

## Interview with António Vitorino: the methods of the Lisbon Strategy (Lisbon, 24 October 2007)

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[Miriam Mateus] You were talking a little while ago about the Lisbon Strategy. Do you think that it puts forward appropriate methods for the attainment of the objectives set by the European Union?

[António Vitorino] The Lisbon Strategy is based on a different approach from the one on which the internal market was based, the large internal market, the European Single Market. The Single Market was based, above all, on legislative instruments adopted in accordance with the process used in Brussels and which the Member States subsequently had to transpose. That's not the approach of the Lisbon Agenda, which is one of benchmarking, best practices and merely illustrative but not fully binding indicators. So it's much less dependent on the performance of the centre, but it amounts to more than what each State effectively manages to apply.

The assessment that can be made today is that some states have achieved very positive results in applying the Lisbon Strategy objectives because they've carried out the internal reforms required to attain them, while others are further away from those objectives because the pace of their reforms has been slower or less effective. So the consequence is greater asymmetry in the outcome of the Lisbon Strategy. Having said that, I believe that that asymmetry — which, incidentally, reflects the greater complexity and greater diversity of a Union of 27 compared with the Union of 12 Member States (which it was when the internal market project was determined) — that that greater diversity doesn't call into question the validity of the Lisbon Strategy objectives. What we can call for is an improvement in the Lisbon Strategy's system of governance.