



**Roma, 11 luglio 2013**

**Prot.2013p4626.bv**

Dear colleagues,

first of all we would like to thank you for your kind message, that gives us the possibility to clarify a series of issues. We would like nevertheless to say that we are a little bit surprised surprised to receive such communication at this stage, when the preparation of the conference is in full swing.

As a premise to this reply, it is necessary to clarify that two main issues lie behind the preparation of this conference that should be kept in mind at all times. The organisations writing this message had to apply for EU funding in order to make the conference economically sustainable. This was announced during the conference that took place in Moscow in September 2012. In any case, without this financial support, we would have not been in the condition to host it or to cover the expenses (according to the information previously sent) for the delegates.

The request for EU funding was submitted last year in April 2012 in a big hurry and with huge efforts. The “C.Re.A.T.E.S project – Capital Regions And the Twenty20 European Strategy” is simply aimed (and this can be easily understood by the questionnaire) at investigating the role of trade union organisations in fostering growth and quality jobs in our territories, drawing on the growth strategy launched by the EU. As you know, our organisations opposed and will oppose vividly EU austerity policies, so we approach the EU 2020 Strategy with strong criticism. For sure by submitting a project on this issue , we never meant to endorse the policies you described in your message. On the contrary, we hope to transfer to the Commission the message that trade union organisations have different points of view relating to the issues you mentioned and many others included in the strategy (while mostly agreeing with the growth targets highlighted by the EU). We are convinced that this will come to light in the report that will derive from the analysis of the questionnaires.

We do also fully agree when you say that our action should be trade union focused. This is the reason why the ETUC (that already confirmed the participation in our conference) will take the floor at the conference to oppose its Social Compact for Europe - that we all strongly supported - to the austerity plans of the EU.

The second issue that we would like to clarify as a premise is that the EU funding is connected to bureaucracy and funding guidelines that we are striving to adapt as much as possible to our conference format.

The meeting in Athens was attended by all project partners, i.e. all the trade union organisations that last year sent us a partnership letter (following the many requests of a partnership letter sent out in March/April 2012) and the members of the present steering committee of the



conference, i.e. the so called Troika. With them we discussed all the issues concerning the project and the conference.

As for the network's name, this was widely discussed at the Athens meeting too. The acronym ECTUN does not make any direct reference neither to the metropolitan or regional dimension of our organisations, but only to the capital dimension, which is the only common and unifying feature of all our organisations that are based on the capitals territories. Our organisations – which are significantly different – have different territorial dimensions. Indeed – as you can easily check in the documents of the past conferences – the name of our conferences has always been “Permanent Conference of the Trade Union Capitals”. We can't see any change in this respect, except the fact of having made it clear that ours is an informal network of territorial trade union organisations.

The need of a logo and of the acronym ECTUN derives from the necessity of facilitating the relationship with the OPCE (the network of employers association in the capital cities), as agreed unanimously at the Athens meeting. We are in the process of drafting a common joint document with the OPCE on green economy and sustainable development that will be sent to you as soon as possible and that we will officially present at the Rome conference.

At the end of your message you then mention a series of topics that you suggest to be the core of the discussion of the conference. Such topics are indeed at the core of the trade union action carried out by all our organisations, so we wish that the discussion at the occasion of the conference will be very fruitful and make our informal network stronger allowing us to work jointly on the objectives you described even in a stronger partnership in the next few years.

In any case we are available for further clarifications and for face to face meetings, where needed.

Faternally,

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