

Work Session 6

The Changing Climate – A Challenge for Europe

Theses

1. *If the European Union is to be capable of acting on the global stage in economic, social and ecological terms, then a “deepening” of European integration is required in addition to the recent EU enlargement.*

2. *European citizens typically have a strong set of values and a good awareness of sustainability. This is a considerable head-start when it comes to successfully overcoming both the ecological challenges ahead and the economic issues arising from them.*

3. *Awareness within Europe is not enough on its own to overcome these challenges, however. A global sense of responsibility and, above all, the involvement of the United States, India and China are vital if long-term, sustainable action is to be achieved.*

4. *But how can we succeed in bringing the United States, India and China to the table? What means does Europe have at its disposal for actively promoting developments in this direction?*

5. *First and foremost, it is vital that we achieve a Europe-wide consensus (an immense challenge in itself). Then we can set about brainstorming and developing strategies, whilst at the same time ensuring that the infrastructure is in place to implement them. This would enable the European Union to lead the way in creating a new global ethos and defining a global set of standards.*

6. *Governments, NGOs and economic agents must work together in a targeted way to establish clearly-defined goals and follow these up with clear-cut measures. This will mean that the conclusions reached at climate conferences can be explored in more detail and developed on a global scale, resulting in the establishment of long-lasting standards and/or regulations.*

7. *Is it therefore the role of Europe to bring about a “sea change” in attitudes to sustainability or even encourage efforts to promote a better understanding of the issue?*

CV

Born in 1949. Christoph Leitl obtained a Ph.D. in economics from the Johannes Kepler University in Linz in 1973 and graduated from Hernstein Management Academy in 1974.

Christoph Leitl started his political career with the foundation of European Youth in Linz in 1966. He held several political positions in the federal state of Upper Austria, including being a member of Parliament from 1985 to 1990 and being member of the Federal Government, responsible for economy, technology, energy, Europe et al. from 1990 until 2000. He has played an active role in the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP), acting as Deputy Chairman of the Upper Austrian branch since 1990 and Executive of the party at federal level since 2000. Beside his political career, he was Managing Director of *Bauhütte Leitl Werke* from 1977 to 1990. He has been President of the Austrian Small and Medium Enterprise Union (SME Union) since 1999 and President of the European SME Union since 2005. Since 2000, Christoph Leitl has served as President of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber.

In addition, Christoph Leitl is President of Organisation for International Economic Relations (OIER) and the Austrian Institute of Economic Research (WIFO). He acts as member of the Board of MAN Nutzfahrzeuge AG, Oberbank AG and ALAS AG. He also chairs the Social Insurance Institution and has lectured at the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration, Princeton University and Fudan University in Shanghai.

Christoph Leitl is an honorary senator of the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration and the Johannes Kepler University in Linz. Among his many distinctions are the *Gran Croce dell'Ordine al merito della Repubblica Italiana* and the Maltese Cross. In 2003, he received the *Mérite Européen* in gold. He was awarded as *Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur* and as commander with Grand Cross of the Royal Order of the Polar Star.



Dr. Christoph Leitl (AT)
President
Austrian Federal
Economic Chamber
Vienna