

PRESS RELEASE

Luxembourg Presidency **EUROCHAMBRES urges Prime Minister Juncker to take up the torch for economic revival**

On 23 September, a high-level EUROCHAMBRES' delegation met with Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker in Luxembourg to discuss the future competitiveness of the European Union and the expectations of the business community.

In a joint press conference with Mr Juncker, EUROCHAMBRES President Christoph Leitl said: *"Chambers urge the Luxembourg Presidency to urgently take the necessary and decisive steps to re-launch the achievement of the Lisbon targets following the mid-term evaluation."*

"It has been a very fruitful dialogue and I am optimistic that the Luxembourg Presidency will contribute significantly to the rebalancing of the Lisbon Strategy in favour of the economy. It should make 'competitiveness' and economic revival the overarching priority for Europe."

Priority actions for EUROCHAMBRES during the Presidency of the Grand Duché are to:

- **Improve the quality of regulation:** Build on the Regulatory Reform proposals of January 2004 made jointly with the Irish, Dutch and British Presidencies to give more concrete results and to ensure buy-in by the other 21 EU Members.
- **Increase the accountability of Member States' actions at home:** Introduce "National Lisbon action plans" with detailed roadmaps. They should become part of regular national government programmes and would make Member States more accountable in their national parliaments.
- **Promote lifelong learning.** Lisbon is not possible without greater commitment to this issue.
- **Review the open method of co-ordination:** Generate peer pressure among Member States by valuable, measurable and annual benchmarks.

EUROCHAMBRES' president assured Mr Juncker of the support of the Chambers in order to enhance European competitiveness. Mr Leitl called on the Presidency to involve the wider business community - including Chambers - in general economic and social consultations and in its organisation of events to benefit from the knowledge and expertise of the full spectrum of social partners.

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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.

Mr Leitl also congratulated Mr Juncker on his recent appointment as President of the Euro-Group. He said: *“The creation of a permanent presidency over two years and the improvement of the working methods is an big step forward for this institution, and we strongly welcome the choice of Mr Juncker to lead it. Mr Juncker is widely known and appreciated for his competence and experience as well as for his European-minded attitude. Businesses are optimistic that under his lead the Euro-group will reinforce a growth oriented monetary strategy.”*

During his visit in Luxembourg Mr Leitl also met with Philippe Maystadt, President of the European Investment Bank, Vassilios Skouris, President of the European Court of Justice.

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