

# Annual Report 2006

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

For me, 2006 was above all my first full year as president of ELEC. It was an honour, doubled by the joy of having had the opportunity to preside over the celebration of its sixtieth anniversary last December 8<sup>th</sup> in the European Parliament.

I was really able to put my finger on the strengths and weaknesses of our organisation this past year. On the plus side: the vitality of some of our national sections, including the Spanish section, which I would like to cite in particular, as it celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with style in 2006; the loyalty and devotion of many of our members, who have endeavoured for decades in the service of ELEC; the pertinence and sharpness of our contribution in a number of fields, as attested in particular by *Cahier Comte Boël* n°12 dealing with "Financial supervision in Europe" or the latest resolution of the Economic and Social Commission on the "Enterprise in Europe".

On the minus side: a natural ageing of our members, insufficiently offset hitherto by the attraction of new members still professionally active and capable of revitalising some of our working commissions; the loss - or let us hope temporary occultation - of two more of our national sections: Hungary and Monaco; a highly insufficient echo among the general public and the media that limits the scope of our analysis and recommendations; a precarious financial situation which seriously restricts our capacity to act and make ourselves better known.

These problems have been analysed and discussed with lucidity and frankness by ELEC Central Council. Reforms have already been implemented, including having most working commissions assumed by the national sections. We must now, as a matter of absolute priority, give a new lease of life to these sections and commissions both in order to guarantee the future of ELEC and to involve the coming generation in its great European project.

At the last Central Council meeting on 8 December 2006, I proposed "10 golden rules," - explained in the text of my speech - the implementation of which should, in my opinion, enable ELEC to rediscover a role and influence in the construction of Europe commensurate with its proud past. The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaty of Rome in 2007 can be an opportunity to give ELEC renewed impetus, provided that it expands its resource base and finds new support, both at the central level and through its national sections, which is indispensable for organising new activities.

In 2006, we also strengthened our ties with the European Movement International and embarked with it on cooperation that I hope will prove lasting and enable ELEC to become again the "economic arm" of the EMI, so that it can make the voice of the business world heard more clearly therein. The leaders of industrial and financial companies have played a key role in the creation and development of ELEC. This close, but non-exclusive connection of ELEC with the business world is part and parcel of its tradition and should serve as source of further inspiration in the search for new members and additional resources.

Anton van ROSSUM

## **THE CENTRAL COUNCIL**

In 2006, ELEC Central Council met on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June in Barcelona and on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December in Brussels.

The **June enlarged Central Council**, whose meeting also witnessed a celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Spanish section, heard a communication by European Commissioner Joaquin ALMUNIA on Europe's economic prospects and, during the luncheon hosted by Banco Sabadell, a speech by its President Josep OLIU on the challenges currently faced by the European Union.

Following the reports by the national sections and working commissions, the Central Council adopted a resolution, proposed by the Economic and Social Commission entitled "Multilateral trade negotiations and balance-of-payments disequilibria", as well as a text of "Conclusions of the Conference of the Mediterranean Commission", a conference that was held in Monaco on April 28-29 on the topic "Education, training and technology as levers for economic development in third countries of the Mediterranean".

The **Brussels meeting**, which as in previous years took place at the European Parliament, was preceded by an academic session celebrating ELEC's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Central Council heard on this occasion, in addition to its President's introductory message, an *exposé* by Rolf E. BREUER, President of the Monetary Commission, on "Monetary and financial integration in Europe: the next steps", and a speech by Ernest-Antoine SEILLIERE, President of UNICE (renamed since then BusinessEurope), on "The business world and the future of the European project".

After hearing reports on the activities and new projects of the national sections and working commissions, the Central Council adopted a resolution presented by the Economic and Social Commission entitled "Enterprise in Europe", as well as a statement proposed by the Europe & Strategy Study Group and dealing with "Suggested directions for the priorities of the EU's next presidencies".

In addition the Central Council paid tribute to Jean DEFLASSIEUX for having assumed the presidency of the French section for over twenty years before handing it over to Philippe Jurgensen, and conferred on him the title of "Member of the Central Council". It also heard an homage and observed a minute's silence in memory of Ivo STANEK, former Secretary general of the Austrian section and member of the Central Council.

Lastly the Secretary General informed the Central Council over actions taken in 2006 to strengthen the links with other European organizations active in Brussels, which formed the fifth point of the "action programme" proposed by the President in his inaugural address of December 2005; he stressed in particular, in the presence of representatives of the European Movement International, his and the President's participation at several EMI meetings and activities in 2006.

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## **ACTIVITIES of the NATIONAL SECTIONS and MEETINGS of the WORKING COMMISSIONS**

### **10 January - Vienna - Austrian section**

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: "The Austrian EU presidency - six months of Austrian services to Europe".

### **31 January - Barcelona - Spanish section**

Lunch-debate: Anton van ROSSUM, International President of ELEC.

### **3 February - Monaco - Mediterranean Commission**

President: Carles GASÓLIBA. Preparation of the Monaco conference (April 2006).

### **13 February - Vienna - Austrian section**

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: "Europe is not working without the regions".

### **1<sup>st</sup> March - Vienna - Austrian section**

Lunch-debate in collaboration with IVC: "The economic and political importance of Turkey's EU accession negotiations from the EU's perspective".

### **7 March - Vienna - Austrian section**

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: "Central European region. We grow together. Together we grow".

### **8 March - Polish section**

Participation in the finals of the school competition "Resident of the changing Europe".

### **22 March - Gdansk - Polish section**

General Assembly of the Polish section.

### **24 March - Paris - Monetary Panel**

President: Jean-Jacques REY. Topics: prospects for global adjustments - price stability: what are the issues? A central banker's point of view.

### **26 March - Barcelona - Spanish section**

Lunch-debate: "Las nuevas propuestas de reforma de la PAC".

### **3 April - Vienna - Austrian section**

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: "Europe at school".

### **27 April - Monaco - Economic & Social Commission**

President: Philippe JURGENSEN. Topic: problems linked to international trade imbalances. Resolution "Multilateral trade negotiations and balance-of-payments disequilibria".

### **28 April - Barcelona - Spanish section**

Lunch-debate: "Bulgaria en la Unión Europea".

### **28 & 29 April - Monaco - Mediterranean Conference**

President: Carles GASÓLIBA. "Education, training and technology as levers for economic development in third countries of the Mediterranean". Conclusions.

### **April / June - Polish section**

Meetings with representatives from SMEs on the use of structural funds for SMEs development.

### **5 May - Brussels - Neighbourhood Commission**

President: Michael PALMER. Topic: the Council of Europe.

### **8 May - Vienna - Austrian section**

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: "Republic of Macedonia: road of accession to the EU".

### **12 May - Vienna - Austrian section**

Lunch-debate in collaboration with IVC: "Recent developments in the oil market and the growth strategy of OMV in Eastern Europe".

**18 May - Gdynia - Polish section**

First Baltic Conference: "A region with a future".

**2 & 3 June - Barcelona - Enlarged Central Council - General Assembly** and celebration of the Spanish section's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

**1 - 4 June - Brno - Czech section**

Participation in the organization of the congress "Financing transport infrastructures".

**6 June - Vienna - Austrian section**

Lunch-debate in collaboration with IVC: "Kosovo - Gordian knot of the Balkans".

**6 June - Vienna - Austrian section**

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: "Communicating Europe. Initiatives, experiences, perspectives".

**19 June - Barcelona - Spanish section**

Lunch-debate: "España en la UE en el 20 aniversario de nuestra integración".

**July / August - Gdynia - Polish section**

Participation in the "Summer Scene Project".

**31 August - Bern - Swiss section**

General Assembly of the Swiss section.

**4 September - Vienna - Austrian section**

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: "The EU presidency of Finland: objectives and priorities".

**15 September - Brussels - Economic & Social Commission**

President: Philippe JURGENSEN. Topic: enterprise in Europe. Resolution "Enterprise in Europe".

**22 September - Gdansk - Polish section**

General Assembly of the Polish section.

**2 October - Barcelona - Spanish section**

Lunch-debate: "La presidencia finlandesa de la UE".

**3 October - Vienna - Austrian section**

Lunch-debate in collaboration with IVC: "China - challenge for Austria and Europe".

**12 October - Vienna - Austrian section**

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: "What kind of social model for Europe?".

**13 October - Paris - French section**

Lunch-debate: Jacques BARROT, European Commissioner.

**20 October - Amsterdam - Monetary Panel**

President: Wim BOONSTRA. Topics: future role of the euro in the international financial architecture - economic and monetary conditions in the European member states: tour d'horizon.

**24 October - Vienna - Austrian section**

Lunch-debate in collaboration with IVC: "The world of tomorrow".

**7 November - Brussels - Infrastructures Commission**

President: Klaus MILZ. Topics: status of TENs and ERTMS - EU actions to foster PPP - harbours as transfer points between sea shipping and inland transport.

**11 November - Vienna - Austrian section**

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: "Happily united in Europe? Expectations for accession and experiences".

**14 November - Madrid - Spanish section**

Audience by H.M. King Juan Carlos and reception offered by the Minister of Foreign Affairs for the section's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

**24 & 25 November - Kronberg - Monetary Commission**

President: Rolf BREUER. Topics: "Monetary Policy in a changing world: commitment, strategy and credibility" - "Managing the balance sheet of a central bank" - "New EU member states: a two-class society regarding euro introduction?" - "Global imbalances: how to recycle US\$ 1 trillion".

**28 November - Vienna - Austrian section**

Lunch-debate in collaboration with IVC: "Turkey: what next?".

**29 November - Vienna - Austrian section**

General Assembly of the Austrian section.

**4 December - Vienna - Austrian section**

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: "EU enlargement - Pause or termination?".

**8 December - Brussels - Central Council - General Assembly** and celebration of ELEC's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

**11 December - Brussels - Belgian section**

Lunch-debate: "The recovery of Belgium and Europa: is it for real this time?".

**18 December - Barcelona - Spanish section**

Lunch-debate: "Grandes imperios, pequeñas naciones".

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