

CBI: Demonstrating the value of business after Brexit

Just four weeks ago the world changed.

The [immediate priorities following the referendum must be](#) strong political leadership, to agree the principles that will underpin our new relationship with Europe and to build a close collaboration between business and the government that will help shape the future.

Understanding the impact of the referendum will take time, but did the campaign tell us anything about the role of business?

It's fair to say that the business voice did not have the impact we might have expected, alongside that of politicians, global non-governmental organisations and others. Perhaps the 'traditional establishment' were not who people wanted to listen to.

I've heard concerns from businesses around the country about what this means for how we connect with people and communities. There's also a recognition that the debate about the value of business is as important as ever.

We need to ask ourselves some tough questions about why anti-establishment feeling is so strong – in the UK and elsewhere. Business drives prosperity and creates opportunity, but do we have a strong enough answer on the biggest issues facing the British people today, including fairness? Above all, do we have a clear and united view about the type of economy we are now trying to build?

As we face economic uncertainty over the coming months, the role of business has never been more important for each of us. Businesses are demonstrating their value in a clear and pragmatic way: while we are surrounded by political and economic uncertainty, firms up and down the country are just getting on with it – identifying challenges and opportunities and focusing on serving their customers.

Valuable though this is, we recognise that business as usual is not enough. Business needs to go further to show that it understands the public mood and to find ways to tackle difficult issues – like executive pay and tax – head on.

But business can't do it in isolation: the CBI is calling for a renewed partnership with government to find new ways of tackling the big problems facing our society: regional growth, skills and opportunity, great employee relations, innovation that makes our lives easier, a tax system that builds trust and supports investment.

By working together, business and government can build a more prosperous society for everyone. Now is the time for business to show its value, by getting on with what it does best and by demonstrating that it is a vital part of the solution.

So what do you think? We'd like to hear what you think the referendum campaign told us about the role of business in society. Please share your views in the comments below or email us at info@greatbusinessdebate.co.uk