



Tripartite Social Summit on 14 October 2026

Driving Europe forward:

ADDRESS BY MACIEJ, PRESIDENT OF BUSINESSEUROPE

Dear Presidents,
Dear Taoiseach,
Dear Ministers,
Dear Executive Vice-President,
Dear colleagues,

Translating Europe's competitiveness ambitions into tangible improvements is more urgent than ever. In all the talks I have with enterprises across Europe, I hear concerns about the state of our economy and too slow delivery of measures to strengthen it.

Europe has talented people and innovative companies. We still have a decent industrial base but we have strong competitors. We are losing industrial jobs. Three non-EU hyper-scalers control over 70% of the European cloud market and only 3-4% of world AI computing capabilities are in Europe. Our companies are disadvantaged by high energy prices and over-regulation!

The 1 billion Euro per day trade deficit with China shows the urgency to give European companies relief and support. China is a crucial market for our companies, and the European market is crucial for China. However, this relationship is off balance. China's export-oriented economic model driven by state policies is becoming a source of systemic risks, dangerous dependencies and market distortions, impacting Europe's industrial capacity and economic growth. We must defend our interests. But we also need to urgently put our own economic house in order.

A copy of BusinessEurope's message to tomorrow's European Council meeting has been distributed but I would like to underline 3 key points.

My first point concerns the EU Inc. proposal and regulatory simplification.

There are 2 non-costly ways in which the EU can bring tangible results for companies and society at large:

- deepening Single Market integration by tackling remaining obstacles to cross-border activity, and
- reducing regulatory burden and ensuring that EU legislation is easy to comply with.

The EU Inc. seeks to meet both objectives by allowing companies to scale

across Europe, with less paperwork to fulfil company law requirements. National labour law will continue to apply. Existing workers participation systems are protected. Fears that the EU Inc. will turn national social systems upside down are unfounded. EU legislators must ensure that the EU Inc. remains a simple, and attractive instrument focused on company law. Otherwise, it will not be used!

Moreover, it is crucial to accelerate the work to simplify EU legislation and streamline industrial permitting in order to deliver the promised regulatory burden reduction by at least 25% for all companies and 35% for SMEs. BusinessEurope made very concrete proposals in its Omnibook. Only 7% were addressed so far!

My second remark concerns the Single Market.

The Single Market Strategy and the “One Europe, One Market” roadmap give useful timelines for completing legislative work. But we are missing a long-term vision on where we want the Single Market to be in ten years, with clear KPIs and measurable targets for cross-border integration and enforcement of Single Market rules, as was done for the green and digital transitions.

BusinessEurope made 4 concrete suggestions:

- Establishing a headline target for Single Market integration for 2035;
- Increasing intra-EU goods and services trade by 2% by 2030;
- Removing the “terrible ten” barriers by the end of 2027.
- Establishing a target for Member States’ compliance with EU Single Market legislation.

My third message concerns the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF).

Disproportionate cuts on competitiveness funding and new company taxes like CORE will certainly not make Europe a better investment location! The next MFF must strengthen Europe’s competitiveness, leverage private investment and concentrate resources where European action provides the greatest added value.

For BusinessEurope, this means:

- Preserving the proposed increases in competitiveness-enhancing expenditure for the European Competitiveness Fund, the Connecting Europe Facility and Global Europe;
- Increasing funding for Horizon Europe and better targeting cohesion funding as a lever for competitiveness;
- Avoiding increases in business taxation to finance the EU budget as European companies already face a high average tax burden compared to global competitors.

One thing is clear, **Europe cannot regulate and tax its way to prosperity. It**

has to improve the EU as an investment location so that quality jobs can flourish. Let's join forces to achieve this shared ambition.