

Joint Press Release

Ankara, 3 June 2014

EU-Turkey Chambers Forum II: Contributions from the Chamber network to Turkey's on-going EU accession process

A total of sixty-three Chambers and Commodity exchanges from all over Turkey and forty-six Chambers from the European Union have participated in at least one of the ETCF II activities since June 2011.

This strong mutual interest and the successful implementation of the different activities illustrate, than more than ever, the relations with Turkey are important for the EU business community and vice versa. In this context, it is important to better communicate on the massive mutual economic benefits brought by the implementation of the Customs Union between the EU and Turkey as well as by Turkey's accession process to the EU, since they are too often unreported by the media or politicians.

During the implementation of the project, the business community on both sides has also confirmed that the EU-Turkey economic relationship could be stronger and deeper. It would be crucial to further untap the potential for trade and investment between Turkey and the EU by improving the business environment in Turkey and better promoting the Turkish market in the EU, and vice versa.

Surveys carried out in the context of the project have highlighted that both business communities largely believe that Turkey will join the EU by 2023. Turkish companies should therefore intensify their efforts to successfully adapt to and comply with *acquis* requirements so that they can be competitive in an enlarged Europe.

Presenting the results of the project during ETCF II closing event in Ankara on 3rd June, Dirk Vantuyghem, Director of International Affairs in EUROCHAMBRES, highlighted that: "*In these challenging times, we strongly believe that the business community can contribute to re-energise the EU-Turkey relationship. Chambers have a central role to play in this regards*".

The EU-Turkey Chambers Forum (ETCFII)

[ETCF II](#) is a three-year project implemented by EUROCHAMBRES and the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB). ETCF II aims at strengthening mutual knowledge, dialogue and long-term co-operation between the Turkish Chambers and their EU counterparts, thus promoting the integration of European and Turkish business communities. ETCF II is co-financed by the European Union (EU) under the 2009 Instrument for Pre-Accession – Civil Society Facility and the Republic of Turkey.

MORE

Two sets of activities were implemented:

1. Activities aimed at improving the knowledge of Turkish Chambers on EU legislation and policies (two surveys on the perspective of the business community towards EU-Turkey relations; a training programme on EU affairs for Turkish Chamber executives; and an audit of Turkish companies on their compliance with the EU *acquis* on six specific topics).
2. Activities aimed at enhancing the abilities of Turkish Chambers to generate and develop value-added services to their members (scholarships for EUROCHAMBRES Academies; study visits in the EU; and partnerships between Chambers from Turkey and the EU).

For more information, read:

The agenda of the conference on "[Contributions of the Chambers to the EU-Turkey Civil Society Dialogue](#)"

The press release issued on the occasion of the last High level Conference on "[EU-Turkey relations: perspectives from the business community](#)".

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EUROCHAMBRES is the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry represents over 20 million enterprises in Europe – 98% of which are SMEs – through members in 43 countries and a European network of 1700 regional and local Chambers.



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TOBB is the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey. TOBB represents a network of over 1.4 million enterprises, 365 local Chambers and Commodity Exchanges and 59 sectoral assemblies.