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CIRCULAR ECONOMY – OPPORTUNITY FOR SOCIETY



The transition from a linear model of consumption requires a total transformation of economy and society. It helps to deal effectively with economic, social and environmental challenges. The basis for this change is the consumer awareness and shift in companies' thinking. The European Commission proposed the new vision of the transition to the circular economy by 2020 in its December package. The Commission's Action Plan, the goals of the Circular Economy Package and its impact on the Czech economy was discussed by the representatives of EU institutions, business sector and non-governmental organizations on 9th February 2016 in the European House in Prague. The participants agreed that transition to the circular economy is an opportunity for the overall transformation of the economy. Nevertheless it means a long-term

development that will take effect in the next generations. The success of its implementation depends on the signal which will be sent towards enterprises and on the consumer awareness. For proper measurement of the Action Plan's goals, the Commission must set a uniform methodology that will respect the current situation in each Member State. Today, there are no relevant data in the EU that could be assessed and compared. Representatives of employers' organizations also highlighted that implementation of circular economy measures must not result in higher administrative burden, especially for microcompanies a SMEs. Furthermore, financial incentives should be focused on research and innovation and not on operational expenditures that would only distort the market.

CEBRE was founded in 2002 by the three most important Czech business organizations - Czech Chamber of Commerce, Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic, Confederation of Employers' and Entrepreneurs' Associations of the Czech Republic with kind support of the Ministry of Industry and Trade via its Trade promotion agency CzechTrade.



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News FLASH

>FREDERICA MOGHERINI IN PRAGUE

On January 11, the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Frederica Mogherini visited Prague to discuss EU foreign and security policy with Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs Lubomír Zaorálek. She welcomed the candidature of Edita Hrdá, the Czech diplomat, who became a new Managing Director Americas for the EEAS.

>SMEs IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC WILL OBTAIN OVER €50 MILLION FROM EUROPEAN INVESTMENT FUND

Komerční banka has signed an agreement with the European Investment Fund (EIF) within COSME programme that will allow Komerční banka to support more than 2,300 SMEs and microbusinesses in the Czech Republic with €50 million of loans over the next three years.

>CENTRAL REGISTER OF BANK ACCOUNTS

The Czech Government approved a draft law on the Central register of bank accounts of natural and legal persons in order to fight against tax evasion. According to the Ministry of Finance, obtained information will help the financial authority to quickly respond on transfers of money obtained by fraud.

MEPs CORNER



"I expressed my first reaction to the new Circular Economy package in the EP plenary just a few hours after the Commission had made the proposal public. The Commission delivered and submitted a rather complex and realistic proposal on time. Having said this, it is by no means perfect. As a rapporteur for the opinion on a large part of the waste legislation I am very much looking forward to work on this file. There are still many issues to be addressed and I hope the European Parliament will find the right balance. My perception of the circular economy reflects largely also the industrial dimension. Therefore, I will promote such an approach that will enable industry to bring the Circular Economy concept to life."

Pavel Telička

Member of the Committee on Transport and Tourism of the European Parliament

TRADE FOR ALL STRATEGY: DOORS OPENED TO NEW MARKETS?

The new trade and investment strategy of the EU accents better access of the European companies to third markets. The Czech Republic, an export-oriented economy with the efforts to diversify exports outside the EU welcomes this Commission's strategy. In practise, the strategy means a greater emphasis on negotiation of comprehensive trade agreements with key partners, as well as greater emphasis to economic diplomacy. Czech companies expect finalization of new bilateral trade agreements, thus removal of trade barriers and

avoidance the new ones. These are the main conclusions of a debate that took place on 8th December in the European House in Prague. Speakers welcomed the new strategy and firmly believed that it would ensure negotiations of more balanced agreements. However, the key is that the negotiated agreements have to be implemented properly and their obligations must be enforced effectively. Speakers also agreed that the prerequisite for the common EU trade policy was a functional internal market.

NEW DELEGATE OF CONFEDERATION OF INDUSTRY TO BUSINESSEUROPE



in Buenos Aires. Her professional experience is directly related to EU public affairs and promotion

Jana Radová graduated from the University of Economics in Prague with a masters' degree in International Business and studied at the University Torcuato di Tella

of businesses as she worked for CEBRE – Czech business representation to the EU, both in Brussels and in Prague. In Brussels, she accomplished a traineeship at the European Commission, DG Trade, where she reported on EU related topics and international trade issues. She also gained experience at the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic, the Czech Trade Representation Office in Buenos Aires, and the Czech automotive company SKODA AUTO. Currently she works for the Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic as a Permanent Delegate to BusinessEurope. Jana has taken this position with the aim to actively represent

the Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic and to promote the positions of its members within BUSINESSEUROPE and the European institutions. This position represents an opportunity to defend the interests of Czech employers and businesses in the centre of European policy-making. One of her main tasks is to coordinate the exchange of information between the Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic, its members and BUSINESSEUROPE and thereby contribute to the formulation of common positions of European business. Being part of it is an effective way of how to ensure that the voice of Czech businesses is heard on the European level.

EESC EMPLOYERS' PRIORITIES 2015-2018



The EESC employers' group has developed its new road map defining the priorities for the next future. Even though Europe is suffering from the migration crisis, geopolitical instability and increasing danger of the terrorist attacks, the path of the European Union to the economic recovery and sustainable growth must not be interrupted. The EU Internal Market acts as springboard for European companies to be successful by facilitating them to sell their goods and services on the global scale. The Employers' Group therefore believes that the EU is beneficial for all EU business. However, to deliver a better, more entrepreneurial Europe, which responds to the expectations of European citizens and companies, it is imperative that improving the competitiveness of European companies and entrepreneurs becomes the key driver of EU's actions. The Employers' Group wants the EU to focus on issues that make a difference and where the EU action has a real added value. Europe needs clear, pragmatic and realistic priorities and the focus must be on concrete delivery on those priorities. To promote a more dynamic and competitive future for the EU, the Employers' Group builds its program on six strong pillars in the context of the Juncker'

New start agenda and in interest of the whole European business community:

- 1. A stable macro-economic environment** is a precondition for a solid, strong and sustainable growth. It is essential that Member States carry out growth-enhancing structural reforms in the framework of the European Semester and respect fiscal responsibility.
- 2. Entrepreneurship:** a stronger culture of entrepreneurship must be encouraged in Europe to facilitate business creation and growth.
- 3. Full completion of the EU Internal Market,** mindful of the needs of business and leading to improved efficiencies, based on better regulation and much-reduced costs.
- Stimulate a more efficient, competitive, fully integrated and forward-looking industrial policy to ensure a strong, solid and competitive industrial basis in Europe.
- (Re)-Building the role of Europe in the world,** championing free trade and access to markets based on principle of reciprocity for the benefit of business and its customers.
- 6. Competitiveness for more employment** thus maintaining the social dimension of the

EU. Economic migration should be facilitated to attract talent from third countries.



Vladimíra Drbalová,
Member of the EESC,
Vice-chair of the Group I
-Employers

CEBRE CALENDAR:

- **16th – 17th February:** CEBRE consultations with Czech companies (Prague)
- **14th – 17th March:** Mission of Czech and Slovak Energy companies to the EU (Brussels)
- **15th March:** Presentation on business opportunities in the Czech Republic (Ghent)
- **4th April:** Debate on Access to online digital content (Prague)
- **4th April:** Debate on Seals of Excellence (Brussels)
- **19th April:** Debate on Services Passport (Brussels)
- **17th May:** Debate on Services passport (Prague)

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CEBRE – Czech Business Representation, protects the interests of the Czech business community in relation to EU institutions, informs Czech businesses about EU legislation affecting them, trains Czech entrepreneurs in Brussels and represents Czech business associations at European business federations. Contact: Avenue des Arts 19 AD, 1 000 Brussels, Tel: +32 2 502 0766/+32 2 502 8091, e-mail: brussels@cebre.cz, www.cebre.cz