



## AT THE OFFICES OF EUROPE'S REGIONS AND CITIES

### PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

## THE PRACTICE AND REFORM OF REGIONAL POLICY

Over 70 regional/city representation offices based in Brussels will take part in the OPEN DAYS organised jointly by the Committee of the Regions (CoR) and the European Commission's Directorate General for Regional Policy (DG REGIO) from 27 to 30 September 2004.

As the year 2004 is a crucial one for the future of cohesion policy, the OPEN DAYS are intended to provide its key players, particularly at grassroots level, with a platform for dialogue, information and communication, and allow them to share their experience and their ideas on how the structural funds should be used.

The new architecture of the Structural Funds and instruments after 2006 will be the key topic of this event as well as workshops and training sessions on the topic of "Managing regional development".

The partner offices are expected to welcome CoR members, members of the European Parliament, Presidents of Regions, Mayors of Cities, representatives of local and regional authorities and civil society, officials from the EU institutions, Member States and their regions and cities, experts, academics and journalists.

The programme is mostly organised by the regional offices themselves, however there are some common points for all partners during this four-day event.

### Monday 27 September:

### Opening Session

#### **15:00 – 17:00 Opening Session of the OPEN DAYS**

(European Commission building)

An introductory debate will be held on the agenda and the concrete aspects of future regional policy.

#### Speakers:

- Commissioner for Regional Policy
- Dutch presidency representative
- Mr. Peter Straub, President of the Committee of the Regions
- European and national associations representatives
- European personalities

Expected Attendance: 400 people (Brussels regional offices, European national and regional associations, OPEN DAYS speakers, Structural Funds management authorities, civil servants from regional authorities, EU officials, Media...)

### Tuesday 28 September - Wednesday 29 September - Thursday 30 September:

### Offices Events

#### **Programme at the offices of regions and cities in Brussels**

From Tuesday morning to Thursday morning there will be a large number of conferences, workshops, seminars and exhibitions at the offices of Europe's Regions and Cities in the Brussels' European district.

Participants will have the opportunity:

- to attend discussions on expectations for future regional policy especially regarding the Structural Funds and interregional cooperation beyond 2006

- to examine existing Objective 1, Objective 2 and Objective 3 projects
- to see concrete examples of cross-border and interregional cooperation
- to discuss various aspects of the future of regional policy (Convergence objective, Competitiveness objective, Territorial cooperation objective)
- to attend presentations from the new EU regions and cities
- to watch video presentations directly from the EU regions and cities

### **Workshops and training sessions organised by DG REGIO: Managing regional development**

In partner offices involved in the OPEN DAYS there will be free workshops and training sessions on how to manage the Structural Funds organised by the European Commission's DG REGIO. These seminars will cover such topics as:

- Programme management and project selection
- Cohesion fund management
- Cooperation between regions
- Urban development
- Specific development issues (e.g. infrastructure, innovation, RTD, SME)
- Management of regional and local partnerships
- Programme monitoring and evaluation
- Financial management and control
- Strengthening administrative capacity
- Managing information and transparency

### **Parallel events in partner regions and cities "at home"**

A series of events will be held in partner regions and cities to coincide with OPEN DAYS.

Conferences, workshops and exhibitions will be open to everyone involved in the implementation of the Structural Funds including politicians, civil servants, management authorities, experts...

The exact format of these parallel events will vary from city to city.

## **Wednesday 29 September:**

## **Official Reception**

### **19:00 Official reception with Partner Regions and Cities**

(Brussels-Capital Region Official Venue)

An official reception hosted by Brussels - Capital Region for all partners involved in OPEN DAYS and their guests. Regions and cities will provide their local specialities.

## **Thursday 30 September:**

## **CoR Plenary Session**

### **11:30 – 13:00 Debate at the Plenary Session of the Committee of the Regions on "The Future of Regional Policy"**

(Charlemagne building of the European Commission, Brussels)

Debate with members of the CoR, Presidents of Regions, Mayors of Cities involved in OPEN DAYS

#### Speakers:

- Mr. Peter Straub, President of the Committee of the Regions
- Mr. Albert Bore, First Vice-President of the Committee of the Regions
- Commissioner for Regional Policy

Expected Attendance: 400 people (CoR members, regional office representatives, European regional associations, OPEN DAYS speakers, civil servants from new Member States and Media)

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