

Eurochambres Annual Report

2021



About Eurochambres

Eurochambres is the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry established in 1958 as a direct response to the creation of the European Economic Community.

We act as the eyes, ears and voice of the chambers and business community at EU level, also delivering activities and enabling capacity building across the European chamber network.

43 national
associations
2 transnational
chamber

A European
network of 1700
regional and local
chambers

Chambers' member
businesses employ
over 120 million
people

Eurochambres' vision is an integrated, globally competitive Europe, where businesses can prosper and drive socio-economic progress. Chambers have an active role to play in the pursuit of this vision.

Advocacy

Delivery

Connectivity

We seek to influence EU **policy**-making and shape a business-friendly regulatory environment.

We develop and – in cooperation with chambers and partners – implement a range of EU co-financed **projects** to support the European business community .

We support the ongoing development of the chamber system across Europe through activities to enable capacity building and **networking** and to give **visibility** to chambers' invaluable work.

Contents

ABOUT EUROCHAMBRES	2
INTRODUCTION	4
FOREWORD	5
EUROCHAMBRES MEMBERS	6
PRESIDENCY	7
BOARD OF DIRECTORS	8
COMMITTEE CHAIRS	9
POLICY	10
POLICY FACTS AND FIGURES	11
POLICY OVERVIEW	12
EVIDENCE BASED ADVOCACY	13
GLOBAL EUROPE	14
NEIGHBORHOOD & ENLARGEMENT	15
SINGLE MARKET	16
SKILLS	17
SME & ECONOMIC POLICY	18
SUSTAINABLE EUROPE	19
PROJECTS	20
CONNECTIVITY	29
CONNECTING EUROPEAN CHAMBERS	29
COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST (COIS)	29
DIGITAL SERVICES NETWORK	30
AFFILIATED AND CORRESPONDENT MEMBERS	30
EUROCHAMBRES WOMEN NETWORK	31
VISIBILITY	32

Introduction, Christoph Leidl

Last year was like no other, full of challenges and uncertainties brought about by the Covid-19 crisis, the impact of which had repercussions across the European economy. As President of Eurochambres, I worked closely with our partners and members to ensure that companies' concerns were heard and prominent among decision-makers agenda and implemented in the recovery strategy. This was more important than ever in the context of the need for post-Covid-19 economic recovery.

Chambers of Commerce and Industry have never been closer to their members and millions of European businesses than during this crisis and have contributed concretely and considerably to the EU's recovery roadmap and action plan. The network of chambers has worked tirelessly to help businesses in many ways, based on the need for a coherent European approach to avoid supply chain disruption and stimulate demand. I was proud that the chambers responded so effectively to this need and pleased that Eurochambres could play a role in coordinating this process.

Last year was also characterised by remarkable resilience and our Eurochambres Economic Survey 2022 gives reason for optimism about the post-pandemic recovery.

As President of Eurochambres for two terms (2018-2021), I was able to witness first-hand how factual and technical contributions can contribute to political discussions. We must now strive to continue to inform EU institutions and our national governments to take a balanced approach to environmental protection, European competitiveness, and geopolitical security.

Eurochambres has worked and will continue to work on behalf of our members, to ensure that our policies reflect the needs of the business community. I am confident that I leave the association in a strong position to continue its valuable work in the interests of the European business community and I am happy to pass the baton to Luc Frieden to oversee the next phase of Eurochambres' development.



Christoph Leidl, Honorary President
Eurochambres President from 2018-2021

Foreword, Luc Frieden and Ben Butters

The 2021 Annual Report is an opportune moment to convey our warm thanks to Christoph Leidl for his valued contribution to Eurochambres as President from 2018 to 2021. The content of this report bears testimony to Christoph's dedication to the European business community, to the chamber network and to the European project.

2021 was of course an extremely challenging year for the European economy, but the confidence of our business men and women indicated in the Eurochambres Economic Survey shows that 2022 can be a year of recovery. For this, we must capitalise on key growth levers.

The potential of the single market must be realised, enabling free movement and thereby stimulating competition, cooperation, knowledge, innovation and specialisation across Europe. The EU must promote fair and open trade, based on a rules-based international order. And Europe must prove itself a global pioneer in the twin transition to a sustainable and digitalised economy, responding effectively to climate change while at the same time creating growth and opportunities.

Building on the activities and achievements of 2021, Eurochambres has an important role to play in working with the EU institutions to ensure that these growth levers are pushed forward, rather than held back. We look forward to working with our members, with EU policy-makers and with partner organisations in pursuing this common objective.

Luc Frieden
President of Eurochambres



Ben Butters
CEO of Eurochambres



Eurochambres Members

Full Members

Austrian Federal Economic Chamber
Federation of Belgian Chambers of Commerce
Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Croatian Chamber of Economy
Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Czech Chamber of Commerce
Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Finland Chamber of Commerce
CCI France
Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry
Union of Hellenic Chambers of Commerce
Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Chambers Ireland
Italian Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Handicrafts and Agriculture
Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Association of Lithuanian Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Crafts
Chamber of Commerce Luxembourg
Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry
Netherlands Chamber of Commerce
Polish Chamber of Commerce
Portuguese Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Romania
Slovak Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia
Spain Official Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Services and Shipping
Sweden's Chambers of Commerce

Affiliated Members

Union of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Albania
Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Foreign Trade Chamber of Bosnia and Herzegovina
Georgian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Kosova Chamber of Commerce
Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Moldova
Chamber of Economy of Montenegro
Economic Chamber of North Macedonia
Association of Norwegian Chambers of Commerce
Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation
Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia
Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey
Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Correspondent Members

Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce
Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services of Andorra
Network of Insular Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the EU
Federation of Israeli Chambers of Commerce
Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Switzerland

Presidency 2020-2021

President



Christoph Leitl
Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (Austria)

Deputy Presidents



Vladimír Dlouhý
President of the Czech Chamber of
Commerce (Czech Republic)



Ian Talbot
CEO of Chambers Ireland
(Ireland)



Stephan Mühler
President and CEO of Chambers of
Commerce of Southern Sweden
(Sweden)

Vice-Presidents



Pierre Goguet
President of CCI France (France)



Wolfgang Grenke
Member of Board of Association of
German Chambers of Commerce and
Industry (Germany)



Michl Ebner
President of Chambers of Commerce,
Industry, Handicrafts and Agriculture of
Bolzano (Italy)



Marek Kloczko
President and Director General of Polish
Chamber of Commerce (Poland)



José Luis Bonet Ferrer
President of Spain Official Chamber of
Commerce, Industry, Services and
Shipping (Spain)



Rifat Hisarciklioğlu
President of the Union of Chambers and
Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (Turkey)

Honorary Presidents



Richard Weber
Germany



Pierre Simon
France

Board of Directors 2021

Full EU Members

Christoph Leidl
Martha Schultz
Luc Luwel
Tsvetan Simeov
Luka Burlorilovic
Christodoulos Angastiniotis
Vladimir Dlouhý
Mait Palts
Juho Romakkaniemi
Pierre Goguet
Wolfgang Grenke
Constantine Michalos
Laszlo Parragh
Ian Talbot
Michl Ebner
Aigars Rostovskis
Alfredas Jonuska
Luc Frieden
John Huber
Claudia Zuiderwijk
Marek Kloczko
Bruno Pinto Basto Bobone
Mihai Daraban
Peter Mihok
Ales Cantarutti (ad interim)
José Luis Bonet Ferrer
Stephan MÜchler

Eurochambres
Austria
Belgium
Bulgaria
Croatia
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Estonia
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Ireland
Italy
Latvia
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Netherlands
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Slovakia
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden

Affiliated Members

Vjekoslav Vukovic
Georgi Pertaia
Marco Čadež
Rifat Hisarciklioglu
Gennadiy Chyzhykov

Bosnia & Herzegovina
Georgia
Serbia
Turkey
Ukraine

* Composition approved in 2021

Committee Chairs

Global Europe Committee Co-Chairs

Georgi Stoev – Vice President of Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Ian Talbot – Deputy President of Eurochambres and CEO of Chambers Ireland

Neighbourhood and Enlargement Committee Co-Chairs

Giorgi Pertaia – President of Georgian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Rifat Hisarcıklioğlu – Vice President of Eurochambres and President of the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey

Single Market Committee Co-Chairs

Juho Romakkaniemi – CEO of Finland Chamber of Commerce

Marko Čadež – CEO of Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia

Skills and Entrepreneurship Committee Co-Chairs

Aigars Rostovskis – President of Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Martha Schultz – Vice President of Austrian Federal Economic Chamber

SME & Economic Policy Committee Co-Chairs

Gilbert Stimpflin – President of the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern France

Wolfgang Grenke – Vice President of Eurochambres and Member of the Board of Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry

Sustainable Europe Committee Chair

Vladimir Dlouhý – Eurochambres Deputy President and President of the Czech Chamber of Commerce

Policy

Covid-19 and the accompanying economic crisis were at the top of the EU political agenda at the beginning of 2021 and continued to impact on EU priorities and decisions throughout the year.

The Commission remained focused on its 2019-24 policy priorities, which for Eurochambres meant a strong focus on the twin green and digital transition, with the launch of the EU Green Deal and Fitfor55 Package, as well as Digital Decade files such as the Digital Markets Act, the Digital Services Act, as well as the Artificial Intelligence Act.

Eurochambres policy priorities for 2021 also revolved around the importance of an SME-friendly approach to the EU's ambitious new industrial strategy and a favourable regulatory framework. This was evident in our advocacy efforts around corporate due diligence and regular calls for the appointment of an EU SME Envoy.

Attention gradually turned to economic revival as the year evolved. The EU is an important actor in this process. Eurochambres contributed actively to discussions on the Next Generation EU recovery plan and the Recovery and Resilience Facility, both launched during 2021; our message was that these funds can prove valuable in enabling businesses to drive the recovery if rolled out correctly across the economy. Reflecting this, Eurochambres worked with members to understand the extent to which chambers participated in the design and implementation of the National Recovery Plans.

The Conference on the Future of Europe comes at an important juncture as we manage the legacy of the pandemic and pursue a swift and sustainable revival. Eurochambres submitted its priorities to guarantee an inclusive and participatory Conference on the Future of Europe where businesses play a key role.

Even if in an online context, Eurochambres continued during 2021 to contribute to a wide range of EU expert groups reflecting our priorities. We also remain active participants in the European Commission's SME Envoy Network and the European Parliament's SME Intergroup. The strong involvement of chamber representatives in the new mandate of the European Economic and Social Committee also provides a valuable platform for a coherent business message on key EU topics.

The Eurochambres Reviving Europe online series in October provided the showpiece for our 2021 policy calendar. The eight sessions spread over three days allowed over 600 participants to exchange views and opinions with senior policy-makers on some of the key policy levers at the EU's disposal to drive the economic recovery.



Policy facts and figures

Joint initiatives



13 positions and 21 public consultation responses



Engagement with commissioners, MEPs, senior EU officials and other key stakeholders



Publications

20 committee meetings



25 events

Policy overview

Eurochambres key policy work is grouped into the six priority areas of our agenda.



Global Europe

Championing open, fair, and predictable trade for European companies and securing the competitive position of Europe on the world stage.



Neighbourhood & Enlargement

Striving to develop favourable business conditions and close economic ties with the EU in candidate and neighbouring countries

Single Market

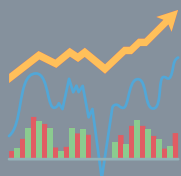


Addressing remaining obstacles to the free movement of workers, goods, services and capital across Europe.

Skills & Entrepreneurship



Tackling skills mismatches, encouraging an entrepreneurial mindset and developing vocational education and training.



SME & Economic Policy

Promoting an SME-friendly approach to EU policy-making and economic policies that strengthen competitiveness.



Sustainable Europe

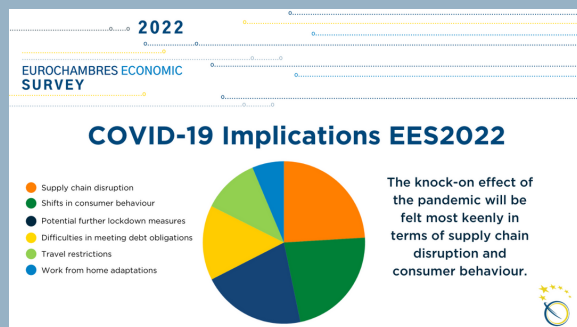
Supporting an ambitious agenda focusing on resource supply security, energy efficiency and innovation, that must encourage and support the innovative capacity of businesses.

Evidence based advocacy

Eurochambres highlights the value of evidence-based policy-making and this applies also to our own advocacy. Building on the chamber network's capacity to reach out to the business community, we are able to convey the views of entrepreneurs to the EU institutions, not least through exercises such as the annual Eurochambres Economic Survey and Global Economic Survey.

Eurochambres Economic Survey 2022

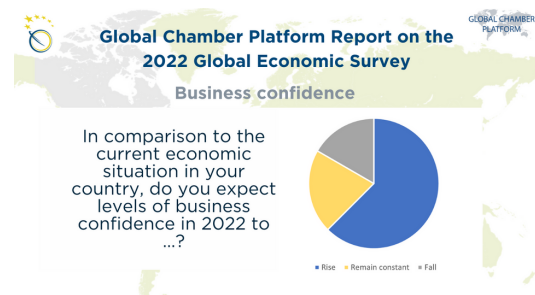
Following the deep dip in 2021, the Eurochambres Economic Survey 2022 (EES2022) showed that European companies' general optimism for 2022 was undermined by concerns over access to affordable energy and raw materials, as well shortages in skilled workers. The survey, published in November 2021, was based on responses from over 52.000 businesses in 26 countries.



Global Economic Survey 2022

In December 2021, Eurochambres and the Global Chamber Platform (GCP) launched the Global Economic Survey, which highlighted the impact on global growth of the ongoing uncertainty caused by Covid-19.

The survey underline the importance of multilateral solutions to better anticipate risks to the recovery process, notably supply chain disruption and shortages, as noted in the main challenges pointed out for 2022.



The gap between the demand and supply of digitally skilled workers is also increasing, so the GCP invited policy makers to cooperate more closely at global level to roll out policies and upskill the workforce. The full report can be accessed [here](#).



Global Europe

The immediate priority for the Global Europe Committee was the entry into force of the new trading conditions with the UK as of the 1 January 2021, as well as the European Commission's new Trade Strategy, which was announced in the first half of 2021. Eurochambres outlined its vision for an "open strategic autonomy" in its strategy paper on the Trade Policy Review, and submitted its take on a proposal for a carbon border adjustment mechanism (CBAM). We highlighted the need to maintain a strong EU trade policy that opens new doors for European companies, especially SMEs, but also for a greater diversification post-Covid.



In addition, many crucial dossiers were also actively followed such as Brexit and the Brexit Adjustment Reserve, the new Transatlantic Agenda for economic cooperation with the incoming Biden administration, a more balanced economic relationship with a growing China, the EU-Mercosur agreement, as well as closer economic ties with Africa, among others.



With respect to Brexit, through exchanges and advocacy, Chambers called for a proper implementation of the agreed rules, including the protocol on Northern Ireland, continued support for SMEs, and outlined concrete elements for a future positive economic agenda.

Eurochambres was selected as a full member of the newly established EU-UK Domestic Advisory Group to help fulfil this role.

Moreover, Eurochambres continued advocating for advancing an ambitious EU-US transatlantic agenda including through the Trade and Technology Council (TTC), fostering cooperation on emerging technologies, boosting trade and investment, and taking meaningful steps to facilitate SME access to digital technologies. Eurochambres is contributing to the TTC's working groups.

In a major effort to strengthen ties between the private sectors of Latin America and Europe, the members of the Council of Chambers of Commerce of Mercosur (CCCM) and Eurochambres signed a Joint Statement in support of the trade agreement between the EU and the MERCOSUR that was widely shared among key government authorities on both sides. Negotiations between the blocs took more than twenty years to conclude and resulted in an agreement that has the potential to turbocharge economic relations between two of the world's most important growth centres, representing 25% of the global economy.



Meanwhile, the Eurochambres Customs Subcommittee worked the year to raise origin and customs issues with the European Commission's DG-TAXUD and adapted the Eurochambres guidelines on non-preferential origin for exports.



Neighbourhood and Enlargement

Eurochambres decided in early 2021 to reinstate a specialised Neighbourhood and Enlargement Committee, decoupled from the Global Europe Committee. This committee concentrates on three geographical areas:

- Western Balkans with the perspective of accession to the EU
- Turkey and the advancement of its Customs Union with the EU
- Eastern Partnership countries and assimilation agreements

As leading business representatives, chambers are supporting the business community to prepare for enlargement in enhancing SME competitiveness, as well as trade and investments between both regions. Chambers also play a crucial role in other key areas of the enlargement process, such as the fight against corruption, regional cooperation, application of EU rules and standards, vocational education and training, and enhanced dialogue and mutual understanding between both business communities.

On the political side, we focused on the Western Balkans in 2021. A dynamic partnership with eastern and southern neighbours is also essential to Eurochambres, as these countries offer still largely untapped potential for the broader European economy. For the enlargement negotiations, we suggest a dependable “timetable” (timeframe) and an increase of the EU’s pre-accession support for future Western Balkans member states condition on the reform progress. To prepare accession, the EU should support the digitalisation of companies, entrepreneurial knowledge, and training through regional partners, such as chambers of commerce and industry. A more unified European voice in external affairs is crucial to all of these issues.

Eurochambres also hosted an event on 14 October 2021 in the framework of the online Reviving Europe series on the theme “Key factors for recovery in the Western Balkans, Turkey, and the Eastern Partnership countries”. The EU and the European Investment Bank provide substantial financial support for various initiatives, which will remain important in strengthening the recovery in the Western Balkans, Turkey, and the Eastern Partnership countries.





Single Market

The integrity of the single market remained under heavy pressure throughout 2021 due to restrictions imposed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Member states unilaterally imposed restrictions on the free movement of people and labour, making it particularly difficult for companies to operate normally. As a result, supply chains, which are more than ever interconnected within the European Union, were severely disrupted. In order to alleviate these burdens for companies, Eurochambres underlined the importance of having a more harmonised framework of rules by advocating for increased coordination between the member states, as well as with the European Commission.

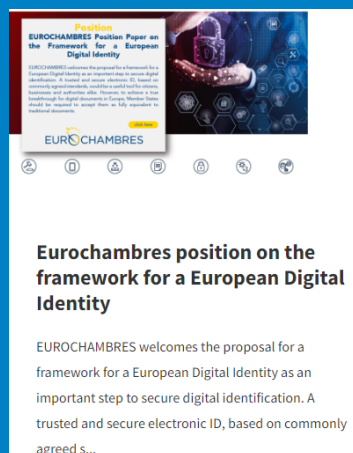
It is in this same spirit that we supported the introduction of the Digital Green Certificate, to ensure that travelling could take place again and especially to avoid discriminatory practices and non-proportionate measures.



All these issues were debated at a well-attended May 2021 event Eurochambres co-organised with the Employers group of the European Economic and Social Committee during which we had the pleasure to have Justice Commissioner Didier Reynders as a keynote speaker.



With regard to the digital transition, Eurochambres focused on ensuring that the voice of businesses was heard on the Digital Markets Act and the Digital Services Act, which – once finalised and implemented - will significantly overhaul the rules for online platforms and e-commerce in general. For the former, we successfully argued for better specification of obligations for platforms and clearer rules for structural remedies. For the Digital Services Act, Eurochambres fought to retain the internal market clause and stressed that SMEs need to have the possibility to freely advertise their products and services to potential consumers.



Artificial Intelligence (AI) is playing an ever more important part in our lives and therefore the European Commission launched a proposal for an AI Act. Eurochambres expressed support for the Commission's approach, but at the same time warned that putting too many restrictions on the use of certain types of AI might curb innovation and growth.

The broader introduction of digital identification methods has the potential to facilitate the daily work of SMEs. Eurochambres therefore asked to go beyond what the European Commission proposed in their "proposal for a framework for a European Digital Identity (EUID)," namely, to accept electronic identities as fully equivalent to traditional documents.

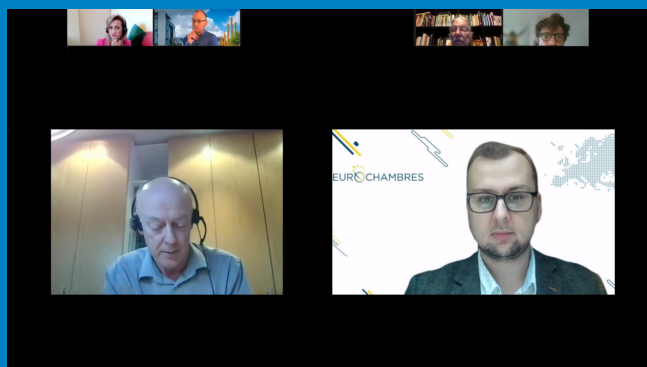


Skills and Entrepreneurship

Chambers of commerce and industry have a long history of offering vocational education and training. Over 2.5 million people are trained by Chambers in a typical year. This demonstrates the business community's commitment to providing the right skills, as their scarcity is a major impediment for many businesses.

However, because SMEs account for most European businesses, Eurochambres believes that entrepreneurial skills and attitudes should be promoted at all levels of education to encourage more people to start their own businesses. According to the Eurochambres Economic Survey, Europe's skills gaps are widening, posing a second major challenge for businesses in 2022.

Eurochambres prepared its input for public consultations of both crucial education files: the micro-credentials framework and the initiative for individual learning accounts. We expressed a need for training offers that reflect labour market needs and assist businesses in addressing exacerbating skill mismatches through these.



Another key position of chambers of commerce was our statement on the Green Deal's impact on employment. We believe that although there is a high potential for job creation, the deployment of green skills and jobs necessitates dedicated business support.

Eurochambres has been accepted as a member of two crucial thematic working groups of the European Commission, the first of which is concerned with the implementation of the Green

Deal goals in vocational education and training, and the second with the investigation of how adult learning can benefit society.

This reflects chambers' long history of offering vocational education and training and the fact that over 2.5 million people are trained by Chambers in a typical year.

Our involvement in these working group allows Eurochambres to emphasize the critical role of both modes of training in bringing about much-needed reforms in European education systems that would make them more responsive to rapidly changing labour market demands. We also conveyed this message through of our participation during 2021 in the European Commission's Advisory Committee for Vocational Training.



Eurochambres established a new Working Group on Migration Policy in response to the impact of the New Pact for Migration and Asylum on businesses. Through that group, our members share best practices in the field and discuss recent challenges related to attracting talent into the European labour market and supporting integration of migrant workers into labour markets.





SME and Economic Policy

The Eurochambres Economic Survey is the biggest exercise of its kind in Europe, annually highlighting the key trends and challenges based on feedback from over 50.000 businesses. Its results support EU policymakers in grasping the single market's shortcomings. Affordable access to energy and raw materials, skills shortages and rising labour costs are highlighted as major challenges for next year, according to the 2022 Survey.



Eurochambres has also raised its visibility by engaging with the SME Intergroup of the European Parliament, the SME Envoy Network and during the 2021 SME Assembly, in Portoroz, Slovenia.



Eurochambres is an active member of the Commission's Industrial Forum, co-designing solutions for the different industrial ecosystems and assessing the different risks and needs of industry as it embarks on the twin digital and green transitions.

Eurochambres defends the systematic application of the SME Test in EU impact assessments and the respect of the 'Think Small

First' principle, supporting CCI France in the Fit for Future Platform, with the aim of simplifying EU law and cutting red tape for businesses.

Eurochambres also provided a platform for the members to discuss about the Enterprise Europe Network challenges and opportunities.



Eurochambres advocated for a more proportional regulatory approach to due diligence across the supply chain, sustainable corporate governance, and sustainable reporting. Eurochambres developed positions on these matters and met with Commissioners Didier Reynders (Justice), Thierry Breton (Internal Market), Vera Jourová (Values and Transparency), and Mairead McGuinness (Financial services and Capital Markets Union) to discuss about how the business sector, particularly SMEs, can positively contribute to the transition to a sustainable economic system without jeopardising its competitiveness and access to finance.





Sustainable Europe

2021 has been a busy year for the Sustainability Committee with the release of the initiatives linked to the European Green Deal and the Fitfor55 package. To that end, Eurochambres held a meeting with Executive Vice-President Timmermans to effectively place business community most pressing needs and concerns in relation to the energy and climate goals. Mr Timmermans acknowledged our messages and highlighted the key role of chambers in supporting businesses.

The most important files related to the energy transition and the decarbonisation of our economy and industry are contained in the Fitfor55-package, which will decisively shape the future development of renewable and low-carbon energy markets. Recognising the importance of this package, Eurochambres has been actively involved in the policy process from the beginning by delivering input and organising events and workshops.



We had exchanges with representatives from the Commission, the Council, and the Parliament during our Committee meetings as well as public events on energy and climate-related files and topics of high concern to the business community, for example during the EU Industry Days and the EU Green Week.

The circular economy is another cornerstone of the Green Deal. Eurochambres already got involved at an early stage with an overall position and we will closely follow the developments around the Sustainable Products Initiative and

the Digital Products Passport. Early 2021 we had a meeting with the Director-General of DG Environment on these issues, where we advocated for an ambitious agenda focusing on resource supply security and innovation.

Eurochambres also started its preparation for the EU Industry Days 2022 to discuss with businesses and policymakers about their approaches to circular economy.

The European taxonomy and the renewed sustainable finance strategy were among the priorities for 2021. Eurochambres stressed the need to encourage investments towards a cleaner economy, while ensuring that businesses' access to finance is not hampered and the administrative burden, especially for SMEs, remain proportionate.



During the COP26 in November 2021, Eurochambres organized two events, one along with BusinessEurope and CEN-CENELEC and another one at the ICC "Make Climate Action Everyone's Business" Forum. Eurochambres also prepared its position on the outcome of the COP26 negotiations.



Projects

The chamber network is well-positioned to contribute to the pursuit of business-related priorities within the EU's multiannual financial framework. This is evident from the various ongoing and new activities that Eurochambres implemented during 2021 in the framework of relevant EU programmes. These actions reflect chambers' position as trusted service providers to the European business community. Eurochambres also delivers certain services directly on behalf of the European Commission and its agencies that capitalise on chambers' expertise in supporting entrepreneurs and their ability to provide a bridge between the public policy and the grass roots economy.



Global Europe

AL-INVEST Verde



AL-INVEST is a flagship programme of the European Union (EU) with a history of 26 years. The sixth edition, called **AL-INVEST Verde** aims to promote sustainable growth and job creation by supporting the transition to a low-carbon, resource-efficient and more circular economy in Latin America.

The AL-INVEST Verde programme will mobilise EU know-how and investment in support of building alliances with the private sector in Latin America. Thus, via call for proposals, AL-INVEST Verde will co-finance innovative projects that promote sustainable economic practices and are implemented by partnerships formed by at least by one European and one Latin American partner.

Duration: December 2021 to November 2025

Website: www.alinvest-verde.eu

Project budget: 31.250.000 €

Eurochambres status: project partner



The **EU SME Centre** is an EU-funded project by EISMEA and it is aiming at helping SMEs get ready for the Chinese market. We provide the following four first-hand support services: Knowledge through an online library with over 200 market reports, confidential one-to-one consultation, offline and online training sessions, and advocacy support.

Outputs:

- Self-diagnosis tool available online
- 115 enquiries answered through the “ask-the-expert” service
- 1242 participants trained through webinars and workshops
- 36 MoUs signed with Business Support Organizations

Duration: October 2020 to March 2022

Website: www.eusmecentre.org.cn

Project budget: 1.333.253 €

Eurochambres status: project partner

Projects

LATIN AMERICA IPR SME HELPDESK



The **Latin America IP SME Helpdesk** offers first-line IP assistance services for European/COSME SMEs that operate or intend to access the Latin American region and look to improve their global competitiveness. The project supports SMEs to both protect and enforce their Intellectual Property (IP) rights in or relating to Latin American countries, by providing free information and services.

Services:

- Helpline: professional, confidential and tailor-made answers to IP-related questions
- Training: on-site and online training activities that cover relevant IP topics
- IP resource library: open-access IP materials
- IP tools: IP innovative tools for pre-evaluating costs related to IP management in Latin American countries and self-evaluation to measure the status in terms of IP management and IP knowledge

Duration: September 2018 to September 2022

Website: Latin America IP SME Helpdesk

Project budget: 3.392.480 €

Eurochambres status: project partner

INDIA IP SME HELPDESK



A first-line IP assistance service for European/COSME SMEs that operate or intend to access the Indian market and look to improve their global competitiveness. The **India IP SME Helpdesk** supports SMEs from the EU and COSME associated countries to both protect and enforce their Intellectual Property (IP) rights in or relating to India by providing free information and services.

Services:

- Helpline: professional, confidential and tailor-made answers to IP-related questions within a maximum of 3 working days
- Training: on-site and online training activities that cover relevant IP topics for EU SMEs and entrepreneurs looking to expand their business to India
- IP resource library: open-access IP materials
- IP tools: IP innovative tools for pre-evaluating costs related to IP management in India and self-evaluation to measure the status in terms of IP management and IP knowledge

Duration: November 2020 to November 2022

Website: India IP SME Helpdesk

Project budget: 969.020 €

Eurochambres status: project partner

Projects



This project is funded by the European Union

The **Business Support to the EU-India Policy Dialogues** supports the implementation of the new EU strategy on India, which was adopted in December 2018. The project strives to increase business involvement in strategic areas of bilateral cooperation in order to reinforce the already strong partnership between the European Union and India. These key areas are derived from on-going policy dialogues between the EU and India, such as Environment, Energy, Climate, ICT and Urbanisation and hold relevant/ real-time opportunities for EU businesses interested in entering the Indian market.

Outputs:

- Over 400 number of EU companies participated in events in India and Europe
- 6 studies published by the project on the Indian market
- India Readiness Kit – a self-diagnostic tool to gauge preparedness by an SME before entering India designed and published
- EU Green Champions for Europe – a group of EU companies not yet in India but interested in entering India, that focus on sustainability across their value chains created.
- EU-India Aviation Cluster launched to promote EU expertise in the aviation sector

Duration: December 2019 – January 2022

Website: www.euindiabusinesssupport.eu

Project Budget: 3.000.000 €

Eurochambres status: project partner

Projects



Neighbourhood and Enlargement



EU4Business

The EU4Business Connecting Companies project aims to support sustainable economic development and job creation in the EaP countries by helping SMEs to grow- especially by promoting increased trade, encouraging inward investment and fostering business links with companies in the EU.

Outputs:

- 59 projects with financial support up to 60.000 €, in five sectors (bio-food, creative industries, textile, tourism and wine) for the implementation of B2B matching, twinning and study visits
- 250 SMEs are involved in the actions of B2B and study visits
- 122 Business Support Organizations staff are involved in the twining and study visits
- 5 new services developed for SMEs

Duration: December 2019 to December 2022

Website: www.connectingcompanies.eu

Project budget : 6.840.000 €

Duration: December 2019 – January 2022

Eurochambres status: project leader



The **Turkey-EU Business Dialogue** (TEBD) aims to strengthen mutual understanding and cooperation between the Turkish and EU business communities. TEBD gives Turkish and European Chambers and businesses the opportunity to engage in dialogue, partnerships, capacity building and much more.

Outputs:

- 19 Chamber Partnership Projects
- 2 EU-Turkey High Level Business Dialogue
- 2 SME Surveys
- 44 SME Workshops
- Acquis, Solvency and Energy Efficiency Audits
- 8 Study Visits
- 1 Chamber Academy

Duration: July 2017 to October 2022

Website: www.tebd.eu

Project budget : 2.499.000 €

Eurochambres status: project leader

Projects



Single Market



Consumer Law Ready is an EU-wide consumer law training programme for SMEs. Consumer Law Ready was developed by the EU to bring SMEs up to speed on important aspects of EU consumer law. The programme, developed by European Commission approved experts, spans all aspects of SME trading.

In terms of content, the training has been so far organised - and will continue to be organised - around 5 modules:

Module 1: Pre-contractual information requirements

Module 2: Right of withdrawal for distance and off-premises contracts

Module 3: Consumer rights and guarantees in case of defective goods

Module 4: Unfair commercial practices and contract terms

Module 5: Alternative Dispute Resolution and Online Dispute Platform

Outputs:

- 60 training have been delivered across Europe
- 1500 people have been trained
- Online training guidelines and GDPR – information materials for SMEs, Covid-19 Notice

Duration: December 2019 to December 2022

Website: www.consumerlawready.eu

Project budget: 1.000.000 €

Eurochambres status: project leader

Projects



Skills & Entrepreneurship



ARCHIPELAGO

an African-European partnership
for vocational training

project funded by the European Union

ARCHIPELAGO is an inclusive economic development programme funded by the EU under the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. It addresses youth and vulnerable groups' employability through increasing their professional skills as well as enhancing employment opportunities. The main approach of the action is the implementation of targeted partnership projects between European and African Business Support Organisations (BSOs) in the 12 targeted countries of the Sahel and Lake Chad regions with the objective to provide labour market relevant TVET training, enhance local economic development, foster public-private dialogue (PPD).

An overall total of 11.500 direct beneficiaries are involved in different activities ranging from awareness raising and skills needs analyses, over the (re-)design of VET curricula, training for enterprises, trainers and youth, to new relevant services offered by BSOs and VET centres and enhanced PPD.

Duration: September 2018 to December 2022

Website: www.archipelago-programme.org/

Project budget: 15.000.000 €

Eurochambres status: project partner

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs helps provide aspiring European entrepreneurs with the skills necessary to start and/or successfully run a small business in Europe. New entrepreneurs gather and exchange knowledge and business ideas with an experienced entrepreneur, with whom they stay and collaborate for a period of 1 to 6 months. Eurochambres is entrusted by EISMEA with managing the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme support office.

Outputs:

2 online network meetings with 250 participants each

Support office for 185 IOs

The programme reached in 2021, 10.000 entrepreneurial matches

Duration: May 2021 to April 2023

Website: www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu/

Project budget: 710.000 €

Eurochambres status: service provider

Projects



EntreComp Europe, co-founded by EISMEA, supports and inspires actions to help develop, validate and recognise the entrepreneurship key competence in all areas of lifelong learning, by creating collaborative communities and by working on both policy level and practical implementation of EntreComp into youthwork, formal education, employment and enterprise settings.

Outputs:

- 5 National Collaborative Communities built with 186 members.
- New resource: EntreComp into Practice, with a translation of the EntreComp Framework as well as EntreComp into Actions highlights in 5 different languages.
- EntreComp analysis and reflection in each collaborative community through online questionnaires and national online workshops
- Online strategy workshop + national workshops
- 15 Inspiring practices collected and collated into a published compendium
- National and international open spaces, workshops and events

Duration: February 2020 to January 2023

Website: www.entrecompeurope.eu/about/

Project budget: 499.993 €

Eurochambres status: project leader



Migration of African Talents through Capacity building and Hiring (MATCH) is a 36-month initiative funded by the European Union's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. It seeks to address labour market shortages in 4 EU Member States by enabling an estimated 105 migrants from Nigeria and Senegal to work for a period of 1-2 years in companies in Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg or the Netherlands where specific sectorial labour shortages have been identified primarily within the ICT, technology and digitalisation sectors.

Outputs:

- Awareness raising of the private sector on labour migration from Africa
- Matching of private sector vacancies in BE, NL, IT and LU with candidates from Nigeria and Senegal
- Training, knowledge sharing and capacity building for African candidates as well as employers on the European side
- Dissemination of lessons learned and good practices

Duration: January 2020 to January 2023

Website: www.belgium.iom.int/match

Project budget: 1.999.600 €

Eurochambres status: project partner

Projects



ERIAS

ERIAS is the European Chambers response to the labour market integration question of Third Country Nationals (TCN), including refugees. ERIAS proposes a methodology for the integration of TCN in the labour market. The different steps of the methodology range from the initial identification of TCNs skills and labour market needs in the participating countries, over targeted training/advice for both TCN and companies to matching TCNs with potential employers. The project is funded by the European Union's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund.

Outputs:

- Over 350 TCN having their skills assessed and are trained
- 4 skills assessments
- 25 training sessions
- 3 counselling and guidance activities
- Over 500 companies informing about ERIAS or contributing to its implementation
- 8 workshops and 2 surveys
- Integration check list in FR, EN, ES, IT, BG and Vademecum of positive integration practices gathering 38 testimonials

Duration: January 2019 to January 2022

Website: www.erias.org/

Project budget: 853.632 €

Eurochambres status: project partner



The **LABOUR INT 2** project aims to promote employment as a key part of the integration process of Third Country Nationals (TCN), and central to the participation of migrants in the society. The programme aims to promote multi-layered and multi-stakeholder integration paths for migrants and refugees across the EU, from arrival up to the workplace, passing through education, training and job placement, promoting TCN inclusion in the labour market, building on the interest and capacities of employers, chambers of commerce and industry, trade unions and migrant associations.

Outputs:

- 1 Network Building Package including a permanent steering committee, 1 kick off conference, a website and enhanced communication tools of project partners
- 1 Expert Group on Skills and Migration whose results will be implemented in at least 2 national multi-stakeholder pilot actions (namely in Austria and Greece)
- A dissemination package including 2 seminars, 1 Final Report

Duration: December 2019 to April 2021

Website: www.labour-int.eu/

Project budget: 792.582 €

Eurochambres status: project partner

Projects



Sustainable Europe



The **India-EU Clean Energy and Climate Partnership (CECP)** project, is one of the main projects implementing the Clean Energy and Climate Partnership. The overall objective of the project is to reinforce cooperation between EU and India on clean energy and climate change with a view to ensure a secure, clean, affordable and reliable energy supply for all and to progress in the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

Duration: December 2018 to June 2022

Website: www.cec-p-eu.in/about-us

Project budget: 3.230.000 €

Eurochambres status: project partner

© Eurochambres, 2022

Disclaimer –This annual report has been drafted under the sole responsibility of the author; it cannot be considered to reflect the views of the European Commission and/or any other Agency or body of the European Union. All of the projects mentioned in this report have been financed or co-financed by the EU.

Connectivity

Connecting European Chambers



Connecting European Chambers took place online from 29 June to 1 July 2021. The first day was fully dedicated to presentations by EU representatives, on the subject of programmes, specific project and initiatives that were to be launched for 2021, under different topics. This part was meant to give participants (national, regional and local chambers representatives) an overview of the upcoming activities.

The second and third days were focused on thematic sessions, each discussing one (or two) of the topics of the Communities of Interest.

Communities of Interest (COIs)

Communities of Interest (COIs) are online groups where national, regional and local chambers can meet and discuss topics of relevance for their activities, services, initiatives. The Communities are meant to encourage collaboration among chambers (also on the participation to EU-funded calls), exchange best practices in view of replicating activities across Europe. 9 Communities of Interest were launched in mid- 2021 and the first meetings took place online towards the end of the year.

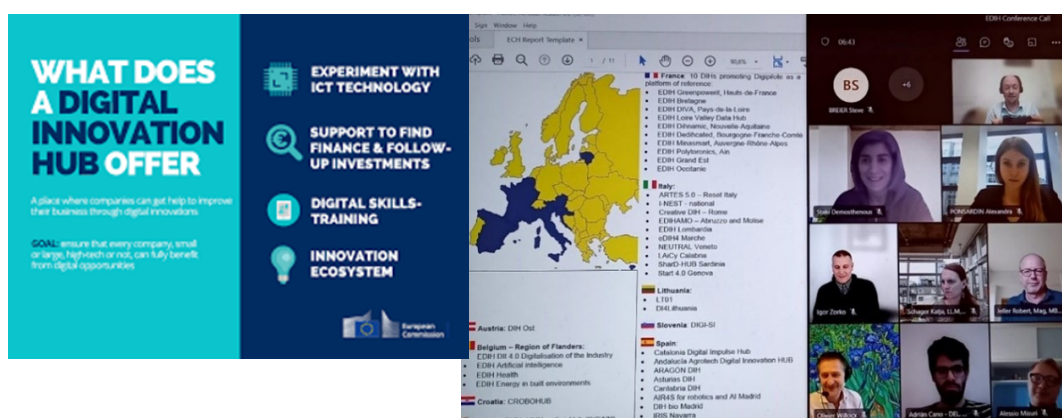


Connectivity

Digital Services Network

The Eurochambres Digital Services Network in 2021 provided chambers with a platform for exchanging best practices in service offerings to deal with the effects of the Covid-19 restrictions and the subsequent recovery. Several chambers were inspired by the initiatives presented and capitalized on them to strengthen their own digital transformation service for companies or to develop their own digital service.

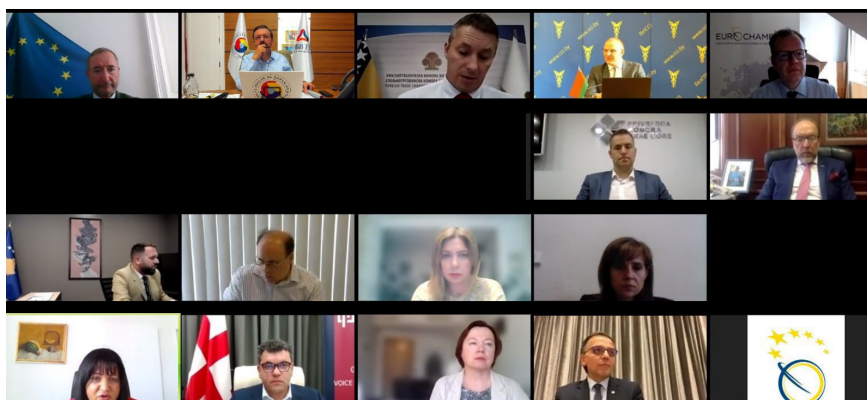
Preparation for the European Digital Innovation Centres (EDIH) competition was at the heart of our actions in 2021. Members exchanged with the responsible Commission unit to clarify requirements and prepare their proposals for this initiative funded through the Digital Europe Programme. More than 40 bids for EDIHs with the involvement of the Chamber were finalized.



Affiliated and Correspondent Members

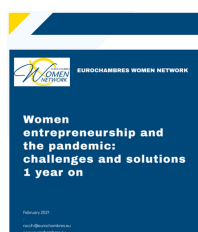
Eurochambres' members come not just from the EU, but from a sizeable number of neighbouring countries. Eurochambres Vice-President, Rifat Hisarcıklioğlu, chaired an online meeting of the Affiliated and Correspondent members in September 2021. The main focus was an appraisal of the impact of the impact of Covid-19 on the economies of these countries, on measures taken in response and on the role of chambers in the recovery process.

The group was also updated on the implementation of two major Eurochambres led projects in EU neighbourhood countries, Tukey-EU Business Dialogue and EU for Business: Connecting Companies.



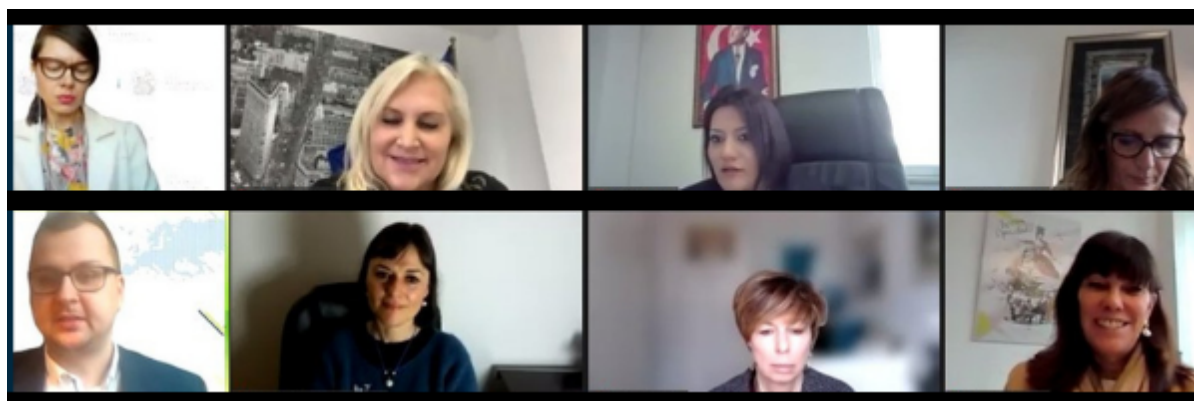
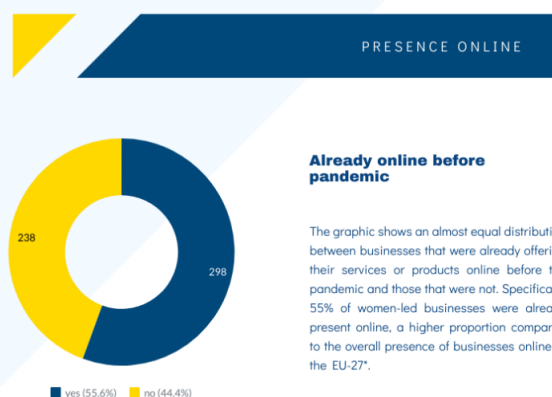
Connectivity

Eurochambres Women Network



The **Eurochambres Women Network Survey: women entrepreneurship and the pandemic: challenges and solutions 1 year on** survey was launched in early 2021 to assess the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on women entrepreneurs. 536 women from 20 countries replied, with 86.8% of replies coming from female entrepreneurs and 13.2% coming from women in employment.

The survey focused on the economic aspect of the pandemic, trying to measure the effect that this has had on the business model of the women-led companies, but also on the work-life balance of the entrepreneurs, due to the home working measures adopted in each country. Financial questions and the reconciliation between business and family life remain the main stumbling stones in the daily operation of the business. They are followed by bureaucracy and the lack of time for upgrading skills. The survey was presented in March 2021 by the president of EWN, Martha Shultz.



About Eurochambres Women Network (EWN)



EWN is a pan-European network of women's chambers created with the aim of helping to explore women's entrepreneurial potential, chaired by Martha Schultz, Vice-President of Eurochambres and of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber. EWN focus on identifying challenges faced by women entrepreneurs and developing suggestion on how to overcome it; disseminating good practices; sharing success stories and promoting networking.

Visibility

Complex policy issues and the demands imposed by the pandemic required an innovative set of communication tools to amplify our messages. In 2021, Eurochambres increased its efforts to spread its messages regarding the needs of European business through advocacy, social media, publications, new formats of written content and events.

Social Media

Social media platforms are at the core of Eurochambres' news dissemination strategies, to promote our messages and influence decisions-makers at European level on important issues for the business community.

Twitter - 7,500 followers

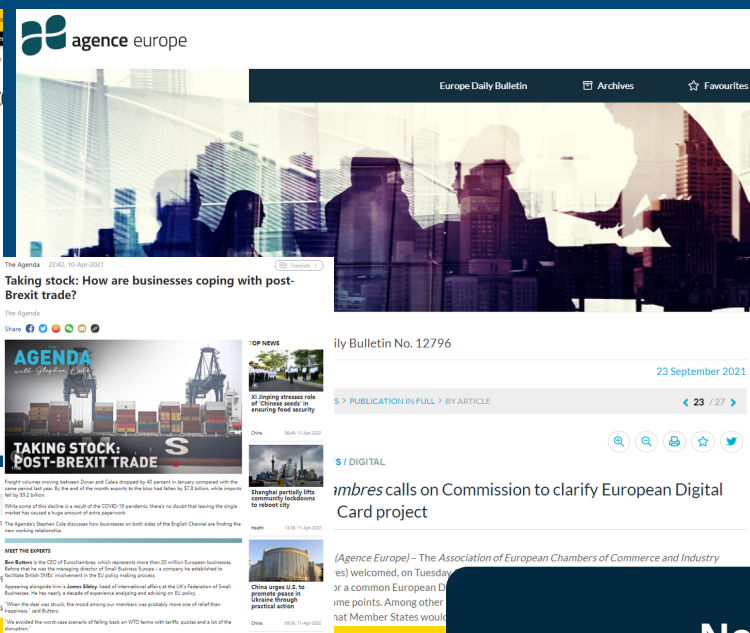
LinkedIn - 4,333 followers

Facebook - 1,940 followers



Events

30 online events and webinars



Media Coverage

Our views were featured in leading news outlets in Europe and around the world, including: Politico, EURACTIV, Agence Europe, BBC, EFE Agency and Euronews.

Website

Eurochambres website is regularly updated with useful information and contains general information about Eurochambres and the Chamber Network. The features on the website include our policy priorities, publications, latest news, projects managed by us and events, with highlights of our policy work and key activities on behalf of the Chamber Network.

Newsletters

Eurochambres News launched in September 2021 and is issued fortnightly.





@Eurochambres

CONTACT INFORMATION

Eurochambres
Avenue des Arts, 19 A/D
B-1000 Brussels
Tel: +32 (0)2 282 08 50
Fax: +32 (0)2 230 00 38
eurochambres@eurochambres.eu

Eurochambres Annual Report is a comprehensive report on activities throughout 2021.