



NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

THE COMMISSION'S 2014 COUNTRY-SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS SEND THE RIGHT REFORM MESSAGES

Following the release by the Commission of its 2014 country-specific reform recommendations, BUSINESSEUROPE Director General Markus J. Beyrer commented: *"The Commission has sent the right message about the need for Europe to continue and focus on undertaking fiscal consolidation accompanied by growth-enhancing structural reforms. We particularly support the Commission's call for a number of states to improve the efficiency of their public expenditure to allow a reduction in very high levels of labour taxation. As well as supporting the Commission recommendations in the Council, Member States urgently need to raise their game regarding reform implementation."*

BUSINESSEUROPE's 2014 Reform Barometer highlighted the urgent need for a greater focus on reform implementation in EU Member States. In particular the Reform Barometer showed that:

- Our member federations believe that the Commission's and Council's reform objectives have generally focussed on the right issues for competitiveness, with 83% of the 2013 CSRs assessed by member federations as being important or extremely important.
- However, only 23% of the 2013 CSRs have been assessed by BUSINESSEUROPE's member federations as being satisfactorily implemented.
- The overall tax burden in the EU is now 50% higher than the US and 30% higher than Japan.
- The average tax wedge on low-income workers is 40% higher than in the US and Japan.

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BUSINESSEUROPE is the leading advocate for growth and competitiveness at European level, standing up for companies across the continent and actively campaigning on the issues that most impact their performance. We speak for enterprise in 35 European countries whose national business federations are our direct members.

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