



Newsletter

A word from the Chair



Dear Colleagues,
Dear Friends,

Our April REGI meeting is the final one of the 2014-2019 parliamentary term, and therefore this will also be the last newsletter of the current REGI Committee.

I want to warmly thank all the colleagues and stakeholders for the past five years. I have very much enjoyed both the good spirit of cooperation and the will to improve and defend Cohesion Policy that we have shared between the political groups in the Committee. As a result of the positive atmosphere and our very hard-working Members and staff, we have managed to achieve a lot during the parliamentary term.

For almost a year now, our Committee meeting agendas have been full of reports and opinions linked with the next Multiannual Financial Framework. All the MFF files where we lead the work have gone through the committee phase, and the first readings in Parliament have been completed to further clarify and strengthen Parliament's position. After the elections, the interinstitutional negotiations are foreseen to continue for the Common Provisions Regulation, and to start for the other REGI MFF files. You can follow the next steps through this newsletter.

The European Parliament elections will take place on 23-26 May. The new REGI Committee will have its first meetings in July, and the Committee activities will get into full swing from the beginning of September. The coming autumn will be busy with the legislative work, and the parliamentary hearings of the Commissioners-Designate will also take place. You can read more about that in the next editions of the newsletter.

In our April meeting, Members of the REGI Committee will have a chance to take stock of the closing term and to discuss past, present and future Cohesion Policy with Commissioner Crețu. She will look back at what has been achieved over the past five years, and answer Members' questions on the current implementation and the plans for the future.

Thank you to all our readers for these past few years.
I look forward to seeing you at our April meeting.

Yours,

Iskra Mihaylova

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"We should not forget about period 2007-2013, because it provides us with tangible evidence that helps us to reflect about the future."

Marc Lemaître, Director-General
of DG REGIO

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In Focus

Recap of the MFF legislative files

Common Provisions Regulation 2021-2027

On 27 March, the plenary confirmed its support of the [position reached in February](#) regarding the common rules for cohesion policy in all EU regions for the 2021-2027 period. Despite efforts led by the REGI co-rapporteurs ([Constanze Krehl](#) and [Andrey Novakov](#)) in inter-institutional negotiations, which started shortly after the February plenary vote, an agreement could not be concluded in time before the end of this legislature.

The first reading of this file has now been closed, without a deal, and negotiations will resume under the new Parliament.

You can find more information on the file [on the legislative observatory](#).

European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund

On 27 March, the plenary adopted its position on the European Regional Development Fund-Cohesion Fund proposal by 475 votes in favour, 93 votes against and 53 abstentions.

The text adopted closes the EP first reading of this file and is the starting point for the autumn negotiations with the Council.

You can find more information on the file [on the legislative observatory](#).

European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg)

On 26 March, the plenary confirmed its support of the position reached in January regarding the Interreg file (i.e. the Specific provisions for the European territorial cooperation goal).

The first reading of this file has now been closed and negotiations will start under the new Parliament.

You can find more information on the file [on the legislative observatory](#).



Last time

REGI meeting

21 March 2019

Exchange of views with Leo Brincat, Member of the European Court of Auditors

Mr Brincat, Member of the ECA, attended the REGI March meeting to present the ECA special report no. 03/2019 entitled "European Fund for Strategic Investments: Action needed to make EFSI a full success". He talked about the main points of the report, namely estimated investment mobilized, the geographical spread and the role of national promotional banks.

The European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) was set up in 2015 as part of investment plan for Europe designed to tackle the investment gap emerging from the financial crisis. It aimed to mobilise €315 billion in additional investment by July 2018.

According to Mr Brincat, the ECA's audit objective was to explore whether the EFSI has been effective in raising finance to support additional investment within the whole EU. The audit covered the time period from its launch in 2015 up until July 2018.

The audit concluded that, in principle, the EFSI has been effective and reached its target of mobilising additional investment. Mr Brincat mentioned, however, that the methodology used to estimate the mobilised investment overstated the additional investment in the real economy. The overstatement, according to the report, applies also to the multiplier effect. There was also a risk of double counting, and lack of comparable performance and monitoring indicators.

The report also criticizes the geographical coverage of the projects and states that they often ended up in a few of the larger EU15 Member States. The report points out also that the countries with the most EFSI uptake were the ones that had the most developed and active national promotional banks and institutions.

You can watch the whole debate [here](#). The full report is available [on the ECA website](#).

Exchange of views with Marc Lemaître, DG REGIO Director-General

The Director-General of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO), Mr Marc Lemaître, attended the REGI Committee meeting on 21 March. In his presentation, he shed light on the lessons learned from the past, the situation of the current implementation of Cohesion Policy and what the future looks like at the moment.

Mr Lemaître said that it is important not to forget about the funding period 2007-2013, as it provides evidence and best practises that can be very helpful when planning for the future of Cohesion Policy. He highlighted that the closing of the period is proceeding smoothly and quickly.

He then moved on to analyse the current state of implementation of the policy, and said that it is slow compared with 2007-2013. In his opinion, speed does matter, and the world is not waiting for Europe. On preparation for the future he said that he is sad that it was not possible to finalise the post-2020 legislation, but that useful groundwork was laid, which is something that negotiators will be able to build on after the elections.

Mr Lemaître also spoke about the new "annex D" of the country reports that gives guidance on where cohesion policy investment should go. He stressed that this was not a takeover of Cohesion Policy by the European Semester, but rather a "marriage of equals" that could benefit both.

This was Mr Lemaître's third exchange of views with REGI Committee - the two previous were in January and September 2017. You can watch the whole debate [here](#).

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***** VOTED IN THE LAST MEETING *****

During the Committee meeting on 21 March the following text was adopted (for more information please follow the hyperlink):

TITLE**RAPPORTEUR**

Draft report on Adjustment of annual pre-financing for the years 2021 to 2023
[2018/0322\(COD\)](#)

Mirosław Piotrowski
(ECR)

Ahead of us

REGI meeting

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

11 April 2019

Exchange of views with Commissioner Crețu

The Commissioner for Regional Policy, Corina Crețu, will attend the April REGI meeting to have an exchange of views with Members of the Committee. This will be the last opportunity for such a discussion before the European elections in May.

Commissioner Crețu will talk about the past, present and future of Regional Policy, and address key issues raised by Committee Members. The meeting is a part of the REGI Committee's regular dialogue with the Commission. The last time that the Commissioner was in the REGI Committee meeting was 22 January 2019.

After the elections

Future meetings

The Parliament begins a recess on 19 April for the parliamentary elections which will take place on 23-26 May. The new Parliament will assemble for the first time in Strasbourg on 2 July and the plenary session of 2-4 July will be devoted to the election of senior EP office holders and the appointment of Members to Committees.

It is likely that the REGI Committee will meet for the first time, after the elections, during the week beginning 8 July: a short constituent meeting will be taken up with the election of the Chair and up to four Vice-Chairs, and the adoption of a calendar of meetings for the remainder of the year. The first full meeting of the Committee will probably take place during the week beginning 22 July: at present, a meeting is foreseen for Monday 22 - Tuesday 23 July, and one of the highlights of the agenda will be an exchange of views with the Finnish presidency of the Council about its work programme for the remainder of 2019.

Upcoming events

in Brussels or near to your home

Date	Event	Place	Additional info
4 May	EU Open Day	Brussels, Belgium	
7-8 May	4th Forum of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR)	Budva, Montenegro	
23-26 May	European elections		

Useful internet links

[REGI Website](#)

[EP studies Website](#)

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

[OEIL - The Legislative Observatory](#)

[EUR-Lex](#)

[EC Regional Policy - InfoRegio](#)

[Committee of the Regions](#)