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## Editorial

*Mattia Crosetto*

Dear Readers,

The financial difficulties of local and regional authorities weighed heavily on the discussions of members of the Committee of the Regions (CoR) at its latest plenary session.

On Thursday 10 June, the EC Commissioner responsible for Internal Market and Services, Mr. Michel Barnier, met with local and regional representatives at the CoR for the first time since taking on his new portfolio. Mr. Barnier was seeking local and regional support for new European financial market rules put forward by the European Commission in recent days as an answer to the present difficult economic situation. When speaking at the plenary, he emphasized that "growth will not recover unless the Regions are brought on board as their economic weight and creativity will contribute to the recovery of the single market".

The visit took place just when several European cities and regions, including Brussels, saw their standing with credit rating agencies deteriorate, placing further pressure on their public finances.

Nevertheless, local and regional authorities backed the principle of European solidarity and the reinforcement of budgetary discipline advocated by the EC. However, they were strongly opposed to suspending the Cohesion Fund as a measure to oblige Member States facing an Excessive Deficit Procedure getting back to a financial proper situation. Regional and local representatives pointed out that this would "unfairly target regions and cities and a few Member States, which would run counter to the territorial cohesion principle recognised in the Lisbon Treaty".

With regard to the current draft of the Europe 2020 strategy, CoR members, bolstered by the support of the European Parliament, adopted a resolution calling for "stronger local and regional involvement in the Europe 2020 strategy".

As a conclusion, we can say that the discussions pointed out once more the importance of Regions in present scenario, but also the huge dimension of the current economic crisis.

Sincerely,

Mattia Crosetto  
The Head of Office  
Zlin Region in Brussels

## Combating poverty and social exclusion - this is the European Year 2010

Since 1983 European Union is initiating a "European Year", which is designed to inform the European citizens about particular issue and work with them for a change of behavior and mentalities. This year is dedicated to fight with social exclusion and poverty.

Despite the Europe's social system is one of the most developed in the world, almost 80 million people in Europe, which represents almost 16% of the population, live in poverty. The most exposed group is children – 19 million of them are affected. Even though it has been achieved a great development in fighting with this phenomenon, it still remains one of the main issues in every country. European Union dedicated this year to raise awareness of many forms of poverty and social exclusion and inspire people to come together to undertake more bold steps to wipe it out.

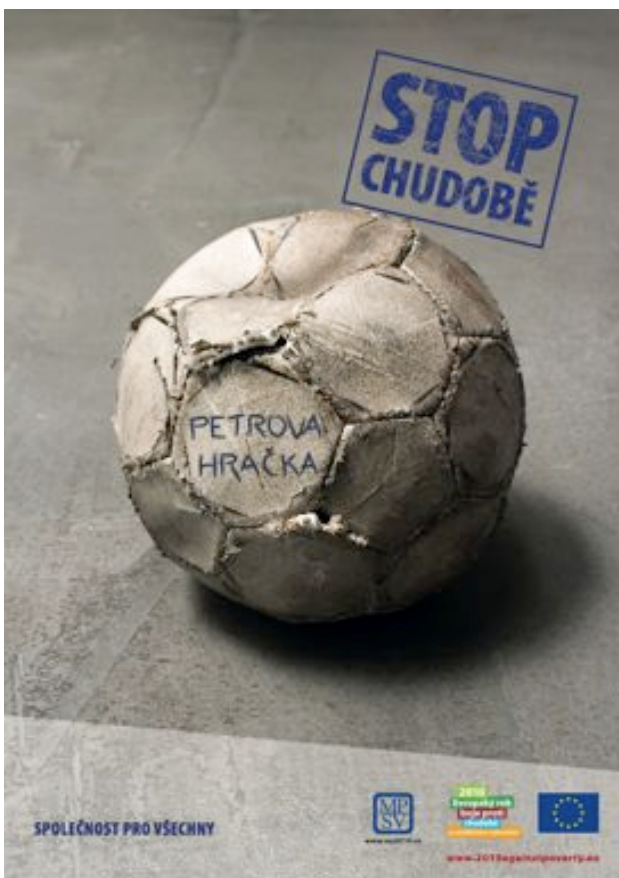
The main goal of this year is to show more effective solutions in fighting with poverty. European citizens could experience many activities about this concern, which will be prepared at EU and national levels and implemented at regional level. European could support hundreds of campaigns, information sessions in schools, roundtables, artworks and many other events that took place in every EU country.

On the 8th of June, for instance, the Forum on Local and regional response to poverty and social exclusion took place in Committee of Regions (CoR) in Brussels. Local and regional authorities, representatives from organizations and EU institutions were invited to exchange their experience with combating these phenomena.



### The objectives of the European Year 2010 are:

- Recognition: to better acknowledge the rights of people living in poverty
- Shared responsibility and participation: to emphasize collective responsibility
- Cohesion: to promote a more cohesive society, where no one can deny the poverty fighting benefits
- Commitment and practical action: to combat harder with poverty



On the forum, the main points of discussion were:

1. How to help vulnerable groups of people to benefit from social services and make it more accessible to them
2. How to improve techniques, that everybody has the same opportunities for a better quality of life, unemployment
3. How to prepare people better for the labor market
4. How to reduce a number of people living in the poverty
5. How can people benefit the same opportunities offered

The main findings of the Forum held before the CoR plenary session were that at present, neither Member States nor local authorities have the means to single-handedly ensure that they can meet EU objectives to combat poverty. Arnoldas Abramavičius, Mayor of Zarasai (LT/EPP) and rapporteur on the protection of the rights of the child, took this opportunity to stress to what extent "children were at their most vulnerable in situations of poverty". He added that "the objectives set cannot be met without a partnership involving all stakeholders, local and regional authorities in particular".

A recent survey conducted by Eurobarometer on nearly 27,000 citizens shows that 73% people feel poverty in their country, and the phenomenon is widespread. The main "social" explanations of poverty are unemployment (52%) and inadequate wages (49%), while the "personal" reasons are lack of education (37%) and "inherited" poverty.



**"The European Commission has unveiled a new strategy, "the Europe 2020 Strategy", that should help us get out the crisis on a growth path. It is needed, because as we experienced last year, when the European economy felt by 4% and the unemployment reached 10%, if we do nothing, we could easily slip to stagnation, or lost decade."**

*- Jose Manuel Barroso -  
President of the  
European Commission*

### **European Union set seven "flagship initiatives" that EU should take to strengthen growth and employment:**

- "Innovation Union" to ease conditions for financing research and development
- "Youth on the move" improve education system and facilitate the entry to labor market for young people
- "A digital agenda for Europe" for faster internet connection
- "Resource efficient Europe" to shift towards the renewable sources of energy, low carbon economy and promote energy efficiency
- "An industrial policy for the globalization era" be able to compete in the whole world, facilitate the business environment for SME's
- "An agenda for new skills and jobs" to empower people to develop their skills over lifetime
- "European platform against poverty" to connect socially excluded people with society, to enable them to live in dignity

### **Europe 2020 strategy - a vision of EU social market economy**

**Emphasis is on using renewable sources of energy, shift to the low-carbon economy, and to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and more competitive economy.**

Commission has proposed, by 2020 to raise the employment of the 20-64 aged population from 69% to 75% or to increase investments to research and development from 1,9% to 3% of EU GDP. Bold plan is set to reduce the people in a risk of poverty by 20 million.

But almost these same goals we heard few years ago, when the Lisbon strategy in 2000 was launched. "The most dynamic and competitive economy in the world by 2010" was not accomplished.

So that is why the Commission should be more realistic about the setting goals. European Union must work boldly and swiftly, but mainly – together. Strategy requires co-ordinate approach. Only this way we can come out of this crisis stronger.

**European Year official homepage:**

[www.2010againstopoverty.eu](http://www.2010againstopoverty.eu)

**CoR official web page of the conference:**

<http://www.cor.europa.eu/pages/EventTemplate.aspx?view=folder&id=727a3dfd-349b-47e6-b4dd-bd5c2c91e036&sm=727a3dfd-349b-47e6-b4dd-bd5c2c91e036>

**Social agenda – magazine of DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, European Commission:**

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=737&langId=en&pubId=518&furtherPubs=yes>

## Future of the Common Agriculture Policy

**Funding for farmers must be fairer and more focused on local and regional requirements, and the Committee of the Regions (CoR) has urged in an own initiative opinion on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy, adopted at its Plenary Session on 9th June.**

The opinion, drafted by René Souchon (FR/PES), President of the Auvergne regional council and a former French agriculture minister, is the CoR's response to the call by EU Agriculture Commissioner Dacian Cioloş for input from local and regional actors on the future of one of the EU's most controversial and expensive policies.

Commissioner Cioloş attended the CoR Plenary Session for the second time in succession to hear the Committee's position, and took advantage of his visit to ask for a further opinion from the CoR, this time on how to give greater support to local agricultural marketing (the so-called 'short-circuit') and to promoting small-scale, high quality agricultural output.



In his opinion, Souchon sets out a number of red lines which he believes must not be crossed. "First, it is clear that the CAP should remain an EU policy: the Committee of the Regions will resist any attempt to renationalise farm expenditure, as has been called for by some Member States. Second, we need to establish what we consider the goals of the CAP before setting its budget – and not limit our aims to what can be achieved by the money available. Third, we need a future CAP that is more responsive to the demands of modern farming – one that rewards farmers who act responsibly towards the environment or who invest in organic production, for example, and that is tailored to the needs of each specific region rather than subject to a one-size-fits-all approach."

The opinion states that while it is important to develop tools to stabilise prices and tools for managing production, the future CAP should also see an end to the so-called "historical references", which compensated producers based on their output several years previously and which has led to significant disparities in payments to farmers in "old" and "new" Member States.

Souchon also calls on the European Commission to ensure greater coordination between the CAP and cohesion policy in the area of rural development. His initial proposal to transfer the non-agricultural measures from the second "pillar" of the CAP to cohesion policy was considered too radical by the CoR Plenary. But the Committee nonetheless agreed that it was important to clarify the situation with regard to support for non-agricultural rural activities, to ensure that rural communities across the EU get the support they need.

Responding to this key demand, Commissioner Cioloş reassured the CoR that "both Commissioner Hahn and myself will work to remove the 'grey areas' in order to ensure better coordination between cohesion policy and the CAP. Our aim is to improve the relationship between urban and rural areas and the social and environmental challenges they face."

Souchon concluded: "It is important that, as the body representing local and regional authorities at the EU level, the Committee of the Regions takes a strong position on the future of this key European policy, and that is what we have done today by adopting this opinion. We have made it clear to Commissioner Cioloş that we want to see a far greater involvement of local and regional authorities in distributing CAP support – since we know better than anyone where the money needs to be spent – and that we want a policy that is fairer, more flexible and that encourages sustainable production at the same time as protecting rural livelihoods and ensuring Europe's food supply".

For more details, see the interviews with Dacian Cioloş and René Souchon on:

<http://www.cor.europa.eu/pages/DetailTemplate.aspx?view=detail&id=1fa8ca73-d112-48f2-9da0-3574281380d6>

## Open Days 2010 – meeting of BAC Regions

**On the 4th of June 2010, the Zlín Region in Brussels organized another meeting of the Open Days partners at the Rose House, the seat of its Representative Office.**

Main issues in the agenda included the program of the official seminar on the Baltic Adriatic Corridor and of its complementary events. Partners agreed on the structure of the seminar, which will be composed of two parts. The former will be devoted to the presentation of the Baltic Adriatic Axis and its connections with the Trans Baltic Highways of the Sea and with the Adriatic new lines to China and Far East; the latter will focus on the regional dimension of the Axis. Other issues treated were the logistic and promotional sides of the Open Days 2010.

A new meeting is scheduled for the second part of June.



## Meeting with Czech Ambassador to Belgium, SE Vladimir Müller

**On the 7th of June 2010, representatives of the Zlín Region in Brussels accepted the invitation of the Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the Belgian Kingdom for the meeting to talk about the common organization of promotional event during EU Belgium Presidency.**

On the agenda, the proposal submitted by the Municipality of Ixelles - Brussels for organising a promotional initiative for the Czech Republic and its Regions during the Belgian Semester of Presidency to the EU Council (July-December 2010). The initiative, scheduled for the 29 of September 2010, should consist of an exhibition space equipped in front of the European Parliament in Brussels where the Czech Regions could present during the all day their gastronomic specialities as well as promotional materials. An option for cultural performances could be also examined.

During the meeting, SE Ambassador Müller presented the main outline of the initiative and resumed the state of the art concerning the dialogue with the Municipality of Ixelles.

As the Regions reacted with interest, new meetings will follow for the definition of the common program and activities. In the meanwhile, the Czech Regions present in Brussels will start coordinating their participation to the initiative.

Information about further activities of the Representative Office of the Zlín Region in Brussels on: <http://www.zlinregioninbrussels.eu/mission/activities.php>

# Calls for proposals

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<b>Civil Society</b>	Youth in Action: Support to information activities for young people Deadline: <b>10. 09. 2010</b> <a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:144:0035:0037:EN:PDF">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:144:0035:0037:EN:PDF</a>
<b>Civil Society</b>	Preparatory action in the field of sport Deadline: <b>31. 08. 2010</b> <a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:133:0010:0011:EN:PDF">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:133:0010:0011:EN:PDF</a>
<b>Education</b>	Erasmus – University Charter 2011 Deadline: <b>30. 06. 2010</b> <a href="http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:095:0007:0008:EN:PDF">http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:095:0007:0008:EN:PDF</a>
<b>Education</b>	ICI Education Co-operation Programme Deadline: <b>06. 09. 2010</b> <a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:138:0030:0032:EN:PDF">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:138:0030:0032:EN:PDF</a>
<b>Education</b>	LifeLong Learning Program – Support to testing of ECVET systems Deadline: <b>16. 07. 2010</b> <a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:085:0014:0016:EN:PDF">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:085:0014:0016:EN:PDF</a>
<b>Economics</b>	European Investment Bank – EIBURS Call 2010 Deadline: <b>10. 09. 2010</b> <a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:142:0030:0032:EN:PDF">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:142:0030:0032:EN:PDF</a>
<b>Environment</b>	LIFE+ - Call 2010 Deadline: <b>01. 09. 2010</b> <a href="http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:114:0014:0017:EN:PDF">http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:114:0014:0017:EN:PDF</a>
<b>Transport</b>	Trans European Network – Call 2010 Deadline: <b>31. 08. 2010</b> <a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:129:0014:0014:EN:PDF">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:129:0014:0014:EN:PDF</a>
<b>Transport</b>	EC MOVE Program: call 2010 - Inland Waterway Transport Deadline: <b>15. 09. 2010</b> <a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:135:0021:0021:EN:PDF">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:135:0021:0021:EN:PDF</a>

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## CALENDAR

### JUNE

**17–18.6.2010**

European Council  
Ending of Spanish Presidency  
Brussels, Belgium

**24.6.2010**

European World Heritage  
Cities Conference  
Úbeda, Spain

**25.6.2010**

Organisational meeting for  
Open Days 2010  
Committee of the Regions  
Brussels, Belgium

**25.6.2010**

Czech Street Party  
Rue Caroly, Brussels

### JULY

**01.07. 2010**

Spread of Crisis on real  
economy and public finances  
European Parliament  
Brussels, Belgium

## Vacancies in Europe

### European Medicines Agency

- **Medical Information Sector experts**

Vacancy notice: EMA/AD/311

Administrators (Patient Health Protection Unit)

Place of work: London (UK)

Deadline: 22. 07. 2010

Info: <http://www.ema.europa.eu>

### European Medicines Agency

- **Institutional Liaison Office**

Vacancy notice: EMA/AD/312

Administrators

Place of work: London (UK)

Deadline: 22. 07. 2010

Info: <http://www.ema.europa.eu>

### European Medicines Agency

- **Compliance and Inspection Sector**

Vacancy notice: EMA/AD/313

Administrators

Place of work: London (UK)

Deadline: 22. 07. 2010

Info: <http://www.ema.europa.eu>



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15. 6. 2010

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