



PRESS RELEASE

Europe's corporate leaders gear up to meet Europe's Competitiveness challenge: harnessing security and the Single Market

- CEOs & Chairs of Europe's major companies meet with Draghi
- ERT announces revision of its work to reflect changing geopolitical circumstances and priorities of the new von der Leyen Commission

Rome, 19 May 2025: The European Round Table for Industry (ERT) met in Rome for its annual spring plenary, hosted by **Claudio Descalzi**, CEO of **Eni** and chaired by ERT Chair, **Jean-François van Boxmeer**. The meeting brought together the CEOs and Chairs of major European companies¹ covering all sectors of industry and technology.

The gathering was honoured with interventions from former Prime Minister of Italy and former President of the European Central Bank, **Professor Mario Draghi**, the **Rt Hon. Guido Crosetto**, Minister of Defence of Italy and **General Luciano Portolano**, Chief of the Defence Staff of Italy. The themes under discussion included industrial growth, technological innovation and the growing role of space and defence.

Jean-François van Boxmeer, **ERT Chair** commented *"The past six months have seen activity to address the competitiveness challenge across many fronts: Clean Industrial Deal, simplification, the forthcoming Single Market strategy and the defence imperative. Against a backdrop of evolving external uncertainties, we need to see a rapid acceleration in efforts by the Commission and the EU Member States. We need a new era of enhanced cooperation between EU Member States – there is no time to waste."*

Dialogue with Draghi

ERT is a longstanding voice for European competitiveness and a vocal proponent of the Draghi Report released last September. The results of a survey of the corporate leaders in the organisation were released at the last ERT Plenary (in November), in which over 80% said that if the report's recommendations were fully implemented², they would give priority to investing in the EU within three years.

Since its launch, the Draghi Report has heavily informed the second von der Leyen Commission's agenda, providing a map to navigate rapidly increasing changes in the geopolitical landscape. The Commission's Competitiveness Compass and Prof. Draghi's emphatic call 'Do Something!' at a Parliamentary hearing in February underlined the urgent need for swift implementation. The announcement of the Clean Industrial Deal in February and Germany's change in stance on fiscal and defence policies also reflect positive momentum towards the kind of transformative change advocated by the Draghi Report.

Today's encounter in Rome was an opportunity for further exchange on how the report has landed in the different EU Member States, the recommendations supported by a broad

swathe of national governments and some of the trickier aspects such as financing and competition policy reform.

Overhaul in ERT structure

The meeting also advanced a revision of the focus of ERT's work, to align with the priorities of the EU institutions. In light of the shift in globalisation, the resurgence of defence and security as an imperative and renewed focus on the EU's own resilience, a significant regearing of the Committees and Working Groups within the organisation was needed. Some changes are also driven by the fact that competitiveness now a firm part of the new EU mandate, as the Commission seeks to implement the Letta and Draghi reports.

Anthony Gooch Gálvez, Secretary General, ERT said *"With the second von der Leyen Commission now firmly in place and a significant shift evident in the priorities of this EU mandate, it was time to revise our committees and working groups. Through this exercise, we have sought to better connect the dots between the overarching goals and the different workstreams of the EU institutions and evolving geopolitical circumstances. In addition, bringing in a new system of Co-Chairs ensures our work is always led by a cross-sectoral consensus – and the creation of dedicated Committees for Single Market Completion & Simplification and Security, Defence & Dual Use is timely."*

Each focus area has a working group of company representatives, overseen by a Committee of ERT Members (CEOs & Chairs), with two Co-Chairs.

The new focus areas of ERT are:

- **Energy Transition & Clean Industry** - **Industrial & Competition Policy**
- **Investment & Tax** - **R&D, Innovation & Skills**
- **Security, Defence & Dual Use** - **Single Market Completion & Simplification**
- **Tech, AI & Data** - **Trade & Economic Security**

This new suite of focus areas will be rolled out on the ERT website in the coming weeks.

This ERT Plenary also brought changes to the [Steering Committee of ERT](#), welcoming Michel Demaré (AstraZeneca), Christel Heydemann (Orange), Patrick Pouyanné (TotalEnergies) and Claudio Descalzi (Eni).

Note to Editors:

¹ The names of the **ERT Members in attendance at the meeting in Rome follow in the next pages**. A full list of the membership of ERT is accessible <https://ert.eu/members/>

² Full details of the press release of those survey results from November 2024 are available here: <https://ert.eu/documents/surveyh22024/>

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.

ERT Members in attendance @ Rome Plenary, 19 May 2025

Jean-François van Boxmeer	Chair	ERT Chairman, Vodafone Group
Nancy McKinstry	Vice-Chair CEO	ERT WoltersKluwer
Ilham Kadri	Vice-Chair CEO	ERT Syensqo
Jean-Paul Agon	Chairman	L'Oréal
Zoltán Áldott	Chairman of the Supervisory Board	MOL
Nils Andersen	Chairman	ASML
Cláudia Azevedo	Chief Executive Officer	Sonae
Leonhard Birnbaum	CEO	E.ON
Estelle Brachlianoff	Chief Executive Officer	Veolia
Dolf van den Brink	Chairman of the Executive Board and CEO	HEINEKEN
Jean-Pierre Clamadieu	Chairman of the Board	ENGIE
Vincent Clerc	Chief Executive Officer	A.P. Møller-Mærsk
Rodolfo De Benedetti	Chairman	CIR
Michel Demaré	Chairman	AstraZeneca
Claudio Descalzi	CEO	Eni
Stefan Doboczky	Chief Executive Officer	Borealis
Henrik Ehrnrooth	Chairman	UPM
Börje Ekholm	President and CEO	Ericsson
Aiman Ezzat	Chief Executive Officer	Capgemini
Guillaume Faury	Chief Executive Officer	Airbus
Ignacio Galán	Executive Chairman	Iberdrola
Óscar García Maceiras	Chief Executive Officer	Inditex
Belén Garijo	Chair of the Executive Board & CEO	Merck Group
Christel Heydemann	Chief Executive Officer	Orange
Timotheus Höttges	Chief Executive Officer	Deutsche Telekom
Roy Jakobs	President & Chief Executive Officer	Royal Philips
Jan Jenisch	Chairman	Holcim
Ola Källenius	Chairman of the Board of Management	Mercedes-Benz Group
Eivind Kallevik	Chief Executive Officer	Norsk Hydro
Markus Kamieth	Chief Executive Officer	BASF
Thomas Leysen	Chairman	dsm-firmenich
Miguel Ángel López Borrego	Chief Executive Officer	thyssenkrupp
Martin Lundstedt	President and CEO	AB Volvo
Nancy McKinstry	CEO and Chair of the Executive Board	Wolters Kluwer
Florent Menegaux	Chief Executive Officer	Michelin
Marc Murtra	Chairman & CEO	Telefónica
Patrick Pouyanné	Chairman of the Board and CEO	TotalEnergies
Gianfelice Rocca	Chairman	Techint Group of Companies
Bart Sap	Chief Executive Officer	Umicore
Wael Sawan	Chief Executive Officer	Shell
Severin Schwan	Chairman of the Board	Roche
Kurt Sievers	President & CEO	NXP Semiconductors
Jim Snabe	Chairman of the Supervisory Board	Siemens
Jakob Stausholm	Chief Executive Officer	Rio Tinto
Jonathan Symonds	Chair	GSK
Jacob Wallenberg	Chair	Investor AB
Morten Wierod	President & CEO	ABB
Oliver Zipse	Chairman of the Board of Management	BMW Group

DEPARTING MEMBERS attending the meeting

Pekka Lundmark

President & CEO

Güler Sabanci

Chair (former)

Nokia

Sabanci Holding

NEW MEMBERS attending for the first time

Benoit Bazin

CEO & Chair

Laurent Freixe

CEO

Justin Hotard

Chief Executive Officer

Marc Murtra

Chairman and CEO

Bart Sap

CEO

Saint-Gobain

Nestlé

Nokia

Telefónica

Umicore

Anthony Gooch Gálvez

Secretary General

ERT

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