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## Final Declaration of the 15th CEEP Annual Conference of Local Enterprises

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#### ***“Local Public Services enterprises go for innovation”***

*Representatives from 16,000 local enterprises providing services of general interest throughout the EU gathered on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2012 at the 15<sup>th</sup> CEEP Annual Conference of Local Public Services' Enterprises on the theme “Innovative Local Public Services building Growth in Europe” and agreed on the following statements:*

- 1. Local enterprises providing public services are fully engaged in a process of modernisation** of their mission of providing public services to citizens and businesses in their territories. This modernisation through innovation aims above all at improving the quality, affordability, safety and effectiveness of those services and takes place both in the operational management of the enterprises and in their daily activities.
- 2. Providers of Services of General Interest are a key element of the European economy** both directly and indirectly. Directly, they contribute more than 26% to the EU27 GDP. Indirectly they create employment in other sectors. Among public services providers, local enterprises employ more than one million employees and generate an annual turnover of more than 140 billion Euros. They are important stabilisers and contributors to economic growth as they:
  - Target, on the long-term, sustainable growth,
  - Promote stable investment paths,
  - Stabilise labour markets and
  - Contribute significantly to urban development through innovation taking into account environmental, social or historical considerations.

For further information, please contact:

Priya Klinkenberg- tel. +32 (0) 2 229 21 40

CEEP gathers enterprises and organisations from across Europe, both public and private, at national, regional and local level, which are public employers or providers of services of general interest. CEEP members contribute to more than 26% of EU GDP and employ 30% of the EU workforce; CEEP is one of the three general cross-industry European Social Partners.

3. **Providers of SGIs, whatever their structure or ownership, are enabling tools** by providing necessary services for SMEs and the industry (energy supply, water supply, roll-out of high-speed internet, etc.). In these terms SGIs are the **backbone of the European economy**. A decentralised way of providing SGIs also secures many providers of SGIs in the current economic and financial crises. Despite the context of economic difficulties, the majority of local enterprises still fulfil their mission by providing efficient and quality public services contributing to a stabilisation of local economies and regional labour markets thanks to their strategies.
  
4. **Being innovative requires having the capacities and tools to act.** Therefore, local enterprises providing SGIs call for an adapted EU legal framework and adequate financing tools.  
The very specific nature of Services of General Interest (SGIs) is now well recognised in the EU primary law and clear provisions have been included for example recognising the freedom of local authorities to organise, provide and finance public services in their territories, and regarding the role of SGIs in the European Economic and Social Model. This now needs to be implemented in all EU rules impacting the provision of SGIs, and notably in the revision of EU public procurement directives and in the proposal on concession contracts.  
Local enterprises providing SGIs call for a pragmatic and proportionate approach which will allow to draw up the main lines of the “tool box” at their disposal when providing SGIs, giving them the necessary room for manoeuvre to effectively carry out their mission.
  
5. **As innovative employers, local enterprises providing SGIs are also very much involved in the development of Corporate and Social Responsibility (CSR)**, recognising the specific role of the enterprise towards the community, staff, environment and customers. The CEEP-CSR Label highlights the variety of practices of providers of SGIs, and the fact that a voluntary approach towards social and environmental commitments leads to the best results.



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