

Regional and Local Dimension of the "Eastern Partnership"

Brussels, 16/17 June 2009



"Regions and cities in the EU and the countries of the Eastern Partnership can learn a lot from each other. Our Forum on Eastern Partnership is meant to be a meeting place for practitioners and colleagues from local and regional authorities and a useful tool for developing the existing networks and exchange best practice experience."

Luc Van den Brande - President of the Committee of the Regions

On 7 May 2009 in Prague, the Heads of State and Government of 33 countries launched, together with the President of the Committee of the Regions, Luc Van den Brande, the new initiative on the Eastern Partnership. It envisages a strengthened co-operation with six countries neighbouring the EU Eastern borders, based on the principles of market economy, sustainable development and good governance. Moreover, the Eastern Partnership aims at promoting mobility through visa facilitation and readmission agreements.

The Committee of the Regions believes that partnerships at regional and local level are crucial for Europe's relationship with its Eastern neighbours. The Eastern Partnership should become a project for dialogue between citizens and a platform for co-operation, bringing together local and regional authorities through an approach based on solidarity and on citizens' needs.

Announced at the Summit in Prague, the Committee of the Regions' forum on the Eastern Partnership will provide an opportunity to share best practice experiences and to encourage local projects involving EU institutions as well as national, regional and local authorities, business and non-governmental organisations and academic institutions. The event will focus on two key themes:

- Territorial co-operation and economic development
- Institution-building and good governance.

For further information please consult the Committee of the Regions' website:

www.cor.europa.eu

Draft Programme

Tuesday, 16 June 2009

9:30-10:15

Welcome Addresses

- **Luc Van den Brande**, President of the Committee of the Regions,
- **Anders Henriksson**, Senior Special Adviser at the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (tbc)
- **Jan Tombiński**, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Poland to the European Union
- **Janos Herman**, European Commission, DG External Relations, Principal Adviser for regional cooperation, Deputy Political Director

10:15-12:30 Panel Debate

'Eastern Partnership' from a regional and local perspective

Moderator: **Alexander Duleba**, Research Center of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association, Bratislava

- **István Sértő-Radics**, Mayor of Uszka, Hungary, Chairman of the Committee of the Regions External Relations Commission, Rapporteur on the "Eastern Partnership"
- **Ian Micallef**, President a.i. of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, Member of the Committee of the Regions
- **Giorgi Ugulava**, Mayor of Tbilisi, Georgia
- **Michèle Sabban**, President of the Assembly of European Regions (AER)
- **László Gazda**, President of the Eszak-Alföld Regional Development Council, Hungary
- **Katlijn Malfliet**, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Institute for International and European Policy
- **Miraslau Kobasa**, Chairman of the Board, Lev Sapieha Foundation, Belarus (tbc)

30 minutes discussion with the floor

12:30-14:00 Lunch buffet

14:00-15:30

Workshop 1: Territorial co-operation and economic development

Moderator: **Eva Gross**, Institute for European Studies, Free University of Brussels

- **Marek Wozniak**, Marshall of the Wielkopolskie region, Poland, Member of the Committee of the Regions, Rapporteur for an own initiative opinion on the local and regional government in Georgia
- **Nathalie Thiberge**, European Commission, EuropeAid Co-operation Office
- **James Macbeth**, Director, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (gtz; German Technical Cooperation), Yerevan, Armenia
- **Oleh Luksha**, Executive Director, Transcarpathian Regional Branch of the Association of Ukrainian Cities and Communities
- **Jens Gabbe**, Honorary Member, Association of European Border Regions

15:30-16:00 Coffee break

16:00 - 17:30

Workshop 2: Institution-building and good governance

Moderator: **Michael Emerson**, Center for European Policy Studies, Brussels

- **Uno Aldergren**, Member of the Executive Committee of Region Skåne, Sweden, Member of the Committee of the Regions
- **Daniel Popescu**, Head of Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, France
- **Ana Guțu**, Vice-Rector, Free University of Chișinău, Moldova
- **Ghia Nodia**, Member of the Board of Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, Georgia
- **Srdjan Cvijic**, Association of Local Democracy Agencies, Brussels
- **Svetlana A. Aslanyan**, President, Center for Development of Civil Society, Armenia (tbc)
- **Arif Yunusov**, Chief of Departments of Conflict and Migration Studies and State and Society, Institute of Peace and Democracy, Azerbaïdjan

19:00 - 22:00

Forum Reception (Committee of the Regions, Jacques Delors Building, Atrium 5)

Wednesday, 17 June 2009 – CoR Plenary Session

The **conclusions of the forum** will be presented during the Plenary Session of the Committee of the Regions as of 15:00, in the European Parliament, JAN building, room 222