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EU urban agenda for better regulation and better results

EUROCITIES at 2nd CiTIES Forum

Today, commissioners, MEPs, local and national politicians discussed how to advance an EU urban agenda at the Commission's 2nd European CiTIES Forum.

Tom Balthazar, deputy mayor of Ghent representing the EUROCITIES vice president, spoke on a panel alongside Commissioner Crețu.

He said that cities are responsible for implementing many EU policies and programmes, so they should be involved in developing them too. With the right framework, cities can make a critical and practical contribution to achieving the Commission's priorities on areas such as jobs, growth, climate and energy.

The Commission presented the results of its consultation on an EU urban agenda at the event. EUROCITIES has been involved in the development of an EU urban agenda from the very beginning.

The Commission's proposals for better coordination, impact assessments and urban data collection are positive steps, but they are not enough to ensure real progress in tackling challenges on the ground at EU and local level.

Anna Lisa Boni, EUROCITIES secretary general, explained:

"Proper involvement of cities in EU policy development means moving beyond consultation to genuine partnership between cities, member states and the EU institutions. This will deliver more effective results and tangible and sustainable benefits for citizens, as the Commission sets out in its better regulation agenda."

We want a framework that enables cities to get more involved in shaping the EU policies that impact on their territories and cities. The EU urban agenda isn't about creating new policies or programmes, but about better connecting what's already there, setting clear policy objectives and strengthening understanding in cities of how different European initiatives are linked, or not.

We are making clear suggestions for where an EU urban agenda could make a real difference. Employment, one of Europe's most urgent challenges, could be better tackled through improved partnership at local, national and EU level, as set out in the EUROCITIES declaration on work. Air quality and the integration of asylum seekers and refugees were other examples we put forward.

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Notes to editors

- EUROCITIES statement on an EU urban agenda: <http://bit.ly/1M00DQb>
- 'Towards an EU urban agenda' infographic: <http://bit.ly/1K6ALDN>
- EUROCITIES declaration on work: <http://bit.ly/1wj5fIX>
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