



**#Chambers4EU**



**EU 2019-2024**  
**MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER:**  
**FOR A COMPETITIVE, INNOVATIVE,**  
**INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE EUROPE**

## EU 2019-24: Converting optimism into tangible progress

“Chambers and the millions of small, medium and large businesses that they represent and serve across Europe are key stakeholders in the future of the EU. This is why the Chamber network so actively promoted the 2019 European elections and why we believe that the increased voter turnout provides cause for optimism.

To capture this optimism and convert it into tangible progress, the priorities and actions of the EU institutions for the 2019-2024 term should effectively address the top issues for citizens:

**Security, climate change,  
youth unemployment  
and immigration.**

The business community’s role is pivotal in responding to such challenges, in creating opportunities and in driving innovation and competitiveness. EU policy must facilitate this role, not constrain it, so that we move forward together, combining forces with a reinvigorated European spirit.”

**Christoph Leitl,  
EUROCHAMBRES President**



“THE ROLE OF  
BUSINESS IS PIVOTAL  
IN CREATING  
OPPORTUNITIES  
AND DRIVING  
INNOVATION.”

## **A solid, fully functioning single market**

...not just in the lawbooks, but in the way in which this core component of the EU is applied and delivered at national level.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Renew efforts to open the internal market for services with the unambiguous support of member states, tackling unjustified regulatory barriers, reducing administration, improving notification procedures and guaranteeing freedom of contract.
- Ensure that consumer protection legislation does not become counter-productively burdensome and that online and offline requirements correspond, avoiding excessive information requirements for producers.
- Rigorously enforce the implementation of single market law, based on stronger data, consistent application in all member states and regular evaluation of progress at ministerial level.



## **An ambitious EU trade and investment agenda**

...that delivers for all, is accessible even to the smallest companies, and promotes free and fair trade and investments on the international stage.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Pursue a 'European way' to shape globalization and lead by example, concluding deep and comprehensive trade agreements with important EU trading partners, based on fair competition and reciprocity, and deploying effective European economic diplomacy that builds on existing structures.
- Uphold and enhance the multilateral rules-based system by playing a leading role in the modernisation of the World Trade Organization and in progress on a WTO-SME agenda.
- Strengthen business awareness and uptake of free trade agreements through European implementation action plans, delivered in close partnership between the Commission, member states and national business communities, notably Chambers.

**STRENGTHEN  
BUSINESS AWARENESS  
AND UPTAKE OF FREE  
TRADE AGREEMENTS**

## **A balanced and effective European response to changing climate and environment**

...that enables businesses to drive the shift from current production and consumption patterns towards a sustainable and competitive economy.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Align future industrial and climate policies, taking due consideration of the needs of businesses – especially SMEs - and tackling in a coherent and balanced manner critical challenges such as access to raw materials, competitive and secure energy supply and carbon leakage.
- Draft a ‘Circular Economy Action Plan 2.0’ that balances ecological and economic interests, and revolves around a fully functioning single market for secondary raw materials, reducing damaging barriers to trade between member states.
- Thoroughly assess the cost-efficiency, resilience and sustainability potential of future measures relating to material flow, energy use and investment optimisation, in close consultation with key stakeholders, not least Chambers.



## **Better skills matching**

...based on Europe-wide solutions that enable both businesses and citizens to fulfil their potential.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Confirm the Erasmus+ programme budgetary increase for the 2021-27 period, as well as the higher financial allocation for vocational education & training (VET) mobility actions.
- Adopt and deliver a post 2020 strategic framework for cooperation on VET that positions work-based learning at the centre of all VET programmes and enhances permeability between general, vocational and higher education pathways.
- Pursue measures to increase mobility, notably by enabling employers to assess better the knowledge and skills of people from another country and facilitating the development and use of Europe-wide skills data.

## **A fully interconnected digital Europe**

...underpinned by the provision of advanced, secure and accessible digital infrastructure.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5G, a precondition for the EU to catch up with digitally advanced economies, must be rolled out broadly, swiftly and securely to ensure accessibility for all European companies.
- Guarantee a fair and level digital playing field for SMEs, notably through active competition policies designed to prevent platforms from abusing dominant market positions.
- Progress towards an integrated European digital single market - a requirement for global European digital players and digital autonomy - through harmonized rules and standards in areas such as cyber security, data localisation or machine to machine communication.

## **A FAIR AND LEVEL DIGITAL PLAYING FIELD FOR SMEs.**

## **A coherent and comprehensive approach to SMEs across all institutions and all relevant policy areas**

...to ensure that policy is conceived, drafted and delivered from the perspective of the 99% of EU businesses that are micro, small or medium.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Apply the 'think small first' principle consistently to policy development and implementation, based on rigorous cost-benefit analysis and comprehensive data, and underpinned by robust internal procedures and high-level political commitment.
- Guarantee more effective coordination within and between the EU institutions and member states on policy areas of key importance to SMEs, in order to boost competitiveness and reduce burdens on smaller businesses.
- Promote and invest in a business environment that fosters research and innovation, ensuring adequate financing for SMEs and enabling them to fulfil their potential in driving Europe's competitiveness and its response to critical challenges.

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& Industry represent the  
real economy.**

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Chambers of Commerce  
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countries.**



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