

Unacceptable blocking of EU recovery package must be main issue for European Council tomorrow

EUROCHAMBRES, the European association of chambers of commerce & industry, has highlighted the extreme importance of tomorrow's European Council video conference on the EU's COVID-19 response. President Christoph Leitl has criticised attempts by the governments of Hungary and Poland to block the EU long-term budget and recovery package and urges heads of state to find a solution. He also highlighted the importance of a properly functioning single market to the recovery process and called for ambition from the member states.

The EU recovery package must be unblocked

President Leitl reacted strongly to the news that the €1.82 trillion package agreed between the Council and Parliament last week is now being blocked within the Council: *"It is now over 9 months since the crisis began and our businesses are suffering every day. They need swift, targeted support, so it is unconscionable that two member states are blocking the EU package. Our members in Hungary and Poland fully support this view. The recovery will be undermined before it has even begun if we don't roll out this funding from the start of 2021, so I urge leaders to find a solution tomorrow."*

Functioning Single Market

The need for a properly functioning single market has been underscored during the crisis, with temporary restrictions disrupting cross-border trade and supply chains. Chambers consider that there is still room for improvement in the coordination of national measures. *"The single market will be an important tool in reviving the economy, but member states must respect the principles of free movement and provide our businesses with clear information."*

Chambers would also like a commitment from EU leaders to work with the Commission in tackling more deep rooted single market obstacles: *"We cannot settle for a return to the pre-COVID norms and member states need to address the many unnecessary barriers that still limit the benefits of the single market, particularly for SMEs."*

Further information: Ben Butters, Tel. +32 2 282 08 71, butters@eurochambres.eu
Press contact: Ms. Agatha Latorre, Tel. +32 2 282 08 50, latorre@eurochambres.eu