

## **EUROCHAMBRES / TOBB survey:** **Turkish companies eager yet unprepared for EU accession**

While more than ¾ of Turkish businesses are strongly in favour of joining the EU, for most of them the prospect of accession is still a far-away reality: 72% of them have not yet started preparation to comply with the *acquis communautaire* and a vast majority of companies (95%) have no idea of the related compliance costs.

Two days ahead of the release of the European Commission's "Turkey 2008 Progress Report", a EUROCHAMBRES/TOBB survey conducted among nearly 3000 Turkish companies shows that Turkish businesses are not yet ready for EU accession, and this mainly because of a lack of information on EU legislation and on the advancement of the accession negotiation process.

The smaller the company, the less it is informed about EU legislation. 76% of big companies consider that they are fully or partly informed about the *acquis*, while the percentage drops to 37% for SMEs.

Commenting on these findings during a conference in Brussels, Pierre Simon, President of EUROCHAMBRES, said: *"The information gap about the acquis in the enterprise sector is not particular to Turkey and was already identified in the context of previous enlargements. Nevertheless, survey results call for further efforts to ensure that information on the acquis is reached by the largest number of Turkish companies, especially smaller ones. The lack of information among Turkish businesses on the conditions for, and consequences of, EU accession may lead not only un-preparedness to cope with the Community Single Market, but also to mistrust vis-à-vis the accession process."*

Tamer Taşkın, Member of the Executive Board of the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), added: *"The prospect of EU accession should be a powerful catalyst towards the reforms in Turkey. In order to keep Turkish enterprises motivated to continue reforms, it is very important to enhance communication and mutual understanding between both business community and to a larger extent both civil societies to overcome any misperceptions. This is exactly what Chambers are committed to doing."*

Turkish companies see seminars, workshops and conferences as the best tools to fill their information gap, and recognize a role for Chambers of Commerce in improving their knowledge about EU-related issues. In this respect, the ETCF project can play a crucial role, since it was specifically designed to carry out training seminars, partnerships between Turkish and European Chambers, or the publication of manuals on selected EU legislation.

### **About the EU-Turkey Chambers Forum (ETCF)**

The survey was carried out in the framework of the EU-Turkey Chambers Forum (ETCF). ETCF is a two-year project implemented by EUROCHAMBRES and the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB). ETCF aims at strengthening mutual knowledge, dialogue and long-term co-operation between the Turkish Chambers of Commerce and their EU counterparts, thus promoting the integration of EU and Turkish business communities. ETCF is fully financed by the European Union (EU) under the 2006 Programme for Pre-Accession Assistance. More information on [www.etcf.org.tr](http://www.etcf.org.tr)

**The full ETCF survey can be downloaded from  
[www.eurochambres.eu/content/default.asp?PageID=1&DocID=1348](http://www.eurochambres.eu/content/default.asp?PageID=1&DocID=1348)**

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**EUROCHAMBRES** is the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry. EUROCHAMBRES represents over 19 million member enterprises in Europe through 45 national associations of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and a European network of 2000 regional and local Chambers.

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**TOBB** is the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey. TOBB represents a network of over 1.3 million enterprises, 365 local Chambers and Commodity Exchanges and 56 sectoral assemblies.

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