

19 May 2010

## **MEETING OF THE EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE WITH THE SOCIAL PARTNERS**

### **ON THE INTEGRATED GUIDELINES**

#### **SPEAKING NOTES OF THÉRÈSE DE LIEDEKERKE, MANAGING DIRECTOR**

BUSINESSEUROPE broadly support the integrated guidelines and welcome their reduced number. The guidelines address the right priorities to put Europe back on track of sustainable growth and job creation, We support in particular the call on Member States to implement flexicurity policies. However, we have a number of concerns which we would like the Council to take into account when finalising the text of the guidelines.

Job creation is a key concern in a flexicurity approach. Ensuring access to finance for companies is essential for this and is not sufficiently addressed. This is an essential condition to get sustainable growth. Financial market reforms must seek to combine greater financial stability and broad access to finance. New financing channels must be developed to support the modernisation our economy.

Flexible work contracts are contributing to the creation and preservation of jobs. The link made between temporary and precarious employment in guideline seven is sending the wrong signal. Workers on fixed-term contracts and temporary agency workers are protected by European and national legislation as well as by collective agreements. Putting a straight jacket on flexible forms of work will restrict their possibilities to hire workers and would be counter productive

BUSINESSEUROPE supports the objective of reducing greenhouse gases emissions by 20% by 2020. However, the conditions for increasing the target to 30% are not fulfilled as the other developed economies have not taken comparable commitments. To fight climate change whilst preserving the competitiveness of European companies, technological development to increase energy-efficiency is key. The guidelines rightly call for investing in research, innovation and skills.

Simplistic messages on green taxation or divisions between so called green jobs and traditional activities must be avoided.

The social partners' autonomy to negotiate on pay must be respected. Wage developments should be in line with productivity trends, price stability and competitiveness requirements if we want sustainable growth. Ambiguous references linking wage developments and macro economic imbalances can be misunderstood and should be deleted.