

**PRESS RELEASE**

## **Regional Policy: EUROCHAMBRES calls for systematic involvement of businesses**

The future Regional Policy of the EU (2007-2013) must be part of a sustainable forward-looking approach based on competitiveness, economic and social cohesion, EUROCHAMBRES said.

For the business organisation representing over 17 million companies in 41 countries the policy guidelines of the European Commission on Regional Policy (period 2007-2013) are in line with the main targets of the Union. They are designed according to a territorial approach and pursue the idea of extended partnership .

However, to reach an efficient implementation of structural policy and funding programmes, EUROCHAMBRES raised the following requests:

- **Create a sustainable economic dynamism:** Structural/Cohesion Funds should help the regions that are lagging behind to catch up and develop a proper economic dynamism but not lead to a situation of dependency to permanent assistance. The new Objective 1 must provide instruments to finance infrastructure capacity and to strengthen human capital (education and training) while ensuring that community money is used for general support measures for SMEs and actions aimed at enterprise start-ups.
- **Enhance the partnership principle:** A systematic, early and continuous involvement/consultation of the business community in both planning and implementation would bring added value to the Regional Policy process, as the needs of businesses would be better taken into account. Furthermore, EUROCHAMBRES demands that 10% of the funding be devoted to strengthening the administrative capacity of economic and social partners at local and regional levels and civil society.
- **Streamline the administrative process:** Funds programmes should be written in a clear language, the administrative processes should be simplified and the speed of decision-making processes improved – enabling businesses to better participate in the programmes .

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**EUROCHAMBRES** has member organisations in **41** countries representing a network of **2,000** regional and local Chambers with over **17 million** member companies.

