

## **UNI Europa Commerce and EuroCommerce sign a pledge for quality apprenticeships**

UNI Europa Commerce and EuroCommerce today signed a pledge to raise awareness and support more quality, access and fairness in apprenticeships in retail and wholesale.

Apprenticeships provide a valuable mix of formal study and on-the-job training. As an employer of 1 in 5 young people working in Europe, the retail and wholesale sector is already active in providing young people with valuable skills which allow them to take up the many possibilities the sector offers to develop their careers.

This pledge will encourage members of UNI Europa Commerce and EuroCommerce to further promote opportunities for young people to work in SMEs, e-commerce and the new areas of retail and wholesale. Members are encouraged to gather and share best practice in dual learning systems from across Europe in order to encourage apprenticeships designed to produce the best results.

The pledge sends a clear message from social partners to Ministers for Vocational Education and Training meeting in Riga (Latvia) on 22 June 2015 looking at how to develop the European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA) to meet future needs. EuroCommerce will be representing both social partners in the retail and wholesale sector at this meeting.

UNI Europa Regional Secretary Oliver Roethig said: *“Social partners have a key role in defining the criteria and the content of apprenticeship programmes. These schemes increase young people’s employability and help to create jobs in a high quality and safe working environment.”*

EuroCommerce Director-General Christian Verschuere said *“In a sector like retail and wholesale which is changing at such a rapid pace, companies need to find people with the right skills to do the jobs needed. This requires flexibility and the ability to meet new challenges. Apprenticeship programmes, responding to the needs of big and small companies, are vital to prepare young talent for these newly-emerging careers in retail and wholesale.”*

~ENDS~

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### **EuroCommerce and the commerce sector**

EuroCommerce is the principal organisation representing the retail and wholesale sector. It embraces 5.4 million companies, both leading multinational retailers such as Carrefour, IKEA, Tesco and REWE and many small family operations. Retail and wholesale provide a link between producers and 500 million European consumers over a billion times a day. It generates 1 in 7 jobs, providing a varied career for 29 million Europeans, many of them young people. It also supports millions of further jobs throughout the supply chain, from small local suppliers to international businesses. <http://www.eurocommerce.eu>