

ECCK Newsletter



February 2, 2015, No 17

Secretary-General's Message

Dear Valued Members & Friends:

Happy New Year! I hope you all had a great start into the year of 2015. The ECCK and I wish everyone a prosperous and successful year.

The ECCK, together with almost 150 members and friends, welcomed the New Year at the ECCK New Year Party on January 22. Special words were delivered by H.E. Tomasz Kozlowski, Ambassador of the European Union to Korea, and Kyonglim Choi, Deputy Minister for Trade (MOTIE). What a remarkable evening – it was a wonderful opportunity to catch up with peers and discuss about future plans and business prospects.

In regard to the Chamber's events this year, we have plans for more than 50 events in various forms and sizes. Details for major events will be published three months in advance on our website. The most notable events in the upcoming months include the Annual General Meeting on February 23, the EU Research & Innovation Day on March 25 in cooperation with the Delegation of the European Union to Korea, and the Global Alternative Investment Inside Conference on May 12 with MK Business News.

As you may have heard by now, Thilo Halter, our first president of the ECCK, will be leaving Korea for his new post in Beijing. Under Thilo's leadership

in the last two years, the ECCK has received much guidance and support and has grown into a strong, solid organization. Thilo has never failed to make himself available to properly represent European businesses in Korea. While his great passion and energy will be missed, I am confident that our new leadership will continue to further develop the ECCK's goals and success.

All businesses very much depend on free information flow and knowledge sharing. Therefore, I was very happy to welcome Jeroen Dijsselbloem, President of the Eurogroup and Minister of Finance in the Netherlands, on January 15. The president spoke about the growth in the Eurozone, and his speech was followed by a Q&A session facilitated by Simon Mundy, Seoul Correspondent of the Financial Times. About a week later, H.E. Normans Penke, the Latvian ambassador of Japan and Korea, visited the ECCK for a short information exchange meeting.

Back in November 2014, the ECCK, with the support of Roland Berger Strategy Consultants, conducted a Business Confidence Survey with BCKK, FKCCI, ITCKK and KGCCI. The final results were presented to journalists from MK Business News and The Korea Times at a small media breakfast meeting and uploaded onto the ECCK's webpage. From now on, this kind of survey will be conducted regularly to provide time-series data on Korea's business environment to foreign investors and the public.

Last but not least, we have proposed a tax amendment concerning the policy that will only allow the foreign employees of foreign corporations registered in Korea to benefit from a flat tax rate. It is our opinion that different tax policies for the foreign employees of branches versus other forms of companies in Korea are unjust. An open discussion round with the Ministry of Justice in respect to immigration and work-permit / visa has been done, and we sincerely hope that some of our ideas will be picked up and included in the amendments at the meeting with the National Tax Services at Sejong. The ECCK will continue working with AMCHAM, KGCCI and Seoul Japan Club regarding the tax issues.

Best regards,

Christoph Heider
Secretary-General
European Chamber of Commerce in Korea

ECCK Events & Activities

New Staff Members

The ECCK welcomes three new staff members – Chahee Kim, Tomasz Wierzbowski, and Jiyun Choi.

Chahee started on January 5 to assist the event management division. Having received her undergraduate degree in convention management, Chahee has previously worked at the Stockholm branch office of KOTRA and Plaza Hotel Seoul. She will be mainly responsible for event logistics, as the ECCK is preparing for a series of major conferences and meetings throughout 2015.

Tomasz joined the ECCK on January 6. As a native of Poland, he moved to Korea in 2008 as a Korean Government Scholarship Student. He attended Sungkyunkwan University where he obtained his Master's degree in Political Science in 2012. As the Head of Innovation and Future Technology, he will be leading the organization of industrial cooperation between the European Union and Korea with Global Navigation Satellites Systems (GNSS).

On February 2, Jiyun Choi joined the Chamber as assistant manager of PR and Publications. Having studied at UC Berkeley, her previous work experience includes education, translation/interpretation, editing, and program development. Jiyun will be responsible for supporting all publications of the ECCK.

Executive Training Programme (ETP)



The Executive Training Programme (ETP) Korea has launched its ninth cycle with 11 participants from 6 EU Member States. On January 9, the welcoming ceremony was held at Sangnam Institute of Yonsei University, which has been entrusted with the ETP Korea. The ETP provides European participants planning to enter the Korean market with language training and exposure to the Korean business culture. The ECCK has been promoting the program for our members and the general public since 2013.

Eurogroup President Visited ECCK

The ECCK had the pleasure of inviting the President of the Eurogroup, Jeroen Dijsselbloem on January 15. The Eurogroup is a forum of the Eurozone finance ministers where its member states coordinate the economic policies and promote financial stability of the Euro area. In his speech, President Dijsselbloem emphasized that Eurozone countries and their banks have become stronger through vigorous structural reforms. When asked about the possibility of "Grexit", he stated that Greece's exit from the Eurozone was not an issue. The Q&A session was moderated by Simon Mundy, the Financial Times correspondent.

More than 40 foreign dignitaries, business executives, and reporters attended the event, followed by a networking reception. The event was supported by Seoul Square and Heineken Korea.



Korea JoongAng Daily, a local English newspaper, extensively covered President Dijssbloem's speech and discussion with the ECCK members. To read the article, please [click here](#).

New Year Party



On January 22, the ECCK welcomed 150 members and friends to the New Year Party at Grand Hyatt Hotel. Throughout the event, various gifts and prizes were distributed to the best-dressed in blue, those born in the year of the sheep, and the lucky winners of the raffle tickets. With melodious music provided by Lynn, a fusion Korean music group, old and new friends merrily conversed and spent the evening in a cordial atmosphere.



The ECCK appreciates generous sponsorships from Bioderma, Diageo Korea, Dior, Pernod Ricard Korea, Conrad Seoul, Haeundae Grand Hotel, Ibis Styles Hotel, Novotel Suwon Ambassador, Park Hyatt Hotel, and Grand Hyatt Hotel.

Business Confidence Survey

European businesses are generally satisfied with doing business in Korea, but concerns regarding rising labour costs and unpredictable regulations are still prevalent, according to a joint survey conducted by five European chambers of commerce.

The ECCK, in partnership with British, French, German, and Italian chambers of commerce, conducted the survey among the member companies in November 2014. Nearly 100 European companies responded with detailed information, which Roland Berger, a German business-consulting firm, analysed for presentation.

The final results were presented on January 30 to the media partners of this project, MK Business News and the Korea Times. The ECCK is planning to conduct a confidence survey every year to provide time-series data on Korea's business environment to foreign investors and the public. For more information, please see the presentation slides on the ECCK website.

Board Member Election

The candidate nominations for the ECCK board member positions were completed on January 30. On February 5, candidate profiles will be made available to all the ECCK members. Please participate in making this momentous decision with us.

Upcoming Event

ECCK Tax Forum

- Topic: "Introduction to the Korean Personal Income Tax System"
- Date: Thursday, February 12
- Time: 08:00 – 10:00
- Venue: Berkeley Suite (36F), Hotel Lotte
- Admission Fee: KRW 45,000 (VAT included)

ECCK Annual General Meeting

- Date: Monday, February 23
- Time: 17:00 – 20:00
- Venue: Grand Ballroom, Conrad Seoul (3F)
- Admission Fee: Free for registered members
- Members-only event

ECCK Busan Annual Update

- Date: Thursday, February 26
- Time: 18:00 – 20:30
- Venue: Park Hyatt Busan, Saloon (1F)
- Admission Fee: Free (members)/ KRW 70,000 (non-members)

External Event Notice

2015 Korea Alcoholic Beverage Awards

- Hosted by ChosunBiz
- Date: Wednesday, February 25
- Venue: Nine Tree Convention Seoul



The 8th ACRC Policy Briefing for Foreign Businesses

- Date: Thursday, February 26
- Time: 07:30 – 09:00
- Venue: Korea Press Center, Press Club (20F)

Seoul City Town Hall Meeting

- Date: Late February (TBA)
- Venue: TBA

The Mayor of Seoul will preside over the meeting where participants can ask questions and raise issues to improve the city's friendliness towards international residents. Currently, Seoul Global Center is conducting a survey to collect discussion topics for the meeting. To participate in the survey, click the link: [Go to survey](#)

The ECCK is supporting the meeting by helping the city government collect issues.

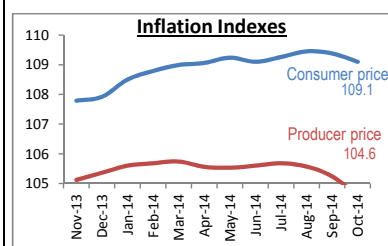


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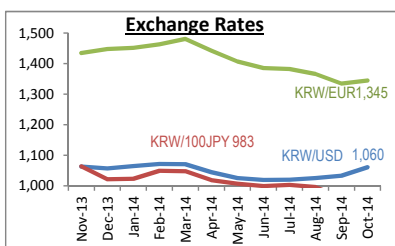
MACROECONOMIC INDICATORS SOUTH KOREA

	Figures	Tendency
GDP 2013** (bln WON)	1,428,300.0	+ 3.7% /2012
Export* (bln USD)	51.6	+7.5% / Sep
Import* (bln USD)	44.3	-0.1% / Sep
Unemployment rate** (%)	3.5	0.0% / Aug

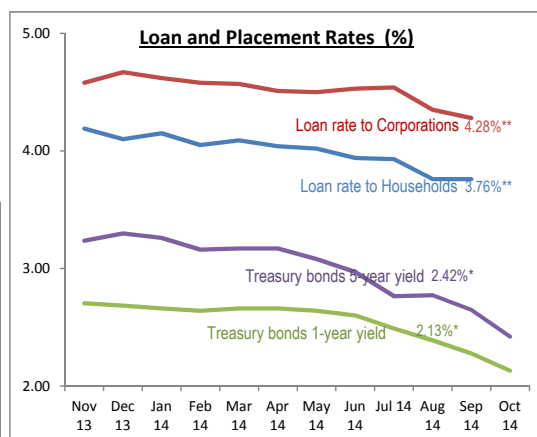
Source: *Korea Customs Service, **Bank of Korea(BOK) Data



Source: BOK Figures for Oct 2014



Source: BOK Figures for Oct 2014 (month average)



Source: BOK **Figures for Sep 2014 and * for Oct 2014