

PRESS RELEASE

EUROCHAMBRES urges Member States to speed up labour market reforms

EUROCHAMBRES, the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry, urges the Irish Presidency and Member States to speed up reforms in the field of employment at the meeting of the employment ministers in Galway on 15-17 January.

Christoph Leidl, President of EUROCHAMBRES, said: *“The Commission has recently clearly pointed out some crucial efforts required by Member States to remove barriers to the participation of unemployed in the labour market.* EUROCHAMBRES calls on the employment ministers to implement the measures proposed by the Commission in order to increase the labour supply and make work pay.”*

EUROCHAMBRES highlighted the urgent need for a reform of the social protection systems in Europe. The burden of social protection must not fall on businesses. Taxes on labour and social contributions on wages have to be diminished and unemployment benefit periods have to be shortened. Young people under 25 should be re-integrated in the employment market as soon as possible e. g. by special training programmes.

Chambers are convinced that competitiveness increased by a business-friendly environment and enhanced business performance are the best support to employment. To ensure a sustainable and high level of employment in Europe, EUROCHAMBRES called for

- Ø More flexible labour regulations (flexible working hours, part-time work);
- Ø A rapid transformation of undeclared work into declared work;
- Ø Support of business creation to increase the level of self-employment;
- Ø Measures for an increased geographical and occupational mobility within the European Union;
- Ø More compatibility of occupation and family by time-flexible, qualified, sufficient and affordable health care facilities for children and elderly people.

* Communication “Modernising Social Protection for More and Better Jobs – a comprehensive approach contributing to making work pay”

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The Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry has member organisations in 41 countries representing a network of 1,600 regional and local Chambers with over 15 million member companies.

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