

Christoph Leitl elected new President of EUROCHAMBRES

Christoph Leitl, President of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber, was today elected new President of the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry (EUROCHAMBRES). His term will begin on 1 January 2018, succeeding Richard Weber (Germany), who was appointed EUROCHAMBRES' Honorary Chairman.

In his investiture speech, as part of the EUROCHAMBRES' General Assembly held in Brussels, Mr. Leitl said: *"I look forward to work for strengthening EUROCHAMBRES and the Chamber network, in the member countries and at European level, to enable our members better respond to globalisation challenges."*

After being elected President of EUROCHAMBRES, Mr. Leitl said: *"EUROCHAMBRES underlines the importance of enhanced economic and **free trade relations** with partner countries. This will strengthen the competitiveness of Europe's companies and ensure equal treatment with competitors on foreign markets as well as growth, employment and prosperity in the EU. Besides measures against protectionism in third countries, a closer cooperation between the EU and its trading partners in terms of multilateral, regional and bilateral negotiations as well as for example institutionalized talks to prevent trade conflicts in the forefront are needed."*

*"On **entrepreneurship**, we need initiatives to foster entrepreneurial spirit, so that entrepreneurs will be seen again as valuable members of the society, as job creators and as an important part of social life. As chambers we can look at best practises from various countries in this respect."*

*"Chambers are key players in imparting and raising skills. Not only do they represent businesses, the "users" of skills, but they also play a unique and pivotal role in **skills development** through the shaping and delivery of vocational education and training policy. Young people need the right skills to compete in changing and challenging labour markets."*

Mr. Leitl's mandate will be focused on three priorities:

1. Challenges like globalisation, digitalisation and migration are not only threats but also opportunities. We have to seize the chances.
2. Europeans account for only 7% of the world's population. They realise 25 % of world GDP, thus financing more than 50% of global social and environmental services. The business society of Europe has to maintain these quality standards also in the future.
3. Creativity, talent, skills and motivation create innovation as the key factor for entrepreneurial success and social stabilities.

Christoph Leitl was born in 1949 in Linz, Austria. Since 2000 he is President of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber and, since 2008, the Chairman of the Social Insurance Institution for Trade & Industry of Austria. Mr. Leitl is also President of the Global Chamber Platform and Member of the Executive Committee of Austrian People's Party (ÖVP).

Mr. Leidl has become the only President of EUROCHAMBRES to win two non-consecutive terms. He was President before from 2002 to 2005. Since 2006, he has been Honorary President of the Association. (Photo available at: <http://bit.ly/2yvduRb> – CV is at: <http://bit.ly/2xmA3B7>)

New Deputy Presidents

EUROCHAMBRES' Plenary Assembly also elected 3 new Deputy Presidents. New Deputy Presidents are Constantine Michalos (Greece), Ian Talbot (Ireland) and Stephan Mühler (Sweden). Deputy Presidents have a two-year mandate (2018-2020).

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