



## Building bridges for a united future Press conference with Ludger Ramme, President of CEC European Managers

The European Union is currently experiencing a critical phase, marked by new populism and growing divergences between Member States. The geopolitical situation, a slow economic recovery in some parts of Europe and a stalled process of converging social standards and salaries call for decisive actions by policy makers, managers and other stakeholders alike.

In this context, CEC European Managers is determined to pursue its function as a bridge builder between employers and employees and as a voice in the European Social Dialogue representing around one million professionals, managers and executives in Europe. The triannual CEC Congress on 24 and 25 of May in Mainz, where the Czech Management Association is to be accepted as a new member, will therefore run under the slogan "better together." Only by understanding Europe as a political and economic unit can we as managers work towards a more sustainable and inclusive future with sustained growth. Isolation will bring political turmoil, economic stagnation and social conflicts.

The success of the European social market economy, as highlighted in CEC's foundational document "Managers in Europe: vision, roles & values", consists in bringing economic and social considerations together: only with both

can political stability, growth and cohesion be assured. However, we need to invest and take the right decisions to make the model fit for future challenges. Besides lifelong learning, easier labour mobility in Europe and a better work-life balance, CEC is particularly involved in the topic of digitalisation, the subject of its seminar during the Congress on 25 May in Mainz.

CEC currently participates in two European projects on the digital economy: one on the role of European Works Councils in accompanying the digital transformation and one on how industrial relations evolve in the age of the collaborative economy, together with the think tank CEPS. Managers will shape the way digital technologies are conceptualised and put in practice. It is therefore of paramount importance to equip them with the necessary skills to use the technologies for the benefit of our economy, society and environment. Our upcoming survey on "Management in the Age of Artificial Intelligence", in the framework of our European Managers Panel, will investigate the key challenges for managers in that regard.

Leadership today is undergoing major changes and needs to account to a growing number of issues, both in the companies managers work for and society at large. The particular profile of CEC as a Social Partner and as a provider of expertise

in leadership and management is therefore particularly fit for purpose. We bring company-level considerations together with European policy-making, directly impacting the working life of the people we represent.

In an effort to update the definition of what a manager is and to raise awareness on what constitutes European management and leadership, CEC is in talks with MEPs to bring forward a European Parliament resolution replacing the outdated Gil Robles resolution of 1993. A European management culture exists and is more than the lowest denominator of national definitions. We are convinced that overcoming divides, taking a stakeholder approach and using evidence-based practices are part of this culture. It is our common duty to strengthen this culture and look beyond what separates us. More than ever before.

In this spirit, we are more than glad to welcome the Czech Management Association among our ranks. Their membership will help to strengthen the voices of Eastern European managers and bring to attention the particular needs of their economies. With united forces across the continent will managers be increasingly heard at European level.

**Ludger Ramme** ■

President of CEC European Managers

CEC European Managers represents around **one million managers** in Europe through its national and sectoral federations. Managers play a vital role in Europe, both in the companies they work for and as facilitators of dialogue in society: it is about taking the right decisions to prepare a more sustainable and inclusive future.

At European level, we are one of the six EU **cross-industry social partner** organisations recognised by the European Commission. As the independent and autonomous voice of managers, we are making sure that the interests of managers as **bridge builders** between employers and workers are heard - since 1951.

With our action, we bring **managerial and leadership issues** to the center of the public debate. We are convinced that our knowledge, experience and competence can contribute to find comprehensive solutions to today's challenges.

Our affiliates, active both in the **public and private sectors** all share one feature: they enjoy a higher degree of authority and autonomy than other employees, as well as more responsibility in defining and achieving the goals of the company they work for.

But the people we represent are also active and **conscious members of the societies** they live in, who know that the common welfare is an absolute pre-condition for a sustainable economic growth.

## As European Social Partner

We strive for **European integration**; we contribute to find a balance between the **economic performance** of enterprises and **income and social protection** for the workforce. We raise awareness about the fact that managers and workers need different degrees of security and flexibility; we express and **defend the needs and opinions of European managers** on current topics such as sustainable development, environmental protection, energy self-sufficiency, lifelong learning, active ageing, equal opportunities or diversity.

## As leadership and policy researchers

We **provide relevant knowledge** to managers and policy makers at the cutting edge of leadership and policy research. We take a holistic approach integrating public and private management principles as well as different research traditions; we contribute to strengthen the **quality of European management** practices by providing best practices and raising awareness; we contribute to the debate on the **future of public policies** from a managerial point of view.

## Our values

### Progress

The idea of linear and purely quantitative economic progress has proved contrary to the needs and capacities of humans. We need to redefine progress through aligning the idea to values and domain specific visions for it to be measurable. For progress to be sustainable, the process has to be subject to democratic deliberation.

### Responsibility and ethics

Managers have a key role in society and need to account to their responsibility through a positive social impact. Behavioural ethics is one of the fundamental values of managers, who must perceive the need to lead by example as a concrete form of civic-mindedness.

### Sustainability

We need to mainstream sustainable thinking and behaviour into all domains of life and professional activity. It is our duty to hand over to future generations a healthy environment, an inclusive society and an economy beneficial to all members of society.

### Transparency

Decision-making processes need to be visible and transparent, both in the public arena and at business level, to guarantee the democratic control of institutions and the society. Measures to increase transparency have to respect privacy and be subject to democratic control.

### Freedom and equality of opportunities

To guarantee freedom, we need to empower people through positive measures creating spaces of security in which individuals can develop. Equal treatment and the implementation of truly non-discriminatory policies in all aspects of social life are the founding basis of such spaces.

### Solidarity and inclusion

People and their needs must be at the centre of our action. Only a climate of mutual respect for diversity and personal development potentials can create the space for solidarity and inclusion. We need to work on inclusiveness through more participatory processes, a strong stance against intolerance and a trustful working environment.

### Merit

We believe in a social and company environment in which each individual's competences are the basis for his/her professional success. The people we represent are characterised by their knowledge and skills, which are put at the service of the company they work for and the society they operate in. We need to increase social mobility and defy structures favouring success with no merit.