

REGI News

Newsletter of the Committee on Regional Development



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In Focus

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5765

it's an average number of inhabitants per municipality in the EU (e.g. 1685 in the Czech Republic and 164755 in the United Kingdom (OECD, 2015)

A word from the Chair



Dear Colleagues,

Dear Friends,

As of last week, our Committee can start working on the Commission's legislative proposal to establish a "Structural Reform Support Programme" for the period 2017-2020, amending the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR).

This file implies a close cooperation with our colleagues from ECON Committee (as associated Committee) and with a number of others which will deliver their opinions. You can find more about this through reading the In Focus chapter of this Newsletter.

As you may have already read, on 24th May, we will host Jyrki Katainen, the European Commission Vice-President in charge of jobs, growth, investment and competitiveness.

It will be a great opportunity to hear about his involvement in REGI related topics.

I'm looking forward to seeing you next week.

Iskra Mihaylova



Issue 7

8th Parliamentary term

17 May 2016

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In Focus

[Structural Reform Support Programme for the period 2017-2020](#)

In December 2015, the European Parliament and the Council received the Commission's legislative proposal to establish a "Structural Reform Support Programme" for the period 2017-2020, amending the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR).

In the following weeks, the relevant parliamentary bodies discussed the competence for this important file. During its meeting on 4 May 2016, the Conference of Presidents has decided to accept the recommendation of the Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs, Mr Buzek, about the division of responsibility between committees for this dossier.

REGI was confirmed as the lead committee and will work together with ECON (associated under Rule 54 of the Rules of Procedure). BUDG and EMPL will draw up opinions with additional provisions under the so-called Rule 53+, while CULT and PECH will have the possibility to produce regular opinions under Rule 53 (AGRI, ENVI, ITRE and LIBE decided not to do so).

Once these important decisions had been taken, parliamentary work on this dossier has started immediately. The first key date will be an extraordinary REGI meeting on 25 May, where Commission Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis will present the proposal to REGI Members.

The aim of this structural reform support programme is to strengthen the overall capacity of Member States to prepare and implement institutional, administrative and structural reforms to promote growth and jobs.

There are important questions to address:

First, the major part of the multi-annual budget of this new programme (EUR 142.8 million) will be deducted from the Technical Assistance budget at the initiative of the Commission under the ERDF, ESF and Cohesion Fund.

Second, the eligibility of actions financed by Technical Assistance is proposed to be considerably enlarged, so that not only the implementation of the ESI Funds, but a wide range of other actions would be covered - as long as they improve national capacities for structural reforms.

This is also relevant in view of the future of cohesion policy after 2020, which is why REGI Members can be expected to be very interested in exchanging their views on this file with the Commissioner.

The co-rapporteurs in REGI on this legislative file will be Ms Constanze Krehl (S&D) and Mr Lambert van Nistelrooij (EPP).



Last time - REGI meeting – 18 and 19 April 2016

An EU strategy for the Alpine region

[2015/2324\(INI\)](#)



Rapporteur:
Mercedes Bresso

In the presentation of her draft-report on the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP), the rapporteur, Ms Bresso, stressed the need to strengthen the role of EU institutions in the governance of the strategy. She also underlined the potential of ESI funds and of other EU funding for the development of the Strategy both in urban and Alpine areas. In addition, Ms Bresso requested that the Member States' competent authorities embed EUSALP projects in the already adopted operational programmes.

The shadow rapporteurs and a number of REGI Members underlined the importance of only using already existing funds to implement the strategy and to guarantee an adequate coordination of the strategy.

Some 217 amendments were tabled to the draft report which will be voted in REGI committee in June 2016.

Exchange of views with EUROCIITIES



Anna Lisa Boni

Ms Anna Lisa Boni, Secretary-General of EUROCIITIES made an eloquent presentation on the need for a genuine EU Urban policy – through implementing the future Pact of Amsterdam – but also spoke on the EU cities' wishes and positions for the future of Cohesion policy post 2020.

Speaking of the Urban agenda, Ms Boni outlined the excellent results achieved in more than 20 years of debate. She pointed out that, owing to determination, the efforts are going into the right direction and that the urban focus of EU policies is ever stronger.

According to Eurocities, the Pact of Amsterdam, which should be discussed on an informal ministerial meeting in Amsterdam on 30 May, is a clear message of strong political support for a delivery mechanism of many city oriented initiatives and policies. It is a city driven process, stemming from the grassroots, with a new set of governance arrangements, improved regulatory agenda and simplified and more focused financial support for cities to tackle difficult demographic, environmental social and economic challenges.

Ms Boni also asked REGI committee members to make every effort to support the Urban agenda and eventually a genuine urban policy. In her view, united metropolitan areas should have their primordial role recognised in the future Regulations, with the adequate funding to be made available in order to tackle concrete challenges (ex: air quality; migration; regeneration etc.)

In the ensuing exchanges with Members of REGI committee, it was made clear that the Urban agenda will not be a new "machinery" adding bureaucratic burden through an additional decision making level. Instead, the agenda should capitalise on what is already built through partnerships, with Member states and REGI committee facilitating and monitoring the outcome, but leaving the cities clearly in the "driver's" seat.

Therefore, MEP's and Ms Boni agreed that REGI committee should send a strong message in Amsterdam and prepare the stage for the political debate on the future Cohesion Policy post 2020, increasing the role of cities and functional urban areas.

*** VOTED IN THE LAST MEETING ***

During the last Committee meeting, the following texts were adopted (for more information please follow the hyperlink):

TITLE	RAPPORTEUR
Cohesion Policy and Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS3) 2015/2278(INI)	Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso (PPE)
Implementation of the thematic objective "enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs (Article 9(3)) of the Common Provisions Regulation 2015/2282(INI)	Rosa D'Amato (EFDD)
The activities, impact and added value of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund between 2007 and 2014 2015/2284(INI)	Tamás Deutsch (PPE)
Improving the connection and accessibility of the transport infrastructure in Central and Eastern Europe 2015/2347(INI)	Joachim Zeller (PPE)
Renewable energy progress report 2016/2041(INI)	Younous Omarjee (GUE)
Acceleration of implementation of Cohesion policy" 2016/2550(RSP)	Iskra Mihaylova (ALDE)

Ahead of us - REGI meeting – 24 May 2016

(*) agenda of the forthcoming meeting might be changed after publication of the Newsletter

The European Union Solidarity Fund: an assessment

[2016/2045\(INI\)](#)



Rapporteur:
Salvatore Cicu

Summer 2002 is synonymous with the severe floods that hit Central Europe. The European Union showed its solidarity with victims of these disasters, creating the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) in order to ensure an effective response to such situations in the future.

So far, more than €3.7 billion has been committed through the Fund in which will fund the response to some 70 disasters: floods, forest fires, earthquakes, storms and drought.

This report will assess the impact of the Fund on the basis of the annual Commission report. This report will give MEPs an opportunity to highlight the importance of the EUSF for countries and regions facing disasters. It will also look for possible improvements in the future.

Exchange of views with Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President of the European Commission for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness



Jyrki Katainen

Jyrki Katainen, the European Commission Vice-President in charge of jobs, growth, investment and competitiveness, will attend the REGI Committee meeting on Tuesday 24 May as a part of the regular dialogue between the Parliament and the Commission.

He is expected to address the synergies between ESIF and EFSI as well as discuss his recent and future work connected with regional policy.

Upcoming events in Brussels or near to your home

Date		Place	Additional info
17/19 May 2016	REGI Delegation	Croatia	
24 May 2016	REGI Committee meeting	EP, Brussels	
25 May 2016	Extraordinary REGI meeting with Commission Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis on Structural Reform Support Programme (SRSP) for the period 2017-2020.	EP, Brussels	
29-30 May 2016	Informal Ministerial Meeting of the Ministers responsible for Urban Matters	Amsterdam, NL	
30 May 2016	CoR Forum on the EU Urban Agenda, Amsterdam	Amsterdam, NL	
01/02 June 2016	Enlargement Day - Contribution of the sub-national authorities to the enlargement process	CoR, Brussels	
01/02 June 2016	SMART REGIONS Conference. Driving Smart Specialisation Investments in Priority Areas for European Growth	Brussels	Registration deadline 17/05/16
7 June 2016	VASAB Conference "Achieving Good Living Environment: territory matters. What's beyond 2030 for macro-regions?"	Warsaw, PL	Registration deadline 24/05/16
8 June 2016	Atlantic Strategy in Action	CoR, Brussels	
15-16 June 2016	REGI Committee meeting	EP, Brussels	
16/17 June 2016	7th European Evaluation Conference "The result orientation: Cohesion policy at work"	Sofia, BG	

Useful internet links

[REGI Website](#)

[EP studies Website](#)

[EP Library - Info on items related to regional development](#)

[OEIL - The Legislative Observatory](#)

[Regional Policy Inforegio](#)

[EUR-Lex](#)

[Committee of the Regions](#)

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