

NEWS RELEASE



European Chemical Industry Council
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UNICE and Cefic table proposal for improved impact assessment of REACH

Brussels, 25 November 2003 – UNICE and Cefic welcome the opportunity given to industry and other stakeholders by the European Commission to discuss the business impact of the REACH proposal in an open dialogue. The dialogue was initiated last Friday at a special workshop, organised as a follow-up to the European Commission's adoption of the proposed new chemicals policy on 29 October 2003.

Commenting on the stakeholder dialogue Philippe de Buck, Secretary General of UNICE said: "The REACH proposal is not just about the chemical industry; it will have significant effects right along the supply chain; consequently the full impact on industry should be properly evaluated".

At the special workshop of 21 November, UNICE and Cefic presented a proposal for setting up a Steering Committee in order to facilitate co-operation between various stakeholders with a view to developing an in-depth impact assessment. Cefic Director General Alain Perroy stated: "The aim of such an assessment is first and foremost to identify opportunities for improving REACH and to correct elements of the proposal that will hamper smooth and cost-effective implementation, whilst safeguarding the objectives of the legislation".

European industry has long argued the need for an improved impact assessment. "Clearly, before adopting the new legislation it is very important that its potentially serious effects on the industry's competitiveness and ability to innovate are accurately assessed", commented Philippe de Buck.

Regarding methodology, UNICE and Cefic suggest that this new impact assessment is based on an open economic model. This should allow assessment of the considerable macroeconomic effects of REACH on a diversified, globally operating EU industry. An essential part of the assessment should consist of further bottom-up analysis of subsectors in the chemical industry and downstream sectors. "This analysis should be undertaken with an open mind, drawing on the results of all available business impact work", commented Alain Perroy.

Both Mr de Buck and Mr Perroy said: "We are pleased to see that the Commission intends to continue the dialogue with stakeholders and further explore ways to improve impact assessments; UNICE and Cefic look forward to pursuing this open dialogue and the work initiated at this first workshop; we will continue to fully co-operate and contribute fully".

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