



STATEMENT

ERT delegation meets Prime Minister Sánchez

MADRID, 14 March 2023: With the upcoming Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union due in the second half of this year, Members of the European Round Table for Industry (ERT) met with Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez in Madrid yesterday evening to discuss the best ways to enable and secure a renewed long-term industrial strategy for Europe. Reyes Maroto Illera, Minister for Industry, Commerce & Tourism and Manuel de la Rocha, Secretary General of Economic Affairs also attended the meeting.

ERT Members, comprising of CEOs and Chairs of some of the most significant industrial and technology companies in Europe, have long communicated their backing for the EU and the peace and prosperity that unity has provided for numerous decades. During this challenging period of economic constraint and political unrest, they exchanged views with the leaders on the most pressing challenges of the moment. As major employers, innovators and investors in European countries, industry seeks to contribute solutions.

The leaders exchanged on the following priority areas:

1. **Strengthening Europe – Competitiveness & the Single Market***. This year marks the 30th anniversary of the dawn of the Single Market. ERT believes that this banner year is also the opportunity to invest fresh political capital in deepening the EU Single Market, across various parameters such as capital markets, energy, digital services, all of which would benefit European citizens and strengthen Europe's place in the world.
2. **Digital transition as a key pillar of Europe's future success**. Alongside established issues such as slow, fragmented 5G rollout, cloud computing, cybersecurity and data-sharing need attention if Europe is to be at the global forefront. Digital is also an enabler of efficiencies in energy consumption.
3. **Green transition****: Guiding the shift to green energy during this period of rising prices so that the European Union's Green Deal and industrial policy can still meet the goals set out in the Paris Climate Agreement without damaging the EU's ability to compete. Delivering the energy union and boosting the production of clean electricity are two urgently required measures to address the risk of deindustrialisation currently facing Europe.

The need to advance energy transition is underlined by the implications of the current US Inflation Reduction Act which is incentivising unprecedented investment in North America's green transition.

4. **Innovation:** With innovation now a key determinant of competitiveness, it's time to rethink regulation and funding of this sector – refocusing on robust IP rights and standardisation and realising scale-up of investment-intensive innovation.
5. **International dimension:** Maintaining open strategic autonomy in an increasingly volatile geopolitical environment and taking a strong position in the face of unfair behaviour.
6. **Addressing the Skills gap:** ERT is a vocal supporter of the effort to build a culture of lifelong learning and reskilling in Europe – as evidenced by its reskilling programme, R4E^{***}, which is ramping up in Spain. With the twin transitions driving an urgent need for new skillsets, EU support for reskilling needs more volume and more resources. More investment is needed in education, training, and reskilling along with better co-operation between the public and private sector.

Note to Editors:

The names of the CEOs & Chairs in the ERT delegation are listed on **the page that follows**.

* More information on ERT's recently released publication *Renewing the dynamic of European integration: Single Market Stories by Business Leaders* is available here: <https://ert.eu/single-market>

** To find out about the climate targets & projects under way at companies led by Members of ERT, visit <https://industry4climate.eu>

*** ERT's Reskilling initiative, R4E, is already being championed by 7 companies led by Members of ERT and is active in 3 EU countries (Portugal, Spain & Sweden) with more expected soon. For more information, visit <https://r4e.eu>

A full list of the membership of ERT is accessible [here](#).

CONTACT: Robert O'Meara, Communications Director, ERT
Tel + 32 2 543 10 51 - E-mail: robert.omeara@ert.eu
www.ert.eu - Twitter: @ert_eu

About the European Round Table for Industry (ERT)

The European Round Table for Industry (ERT) is a forum that brings together around 60 Chief Executives and Chairs of leading multinational companies of European parentage, covering a wide range of industrial and technological sectors. ERT strives for a strong, open, and competitive Europe, with the EU and its Single Market as a driver for inclusive growth and sustainable prosperity. Companies of ERT Members have combined revenues exceeding €2 trillion, providing direct jobs to around 5 million people worldwide – of which half are in Europe – and sustaining millions of indirect jobs. They invest more than €60 billion annually in R&D, largely in Europe.

www.ert.eu

ERT delegation, Madrid, 13 March 2023

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Jean-François van Boxmeer | Chairman, ERT Chairman, Vodafone Group |
| Dimitri Papalexopoulos | Vice-Chair, ERT Chairman, TITAN Cement |
| José María Álvarez-Pallete | Chairman and CEO, Telefónica |
| Guillaume Faury | Chief Executive Officer, Airbus |
| Ignacio Galán | Executive Chairman, Iberdrola |
| Ilham Kadri | CEO & President of the Executive Committee, Solvay |
| Thomas Leysen | Chairman, Umicore |
| Carl-Henric Svanberg | Chair, AB Volvo |
| Peter Wennink | President & CEO, ASML |
| Frank Heemskerck | Secretary General, ERT |