

**PRESS RELEASE**

## **EUROCHAMBRES launches CAESAR** **New project for Corporate Social Responsibility**

European companies are increasingly committed to adopting principles of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) but often lack information or practical tools to do so. In order to support SMEs on their CSR path, EUROCHAMBRES launches “CAESAR”, a programme to help Chambers of Commerce become “CSR relay points” for SMEs.

CAESAR aims at improving the capacity of Chambers to provide CSR services to their member companies: initially, 50 Chamber advisors will be trained to offer their CSR expertise to enterprises and to other European Chambers.

Arnaldo Abruzzini, Secretary General of EUROCHAMBRES, said: *“Companies are more and more keen to incorporate CSR in their daily activities, but need to learn about it in appropriate terms that correspond to their day-to-day reality. These difficulties cannot be ignored and Chambers are very well placed to act as CSR relay points for SMEs. Encouraging companies to adopt CSR practices will add value to their businesses and contribute to their long term competitiveness.”*

CAESAR is financially supported by the EU’s programme “Mainstreaming CSR among SMEs” and will provide CSR guidance to more than 200 European companies.

### **Chambers of Commerce: strong actors in promoting CSR**

Chambers have been deeply involved in the promotion of Corporate Social Responsibility among European companies, encouraging businesses of all sizes and sectors to integrate environmental and social principles in their management.

Last year, EUROCHAMBRES implemented a pan-European Awareness Raising Campaign, which included 63 events in 29 European countries to bring SMEs closer to Corporate Social Responsibility.

Chambers have also signed a CSR Declaration in 2003, committing themselves to “raise knowledge among their enterprise members on issues related to CSR, spread principles of CSR, provide their business members with valuable information on CSR practices and tools, and support the exchange of experience on CSR amongst companies.”

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EUROCHAMBRES has member organisations in 44 countries representing a network of 2,000 regional and local Chambers with over 18 million member companies.