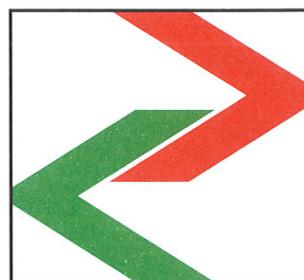


Arbeitsgemeinschaft Europäischer Grenzregionen (AGEG)
Asociación de Regiones Fronterizas Europeas (ARFE)
Association des régions frontalières européennes (ARFE)
Association of European Border Regions (AEBR)
Comunità di lavoro delle regioni europee di confine (AGEG)
Europæiske grænseregioners Arbejdsfællesskab (AGEG)
Werkgemeenschap van Europese grensgebieden (WVEG)
Associação das Regiões Fronteiriças Europeias (ARFE)
Σύνδεσμος Ευρωπαϊκών Συνοριακών Περιφερειών (ΣΕΣΠ)
Stowarzyszenie Europejskich Regionów Granicznych (SERG)
Ассоциация Европейских приграничных регионов (АЕПР)

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AEBR Newsflash – December 2009

UN Copenhagen Climate Change Summit, 7 – 18 December 2009

Contribution by the AEBR and its members

Together with its members, the AEBR is preparing a special contribution in form of a video message for the Climate Change Summit, taking place in Copenhagen/DK from 7 to 18 December 2009.

Some members have already sent their messages. All those regions not yet having submitted their videos are invited to do so as soon as possible.

If you wish to see the videos that have already been submitted, please go to www.youtube.com and enter "AEBR1971" in the search function. Maybe this will inspire you for your own video.

More info, including the AEBR discussion paper on climate change: http://www.aebr.net/news/news_aebr.php?lc=en&nid=237#237

Lisbon Treaty entered into force

On the 1st December 2009, the Lisbon Treaty entered into force. This too long process has finally come to an end. Now, a new period begins for the European Union, which will be hopefully more concentrated on the citizens of Europe.

Further information on what changes this treaty brings for the EU can be found on:

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showFocus.aspx?id=1&focusId=422&lang=en>

http://ec.europa.eu/news/eu_explained/091201_en.htm

A set of explanations on why this Lisbon Treaty is needed is also available on

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/09/531&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

The new citizens' initiative of the EU

With the Lisbon strategy entering into force, Europeans have a new way of getting the commission to act on issues that concern them. But some questions still remain open.

In order to take into account the citizens' point of view, a public consultation has been launched to get some more input.

Read the [commission's recent paper](#) on the initiative and consult http://ec.europa.eu/news/eu_explained/091111_en.htm for more information.

EU 2020 strategy: public consultation

A formal proposal for the EU 2020 strategy is to be presented by the European Commission early next year. In this regard, a public consultation has been launched to get to know the public views on some suggested broad policy considerations for the EU2020 strategy. These considerations are described in the consultation document, available for download on:

http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/consultations/index_en.htm

Contributions can be sent until 15 January 2010.

CoR consultation on its 'White Paper on Multilevel governance'

The deadline for submitting contributions has been extended until 31 December 2009. Authorities, associations and other stakeholders are invited to hand in their ideas on how to promote multilevel governance in Europe.

Detailed information is available on:

<http://www.cor.europa.eu/pages/EventTemplate.aspx?view=folder&id=53788fb1-937b-44ce-bd39-b20f3313bc83&sm=53788fb1-937b-44ce-bd39-b20f3313bc83>

Posts of EU's first permanent president and high representative for foreign affairs and security policy filled

Belgian prime minister **Herman Van Rompuy** was appointed the EU's first permanent president. EU trade commissioner **Catherine Ashton** from the UK will be the EU's high representative for foreign affairs and security policy. This post merges two existing portfolios: high-representative for common foreign and security policy and commissioner for external relations.

For more detailed information, please consult http://ec.europa.eu/news/eu_explained/091120_en.htm

Commissioners designate for the 2009-2014 Commission

All Member States have in the meantime nominated Commissioners designate. In January, the hearings will take place at the European Parliament. After that, the new Commissioners will be subject to a vote of approval by the European Parliament.

Photos as well as further information can be found on the following pages:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/09/522&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_designate_2009-2014/index_en.htm

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/story_page/008-65474-327-11-48-901-20091127STO65453-2009-23-11-2009/default_en.htm

Orientation Paper on the future of Cohesion policy presented in the second meeting of the High Level Group Reflecting on the Future of Cohesion policy

In the meeting on 3 December 2009, Commissioner Paweł Samecki presented his vision on the future evolution of cohesion policy, addressing three key questions: Which goals should cohesion policy pursue in the context of the challenges of the 21st century? How can cohesion policy be focused on impact, performance and results? How can the delivery system become more efficient and simpler?

The full text of the speech of Commissioner Paweł Samecki is available on:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/09/571&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Danuta Hübner: "No region must be excluded from regional policy".

Danuta Hübner, chairwoman of the Committee on Regional Development, gave an interview about her former commission policy area of regional affairs. The 4 minutes video is available on

<http://europartv.europa.eu/yourparliament.aspx?action=viewVideo&packageId=ec249b03-f3dd-4975-b36f-708305e91bec>

Enlargement Strategy and Progress Reports 2009

The Commission's annual strategy document, including a summary on progress made by the candidate and potential candidate countries, was adopted on 14 October 2009. In addition, the info package contains a multi-annual financial framework setting out the financial assistance available for the candidate and potential candidate reform efforts.

Detailed information is available on http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/press_corner/key-documents/reports_oct_2009_de.htm

European Report on Development

The first report of this kind was launched during the European Development Days in Stockholm (22-24 October 2009) with the objective to enhance a European Perspective of some of the most pressing development challenges and improve the visibility of the EU at global level. The ERD is a multiannual process, framed within the "[Mobilizing European Research for Development Policy](#)" initiative. The ERD 2009 report "**Overcoming Fragility in Africa – Forging a New European Approach**" is available for download on:

http://ec.europa.eu/world/index_de.htm

Cross-border healthcare

Despite of the new Treaty entering into force on 1st December 2009, the European Council postponed on the same day again a decision on the **Proposal for a Directive on the application of Patients' rights in cross-border**

healthcare, which still lacks support in some member states at the moment. On the other hand, some steps forward were made regarding e-health:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/111613.pdf

DG REGIO Working paper on territories with specific geographical features

DG REGIO has published a working paper on territories with specific geographical features. It is an interesting analysis of border, mountainous, island, sparsely populated and outermost regions with a comprehensive set of annexes, including descriptions and indicators. You are invited to send comments to us (info@aebr.eu) for a joint statement and/or directly to DG REGIO, regio-papers@ec.europa.eu.

The paper is available for download on:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/work/2009_02_geographical.pdf

2008 Annual Reports for Regional Policy published

The Commission recently published three annual reports for the year 2008 on the Structural Funds, Cohesion Funds and the pre-accession instrument ISPA. They contain a review of budgetary implementation, the way in which programmes were carried out, and major projects adopted during the year. Click on the titles below to open the relevant texts:

[Annual Report on the Cohesion Fund](#)

[Annual Report on the Structural Funds](#)

[Annual Report on ISPA](#)

Visa liberalisation for Western Balkan countries opened:

Citizens of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia will be granted visa free travel to and throughout the Schengen area. Detailed information on the Council decision is available on:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/111561.pdf

Please take note of main AEBR events expected in 2009/2010:

10 December 2009, European Cooperation in the Health sector III – Added value for people, economy and regions, Lörrach, Germany

4-5 February 2010, AEBR Forum on CB Transport Networks, Huesca (Aragón, ES)

18 February 2010, AEBR Task Force External Borders, Botnian Arc (FI/SE)

19-20 February 2010, AEBR Executive Committee in Oulu, Botnian Arc (FI)

29 April 2010, Cross-Border Cooperation meeting in the framework of the Spanish Presidency, Cáceres (Extremadura)

4-5 June (tbc), Executive Committee in Évora (Alentejo, PT)

Summer 2010: AEBR Youth Forum in Friuli Venezia Giulia, IT

16 September, AEBR Forum (Friuli-Venezia-Giulia, IT)

17-18 September, AEBR Executive Committee in Udine (Friuli-Venezia Giulia, IT)

26-29 September, Helsinki-Vyborg-St Petersburg-Narva-Tallin-Helsinki CBC Round Conference

21-23 October, AEBR Executive Committee, General Assembly and Annual Conference, Dundalk-Newry (Ireland-Northern Ireland), proposed topic "CBC Tourism", possible "Case of the Host": CBC in Health Care
December, AEBR Forum in Prague (CZ)

December, Executive Committee meeting, Tabor, Silva Nortica (CZ)

*The AEBR Newsflash is sent to everyone on the AEBR "members and friends" e-mail list.
If you have friends or colleagues who would like to be added to the mailing list, please send their details to:
Cordula Pandary, c.pandary@aebr.eu, or call +49 (0)2562 70219.*

*Please think twice before printing this Newsletter.
Perhaps you can enjoy and share it by electronic means!*

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*The “**Association of European Border Regions**” (AEBR) is the oldest independent association of regions in Europe, founded in 1971, and the only one dealing with Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC). AEBR has almost forty years of extensive theoretical and practical experience in all aspects related to CBC, but also in the field of inter-regional and transnational co-operation. With one hundred members (border and cross-border European regions), the AEBR is a forum for cross-border cooperation and makes the voice of the border and cross-border regions heard at European level.*