

Commission press release on the new Operational Programmes in Portugal (17 October 2007)

Caption: On 17 October 2007, the European Commission presents 10 new Operational Programmes for Portugal. These programmes, which cover the period 2007–2013, are intended to direct a new cohesion policy focused on human resources, innovation and technology, enterprise development and territorial cohesion.

Source: RAPID. The Press and Communication Service of the European Commission. [ON-LINE]. [Brussels]: European Commission, [24.10.2007]. IP/07/1540. Disponible sur <http://www.europa.eu/rapid/setLanguage.do?language=en>.

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Commission approves new programmes marking shift in cohesion policy in Portugal (Brussels, 17 October 2007)

European Commission President José Manuel Barroso will today attend in Lisbon with Regional Policy Commissioner Danuta Hübner, Employment and Social Affairs Commissioner Vladimir Špidla, Portuguese Prime Minister Mr José Sócrates and Mr. Francisco Nunes Correia, Minister for Regional Development, the signing ceremony and public presentation of 10 Operational Programmes. These programmes will direct the action of Cohesion Policy in Portugal for 2007-2013 and will lead to European investment of € 20.9 billion.

The signings cover seven regional programmes -- Açores, Alentejo, Algarve, Centro, Lisboa, Madeira and Norte) and three thematic programmes: "Competitiveness factors" and "Territorial enhancement" with investment from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Cohesion Fund (these amount to €14.8 billion including the regional programmes) and "Human Potential", under the European Social Fund (ESF) (which amounts to €6.1 billion).

The new strategy will focus on human resources, innovation and technology, enterprise development and territorial cohesion. As priorities, the programmes will contribute to the completion of the trans-European transport networks (TEN-T), to the improvement of energy efficiency and reduction of CO₂, to fostering the involvement of enterprises in research and development (R&D) and to the regeneration of deprived urban areas. The "Competitiveness factors" programme will increase the availability of micro-credits for enterprise, notably through the new European initiative "JEREMIE" (Joint European Resources for Micro to medium Enterprises).

Note for Editors

Today's ceremony officially marks the launch of the new cohesion policy in Portugal, following the validation of the Portuguese National Strategic Framework (NSRF) on 28 June.

The 2007-2013 programming period

In total, for 2007-2013, Portugal will benefit from € **21.5 billion** to implement Cohesion policy. The regions "Norte", "Centro", "Alentejo", and "Açores" are eligible under the Convergence objective. The "Algarve" region will be eligible for "statistical phasing-out" (transitional support up to 2013). The region of Madeira falls into the phasing-in regime for the Regional Competitiveness and Employment objective, whereas Lisbon is a full Regional Competitiveness and Employment objective region.

Investment for growth and Jobs

More than **60 %** of the investments for the "Convergence" regions have been "earmarked" by the authorities for expenditure related to the renewed "Lisbon agenda for growth and jobs". This focuses on sectors such as information and communication technologies, research and development, renewable energies, and support to small and medium enterprises. This proportion exceeds **75 %** for regions under the Competitiveness and Employment objective.

Previous achievements of Cohesion Policy in Portugal

Among the projects supported by European regional policy, it is worth mentioning the expansion of Madeira Airport and the building of the Vasco de Gama Bridge linking Lisbon to its southern suburbs. This aid has brought very real changes to the day-to-day lives of the Portuguese. It made it possible, for example, to improve the supply and processing of water for domestic consumption and helped get rid of open rubbish dumps.

For more information on the programmes:
See the following Website

<http://www.qren.pt>

Have your say - Online consultation on the future of regional policy: The Commission has launched a debate on the future of regional policy until the end of January 2008 and invites all citizens to take part via the following website:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/consultation/index_en.htm