

PRESS RELEASE

**Synthesis Reports:
EUROCHAMBRES welcomes ‘reality check’ of the
Lisbon assessment**

EUROCHAMBRES has welcomed the synthesis reports issued by the Commission in the run-up to this year’s Spring Summit, and has called on the Member States to accept and act on the ‘reality check’ that the reports offer.

Arnaldo Abruzzini, EUROCHAMBRES’ Secretary General stated: *“On the one hand, the reports make for very welcome reading: they are to the point, they highlight the clear lack of progress on many fronts and they identify the Member States that are lagging in implementing the promises made four years ago in Lisbon. On the other hand, and for the same reasons, the reports make for depressing reading: there is too little progress, too slowly delivered by too few countries. There is an urgent need for a methodological change. Member States must set quantitative and interim targets to allow monitoring and timely correction.*

“We welcome the proposals of the Commission that the emphasis should now be placed on a limited number of areas: investment, life long learning and competitiveness. The Chambers fully agree that such a focus is needed in order to re-energize the Lisbon process. Member State governments – and in this regard we include the acceding countries – must show they still believe the Lisbon process and ambitions to be valid. They need some quick wins, not just the Quick-Start programme”, he continued.

He said that the business community accepted that some progress was being made in the reform of labour markets, in the use of ICTs and in education. *“However, the real benchmarks are:*

- *Widening labour productivity gap with the US,*
- *Only moderate economic growth, and*
- *Net outflows of investment from the EU.*

These are fundamental signals that the European economy is far from being the most competitive in the world. They show that the economy needs help. It needs real leadership now. We sincerely hope that the Member States take up the challenge to provide that leadership”, he concluded.

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