



PRESS RELEASE

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EU 2020: Regions and businesses together for growth and innovation

The Assembly of European Regions (AER) and EUROCHAMBRES, representing European regions and businesses, gathered today regional and business representatives for a discussion on the European Commission's "EU2020" strategy proposal, which is to succeed the current "growth and jobs" agenda.

"Together, we want to bring into this debate some key elements which we believe precondition the success of the future strategy: a bottom-up approach from the outset, involving regional actors in its definition and implementation through efficient multilevel governance structures; taking territorial specificities into account while creating synergies between different policy areas with due consideration to the Lisbon Treaty," stated Klaus Klipp, AER's Secretary General.

Alessandro Barberis, EUROCHAMBRES' President, suggested that *"It is high time to shift the emphasis from what to how. The previous strategy fell short because nobody felt responsible and Europe's citizens did not know what it was about or feel part of it. We need to be clear about the targets, whom is accountable, how the strategy will be communicated to businesses and citizens and how much it is going to cost. With today's event, we want to show that effective cooperation between private and public actors at local and regional level delivers results."*

"The Lisbon strategy didn't manage to involve territorial authorities in a coherent cooperation framework, therefore it failed to achieve significant results. Let's take this new opportunity to adjust the tactics and adapt the rules to regional specificities!" said Joachim Baldermann, Representative of the Land Baden-Württemberg (D) to the EU. *"The efficiency of the regions is recognised by international organisations like the OECD, which considers that the implementation of public policies is more successful at regional and local level."*

During the event, a series of successful implementation examples of the current Lisbon objectives in the regions of Vienna (AT), Rhône-Alpes (FR), Lombardia (IT), Baden-Württemberg (DE) and Wallonie (BE) were presented. The presentations are available at www.aer.eu/events/regional-development/2009/eu2020.html

The **Assembly of European Regions (AER)** is the largest independent network of regions in wider Europe. Bringing together more than 270 regions from 33 countries and 16 interregional organisations, AER is the political voice of its members and a forum for interregional co-operation.

EUROCHAMBRES, the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry, represents over 19 million enterprises in Europe – 96% of which are SMEs – through members in 45 countries and a European network of 2000 regional and local Chambers.

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