



Europejskie Centrum Przedsiębiorczości

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**Comments of *the Foundation – European Centre for Enterprise, Poland*
(*Fundacja Europejskie Centrum Przedsiębiorczości*)
on the Commission Working Document:
Consultation on the Future “EU 2020” Strategy**

In general we appreciate that the Commission is going to prepare and adopt such a strategic document and that this document is subject of public consultation.

Below we present our opinions and comments on this document as a part of the consultation process. There are many positive features of the document. However, in the comments below we concentrate rather on the weaknesses of the document which we consider as very substantial.

- **The strategy should not be considered only as an instrument to tackle the current economic and financial crisis.** It should rather be a roadmap for the EU for the nearest decade. Of course, the analysis of the current economic environment cannot neglect the financial and economic crisis. In our opinion there is too much focus on the current crisis in this document and therefore this strategy may be considered as a strategy on combating the negative effects of the current financial and economic crisis rather than the strategy on the future of the EU.
- **A successful EU 2020 Strategy must be also built on the lessons learnt from the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy.** There is no reflection on what has been achieved by the Lisbon Strategy, and what and why has failed. This lack of continuity between previous and new agenda makes impossible to draw any lesson from the experience of implementation of the Lisbon Strategy. It is important to state clearly how the new agenda refers to the previous one. It is not enough to say that the new strategy will be the successor to the current Lisbon Strategy. In our opinion there is no radical change between the two (even there are some drawbacks in some areas, e.g. in the area of the regional policy, which we indicate below) so the question of efficient method of implementation still remains open.
- **The document gives an impression across all the parts as it was written by macroeconomists for economists and not for the common people, the EU citizens.** It looks at socio-economic processes from the very macro-level and not from the micro-level and the level of common EU citizens.
- **Is “EU 2020” to be only an EU economic strategy or to be much wider an EU general development strategy covering all the key EU policies and areas of activities? Is “EU 2020” to be a strategy for the EU economy or for the EU citizen? We would prefer this strategy to**

be more as a general strategy. At present, the document gives an impression that this strategy will be purely an economic strategy. We would like to see what this strategy will bring for EU citizen. We see its general objective as “to achieve a sustainable social market economy, a smarter and greener economy”. Will it make the standard and level of life of EU citizens higher and lower?

- **There is no clear vision of the EU in 2020 and the strategy is very insubstantial.** We only know that we are to have a smarter and greener and sustainable social market economy in 2020. Will we have an economy stronger or weaker than e.g. of the US? Our standard of life, will it be at the current level or higher, or will it be the best in the world? This list of questions can be continued. We can deduct that we will probably spend more money at the EU level on items such as research and innovation, energy efficiency, high-speed trains, etc. But that is not enough.
- **The strategy looks as it was written for rich and not for all the Member States, especially poorer Member States.** There are big discrepancies in economic performance and the level of life between the Member States and the regions of the EU. The strategy does not tackle this problem at all.
- **There is no reflection on risks concerning the presented model of development** (shift to greener, knowledge-based economy, promoting self-employment and flexicurity system, investment in people). Is this way of dealing with crisis and globalization challenge suitable for all? For example, how will the risk of creating few centres of fast growth and leaving others far behind be minimized?
- **The question of how to assure the success of new strategy is also unresolved.** Basing on the experience of past years we know that an open method of coordination is not sufficient. On the other hand a system that would involve some sanctions is unacceptable for many Member States as it was shown by reaction to the recent Spanish presidency proposal.
- **The role of regions and of the regional policy itself is completely neglected in the new strategy** and only territorial cohesion is mentioned somewhere. We think that it is important to state how regions, national parliaments and other non-state actors can get engaged in the implementation of strategy.

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