

## 7. The Lisbon Process is needed as never before

The European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party, convening in Barcelona, Catalonia on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> November 2009:

Whereas:

- The global financial crisis is likely to leave structural traces in the European economic landscape, and the economy could be on a structurally lower growth path unless action is taken;
- The analysis underlying the Lisbon Process, i.e. the need for Governments and the private sector to invest in knowledge and innovation to increase productivity and retain European competitiveness in an increasing competitive global environment; remains fully applicable;
- The 24 guidelines for economic leadership set in the Lisbon process, for 2010 will not be fully met;
- Europe will realise its competitive edge only by creating focus and critical mass in research and innovation on a European scale;
- The greying of the population underlines the need for increasing labour productivity, both in terms of costs and lack of labour force;
- The climate crisis adds the challenge of realising low-carbon economic growth.

Underlines the need to:

- Continue to give priority to investing in education, research and innovation, also in the context of the current economic and financial restraints, using public money to leverage financial participation of the private sector;
- Increase the flexibility of the European labour market by avoiding mandatory retirement, especially for knowledge workers, and facilitating both the immigration and migration of knowledge workers into and between EU Member States through a blue card scheme;
- Invest in high quality education at all levels, avoid early drop out, and ensure curricula correspond to the requirements of public and private employers; provide more funds to promote international student exchange programmes, in order to encourage students to develop into a more mobile workforce;
- Remove barriers to the free movement of knowledge by strengthening the role of the European Research Council as the central European institute for frontier research, by improving the single European patent system and facilitating cross border funding of research;
- Increase the efficiency and impact of public and private spending on research and innovation by concentrating efforts in joint European initiatives, focusing on long-term strategic goals, meeting demands from either industry or European citizens;
- Increase the global attractiveness of Europe as a location for research activities by investing in building state-of-the-art research infrastructures;
- Capitalise on the economic opportunities generated by the challenges of meeting the international climate crisis as well as the needs and demands of a greying population through research and innovation according to the strict criterion of the quality of research;

- Help small and medium enterprises to access knowledge and to increase support for knowledge-intensive SMEs to realise their growth potential.

Calls on:

- The European Council and the Commission to put forward a clear and viable timetable for the implementation of the Lisbon Process;
- The Council of the European Union to increase funding for Research and Innovation according to the strict criterion of the quality of research;
- The Council of the European Union and European Commission to strengthen the European Research Council, by increasing funding and creating opportunities for researchers to excel in their field;
- The Council of the European Union and the European Commission to prioritise the creation of a truly European education zone at university and vocational level, by increasing and facilitating the exchange of students and knowledge workers, and making degrees compatible and comparable throughout the European Union;
- Member States to decrease regulations that hamper knowledge-intensive SMEs' efforts to work and compete on a European level.