

## PRESS RELEASE

### ALLIANCE FOR A COMPETITIVE EUROPEAN INDUSTRY CALLS ON EU INSTITUTIONS TO PRIORITISE IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Further to the Competitiveness Council held on 25 and 26 November 2004, the *Alliance for a Competitive European Industry* calls on EU legislative institutions to support the call for consistent use of a clear, transparent Impact Assessment method right across the process of adopting legislation affecting industry. A position paper released today sets out the Alliance views on this point in detail and a workshop on the issues is scheduled for early 2005.

The Alliance, representing associations from major European industry sectors and UNICE, has been formed to promote the competitiveness of European industry on a global scale. Its key goal is to contribute to the implementation of the "Lisbon Strategy", which aims to turn Europe into the most competitive knowledge-based economy. The Alliance will also provide input into relevant upcoming EU legislative proposals.

The Alliance will reinforce the work of UNICE by adding the voice of sectoral industry associations.

The Alliance fully supports the positions and proposals of UNICE as laid down in its document "Business Vision: growth, jobs and prosperity" issued in September 2004 for both the new European Parliament and European Commission. The top action points which are necessary to achieve the main aim of the Lisbon Strategy are:

- *Better Regulation*: Reduce existing regulation substantially and set up compulsory business impact assessments for new legislative proposals. The real potential cost of legislation for business must be clear before developing policy measures or introducing regulatory procedures.
- *Public Finance*: Encourage reform of social protection and decrease structural government deficits so as to meet the challenge of an ageing population and of unsustainable public expenditure levels.
- *Innovation*: Develop research policies focused on stimulating R&D and innovation, also with a view to fostering industry cooperation with knowledge institutions.
- *Employment*: Accelerate reform of national labour market regulation in order to introduce more flexibility, increase the number and quality of jobs and productivity at work.
- *Internal Market*: Boost internal market efficiency by tackling the transposition deficit and through timely realisation of Trans-European Networks without however further straining public budgets.

The Alliance welcomes the appointment of Günter Verheugen as the Commissioner in charge of the competitiveness issue in the new European Commission which took office on 22 November 2004.

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*ACEA, CEFIC, CEMBUREAU, CEPI, CIAA, EURATEX, EURELECTRIC, EUROFER, EUROMETAUX, EUROPIA, ORGALIME  
and UNICE*

High on the agenda of the Alliance is the implementation of thorough business impact assessments whenever new legislation impacting industry is proposed or existing legislation is reviewed. The Alliance welcomes the gradual introduction of new and coherent methods for impact assessment and the increasing inter-institutional co-operation which are essential to achieving better regulation. In the long term, the Alliance would like to see all impact assessments carried out by an external body reporting to the Council and the European Parliament and independent from Commission desk officers.

The Alliance position paper on this subject will serve as the basis for a workshop oriented to policy-makers to be held in Brussels in early 2005.

Alliance members' organisations represent industry sectors which are essential to the European economy: 6,000 large companies and 1.7 million SMEs with a combined turnover of nearly €5,000 billion generating €1,300 billion added value and employing some 23 million EU citizens.

Paul Bulteel, Secretary-General of EURELECTRIC, has been elected Chairman of the Council of the Alliance, with UNICE Secretary-General Philippe de Buck as co-Chairman and Dr Jean-Marie Chandelle, Chief Executive of CEMBUREAU, as Vice-Chairman.

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The list of contact details is attached hereto.

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