and sectoral organisations as well as individual companies. The project is based on a partnership between eight EU federations – Austria, France, Germany (two federations), Greece, Italy, Netherlands and Spain – and ten CEEC federations – Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. UNICE-BOSMIP is financed by the Business Support Programme of the European Commission (BSP II) and EU business federations.

Note to the editor:

UNICE is the official voice of more than 16 million small, medium and large companies in Europe. Active in European affairs since 1958, UNICE's members are 35 central industrial and employer federations from 28 countries, working together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe.

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