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BUSINESSEUROPE
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For immediate release

Europe's economy turning a corner: upcoming EU Council must help consolidate growth

- **Tentative signs of recovery as output set to increase in second half of 2013, but business investment varied due to continuing uncertainty**
- **Decisive political signals on banking, structural reform and digital policies can reduce uncertainty and consolidate growth**

In advance of the October 24 EU Council meeting, BUSINESSEUROPE sees early signs of economic recovery in Europe but calls on the Council to consolidate growth by accelerating agreed policy action. At a meeting in Brussels of its Executive Committee, a gathering of the chief executives of the national business federations of 35 European countries, BUSINESSEUROPE called for urgent and tangible action in three critical areas:

- Completion of the banking union to enhance access to finance, particularly for European SMEs;
- Further necessary reform at national level, notably labour market reform to boost employment;
- Development of the single market in the areas of digital economy and telecoms to regain Europe's leadership position.

Reporting mixed economic performance at national level, the members of the BUSINESSEUROPE Executive Committee urged Europe's political leaders to create a more certain and positive business environment. *"Growth in business investment varied significantly from country to country (+/- 9%) in the last 12 months. This shows that overall investment levels are still being affected by uncertainty. The EU Council must use this opportunity to provide credible signals about the future to boost confidence and foster employment"*, said BUSINESSEUROPE Director General, Markus J Beyrer.

"Data released this week shows that, boosted by industrial output growth of 0.3% over the last 3 months, the Euro area trade balance is continuing to improve. While we still expect EU GDP growth to be around zero in 2013, output in the second half of the year is likely to be 0.6% above the first. Our national federations see the potential for a pick-up in investment that will ultimately lead to job creation. However, this is dependent on the delivery of policy commitments and clear political leadership. We share the IMF's view that, in the absence of fundamental reform, there is a high risk of stagnation for the EU economy which we must avoid."

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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.