

EUROCHAMBRES assesses the results of the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the EU

At the end of this Presidency of the Council of the European Union, EUROCHAMBRES President Christoph Leitl shares his thoughts about how it went and what was achieved.

Christoph Leitl, President of EUROCHAMBRES, underlined the progress achieved in the areas of circular economy, the preparation of a new long-term EU budget that reflects the European priorities for the next years (such as youth, research & development and digitalisation), as well as the political agreements for a positive outcome on the Italian budget and the recent developments to try to reach a Withdrawal Agreement with the United Kingdom.

On these results, President Leitl stated in Vienna: *“The motto of this Presidency, ‘**A Europe that protects**’, has been successful also when we talk about entrepreneurs, skills, promotion of new trade agreements, opportunities for the future and better regulation for SMEs. In many ways, this has been a positive semester for the European economy”.*

“On Brexit, I would like to remark the big efforts developed by the Austrian Presidency, EU Member States and European institutions working together to try to achieve an UK withdrawal without catastrophic consequences for entrepreneurs and SMEs. This has been a remarkable work, but for the moment is not enough. Now that the clock is ticking, we need to avoid damages of the consequences of a no-deal Brexit, especially for the European economy. Chambers are preparing for the worst and the Chamber Network expects that the best economic relationship possible with the UK is still reachable during next weeks, considering the current scenario”, President Leitl said.

On the other hand, President Leitl remarked that, despite the efforts of the Austrian Presidency, a new fair taxation system was not supported by some EU countries: *“The issue remains pending and to be developed by the next rotating Presidency”,* he said.

About the Austrian Presidency

The Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union programme was focused on asylum and migration issues, protecting external borders, fighting radicalisation, terrorism and organised crime, digital security, and on protecting European values.

Romania will take over the rotating Council Presidency on 1 January.

Additional information:

- President Leitl is available for interviews. Please contact our press service if interested.

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