

EUROCHAMBRES survey: **Entrepreneurs would double EU budget for competitiveness**

In these times of economic recession, how would entrepreneurs spend EU money? A survey conducted among businesses of different nationalities, sizes and sectors – gathered in the context of the European Parliament of Enterprises, recently organised by EUROCHAMBRES – shows that entrepreneurs would double the expenditure on the ‘competitiveness’ subheading (from the current 9% to an ideal 18%), thus devoting 50% of the EU budget to ‘sustainable growth’.

Entrepreneurs would also cut by a quarter the ‘CAP-market-related expenditure and direct payments’ sub-heading, bringing it to around 23% of the total budget.

In addition, businesses call for a five-fold increase of EU resources devoted to the ‘citizenship, freedom, security and justice’ heading (from 1% to 5%), as well as for a slight increase of the ‘EU as a global player’ heading.

Arnaldo Abruzzini, Secretary General of EUROCHAMBRES, commented: *“These figures show that European entrepreneurs, with a great sense of responsibility, recognise the importance of having a balanced EU budget. However, they would like the share of EU money devoted to competitiveness objectives to be doubled, and ask for a stronger focus on innovation, research, education and training. This direct input from entrepreneurs is invaluable, given the current economic climate.”*

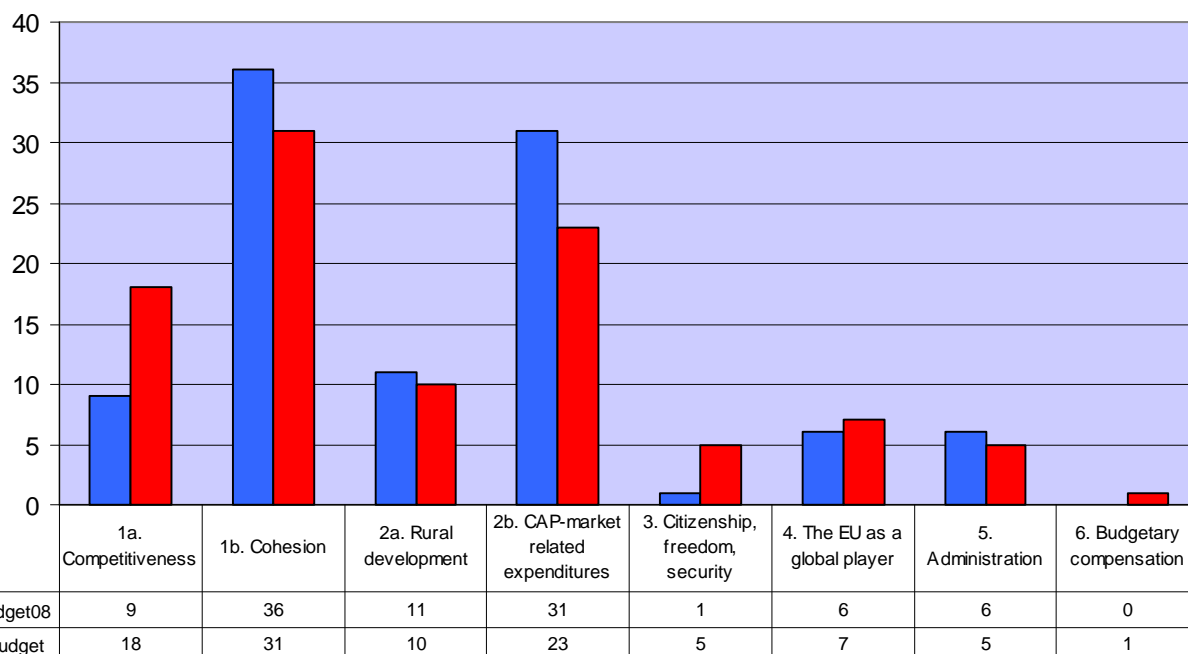
The ECOFIN Budget Council, meeting on 21 November, has a responsibility to respond to these demands by entrepreneurs. Business recommendations should also be addressed in the context of the review of the EU budget, and in the framework of the negotiations on the next financial perspectives.

The European Parliament of Enterprises (EPE)

The European Parliament of Enterprises, held on 14 October in the Brussels Hemicycle of the European Parliament, allowed 774 entrepreneurs of all sizes and sectors, coming from 45 European countries, to debate and vote on specific business-related issues. The EPE was organised by EUROCHAMBRES and its network of Chambers of Commerce, on the occasion of EUROCHAMBRES’ 50th anniversary.

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Comparison EU budget 2008 - EPE 'EU Dream budget'



■ EUbudget08 ■ EPE budget

N.B. For the sake of clarity and to be consistent with the way the survey has been presented to European entrepreneurs gathered at the EPE, all percentages were rounded up or down to eliminate decimals. For example, 'Budgetary compensation' in the 2008 budget is about 0.1%.

Connecting **business to Europe**

EUROCHAMBRES – The Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry represents over 19 million enterprises in Europe – 96% of which are SMEs – through members in 45 countries and a European network of 2000 regional and local Chambers.