

PRESS RELEASE

Action Plan on Entrepreneurship **EUROCHAMBRES welcomes approach but calls for concrete steps on the European and national level**

EUROCHAMBRES, the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry, has welcomed the Action Plan for Entrepreneurship as well-focused and well-intentioned, but said it could have gone further to bring new impetus to the Lisbon process.

“We welcome the Action Plan which clearly identifies the problematic of enterprise promotion in Europe and the key issues which need to be addressed, “ said EUROCHAMBRES’ Secretary General, Arnaldo Abruzzini. “However, clear targets and a detailed timetable for implementation would have improved the document. The business community has already seen many well-intentioned initiatives but has yet to see much in the way of concrete results “

EUROCHAMBRES agrees with the Commission’s selection of the five strategic policy areas*. They coincide for the most part with the priorities outlined by EUROCHAMBRES of creating the right framework for enterprise creation and growth and promoting a more entrepreneurial climate in Europe.

More specific actions and targets for measuring progress

The Action Plan also lists some positive new policy initiatives, such as support schemes to help SMEs to deal with the regulatory burden, awareness campaigns to facilitate business transfers and more research and education on business failures which should help reduce the stigma of bankruptcy. However, in key policy areas such as entrepreneurship education, the promotion of female entrepreneurship and supporting SMEs activities abroad concrete actions are lacking.

Specific actions such as studies, projects or guidelines in each policy area, along with a clear timetable for their implementation, would have brought more coherence to policies on entrepreneurship.

Furthermore, the performance targets listed are by no means comprehensive. European business wants to see the Commission consistently applying indicators and targets for measuring progress, both at the EU and at Member States level.

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*Fuelling entrepreneurial mindsets; encouraging more people to become entrepreneurs; gearing entrepreneurs for growth and competitiveness; improving the flow of finance; creating a more SME-friendly regulatory and administrative framework.

EUROCHAMBRES has member organisations in **41** countries representing a network of **2,000** regional and local Chambers with over **17 million** member companies.



National Action Plans needed for real progress

Although responsibility for Enterprise policy still lies largely at the national level, the Action Plan should make it clearer just what actions are expected from Member States as well as what actions the Commission will undertake itself.

The Chamber network believes that Member States should be encouraged to make real progress with the elaboration and publication of national Action Plans, in which they could select their own priorities along the lines of those suggested by the Action Plan and a more systematic follow up of their implementation could be undertaken.

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