

Governing in Partnership

An EU Governance Model



A new way for the realisation of the Europe 2020 Strategy through the seven flagship initiatives

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Mayor of the City of Stuttgart

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European Council

European Parliament

European Commission

Council of
Europe

Education

Member States

Governing in Partnership

Culture

Regions

Science

Economy

Municipalities

Civil Society

Introduction

In June 2010, following the proposal of the European Commission, the European Council adopted the **Europe 2020 Strategy** for intelligent, sustainable and integrative growth with five key objectives:

- 75 % of the population aged between 20 and 64 should be in employment.
- 3 % of the GDP of the EU should be used for R&D.
- The 20-20-20 climate protection / energy targets should be achieved (including raising the emissions reduction targets to 30 %, provided the corresponding conditions are met).
- The proportion of school dropouts should be lowered to less than 10 %, and at least 40 % of the younger generation should have a higher education degree.
- The number of people at risk of poverty should be reduced by 20 million.

To achieve these objectives a multitude of measures are required at all political levels. Here the Commission has proposed **seven flagship initiatives**:

- **“Innovation Union”** to improve the framework conditions and provide better access to financial resources for research and innovation and, in this way, ensure that innovative ideas can be realised in growth- and employment-generating products and services.
- **“Youth on the Move”** to make our education systems more efficient and make it easier for young people to gain access to the labour market.
- **“A Digital Agenda for Europe”** to accelerate the roll-out of high-speed Internet access services and reap the benefits of a digital single European market for budgets and enterprises.



In January 2011 Commission President José Manuel Barroso visited the Mayor of Stuttgart.

Photo: Hass

- **“Resource-efficient Europe”** to decouple economic growth from the use of resources, support the transition to a low-emission economy, promote the use of renewable energy sources and energy efficiency and modernise our transport systems.
- **“An Integrated Industrial Policy for the Globalisation Era”** to improve the general conditions for business enterprises, in particular for SMEs and promote an internationally competitive, strong and viable industrial structure.
- **“An Agenda for new skills and jobs”** to modernise the labour markets, provide people with new opportunities through life-long learning and acquisition of qualifications, and thus increase the labour force participation rate and better coordinate the supply and demand on the labour market, for instance through labour mobility.
- **“European platform against poverty and social exclusion”** to ensure social and territorial cohesion, so that every one of us can benefit from growth and employment, and people suffering from poverty and social exclusion can live their lives in dignity and play an active part in the community.

The tasks resulting from the objectives described here are, at the same time, local, regional and national tasks. They can therefore only be realised if, together with partners from industry, science and society, many of the leaders at a local, regional, national and European levels join forces and tackle these challenges together. Governance is now more complex as it involves a large range of stakeholders. Scientists have described this phenomenon for some time ¹ as multi-level governance. However, up until now, the multi-level governance consists of delegating responsibilities and implementation of policies

to different levels of governance rather than designing the policies in cooperation. In Europe, the interpretation of the Lisbon Treaty gives us new perspectives, and the Europe 2020 Strategy can offer a practical and first example of a true cooperation set up between political decision-makers at European, national, regional and local levels. ² The current form of working together by a structured dialogue will be certainly not sufficient for the necessarily reliable cooperation.

Following my proposal, it has been agreed upon in June 2010 by the Commission President José Manuel Barroso, the president of the Committee of the Regions and the presidents of seven European representative associations ³ of specific spheres of governance, that the seven flagship initiatives shall be realised by forming joint horizontal and vertical networks of the various political levels.

During Commission President Barroso’s visit to Stuttgart in January 2011, I substantiated my proposal for the model **“Governing in Partnership”**. In a first step the City of Stuttgart will develop the pilot project “European Pact for Integration”. As President of CEMR, I will ask cities and regions to play an active part in establishing more networks to realise the flagship initiatives, with the support of CEMR and national associations of local and regional authorities as members of CEMR.

I firmly believe that Europe can only assert itself in the growing competitive global market if the development of Europe will also become the business of our citizens. However, we can only take them on our shared journey into a European future if we let them become involved. The proposed model “Governing in Partnership” offers many chances for our citizens to play an active part in facing the challenges in Europe: in the municipalities, the cities, the regions, the member states and the EU.

¹ The authors Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks were the first to develop the concept of multi-level governance in the early 1990s

² See the Reflection Group report “Project Europe 2030” to the European Council

³ European Association of Elected Representatives from Mountain Regions (AEM), Conference of European Regions with Legislative Power (REGLEG), Association of European Border Regions (AEBR), Conference of European Regional Legislative Assemblies (CALRE), Assembly of European Regions (AER), Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR), EUROCITIES

I. The EU Governance Model: Governing in Partnership

The crisis as a chance for Europe

The economic and financial crisis is a very demanding challenge for all of us, the cities, regions, national states and EU institutions. Like a wake-up call this crisis forces us to reflect on our perspectives in Europe.

In the 21st century the rise of Asia, specifically China and India, the emerging competitive global market, the increasing energy challenge, the demographic problems, the high rate of youth unemployment, the huge public debts, the instability of the financial markets give Europeans a feeling of insecurity and a lack of confidence in our future. This leads us to reflect about further modes of development to sustain the level of social and economic comfort we enjoy in Europe.

There are no simple answers. In the era of globalisation the traditional national states in Europe are less and less capable to fulfil their tasks in a stand alone position. The financial and economic crisis has clearly proven to everyone, that we need stronger financial and economic governance in Europe. The most important problems we are facing at the local, regional and national levels are at the same time European problems. Therefore we can overcome the problems if all of us – the politicians, citizens, employers and employees are willing to pull together and build on the EU strengths.

Following the Treaty of Lisbon, this crisis is a chance to find new ways of policy making together with the European institutions: from the global to the local setting in the major policy fields, e.g. economic and social development, job creation and youth employment, education and training, science and research, demographic change and gender policy, migration and integration, environmental protection and climate change, energy efficiency and energy supply, stability of law and security, foreign

policy and development cooperation. All these complex tasks require the development of comprehensive solutions. In order to implement the Europe 2020 Strategy and to realise action plans for the seven flagship initiatives in Europe, all political levels of decision-making as well as the private sector have to be involved. Nonetheless, their participation should neither be characterized by centralistic rules nor by the ongoing debate about the division of competences but by sharing tasks to tackle the pressing challenges and achieve common goals. In that regard we need a specific model of governance in the EU, a governing system conducted along the lines of a partnership: Governing in Partnership.

Governing in Partnership is the major way

- 1.** to promote the essential goals and measures in Europe by a multi-level governance model at the European, national, regional and local levels. This includes coordinated and binding competences for each level as well as reliable and jointly decided rules, regulations, contracts and self commitments;
- 2.** to combine the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality through power sharing, partnership and participation at all political levels. This should be based on voluntary decisions without changing the legal competences between the different political levels;
- 3.** to develop flexible as well as binding horizontal and vertical networks, these networks have as an objective the involvement of citizens, business enterprises, NGOs and other partners and the formation of common tasks and measures of importance to all Europeans. By this their identification with the European Union will be strengthened.

The transformation of national states

1.

The concept of nation states in Europe, which mainly emerged in the 19th century, is based on the **idea of one nation of people in one state with sovereignty rights**.

In the 19th century, the sovereignty rights include homeland and national security, foreign policy, tax privileges, finances and currency, justice. The sovereignty can also be exercised in other policies depending on the nation: social security, food and water supplying, environmental protection, energy, labour policies etc. This list is becoming more and more irrelevant for the 21st century, because it is becoming more and more difficult for the individual nation states in Europe to tackle these tasks alone – which is not limited only to smaller states.

The traditional nation state has become challenged by population change. The notion of “one nation – one state” is no longer a reality due to an increasing internationalisation of the population. The deliberate promotion of citizen’s mobility, the freedom of professional establishment, the right of residence, the information and cultural exchange, the economic and the scientific cooperation etc. and the communal voting rights in Europe lead to an increasing Europeanization and Internationalisation of the respective state.

In consequence we experience a transformation of the traditional nation state concept at two levels: one that favours the inter-national aspects and another one that favours a supra-national cooperation within the European Union. This cooperation makes it possible and easier for the member states to grow together – regardless of their size, population, economic strength, etc. – and still preserving their national cultures, languages as well as regional and local characteristics.

2.

The voluntary and necessary transfer of certain competencies and sovereignty rights to the European institutions does not lead automatically to a “Confederation” or to a “Federal State” in terms of a traditional state law. The union of states and its sub-national levels that are bound by contract, do not constitute a new supra-national state. Hence, the European Union is not comparable with the United States of America – neither from the historical development nor from the current and future concept of the Union.

3.

The EU Governance Model is based both on a contracted, evolving and federally structured multi-level governance system in the EU and in the long-term, on the contractual devolution of national sovereignty rights to the European institutions. The legal framework of this common consent is the “*aquis communautaire*”.

As the world is becoming more and more interdependent and competitive, the national states in Europe are facing new challenges and increasing dependencies. The economic and financial crisis has clearly proved to everyone that we need stronger financial and economic governance in Europe. This crisis is a chance to find new ways of cooperation and definition of new policies within the European Union to develop a specific model of governance in the EU: Governing in Partnership.

The principles of the European Governance Model: Power-sharing, partnership, participation

1. Power-sharing

The Treaty of Lisbon promotes the task-related cooperation in the various statutory schemes in Europe. It really calls for such cooperation to achieve the essential goals of the EU. The proposed European Governance Model therefore envisages a binding power-sharing of tasks which are important for shaping Europe's future and in line with the respective competences of the individual member states, regions and cities: economic and social development, education, science and research, the demographic development, migration and integration, environment and climate protection, stability of law, homeland and national security and foreign policy.

Since all the fundamental challenges for the sustainable development of Europe cannot be accomplished by any political level alone, the EU, the member states, their regions and municipalities have to work together as partners to accomplish these tasks. In order to avoid centralism amongst the EU Institutions we have to adhere to the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality which are fundamental.

According to the Lisbon Treaty the European level can therefore only operate to the extent that the respective targets and measures of the member states cannot be accomplished at a national, regional or local level. At the same time the Union has to show that these targets and measures can be better realised within the Union. As far as EU matters are concerned, the Union measures must be proportional, e.g. all strains – also financial strains – should be kept as low as possible and in a reasonable relation to the target envisaged.

The consequence of this governance system is that for the sustainability of Europe all essential tasks can only be achieved by sharing competences through a coordinated cooperation between various political levels.

2. Partnership

Apart from few exclusive Union jurisdictions (customs union, competition policies, fisheries and trade policies, monetary policies) the EU Governance Model is not a hierarchical model of top-down regulations, but a partnership model. Each level, be it the European, national, regional or local, contributes with its competences and in its own statutory and political responsibility to the fulfilment of both the goals and the realisation of the measures at the local and European Union level.

An essential instrument to achieve these objectives in a transparent, efficient and responsible way are organised, contractually binding horizontal as well as vertical networks. This cooperation aligned in networks and based on partnership also includes regions, cities, communities as well as civic initiatives, private companies, research institutes etc.

The decision to follow this new model of governance has to be taken by a democratically elected body, e.g. the city council, the regional or state parliament. They hold the democratic control by governing their tasks in their own legal sphere of competences in the framework of a multi-level network. This sharing of tasks, burdens and responsibilities opens chances for more efficiency, better comparison and stronger participation beyond their own jurisdictions.

3. Participation

The rules of governance have changed through a changing political culture e.g. with new forms of participatory models such as facebook or social media. The role of the local and regional governments is becoming more and more a driver for the public and private sector by promoting different forms of citizens' participation. Representative democracy, our form of government at European, national, regional and local levels, in particular thrives from the civic engagement of the citizens.

These citizens expect to play an active role in shaping their societies and their basic political rights at all political levels.

The EU Governance Model opens up many opportunities for participation on a formal and informal basis.

According to the Lisbon Treaty the European citizens' initiative enables at least one million citizens from at least one third of EU member states to call upon the European Commission and bring forward a new policy proposal. The right to be heard and dialogue forums offer regions, cities, experts, lobby groups, NGO's etc. a multitude of possibilities of becoming involved in the decision-making process within Europe. This applies for processes vis-à-vis the EU Commission, the European Parliament and the national parliaments.

Civic engagement is strongest in the municipalities. This is the place in which citizens involve in fields that are impor-

tant for the future of the European Union: e.g. education, integration, environmental protection, job creation, social cohesion, and demographic issues. Therefore, they are contributing to the major European tasks. This considerable "social capital" should be appreciated as an accomplishment for Europe on behalf of the citizens.

This voluntary work on the spot, networking with other cities, NGO's and non-profit organisations in various European countries should be recognised as integration work for Europe. After all, the attitude of the European citizens towards the European Union is often defined by regulations, bureaucracy and subsidies and not by the positive impacts of the EU in our daily life.

At the same time, the multitude of participatory processes offers a new opportunity for citizens to identify more strongly with a peaceful, democratic Europe characterised by individual freedom, social responsibility and active solidarity.



At the 2009 European citizens' summit, citizens from all 27 EU member states discussed the national recommendations.

Photo: Toussaint/lifok

A proposal for the organisation of the European Governance Model

1. General targets

In order to achieve the innovations partnerships in the different fields, common general goals are needed:

- Providing better information and understanding of the situation in the different European states, regions and cities.
- Knowledge transfer and exchange of best practises as a continuing learning process.
- Elaboration of concrete recommendations for better coordination and higher efficiency by new strategies and action plans, based on regulations, binding networks and self commitments.
- Better public awareness and visibility by involving many partners of the public and private sector.
- Monitoring of the results as part of a common learning process.

2. Network organisation

The seven flagship initiatives will only succeed if all political levels and many other partners in the fields of education, science and research institutions, the private and non-profit sector are involved. Therefore different horizontal and vertical networks have to be created. These binding networks are the pillar of the proposed innovation partnerships.

Members:

Local level

- Interested municipalities and associations of cities and towns.

Regional level

- Members of the Assembly of Regions and other regions.

National level

- Members of federal governments and national agencies.

European level

- Representatives of the European institutions: the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Council, the Committee of the Regions, the Council of Europe and the Council of European Municipalities and Regions.

Sciences and education

- Universities, research and educational institutions.

Civil society

- Representatives of NGOs, European entrepreneurs' associations and labour unions, foundations.

Each network requires an organisational structure with at least **two management levels**:

- The **Steering Committee** is responsible for the whole organisation and assigned to the objectives and tasks.

Members are representatives of national governments or the European Council, representatives of local and regional associations, experts, and the chairs of the working groups.

In general the Steering Committee is led by a commissioner who coordinates the respective subject area in the Commission.

- **Working groups** will be established for the different subjects and fields of action.

Members are representatives of European institutions, national governments, regions and cities as well as representatives of associations, and experts of respective subject areas. The chair of each working group will be nominated by the Steering Committee.

3. Implementation

Pilot projects:

The outcomes of the network shall be used by the participating partners as pilot projects in order to convey policy strategies and implementation concepts which then will be realised by regulations, contractual agreements and self commitments.

Monitoring:

After two years a first report on the implementation of the measures will be compiled and if needed strategies and implementation concepts will be adjusted.

Benefits:

The benefits of the participating partners in this process will be threefold: An opportunity to shape a key subject area in Europe, transfer of know-how for the own work and a better access to EU institutions, and if applicable, to EU-funds.

This will facilitate the implementation of measures for each partner and increase the acceptance of measures which maybe will not find popular acclaim for all.



II. The European Governance Model in practice

The implementation of the Multi-level Network Governance is promoted within the scope of various EU programmes. This involves all the specialised networks within Europe, but also the development cooperation. The diversity of the tasks is as extensive as the diversity of networks. **The following examples illustrate the potential for the future Governing in Partnership:**

1.

Baltic Sea Strategy:

cooperation of regions and cities to improve territorial cohesion

Aims: To identify and address the most important challenges of the region: environmental problems, economic factors, social and territorial cohesion, competitiveness, safety and security.

Members: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland as well as cities and regions and their representative associations.

2.

Alpine Space Programme

(INTERREG III B – trans-national cooperation)

Aims: to find solutions for sustainable transportation, to protect the natural and cultural heritage.

Members: Austria, France, Germany, Italy, and Slovenia (with participation of Liechtenstein and Switzerland) as well as regions and cities and their representative associations (e.g. the Euromontana).

3.

Danube Strategy:

based on traditional cohesion of cities and regions along the Danube by common cultural and economic activities

Aims: social development, sustainable economic development, transport and energy infrastructure, environmental protection, culture and education.

Members: 8 EU Member States (Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Slovak Republic, and Slovenia) and 6 Non-EU countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, and Ukraine) as well as the bordering cities and regions and their representative associations.

4.

Network for Local Integration Policies for Migrants (CLIP)

Aims: to improve integration policies through a comprehensive approach in our cities that combines the policies of the different political levels.

Members: 35 cities in 22 countries, six universities, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Working and Living Conditions (Eurofound), the European Commission, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (CLRAE), the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), the Committee of the Regions (CoR), the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) and other partners.

5. Development cooperation:

via **PLATFORMA, the platform of representative associations of local and regional authorities, cities and regions involved in cooperation development and the Assembly of Regional and Local Authorities of Europe-Mediterranean (ARLEM)**

Aims: PLATFORMA is the partner of the European Commission in the field of development cooperation or “Decentralised Cooperation”; ARLEM is an important instrument for the development of the Union for the Mediterranean in the fields of energy, security, counter-terrorism, immigration, and trade.

Members: PLATFORMA unites all relevant associations plus direct cities and regions involved in development cooperation, the CEMR coordinates and hosts the secretariat. It includes the ARE, the CPMR, UCLG etc. The ARLEM comprises the Committee of the Regions, the CEMR and other representatives of European and international associations engaged in Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, regional and local authorities from the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean.



Stuttgart is continuing its successful integration policy and wants to exchange best practices with other cities.

Photo: Hass

The seven flagship initiatives of the Europe 2020 Strategy as common fields for Governing in Partnership

Proposals for Innovation Partnerships of the seven flagship initiatives:

1. European platform against poverty and social exclusion:

A European framework for social and territorial cohesion

Using this European platform a partnership against poverty and social exclusion, several networks could be developed:

- a. The **education and training partnership** could be a network based on a “Charta for Education and Training” starting with pre-primary education, including informal education, vocational qualification by involving civil society, business enterprises, local, regional and national job agencies, NGOs etc.
- b. The **European Pact for Integration** could be based on the experiences of the European CLIP Network (Cities for Local Integration Policies for Migrants) to develop comprehensive strategies and action plans (like the national integration plan of the German Government) for a European migration and integration policy.



The European Pact for Integration

2. An Integrated Industrial Policy for the Globalisation Era:

Putting competitiveness and sustainability at centre stage

Facing the increasing challenges of climate change and of fossil energy, several networks should be promoted:

- a. The network of the covenant of mayors for climate change with more than 2000 members is linked with regional, national and European policies and projects to elaborate and implement a common European strategy on energy and climate: **The European Pact on Climate Change**.
- b. A **European partnership for sustainable mobility** could be based for example on the cluster for sustainable mobility in the metropolitan area of Stuttgart and linked with the global network “Cities for Mobility”, which currently includes vocational training, science, research, companies, cities and regions.



- c. A **European sustainable construction network**, combining public housing, public buildings, private buildings, construction firms, associations of chambers handicraft industries, vocational training, science and research could help to reinforce the energy performance requirements and could experience new forms of construction and new standards for buildings.

3. A Digital Agenda for Europe

- a. A **network for developing digital literacy and a competence agenda** with projects starting in primary schools up to life long learning processes for elderly people could become a partner for the Charta for Education and Training (as proposed in No. 1.a.).
- b. **New partnerships between the ICT sector and construction as well as the mobility sector** could be established and linked to the proposed networks for sustainable mobility and the sustainable construction (as proposed in No. 2.b. and 2.c.)

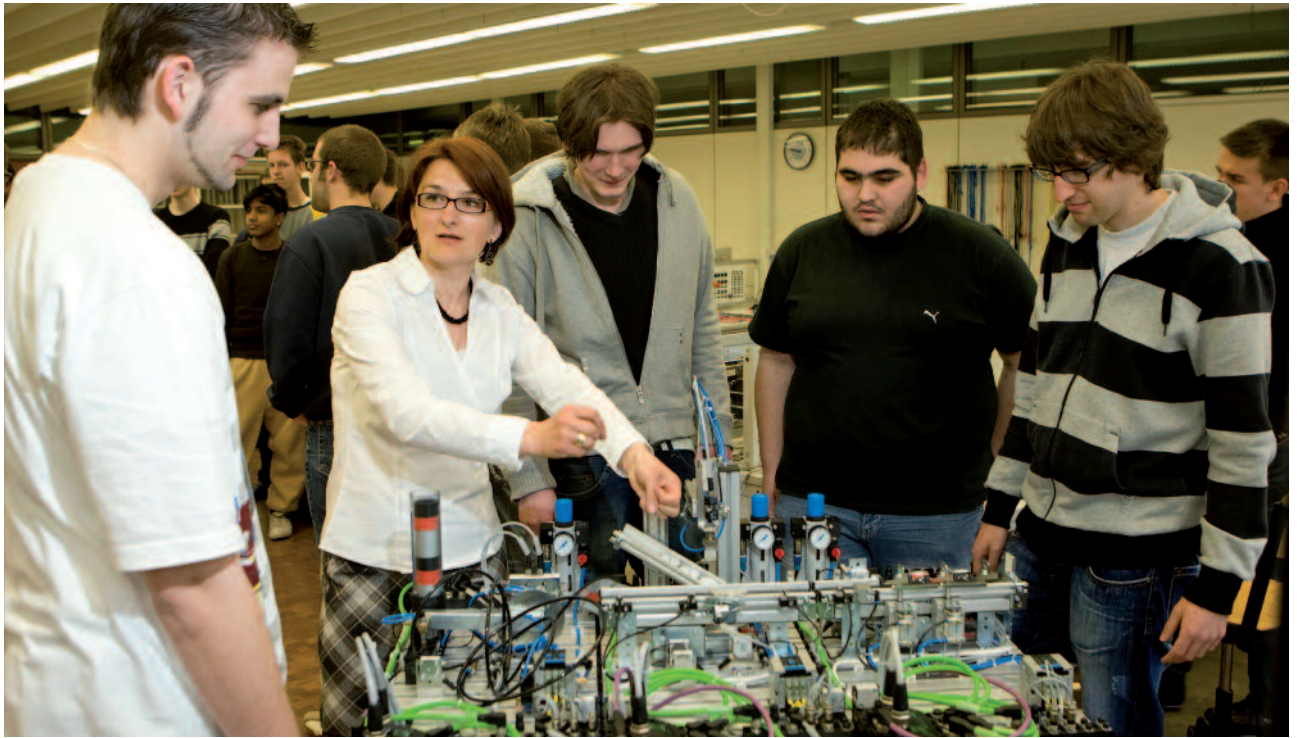
4. Youth on the Move:

An initiative to promote the potential of young people to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in the European Union

- a. A **network for youth employment** involving education and social welfare institutions, job agencies and business, the local, regional, national and European level could fight youth unemployment.

This network could identify the most effective support measures, establish a monitoring on youth unemployment and develop a new system of “Guarantee for Young People” providing them training or a job opportunity.

- b. A **network for improving employability** and reducing school drop-outs could be developed (as proposed in No. 5.a.).



Vocational training and education programmes for professional success.

Photo: Hass

5. An Agenda for new skills and jobs:

A European contribution towards full employment

a. The **action plan on education** for employability and for reducing early school leaving could be linked to the proposed network “Education and Training” (as proposed in No. 1.a.) and the network for youth employment (No. 4.a.).

b. The **new agenda for integration** could become part of the European Pact for Integration (as proposed in No. 1.b.).

6. Resource-efficient Europe

a. This task could be linked to the proposed three networks:

- the **European Pact on Climate Change**,
- the **European partnership for sustainable mobility**,
- the **European sustainable construction network**

b. European agenda for resource conscious living

The EU-Commission has adopted selective measures e.g. energy saving bulbs, water saving shower heads, CO₂-regulations for vehicles etc. In order to engage the citizens in environmental conscious behaviour a comprehensive European agenda is needed. This agenda should contain e.g. recommendations for environmental education at the kindergarten and schools, programs for companies, for energy conscious housing, environmental mobility etc. The knowledge about the own CO₂-footprint and environmental consciousness could be better improved through information and campaigns e.g. school competitions. For this, the members and partners of the three networks listed under point 6a could be joined by media partners e.g. the European Newspaper Publishers’ Association.

7. Innovation Union

- a. In the proposed pilot project **European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing**, only a comprehensive strategy involving all political levels, the private sector, the civil society, science and research will be successful. Existing networks like “Healthy Cities” could become partners in this pilot approach.
- b. The proposed networks of the other six flagship initiatives could be developed as pilot innovation partnerships, too.
- c. As good governance is one of the keys for the innovation union, a new **European Academy for Local and Regional Governance** could promote the knowledge transfer and the training of senior administrative staff, councillors and mayors. This qualification and empowerment is particularly needed in the new member states of the EU and in the European partnership countries in Eastern Europe. A stable local democracy and strong local and regional governments facilitate the participation of cities and regions in the EU 2020 Strategy.



Active and healthy ageing.

Photo: istock

Conclusion

The economic and financial crisis is a very demanding challenge for all of us, the cities, regions, national states and EU institutions. Like a wake-up call this crisis forces us to reflect on our perspectives in Europe.

Since the Second World War the citizens of Western Europe have experienced a positive development which has never before been lived in our history. We had the wonderful chance to live in peace, freedom, democracy, stability of law and enjoyed prosperity and social benefits. Fortunately the fall of the Iron Curtain opened the chance for the unification of Europe.

In the 21st century the rise of Asia, specifically China and India, the emerging competitive global market, the increasing energy challenge, the demographic problems, the high rate of youth unemployment, the huge public debts, the instability of the financial markets give us a feeling of insecurity and a lack of confidence in our future.



There are no simple answers. The most important problems we are facing at the local, regional and national levels are at the same time European problems. Therefore we can overcome the problems if all of us – the politicians, citizens, employers and employees are willing to pull together and build on the EU strengths. The report to the European Council by the Reflection Group on the Future of the EU 2030 (<http://www.reflection-group.eu/2010/06/16/project-europe-2030-translations/>) shows solutions and ways how to make the Project Europe 2030 a success. The Treaty of Lisbon and the Europe 2020 Strategy open the way to the EU Governance Model "Governing in Partnership". The doors are open to realise the seven flagship initiatives together. Let's join our forces to transform this crisis into a chance for a better common future in Europe!

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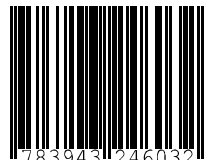
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