

**PRESS RELEASE**

## **Enlargement: Chambers continue their support to the EU accession process**

One day before the publication by the European Commission of the regular accession reports for the three candidate countries (Croatia, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, FYROM), EUROCHAMBRES announces the launch of a new Business Support Programme (BSP), focused on the development and implementation of the *Acquis communautaire*.

This project will allow companies in Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, Turkey and FYROM to evaluate their level of compliance with EU legislation via a self-diagnostic toolkit, and will offer them relevant training when necessary. In addition, the programme will support the introduction of corporate and social responsibility (CSR) strategies among young entrepreneurs in the participating countries.

Arnaldo Abruzzini, Secretary General of EUROCHAMBRES, said: *“Surveys among the business community in these countries show that the level of information and understanding of relevant EU legislation is too low, leading to misunderstandings, and ultimately disillusion in the enlargement process. This programme aims at assisting Chambers of Commerce, and their member companies, in the Candidate Countries to successfully manage the economic integration process with the EU.”*

The project, which will start in 2008 and run for 18 months, has a budget of about 900,000 EUR, 80% of which covered by European Commission funding. It comes as a natural follow up to the successful CAPE (Chambers' Accession Programme for Eastern Europe) experience, which was supported by BSP I & II in 2001-2004.

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