

## 5+1 business proposals to make Europe 2020 work

The five targets outlined in the Europe 2020 strategy presented by the European Commission today represent a sound business plan to enhance the EU's growth and competitiveness in the years to come.

But these priorities and targets will prove meaningless if national governments do not pursue them rigorously through their domestic agendas.

Below are EUROCHAMBRES' proposals on how the Europe 2020 headline targets can be delivered, along with the addition of a further proposal on governance that is a pre-requisite to the whole strategy's success.

1. **A "Pact for Sustainable Employability"**. Increased employment requires a far better correlation between the needs of private sector employers and the competences provided by education systems. EUROCHAMBRES repeats its call for a 'Pact for Sustainable Employability' that should establish the framework for far more effective collaboration between training organisations, universities, businesses and public authorities to ensure that the provision of training responds to the results of skills forecasting.
2. **Linking R&D to business**. Spending on research & development per se will not contribute to growth. R&D must respond to the needs of businesses, which in turn requires far closer links between business and the research community and radical changes in the governance and philosophy of academic institutes.
3. **Energy efficiency**. The 20-20-20 targets to fight climate change of course remain valid and should be integral to Europe 2020. As a short term measure, a forthcoming Chamber survey indicates that much more should be done to encourage small businesses and consumers to grasp the low hanging fruit of energy efficiency measures. This is a potential quick win that would deliver considerable economic and environmental benefits.
4. **Employability**. Employability must be a key indicator of education systems. To this end, tertiary education must be more demand-driven and should embrace vocational education, which has become worryingly devalued in some parts of the EU.
5. **Employment to fight poverty**. The most effective route to poverty reduction and social inclusion is employment, so businesses are key actors in reducing the poverty gap. There are 18 million job seekers in Europe, while 4 million vacancies remained unfilled last year. Designing tools that would 'match the unmatched' could cut unemployment by nearly a quarter overnight.
6. **Ensure governance**. A strong business plan is of course important, but it is worthless if not resourced and implemented. National budgets, priorities and actions must be regularly monitored, reviewed and adapted by the Council in line with the priorities and targets of Europe 2020.

Arnaldo Abruzzini, Secretary General of EUROCHAMBRES, said: *“As with Europe 2020’s predecessor, the Lisbon Strategy, the question mark is on the delivery. It is critical that the European Council demonstrates rigour and ambition in leading the implementation and monitoring processes. Ultimately, it boils down to political commitment.”*

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Further information: Mr Ben Butters, Tel. +32 2 282 08 71, [butters@eurochambres.eu](mailto:butters@eurochambres.eu)  
Press contact: Ms Guendalina Cominotti, Tel. +32 2 282 08 66, [cominotti@eurochambres.eu](mailto:cominotti@eurochambres.eu)  
All our press releases can be downloaded from [www.eurochambres.eu/content/default.asp?PageID=153](http://www.eurochambres.eu/content/default.asp?PageID=153)

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