

PRESS RELEASE

Hampton Court Summit: Business needs clear leadership and clear direction

Speaking in advance of the Hampton Court summit, Arnaldo Abruzzini, Secretary General of EUROCHAMBRES, stressed the need for European leaders to address the competitive global challenges facing Europe which put at risk the social models currently enjoyed by European citizens. He said: *“Appropriate social models are absolutely vital for the future of the EU – underpinning the quality of life, the promotion of profitable enterprise and the quest for growth and employment”*.

The business view is that the spectrum of social models currently implemented in Europe are not balanced overall, that they lead to inflexible labour markets, that they do not sufficiently encourage successful entrepreneurship and that they do not support a rapid expansion of employment.

EUROCHAMBRES urged the Council to:

- Implement the recommendations made in the Kok Group Report on Employment “Jobs, Jobs, Jobs”;
- Make progress on the debate on the Financial Perspective to understand the impact on the European society;
- Investigate – in depth – the impact European social systems have on the willingness and ability of entrepreneurs to set up and continue in business;
- Adapt national social models in order to encourage work, promote enterprise and protect competitiveness – thereby generating employment and improving living standards; and
- Ensure that consultations on economic and social issues are not closed-shop events attended by an exclusive group of industrial relations negotiators.

“What we need most of all is an indication of common leadership from the summit, which sets a clear direction for the future. Those present must answer the question: How can Europe maintain a dignified and appropriate social system, while effectively contending with vibrant, thriving economic competitors globally? The outcome of the summit must be credible.”

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