



## SILVER ECONOMY IN EUROPE 2005

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### Memorandum of Understanding

#### **Bonn Declaration for the Silver Economy - Silver Economy as an opportunity for quality of life, economic growth and competitiveness in Europe**

**Adopted at the 1st “Silver Economy in Europe” Conference on 17 February 2005, Bonn**

**On the basis of the** demographic change, which over the next few years will result in a sharp increase in the average age of the population and produce a sharp increase in the number of elder people in the industrial nations and newly industrialised countries;

**Having established** that this demographic change constitutes a challenge for the social security systems and labour markets,

**Having established** that the present know-how shows that the demographic change also amounts to considerable societal opportunities for a society characterised by solidarity;

**Having established** that elder people expect new and innovative products and services for greater quality of life in their old age (Silver Economy) while an appropriate innovative drive results in growth and new jobs, and in a global context increases Europe’s competitiveness and that of the companies operating here;

**In recognition** of and in relation to key public documents of the European Union that address the demographic change and the subsequent changes, above all:

- *Report of the high level group on the future of social policy in an enlarged European Union (May 2004)*

- *Report by the Commission to the Spring European Council: delivering Lisbon Reforms for the Enlarged Union (February 2004) and the attendant call on the member states to make a special political effort in view of the demographic change;*
- *Report to the Spring European Council, 21 March 2003, on the Lisbon strategy of economic, social and environmental renewal*
- *Long – Term Care Expenditure in an ageing society (February 2003);*
- *Report from the UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing (Berlin, 11-13 September 2002) and the UN Programme on Ageing.*

**Bearing in mind** that the sustainable development of an economic area depends largely on finding forward-looking economic and socio-political answers to address the demographic development in suitable underlying political conditions;

**Having decided** to seize this opportunity in view of the increase in the quality of life, work and competitiveness in Europe, and jointly dedicate our efforts towards paying increasing attention to the far-reaching, differentiated, challenges and opportunities of an ageing society;

The regions represented at the 1st Silver Economy Conference on 17 and 18 February in Bonn **meet** with the objective of creating suitable underlying political conditions by way of an exchange of ideas in a network of European regions to seize on a regional, Europe-wide and global basis the economic and political opportunities associated with demographic ageing, and accept the Memorandum of Understanding entitled “Bonn Declaration for the Silver Economy as an Opportunity for Quality of Life, Economic Growth and Competitiveness in Europe.”

The network’s specific objective consists of the leading co-operation in matters concerning the Silver Economy to bring about the following in the participating regions:

1. Improve the quality of life of the ageing population;
2. Stimulate activities in the case of products and services for greater quality of life in old age with the objective of more growth and jobs;

3. Consolidate and expand the knowledge base currently available in this connection;
4. Support the incorporation and cohesion of the European regions.

**Agreement has been reached on Europe-wide co-operation regarding the following**

- Create a general greater awareness of the opportunities of an ageing society
- Support regional companies and service providers in the Silver Economy
- Initiate and stimulate an interchange of know-how on the creation and development of regional networks for the Silver Economy
- Create a Europe-wide pool of knowledge on the attendant economic, social and political topics
- Support network members in the regional development initiatives and global marketing in relation to Silver Economy products and services
- Promote political initiatives at European level and draw up a programme to create a worldwide leading European Silver Economy
- Provide mutual support at all political levels: regional, national and European.

The “Silver Economy Network of the European regions” shall, with overall responsibility, group together region and state wide activities in the following areas, and in doing so develop worldwide leading skills for economic and social matters regarding the Silver Economy: independent living (incl. housing, architecture, new media and telecommunications); tourism; sport; culture; home based services and shopping; health and well-being; financial services; regional and local networking – new co-operation culture.

Bonn, 17<sup>th</sup> February 2005