



PRESS RELEASE - 8 May 2012 - BRUSSELS

## Structural funds must support cities to deliver Europe 2020

---

Representing EURO CITIES today at the European Parliament's regional development committee hearing on the next round of EU structural funds, Paul Tilsley, deputy leader of Birmingham, UK, said:

"The speed of change in Europe is rapid - economically, socially and politically. Europe's new seven-year funding perspective needs to recognise that cities will be at the centre of these changes.

Europe will only achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth if we help Europe's cities to become smarter, more sustainable and more inclusive.

If the EU does not take the opportunity now to engage meaningfully with its major cities we run the very real risk that Europe's 2020 ambitions will remain wishful thinking. For Europe to be globally competitive we need to invest in our metropolitan economies and territories."

Paul Tilsley pressed for a stronger urban dimension in the draft regulations as follows:

1. Major cities must be directly involved in the partnerships that decide EU investment programmes
2. There must be a strong urban priority throughout the regulations
3. Member states must be required to delegate funding to cities and metropolitan areas so that local challenges can be effectively addressed
4. The selection of cities for delegation of funds must be transparent, based on criteria developed in each member state in partnership with cities.

- ENDS -

### Note to editors

- EURO CITIES is the network of major European cities, [www.eurocities.eu](http://www.eurocities.eu)
- EURO CITIES on Twitter: [www.twitter.com/eurociestweet](https://twitter.com/eurociestweet)
- Contact: Dorthe Nielsen, EURO CITIES senior policy advisor: [dorthe.nielsen@eurocities.eu](mailto:dorthe.nielsen@eurocities.eu)