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## Press Release

### ECCK holds press conference for the launch of 'ECCK White Paper 2022'

28 September, 2022, Seoul - The ECCK held a press conference on September the 28th for the publication of the 2022 ECCK White Paper at the Korea Press Centre, which contains recommendations of European companies regarding the Korean business environment.

During the conference, the ECCK explained and discussed the regulatory challenges and industry issues still present in the Korean market. A total of 96 recommendations and regulatory issues across 18 industries were included in the White Paper published by the Chamber this year. Representatives from the automotive, food, beer, wine & spirits (BWS), energy & environment, and chemical committees were also in attendance to present relevant recommendations.

The press conference opened with welcoming remarks by ECCK Chairperson **Dirk Lukat**, "For the past decade, the development of trade and investment between Europe and Korea has been remarkable. Total amount of trade between the two parties grew notably from 61 billion EUROS in 2010 to 107 billion EUROS in 2021<sup>1</sup>. Such an impressive increase in the number indicates the positive outlook for a more mature and mutually beneficial relationship between Europe and Korea." Chairperson Lukat stated the importance of a fair and transparent business environment. "It would be critical for the government to commit to making necessary adjustments to create and ensure a fair and transparent business environment for both Korean and European businesses. Therefore, we hope that this White Paper serves as a strong and constructive communication tool for both European business and Korean authorities," he continued.

Following the opening remark, **H.E. Maria Castillo-Fernandez**, Ambassador of the European Union to Republic of Korea, delivered congratulatory remarks in which she highlighted the value of the strong EU-Korea partnership. "We are in the middle of a period of geopolitical turbulence. This is a defining moment in which like-minded countries like the EU and South Korea need to build on their strong values and cooperate to safeguard the rules-based order." The Ambassador added, "EU and Korea have essentially the same agenda: digital and green. This paves the way for obvious synergies."

The presentation of the key issues and recommendations included in the ECCK White Paper 2022 was started by ECCK President **Christoph Heider**. President Heider explained, "The intention of our recommendations is to improve the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the market. This is why 18 of our 21 committees have come up with 96 recommendations to the Korean administration this year." He also emphasised the importance of international standardisation. "International standards are becoming more and more important. "I hope that we will see the Korean administration take a greater leadership role in the implementation of international standards, or full adherence to them, something which is of key importance to all our member companies."

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<sup>1</sup> Source: European Commission (2022)



ECCK Passenger Vehicles Committee Chairperson **Andrew Hongjoong Kim** said, “To ensure a stable supply of electric vehicles and other eco-friendly vehicles to Korea, the Passenger Vehicle Committee has recommended that the government’s supply target be decided in at least 2 years in advance. Another issue is the clarification of certification procedures for electric vehicles which may not address the specific needs of electronic vehicles because current procedures have been prepared based on previous internal combustion engine cars. To reduce administrative processes and lead time, an exchange of information and sufficient discussion with industry would be more helpful.”

In addition, ECCK Heavy Duty Commercial Vehicles Committee Chairperson **Gang-Serk Park** suggested that adjustments should be made to the current rule concerning the width of motor vehicles, something that has been an obstacle to the earlier introduction of environment-friendly vehicles in Korea, such as electric trucks and buses. He explained “the current Korean safety regulation specifies that the width of a motor vehicle cannot exceed 2.50 meters, while those of Europe is 2.55m. Considering the flexibility of road width conditions, we suggest a maximum of 2.55 m in width for a motor vehicle as a more flexible approach in Korea.”

The Vice-Chairperson of the Beer, Wine & Spirits Committee, **James Paton** said “E-commerce is critical for South Korea’s sophisticated and digitally connected consumers. The time to modernise the alcohol e-commerce regulatory environment is now.” He added “All retail license holders should have flexibility to deliver directly to consumers within a revised regulatory framework, that recognises changes in industry practices and consumer.”

ECCK Food Committee Chairperson and CEO of Nestlé Korea, **Karsten Kuehme** reiterated the importance of a fair and non-discriminatory business environment for all market participants. He said, “Under the ‘Food Import and Sales’ license, we both import and supply safe and good quality food to retail businesses, and also sell directly to end consumers such as through our own offline stores and e-commerce platforms as there is no separate license for food importers to do the retail business. But when there is issue or any administrative measures suspending ‘Food Import and Sales’ licenses, current authority interpretation of relevant regulations is to suspend retail businesses together with food importation and wholesale operation without considering separated responsibility despite that they are operated totally differently. We think the measure is too excessive and we suggest a more rational interpretation.”

ECCK Energy & Environment Chairperson **Go-Young Moon** explained the importance of the offshore wind power sector, regarded as the most promising source of large-scale renewable energy due to the geographical characteristics of Korea. He said, “The offshore wind power industry is expected to have a positive impact on the related industrial ecosystem and job creation as well as the input of large-scale capital and technology. As a result, the White Paper contains suggestions for prompt grid connection, unified licensing processes, clear guidelines for residents’ consent, and the long-term strengthening of domestic offshore wind energy supply chain capabilities considered. We will deliver the voices of the industry for the country’s sustainable green growth,” he concluded.

Lastly, ECCK Chemical Committee **Jee-Seop Hwang**, Team head of BASF Korea said, “Harmonisation with International Standards is important to maintain the sustainable development of the chemical industry. We recommend adjustment of new substance registration standards for

manufacturing imports to the level of other countries, and this change will guarantee various R&D activities in Korea. We also want to comment on the unpredictable law amendments, and short comment and grace periods. The current comment period for law amendments is usually less than 30 days, or 20 days or less, without considering the complexity and diversity of the industry. Therefore, when the government enacts or amends laws, we hope that the opinions of the industry will be collected for a sufficient period of time and that in-depth exchanges of opinions will be regularised.”

In the meantime, KOTRA Foreign Investment Ombudsman responded to the review’s results by discussing the 114 issues and recommendations from the previous ECCK 2021 White Paper with relevant ministries and the ECCK received answers about 30% of them affirmatively last year.

Looking to the future, the ECCK will continue to forge a stronger, more collaborative relationship with the Korean government to further improve the business environment for foreign investors in Korea.

**[ Please download White Paper 2022 pdf file here. ]**

- **Korean** [https://ecck.or.kr/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/FINAL\\_ECCK-White-Paper-2022\\_KR.pdf](https://ecck.or.kr/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/FINAL_ECCK-White-Paper-2022_KR.pdf)
- **English** [https://ecck.or.kr/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/FINAL\\_ECCK-White-Paper-2022\\_EN.pdf](https://ecck.or.kr/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/FINAL_ECCK-White-Paper-2022_EN.pdf)

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### **About the ECCK White Paper 2022**

The ECCK White Paper 2022 contains 96 key industry issues across 18 different sectors, including Automotive, Beer, Wine & Spirits (BWS), Chemical, Cosmetics, Fashion & Retail, Food, Healthcare, Insurance, Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), Kitchen & Home Appliances, Logistics & Transport, Marine & Shipbuilding, Aerospace & Defence, Energy & Environment, ICT, Taxation, Tourism and Sustainability. Key issues and recommendations are compiled by 200 industry experts from ECCK Committees and Working Groups nominated by the Chamber’s member companies and edited by the dedicated staff at the ECCK Secretariat.

### **About the ECCK**

Established in 2012, The European Chamber of Commerce in Korea (ECCK) is a business association of European companies in Korea, representing the common voice of the European business community, the ECCK provides its members with information, communication, and access pertaining to the business and regulatory environment of Korea. Currently, the Chamber consists of 400 member companies and approximately 50,000 employees in Korea.

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