

PRESS RELEASE

Chambers urge EP election vote: New Parliament will be critical for economy and jobs

EUROCHAMBRES and the Chamber network across the enlarged Union actively support a high turnout in the elections for the European Parliament on 10 – 13 June. Chambers urge all European citizens to make use of their democratic right and participate in the elections.

The requests of the European business community to the new-elected Members of the European Parliament have been published in "EUROCHAMBRES' Manifesto". European business wants to see a European Parliament acting to deliver a more competitive economy, creating jobs and wealth.

Christoph Leitl, President of EUROCHAMBRES said: *"The political focus over the past five years has been on institutional affairs, on international security, on the environment and on ensuring social equality. All valid, all necessary. However, we strongly believe that the new European Parliament and new Commission must re-focus on the economy. They must champion growth and competitiveness."*

A stronger economy will provide jobs for the huge number of Europeans now unemployed. A stronger economy will support the enlargement process for the benefit of all. A stronger economy will underpin security and foreign policy."

With no growth strategy, Europe will drop out of the premier league of international competitiveness

Stronger European economic growth was also the key message of EUROCHAMBRES, when President Leitl met with new EU Commissioners Kyprianou (Budget), Hübner (Trade), and Figel' (Enterprise and the Information Society) yesterday.

"A targeted Growth Strategy is Europe's biggest and most important challenge in order to achieve its key targets of a sound economy, employment, social welfare and high environmental standards", Mr. Leitl summarised. "With no growth strategy, Europe will no longer play in the same league as major players such as the US and Asia but will be relegated to a second tier status."

Mr. Leitl urged all key actors on European and national level and the social partners to pull together. *"We all know what has to be done. The question now is how to achieve the envisaged results. We need an improved decision-making power of the European institutions backed by a modern Constitution and stronger European leadership. We need a European Commission capable of acting with a passionate will for growth."*

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



EUROCHAMBRES confirmed to Commissioner Kyprianou and Commissioner Figel' the support of the business community for a strong and very active Commission and urged the Commission to be aware of the importance of growth, highlighting that economic policy must be the central issue for the next five years .

Mr. Leitl discussed with Commissioner Hübner how to move forward the Doha Round and the need for more regional integration in Latin America and the Caribbean as key to further development of EU-Latin American-Caribbean trade relations.

"EUROCHAMBRES' Manifesto" can be downloaded from www.eurochambres.be

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