



**PROGRAMME OF WORK  
OF THE RHÔNE-ALPES PRESIDENCY  
OF THE "FOUR MOTORS FOR EUROPE"  
2011-2012**

The “Four Motors for Europe” agreement, which includes Baden-Wurttemberg, Catalonia, Lombardy and Rhone-Alpes, embraces nearly 33 million inhabitants, or 6.6% of the total population of the European Union, and represents economic wealth equivalent to 7.8% of the EU’s GDP.

As a result, the Four Motors are a major force within the European Union:

- These partner regions signed a multilateral, borderless cooperation agreement in 1988;
- They play a leading role in their respective Member States in terms of economic and industrial development and innovation.

The Four Motors for Europe are organised and operate on the principle of a rotating presidency, which is assumed by each of the members in turn. The region that is president drives policy and coordinates the network in accordance with an annual programme of initiatives drawn up previously.

On 11 July 2011, the Rhone-Alpes Region will assume the presidency for a one-year term.

This presidency will take place against a backdrop of major changes within the Four Motors for Europe:

- The last regional elections brought in new teams to lead Catalonia and Baden- Wurttemberg, creating new opportunities for cooperation and exchange among the four partners;
- All of the Regions are faced with heavy budget cut-backs this year.

The Rhone-Alpes presidency of the Four Motors will revolve around two focus areas:

- Sustainable innovation;
- The role of the Four Motors within the European Union.

The work carried out throughout the year by the thematic working groups will reflect and support the main focus areas of the Rhone-Alpes presidency’s programme

## I. 1ST FOCUS AREA: SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION

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Since 2007, the Four Motors for Europe have applied a strategic approach aimed at making the Regions more competitive in the economy, science and technology in a context of global interdependence.

This goal was reiterated in the European strategy voted in by Rhone-Alpes in 2007 and confirmed by the successive presidencies of Lombardy (2009-2010) and Catalonia (2010-2011).

For 2011-2012, we propose that the Rhone-Alpes presidency pursue these goals and focus its programme on **sustainable innovation**, thereby addressing the new environmental issues our Regions now have to tackle.

The Rhone-Alpes presidency of the Four Motors has decided to focus our efforts and channel our resources into three key events spread out over the whole year.

The network’s thematic working groups will be in charge of preparations for these events.

a) **The European Conference of Regions on Climate Action (20-21 October 2011)**

The European Conference of Regions on Climate Action, organised by the Rhone-Alpes Region in partnership with the Climate Group and nrg4sd networks, will be held on 20 and 21 October 2011 in Lyon.

This event will be the first highlight of the Rhone-Alpes presidency of the Four Motors for Europe and the Presidents of its three partner Regions will be invited to take part in the debate.

The conference will be divided into two parts.

- The first day will consist of three thematic workshops on sustainable mobility, energy efficiency and inter-regional solidarity.
- The second day will consist of a plenary session on policy, at the end of which the partner Regions will sign a declaration with a view to the climate talks to be held in Durban at the end of the year.

Prior to the conference, the Four Motors' environment working group will:

- Consider the Regions' strategic vision and the dialogue to be established with EU institutions;
- Provide input for the conference's thematic workshops, using emblematic examples from the Four Motors.

This event is the first of a series of meetings, which we propose to continue by organising a cycle of conferences in each of the Regions making up the Four Motors for Europe.

b) **Institutional, economic and technological promotion as part of cooperation with the "Four Motors for Mercosur" (27-30 February 2012)**

Four Motors for Mercosur is an inter-regional agreement modelled on the Four Motors for Europe. It comprises the state of Parana (Brazil), the province of Cordoba (Argentina), the department of Alto Parana (Paraguay) and the department of Revera (Uruguay).

In May 2009, the President of the Rhone-Alpes Region, Jean-Jack Queyranne, signed a memorandum of intention with regard to setting up cooperation between the two networks. This document marked the beginning of a long-term collaboration, mainly in the areas of economic competitiveness, green technologies and institutional cooperation.

In early December 2010, the eight European and South American Regions gathered at the POLLUTEC trade show to begin cooperation in the area of clean technologies (2011-2012). Through exchanges between the two networks, they aim to make their businesses more competitive and raise the environmental quality of their economies.

A number of projects have already been launched:

- Set up a funding committee to monitor national, European and international funds used to support collaborative clean-tech projects;
- Exhaustively map each region's most emblematic areas of expertise and experience in the fields of biomass and waste management (1<sup>st</sup> half of 2011);
- Organise a technical seminar in August 2011 in Cordoba in preparation for the meeting to be held in early 2012.

An **institutional, technological and economic mission** (led by the Vice Presidents of the Four Motors)

to be held from **27 to 29 February 2012** in the Mercosur partner regions will be a key event of the Rhone-Alpes presidency.

In particular, this mission will be an opportunity for the European businesses involved to explore new markets.

### c) **European innovation fairs (October 2012)**

In the Rhone-Alpes Region, there are two major regional events devoted to innovation:

- d) The Grenoble Innovation Fair (GIF) presents opportunities for collaboration between industrial groups, start-ups and research laboratories;
- e) The Rendez-vous Carnot bring together members of the research community. The topic in 2010 was green innovation.

There are plans to merge these two events in coming years. We propose to take advantage of the closure of the Rhone-Alpes presidency of the Four Motors to make these meetings a **major European event in innovation and technology transfer**.

Initially, regional partners and agencies involved in research and innovation from the Four Motors for Europe will be sent an invitation to the 2011 edition of the event.

Prior to the 2012 edition, a one-day "Four Motors" meeting will be held in Brussels in the spring of 2012. Attended by the innovation agencies of the four partner Regions and representatives of the European Commission, it will discuss EU post-2013 research policy (the future FP8) and present a common policy statement from our Regions.

## **II. 2<sup>ND</sup> FOCUS AREA: THE ROLE OF THE FOUR MOTORS FOR EUROPE WITHIN THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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For the 2011-2012 year, the Rhone-Alpes Region would like the programme of its presidency of the Four Motors to **reflect the major meetings on the EU calendar**.

The European Union has already defined its post-2013 policy directions and is currently constructing its future funding programmes. It is important, therefore, that the Four Motors for Europe makes itself heard so that the Regions are recognised as key stakeholders in European development.

The Rhone-Alpes Region accordingly intends to pursue the Four Motors for Europe's efforts to strengthen the network's role at European level.

Following on from the first common policy statement on future EU cohesion policy presented to the European Commission at the beginning of 2011, the Rhone-Alpes Region would like to suggest that the partners **consider the matter together and draw up a common position** on:

- European Union initiatives to help SMEs expand into international markets (July 2011);
- The future of EU structural funds (autumn 2011);
- The future Common Agricultural Policy (winter 2011);
- Future EU research & development policy (spring 2012 - see point Ic above).

## 111. THESE INITIATIVES RELY ON THE WORK OF THE THEMATIC WORKING GROUPS THAT SUSTAIN THE PROGRAMME OF THE RHONE-ALPES PRESIDENCY

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In order to implement the main policy directions of its presidency, the Rhone-Alpes Region will rely on the work done by the Four Motors' various thematic working groups.

In this context, it is important to promote all of the projects and initiatives conducted by the agreement, including technical meetings, participation at conferences and trade shows organised by the Rhone-Alpes Region or the EU, and EU-funded projects.

### a) "Economy" working group

This working group is responsible for implementing the **multi-year action plan** that will be adopted at the end of 2011 and which has three main priorities:

- Help businesses in the Four Motors regions expand into international markets. More specifically, the four regions will be present at thematic trade shows and conduct business development missions outside the EU. The next such mission will take place in the Mercosur as part of cooperation with the Four Motors for Mercosur.
- Policies to promote innovation and interclustering, as part of the "dialogue cluster" workshop. For the 2011-2012 year, work will focus on green mobility. The Four Motors will participate in the next Truck & Bus World Forum to be held in Lyon at the end of December 2011.
- Lobbying and promotion of the network at European and international level, mainly by drawing up common position statements with regard to EU policy on economic development and innovation.

### b) "Environment" working group

This working group will continue its work on climate change, with a view to the conference organised on the subject on 20 and 21 October 2011 in Lyon.

### c) "Science and Research" working group

This working group will help the development and innovation agencies of the four partner Regions identify joint projects in R&D and technology transfer, funded by EU programmes to support research.

### d) "Youth, Sport and Training" working group

Europe is constantly evolving, as we can see by recent political changes within the Four Motors for Europe, and **the role of young people as vehicles for hope and future aspirations** should be a core concern for our Regions.

As part of its presidency of the Four Motors, the Rhone-Alpes Regions proposes to shine a spotlight on youth by:

- Holding the plenary session of the European Youth Parliament in Lyon in July 2011;
- Encouraging the mobility of apprentices and young professionals between the partner regions by signing bilateral and multilateral cooperation agreements;

- Promoting exchanges of young sportspeople through regular competitions organised by the regional sporting federations of the Four Motors regions in disciplines such as kayaking, gymnastics, table tennis and handball;
- Holding a meeting of trade unions from the Four Motors regions in Lyon at the end of 2011 to discuss the future of young people.

#### e) "Culture" working group

The Rhone-Alpes Region proposes to support renewed cooperation in the cultural field, in particular by **promoting, at European level, the policies implemented by the four Regions** to support cultural and artistic activity. Two main measures have been identified:

- Publicise our regions' initiatives to support the film industry;
- Take part in European think tanks on the creative industries.

#### f) "ICT" workshop

The ICT workshop began in June 2010 on the theme of "practices and society".

Echoing the Rhone-Alpes presidency's initiatives to encourage sustainable innovation, this workshop is continuing over 2011-2012. It will work on research into and support for deploying innovative digital solutions that can be pooled at European level.