

Mr Nicolas Schmit  
Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights  
Mr Paolo Gentiloni  
Commissioner for Economy  
European Commission  
Rue de la Loi 200  
B-1049 Brussels

Brussels, 13 May 2020

Subject: **SURE initiative delivery to the benefit of SMEs and their employees**

Dear Commissioners,

EUROCHAMBRES appreciates the SURE initiative to shield European jobs threatened by the COVID-19 crisis, as we expressed on the occasion of its announcement on 2 April. Nearly three weeks on from then, we underline that this support must be made tangible to businesses without delay if SURE is to prove effective in helping many thousands of businesses to remedy the hazardous employment situation that they face.

Maintaining income for staff during the ongoing confinement is crucial to ensuring that they can be retained and thus contribute to an efficient return to full capacity and productivity as confinement measures are eased. However, many businesses today fear that they will be obliged to make redundancies imminently as a direct consequence of the current dramatic economic slowdown.

A lack of clarity about the implementation of the SURE initiative risks undermining its purpose. Companies seek clarification in order to understand its relevance to pressing decisions on their crisis human resource management, as do the Chambers that support them. Information on conditions for businesses needs to be clear and communicated immediately at national level.

The consultation phase with member states, especially on the allocation of envelopes, is delaying the introduction of the initiative. Meanwhile, the reality and risk of redundancies caused by the crisis is increasing every day. The programme must therefore be launched at the latest as soon as possible if it is to help alleviate this pressing socio-economic challenge.

EUROCHAMBRES calls on the Commission and Council to approve SURE without undue delay and to ensure that it is delivered as soon as possible, ideally in a matter of days, rather than weeks. At the same time, it must be clear that SURE needs to be focused and temporary and provide support only to alleviate the consequences of the current crisis. It should not become a precedent for a permanent EU unemployment insurance scheme.

Yours sincerely,



Aigars Rostovskis  
President of Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry  
Co-chair of the EUROCHAMBRES Skills and Entrepreneurship Committee



Martha Schultz  
Vice President of Austrian Federal Economic Chamber  
Co-chair of the EUROCHAMBRES Skills and Entrepreneurship Committee