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## City of Malmö response to the consultation on the EU 2020 Strategy

The City of Malmö welcomes the consultation on the EU 2020 strategy. As the European Commission we believe it is important with a strategy setting the agenda for the future with sustainable long term objectives.

We strongly believe that the European Union needs to approach the future with clear focus on economic, social and environmental sustainable development and cohesion. To achieve these objectives, the local and regional levels need to be involved as strong partners. Without the local level, the European Union will not be able to deliver the sustainable and long-term results aimed for.

We would also like to stress the importance of cohesion policy as an instrument to enhance competitiveness, innovation and employment in all European regions and cities.

### **Basing growth on knowledge**

The City of Malmö believes that education is central in achieving growth, inclusion and a sustainable job market. We share the view of the European Commission that strengthening education and supporting lifelong learning are some of the most effective ways of fighting inequality and poverty. Great emphasis on vulnerable groups is needed to ensure that no one is excluded from knowledge.

We also agree with the European Commission that it is necessary to provide more attractive framework conditions for innovation and creativity. This includes not only adequate funding for the R&D sector and other creative environments but also facilitation on a European level in terms of cooperation, exchanges, partnerships and student mobility. Cities can play a central role in this field.

### **Empowering people in inclusive societies**

More and better jobs with higher productivity are needed. A real chance for everyone to enter the labour market, with special emphasis on possibilities for young people, is necessary when working for socially sustainable societies.

### **Competitive, connected and greener economy**

The European Union needs to take the lead in the transition to a smarter and greener economy. Cities are important players in this field. The City of Malmö, as well as many other Swedish and European cities, is strongly committed to work for adaptation to climate change. In Malmö, the new climate and environmental strategy sets ambitious targets; 100 percent renewable energy sources will supply the city by the year 2030 and by the year 2020 the municipal organization will be climate neutral. This clearly shows that cities are on the forefront in these issues.

The City of Malmö agrees with the European Commission concerning the necessity to have strong energy and transport policies in Europe. Cities have showed that they are important actors in this area. Cities are often the testing ground for new pilot actions (e.g. the Western Harbour<sup>1</sup> area in Malmö), often with European funding from innovative programs, structural funds and Research and Development funds. Regarding transport cities have a real possibility to stimulate growth by developing wider and more efficient public transport networks, and hereby open up for new commuting alternatives for the inhabitants.

The EU Cohesion Policy is a central instrument for mobilizing the local resources necessary for reaching the goals and priorities set in the EU 2020 strategy. The City of Malmö believes that the EU Cohesion Policy should be an instrument available to all European regions and cities and as such be an integrated part of the EU 2020 strategy. The future policy should have a strong focus on sustainable urban development.

### **Concluding remarks**

Finally the City of Malmö concludes that the consultation paper points out important priorities. However there are some significant shortcomings as regards to the necessary involvement of the local level in the European policy development and the disregarding of cohesion policy as an important tool for successful implementation of the priorities outlined in the EU 2020 strategy.

We look forward to a revised strategy paper which includes cooperation between the EU, Member States and the sub-national levels (i.e. regions and municipalities) with the aim of implementing the EU 2020 strategy. The City of Malmö believes that it is of high importance that the regional and local level will have the mandate and the financial resources, including structural funds, to be able to contribute to the fulfillment of the strategy.

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<sup>1</sup> The Western Harbour area in Malmö is a new city district totally self sufficient in producing its energy needs. The city has managed European Commission funded energy research projects in the area.