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Til underretning for Folketingets Europaudvalg vedlægges formandskabets konklusioner på baggrund af Rådets (beskæftigelsesministre) frokostdrøftelse om Wim Kok-rapporten og Vækstinitiativet den 1. december 2003.

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**- 9 DEC. 2003**

**Det italienske EU-formandskabs konklusioner på baggrund af frokostdrøftelsen i Rådet (beskæftigelsesministre) den 1. december 2003**

Vedlagt fremsendes formandskabets konklusioner på baggrund af Rådets (beskæftigelsesministre) frokostdrøftelse om Wim Kok-rapporten og Vækstinitiativet den 1. december 2003.

Vores sag  
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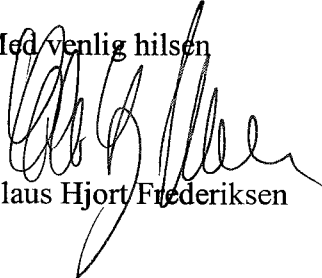
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Udenrigsministeriet anmodes om at forestå videreforsendelsen af konklusionerne med henblik på orientering af Folketingets Europaudvalg.

Det skal bemærkes, at jeg omtalte sagen under forelæggelsen af Rådsmødet i Folketingets Europaudvalg den 28. november 2003.

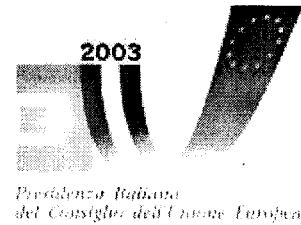
Konklusionerne er også oversendt elektronisk til Udenrigsministeriet.

Med venlig hilsen

  
Claus Hjort Frederiksen



Ministero del  
Lavoro e delle  
Politiche Sociali



## PRESIDENCY CONCLUSIONS

### **Boosting employment, implementing labour market structural reforms and investing in human capital**

The Ministers of Employment and Social Affairs of the European Union, the European Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs together with the Ministers of the ten new Member States discussed the European Action for Growth and the Report of the Employment Taskforce presented by its Chair, Wim Kok. The two reports will be debated at the Extraordinary Tripartite Social Summit in December.

**The report of the European Employment Taskforce** was welcomed as an important contribution to strengthening the European Employment Strategy and revitalising the Lisbon Agenda since it acknowledges that employment is a key driver for growth and social cohesion. The report rightly underlines the importance of pursuing structural labour market reform and insists on the need to increase both employment and labour productivity in order to raise Europe's economic growth potential.

The report identifies four areas for action - increasing adaptability of workers and enterprises, attracting more people to the labour market, more and more effective investment in human capital and a better governance for employment - which are fully consistent with and reflect the scope of the new European Employment Guidelines.

In order to create more businesses and more jobs, Europe needs to increase the adaptability of workers and enterprises and to re-assess employment contracts, carefully balancing flexibility with security. Flexibility should be seen no longer just an employer's interest but it should also serve the interest of workers.. The capacity of firms and their workers to manage change in a positive way will be a key to the success of future employment policies..

The Ministers and the European Commissioner emphasised that the Taskforce Report and its follow-up should help to boost the implementation of the European Employment Strategy by providing a key input to the Council/Commission joint Employment Report for the Spring Council 2004

The Ministers welcomed **the European Growth Initiative** as a useful policy and financial instrument in order to boost investment in infrastructures and knowledge Europe-wide. The potential of the selected projects should be tapped with the view to sustaining productivity and employment growth in the longer-term, and thus help to achieve sustainable economic growth.

Given low economic growth and the high unemployment, and in the light of the longer-term challenges Europe faces, such as globalisation, world-wide economic transformation and the consequences of the ageing society, Member States must take effective action for reform at national level to boost job creation and maximise the EU's performance.

The meeting recognized that the European Growth Initiative is a concrete answer to the Lisbon strategy and is fully complimentary to the work of the Employment Taskforce. At the Lisbon Council, indeed, the European Union defined a comprehensive strategy aimed at long economic growth, full employment, competitiveness, social cohesion, and sustainable development in a knowledge society. Successful labour market reforms and growth- and stability-oriented macro-economic policies are crucial for reaching the employment objectives set in Lisbon and Stockholm and to tackle the demographic challenge.

Europe also needs more and better investment in **human capital**. Despite Lisbon's call for a substantial increase in investment in human capital, levels of investment are not progressing significantly and lifelong learning systems are still inadequately developed. The EU suffers from under-investment in human capital and from insufficient investment in ICT tools that are necessary to raise productivity and quality at work. Investing in human capital is a central requirement to attain the Lisbon objective of becoming the most competitive knowledge-based economy.

Therefore, in order to complement the Growth Initiative and to achieve the strategic goal set by the Lisbon European Council, and in light of the Kok Report, a particular emphasis should be placed on investing in human capital. The Ministers stress that policies to promote economic growth must be backed up by structural reforms, including labour market reforms, and by investment in human resources.

Given the financial characteristics of the Initiative for Growth, it appears necessary to encourage new ways to facilitate investment in human resources, inter alia such as encouraging the European Investment Bank in facilitating investment in human resources, or considering to allocate a part of economic and social cohesion funding post-2006 to human capital investment, and lifelong learning.

Finally, the Ministers and the European Commissioner stressed a strong political commitment to accelerate efforts in order to achieve the Union's long-term goals. This will be crucial to strengthening confidence among citizens and businesses. The social dialogue at all levels will also have a key role to play. In particular, the extraordinary Tripartite Social Summit in 11 December 2003 should give some preliminary indications on the relevant fields where an effective partenariat would develop.