

**PRESS RELEASE**

## **New Commission: 10 business proposals to make the EU work**

Commenting on the formation of the incoming Commission, EUROCHAMBRES, the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry, stressed the need for the new Commission to adopt **economic rejuvenation** as its over-arching priority for the coming five years. The business body called on the new Commission to...

### **1. BECOME THE COMMISSION OF ECONOMIC REJUVENATION**

The single over-arching priority for the new European Commission must be the revival and competitiveness of the European economy. The achievement of this priority will directly and profoundly impact on employment, on consumer confidence, on environmental and social well-being. Conversely, 5 more years of economic stagnation will alienate citizens, drive business away, and further erode the public finances and capacity to act - throughout the Union.

***We need, for the next 5 years, a Commission whose leitmotif is Economic Revival.***

### **2. REBALANCE THE 3 PILLARS OF SUSTAINABILITY**

Business supports the three pillar approach to European sustainable development. However, that approach is now seriously unbalanced.

To put it another way: while Europe's environmental legislation and social model can safely be said to be world beaters, Europe's economy certainly can not be described as leading the world. If we are serious about a balanced and truly sustainable approach to development, then the economic pillar is the one in need of most attention and action - to balance the other two. The new Commission must lead this action.

### **3. SHARE RESPONSIBILITY, BUT PRESIDENT MUST LEAD**

The actions of Commissioners across a very wide range of portfolios can have significant impact on the competitiveness of the economy. Therefore, all Commissioners in the new College must adopt competitiveness as their shared responsibility. However, we urge that the President of the Commission must take the main responsibility for the achievement of the Lisbon targets and retain overall responsibility for delivering growth over the course of the five years.

### **4. ENFORCE THE INTERNAL MARKET**

Business calls on the new Commission to more strictly uphold the rules of the internal market. While some (few) pieces of further internal market legislation may be necessary, we believe allocation of resources to ensure stronger and quicker enforcement of *existing* legislation will have more positive impact. Do less better.

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

## **5. CONSULT BUSINESS WIDELY AND FAIRLY**

We call on the new Commission to consult the wider business community on proposals which will impact on the business environment – to involve all significant economic actors in key events.

## **6. REGULATE WITH THE ECONOMY IN MIND**

All legislative proposals should be competitiveness – and SME – proofed. Vet all proposals for legislation by posing a simple question: will this legislation make European business, including SMEs, more or less competitive vis a vis our competitors abroad? Do not put proposals forward that hinder growth.

We also strongly urge the new Commission, with the co-operation of the other institutions, to develop an impact assessment system to take account of any major changes introduced by Parliament or Council to proposed legislation. At present, no assessment is made of any such amendments.

Finally, we recommend that budget and resources are made available to undertake a number of ex-post impact assessments each year, on legislation passed in previous years. Such a scheme should be led by business, but undertaken by independent assessors.

## **7. BE A MORE VISIONARY COMMISSION**

The business community calls for a more visionary Commission over the coming five years – asserting its unique role with the European Council, European Parliament and with other EU institutions, but also around the world.

## **8. DO NOT CREATE 'CLUSTERS' OR 'JUNIOR' COMMISSIONERS**

EUROCHAMBRES does not see a business value in clustering portfolios at this time. We stress the point already made above concerning the need for shared responsibility for competitiveness – this should not be limited to a sub-group of Commissioners. However, we believe that some subsequent, informal clustering may naturally evolve – but on an issue-by-issue basis.

## **9. BE HELD TO ACCOUNT**

We urge the Commission as a whole, and Commissioners individually, to set out quantifiable targets in terms of economic development for years 1 through to 5. Commissioners should set out their plans to make Europe's economy more competitive and dynamic (relative to the US and other blocs) over the course of the next 5 years.) We will urge Council and Parliament to do likewise.

## **10. SUPPORT SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED ENTERPRISES**

SMEs must be fostered and encouraged. The role of SME Envoy created within DG Enterprise should be maintained, and his/her remit and resources broadened.

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