

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND EUROCHAMBRES FOR THE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS 2019 CAMPAIGN

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") and its action plan is to establish a partnership framework for cooperation between the European Parliament and EUROCHAMBRES, the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry, regarding elections-related activities.

Context

The European Parliament is the Institution representing the citizens of the European Union with elections of representatives to the European Parliament held by direct universal suffrage every 5 years.

The dates for the next elections to the European Parliament are 23-26 May 2019, as decided by the Council of the European Union and approved by the European Parliament.

Based in Brussels, Belgium, EUROCHAMBRES acts as the eyes, ears and voice of the business community at EU level. EUROCHAMBRES represents over 20 million businesses in Europe through 46 members (42 national associations of chambers of commerce and industry and two transnational chamber organisations) and a European network of 1700 regional and local chambers. More than 93% of these businesses are small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). Chambers' member businesses employ over 120 million. EUROCHAMBRES strives to improve the general conditions in which businesses operate, to facilitate access to markets within and beyond the EU and to ensure the availability of human, financial and natural resources.

A strategic partnership exists between the Parliament's Communications team and EUROCHAMBRES. The unifying objective of both parties is to create momentum in the lead up to the elections and activate as many European citizens to get involved and become multipliers of the campaign.

The principal objectives of EUROCHAMBRES in respect of the European elections:

- a. To raise awareness of the importance of the European elections 2019, that could fundamentally change the shape of the future of Europe –and consequently the opportunities for entrepreneurs in the Single Market– among citizens across the EU27, via the Chamber network at national and subnational level and its surrounding ecosystem;

- b. Influence the debate to convey a constructive and positive message regarding the EU and its benefits for businesses, SMEs, entrepreneurs, the average citizens and society in general;
- c. To provide a platform for candidates from various political parties to engage with company owners, managers, entrepreneurs, staff and businesses' surrounding community throughout the EU;
- d. To enable Chambers at national and subnational level to establish links with future MEPs in order to collaborate effectively during the 2019-24 term.

Acknowledgements

In a pluralist democratic society, citizens should have the opportunity to be properly and fully informed in order to actively and effectively participate in public life and take part in political debates. Engaged voting is a cornerstone of democracy.

In view of the European Elections 2019:

The European Parliament and EUROCHAMBRES both understand that it is more important than ever to get as many citizens to participate in the democratic process by voting in the next elections.

The European Parliament and EUROCHAMBRES seek to reinforce the collaboration between the Parliament and EUROCHAMBRES, in order to increase awareness of and cooperation on each other's activities.

EUROCHAMBRES's mission in the context of this partnership with the European Parliament is to highlight the importance and relevance of the European Elections 2019 and accordingly to mobilize citizens – via its Chamber network – to vote in May on an informed basis. It would do so via a range of initiatives that would be coordinated by the association at EU level, but implemented principally by Chambers at national and regional level, i.e. closest to the electorate.

EUROCHAMBRES confirms that it does not provide support to either political parties or candidates participating in the elections, nor does it intend to field its own candidates; it undertakes to respect the Code of Conduct of the campaign (Annex 2).

The European Parliament is aware of the importance of working closely with European umbrella organisations to engage more citizens and ensure the widespread dissemination of the campaign, including through the organisations' national chapters and affiliated national, regional and local organisations.

Provisions

Both EUROCHAMBRES and the European Parliament confirm to each other their strong willingness to cooperate with each other on election-related activities.

In relation to the European elections, EUROCHAMBRES will ensure the contributions described in Annex 1 (Partner Action Plan).

In order to do so, EUROCHAMBRES member national Chamber organisations across the EU and their sub-national Chamber networks should, for the purposes of this MoU be considered part of

EUROCHAMBRES. As such, the contributions set out in annex to this MoU will encompass and be applicable also to these national and sub-national Chambers, as will the code of conduct.

The European Parliament, through its Directorate-General for Communication, will offer EUROCHAMBRES the support also described in Annex 1.

This MOU and its action plan will be in force upon the signature of the parties. It will remain in effect until the designation of the new European Commission. It may be further extended on mutual agreement of both parties after the elections to continue a partnership in the pursuit of the common goal of promoting active citizenship in the European Union.

This MOU and its action plan do not establish legally binding obligations.

This MOU may be amended and its action completed by EUROCHAMBRES and the European Parliament upon mutual agreement of the parties. All amendments and addenda will be an integral part of the MOU and will become effective upon signature.

This MOU and its actions are in two versions, one for the European Parliament and one for EUROCHAMBRES.

Signed in Brussels, on 30 January 2019.



Antonio TAJANI
President of the European Parliament



Christoph LEITL
President of EUROCHAMBRES

