

MARTENS AND LOPEZ ♦ ISTURIZ REMIND IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL MEDIA FOR CONNECTING WITH EUROPEAN CITIZENS

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The President and the Secretary General of the European People's Party (EPP), **Wilfried Martens** and **Antonio Lopez – Isturiz**, attended the second Summer University for local and regional media called "**Local Media meets Europe – Europe meets local media**" organized by the European People's Party (EPP) Group in the Committee of the Regions (CoR) on 12 and 13 June in Brussels.

Around 70 journalists from all the countries of the European Union (EU) and officials of the European institutions participated in this meeting.

In the debate on Energy and climate change: EU solutions for citizens Wilfried Martens underlined that climate change is the biggest world environmental problem at the moment: *"It directly touches the chances for survival of a huge part of world population and of the ecosystems"*

He reminded that the EPP already proposed last February concrete ideas for a more sustainable, efficient and safe future for energy.

Martens also stressed that the challenge is huge and it is a collective responsibility to look for solutions to keep the earth viable for the next generations: *"Energy-policy will play an important role in a global strategy. Diversification of energy-sources and opting for alternative energy-techniques will lead to less pollution and a reduction of global warming"*.

According to Martens, it is necessary to define the regional dimension of the cost-benefits of climate change and climate-policy. In that context he stressed the necessity to look for the possibility of using means from the EU-structural funds and the cohesion budget to support regions that have to invest a lot to face the effects of the climate change.

Addressing directly the journalists, Wilfried Martens asked them to communicate on the climate change: *"It is up to all European, national, regional and local authorities to take measures to stop climate change; but also all citizens have the responsibility to act. The media need to make them aware of this"*

In the same line, the Secretary General of the EPP, **Antonio Lopez – Isturiz**, reminded the importance of local and regional media in order to explain the benefits of the EU to all the European Union.

During his participation in the second day of the Summer University, Lopez – Isturiz reminded that there is still a lack of information and comprehension between the politicians and the citizens, for example in issues such as the European Constitution.

The local media, he said, have an decisive role to play in order to improve this situation.

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