

PRESS RELEASE

EUROCHAMBRES' rendez-vous in Paris **Annual Congress puts local actors at centre stage**

The 15th annual Congress of EUROCHAMBRES, the organisation representing over 2,000 regional and local Chambers of Commerce in Europe, is approaching fast. The event, to be held in Paris on 25-26 October, will gather more than 500 representatives from Chambers, business, politics and academia around the theme "Business and regional development: growth will come from the ground".

How can regions and local actors contribute to boosting competitiveness on a European scale? What best practices exist at local level that could inspire future EU action? Chambers will try to provide the answer, based on their historical regional focus and their extensive expertise on fostering local economic development.

Amongst others, **François Fillon**, French Prime Minister, **Jacques Barrot**, Vice-President of the European Commission and **Michel Delebarre**, President of the Committee of the Regions will address the opening sessions of the Congress.

In addition, specific workshops and bilateral meetings will offer participants the opportunity to share best practices and ideas of successful projects at local level, such as public-private partnerships, effective support for local entrepreneurs, making the most of the EU internal market, etc.

The "Competitiveness Atlas" – Ranking European regions

One of the highlights of the Congress will be the presentation of EUROCHAMBRES' "Atlas of Competitiveness", a ranking of the 250 most competitive European regions. This unique study, comparing figures for all 27 Member States, will give an extensive geographical overview of the EU's economic performance, on the basis of six different indicators: general economic background; infrastructure; entrepreneurship; employment and education; innovation; and internationalisation.

The Atlas will serve as a basis for Chambers' policy recommendations towards local, regional, national and European decision-makers.

Registrations for the Congress are open on www.eurochambresparis2007.org

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EUROCHAMBRES – The Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry represents over 19 million enterprises in Europe through 46 members and a European network of 2000 regional and local Chambers.