



DRAFT PROGRAMME

Last update: 05/08/2016

10.00-11.30 Welcome coffee & Registrations

11.30-11:50 **OPENING**

- Martin Schulz, President, European Parliament (*tbc*)
- Jean-Claude Juncker, President, European Commission (*tbc*)
- Richard Weber, Chairman, EUROCHAMBRES

Master of Ceremony: Arnaldo Abruzzini, CEO, EUROCHAMBRES

11.50-12:40 **FIRST SESSION - TRADE**

Scene-setter: Shada Islam - Friends of Europe (*tbc*)

The EU negotiates collective trade and investment agreements on behalf of its member states with third countries, CETA (Canada) and the TTIP (USA) being notable current examples. Representing the interests of the world's largest single market affords the EU negotiators a strong bargaining position at the trade negotiation table with other major global economies. This is crucial to our competitiveness given that 90% of world growth will be created outside the EU in the next 10-15 years, with 30 million jobs already dependent on EU exports. To maximize Europe's economic potential, especially that of its 20 million plus SMEs, coherent EU policies and measures on international trade are needed. These should complement initiatives at member state level and within the private sector through a comprehensive and coordinated strategy of European Economic Diplomacy.

Debate with MEPEs

Voting session

Reaction: Cecilia Malmström, EU Commissioner for Trade (*tbc*)

12.40-14.40 **Networking lunch**

14:40-15:30 **SECOND SESSION - SINGLE MARKET**

Scene-setter: Malcom Harbour - European Policy Centre (*tbc*)

The single market is in some ways the most sophisticated trade agreement on earth. As such, it is one of the EU's greatest achievements, even if the significant changes that it has delivered to EU citizens' everyday lives are sometimes overlooked. Nonetheless, it is far from complete or 'single'; feedback from SMEs suggests that the benefits aren't as perceptible as they should be. Moreover, digital technologies, by nature borderless, present new opportunities for business and new challenges for lawmakers. Various single market policy packages and strategies over the last decade have had little noticeable impact on the real economy. What needs to be done to convert the rules and political agreements on free movement of goods, services, people and capital into tangible improvements in the market place? How can we ensure that slogans like 'digital by default, open by default and cross-border by default' become a reality for entrepreneurs?

This event is co-organised by EUROCHAMBRES and the European Parliament



European Parliament Hemicycle, Brussels Thursday 13 October 2016

Debate with MEPs

Voting session

Reaction: **Elżbieta Bieńkowska**, EU Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (*tbc*)

15:30-16:20 **THIRD SESSION - SUSTAINABILITY**

Scene-setter: Paul Hofheinz - Lisbon Council (*tbc*)

Ensuring the planet's sustainability has many factors, among which energy and environmental aspects are of critical importance. This is reflected in the EU's Energy Union strategy, aiming to bring about the transition to a low-carbon, secure and competitive economy. Additionally, the recently proposed 'Circular Economy Package' aims to extract the maximum value from raw materials, products and waste to the benefit of both the environment and the economy. Indeed, policy makers cannot afford to overlook the economic aspect of sustainability, so measures to reduce our environmental footprint and mitigate climate change must complement established objectives to boost Europe's global competitiveness. The sustainability challenge is a global one and the EU plays a direct role in international negotiations, such as last year's 'COP21' Paris Climate Conference. Closer to home, the EU institutions must steer the drive towards greater sustainability across all 28 member states. This process presents both opportunities and risks for the business community.

Debate with MEPs

Voting session

Reaction: **Daniel Calleja Crespo**, EU Commission, Director-General for Environment (*tbc*)

16:20-17:10 **FOURTH SESSION - SKILLS**

Scene-setter: Alan Päll - European Youth Forum (*tbc*)

It is widely accepted that Europe cannot compete with emerging economies on cost and that its advantages lie in quality and innovation. This makes access to a skilled, creative workforce a critical component in the European business model. It is thus worrying that the skills mismatch paradox persists, with levels of unemployment stubbornly refusing to fall in several member states, while many businesses struggle to recruit staff with the required competences. The refugee crisis and migration are additional factors in this complex situation. The role of the EU in this hugely significant socio-economic challenge is ambiguous. Education and training policy is largely in the hands of member states, yet several elements in the equation are by nature European, even international.

Debate with MEPs

Voting session

Reaction: **Marianne Thyssen**, EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility (*tbc*)

17:10-17:30 **CLOSING**

- **Donald Tusk**, President, European Council (*tbc*)
- Representative of the Slovak Presidency of the European Union (*tbc*)

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