

PRESS RELEASE

EU budget 2007-2013: FP7 must give competitiveness and growth a chance!

While an agreement on the breakdown of the EU's financial perspectives is likely to be adopted by the European Parliament on Wednesday, EUROCHAMBRES calls for progress to be made already tonight in the vote on the 7th Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7).

EUROCHAMBRES asks MEPs for a greater focus on competitiveness and growth, and for increased involvement of business in the implementation of FP7.

Arnaldo Abruzzini, Secretary General of EUROCHAMBRES, said: *"FP7 is one of the EU's most important measures to enhance growth, employment and competitiveness in the long term. We hope MEPs will adequately fund this programme, and involve companies in its implementation: we can not miss the chance to sustain Europe's current fledgling economic revival."*

Industry and SME participation is the only lever by which FP7 can make a contribution to the renewed Lisbon Agenda. However, it is precisely the participation of industry and SMEs which decreased in FP6. Mr Abruzzini argued: *"Supporting private participation in R&D is the only way of achieving the Barcelona objective of an R&D investment of 3% of GDP by 2010."*

In order to increase private sector participation in R&D investment, EUROCHAMBRES insists that sufficient resources are allocated to pillars "Cooperation" and "Capacities". Additionally, SME participation can be fostered by dramatically shortening and simplifying the funding process, and by linking FP7 with the CIP and the Structural Funds.

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