

**UNICE REGRETS FRENCH “NO” VOTE BECAUSE IT IS AN IMPORTANT
SETBACK**

In its referendum France has said no to ratification of the Constitutional Treaty for Europe.

Representing 20 million companies which employ more than 120 million workers in Europe, UNICE is in favour of this Treaty because it is balanced in the values and policies it proposes and because it creates the foundation for the clear, democratic and effective governance the European Union needs so badly. The Constitutional Treaty is favoured not only by employers but also by the European Trade Union Confederation.

This negative decision in one important founding Member State will have a serious impact. Therefore UNICE deeply regrets the negative decision in France. It will be crucial however that the European Union continues to make progress, that decisions are taken and that fulfilling the Growth and Jobs strategy does not suffer any delay. This negative vote has also emphasised the challenge of bringing the EU closer to its citizens. UNICE expresses the wish that the referendum, next Wednesday 1 June, in the Netherlands will be positive.

The European Union is part of the world and European companies continue to face fierce competition. They need to be able to benefit from large opportunities by participating in the development of the world economy. That is why the European Union must be governed and the current difficulties must not hamper European integration and not create more difficulties for companies.

“As President of UNICE I call on all the decision-makers at EU and national level to find solutions to this important setback and in the meantime to make sure that the European affairs are properly managed and that the work continues on implementation of the Growth and Jobs strategy. UNICE members will assess in detail the consequences of this development at their June Council of Presidents” says Jürgen Strube.

Note to the editor:

UNICE is the voice of more than 20 million small, medium and large companies. Active in European affairs since 1958, UNICE's members are 38 central industrial and employers federations from 32 countries, working together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe.

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