



**REPORT - STRUCTURAL DIALOGUE WITH VICE-PRESIDENT MARGOT WALLSTRÖM AND THE REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS  
ON THE  
COMMISSION'S ANNUAL POLICY STRATEGY FOR 2010**

**26 May 2009 CoR, Brussels (B)**

**SPEAKERS**

Margot Wallström- Vice President and Commissioner for Institutional Relations and Communication Strategy

Luc Van den Brande - CoR President

Erwin Mohr, (Wolfurt, Austria) - Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) Representative (Arco Latino)

Hilde Brüggemann (Deutschland) - Association of European Border Regions (AEBR)

Sauri Pekka (Helsinki, Finland) - European Regions Research and Innovation Network (ERRIN)

**MAIN POINTS / SUMMARY**

**Annual Policy Strategy** paves the way for establishing a policy agenda for 2010 and launches the interinstitutional dialogue on the priorities for 2010. The annual policy strategy will be followed by a work programme which translates the annual policy strategy into policy objectives.

The next Commission will review the policy priorities in the light of its own objectives. It will then turn them into an **operational programme for 2010**.

**Luc Van den Brande** opened the Structured Dialogue and emphasised the importance of this dialogue and informed participants about the follow-up on this dialogue session:

- Autumn 09 - Debate during plenary session of CoR
- End of the year proposed debate with the presidents of the associations and the president of the European Commission

After this presentation Commissioner **Wallström** gave a short presentation of the annual policy strategy of the European Commission:

**General remarks:**

- no major new initiatives are foreseen at the moment
- the next European Commission will review main points and turn them into priorities

- local and regional authorities were mentioned as important actors in shaping future policies

More detailed presentation of priority areas:

**1) Economic and Social recovery - main activities:**

- debate on post 2010 - Lisbon strategy - revision of Lisbon strategy (key priority)
- Follow-up of Single market Review
- Focus on SME support
- Follow-up on European Recovery Plan
- European financial framework supervision
- Reducing social impact of crisis (on top of agenda)

**2) Climate Change and sustainable Europe:**

- Priority will be Copenhagen conference
- Implementation of Energy and Climate change package

**3) Europe for Citizens:**

- Migration policies are high on agenda
- Working on revised health agenda
- Proposal for creation of European Asylum support office
- Protection of fundamental rights (focus children)

**4) Europe and the world:**

- Conclusion of Doha development round
- EU and regulation of worldwide financial markets

**Preliminary conclusions:**

- Cohesion Policy must include a territorial agenda
- EU policy will have to enforce the interlinking
- Territorial cooperation should be seen as a powerful tool to solve shared problems
- role of cities and local actors has to be enforced

**Discussion - Answer&Question round:**

Erwin MOHR (CEMR) mentioned problematic **discrepancies between rural and urban regions** and pleaded for support for rural regions. He also mentioned the challenge of climate change and asked how the European Commission is planning to communicate its initiatives in this area in order to get all people on board.

Hilde BRÜGGEMANN (AEBR) emphasised that the **Lisbon strategy** really has to be implemented (in order not to be simply a concept). She wanted to know how the EGTC will be developed in the future.

The representative from Arco Latino wanted to know whether regional and local authorities will be included in the development of **flagship projects in the Mediterranean Union**.

Pekka SAURI (ERRIN) was asking how the European Commission would like to **encourage economic and social recovery**. He also pointed out that energy saving activities in the housing and building sector are very

efficient and wanted the Commissioner's view on that.

Commissioner WALLSTRÖM promised to take back Mr. Mohr's comments on the challenges for rural regions back to her colleagues. She emphasised that the European Communicating strategy is very important and mentioned that every legislative proposal will be accompanied by a **citizens-summary**. Further details on communication will be put on the workprogramme.

On the **Lisbon strategy** she mentioned a stronger enforcement of action and partnership between Member States and European Commission. Member States need more ownership of the Lisbon Strategy. In order to encourage **economic and social recovery** the European Commission is willing to accelerate mechanisms to finance projects, to provide more front loading, more money available earlier, to provide in certain cases 100 % financing. The Commission will finetune the cross-border cooperation programmes and implement better governance tools.