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Editorial

Mattia Crosetto

Dear Readers,

On the 27th of May 2010, the European Commission and the Spanish Presidency to the EU Council organized the first edition of the Forum for Outermost Europe. This event, that from now on will take place every two years, had the aim to increase awareness of the EU's outermost regions' specific characteristics and opportunities, as well as to offer those regions a networking platform for dialogue with other political stakeholders.

The so called "outermost regions", including territories in the Atlantic, Caribbean and Indian Ocean, and are distinguished by their low population density and their considerable distance from mainland Europe. Their specific location makes them European bridgeheads for fostering trade relations with their non-EU neighbours, most of whom are less-developed countries. Above all, on account of those regions, the maritime territory of the European Union is the world's largest with an economic zone covering 25 million km².

The forum had to contribute to define the future EU strategy for those special regions.

Actually, the debate that animated the conference room at the Charlemagne building of the European Commission was extremely interesting for all the EU Regions. In fact, those special Regions are benefiting of the Structural Funds exactly as the other EU Regions and they use the European resources in a series of critical sectors that are similar to those of the EU Regions.

For example, one of the main issues discussed related to "connectivity", meaning the importance of transport connections both for people and services. All parties attending the conference agreed on the strategic importance of devoting investments to that sector to foster development and economic growth.

This priority is shared also by several EU Regions on the continent, starting from the Zlin Region: possible alliances could be thus useful.

Sincerely,

Mattia Crosetto
The Head of Office
Zlin Region in Brussels

EU economic chiefs call for ambitious structural reforms to avoid stagnation



On 25th to 26th May, the prestigious Brussels Economic Forum took place in Charlemagne Building. At the forum, they were handing out blue and yellow sweets marked with the symbol of the euro, but the much-battered euro has left a sour taste across Europe and beyond.

The Brussels Economic Forum is the European Union's premier platform for debate on economic issues. Every year EU decision-makers, opinion leaders and other key players from government authorities, international organisations, European institutions, financial institutions, social partners, academia and the media meet in Brussels to tackle with the main economic priorities of Europe. This year, attention was naturally focusing on the present economic crisis that is still involving industrialized countries and the ways to overcome it efficiently and as soon as possible.

Actually, European leaders were meeting at the Economic Forum conference because of the serious debt problems of Greece, Spain and Portugal. Their mission was to stem the possibility of panic and prevent the crisis from destabilizing the economies of the other member states. Despite emergency measures worth €750 billion to prevent the Greek debt crisis from affecting other eurozone countries, the euro has been under intense pressure.

When opening the Forum, the President of the European Council, Mr. Herman Van Rompuy, said: "Risk of the economic crisis was always underestimated throughout the history, until now. The next steps will determine the fate of our economic and monetary union. European Union stumbled, but did not fail."

"In the short term, the acceleration of fiscal consolidation will hamper growth in the Eurozone as a whole only marginally," Van Rompuy added in his intervention.

Mr. Van Rompuy gave also some positive perspectives, for example underlining that, unlike in the 1930's, the countries involved in the crisis could manage to stay away from protectionism and in some cases even raised the crisis as an opportunity. He reiterated that Eurozone governments appear strongly committed to strengthen the budget deficit rules and increase macroeconomic cooperation to avoid any repeat of the debt crisis that had resulted from Greece's fiscal woes. But still the average public debt in European Union remains on a number of 85% of GDP.

Some critics claim that not enough has been done to reassure the financial markets, which have been unnerved by worries over sovereign debt levels in the eurozone. "There is turbulence in the markets," said the European Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs, Mr. Olli Rehn, "but it is better to do something to reinforce the confidence than only speculate on the reasons". Commissioner also said, if European Union will growth 2% each year in the next decade, 10 million jobs will be created. According to him, we should thus be more focused on a investment policy putting priority on knowledge and education.

Among the reforms that should be quickly undertaken Mr Rehn was calling for those that can boost economic growth, such as the improvement of the labour market to encourage productivity and reduce unemployment. There is a clear case for economic reform in Spain, he said. "In Spain, there is 20% unemployment and they have an archaic system of a two-tier labour market."

But, he added: "It is important we don't try to imitate any other social models and in my view, the European social model is the foundation of European social and economic development." He says the European model should be kept, but modernised to reach the challenges of the 21st Century. "If we are not able to reform the European economy, then we simply cannot afford the welfare societies, because of the very high burden of debt" - he said, and added - "We need to have fiscal consolidation and at the same time mobilise growth, so we have a more dynamic economy which is able to carry the welfare society."

He maintained that, with the current debt levels, the welfare system is already under threat.



„We built a lifeboat at the sea“. President Herman Van Rompuy about the Greece bailout.

About the euro

When commenting the situation on the monetary market, the EU Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs, Mr. Olli Rehn, commented: "Some observers believe reforms will lead to more political integration to restrain tax and spending across Europe to recover from the debt crisis. It will not lead to any fiscal federalism, but it should lead to reinforced economic governance".

Actually, critics believe there are fundamental flaws in the euro, and although it has survived in the good times, it is unworkable in a crisis.

"We have had 10 good years for the euro - with increased investment and reduced interest rates. It has also provided a protective shield for its members during the recent crisis," Mr. Olli Rehn said.

"But it also has certain systemic weaknesses and we have now made concrete proposals to address these weaknesses and to reinforce economic governance" he concluded.

And what the guest of the Forum said?

Many European and world leaders in public life and business were invited to participate to the Forum in Brussels. They provided their contributions to panels and debates taking place for two days at the Charlemagne Building of the European Commission.

For example, among the first speakers there was Mr. Ajai Chopra, Deputy Director at the European Department of the International Monetary Fund. Mr. Chopra said that one of the main priorities of the IMF now is to deal with the financial regulation. IMF should in fact enhance regulations over the financial market with stronger supervision. Supervision should be intrusive, comprehensive, adaptive, skeptical and proactive, he said.

The present Spanish Presidency to the EU Council was also present.

In her intervention, Mrs. Elena Salgado, Second Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy and Finance in Spain said: "Public debt is the greatest challenge nowadays. Also new regulation on derivatives and new accountancy standards should be passed during this year. In a longer term period, to have a sustainable growth, we need structural reforms, force social cohesion in our common market and most vulnerable groups must be helped and absorbed by the market. And only by working together, we can achieve our goal".

During the afternoon of the first day of the conference, the problem of global warming was discussed in several panels. Questions on how to lead the green trajectory of growth were asked and possible answers examined.

Trying to establish a connection between investments in more environmentally friendly economies and recovery of growth and jobs, panelists discussed several topics – such as the potential for future green jobs in Europe, the redefining of the energy system in order to get on green growth, the importance of industrial innovation in re-launching industrial production, the role for the governments and markets, the economic potential of the climate change.

Just to quote some remarkable messages, Mrs. Claudia Kemfert, professor at Hertie School of Governance said that Germany will add 1 million new green jobs in the next years and its economy considers future markets as the green ones. On the other side, Mr. Dieter Helm, professor at Oxford University took other points of view and emphasized the relatively high cost of green technologies, which sometimes can cause higher costs for the final customers, thus risking diminishing consumptions.

On the second day of the conference, the debate about Euro took place. Political and business leaders gathered in Charlemagne building again and boost another very interesting debate.

Mr. Otmar Issing, President of the Centre for Financial studies highlighted a key point for the stable future of the common currency: "We need more transparent form of rules, which will be obeyed." The EU Commissioner for Regional Policy, Mr. Hahn ended the conference by saying: "We need to reform the financial regulations. But if we do all the reforms, then there is still one thing missing. And that is we need to act as a whole. We need to cooperate. This is vital for more and more integrated Europe"

For more information about the Brussels Economic Forum:

http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/bef2010/

To read the speech of EU Council President, Mr Van Rumpuy:

<http://vloghvr.consilium.europa.eu/?p=145>

The outermost regions at the heart of Europe

Political leaders from the EU's outermost regions met in Brussels to discuss needs for tailor-made strategies and adaptations of a number of key EU policies at a high-level conference with EU Commissioners Michel Barnier and Johannes Hahn



With the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, the European Union now has nine outermost regions (ORs): the four French overseas departments (Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Réunion and Martinique), two French overseas collectivities (Saint Barthélemy and Saint Martin), the autonomous regions of Portugal (the Azores and Madeira) and the Spanish Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands.

Since 1999 the European Union has recognised the special situation of the outermost regions: their insularity, remoteness, small size and economic dependence) in relation to the other European regions. The Lisbon Treaty also includes a clause (Article 349) explicitly outlining the unique challenges faced by the ORs and consequently calling for "specific measures" to be applied to their situation in EU strategies. Of the nine ORs, all apart from the Canaries and Madeira fall into Objective 1 status for EU Regional funds, i.e. they are among the Union's least wealthy regions, with GDP at 75% or less of the EU average.

This "special profile" for those territories and communities that are fully part of the European Union even if located far from the continent represents a kind of laboratory for all European Regions. This is why it is important to study them. For this reason, the Zlin Region in Brussels followed the special conference organised in Brussels on the 27 and 28 of May 2010 by the European Commission.



Images of the conference

The opening panel with the representatives of the European Commission and the Presidency of the EU Council, from Spain



Mr. Diego Loper Garrido, Secretary of State for the EU Affairs of Spain greeting the representatives of the European Commission



The plenary session in the auditorium of Charlemagne with the delegates from the outermost regions of Europe

Launching event of the SMEs Week in Brussels

On the 25th of May 2010, the Zlin Region in Brussels attended the opening event of the European Week of Small and Medium Enterprises 2010

The event was organised by the European Commission at the Wolubilis Cultural Centre and consisted of two parts. The former was devoted to the formal Opening of the peak week of European SME Week 2010 and the latter to the Award Ceremony of European Entrepreneurship Video Awards 2010 (EEVA 2010).

It gathered all stakeholders present in Brussels, including in particular representatives of youth business organisations, representatives of the EU Institutions and of the regional and national partners active at EU level.

In addition, most of the 36 entrepreneurs featured in the 2010 edition of the "Secret of Success" brochure were present and a panel of them joined EC Vice-President Tajani for a discussion on entrepreneurship building upon their own life experiences.

Winners of the EEVAs 2010 received their Prizes from Vice-President Tajani and other present VIPs.



Celebrations for the 5th Anniversary of Czelo Office in Brussels

Organised to celebrate the opening up of the Brussels' centre of the Czech Liaison Office for Research and Development, the event consisted of a networking and informal meeting occurring in the premises of the Czech Cultural Centre in Brussels.

Participants included S.E. the Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the European Union, Mrs. Vycenova, and the Czech Deputy Minister for Education, Youth and Sport, Mr. Růžička. Activities of Czelo in Brussels and in the Czech Republic show the commitment of the Czech Republic for a tangible support to the strengthening of the innovation and research potential of the country with the help of the EU programs and funds. Activities of Czelo in Brussels will of course continue in connection with EU initiatives.

Open Days 2010

The activities for the organization of the next edition of the European Week of Regions and Cities continue. Attention has been given to the details of the program's events and the media component with the invitation of journalists and press agents

The organization of the Open Days Week, scheduled this year for the 4-7 October 2010, is fully on-going. May brought some deadlines for what it concerned the final program of the events and the list of the journalists who will be invited by the Committee of the Regions to be present at the main appointments of the interinstitutional agenda in Brussels.

Now, attention will be reserved to the organization of the local events, mainly scheduled for the month of October in the partner Regions, and to the complementary events that will accompany the official program in Brussels. The Zlin Region in Brussels is engaged in coordinating the initiatives of the partnership "Baltic Adriatic Corridor Regions" that has planned an international seminar on the regional dimension of major transport projects and other initiatives presently in the pipeline.

Registrations for the events in Brussels will start at the beginning of July 2010.

Calls for proposals

Media Program

Support for the Implementation of Pilot Projects

Deadline: **14. 06. 2010**<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:073:0031:0032:EN:PDF>

Civil Society

Preparatory action in the field of sport

Deadline: **31. 08. 2010**<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:133:0010:0011:EN:PDF>

Education

Erasmus – University Charter 2011

Deadline: **30. 06. 2010**<http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:095:0007:0008:EN:PDF>

Education

ICI Education Co-operation Programme

Deadline: **06. 09. 2010**<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:138:0030:0032:EN:PDF>

Education

LifeLong Learning Program – Support to testing of ECVET systems

Deadline: **16. 07. 2010**<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:085:0014:0016:EN:PDF>

Energy

Intelligent Energy for Europe Program – Call 2010

Deadline: **24. 06. 2010**<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:078:0003:0003:EN:PDF>

Environment

LIFE+ - Call 2010

Deadline: **01. 09. 2010**<http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:114:0014:0017:EN:PDF>

Transport

Trans European Network – Call 2010

Deadline: **31. 08. 2010**<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:129:0014:0014:EN:PDF>

Transport

EC MOVE Program: call 2010

Inland Waterway Transport

Deadline: **15. 09. 2010**<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:135:0021:0021:EN:PDF>



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CALENDAR

JUNE

1. 6. 2010

EU Summer University
Local media meet Europe
Committee of the Regions
Brussels, Belgium

9-10. 6. 2010

85th Plenary Session
Committee of the Regions
Brussels, Belgium

10. 6. 2010

EU Cultural Heritage Awards
Final ceremony
European Commission
Istanbul, Turkey

17-18. 6. 2010

European Council
Ending of the Spanish
Presidency
Brussels, Belgium

Vacancies in Europe

European Training Foundation

- **Vocational training development experts**

Vacancy notice: ETF/NEPT/10/01

Temporary agents

Place of work: Torino (Italy)

Deadline: 14. 06. 2010

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

European Training Foundation

- **Labour market specialist**

Vacancy notice: ETF/NEPT/10/02

Temporary agents

Place of work: Torino (Italy)

Deadline: 14. 06. 2010

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

European Training Foundation

- **Human capital development experts**

Vacancy notice: ETF/NEPT/10/03

Temporary agents

Place of work: Torino (Italy)

Deadline: 14. 06. 2010

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



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Form closed:
31. 5. 2010

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