

## **Declaration of the Regional Competitiveness and Employment Regions on the future of EU Cohesion Policy post-2013**

We, **the regions of Europe, eligible under the current Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective** of EU Cohesion Policy 2007-2013, express the importance of EU Cohesion Policy for the whole of the EU. We are fully aware of the challenges and needs for the period post-2013. Therefore, we support the discussion on the Europe 2020 Strategy and the best possible use of the available budgetary means of the European Union. Thus, we see it as a political responsibility to start referring now to the **necessity and urgency of an EU Cohesion Policy for all regions post-2013.**

Cohesion Policy is a valuable and absolutely essential European instrument for Convergence and Transition Regions in their development process, as well as for territorial cooperation between regions. In addition, Cohesion Policy is fundamental for Competitiveness Regions to further enhance their potential to actively contribute to the common European objectives and to meet future needs and challenges. By using tried and tested implementation structures that can respond flexibly to changing circumstances, Cohesion Policy is the most effective European instrument in helping regions to overcome structural weaknesses, both within regions, but also between them. It is also vital to reducing territorial disparities as the essential condition for overall European growth and employment. The integrated multi-annual approach of EU Cohesion Policy is unique, but also crucial for taking into account the requirements and development potential of the different regions. Its system of multi-level governance, with a decentralised programme giving responsibility to the regions, guarantees a successful and efficient bottom-up, place-based policy that is informed through regional priority-setting and tailored measures, in line with EU priorities. This has also been successful in building trust in the programmes, by delivering visible and sustainable results and proven added-value. The other purely sector-based European policies are a useful and essential complement to the actions within Cohesion Policy, but can by no means replace them.

**That is why the Signatory Regions demand the continuation of the current and long-term oriented Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective (without sub-regional zoning) post-2013, or of a similar system with appropriate and sufficient funding and flexibility.**

We, the Signatory Regions, eligible under the current Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective, are therefore asking the European Commission, European Parliament, and Council, as well as the Committee of the Regions to take into account the requests contained in this declaration for the future priority-setting of the EU and to let us, the regions, assume our share of the responsibility based on European partnership.

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Region

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Name