



Gdynia Declaration of European Alliance Group on Developing a EU policy for the regeneration of port cities

The European Alliance (EA) Group at the Committee of the Regions, at its extraordinary meeting in Gdynia (Poland), held on 6 June 2016, confirmed its commitment to actively contribute to developing a EU policy for the regeneration of port cities, and agreed on the following declaration.

The European Alliance Group:

1. **Recognises that** historically ports and cities have strong ties and have developed in close relationship, such is the nature of this interrelationship that it continues to transform. In modern times the effects of globalization have accelerated and ports and the shipping industry have undergone profound changes in scale and in business culture.
2. **Agrees** that regenerating ports and cities is crucial to address the post-crisis stagnation and global industrial restructuring. In this sense, ports and businesses associated with maritime affairs as well as their variety of functions are a strong asset which should be enhanced in all their economic, cultural and environmental dimensions to the benefit to all its citizens and local communities.
3. **Welcomes** the European Commission State Aid Modernisation initiative and its intention to streamline procedures and include exemptions for investments in ports.
4. **Stresses** the need to focus EU policy depending on types of ports and on their geographical locations, economic activities, regulatory regimes and different applicable national ports' policy.
5. **Recalls** the key importance of TEN-T network ports in enhancing economic competitiveness, connectivity with other forms of transport and with its surrounding areas thus achieving territorial cohesion and accessibility.
6. **Encourages** local and regional authorities to find synergies with port authorities to ensure ports' economic, logistic, industrial activities, fit with strategic municipal and urban planning.
7. **Points out** that the development of port cities depends on the capacity to connect the urban fabric with port related activities and integrated port-city ecosystem. A sustainable approach requires integrated port-city/town relations as a point of balance in achieving: environmental integrity, social and economic prosperity, and a high quality of life.

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8. **Regrets** that de-localisation of port activities or decline in traffic has left many coastal towns facing huge areas of derelict land, abandoned buildings and infrastructure at the former heart of the city.
 9. **Underlines** however that port-cities offer huge opportunities in terms of infrastructure, assets, skills for the development of new emerging industries and cultural and leisure activities.
 10. **Urges** local and regional authorities to encourage clustering of activities, where innovation and creativity could flourish to the benefit of the local development.
 11. **Recalls** that local and regional authorities play a key role in developing innovative solutions, promoting clean investments, including renewable energy, and encouraging behavioural change and public acceptance for the regeneration of port cities and areas.
 12. **Recognises** the pressure for the development of alternative uses in areas that are obsolete for or underutilised by their original functions, particularly in parts of the port surrounded by the city.
 13. **Believes** that the development of coherent sustainable tourism policy will lead to tangible benefits to both the local economy and indeed the local environment.
 14. **Expresses** its commitment to the development of a European Union policy for the Regeneration of Port Cities and **urges** the EU and Member States in partnership with local governments to prioritise funding for investments in ports cities or towns.
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