



## DECLARATION FROM THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY ON THE OCCASION OF THE 60<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE TREATY OF ROME

We, Presidents of the leading national business federations in Europe, meeting in Rome on the invitation of the federations from the founding countries, solemnly declare our full commitment to the European Union and our dedication to continuing to contribute to a successful project and united Europe that delivers.

Economic, social and societal progress over the past 60 years is unprecedented. The European Union is, undeniably, the main force behind it and we are proud of its achievements.

On this historic date, it is important to halt for a moment, take a deep breath and look at the bigger picture. We are going through difficult times with protectionism and scepticism towards the EU on the rise, and huge challenges ahead. But the European Union remains the most successful political project in modern times. It brought peace to our continent, and is built on the fundamental values of democracy, peace, human rights, freedom and equality which must be respected and protected. The European Union has accomplished remarkable achievements and will continue to deliver in terms of economic, social, environmental, and technological progress. It is therefore time to regain confidence, to stand behind this project, and to protect what it stands for.

BusinessEurope has been a key supporter of the European project since the early stages of preparation of the Treaty of Rome. While not everything is perfect and mistakes have been made, the advantages of EU membership and the successes of European integration outweigh them by far.

Europe remains one of the best places in which to live in the world. But our European way of life can be defended only if we act and **reform** together to achieve a **strong** and **competitive** Europe.

- I. We want a Europe that is **united**, that provides **common answers to common challenges** which cannot be solved by individual Member States alone, where Member States converge and that is underpinned by the principles of **responsibility and solidarity**.
- II. We want a Europe that provides for European public goods, that is close to its citizens and companies, that delivers **concrete benefits** and protects living standards, acting as a real enabler for an **inclusive, balanced and sustainable growth, job creation and investment**.
- III. We want a Europe that delivers the full untapped **potential of its single market**, its greatest strength, addressing existing barriers and fragmentation with **better regulation**, expanding it into new areas such as digital technology, making it an area of legal, regulatory and political stability, able to attract talents, companies and investors.



- IV. We want a Europe that fully **understands the importance of its companies** and fosters their reputation as growth and job creators, in driving innovation, and in offering solutions to societal and environmental challenges and therefore works to boost their **competitiveness** on the world stage, creating an area recognised for its easiness of doing business where companies can thrive.
- V. We want a Europe that promotes our social market economies, **where economic success is the necessary condition for continuous social progress**, based on reformed, modern and effective social systems.
- VI. We want a Europe that promotes **social cohesion**, rooted in **employment creation** and active participation in society, tackling the high youth unemployment in some EU Member States.
- VII. We want a Europe that provides **peace and stability**, by rising its joint efforts on **security and defence**, including better management of its external borders, and that drives the work in international fora to restore peace and stability in neighbouring countries.
- VIII. We want a Europe that is open and **lives up to its role in a global context**, that helps to reach global solutions, that does not refrain from global competition but defends and prioritises the interests of its citizens and companies, including **shaping globalisation according to our highly developed values** and by negotiating modern trade agreements which are able to lead to strengthened international cooperation and a liberal as well as rule-based global trading system.
- IX. We want a Europe that is ready to take full advantage of the **opportunities** created by the current industrial revolution and is prepared to face the profound economic and societal transformations that will come with it by modernising and adapting its **industrial policy** with investment in technology, skills as well as digital infrastructure, and that brings secure, affordable and clean energy.
- X. We want a Europe that embraces **innovation**, not only accompanying but leading in a fast-moving world with a clear competitive edge to drive **ground-breaking technological progress** to be **a step ahead in the digital era**.

The European business community stands united in expressing its support for the European integration project and is ready to contribute to its continuous progress

In these difficult times, the European Union must be outward-looking and lead the way forward. On the occasion of the 60 years of the Treaty of Rome, European leaders from politics, business and society must confidently show that Europe is an anchor of stability in the world, that our diverse and modern societies are an asset and not a danger to our European way of life. Populism, fake or alternative facts are to be rejected and rebutted by all responsible players.

We believe that 2017 is a decisive year and we want to help ensure a decisive turn-around proving once more that political, economic and social success can only be achieved together. We have the choice: to either be successful together, or disappear in irrelevance separately.