

HIGH LEVEL GROUP REFLECTING ON FUTURE COHESION POLICY

WORK PROGRAMME 2010

VERSION OF 30/11/2009

Meeting	Date	Subject(s)
1	25.02.2010 or 04.03.2010	Territorial Cooperation
2	10.06.2010	Delivery mechanisms
3	16.09.2010	To be decided
4	02.12.2010	To be decided



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
REGIONAL POLICY

The Deputy Director-General - Development, Coordination and Communication of Cohesion Policy

Brussels, 01.12.2009*011268
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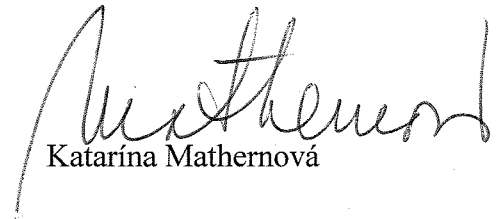
NOTE TO MEMBER STATE EXPERTS

Subject: High Level Group reflecting on future Cohesion policy – mandate

At its first meeting on 2nd October, the High Level Group reflecting on future Cohesion policy devoted some time to discussion of its functioning and objectives on the basis of a draft mandate document. Further to this meeting, comments on the draft mandate document were received in writing from the Italian expert member of the HLG. Consideration was also given to the need to ensure flexibility of functioning of the group in the light of specific topics identified for discussion.

The mandate for the group has now been finalised on the basis of these elements. The mandate document is attached to this note and has also been uploaded to the 'ADMIN' folder for the High Level Group on the circa website established for the group at:

http://circa.europa.eu/Members/irc/regio/future_cohesion_policy/home



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Encs: Mandate

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MANDATE

30/11/2009

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The launching of the 4th Cohesion Report in 2007 marked the beginning of a reflection process on future Cohesion policy, putting forward a number of questions for public consultation related, in particular, to the challenges facing regions in the coming years.
- 1.2. Subsequent steps in the work on reflection on future Cohesion policy since then include:
 - The results of the public consultation on the 4th Cohesion Report summarised in the Fifth Progress Report on economic and social cohesion (June 2008);
 - The Green Paper on territorial cohesion (6 October 2008) and subsequent public consultation summarised in the Sixth Progress Report on economic and social cohesion (June 2009);
 - The Working Paper on Regions 2020 providing a first prospective analysis of the likely regional impact of four major challenges facing Europe – globalisation, demographic change, climate change and energy (November 2008);
 - Commissioner Hübner's Reflection Paper on future Cohesion policy, presented at the informal meeting of ministers responsible for regional policy in Mariánske Lázně, and the joint ministerial communiqué on possible future policy directions and delivery system (23-24 April 2009); and
 - The independent expert report 'An Agenda for a Reformed Cohesion Policy' presented by Fabrizio Barca, from the Italian Ministry of the Economy, providing an assessment of cohesion policy and recommendations for the future (27 April 2009).
- 1.3. In order to provide an informal platform for discussion of the main building blocks for future Cohesion policy between Commission services and Member States policy makers, Commissioner Hübner announced at the Mariánske Lázně informal ministerial meeting that a High Level Group reflecting on future Cohesion Policy would be established. Member States were informed in writing about the establishment of this group by letter of 11 June 2009.

2. MEMBERS AND TERM

2.1. The membership of the High Level Group (HLG) is as follows:

- One invited high level government expert (Director General or substitute) from the national ministries responsible for Cohesion policy from each Member State; and
- The European Commission (Commission), which assumes the presidency, gives technical support and provides the secretariat.

2.2. Invitations to meetings will be sent to each Member State expert via the Permanent Representation. Member States are requested where possible to avoid sending alternates so as to help ensure continuity of debate. Moreover, the number of invited participants is limited in order to help ensure real exchange of views and discussion. However, Member States may, at their own expense, send up to one further government expert in a supporting role.

2.3. The mandate of the HLG expires at the end of 2010. However, the Commission and Member States can decide to continue work after this date.

3. ACTIVITIES

3.1. The HLG is an informal advisory group established to support the work of the Commission in developing the main building blocks of post-2013 Cohesion policy.

3.2. As an advisory group, its views do not in any way bind the Commission or Member States. The HLG is not intended to replace other formal structures (Structural Actions Working Group, COCOF etc.).

3.3. The tasks of the HLG will be to discuss future policy directions, to ensure transparency between the Commission and Member States and to offer a possibility to contribute to the preparatory process and to exchange between colleagues with similar responsibilities.

4. STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONING

4.1. Meetings

- Meetings of the HLG will be convened by the Commission and will take place in Brussels four times a year i.e. twice under each Presidency. If necessary, the Commission can also convene further meetings.
- Participants are responsible for making their own travel and accommodation arrangements. If required, travel expenses can be reimbursed by the Commission according to the normal rules of meetings held by the Commission for reimbursement of experts from public administrations. Reimbursement of travel expenses will be limited to one expert per Member State.

- The meetings will be convened by the Commission at least 4 weeks in advance with an indicative agenda. A report of each meeting will be produced within the calendar month following the meeting. This report can be freely circulated.
- The working language of the HLG will be English.

4.2. Communication

- Communication between the members of the HLG and the Commission will be by electronic means wherever possible.
- The single Commission address for communications is:

European Commission

REGIO C1

CSM1 7/062

B-1049 Brussels

E-mail address: REGIO-C1-HIGH-LEVEL-GROUP@ec.europa.eu

- The Commission is responsible for distribution of information and documents relating to the work of the HLG. To this end, a circa website has been established: http://circa.europa.eu/Members/irc/regio/future_cohesion_policy/home
- The European Parliament, Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee will be kept informed about the work of the group through regular exchange of information.

4.3. Working methods

- The Commission will draw up a draft work programme for the HLG. This work programme and any revisions to it will be presented and discussed at a meeting of the HLG.
- In general, the format of the meeting will be that Member State experts are asked to give their views on issues or questions raised in a discussion document or documents presented by the Commission.
- It might also arise that some experts could propose or be invited by the HLG to make a specific intervention on a subject relevant to their experience which could assist the discussion.
- Furthermore, if needed, the Commission may invite an expert or experts to contribute to or support the discussions.