



## Committee of the Regions

The EU's Assembly of Regional and Local Representatives

CoR/10/053.en  
Brussels, 29 June 2010

### Commission President Barroso meets CoR President Bresso and regional and local leaders

To feed the requests of regions and cities into key EU reform debates, Committee of the Regions (CoR) President Mercedes Bresso brought together Commission President Barroso and the Presidents of European associations of regional and local authorities. Meeting in Brussels today, the regional and local leaders urged the European Commission to acknowledge the Lisbon Treaty 'upgrade' for regions and cities in the discussions on the Europe 2020 strategy, cohesion policy and the future EU budget.

The leaders underlined that their support of future European Commission proposals will depend on the European executive's readiness to put the territorial approach of EU proposals centre stage. The Europe 2020 strategy or the EU budget reform can only be successful if developed and implemented via a multi-level governance approach where all government levels share ownership and responsibility. Regions and local authorities call for a coherent implementation of the principle of territorial cohesion, enshrined in the Treaty, which requires better coordination among all levels of government. Territorial cohesion is not only a goal, it has to become the guiding principle for implementing all EU policies.

Regarding the future EU budget reform, local and regional leaders called upon the European Commission to acknowledge that an integrated and territorial approach has been shown the most effective. The crisis should trigger a reform of the EU budget which makes it easier to combine EU funds. While leaders insisted that the EU budget should not be reduced, they asked for a thorough revision as regards its delivery provisions which, due to their bureaucracy, often hamper the efficient use of EU funds.

Speaking ahead of the meeting Commission President **José Manuel Barroso** said: "I am very pleased to meet, together with the President of the Committee of the Regions, Mercedes Bresso, the representatives of the regions and cities of Europe. Together we will be able to put the European Union on the necessary path to fiscal consolidation and structural reform that will help us in ensuring sustainable growth and jobs in Europe. I am looking forward to a fruitful dialogue and I count on the close involvement of regions and cities in the implementation of our Europe 2020 strategy."

**Mercedes Bresso**, President of the Committee of the Regions<sup>1</sup>, underlined that "the European Commission can count on our full support for the important European reform projects currently under way. However, regions and local authorities expect from President Barroso that the European Commission thinks about the territorial impact whenever it drafts new legislation, cultivates a steady dialogue with those who implement EU legislation on the ground and cuts red tape wherever possible to reduce unnecessary administrative burdens."

<sup>1</sup> Mrs Bresso is also President of the **Association of Elected Representatives of Mountain Regions (AEM)**



Presidents Barroso and Bresso were joined by **Marcelino Iglesias Ricou**, President of the **Conference of European regions with legislative power (REGLEG)** and President of the Government of Aragon, Spain; **Karl-Heinz Lambertz**, President of the **Association of European Border Regions (AEBR)** and First Minister of the German-speaking Community in Belgium; **Giovanni Kessler**, President of the **Conference of European Regional Legislative Assemblies (CALRE)** and President of the Assembly of the Autonomous Province of Trento, Italy; **Wolfgang Schuster**, Vice-President of the **Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)** and Mayor of Stuttgart, Germany; **Michèle Sabban**, President of the **Assembly of European Regions (AER)** and Vice President of the Ile-de-France region; **Claudio Martini**, President of the **Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR)**, and **Lars Weiss**, Vice-President of **EUROCITIES** and municipal councillor of the city of Copenhagen.

President Barroso also announced his intention to continue the debate with the Committee of the Regions at the OPEN DAYS in October and at its December plenary session.

*Pictures and broadcast quality video material of this meeting are available, please contact [photocor@cor.europa.eu](mailto:photocor@cor.europa.eu) with your requests.*

Visit the CoR's website: [www.cor.europa.eu](http://www.cor.europa.eu)

## The Committee of the Regions

The Committee of the Regions is the EU's assembly of regional and local representatives. The mission of its 344 members from all 27 EU Member States is to involve regional and local authorities and the communities they represent in the EU's decision-making process and to inform them about EU policies. The European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council are obliged to consult the Committee in policy areas affecting regions and cities. It can appeal to the EU Court of Justice if its rights are infringed or it believes that an EU law violates the subsidiarity principle or fails to respect regional or local powers.

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