



## TARPTAUTINIŲ KONFERENCIJŲ ATGARSIAI

### INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE “REGIONS IN FOCUS”

The thirteenth International conference of the Regional Studies Association, held at the Universidade de Lisboa in early April in Lisbon, was a great success. The conference has attracted over 300 academics, policy-makers and practitioners from almost 40 countries met to exchange ideas, to discuss key regional issues network and to enjoy socializing in a wonderful location, making this the second largest event the Association has even organized.

Besides the gateways, there were three plenary sessions. After the opening plenary on Monday which sets the conference into the context of Lisbon and Portugal presented by splendid speakers Andres Rodrigues-Pose from London School of Economics and Augusto Mateus from Technical University of Lisbon, the participants have debated recent developments in European structural funding and regional policy on Tuesday presented by famous speakers Nuno Vitorino from Observatorio Do QCA III and Ronnie Hall from European Commission the participants have focused on culture, mobility and tourism on Thursday. Fascinating plenary and parallel sessions provided many opportunities to discuss key regional issues.

My academic report “Cohesion and competitiveness of in Lithuania” showed the high level of development of some cities and a gap is still growing between them. The higher investment of EU structural activities in Lithuania was brought in infrastructure than in human capital and the knowledge

economy development. A faster development in already strong areas of country was noticed too. At the same time there appears to exist a tendency towards further agglomeration of high-income economic activities. This signals that the growth generated by the cohesion support might lead to widening regional disparities in Lithuania. These interventions should help to consolidate local resources and facilitate efforts to build up the key infrastructure, human, social and physical capital that will help to guarantee their future competitive success for least-developed regions. At the same time, the more-developed regions and big cities of Lithuania are likely in need to employ a wider range of different interventions addressing specific market failures that holding back their performance and competitive position. In the presence of disparities in regional technological attainment, the inter-regional trade also promotes the technological diffusion when the technological progress is incorporated in traded goods, thus providing yet another possibility for poorer local economies of Lithuania to achieve higher level. The next International conference of the Regional Studies Association will be in Prague in the early summer of 2008.

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