

reginews

newsletter of the committee on regional development



Next Committee meeting

Tuesday 11 February 2014

9.00 - 12.30
15.00 - 18.30

Room JAN 4 Q 2

in focus

- **External study on "European Economic Governance and Cohesion Policy"**
- **Exchange of views with DG REGIO on "The state of implementation of EU Cohesion Policy 2007-2013"**
- **Vote on :**
 - **Optimise the potential of Outermost Regions**
 - **Discharge 2012**
- **Exchange of views on " Gender equality in regional policies for growth - The approach of the new Cohesion Policy in the Baltic Sea Region to gender equality issues"**
- **Exchange of views with DG REGIO on "Towards EU strategy for Adriatic and Ionian Region"**

comments and subscriptions at regi-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu

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Next Publication

Committee Meeting on

19 March 2014

9.00 - 12.30

15.00 - 18.30

Useful Internet links

EP Library - Info on items related to regional development

OEIL - The Legislative Observatory

Regional Policy Info regio

EUR-Lex

Committee of the Regions

EP studies Website

REGI Website



part 1 meeting of 11 February 2014

Here you will find the topics which will be discussed at the next REGI committee meeting on 11 February 2014. The following items will be discussed as foreseen in [the draft agenda](#). Please note that most committee documents (working documents, draft reports, etc.) are available at our website [REGI](#).

1. Presentation of the External Study on "European Economic Governance and Cohesion Policy" (Point 3 of the draft agenda)

The study prepared by REGI committee and Policy Department B of the EP will be presented by the authors. This study analyses the interactions between the wide-ranging economic governance reforms undertaken since 2008 and Cohesion Policy. It details the main changes and analyses how the aims of Cohesion Policy are likely to be affected. It also highlights the challenges of assuring legitimacy and of suitable formulation of Cohesion Policy as especially salient issues for the European Parliament, not least because of the expanded roles in economic governance of the European Commission and the European Central Bank.

The study will be presented by :

- **Iain Begg**, Professorial Research Fellow at the European Institute, London School of Economics and Political Science
- **John Bachtler**, Professor of European Policy Studies; Director, European Policies Research Centre; University of Strathclyde, Glasgow

2. Exchange of views with Walter Deffaa, European Commission Director-General of Regional and Urban Policy, on the state of implementation of the European Cohesion Policy during 2007-2013 period (Point 4 of the draft agenda)

Mr Walter Deffaa, Director-General at DG REGIO, European Commission, will come to the committee in order to inform the Members on the state of play of implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy during 2007-2013 period. An exchange of views will follow.

3. Negotiations on the MFF 2014-2020: lessons to be learned and the way forward (Point 5 of the draft agenda)

Rapporteur: Jan Olbrycht (EPP)
Responsible administrator: Carla Carvalho
Procedure: 2014/2005(INI)
Main committee: BUDG

After the decision of the Conference of Presidents of 16 January authorising the Committee on Budgets to draft an own/initiative the report on the above issue, REGI Coordinators decided that REGI would issue an opinion to this report.

The subject of the report is of great importance to REGI, as the negotiations on the MFF had a very strong influence in the Inter-institutional negotiations on the legislative package for Cohesion policy for 2014-2020. The negotiations on the legislative package for Cohesion policy were closely linked to the MFF, and were indeed made highly dependent on the MFF negotiations by the Council, although the two legislative procedures applicable to the legislative package for Cohesion Policy, on the one hand, and to the MFF, on the other, are totally independent as regards the respective legal bases and the related procedural rules.

The Rapporteur warns indeed that it is necessary to differentiate between the discussions on the MFF and those on the single legal basis for EU policies, including those for cohesion policy, given the provisions of the Treaties and the role of the European Parliament in both processes, considering in this regard that the work on the MFF should under no circumstances interfere in the work on the regulations defining the scope of support and the rules of implementation of each fund, and should thus respect the role of the European Parliament in the negotiations on the legal basis for cohesion policy. The Rapporteur further regrets the fact that the negotiations on the MFF 2014-2020 did not follow this principle, which resulted in the work on the MFF having a substantial influence on the legislative negotiations on the regulations for cohesion policy in terms of both content and timeframe.

Regarding the resources for cohesion policy, the Rapporteur considers that the level of resources should be based on an analysis of the needs and take account of the evaluation of the implementation of the policy in the previous programming period, emphasising, in a reference to the outstanding payments issue, that the division of the resources between individual years of the MFF (definition of the ceilings) should take into consideration the dynamics of cohesion policy, in particular the programming and implementation processes and the time of the final closure of the programmes, in order to ensure the most accurate level of payments for each year. In this framework, the Rapporteur expresses concern regarding the fact that the amount of outstanding payments at the end of the year is constantly growing, considering that cohesion policy is the most affected by the gap in the EU budget, and thus calls for structural reform of the EU budget, including the system of own resources.

Due to time constraints, the draft opinion will have to be submitted in the meeting of 11 February 2014 and, most probably, voted in an extraordinary meeting on 24 February 2014 in Strasbourg, in order to allow the lead committee to take account of it in their vote, now scheduled for 19 March 2014.

TIMETABLE

Consideration of draft opinion: 11/02/2014

Deadline for amendments: 12/02/2014 (tbc)

Adoption REGI: 24/02/2014 (tbc)

Adoption BUDG: 19/03/2014 (tbc)

Plenary: April I 2014 (tbc)

4. Amending Decision 2009/831/EC as regards its period of application (Point 6 of the draft agenda)

Rapporteur: Danuta Maria Hübner

Responsible administrator:

Procedure: 2013/0446(CNS)

Main committee: REGI

The Commission proposal (COM(2013)0930) proposes to extend from 1 January 2014 up to 30 June 2014 for the authorisation to Portugal to apply a reduced rate of excise duty in the autonomous region of Madeira on locally produced and consumed rum and liqueurs and in the autonomous region of the Azores on locally produced and consumed liqueurs and eaux-de-vie.

This procedure is similar to previous initiatives presented by the Commission for the Canary Islands (COM(2013)0781) and for Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique and Réunion (COM(2013)0839), which were adopted by REGI through simplified procedure.

The adoption of this proposal is quite urgent, given that it relates to the extension of the period of application of Decision 2009/831/EC, which expired at the end of 2013. Thus, the Coordinators have decided in their meeting of 22 January, that as soon as the proposal is announced in plenary (the announcement is expected during February I plenary), it will be presented in committee and adopted through the simplified procedure in accordance with Rule 46 of the Rules of Procedure.

Given that the proposed decision is mainly of technical nature and that it is necessary to vote it in the February II Plenary, the Chair proposes to adopt this draft report without amendments, under the simplified procedure in accordance with Rule 46 of the Rules of Procedure.

TIMETABLE

Consideration and adoption of draft report under simplified procedure (Rule 46): 11/02/2014
Plenary: February II 2014 (tbc)

5. Optimise the potential of Outermost Regions (OR) by creating synergies between the EU structural funds and other EU programmes (Point 7 of the draft agenda)

Rapporteur: Younous Omarjee (GUE/NGL)

Responsible administrator: Stefan Manev

Procedure: 2013/2178(INI)

Main committee: REGI

In his INI report, Mr Omarjee is proposing a new approach to EU's public investment in the Outermost Regions – policies based on the promotion of sustainable development. He considers that the support to Outermost Regions is beneficial to the whole of the European Union as it will considerably contribute to the overcoming some essential challenges that the EU is facing in terms of its global presence, sustainable development or climate change. The Outermost Regions of the EU are opening new perspectives to the EU. Investment in the OR's is investment in the EU's future.

The rapporteur is considering that the Outermost Regions were left aside for too long and the focus should come back to them. These regions are a strong asset for the EU.

Art 349 of the TFEU is recognizing that the OR are having their own specificities. Therefore a differentiated and adapted treatment of these regions would be more than welcome.

The rapporteur is proposing a series of synergies that can be developed between the European Structural and Investment and all other programs and public funds available. He's believe is that by creating such strong and permanent synergies between the ESI Funds and Horizon 2020, Life, the CAP, and many other programs the Outermost Regions will have better opportunities to develop their real potential as valuable territories of the EU.

The draft report received some 158 AMs from a number of MEP's coming from various political and geographical horizons. The amendments are covering a wide range of issues, from EU funding available for the OR's to specific forms of cooperation with the institutions of the Union. Another interesting subject covered is the place these territories should play in the EU's global outreach.

The rapporteur has proposed some 22 compromise amendments in his attempts to secure a majority for the vote, which is foreseen for the 11th of February.

TIMETABLE

Presentation of draft report: 18/12/2013

Deadline for amendments: 07/01/2014 (tbc)

Adoption REGI: 11/02/2014

Plenary: February II 2014

6. Discharge 2012: EU General Budget - European Commission (Point 8 of the draft agenda)

Rapporteur: Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D)

Responsible administrator: Carla Carvalho/Stefan Donea

Procedure: 2013/2195(DEC)

Main committee: CONT

The REGI Rapporteur for opinion on the discharge 2012 procedure, Mr. Stavrakakis, has submitted his draft opinion in the REGI meeting of 27-28 November.

Nine amendments were subsequently tabled to this draft opinion, which will be put to the vote on 11 February 2014. The amendments show the Members concern about the errors issue. They emphasise that Member States authorities, as the Court of Auditors noted in its Annual Report, had sufficient information to detect and correct part of the identified errors before certification of expenditure. It is also stressed that any error in a public procurement procedure leads the Court of Auditors to classify the entire expenditure on that procedure as an error even if there is no financial loss, and attention is drawn to the need to unify the current different approaches of the Court and of the Commission as regards the calculation of the error rate in relation to transactions to which the Commission has applied flat-rate corrections.

TIMETABLE

Consideration of draft opinion: 28/11/2013

Deadline for amendments: 17/12/2013

Adoption REGI: 11/02/2014

Adoption CONT: 17/03/2014 (tbc)

Plenary: April 2014 (tbc)

7. Exchange of views on Gender equality in regional policies for growth - the approach of the new cohesion policy in the Baltic Sea Region to gender equality issues (Point 9 of the draft agenda)

A debate with three guest speakers was organized to discuss the task of gender equality in regional policies for growth and the approach of the new cohesion policy in the Baltic Sea Region to gender equality issues.

At an annual forum for EU's Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region in Estonia 2010, Winnet Sweden, the Federation for Women Resource Centers in Sweden, highlighted the importance of a multilevel approach to fully unleash the potential of a gender perspective in the Strategy. Winnet Sweden expressed its intent to take a leading role in a "gender flagship initiative" aimed at strengthening multilevel governance, sustainable growth and WRC networks in the Baltic Sea Region. Successful implementation of the Strategy would only be achieved through a close cooperation between different political levels, business and industry, universities and R&D institutes, and civil society in a Quadruple Helix partnership. A Flagship to build a prosperous, attractive, sustainable and safe Baltic Sea Region, measures have to be launched to develop a society where both women and men have the same opportunities to participate in the economy.

WINNET8 was a 'capitalisation' project funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) within the framework of INTERREG IVC 2007- 2013 focused on growth, gender equality and counteracting the horizontal segregation in the labour market. In this context capitalisation is understood as a process of collecting, analysing, transferring and disseminating good practices. It helps to increase the effectiveness of regional and local development policies in the selected field of cooperation. Implemented during 2010 and 2011, WINNET8 provided policy input in several domains: rural development, local and regional development, employment, education, entrepreneurship, innovation, and science and technology.

Winnet8 originated from a collaborative platform in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR), a Nordic conference in 2007 focused on building up an infrastructure of Women Resource Centres in the Region and the results of previous interregional and regional Women Resources Centers initiatives, WRCs, in the Nordic countries, Baltic States, Poland and Germany. This Baltic Sea region, BSR, platform has been further strengthened by the collaboration with partners representing the north, east, south and west zones of the EU.

In the debate as first speaker Ms Torstensson, Winnet Sweden, will give an introduction and overview of the initiative of developing a new Flagship project on Gender for Economic Growth in the Baltic Sea Region. The second speaker, Ms Hozer-Kocmiel, Winnet Center of Excellence, BSR, at University of Stettin, in Poland, will give the economic-theoretical background of the relation between economic growth and gender equality. Ms Ewa Ruminska-Zimny, International Women's Forum at Warsaw School of Economic, will explain the applied policy of macro-regions as a platform for promoting growth and gender equality. An expert from the European Commission will give a statement on the approach of the new cohesion policy to gender equality issues and economic growth in the Baltic Sea Region.

8. Exchange of views on "Towards the EU Strategy for Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) with Giannantonio Ballette, Coordinator of the Adriatic and Ionian Team at European Commission DG REGIO (Point 10 of the draft agenda)

Following the decision of the European Council of 13 - 14 December 2012, the European Commission was requested to draft an EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR). This new strategy should take into consideration the experience gained in the macro-regional strategies for the Baltic Sea region and for the Danube region as well as the particular features of the Adriatic and Ionian region. A presentation of the current state of play concerning the EUSAIR will take place during this exchange of views with the EC representative.



part 2 meeting of 22 January 2014

Here you will find information on the issues discussed in the last REGI meetings held on 22 January 2014. The following items were discussed as detailed below. Please note that most committee documents (working documents, draft reports, etc.) are available at our website [REGI](#).

1. Votes

Rapporteur / Draftsperson	Report / Opinion	Result of the votes for/against/abstentions
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut	DRAFT REPORT on the " Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002 establishing the European Union Solidarity Fund " 2013/0248(COD) - COM(2013)0522 - (PE524.730)	adopted with amendments legislative proposal as amended: 37/0/3 legislative resolution: 36/0/3 MANDATE for inter-institutional negotiations: 38/0/2
Vilja Savisaar- Toomast	DRAFT REPORT on " European Commission's 7th and 8th progress reports on the EU Cohesion Policy and the Strategic Report 2013 on programme implementation 2007-2013 " 2013/2008(INI) - (PE523.085)	adopted with amendments 39/1/1
François Alfonsi	DRAFT OPINION on " Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down measures concerning the European single market for electronic communications and to achieve a Connected Continent, and amending Directives 2002/20/EC, 2002/21/EC and 2002/22/EC and Regulations (EC) No 1211/2009 and (EU) No 531/2012 " 2013/0309(COD) - (PE524.757)	adopted with amendments 38/1/0
Ivars Godmanis	DRAFT OPINION on the " Proposal for a Council regulation on the Bio-Based Industries Joint Undertaking " 2013/0181(COD) - (PE523.104)	adopted with amendments 39/1/1

Delegated acts	
<p>Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) on the European code of conduct on partnership within the framework of European Structural and Investment Funds</p> <p>2014/2508(DEA) - C(2013)09651</p>	<p>Early non objection procedure was adopted unanimously</p>

2. Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) on the European code of conduct on partnership within the framework of European Structural and Investment Funds

Mr Nicholas Martyn, Deputy Director General of DG REGIO, made a presentation on the content of the code of conduct. The purpose of this first delegated act pertaining to the cohesion policy package is to provide a set of minimum standards and best practices for the organisation and implementation of partnership agreements and of each programme. The entire process should be implemented in accordance with the Member States' institutional and legal framework as well as their national and regional specificities. He underlined that in fact this code of conduct is a document detailing the provisions of article 5 of the Common Provisions Regulation¹. An exchange of views with the Members followed.

3. Exchange of views with Kostís Hatzidákis, Minister for Development and Competitiveness, on the EU Cohesion Policy priorities of the Greek Presidency of the Council of the European Union

Mr Kostís Hatzidákis, Minister for Development and Competitiveness, President in office of the Council, informed the Members on the priorities of the Greek Presidency. He stressed that the coming European elections and the restoring of the image of his countries represent a double challenge for the Greek Presidency.

Former Member and Chairman of the REGI Committee (1994 - 2007), Mr Kostís Hatzidákis pointed out that the several priorities regarding the cohesion policy, mainly focused on the adoption of the EU Solidarity Fund regulation and of several delegated acts focused on implementation of the cohesion policy package adopted last year. He reassured the Members of his personal engagement in order to obtain tangible results in this sense.

An exchange of views with the Members on the priorities of the Greek Presidency mainly in the field of Cohesion Policy followed.

4. Public hearing on "The Reform of the European Union Solidarity Fund"

In the context of the reform of the EU Solidarity Fund (EUSF), a public hearing with experts took place. The focus was on possible modifications to be brought to the future regulation, taking into consideration the experience of several stakeholders in tackling the consequences of disasters according to current European legislative framework. Accents were put mainly on budgetary aspects, improvement of procedures when submitting applications of Member States to the Commission, participation of civil society organisations in the process, simplification of rules, strengthening of the solidarity principle, and on efficiency in working with the EUSF.

¹ Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 - see *Official Journal L 347*, 20/12/2013 P. 0320 - 0469

Four presentations were given by the following experts:

- ***"A civil society perspective of the reform of the European Solidarity Fund"*** by Mr Viliam Palenik, Member of the EESC-study group on the EU Solidarity Fund
- ***"Practical Experience with the Implementation of EUSF Interventions in Austria"*** by Mr Siegfried Jachs, Head of Unit for Disaster Management and Civil Protection
- ***"Robustness, Legitimacy and Efficiency Issues from a Risk-Based Perspective"*** by Mr Stefan Hochrainer-Stigler, Senior Research Scholar, Risk, Policy and Vulnerability, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA)
- ***"The EU Solidarity Fund: the Italian experiences and best practices"*** by Mr Luigi d'Angelo, Head of International relation unit within the Italian Presidency of the Council of Ministers, National Civil Protection Department.

The presentations were followed by a debate with Members of REGI committee.

5. Exchange of views with Johannes Hahn, Commissioner on Regional Policy on the State of Play of EU Cohesion Policy

Commissioner Johannes Hahn started with general considerations, stressing that the EU cohesion policy has triggered both an internal and external interest. Following the adoption last year of the cohesion policy package, he made a short presentation on the state of play of the implementation phase. Commissioner Hahn referred to the current situation as regards the submission by the Member States of the partnership agreements (PAs) and of the operational programmes (OPs) drafts, insisting on the need of having a high quality of these documents rather than focus only on the speed of the process. He mentioned his ambition to adopt all PAs and OPs in the mandate of the current Commission.

Another point referred to the delegated acts already adopted by the College (like the code of conduct) or foreseen to be approved in the next period.

The issue of the investment clause has been brought to the attention of the Committee. Commissioner Hahn explained this possibility which might offer some flexibility for the budgets of those Member States that are not under the Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP).

He also stressed the experience of the EU regional and urban policy, as seen in the dialogue with 10 - 13 international partners such as Russia, China, India, Japan and others.

The entire process for the adoption of the EU Solidarity Fund was also mentioned by Hahn, who thanked to the Committee for the approval of the Parliament's mandate for the coming negotiations on the Commission's proposal.

Afterwards, a discussion took place with the Members mainly on the above-mentioned topics as well as on other subjects such as the role of the innovative financial instruments in co-financing of projects, communication in an integrated approach of the new cohesion policy package in the Member States, practical implications of the Youth Employment Initiative for the regional policy, financing from European structural and investment funds of different sectors, money gap at the end of 2013, and Connecting Europe Facility implementation.



part 3 - other news

Here you will find the latest news related to Committee activities and cohesion policy issues



Chair's participation on events on behalf of the Committee between the last and next REGI meeting

29 January	London	London School of Economics in partnership with the EC Representation in the UK	Panel debate on “Regional recovery in a diverse union”
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More information is available at the Chair's website <http://danuta-huebner.pl/> or with the secretariat.



Chair's meetings with relevant regional policy actors between the last and next REGI meeting

15 January	Minister Hatzidakis, in charge of Development and Competitiveness, on the priorities of the Greek Presidency
30 January	Minister of Interior, Mr. Michelakis, in charge of Regional Affairs , on the priorities of the Greek Presidency.
4 February	Representatives from foundations dealing with Roma inclusion



Members' Research Service - News

Recent publications in the field of Regional Development

Latest analysis



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[Mapping Smart Cities in the EU: study](#) / Policy Department A: Economic and Scientific Policy, January 2014, 200 p.

"This report was commissioned to provide background information and advice on Smart Cities in the European Union (EU) and to explain how existing mechanisms perform. In exploring this, a working definition of a Smart City is established and the cities fitting this definition across the Member States are mapped. An analysis of the objectives and Europe 2020 targets of Smart City initiatives finds that despite their early stage of development, Smart City objectives should be more explicit, well defined and clearly aligned to city development, innovation plans and Europe 2020 in order to be successful." (Source: the study)



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[Manual on regional accounts methods - 2013 edition](#) / Eurostat, 24 January 2014, 138 p.

This Manual on regional accounts is an update of the two methodological booklets of 1996. In addition it includes the modifications introduced by the ESA 2010. The most important modifications concern the treatment of production units without significant labour input or without a fixed location, the calculation of GDP for extra-regio territories, and the compilation of volume growth rates of regional GVA. The manual is particularly addressed to compilers but also to the major users of regional accounts data. (Source: Eurostat)



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[Study on promoting multi-level governance in support of Europe 2020: Inception Report: revised version](#) / DG Regional and Urban Policy, 2014, 106 p.

This inception study aims to generate lessons from policy experiences and to stimulate learning and exchange between regions. The study focuses on both the analysis and facilitation of transfer processes. This is a revised version of the Inception Report of the DG Regio study on promoting multilevel governance in support of Europe 2020, presented one month after the start of the study. The revised report mainly presents the single tasks ahead, based on our tender and taking into account the comments and discussions during the first steering group meeting on 23 October 2013. In addition the report contains also a revised version of the literature review carried out.



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[OECD Economic Surveys: Hungary 2014](#) / OECD, January 2014, 114 p.

OECD's 2014 Economic Survey of Hungary examines recent economic developments, prospects and policies. Special chapters examine enhancing competition and tackling labour mismatches. The previous Survey of Hungary was issued in March 2012. (Source: OECD)

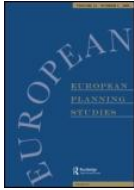


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Urbanization and the role of housing in the present development process in the Arctic
/ by Klaus Georg Hansen, Søren Bitsch and Lyudmila Zalkind (Editors), Nordregio Report 2013:3, 2013, 102 p.

This book is the result of a three year project focussing on the changes in settlement characteristics in the Arctic and emphasizing the housing sector as a means of reflecting the major changes which has characterized the Arctic during the last decades. (Source: the study)

Publications



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European Planning Studies, monthly

European Planning Studies focus upon specific spatial development problems, as well as emerging explanations of new urban, regional, national or supranational developmental tendencies.

Selected articles from the vol. 22, issue 2, 2014:

Confronting Out-Migration and the Skills Gap in Declining German Cities / by Jörg Plöger and Sabine Weck, pp. 437-455 ([Abstract](#))

Is Planning “Under Attack”? Chronicling the Deregulation of Urban and Environmental Planning in England / by Alex Lord and Mark Tewdwr-Jones, pp 345-361 ([Abstract](#))

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