

## François Bausch will host the Informal Ministerial Meetings on Territorial Cohesion and Urban Policy in Luxembourg (26-27.11.2015)

Communiqué par: Ministère du Développement durable et des Infrastructures

In the context of the Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the Minister for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure, François Bausch, will chair the Informal Ministerial Meetings on Territorial Cohesion and Urban Policy that will take place on 26 and 27 November 2015 in Luxembourg.

During the last decades, Europe's territory has unevenly developed by favouring regions and cities already well-developed. This trend was reinforced by the financial and economic crises. Therefore, the territorial cohesion of Europe's territory is becoming a particular point of attention. Against this background, Ministers will discuss on 26 November concrete actions to support territorial cohesion and their impact on overall growth and development. The promotion of a balanced territorial development across Europe promises a sustainable and inclusive pathway to growth that could buffer trends like brain drain in rural areas.

Territorial scenarios and visions can illustrate territorial development in Europe by showcasing the impact of long-term trends such as migration and demographic change, policy initiatives such as the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), or sector policies such as the Energy Union or the Digital Agenda for Europe on territories and regions. Ministers will be able to discuss the opportunities and risks deriving from future perspectives of the European territory.

Another important point for discussion is the instrument proposed by the Luxembourg Presidency to strengthen cross-border cooperation and improve the quality of living and working in border regions. There are still a number of legal and regulatory obstacles along borders, such as different technical standards for cross-border facilities or the access of people on one side of the border to healthcare services on the other side of the border. The instrument is meant to solve these challenges by applying certain laws or regulations of one country on the other side of the border, on a voluntary basis and subject to approval from regional or national authorities.

On 27 November, the Ministers responsible for Urban Policy will address how to support small and medium-sized cities as places of attraction and providers of essential services – from a general and a cross-border perspective. As a large share of the European population lives in small and medium-sized cities and as these types of cities are also important drivers for dynamic development, it is crucial to look at city cooperation beyond metropolitan areas and discuss their development potential with a particular focus on cross-border regions.

Lastly, the Ministers will focus on the urban dimension of the refugee crisis as cities play an essential role in the short, medium, and long term with regards to the reception and accommodation of asylum-seekers and the integration of recognised refugees. The main question at stake is what kind of support cities need to deal with the urban challenges of the refugee situation, linked to housing, training, poverty and integration.

### INFORMATION NON DESTINEE A LA PUBLICATION :

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**Contact(s)**

FRANK Dany

E-mail : [danielle.frank@tp.etat.lu](mailto:danielle.frank@tp.etat.lu)

Tél. : (+352) 247-83336

GSM : (+352) 621 173319