



The voice of 60 million
workers in Europe

**European Trade Union Confederation(ETUC)
Confédération Européenne des Syndicats(CES)**
Boulevard du Roi Albert II - 5
B-1210 Bruxelles
Tel.: +32 2 224 04 11
Fax: + 32 2 224 04 54 - 55
E-mail: etuc@etuc.org

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THE VOICE OF BUSINESS IN EUROPE

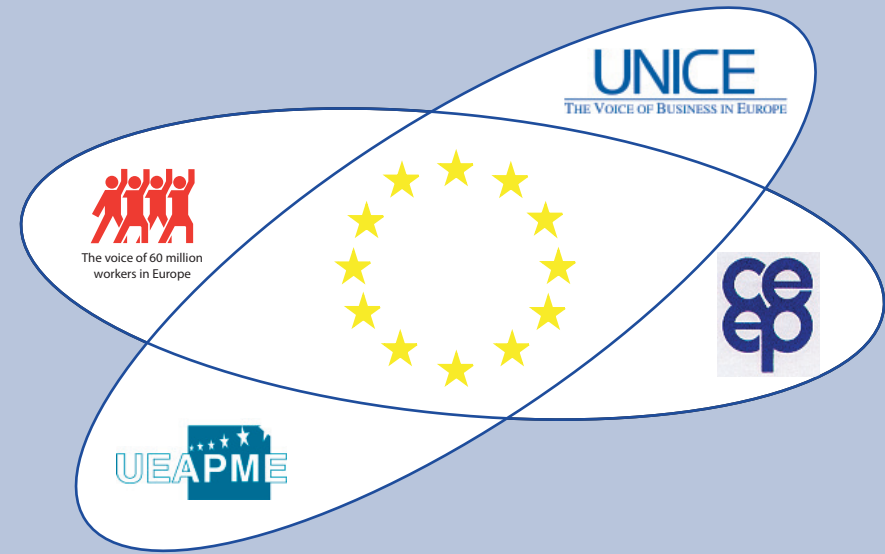
UNICE
Avenue de Cortenbergh, 168
B-1000 Bruxelles
Tel.: +32 (0)2 237 65 11
Fax: +32 (0)2 231 14 45
E-mail: main@unice.be

UEAPME

UEAPME
Rue Jacques de Lalaing 4
B-1040 Bruxelles
Tel.: +32 2 230 75 99
Fax: +32 2 230 78 61
E-mail: info@ueapme.com



CEEP
Rue de la Charite, 15 Bte 12
B-1210 Bruxelles
Tel.: +32-2-219.27.98
Fax: +32-2-218.12.13
E-mail ceep@ceep.org



Work Programme of the European Social Partners 2006-2008

UNICE/UEAPME, CEEP, ETUC (and the liaison committee EUROCADRES/CEC) reiterate their support for the Lisbon Strategy aimed at turning Europe into the most competitive knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth, with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. Europe's weakness in terms of growth and employment needs to be addressed in order to face the challenges of demographic change, globalisation and technological innovation.

The European social dialogue work programme for 2003-2005 has successfully contributed to the implementation of this strategy. It has also been useful to better focus the European social dialogue over the past three years and to enhance its autonomy. The European social partners notably negotiated two framework agreements on telework and work-related stress, two frameworks of actions on lifelong learning and gender equality and developed a programme to assist social partners of the new Member States joining in the EU social dialogue.

Through this second work programme for 2006-2008, the European Social Partners want to contribute to and promote growth, jobs and the modernisation of the EU social model. ETUC, UNICE/UEAPME and CEEP see this work programme as a means of further reinforcing the social partners autonomy. Its quality of outcome in the enlarged EU implies a renewed focus on jointly agreed measures accompanied by effective use and efficient organisation of the follow-up provisions and monitoring activities.

The European Social Partners believe that their new work programme should focus on Europe's major economic and social challenges, in order to ensure that the social dialogue at European level deals with the major concerns of Europe's workers and employers. They will employ a variety of tools in order to realise it.

In order to contribute to enhancing Europe's employment and growth potential and the impact of the European social dialogue, the social partners undertake to make a joint analysis on the key challenges facing Europe's labour markets, looking at issues such as

- ▶ macro-economic and labour market policies,
- ▶ demographic change, active ageing, youth integration, mobility and migration,
- ▶ lifelong learning, competitiveness, innovation and the integration of disadvantaged groups on the labour market,
- ▶ balance between flexibility and security,
- ▶ undeclared work.

On that basis, they will:

1. decide appropriate joint recommendations to be made to EU and national institutions, and
2. define priorities to be included in a framework of actions on employment by the social partners, and
3. negotiate an autonomous framework agreement on either the integration of disadvantaged groups on the labour market or life long learning. In order to define their respective mandates, they will explore different possibilities.

Furthermore, the European social partners will

4. negotiate a voluntary framework agreement on harassment and violence in 2006;
5. complete the national studies on economic and social change in the EU 10, enlarge them to cover the EU 15 and on that basis promote and assess the orientations for reference on managing change and its social consequences and the joint lessons learned on EWCs;
6. continue their work of capacity building for the social dialogue in the new member states, extend it to candidate countries, and examine how the employers and trade union resource centres providing technical assistance to the 10 new member states could provide help to social partners of all EU countries;
7. report on the implementation of the telework as well as the work-related stress agreements and on the follow up to the framework of actions on gender equality;
8. based on the implementation of the telework and stress agreements and the frameworks of actions on the lifelong development of competences and qualifications and on gender equality, further develop their common understanding of these instruments and how they can have a positive impact at the various levels of social dialogue.

CEEP, UNICE/UEAPME and ETUC consider that this work programme does not constitute an exhaustive list. The social partners may decide to up-date it in the light of developments in the EU. Furthermore, they will continue to monitor the implementation of the European Growth and Jobs Strategy.

23 March 2006