



PRESS RELEASE

ERT Plenary in Gothenburg brings together European business leaders, with participation of Kristersson, Modi and von der Leyen

Gothenburg, 18 May 2026: Nearly 50 leaders of major European companies gathered in Gothenburg, Sweden yesterday and today, for the annual spring plenary of the European Round Table for Industry (ERT). Hosted by Martin Lundstedt, CEO of Volvo Group and chaired by ERT Chair, Jean-François van Boxmeer, the high-level meeting brought together CEOs and Chairs (the Members of ERT) from a wide range of industries to discuss various topics including EU policy and the ongoing shift in intercontinental geopolitics.

Across a number of themed sessions, the meeting was honored with interventions from many distinguished speakers, including the **Prime Minister of Sweden, Ulf Kristersson**, and the **H.E. Narendra Modi Prime Minister of India** in the presence of **HRH Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden**. The gathering was also honored by an exchange of views with **European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen**.

Jean-François van Boxmeer, ERT Chair and Chairman of Vodafone Group commented *“This has been an extraordinary spring plenary, with an exceptional line-up of guest speakers and working sessions. Our sincere thanks to Martin and the team at Volvo Group. It has also been a perfectly-timed opportunity to revisit ERT’s original connection with Gothenburg, the birthplace of the very first ERT Chair, Pehr Gyllenhammar, who led the organisation’s efforts to call for the creation of the Single Market¹ in the 1980s. Fittingly, we find ourselves urging the delivery of its next iteration: the One Europe, One Market roadmap. Now, just as then, there is no time to lose. Europe’s continued relevance and prosperity relies on swift implementation.”*

Martin Lundstedt, CEO, Volvo Group said *“In its role as a consensus builder between Europe’s industrial & technological leaders, ERT is the centrepiece of dialogue between business and policymakers – and the leadership at Volvo has been proud to be part of that since the very start. At such a complex and delicate time in geopolitics and international business, it has been an honour to host this ERT Plenary – and showcase some Swedish know-how as well. As we all know, European industry is not short of expertise and innovative ideas. But if we want to claim our place in the next industrial era, it must become easier to deploy and scale, not just invent. Only then does innovation really turn into the competitiveness that secures our prosperity.”*

The plenary addressed the following issues:

1. **Innovation:** with Europe’s capacity to innovate and enable scale such a frontline topic for business and policymakers, a dedicated session yielded insights from scale-ups in digital/AI, energy/green transition and defence. ERT is grateful to **Arthus Mensch** from **Mistral AI**, **Nicholas Loughlan** of **Cellcentric** and **Tobias Billström** of **Nordic Air Defence** for their participation.

2. **Trade:** the landmark speech from Prime Minister Modi and the exchange of views with Prime Minister Kristersson and President von der Leyen afforded the topic of trade relations ample room during this Plenary. Reflections on the shifting sands of geopolitics, the room for response by Middle Powers working in partnership and the to the EU's ambitious bilateral trade agenda and the need for them to be closely tied to the EU's industrial strategy.
3. **EU competitiveness agenda:** In this important year in the mandate of the second von der Leyen Commission, there was a frank exchange of views with President von der Leyen on the rollout of some key policy initiatives including the *One Europe, One Market* roadmap, the Simplification omnibus packages, the competitiveness fund and the Industrial Accelerator Act.
4. **Navigating the energy shock:** The unique mix of leaders of energy-intensive industrial companies and energy-producing companies, facilitated informed dialogue on the effects and implications of the evolving energy shock on European industry and the green transition.

With its 60-strong membership of CEOs and Chairs of some of Europe's most significant industrial and technology companies operating worldwide, ERT has a global view on Europe's competitive place in the world, *vis-à-vis* other regions – and on the policy steps that are needed to restore confidence in Europe as a place to invest in.

This meeting continues ERT's longstanding tradition of high level engagement with European institutions and Heads of State & Government within and beyond Europe. Such meetings are the occasion to highlight cross-sectoral industry priorities¹ for Europe's pro-competitiveness strategy. Europe's industry is a major contributor to economic growth, employment, innovation and infrastructure.

The names of the CEOs & Chairs who attended this Plenary are listed on **the page that follows**.

ENDS

Note to Editors:

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

¹ Visit ERT's Single Market section, featuring stories, technical analyses and links to the Single Market coalition-led compendium of 100+ obstacles [here](#).

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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 Chairmen of major multinational companies of European parentage, covering a wide range of industrial and technological sectors. ERT strives for a strong, open, and competitive Europe as a driver for inclusive growth and sustainable prosperity. Companies of ERT Members are situated throughout Europe, with combined revenues exceeding **€3 trillion**, providing around **6 million** direct jobs worldwide - of which half are in Europe - and sustaining millions of indirect jobs. They invest more than **€120 billion** annually in R&D, largely in Europe.

www.ert.eu

Membership of ERT in attendance at the Spring Plenary, May 2026

Chairman: Jean-François van Boxmeer	Chair	Vodafone Group
Dominik von Achten	Chief Executive Officer	Heidelberg Materials
Zoltán Áldott	Chairman of the Supervisory Board	MOL
Cláudia Azevedo	Chief Executive Officer	Sonae
Benoit Bazin	Chairman and Chief Executive Officer	Saint-Gobain
Leonhard Birnbaum	Chief Executive Officer	E.ON
Olivier Blum	Chief Executive Officer	Schneider Electric
Roland Busch	Chief Executive Officer	Siemens
Jean-Pierre Clamadieu	Chairman of the Board	ENGIE
Vincent Clerc	Chief Executive Officer	A.P. Møller-Mærsk
Dimitri de Vreeze	Chief Executive Officer	dsm-firmenich
Michel Demaré	Chairman	AstraZeneca
Claudio Descalzi	Chief Executive Officer	Eni
Stefan Doboczky	Chief Executive Officer	Borealis
Henrik Ehrnrooth	Chairman	UPM
Börje Ekholm	President and CEO	Ericsson
Aiman Ezzat	Chief Executive Officer	Capgemini
Christophe Fouquet	President & CEO	ASML
Ignacio Galán	Executive Chairman	Iberdrola
Oscar García Maceiras	Chief Executive Officer	Inditex
Stefan Hartung	Chairman of the Board of Management	Robert Bosch
Christel Heydemann	Chief Executive Officer	Orange
Justin Hotard	Chief Executive Officer	Nokia
Pablo Isla	Chair of the Board	Nestlé
Roy Jakobs	President & Chief Executive Officer	Royal Philips
Micael Johansson	President & CEO	Saab
Ilham Kadri	Special Advisor	Syensqo
Markus Kamieth	Chief Executive Officer	BASF
Christian Klein	Chief Executive Officer	SAP SE
Thomas Leysen	Chairman	dsm-firmenich
Miguel Ángel López Borrego	Chief Executive Officer	thyssenkrupp
Martin Lundstedt	President and CEO	AB Volvo
Ian Meakins	Chair	Unilever
Florent Menegaux	Chief Executive Officer	Michelin
Marc Murtra	Chairman & CEO	Telefónica
Dimitri Papalexopoulos	Chairman	TITAN Cement
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
Tony Smurfit	Group Chief Executive	Smurfit Westrock
Rafael Sotomayor	President & CEO	NXP Semiconductors
Jonathan Symonds	Chair	GSK
Jacob Wallenberg	Chair	Investor AB
Morten Wierød	President & CEO	ABB
Oliver Zipse	Chairman of the Board of Management	BMW Group

Secretary General: Anthony Gooch Gálvez

A full list of the Membership is available at ert.eu/members