



PRESS RELEASE - 22 February 2016 - BRUSSELS

## Working together for more and better jobs

### Mayors from major European cities debate with Commissioners Thyssen and Bieńkowska

Mayors of major European cities today debated with European Commissioners Thyssen (employment, social affairs, skills and labour mobility) and Bieńkowska (internal market, industry, entrepreneurship and SMEs) on why cities should be key partners in the delivery of EU employment policies.

Meeting Commissioner Thyssen, EUROCIITIES politicians emphasised the potential of cities in delivering inclusive labour markets by using social clauses in public procurement, addressing long term and youth unemployment through tailored policies that work at local level, exploring social innovation as a means to address unemployment and the critical role cities can play in developing the New Skills Agenda for Europe.

Daniël Termont, mayor of Ghent and EUROCIITIES vice president, said:

“The success of President Juncker’s jobs and growth agenda depends on the EU’s ability to capitalise on the potential of its cities. We confirm our political will and commitment to contribute our utmost to these goals.”

With Commissioner Bieńkowska, the politicians outlined the important work cities do to create jobs and support SMEs, innovation and economic development at local level. Cities have an important role to play in ensuring Europe’s competitiveness, by creating favourable environments for small businesses and entrepreneurs, including in the social economy, by encouraging technological, social and public sector innovation, by exploring the opportunities of public procurement for achieving economic, environmental and social objectives, and by adapting to a greener, circular, sharing and social economy.

Johanna Rolland, mayor of Nantes and EUROCIITIES president, said:

“The employment situation in Europe remains critical, and as mayors and leaders of Europe’s major cities we see the urgency of this situation on a daily basis. We know that we can make a significant contribution to European and national policies on job creation and social inclusion. We know our citizens well, and making the most of our understanding of the local labour market and employment and education services is an important part of the solution.”

These exchanges were followed by a discussion with stakeholders including the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the European Youth Forum, BUSINESSEUROPE, the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU), our partners in delivering results. Our debates come as part of the implementation of the EUROCIITIES Declaration on Work, which we launched in February 2015 in the presence of Commissioner Moscovici. Jobs and skills have since been identified by the European Commission as one of the priorities of an EU urban agenda.

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#### Notes to editors

- EUROCIITIES declaration on work: <http://bit.ly/1RTgLJi>
- EUROCIITIES website on work: [citiesatwork.eu](http://citiesatwork.eu)
- EUROCIITIES video on promoting an inclusive labour market at local level: [bit.ly/1QjEnBs](http://bit.ly/1QjEnBs)
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