



**COUNCIL OF EUROPEAN MUNICIPALITIES AND REGIONS  
CONSEIL DES COMMUNES ET REGIONS D'EUROPE**

# **THE FUTURE OF RURAL COMMUNITIES IN EUROPE**

## **CEMR Conference**

**9<sup>th</sup> November 2006  
9.30 – 17.30**

**Venue:  
Mission of Norway to the EU  
rue Archimède, 17  
1000 Brussels**

## **Purpose of the conference:**

As the preparations of the new structural funds and rural development operational programmes (2007-2013) are going ahead in full steam, the EU institutions are already taking first steps in preparing the groundwork for the reassessment of the Union's future budget framework for after 2013. In December 2005, the European Council had agreed that a comprehensive reassessment of the Union's financial framework would have to be undertaken. In the coming months, the European Commission will prepare for this reassessment, which will culminate in a formal report to the heads of government in 2008/2009. This will also include a review of the future of EU rural development policy within the framework of the Common Agricultural Policy and of the regional policy.

A key step will be the presentation of the 4<sup>th</sup> Cohesion report by the European Commission in May 2007 as well as the adoption of the 'EU Territorial Agenda' under the German Presidency at the Leipzig Ministerial Meeting in May 2007<sup>1</sup>. For local and regional government, and the CEMR as their European umbrella organisation, it will be important to participate in the debate and to formulate a comprehensive policy position. In this context, CEMR is organising this conference to discuss the contribution that rural communities can make to the development of a competitive and cohesive Europe.

The conference will provide a platform to draw attention to the challenges and future trends for rural communities in Europe. Academic experts, politicians, practitioners and EU officials will explore the ever-widening diversity of rural communities and illustrate the key transformations local authorities have to react to in order to be successful in the future. The conference aims to contribute to a positive appreciation of the important role of rural communities for the future of the EU, looking at the opportunities and critical success factors for building competitive rural communities.

## **Who should attend?**

The conference aims to address representatives from local and regional government; politicians as well as experts/ officers who deal with rural development policies at regional and local level. Experts from European and national institutions or organisations are also welcome.

Brussels, October 2006

Jeremy Smith  
Secretary General  
CEMR

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<sup>1</sup>The EU Territorial Agenda is prepared through informal intergovernmental cooperation and seeks to align the Lisbon objectives of growth and competitiveness more closely to the EU's spatial development perspective. It will describe the current state of affairs, set policy priorities and key future actions for a polycentric, balanced development of the EU territory. Six priorities are agreed: agglomerations, urban networks and metropolitan regions in a polycentric pattern of development; strong urban-rural partnerships and a sufficient level of services of general interest for balanced territorial development; transnational clusters of competitive and innovative activities; trans-European ICT, transport and energy networks; promote trans-European risk management; strengthen trans-European ecological structures and cultural resources.

## Programme

# The future of rural communities in Europe

- 9h00 – 9h30**      **Registration**
- 9h30 – 11h00**      **Setting the scene: What are the challenges facing rural areas in Europe today? What are the future trends that we need to respond to?**
- Chair: Jeremy Smith*, Secretary General, CEMR
- **Louis Le Pensec**, President French section of CEMR (AFCCRE) Co-Chair CEMR Cohesion Policy Forum (FR)
  - **Mario Pezzini**, Head of Territorial Reviews and Governance Division, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD
  - **Czeslaw Siekierski**, Member of the European Parliament (PL), tbc
  - **Antonis Constantinou**, Director Rural Development Programmes, European Commission, Directorate General Agriculture and Rural Development, tbc
- 11h00 – 11h30**      **Coffee Break**
- 11h30 – 13h00**      **Visions for competitive rural communities of the future: what are the opportunities and the critical success factors?**
- Chair: Roland Schäfer*, Mayor of Bergkamen, President of German Association of Towns and Municipalities, DStGB (DE)
- **Neil Ward**, Director of Centre for Rural Economy, University of Newcastle upon Tyne (UK)
  - **Michele Pasca-Raymondo**, Deputy Director General, European Commission Directorate General Regional policy
  - **Janne Antikainen**, Finnish Ministry of the Interior on behalf of the Finnish Presidency (FI)
  - **Roger Kaliff**, Mayor of Kalmar, President Commission for External Relations, Committee of the Regions (SE)
- 13h00 – 14h00**      **Lunch Break**

14h00 – 15h30

## Parallel Workshops: Good practice in building successful rural communities across Europe

### **Workshop 1: Successful practice in diversifying rural economies and creating new employment opportunities**

**Chair: Richard Parry Hughes**, Leader of Gwynedd County Council, WLGA spokesperson on environment and planning (UK)

- **Friedrich Scheerer**, Mayor of Mönchweiler, Head of Clearing Office 'New Media in Rural Areas', Baden-Württemberg (DE)
- **Bernd Vögerle**, Vice-President Austrian Association of Municipalities: employment in rural areas (AT)
- **Maria Habicht**, Project Coordinator, Archimedes Foundation, Energy4Cohesion project (EE), tbc
- **Jiri Bytel**, Mayor of Velká Hledebe (CZ)

### **Workshop 2: New ways of delivering public services in rural communities**

**Chair: Olivier Bertrand**, Mayor of Saint Sylvain Bellegarde, General Secretary of the French section of CEMR, AFCCRE (FR)

- **Claire Greener**, Rural Policy Advisor, Shropshire County Council – UK Beacon 'Improving Rural Services: Empowering Communities' (UK)
- **Emile Eicher**, Chairman of LEADER+ Group, Clerf-Vianden (LUX)
- **May-Britt Nordli**, Director of the Department of Democracy and Regional Development, Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (NOR)
- **Martin Vogler**, Regionalverband Südlicher Oberrhein, EU project PUSEMOR: new needs and innovative strategies for service delivery in sparsely populated mountain regions (DE)

15h30 – 16h00

## Coffee Break

16h00 – 17h30

## The European Policy Framework of the future – what support structures do we need to assist rural areas?

**Chair: Andrew Bowles**, Member of Kent County Council, Chair of Rural Comm the Local Government Association

- **Jean-Pierre Vercruysse**, Coordinator European Citizen Panels on "What roles for rural areas in tomorrow's Europe?", European Association for Information on Local Development (AEIDL)
- **Thiemo W. Eser**, Luxembourg Ministry of Interior and Spatial Development, Responsible for European affairs: "Towards an EU Territorial Agenda: addressing rural areas"
- **Jose Manuel Sousa Uva**, Director Rural Development Programmes, European Commission, Directorate General Agriculture and Rural Development
- **Martin Malvy**, President of the Regional Council of the Midi Pyrenees, President of the Association des Petites Villes de France (tbc)

## Technical information

Fee: No participation fee

Languages: English, German and French

Location: Brussels, Mission of Norway to the EU, rue Archimède 17  
<http://www.eu-norway.org/visit/directions/directions.htm>  
*Please note that there is an Express Bus line (N°12) connecting in 30 minutes the airport and the Rond-Point Schuman (next to the venue) every twenty minutes during the week (Bus line N°11 during the week-end). A one-way ticket costs € 3.00. <http://www.stib.irisnet.be/FR/40000Fre/B/40012F.htm>*

Hotels: We have preferential rates in the two hotels below, which are very close to the Mission of Norway to the EU:

*Hotel Chelton \*\*\*\**

rue Véronèse 48, 1000 Brussels (tel: +32/2/735.20.32, fax: +32/2/735.07.66 ; [info@chelton.be](mailto:info@chelton.be) ; [www.chelton.be](http://www.chelton.be))  
CEMR preferential rate: single € 128, double € 148 (breakfast included)

*Hotel Holiday Inn \*\*\*\**

rue Breydel 20, 1040 Brussels (tel: +32/2/280.40.00, fax: +32/2/282.10.70; [hotel@holiday-inn-brussels-schuman.com](mailto:hotel@holiday-inn-brussels-schuman.com); [www.ichotelsgroup.com/h/d/sl/1/en/hd/brubr](http://www.ichotelsgroup.com/h/d/sl/1/en/hd/brubr))  
CEMR preferential rate: single/double € 118 (breakfast at € 20 per person not included)

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