

Brussels, 18 January 2008

Role of local, regional authorities crucial in facing challenges of globalisation, Hübner tells brainstorming on future of regional policy

The role of local and regional authorities will be ever more crucial in facing the challenges of globalisation, Regional Policy Commissioner Danuta Hübner said today. Speaking at a conference in Seville entitled 'What future for regional policies after 2013?' she said the EU's cohesion policy was playing an essential role in addressing these challenges, and that local and regional authorities' had a vital part to play in tailoring policies to each region's needs.

The Commissioner was attending the conference at the invitation of Mr Michel Delebarre, President of the Committee of the Regions, and Mr Claudio Martini, President of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR). Taking part in the discussion were representatives of regions and inter-regional and inter-city organisations, Member States and European institutions.

Speaking ahead of the event, the Commissioner said: *'The impact of the challenges ahead – restructuring, demographic change, climate change, ensuring energy security – will not be evenly spread across the EU. Some regions will be more severely affected than others, which is why each region will need its own tailor-made solutions. Local and regional administrations have a crucial role to play in this process.'*

She reminded participants of the opportunity to submit contributions to the current public consultation on the future of EU regional policy after 2013.

Notes for editors

Public consultation: Last September, the Commissioner launched a consultation on the future of EU regional policy after 2013. The consultation runs until 31 January 2008 and contributions are welcome from all those with an interest. The Commission will report on these in its '5th progress report on economic and social cohesion', due for adoption by the end of May 2008.

For more details, go to:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/consultation/index_en.htm

Outlook for 2020: The Commissioner also announced plans to publish a scenario-based report on the outlook for regions up to 2020, taking into account the disparities that are likely as a result of the challenges she enumerated.

Slovenian Presidency conference on Cohesion policy: The Slovenian Presidency will hold a high-level event in Maribor on 7-8 April to carry forward the themes of this week's conference.

Further information about European Regional Policy available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index_en.htm