

European Commission
Commissioner Hübner (Regional Policy)
B-1049 Brussels
Belgium

EU Secretariat
Christiansborg
DK-1240 Copenhagen K
Tel. +45 33 37 55 00
Fax +45 33 32 85 36
www.ft.dk
ft@ft.dk

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Opinion on the Commission's Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion: Turning Territorial Diversity into Strength (COM(2008) 0616)

Dear Commissioner Hübner,

I am sending you the reply from the Danish Parliament's European Affairs Committee and Municipal Affairs Committee to the consultation on the Commission's above-mentioned Green Paper.

On 5 November 2008 the European Affairs Committee asked the Municipal Affairs Committee to discuss the Commission's Green Paper. The Municipal Affairs Committee discussed the matter at a number of meetings and agreed on a reply to the consultation. This was endorsed by the European Affairs Committee on 20 February 2009 and is reproduced below.

Opinion from the Committee of interest to the European Affairs Committee, the Education Committee, the Immigration and Integration Affairs Committee and the Science and Technology Committee

The Municipal Affairs Committee appreciates having been consulted about the Green Paper, which it has discussed at two meetings. The Green Paper focuses, among other things, on ensuring that peripheral areas are not cut off from economic, social and technical developments in society. This is an important objective, for one thing because a relatively large number of Europeans live in rural areas. The Municipal Affairs Committee therefore agrees that territorial cohesion should be taken into account also when planning the EU's other policies. However, the Committee would also like to make the point that any EU initiatives aimed at strengthening territorial cohesion should be structured in such a way that they do not reduce local and municipal self-government in the Member States.

Yours sincerely,

Svend Auken
Chairman of the European Affairs Committee

Hans Kristian Skibby
Chairman of the Municipal Affairs Committee