

EUROPEAN UNION



Committee of the Regions

The EU's Assembly of Regional and Local Representatives



The Committee of the Regions and the Spanish Presidency of the European Union



Mercedes Bresso
President of
the Committee
of the Regions

The Spanish presidency's first steps will be like those of an explorer entering a new but, at first glance, welcoming world: the world of the Lisbon Treaty and its new institutional landscape. From the point of view of the Committee of the Regions (CoR), however, an innovation such as the appointment of a President of the European Council will in no way affect the fundamental importance of the CoR's relations with the Member State holding the EU presidency.

Indeed, that country will continue to be responsible for coordinating the Council's work on sectoral policies which - ranging as they do from regional policy to consumer policy, via transport, social and energy policy - are those of most direct concern to the CoR and the EU's local and regional authorities.

Each presidency is different, not least because the priorities contained in its programme include touches which reflect the diversity of its regions. And given the powers of Spain's regions and the dynamism of its cities and provinces, the Spanish presidency promises to be especially active on the regional front. In conjunction with the Belgian presidency during the second half of the year and the enthusiasm surrounding the start of the CoR's fifth term-of-office (2010-2015), 2010 looks an extremely promising year.

The moment of truth will come with the implementation of those provisions of the Lisbon Treaty that are of special significance for the regions, such as those on subsidiarity, territorial cohesion and public services.

A more immediate priority will be the EU's response to the financial, economic and social crisis. The effects of this crisis on our regions are far from being contained, and the operational conclusions have not been drawn. The CoR's message, underscored at the territorial dialogue meeting held in Palma de Mallorca on 18 January, is two-pronged: firstly, we should not rush to draw up a long-term economic strategy for the EU when we have yet to coordinate our economic policy response to the crisis in the short term; and secondly, a future strategy will not succeed if it is a purely inter-governmental exercise with no "grassroots" involvement of the regions.

As regards the three key issues of reform of cohesion policy, the Common Agricultural Policy and the financial perspectives, the CoR will remain steadfast on the need to devise a political approach before opening negotiations on the budget. The CoR's position will continue to rest on three main planks: rejection of any form of renationalisation; the need to adapt industry and employment to the challenges of a more sustainable development model; and the use of multi-level governance and an approach that is more targeted to the region concerned and to intra-regional disparities, in which social inclusion would (finally) be granted its proper place.

Sustainable development will be one of the main topics at the CoR Bureau meeting to be held in Valladolid on 11 and 12 March. Following the December 2009 Copenhagen summit on climate change, the CoR will work resolutely to secure worldwide recognition of the vital role of local and regional authorities in both adapting to and combating climate change. This recognition should also be reflected across the board in the next generation of Structural Funds. The CoR will dedicate one of its monitoring platforms to this issue and will strive to extend the success of the Covenant of Mayors at regional level, also beyond the EU's borders. We will forge new alliances to do this.

One of the most promising of these is undoubtedly the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly, inaugurated in Barcelona in January 2010.

2010 should thus prove a vintage year for us, but like a good wine it will require some hard work: the vines will need pruning regularly, the grapes must be picked at just the right moment, and throughout the process we will need perseverance, patience and a pinch of special European care.

Z.33.0
"2010"



COMISION DE LAS COMUNIDADES EUROPEAS
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A presidency for a Europe of the regions and local authorities

The political decentralisation of Spain into 17 autonomous communities and into local authorities is a symbol of our identity, rooted in a long tradition of struggle for freedom. This is also reflected in the way that we perceive Europe: only by striking a balance between the values of unity and diversity can we build the stronger, more effective, more democratic and more supportive Europe that our citizens wish to see.

Therefore, in its commitment to drive Europe forwards, the Spanish presidency is keen to promote the contribution of regional and local authorities in each of our priority areas of action.

The Spanish presidency aims to ensure that the Lisbon Treaty is fully implemented, particularly as it enshrines the principles of local and regional autonomy, sets down the objective of territorial cohesion and gives national parliaments a key role in monitoring subsidiarity.

In our efforts to step up the coordination of national economic policies in order to recover from the crisis and boost the Europe 2020 strategy with a view to building a new growth model, we also seek to involve the regions and local authorities. Only with their participation can we implement more effective economic, environmental and social policies in Europe. As the Committee of the Regions itself has pointed out, we must move towards true multi-level governance.

Moreover, if we wish to bring Europe closer to our citizens and ensure that their rights are exercised and guaranteed more fully, it is in the regions and cities – key forums for discussion and exchange – that we must implement our policies to integrate immigrants and enforce our proposals to combat all forms of gender-based violence.

Lastly, the local and regional administrations also have a valid contribution to make to the promotion of Europe as a global player and to EU cooperation policies, and this is borne out by their active participation in the meetings held prior to major summits.

Throughout this process, the Committee of the Regions – as a forum for dialogue and guidance for our policies, driver of interregional cooperation and champion of a new concept of cohesion and solidarity – should play a key role in the proposals for this new Europe and, in particular, during our presidency.

José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero
President
of the Government
of Spain

The Jacques Delors building in Brussels, headquarters of the Committee of the Regions



The Committee of the Regions (CoR) is the EU's Assembly of regional and local representatives. It is a political assembly of 344 members (and the same number of alternates) from all 27 EU Member States, all of whom are holders of a regional or local electoral mandate. Members sit in four political groups (European People's Party, Party of European Socialists, Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe and European Alliance) reflecting their own national political allegiances. The CoR provides institutional representation for all the European Union's territorial areas, regions, cities and municipalities. Its mission is to involve regional and local authorities in the European decision-making process and thus to encourage greater participation from citizens.

The CoR was established in 1994 to address two main issues. Firstly, about three quarters of EU legislation is implemented at local or regional level, so it makes sense for local and regional representatives to have a say in the development of new EU laws. Secondly, in order to avoid the public being left behind as the EU steams ahead, the CoR encourages the involvement of all elected levels of government in the decision-making process, bringing Europe closer to its citizens.

The Treaties oblige the European Commission and the Council of the EU to consult the CoR whenever new proposals are made in areas that have repercussions at regional or local level. The Maastricht Treaty set out five such areas – economic and social cohesion, trans-European infrastructure networks, health, education and culture. The Amsterdam Treaty added another five areas to the list – employment policy, social policy, the environment, vocational training and transport - which now covers much of the scope of the EU's activity.

The Lisbon Treaty and Europe's regions and cities

For the first time, Europe's elected regional and local representatives can challenge new EU laws they consider to be in breach of the subsidiarity principle – the principle that decisions should be taken as closely as possible to the citizens – at the European Court of Justice. Having requested this right for fifteen years, and finally having obtained it in the Lisbon Treaty, the Committee of the Regions fleshed out its implementing provisions just days after the entry into force of the new EU Treaty. Meeting in plenary session from 3-4 December in Brussels, CoR members decided that, in future, they can refer EU laws which infringe the subsidiarity principle to the Court of Justice by a simple majority of votes cast in Plenary.

For the first time in its history, the European Union explicitly recognises in the Lisbon Treaty "territorial cohesion" as a fundamental objective in addition to economic and social cohesion.

The Lisbon Treaty also enables the Committee of the Regions to be consulted by the European Parliament, not just by the Commission and the Council. Furthermore, with the new Treaty the CoR will have the right to be consulted on new policy areas, such as energy and climate change. To bring the Committee's mandate period into line with that of the other EU institutions, the mandate period of CoR members was extended from four to five years.

The CoR meets in full plenary five times a year to debate and adopt its opinions, drafted by a rapporteur appointed by one of the six commissions. These commissions focus on core policy areas: territorial cohesion, economic and social policy, sustainable development,

culture, education and research, constitutional affairs and external relations. The aim of CoR opinions is to influence the EU lawmaking process at its earliest stages, proposing political lines of approach and action drawn from the experience and expertise of the regional and local authorities, who are most often responsible for implementing legislation.

The CoR also works on behalf of all the regional and local authorities of Europe, fighting for their right to secure appropriate financial resources to enable them to carry out their duties, promoting the principles and mechanisms of good governance and encouraging the process of decentralisation. It also encourages cooperation between regional and local authorities in the Member States, as well as with those of candidate countries, potential candidate countries, neighbouring countries and third countries. Above all, the CoR and its members are ambassadors of Europe in their respective regions, cities and municipalities, speaking for them in the European debate but also helping to explain and expound the implementation and territorial impact of Community policies at the local and regional level.

Bringing the EU closer to the public

While the major part of the Committee's work is its participation in the legislative process, that is not the end of its role.

CoR members live and work day to day in their home regions and continue with their local or regional government responsibilities, whether as regional president, mayor city or county councillor. This keeps them in touch with the views and concerns of the people they represent, and they are then able to bring these to the heart of the EU process when they come to Brussels for meetings of the CoR.

It also means they are well placed to let people back home know what is going on in the EU and how "Brus-

sels" operates. The way the CoR organises its work is also aimed at 'bringing the EU closer to the people' - literally so, by organising conferences and meetings of its commissions and Bureau away from Brussels, in the regions of the 27 member states.

The Committee of the Regions and the priorities of the Spanish presidency

Prior to each Council Presidency, high-level preparatory meetings take place between the Committee of the Regions and representatives of the upcoming presidency.

The Spanish presidency has asked the CoR to issue an opinion on the importance of urban renewal as a strategy contributing to sustainable urban development from a triple integrated perspective: economic, social and environmental. In particular, the CoR has been asked to reflect on the possibilities offered by urban renewal as a central axis of a new urban paradigm in European cities. This new paradigm will not be based on limitless growth and reclamation of new land but on controlled growth, on the fight against urban sprawl, on the revitalization of existing urban areas and their social tissue, on urban eco-efficiency and on the promotion of sustainable mobility.

The Trio Presidency Spain-Belgium-Hungary has placed evaluation of the 6th Community Environment Action Plan (EAP 6), together with preparations for EAP 7, among the key priorities of its environmental policy programme. In this context, the Spanish Presidency has asked the CoR to issue an opinion which looks at how to enhance coordination and governance in this area, based on the CoR's White Paper on Multilevel Governance, including aspects such as how the CoR can contribute to the engagement of local and regional authorities in drawing up the future environmental policy, as well as how local and regional authorities can achieve greater coherence in the application of environmental legislation.

Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso
President of the Autonomous Community of Murcia,
1st Vice-President of the Committee of the Regions



“The CoR has shown on various occasions that it is equal to the debates and challenges facing it, and now we have to give a new impetus, exploit to the full our capacity for analysis, reaction and influence and bring to bear the decisive leadership of Europe's local and regional authorities in the inter-institutional debate.

We are facing a crucial time for Europe's regions and cities, as this new term of office begins. On the one hand, we have the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty, with all that this means for the Committee of the Regions and for the Community framework as a whole, with new tasks and new procedures; and on the other hand the debate is beginning on the EU's future budget and cohesion policy.”

The Spanish delegation in the Committee of the Regions 2010-2015 at a glance

For the next five years, 21 elected representatives will be the voice of Spain's regions and cities in Brussels. On 9 February, they took up their work as members of the Committee of the Regions (CoR), the EU's assembly of regional and local representatives. On the same day, they elected Guillermo FERNÁNDEZ VARA, Presidente de la Junta de Extremadura (PSE), as head of their national delegation and member of the CoR executive body – the Bureau.

Other Spanish representatives in the CoR Bureau include Juan Vicente HERRERA CAMPO, CoRVice President, President of the Autonomous Community of Castilla y León (PPE) and Vicente Alberto ÁLVAREZ ARECES, President of the Autonomous Community of Asturias (PSE).

Full members

Esperanza AGUIRRE GIL DE BIEDMA (PPE)

President of the Autonomous Community of Madrid

Vicente Alberto ÁLVAREZ ARECES (PSE)

President of the Autonomous Community of Asturias

Francesc ANTICH I OLIVER (PSE)

President of the Autonomous Community of the Balearic Islands

Rita BARBERÁ NOLLA (PPE)

Mayor of the City of Valencia

José María BARREDA FONTES (PSE)

President of the Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha

Francisco CAMPS ORTIZ (PPE)

President of the Autonomous Community of Valencia

Pedro CASTRO VÁZQUEZ (PSE)

Mayor of the City of Getafe

Guillermo FERNÁNDEZ VARA (PSE)

President of the Autonomous Community of Extremadura

Dolores GOROSTIAGA SAIZ (PSE)

Vice-President of the Autonomous Community of Cantabria

José Antonio GRIÑÁN MARTÍNEZ (PSE)

President of the Autonomous Community of Andalusia

Jordi HEREU I BOHER (PSE)

Mayor of the City of Barcelona

Juan Vicente HERRERA CAMPO (PPE)

President of the Autonomous Community of Castilla y León

Marcelino IGLESIAS RICOU (PSE)

President of the Autonomous Community of Aragon

Patxi LÓPEZ ÁLVAREZ (PSE)

President of the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country

José MONTILLA AGUILERA (PSE)

President of the Autonomous Community of Catalonia

Alberto NÚÑEZ FEIJÓO (PPE)

President of the Autonomous Community of Galicia

Paulino RIVERO BAUTE (ALDE)

President of the Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands

Alberto RUIZ-GALLARDÓN JIMÉNEZ (PPE)

Mayor of the City of Madrid

Pedro SANZ ALONSO (PPE)

President of the Autonomous Community of La Rioja

Miguel SANZ SESMA (PPE)

President of the Autonomous Community of Navarre

Ramón Luis VALCÁRCEL SISO (PPE)

President of the Autonomous Community of Murcia

Alternate members

Gabriel AMER AMER (PSE)

Government ministerial representative of the Regional Government of the Balearic Islands in Brussels
Autonomous Community of the Balearic Islands

María Luisa ARAÚJO CHAMORRO (PSE)

Minister for Economic Affairs and Taxation
Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha

Elsa CASAS CABELLO (ALDE)

Commissioner for External Affairs
Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands

Alberto CATALÁN HIGUERAS (PPE)

Minister for Institutional Relations and spokesman for the Regional Government of Navarre
Autonomous Community of Navarre

María de DIEGO DURÁNTEZ (PPE)

Director-General for Institutional Relations and External Affairs,
Autonomous Community of Castilla y León

Francisco DE LA TORRE PRADOS (PPE)

Mayor of the City of Malaga

Emilio DEL RÍO SANZ (PPE)

Minister in the Department of the President responsible for External Affairs,
Autonomous Community of La Rioja

Guillermo ECHENIQUE GONZÁLEZ (PSE)

Secretary General for External Affairs
Autonomous Community of the Basque Country

Paz FERNÁNDEZ FELGUEROSO (PSE)

Mayor of the City of Gijón

Jesús GAMALLO ALLER (PPE)

Director General for external relations and with the European Union
Autonomous Community of Galicia

Alberto GARCÍA CERVIÑO (PSE)

Director-General for European Affairs and Development Cooperation
Autonomous Community of Cantabria

Antonio GONZÁLEZ TEROL (PPE)

Director-General for European Affairs
Autonomous Community of Madrid

Francisco Javier LEÓN DE LA RIVA (PPE)

Mayor of the City of Valladolid

Miguel LUCENA BARRANQUERO (PSE)

Secretary General for External Affairs
Autonomous Community of Andalusia

Lucía MARTÍN DOMÍNGUEZ (PSE)

Director-General for External Affairs
Autonomous Community of Extremadura

Esther MONTERRUBIO VILLAR (PSE)

Commissioner for External Relations
Autonomous Community of Aragon

Juan Antonio MORALES RODRÍGUEZ (PPE)

Director-General for Local, Institutional and External Affairs of the Region of Murcia
Autonomous Community of Murcia

Andrés OCAÑA RABADÁN (PSE)

Mayor of the City of Cordoba

Rafael RIPOLL NAVARRO (PPE)

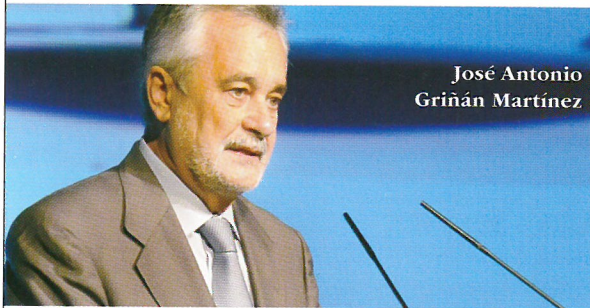
Deputy Minister for Relations with the State and the European Union
Autonomous Community of Valencia

Anna TERRÓN I CUSÍ (PSE)

Secretary for European Affairs
Autonomous Community of Catalonia

Javier VELASCO MANCEBO (PSE)

Director of the Representative Office in Brussels
Autonomous Community of Asturias



José Antonio
Griñán Martínez

“We want to carry on playing an active role in both the Mediterranean area and Cohesion Policy”

José Antonio Griñán Martínez, President of the Andalusian Government, was appointed a Committee of the Regions member in July 2009. Although, the Committee's work has provided **Andalusia** a privileged framework to give voice to its external activities and its European ambitions since the CoR was established in 1994.

During this time, the work undertaken in context of the EU's Mediterranean policy and the Regional Policy have been particularly important for our autonomous government. On these and other issues of clear interest to both the EU and our own region, Andalusia's experience and involvement have made it a special partner in defining the position of European regional and local authorities.

With this wealth of experience and our conviction that Andalusia has much to continue giving to the European Union, we want to carry on playing an active role in both the Mediterranean area and Cohesion Policy.

Andalusia will participate in the former through the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM) which has launched its activities in January 2010. Conscious of the role that the debate on the future of Cohesion Policy will play during the Spanish Presidency, Andalusia will host a meeting of the Committee's COTER Commission that will address the future of this policy in the light of the new Lisbon Treaty.

Finally, the Andalusian government is very aware of Europe's regional dimension and Andalusia's European dimension and recognises the EU's need to fully develop its role as a global player capable of providing firm and effective responses to the current social, economic and environmental challenges

We in Andalusia believe that the CoR's importance as a representative of the local and regional levels should be fully acknowledged and therefore we welcome the strengthening of its role through the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty, in areas such as recognition of the EU's regional dimension and monitoring of the subsidiarity principle.

“The regions' proximity to the population and our grassroots position mean that we are aware of and can convey the real concerns of our citizens”.

Aragón has been actively involved in the CoR to ensure that the autonomous communities play a key role in EU policies in those areas that fall within our remit. The regions' proximity to the population and our grassroots position mean that we are aware of and can convey the real concerns of our citizens. The Committee's work enables the regions to voice their opinions on various European issues, defending their interests and ensuring that the regional dimension is reflected in European policies.

Since the CoR was set up, Aragón's work within the Committee has focused in particular on depopulation, population ageing, the specific nature of mountain areas and cross-border cooperation, along with issues relating to agriculture and the environment, especially sustainable development and water management. It has also worked directly on questions of regional and cohesion policy and transport policy, particularly in the debates on the review of the trans-European networks.

The president of Aragón was recently elected president of the Conference of European regions with legislative power (REGLEG), which will interact intensively with the CoR.

During the CoR's new term of office beginning in February 2010, Aragón will continue to work on those issues – particularly strategic topics – that are a priority for our autonomous community, and will be very much involved in the debates on subsidiarity, multi-level governance, combating the economic crisis and the revision of the Lisbon Strategy held within the CoR.

In 2005, the president of Aragón was elected Spanish vice-president of the CoR. He was a member of the CoR Bureau from 2002 to 2008, and was head of the CoR's Spanish delegation from 2002 to 2004. Over the 2006-2010 period, Aragón has taken part in the COTER (territorial cohesion policy) and RELEX (external relations and decentralised cooperation) commissions, and has been a member of the Croatia working group.



Marcelino
Iglesias Ricou

“The CoR must be closely involved in drawing up strategies for the coming years”

Spain is taking over the presidency of the EU Council of Ministers for the fourth time in the first half of 2010, at a critical juncture for each of the 27 Member States and also for the future of the Union.

Political activities over the next few months will be driven by the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, with key challenges such as economic recovery and employment, the agreements sought on climate change, and the direction of Community strategies and policies for the next decade.



Asturias will demonstrate the commitment to Europe with which it has been taking part in the European project, mainly through the Committee of the Regions and the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions, as well as by means of cooperation with Spain's national government in finding joint solutions to our main problems.

In these bodies, Asturias has clearly defended the key role actively played by the regions in policies to promote economic development and, more recently, measures to address the crisis. We advocate territorial solidarity and the principle of territorial cohesion set out in the Lisbon Treaty as cast-iron principles of European policy.

The Committee of the Regions must be closely involved in framing strategies for the next few years, and its opinions must be taken into account in the process of policy-making that will determine what the European Union should be in the future.

Particular emphasis must be placed on consolidating social and territorial cohesion policies, inter-regional solidarity, innovation in transport, environmental and maritime policies, as well as energy policy and the future development of the Common Agricultural Policy. Asturias wants to take an active part in this debate, contributing its solid experience, so as to start the year 2010 with renewed energy.

Commitment of the Balearic Islands to a Europe of the Regions.

The Balearic Islands are actively engaged with the future presidency of the European Union in 2010, a presidency during which the Lisbon Treaty will be in force, which without doubt represents fundamental progress for all citizens in Europe's regions, since it provides for greater democracy and greater efficacy and flexibility in decision-making at European level.

The entry into effect of the new Treaty is particularly relevant to the Balearic Islands, since it recognises the specific needs of island regions (provided for in Article 174 of the Treaty).

Thus the government of the Balearic Islands, in the same spirit as the Spanish presidency, and conscious of this being a decisive point in building a new Europe in which the regions are ever more present, wishes to declare its firm commitment to Europe as well as its contribution to the Spanish presidency with reference to its position as an island and its Mediterranean setting.

In response to the Spanish government's offer to involve the autonomous communities, the government of the Balearic Islands has therefore presented a raft of proposals concerning key issues and actions for our islands, including island status and tourism, with a view to these being incorporated into the official programme of the Spanish presidency of the European Union.



The Balearic Islands wish to support the current presidency with contributions and opinions that reflect the essence of its government: a new model of sustainable development, based on innovation in all its aspects, active protection of human and environmental capital, development of a new, more competitive and sustainable form of tourism, social cohesion and consolidation of participatory and inclusive democracy.

“Our priority is to promote a clear regional focus for Community policies, guaranteeing the same opportunities for all European citizens”

The Canary Islands form one of the outermost regions of the EU, whose particular status is enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty. In line with Article 349 of the Treaty, the combination in these regions of factors such as their remoteness, insularity, small size and strong economic dependence means that the European institutions can adopt specific measures aimed, in particular, at laying down the conditions of application of the Treaties to those regions, including common policies.

The Committee of the Regions (CoR) is an ideal forum through which the European regions can make their voices heard in Europe, and convey to the other institutions the interests of the representative bodies that are closest to the citizens. Our priority is therefore to promote a regional focus in the implementation of EU policies.

Our main interest is make the EU institutions aware of our autonomous community's specific nature, resulting from its outlying location and the particular treatment granted to this group of regions by Community law. This would enable the CoR to play a key role in drawing up and implementing the European strategy for the outermost regions.

In this context, we have also called for active involvement in the CoR's Subsidiarity Monitoring Network, through which channel we can contribute to the consultation procedures on draft EU legislation of particular regional relevance.

In the new Europe that is being built, the multiple tiers of Spain's autonomic state can share their experience in analysing the regional effects of the policies implemented since it was set up.

Similarly, by adapting Community policies to the specific situation of each region it will be possible to overcome the difficulties that these particular situations cause, and to fully harness each region's potential so that citizens can all enjoy the same opportunities, regardless of the region in which they live – thus benefiting and adding value to the EU as a whole.



“The regions have a large say in the process of European integration”

Lola Gorostiaga, Vice-President of the Government of **Cantabria**, has been a member of the Committee of the Regions since 2003.



“The Committee of the Regions is our voice in Europe and regional and local authorities are the voice of Europe that is closest to the citizens”. Lola Gorostiaga has been a member of the RELEX, COTER, CONST and ECOS commissions. As Cantabria's Head of European Affairs, Ms Gorostiaga is committed to “encouraging communication between the Committee of the Regions' members and the European public on European issues and to developing a decentralised communication policy”.

The entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty gives the regions greater influence in the process of European integration, which will boost the EU's democratic legitimacy, because Europe is moving closer to its citizens through its regional and local authorities. The protocol on subsidiarity and proportionality increases the Committee of the Regions' powers. Furthermore, the Treaty for the first time explicitly recognises the principle of regional and local autonomy.

The Vice-President of the Government of Cantabria is a firm believer that the principles of subsidiarity, proximity and multilevel governance are key to the success of European policies. “In Cantabria, we believe that Europe cannot be built or heard if the regions are sidelined”.

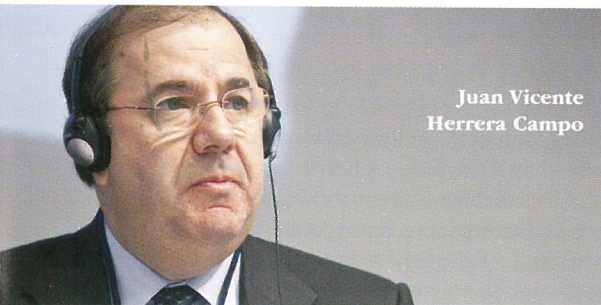
“I feel sure that the goal of territorial cohesion, which has for the first time been recognised in a treaty, paves the way for an ambitious cohesion policy in future”.

“Castilla y León will continue to work to ensure European policies are in touch with the reality on the ground in our region.”

Playing an active role in European affairs is a priority for **Castilla y León**, and that is why we are determined to bring our region closer to people across the EU, and to bring Europe closer to people here in Castilla y León. We want to ensure that our voice is heard both in the European institutions and in other organisations working for Europe.

We have recently stepped up our work at the Committee of the Regions and have been proud to hold the Presidency of the Spanish Delegation from February 2008 to the beginning of 2010.

I am particularly proud to have been able to present the own-initiative opinion on violence against women. The opinion was adopted during the CoR's 81st plenary session, after consulting the Spanish Autonomous Communities, the municipalities, and associations. All of these bodies were aware just how important it is to combat this problem in society, which the Spanish EU Presidency has established as a priority.



Juan Vicente
Herrera Campo

Castilla y León has been playing an active role in the work of the Bureau, and two CoR Commissions. We are determined to continue contributing to the work of this institution in the same way as we have been at Intergroup (where I am vice-president) on the crisis in the car industry. Working within these different forums has given us the opportunity to showcase the variety of interests and opinions in our region, such as social policy, economic and business policy, the Structural Funds, education related to R&D+I and innovation, the future of the CAP and rural development, regional co-operation, and culture and tourism.

Castilla y León will continue working to ensure European policies are in touch with the reality on the ground in our region, now that the Lisbon Treaty has strengthened the powers of the Committee of the Regions.

On 11-12 March 2010, Castilla y León will host the extraordinary Bureau meeting of the Committee of the Regions, which will be held under the Spanish EU Presidency.

“A Europe that ensures the welfare, quality of life and rights of all its citizens”

The region of **Castilla-La Mancha** is strongly pro-European, for we have always been aware of the important role that Europe has played in our growth and development as a region, as evidenced by our high levels of economic and social convergence. We therefore feel part of this common project and firmly believe that only by joining forces can all Europe's regions achieve certain objectives.

This is a particularly important time for Europeans, after the entry into force of the new treaty which will enable Europe to continue moving forwards and to promote those measures that help us to face the major challenges ahead.

During Spain's six-month presidency of the EU, our work will be based on the priorities established by the Spanish government, which are also shared by our autonomous community.

Combating the economic crisis, the debate on the future of the EU and the expected review of the Lisbon Strategy are particularly important topics and will form the priorities on which Community efforts will focus. In our region, the commitment to a more sustainable, competitive production model has resulted in the Castilla-La Mancha pact, drawn up in consensus with the economic and social partners, and making a clear pledge to revive the regional economy while supporting those most affected by the crisis.

Particular attention must also be paid to issues such as the future of cohesion policy and the review of the Common Agricultural Policy, which are closely linked to the review of the Community budget and are of special interest for our region.

Priorities such as climate change and the clear commitment to renewable energies are challenges that must be faced together and Castilla-La Mancha is therefore making real efforts in both sectors, showing its strong desire to achieve these broad objectives.

It is our responsibility to convey our interests as a European region and to harness our experience to help build this Europe in which we believe - a Europe that, above all, ensures the welfare, quality of life and rights of all its citizens.



José María
Barreda Fontes

“The Committee of the Regions: the voice of the regions within the EU”



José
Montilla Aguilera

Catalonia plays an active role in the Committee of the Regions. The Government of Catalonia wishes the Committee of the Regions to be seen as the voice of the regions vis-à-vis the European institutions. The adoption of the White Paper on Multi-level Governance is a step in this direction, and our regions must therefore be more actively involved than ever to ensure that the institutions hear and take on board our concerns.

Our work in the Committee is based on proximity to the citizens. The Government of Catalonia has promoted issues affecting our society, from responding to the economic crisis to managing migration. We would like the institutions to be aware of the challenges that the Spanish regions face when dealing with the current situation and, therefore, that they take account of our capacity and legitimacy to participate in the decision-making process.

The Committee of the Regions also reflects the multiple nature of the territories that make up the EU. Among these numerous players, we – as regions with legislative powers and Spanish autonomous communities – must retain our position and enhance our specific role, given that a large proportion of EU legislation is taken on, implemented and enforced by us. We believe that this can be achieved by working in conjunction with other regions and local authorities.

The Government of Catalonia hopes that the Committee of the Regions will be a valid partner to the Spanish presidency of the EU. Spain is an example of successful multi-level governance and this will shine through during its presidency of the Council, in which the autonomous communities feel a shared responsibility and involvement. Spain's presidency of the Council will be a good opportunity to promote the model of European governance that the regions and local administrations have defended, in which Europe is close to its citizens and responds to their needs.

“Through the Committee, Extremadura aims to take on a leading role in building the Europe of regions and cities, giving the current model an innovative approach.”

Since the creation of the Committee, the Autonomous Community of **Extremadura** has been closely involved in building the Europe of regions and cities which the Committee is championing. Over 15 years ago, we actively promoted the creation of this assembly of representatives. Our commitment is even stronger today, as we take an active role in the Committee's daily work. Extremadura has held the vice-presidency of the Committee of the Regions, been a member of the Bureau and takes an active part in plenary sessions.

All this shows the importance that our Autonomous Community attaches to this body as it upholds our common interests – essential at this very important time for the future of the European Union. The combination of a new Parliament with greater powers, a new Commission with more tools for driving Europe forward as a global player and, in particular, the Spanish presidency, successfully promoting undertakings and initiatives, will enable us, for the first time in many years, to watch with expectation a revival of the European ideal. Especially since the Lisbon Treaty recognises us as key players in this new, exciting stage in Community integration.

Going one step further, using the effective platform which the Committee is becoming, and in the context of this presidency's great showcase of ideas and proposals, Extremadura aims to take on a leading role in building the Europe of regions and cities, giving the current model an innovative approach. An approach based on technology and IT development at the service of the people, proposed by Extremadura to this assembly of regions. An approach based on imagination, such as that proposed in the Extremadura Creative Week in Brussels, part of which was hosted by the Committee. An approach rooted in talent and creativity, which, applied to our way of understanding Europe, made Extremadura one of the leading regions in the last Open Days. This is our contribution to the achievement of a more modern, dynamic European Union, reflecting a young, entrepreneurial Extremadura which is committed to Europe.



Guillermo
Fernández Vara

“Our commitment to cross-border cooperation is a good example of our practical work at the Committee of the Regions”

Galicia plays an active part in the Committee of the Regions in order to ensure that the interests of our autonomous community are reflected in European initiatives. The work carried out in the various commissions on which we sit in this European body means that we can provide Europe and all its regions and territories with an accurate picture of Galicia, of its problems, interests and ambitions. It is a forum where we can voice our concerns in key areas ranging from the Common Agricultural Policy and rural development, fisheries, and the environment to cohesion policy, the structural funds, territorial cooperation and trans-European transport networks.

I think our commitment to cross-border cooperation is a



good example of our practical work at the CoR. The Autonomous Community of Galicia can draw on its experience of cooperation with northern Portugal to offer the CoR the services of experts in this field, while seeking the support of our partners to continue further developing this cooperation. The follow-up to the process of creating the European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), in which Galicia has been a pioneer, as well as to the prospects and opportunities opened up by the adoption of the Community Regulation setting up this legal entity, demonstrates the Committee's involvement in day-to-day territorial cooperation between European regions.

Regarding our major economic sectors – such as the car industry – the CoR provides us with a platform to forge alliances with other European regions in our determination to uphold these sectors and to call for European solutions to the shared difficulties we may experience.

Lastly, we should point out that with the recent entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, there will be more mandatory referrals to the Committee on issues affecting European regions, and in addition the Committee is empowered to uphold compliance with our competences before the EU Court. This boost to the role of the Committee of the Regions within the European institutional framework strengthens the voice and presence of the regions of Europe in building a Union that is closer to its citizens and their concerns.

“In the view of our national government, the Madrid Region will play a key role in disseminating the appropriate image of Spain”.

As a member of the Spanish Delegation, I should like to express the commitment of the Government of the Autonomous Community that I have the honour of leading to contribute to the success of the European Union's work within the Council bodies that will be coordinated under the Spanish presidency. Amongst other issues, the Council will have to implement the Treaty of Lisbon, which has recently entered into force, and will also have to oversee the EU's economic recovery.

As an institutional body to be consulted as part of the EU's legislative process, the Committee of the Regions will undoubtedly be a key partner for the regions and cities in achieving, in conjunction with the Community institutions, the goals of the Spanish presidency. Against this backdrop, the **Madrid Region** inevitably wishes to continue to be a reference point for the CoR, having drafted a number of opinions on EU policies on migration or clusters, and to be recognised as a region that has been outstanding in meeting the Lisbon Strategy goals and for its presentation to the other European regions on Madrid's hospital system or its policy on the protection of minors, for its now regular presence at both the CoR and the Community Institutions' Open Days, for the amendments it tables to opinions and for its regular attendance at CoR plenary sessions.



During this Spanish presidency, in the view of our national government, the Madrid Region will play a key role in disseminating the appropriate image of Spain, as a country that is both economically and socially strong and which acts consistently with the EU's democratic values.

“The Region of Murcia has always been aware of the important role played by the Committee of the Regions in the Community system and of the need to consolidate that role within the decision-making process of the EU.”

Since the Committee of the Regions began its work in 1994, the Autonomous Community of the **Region of Murcia** has been closely involved in its activities. The Autonomous Community has successfully consolidated its manifest experience in European affairs, both from a legislative point of view and in terms of participation in European projects. Murcia has certainly become a “star pupil” of the EU, both for its management of European funding and for its involvement in drawing up and implementing Community legislation.



Ramón Luis
Valcárcel Siso

Thus the Committee of the Regions is a key platform for defending the region's interests in framing European legislation, which directly affects the autonomous communities and local authorities. Mr Valcárcel, the President of the region, has been rapporteur for a large number of opinions, all of them concerning matters of unquestionable interest to the Region of Murcia, such as transport, drought, territorial cohesion, and fishing and aquaculture.

In addition, a new European venture is being launched, the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM), promoted by the CoR as a permanent platform for dialogue and cooperation between local and regional authorities in the Mediterranean countries and of which Mr Valcárcel will be a member. Murcia's experience here and the opportunities for cooperation that are opening up means that we are taking up this new challenge for the external activities of our autonomous community with enthusiasm.

The Region of Murcia has always been aware of the important role played by the Committee of the Regions in the Community system and of the need to consolidate that role within the decision-making process of the EU. The various treaties governing the EU have progressively consolidated the Committee's role; the Lisbon Treaty gives more powers to the Committee by strengthening its political and institutional profile. For the future, the EU's new representatives face the major challenge of enhancing European integration on the basis of equity, solidarity and justice, promoting a strong cohesion policy.

“Navarra has implemented an Internationalisation Plan which takes a European approach to supporting businesses, raising citizen awareness, and promoting exchanges, language learning and understanding of other cultures and civilisations”

The fourth Spanish presidency of the European Union begins on 1 January 2010, twenty-five years since Spain joined the EU on 12 June 1985.

Spain's accession to the EU was a historic step for the country's autonomous communities and Spain as a whole. Joining the EU brought about a step change in the process of modernising our country and improving development and well-being, and has also allowed us to play a key role in establishing Europe as a global power:

Local and regional authorities have an important role to play in the process of building Europe, and the Autonomous Community of **Navarra** has embraced this challenge wholeheartedly.

We have implemented an Internationalisation Plan in Navarra to ensure European principles are put into practice. The plan comprises a series of coordinated measures which are supported by the economic and social actors, including support for businesses to compete internationally, raising awareness on the need to adapt to today's global world, promoting exchanges, language learning, and understanding of the history and culture of other countries and civilisations

The Spanish presidency will allow us to move forward in the process of building social Europe and consolidate policies on equality, immigration, and violence against women. We will also be able to promote joint action in Europe, both internally and on the international stage, to ensure the Community is more competitive, safer, and more committed to conserving the environment and promoting the values that Europe has always championed such as peace, dialogue, democracy and development cooperation.

We all need to play an active role in the Spanish EU presidency and use Europe's fundamental values to promote a sense of Europeaness. In Navarra we will seek to achieve this by promoting projects related to education, civic participation, equality and so on, and by highlighting everything that we have in common with other Europeans within this great community of 27 states, this community striving to promote a better, more just and freer world that we are all in the process of building together:



Miguel
Sanz Sesma

“Euskadi and the Basque citizens believe in Europe”

Euskadi and the Basque citizens believe in Europe.

We believe in a united Europe founded on democratic values, peace and solidarity.

We believe in a strong Europe, where the different levels of government work together to the benefit of each and every citizen.

The Committee of the Regions, as the official voice of Europe's regions and municipalities, has shown itself to be a valuable forum through which to pool interests and establish common positions on key European issues such as climate change, renewable energies, innovation, and so on.

It is no coincidence that my first trip abroad as Lehendakari was to Brussels, or that I chose the Committee of the Regions as the platform from which to present my Government's ideas on fighting the worldwide energy crisis. Global crises need common solutions, dialogue and the exchange of ideas – in other words, joint efforts.

As a political assembly of regional and local governments, the Committee of the Regions helps to move the European venture onwards and upwards, and to resolve many of the daily problems that affect us. Moreover, with



Patxi
López Álvarez

the recent entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, it is the task of the Spanish presidency to implement the new instruments and possibilities for action ushered in by the treaty, such as defending territorial cohesion, observing regional and local autonomy, ensuring compliance with the subsidiarity and proportionality principles and the Committee of the Regions' right of appeal to the European Court of Justice.

In the face of these challenges, the Basque Country is ready and willing to be involved in its implementation and application, which will benefit all Europe's regions and councils, and the Union as a whole.

“Upholding the interests of La Rioja before the members of the Committee of the Regions and the Community institutions has been the main aim of our work.”



Pedro María
Sanz Alonso

The **La Rioja** members of the Committee of the Regions are the region's president, Pedro Sanz Alonso, and the regional minister for presidential affairs and spokesman, Emilio del Río. Since the creation of the Committee of the Regions, La Rioja has enhanced its institutional representation, drawn up opinions and hosted forums and commission meetings. Upholding the interests of La Rioja before the members of the Committee of the Regions and the Community institutions has been the main aim of its work.

From February 1998 to February 2006, La Rioja was represented on the Committee of the Regions Bureau and the Group of the European People's Party Bureau. In 2004 it took on the chairmanship of the Spanish delegation and the Committee vice-presidency for two years. Between February 2006 and February 2008 La Rioja chaired the Commission for Sustainable Development. Since November 2006 it has chaired the CoR “wine” interregional group, whose creation it promoted.

The president of La Rioja has been a Committee rapporteur on seven occasions. The opinions are all related to issues of interest to the Autonomous Community and address: Community structural assistance and employment, regional and local room for manoeuvre in economic policymaking and EU state aid control; an Internal market strategy for services; a proposal to amend the Council Regulation on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs; equal opportunities for people with disabilities; reform of the COM in wine; and European agricultural product quality policy; this last opinion is to be discussed at the February 2010 plenary session.

La Rioja has hosted six Committee of the Regions meetings, in which it took the opportunity to push forward discussions on topics as varied as the wine sector, young people and the Lisbon strategy, designations of origin, disabilities, European integration policies and the internal market.

In the future, La Rioja will continue to contribute with the same commitment to strengthening the Europe of the regions.

“The Committee of the Regions should provide a forum for cooperation between European regions to defend their interests in strategic areas such as water, regional development, agriculture and innovation.”

The Valencia Region is an open and dynamic Mediterranean region with strong European affinities that wishes to take advantage of the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty to establish new working approaches within the Committee of the Regions to give fresh impetus to the determining role that the regions play in Europe.

This is a new phase that should be marked by shared hope, dialogue and effort. What we will be building over the coming years will not just be the individual success of each of our regions, but will lay the foundations for the future of the European Union.

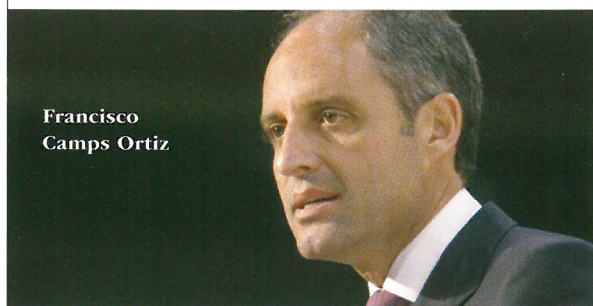
The Committee of the Regions should provide a forum for cooperation between European regions to defend their interests in strategic areas such as water, regional development, agriculture and innovation. The CoR's work must give Europe's citizens new opportunities for their future and prosperity.

By way of an example, the CoR plenary of April 2008 adopted an opinion entitled “Addressing the challenge of water scarcity and droughts in the European Union” for which I was the rapporteur. It prioritised the efficient utilisation, re-utilisation and conservation of water as essential policies for water management. It also established that water planning must be coherent and supportive, and should include the transfer of water resources as an instrument that can benefit regions socially, economically and environmentally.

As the regional representatives of Europe, we must join forces to define the policies of the future, such as regional strategies to guarantee better regional planning and greater sustainability and to safeguard our agriculture, our countryside and our economic and social development.

We would also like the voice of the the Valencia Region to be heard in the CoR to put forward new proposals that generate social welfare, make our businesses more competitive and bring employment and new opportunities for all.

If we succeed in building Europe together we will succeed in meeting the aspirations of each of its citizens. We in the Valencia Region would like to make clear our commitment to making this happen.



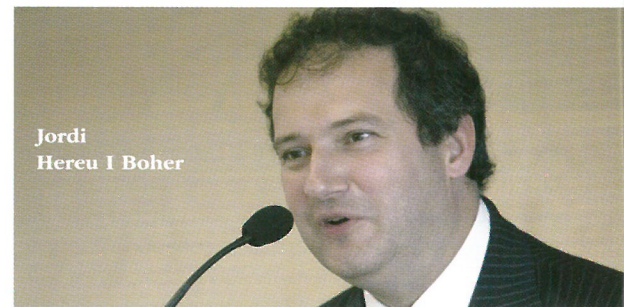
Francisco Camps Ortiz

“The Committee of the Regions is the only body that enables cities and their representatives to participate directly in the mechanisms for strengthening the European project”

The European Union provides a unique example of integration: 27 countries have united to work and develop together, in a shared project. This situation offers an enriching diversity, which symbolises the values of democracy and forms a real global benchmark for cohesion, social and cultural rights and sustainable growth.

The Committee of the Regions is one of the main instruments that we, the European Union's 500 million citizens, have for making our opinion count in the Community institutions' decision-making. As an advisory body to the European Union, the CoR is the perfect platform for giving local and regional authorities a voice in the process of European integration and the only body that enables cities and their representatives to participate directly in the mechanisms strengthening the European project.

Barcelona is a city that feels very much part of Europe, and has always supported the principle of subsidiarity and the regional debate being taken into account in the European Union's policy objectives and legislation. We have, therefore, been involved with the Committee of the Regions since its inception, and have witnessed the progress it has made in its 15 years of existence. New members and new voices have enriched



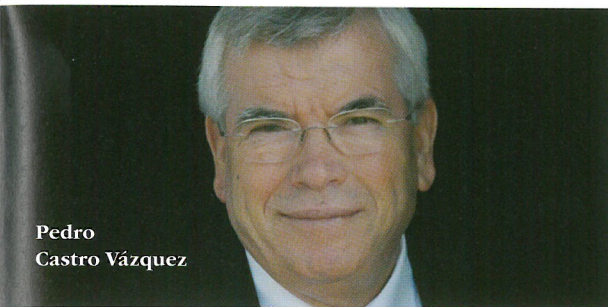
Jordi Hereu I Boher

the vision of the European project held by the authorities that are closest to the public they serve.

With the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the European Union is charting a new course. Holding the presidency of the Council of Ministers for the first half of 2010, Spain will have the historic task of ensuring that this treaty is implemented. The Spanish presidency will also reflect Barcelona's Mediterranean and European commitment: the city will host the formal inauguration of ARLEM and the Second Forum of Local and Regional Authorities of the Mediterranean.

“For the first time, an EU Treaty has recognised local and regional self-government as one of the principles of the EU”

Almost eighteen years have now passed since the Maastricht Treaty was adopted, which established the Committee of the Regions as the consultative body of the EU, and the voice of Europe's regions and local authorities in the EU decision-making process. The need for local and regional authorities to participate in building Europe has become so obvious that all subsequent EU treaties have strengthened the Committee of the Regions institutionally and increased its powers.



Pedro
Castro Vázquez

The entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty builds on this idea and brings in various changes: the Committee has been given new responsibilities, for example, the principles of territorial cohesion and cultural diversity have been recognised as EU objectives, and there is the new system of rotating teams of Member States sharing the EU presidency.

But the most significant change for all of us working in local government is the understanding that for the first time, local and regional self-government has been explicitly recognised as one of the principles and values of the EU.

Spain's regional governments, together with **the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP)**, are therefore looking forward to 2010 with optimism and a sense of responsibility.

Our outlook is optimistic because the Lisbon Treaty has strengthened the institutional role of the Committee of the Regions and ensured that the local and regional authorities are more involved in implementing and evaluating EU policies.

And we are also approaching the new year with a sense of responsibility, because with the fourth Spanish EU presidency as a backdrop, Spain's regional governments and the FEMP are aware of the impact that the EU has on the daily lives of ordinary people living in our towns and villages. As a level of governance within Spain, we have the duty both to apply EU policies to our day-to-day tasks, and to take on the considerable challenge of bringing Europe closer to its people.

The FEMP therefore signed an Action Plan with the Spanish government which brings together government-set priorities for the Spanish EU Presidency and the powers held by Spain's regional governments. The aim was to ensure a sense of continuity across the trio of presidencies and effectively channel local government and FEMP participation during the Spanish Presidency of the EU.

“Madrid believes that the Committee of the Regions is an essential instrument for building the European Union from Europe's towns and cities”

Madrid is one of Europe's main capital cities, and maintaining this status requires an ongoing commitment to improvement and developing a truly open, dynamic and innovative place. Over the past decade the city has undergone a spectacular transformation: we now have people of 183 different nationalities living together in Madrid and over 7 million visitors every year. The city has established itself as a social, cultural and economic bridge to Latin America and North Africa; and we are in the process of building bridges with key emerging areas such as the Asia-Pacific region for example.

The role of Europe's towns and cities is growing in today's global world, and the Committee of the Regions is therefore becoming increasingly important in enabling the EU's regional governments to make a difference and gain the recognition they deserve. The local authorities play a vital role within countries: they have a substantial set of powers and provide key services to achieve progress for local people. And it is within the local authorities that democracy was born and nurtured, which is why it is essential that they are fully involved in the process of building Europe.

The Committee of the Regions is able to ensure that all the different levels of government - including the regions and the towns and cities - participate in the European Union, and the CoR's powers will be strengthened once the Treaty of Lisbon is ratified. The CoR also has an essential role in representing democratically-elected regional governments and local authorities, and in helping to shape EU policies at certain stages. This is particularly relevant if we consider the vast scope the CoR has for consultation, and that the CoR has the power to consult on almost all areas which affect regional or local interests.



Alberto
Ruiz-Gallardón Jiménez

My experience as a Committee member has allowed me to see just how useful and effective the Committee of the Regions is as a forum for debate and the exchange of ideas and initiatives, and in dealing with challenges that require common policies. These are roles which will, I am sure, be strengthened under the Spanish EU Presidency.

“The Lisbon Treaty ushers in a new era full of opportunities for the Committee of the Regions: wider powers will enable cities to play a more active role in decisions affecting our everyday lives”



Two things combine to make 2010 a particularly significant year for **the city of Valencia** in the Committee of the Regions. Firstly, the fact that Spain holds the European Union presidency for the fourth time gives the cities and regions of our country an excellent basis for undertaking and promoting initiatives which will be supported by the rest of the European institutions, with the assistance of the Spanish Executive.

Secondly, the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty ush-

ers in a new era full of opportunities for the Committee of the Regions. Local and regional authorities are the institutions closest to the people - everything happens in local councils and every concern takes shape in the areas they represent. It is cause for celebration that the new Treaty extends the powers of the thousands of municipalities which make up the European Union, and that, thanks to the Committee of the Regions, we can play an active part in the decisions affecting our everyday lives.

There is ample evidence that cities are gaining a greater say in EU decision-making bodies: the territorial dimension of the European Union is now recognised as a fundamental objective; the Committee now has the right to bring legal actions before the Court of Justice of the European Union, and also has the possibility of some interchange with the European Parliament; and the Committee can be consulted on energy and climate change. Moreover, in 2010, coinciding with the Spanish presidency of the EU, the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly comes into being, and could be a source of interesting arrangements for interregional cooperation for the regions bordering on the Mediterranean.

Only four Spanish municipalities are members of the Committee of the Regions; Valencia has been a member since the Committee was founded in 1994. Over this time, we have made our city proud of its strong Spanish and pro-European character: Valencia City Council undertakes to work hard and zealously to make the first half of 2010 a success.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL STRUCTURE OF SPAIN

There are three levels of self-government in Spain: the autonomous communities, provinces and municipalities. The State has transferred a part of its powers to the autonomous communities. There are currently 17 autonomous communities: Andalusia, Aragon, Asturias, the Balearic Islands, the Canary Islands, Cantabria, Castille and Leon, Castille-La Mancha, Catalonia, the Valencian Community, Extremadura, Galicia, La Rioja, Madrid, Navarre, the Basque Country and the Murcia region.

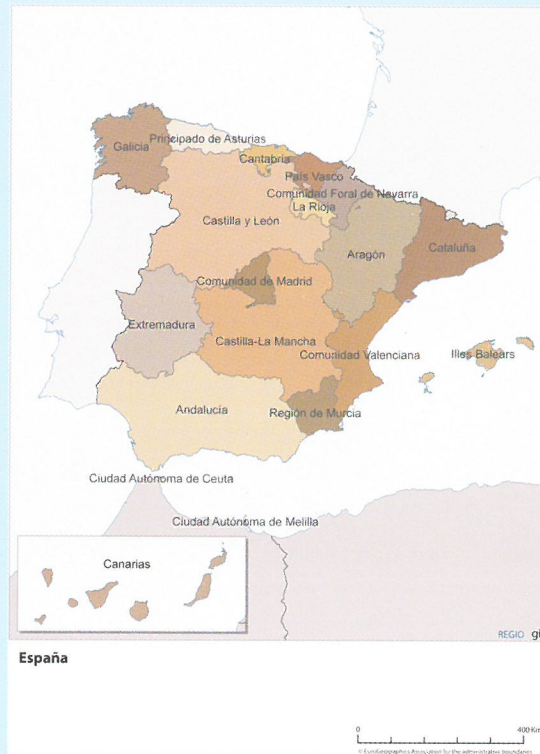
There are also 50 provinces and 8 115 municipalities.

Each autonomous community has its own statute and institutions: a government, a parliament elected by proportional representation, and an administration.

Their exclusive powers cover a multitude of fields: institutional organisation, regional development, public works, the economy, agriculture, culture, social policy, environmental protection, business development, health and education. They can also set up their own police forces.

The autonomous communities thus enjoy broad powers enabling them to govern themselves in the local sphere. Some have gained special status for their local language, as in the cases of Catalan, Basque, Galician and Valencian, which are official languages alongside Castilian (Spanish).

The twin autonomous communities of Ceuta and Melilla are independent administrative units. They occupy a half-way position between the municipalities and the autonomous communities.



8th European Week of Regions and Cities Brussels 4 - 7 October 2010

“Objective 2010:

competitiveness, co-operation and cohesion for all regions”

Since 2003, the OPEN DAYS has become an annual key event at which cities and regions showcase their capacity for creating growth and jobs, implementing European Union cohesion policy, and proof the importance of the local level for good European governance.

The 8th OPEN DAYS will be held between 4 and 7 October 2010, a period during which the debate on the European Union's '2020' agenda, its policies and future budget, will be in full swing. Regions and cities will play a major role in the discussions on 'EU2020'

agenda, on the budget review, and on the future of EU cohesion policy post-2013. The OPEN DAYS are an ideal framework for them to showcase good practice in the field of strengthening regional competitiveness, territorial co-operation and social and economic cohesion, to share experiences with others and to impact on the political debates among EU institutions and Member States.

For more information:

OPEN DAYS website: www.opendays.europa.eu
functional mailbox: opendays@cor.europa.eu

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY

Balearic Islands: Territorial Dialogue (Territorial Dialogue 2010), Palma de Mallorca, 18 January 2010

Catalonia and CoR: Inaugural Session of Arlem, Barcelona, 21 January 2010

FEBRUARY

CoR Plenary Session: Brussels, 9-11 February 2010

Galicia: Photography exhibition "Galicia Latente", Committee of the Regions, 15-26 February 2010

Catalonia: Local governments in a network for a new Europe. European Local Government Summit, Barcelona, 22-23 February 2010

MARCH

Autonomous Community of Cantabria: INTERREG Conference, CoR building

Valencia Region: Exhibition DONES & DONES, CoR building, 1-12 March 2010

Partenalia – Provincial Council of Barcelona/Provincial Council of Cáceres – Conference: Local Intermediate Authorities in the European Union: "key players in multilevel governance" followed by PARTENALIA's formal establishment as an International Association under the Belgian Law, CoR building, 5 March 2010

Extremadura: International Youth Talent Forum for the 2020 strategy: Committee of the Regions, 9 March 2010

CoR Extraordinary Bureau: Castilla y León, Valladolid, 11-12 March 2010

Spanish Presidency: Week of Innovative Regions of Europe (WIRE), Granada, 15-17 March 2010

Spanish Presidency: Informal ministerial meeting on Territorial Policy, Malaga, 16-18 March 2010

APRIL

CoR Plenary Session: Brussels, 13-15 April 2010

Committee of the Regions: Forum on 'Europe's macro-regions : integration through territorial cooperation', Brussels, 13 April 2010

Autonomous Community of Navarra: Conference : Europe Addressing the Future: First European Address, CoR building, 22 April 2010

COTER Commission: external meeting & seminar on "Cohesion after Lisbon: a European regional policy for the future", Jaén, 22-23 April 2010

Autonomous Community of Navarra: Conference: EURADIN General Assembly, CoR building, 23 April 2010

CIVEX Commission: external meeting followed by a seminar on the "Stockholm Programme", Barcelona, 26-27 April 2010

Extremadura: Summit of European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation, Cáceres, 29 April 2010

Spanish Presidency: Launch conference on KICs and Innovation, San Sebastián, 29-30 April 2010

MAY

Castilla y León: Fiscal Harmonization of European Regions, Brussels 4 May 2010

Spanish Presidency: Mayors Forum in connection with the EU-ALC Summit / Local Government Forum, Vitoria, Basque County, 5-7 May 2010

Committee of the Regions and European Parliament: 2nd Covenant of Mayor Ceremony, Brussels, 4 May 2010

Canary Islands: EU ministerial meeting on the Outermost Regions, Las Palmas, 6-7 May 2010

Committee of the Regions: Inter-institutional Open Doors Day, 8 May 2010

Valencia Region: Sculptures by Toni Marí, CoR building, 10-21 May 2010

Asturias: European Maritime Day, Gijón, 18-21 May 2010

CoR: Commission for Sustainable Development, Gijón, 20 May 2010

DG REGIO: Forum on Europe's Outermost Regions, 27-28 May 2010

JUNE

Spanish Presidency: Meeting on "the impact of political and administrative decentralisation on the media of the European Union", Andalusia, 1 June 2010

Spanish Presidency: II Summit of the Union for the Mediterranean, Barcelona, 5-7 June 2010

Committee of the Regions: Forum on 'Combating poverty and social exclusion: The contribution of Europe's regions and cities', Brussels, 8 June 2010

CoR Plenary Session: Brussels, 8-10 June 2010

Castile y León/CoR: European Forum on measures to prevent aggression in the health sector; Committee of the Regions, 11 June 2010

Spanish Presidency: Informal meeting of housing and urban development, Toledo, 21-22 June 2010

Region of Murcia: exhibition *La periferia como nudo, estructuras de red en la creación contemporánea* (The periphery as a crossroads, network structures in contemporary creation, Committee of the Regions) date not specified

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