

**PRESS RELEASE****EUROCHAMBRES Congress opens in Thessaloniki:  
Chambers join voices to communicate Europe**

EUROCHAMBRES' 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress started in Thessaloniki (Greece) today, gathering more than 400 participants around the theme "Communicating Europe: Sharing the Vision, Delivering the Results".

In his opening speech, EUROCHAMBRES' President Pierre Simon said: *"Whether you want more or less 'Europe', one thing is sure: it is urgent, now more than ever, to relaunch the debate and to better communicate about Europe. Communication must be the watchword for European leaders today. More and better communication is what Europe needs if it wants to rekindle the spark with its citizens and to make radical reforms building on a strong base-line support."*

*"Chambers of Commerce can bridge the gap between the complexity of European construction and the dynamism of enterprises. Today, Chambers renew their commitment to being an ally of the institutions in highlighting to the business community Europe's historic achievements, and in helping companies to benefit from Europe's future opportunities."*

Mr Simon added that the Lisbon Strategy remains Europe's finest project and identified four key areas where Chambers can make a significant contribution to its revitalisation:

1. Business creation, development and transfer;
2. Training and apprenticeship;
3. Internationalisation of business;
4. Innovation for business (in particular Energy and Clusters).

Representatives of the European Parliament, the European Commission and of the Greek Government are among the keynote speakers chairing the Congress sessions on these four topics.

The debates will give birth to a **Manifesto of European Chambers**, a document collecting the existing activities of Chambers in these fields, as well as recommendations to EU and national authorities to improve the overall business climate in Europe.

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EUROCHAMBRES has member organisations in 45 countries representing a network of 2,000 regional and local Chambers with over 18 million member companies.