

Paris, 8 March 2012

UBC President becomes new President of CECICN

The Conference of European Cross-Border and Interregional City Networks - CECICN today (8 March 2012) elected Mr Per Bødker Andersen, Deputy Mayor of Kolding (Denmark) and President of the Union of the Baltic Cities unanimously to be the new President of the CECICN. The 65-year old politician will lead the network initially for two years.

In a brief address immediately after the vote in Paris, Mr Andersen thanked the Founding President of the CECICN, Xosé Antonio Sanchez Bugallo for his work since the founding of this network of networks in 2010. Andersen said: "Thanks to the former President and the dedication of the involved networks, we have established the CECICN as a heard voice of European cities and regions."

The Conference of European Cross-border and interregional City Networks – CECICN was born in 2010. Its objective is to boost territorial cooperation among border cities in Europe and to reinforce the message concerning the importance of territorial cooperation. CECICN gathers six cooperating networks that represent more than 500 cities in border regions and 37% of European population. President Andersen sees great potential in a "nort-south- cooperation" as he says: "Europe is at a crucial moment for future territorial cooperation. In a context of crisis Europe is now working on the budget for the next seven years (2014-2020) and new regulations on Cohesion Policy. It is a positive sign that cities and regions from the south and the north have pooled their forces to work for the benefit of the people".

President Per Bødker Andersen has stated as one of his goals to bring in his broad experience in regional and European policy making. He is the President of the Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC), the leading city network in Northern Europe, representing over 100 cities of the 10 countries of the Baltic Sea Region. In addition he is member of the Committee of the Regions.

Per Bødker Andersen has clear goals for the CECICN work: "We are working to foster sustainable, smart and safe cities in a network of experts in our 500 member cities. The main goal is to bring expertise, inspiration and share of experiences to our members. Therefore, it is of major importance to reinforce what the benefits of cooperation are, what opportunities it represents and how, through cooperation, Europe can overcome the challenges it faces in the near future. Cooperation is the key to achieve Europe2020 goals."

Per Bødker Andersen is looking forward to his first official act as new President of CECICN, the 1st Congress on Smart Cooperation. The Congress to be hold in A Coruna (Spain) on 25/26 June, 2012 will be a European event where all European Institutions and CECICN networks will be strongly represented.

"CECICN has worked out a strategic document: "Cities and Regions cooperating among borders as an opportunity to overcome crisis". In this strategic document CECICN members describe the benefits of territorial cooperation for the development of border regions. It shows challenges and opportunities created through cooperation. Moreover, the document demonstrates with concrete examples how territorial cooperation is a key issue to achieve Europe 2020 and Single Market goals. Now we will communicate our message", the President finally says.

