

regi news

newsletter of the committee on regional development



Next Committee meeting

Wednesday 22 January 2014

9.00 - 12.30
15.00 - 18.30

Room ASP 1 G 2

in focus

- **Vote on :**
 - **Mandate to open interinstitutional negotiations on the European Union Solidarity Fund**
 - **European Commission's 7th and 8th progress reports on the EU Cohesion Policy and the Strategic Report 2013 on programme implementation 2007-2013**
 - **European single market for electronic communications**
 - **Statistics for the macroeconomic imbalances procedure**
- **Exchange of views with Minister Kostis Hatzidakis on the EU Cohesion Policy priorities of the Greek Presidency of the EU Council**
- **Hearing on 'the Reform of the European Union Solidarity Fund'**
- **Exchange of views with Johannes Hahn, Commissioner on Regional Policy, on the State of Play of EU Cohesion Policy**

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

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INDEX

PART 1 - 22 January 2014 Meeting

1. [Optimise the potential of Outermost Regions by creating synergies between the EU structural funds and other EU programmes](#)
2. [Commission Delegated Regulation on the European Code of Conduct on Partnership within the framework of European Structural and Investment Funds](#)
3. [European Union Solidarity Fund](#)
4. [European Commission's 7th and 8th progress reports on the EU Cohesion Policy and the Strategic Report 2013 on programme implementation 2007-2013](#)
5. [European single market for electronic communications](#)
6. [Statistics for the macroeconomic imbalances procedure](#)
7. [Exchange of views with Kostis Hatzidakis, Minister for Development and Competitiveness,, on the EU Cohesion Policy priorities of the Greek Presidency of the Council of the EU](#)
8. [Hearing on "The reform of the European Union Solidarity Fund"](#)
9. [Exchange of views with Johannes Hahn, Commissioner on Regional Policy, on the state of play of EU Cohesion Policy](#)

PART 2 - 18 December 2013 Meeting

1. [Optimise the potential of Outermost Regions by creating synergies between the EU structural funds and other EU programmes](#)
2. [Votes](#)
3. [Deadline for amendments](#)
4. [European Union Solidarity Fund](#)
5. [European Commission's 7th and 8th progress reports on the EU Cohesion Policy and the Strategic Report 2013 on programme implementation 2007-2013](#)
6. [Cohesion Policy and Demographic Change](#)
7. [Exchange of views with Nicholas Martyn, DG REGIO, on the Delegated and Implementing Acts following the adoption of the legislative package on EU Cohesion Policy](#)

PART 3 - Other News

[Chair's participation on events on behalf of the Committee](#)
[Info from Members' Research Service](#)

Next Publication

Committee Meeting on
10 February 2014
15.00 - 18.30
and
11 February 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 InfoREGIO
EUR-Lex
Committee of the Regions
EP studies Website
REGI Website



part 1 meeting of 22 January 2014

Here you will find the topics which will be discussed at the next REGI committee meeting on 22 January 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. Optimise the potential of Outermost Regions (OR) by creating synergies between the EU structural funds and other EU programmes (Point 4 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 programmes 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 programmes the Outermost Regions will have better opportunities to develop their real potential as valuable territories of the EU.

Some 157 amendments were tabled to the draft report by Mr Omarjee covering a vast area of subjects. The rapporteur will consider the AMs during next week's meeting in order to examine the possibilities for compromises. The vote on the draft report will take place in February.

TIMETABLE

Presentation of draft report: 18/12/2013

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

Consideration of amendments: 22/01/2014

Adoption REGI: 11/02/2014 (tbc)

Plenary: February II 2014 (tbc)

2. Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) on the European Code of Conduct on Partnership within the framework of European Structural and Investment Funds (Point 5 of the draft agenda)

Rapporteurs: Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE) and Constanze Angela Krehl (S&D)
Responsible administrators: Diana Haase/Monika Makay/Gabriel Alvarez
Procedure: 2014/2508(DEA)
Main committee: REGI

The Common Provisions Regulation for the European Structural and Investment Funds (Regulation 1303/2013), empowers the Commission to adopt a delegated act on a European code of conduct on partnership (code of conduct) to support Member States in organising the partnership (Article 5(3) of the CPR).

The code of conduct is intended to provide a framework for partnership, in accordance with Member States' institutional and legal frameworks, taking account of national and regional competences. (The best practices referred to in Article 5(3) of the Common Provisions Regulation of the European Structural and Investment Funds are set out in a Commission staff working document, accompanying the code of conduct).

The delegated regulation was transmitted on the 7 January to the European Parliament, and distributed to all Members of REGI. The deadline of two months for Parliament or Council to object runs from 7th January and ends 7th March, if the two months extension allowed is not requested. In order to object to a delegated act, Parliament must adopt a Resolution which needs to be properly adopted by the committee responsible accordingly to Rule 87 a) of the Rules of Procedure. If REGI were to object to this delegated act on the European Code of Conduct, an extension of the deadline should be asked and a draft resolution to object the act should be presented in the REGI February meeting with a view to vote it in March and refer to the plenary session in April in Brussels (2-3 April).

A written consultation of the committee was started with a view to assess the delegated act and monitor as whether any requests to postpone the 2 month period for objection or to object the act is presented in REGI. The code of conduct is scheduled for debate in REGI the 22 January 2014, with a view to take decisions on the approach to the act upon Rapporteurs' proposal.

TIMETABLE
Exchange of views: 22/01/2014
Deadline for amendments: tbc
Adoption REGI: tbc
Plenary: tbc

3. European Union Solidarity Fund (Point 6 of the draft agenda)

Rapporteur: Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
Responsible administrator: Stefan Manev
Procedure: 2013/0248(COD)
Main committee: REGI

The main objective of the rapporteur's proposal is to improve the functioning of the existing Solidarity Fund instrument by making it quicker to respond and more visible to citizens, simpler to use and its provisions clearer. This is to be achieved by a limited number of technical adjustments to the Regulation. The principles of the instrument remain unchanged as do its financing method outside the multiannual financial framework (MFF) and the likely level of spending.

A year ago, in December 2012, the European Parliament adopted an INI report on the reform of the EUSF. In this context, the EP's rapporteur, Mrs Rosa Estaras Ferragut (EPP) will to a great extent follow the recommendations of the Parliament's resolution to be introduced in the revised Regulation.

Some of the main recommendations for this revision are:

- A clear definition of the scope of the EUSF;
- A new and simple single criterion for the exceptional mobilisation of the EUSF for so-called extraordinary regional disasters based on a GDP-related threshold;
- The introduction of the possibility to make rapid advance payments upon request of the affected Member State;
- The inclusion of a specific provision for slowly unfolding disasters such as drought;

Some 67 AMs were tabled to the draft report expanding the rapporteur's suggestions and adding some new elements to the text such as exceptional treatment for outermost regions and territories. The rapporteur is currently working on a number of compromise AMs which will cover the most amended Articles of the Regulation.

TIMETABLE

Exchange of views: 27/11/2013

Presentation of draft report: 18/12/2013

Deadline for amendments: 06/01/2014

Public hearing: 22/01/2014

Vote of mandate to open interinstitutional negotiations (art 70 of Rules of Procedure): 22/01/2014 (tbc)

Adoption REGI: 10/02/2014 (tbc)

Plenary: April 2014 (tbc)

4. European Commission's 7th and 8th progress reports on the EU Cohesion Policy and the Strategic Report 2013 on programme implementation 2007-2013 (Point 7 of the draft agenda)

Rapporteur: Vilja Savisaar-Toomast (ALDE)

Responsible administrator: Carla Carvalho

Procedure: 2013/2008(INI)

Main committee: REGI

The draft report had been submitted to the committee in the meeting of 27-28 November 2013, and a deadline for amendments was open until 3 December. In the meeting of 18 December 2013, the 42 amendments which were tabled were submitted to debate in committee.

The draft report and its 42 amendments will be put to the vote on 22 January, including a set of compromise amendments put forward by the Rapporteur, which are now under negotiation.

TIMETABLE**Presentation of draft report: 27/11/2013****Deadline for amendments: 03/12/2013, noon****Adoption REGI: 22/01/2014****Plenary: February II 2014 (tbc)**

5. European single market for electronic communications (Point 8 of the draft agenda)

Rapporteur: François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE)**Responsible administrator: Stefan Manev****Procedure: 2013/0309(COD)****Main committee: ITRE**

The Commission's proposal for a Regulation on the Single European market in telecommunications is the result of more than a decade of intense legislative activity at the EU level in this field. The overall objective is to allow for better access to borderless telecommunication services for the end users and for businesses across the EU at better price and quality.

The EU internal market in telecommunications remains to date quite fragmented and many discrepancies are still present. The fragmentation across 28 Member States is present in terms of distinct authorization procedures, with different regulatory systems and frequency allocation rules and consumer protection.

This fragmentation has a very negative impact on competition, business development and end consumers.

In his opinion, the draftsman considers that the Commission proposal is very timely and will have a strong impact on the fragmentation especially in remote outermost and island regions of the EU. He underlines the importance of a borderless internal market for telecoms on cross border territorial cooperation. In his proposal for an opinion, the draftsman also is putting the accent on the importance of the European Structural and Investment funds to support the European Digital Agenda. He considers the new Regulation highly stimulating the public investment in this field.

TIMETABLE**Consideration of draft opinion: 18/12/2013****Deadline for amendments: 20/12/2013****Adoption REGI: 22/01/2014****Adoption ITRE: 27/02/2014 (tbc)****Plenary: April 2014 (tbc)**

6. Statistics for the macroeconomic imbalances procedure (Point 9 of the draft agenda)

Rapporteur: Ivars Godmanis (ALDE)**Responsible administrator: Stefan Donea****Procedure: 2013/0181 (COD)****Main committee: ECON**

The Rapporteur presented his draft Opinion on the "Provision and quality of statistics for the macroeconomic imbalances procedure" in the November 2013 REGI reunion. He highlighted that this Opinion is drafted because the cohesion policy umbrella regulation¹ includes in its provisions the macroeconomic imbalances procedure as a trigger for funds suspension.

The Rapporteur called in his draft opinion on the responsible committee, Economic and Monetary Affairs, to incorporate several amendments taking into account that the quality of statistical data could influence a possible decision on suspension of the European Structural and Investment Funds for Member States which are under the macroeconomic imbalance procedure.

44 amendments were tabled to this opinion. Some compromise amendments have been envisaged by the Rapporteur in order to be put to vote at the January 2014 REGI meeting.

TIMETABLE

Consideration of draft opinion: 27/11/2013

Deadline for amendments: 03/12/2013

Adoption REGI: 22/01/2014

Adoption main committee: 13/02/2014

Plenary: April 2014 (tbc)

7. Exchange of views with Kostis Hatzidakis, Minister for Development and Competitiveness,, on the priorities of the Greek Presidency of the Council of the European Union (Point 10 of the draft agenda)

Mr Kostis Hatzidakis, Minister for Development and Competitiveness, President in office of the Council, will come to the committee in order to inform the Members on the EU Cohesion Policy priorities of the Greek Presidency of the Council of the European Union. An exchange of views will follow with the members.

8. Hearing on "The reform of the European Union Solidarity Fund" (Point 11 of the draft agenda)

The European Solidarity Fund (EUSF) is an important tool to respond in a rapid, efficient and flexible manner to a major natural disaster in a Member State, e. g. after the latest floods of the summer 2013, the Fund drew lot of attention. The Solidarity Fund is - not only by its name but also by its intention - a perfect manner to show European solidarity with people who suffer from disasters.

The European Parliament is considering a legislative proposal for a draft regulation amending the EUSF. New rules for this Fund and for its implementation thereof will be established.

A REGI public hearing will inform the committee on what procedures in the existing regulation really work, and which rules need a further improvement. Which are the experiences of the victims? Do the reparation means arrive quickly and without too many bureaucratic burdens? Is there a need to simplify the rules? Experts, including local and regional administration dealing with the distribution of EUSF means, will explain the state of play based on past experiences.

**Public Hearing on
the reform of the European Union Solidarity Fund**

22 January 2014

15:00 - 16:30

Room: Altiero Spinelli (A1G-2)

Draft Programme

15:00 - 15:10 Practical Experience with the Implementation of EUSF Interventions in Austria

Mr. Siegfried JACHS

Head of Unit for Disaster Management and Civil Protection

15:10 - 15:20 Robustness, Legitimacy and Efficiency Issues from a Risk-Based Perspective

Dr. Stefan HOCHRAINER-STIGLER

Senior Research Scholar, Risk, Policy and Vulnerability
International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA)

15:20 - 15:30 Mr. Luigi d'ANGELO

Head of the International Relations Unit, Italian Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Civil Protection Department

15:30 - 16:30 Questions by Members

With the participation of the European Commission

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9. Exchange of views with Johannes Hahn, Commission on Regional Policy, on the state of play of EU Cohesion Policy_(Point 12 of the draft agenda)

Members will have the opportunity to have an exchange of views with Commissioner Hahn on the state of play of EU Cohesion Policy.



part 2 meeting of 18 December 2013

Here you will find information on the issues discussed in the last REGI meetings held on 18 December 2013. 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. Optimise the potential of Outermost Regions (OR) by creating synergies between the EU structural funds and other EU programmes

The rapporteur, Mr Omarjee, presented his draft report which was followed by an intense debate. A deadline for amendments was set.

2. Votes

The following votes took place:

| Rapporteur / Draftsperson | Report / Opinion | Result of the votes for/against/abstentions |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| Elisabeth Schroedter | DRAFT REPORT on the "Local and regional consequences of the development of smart grids" 2013/2128(INI) - (PE523.006) | adopted with amendments 32/4/3 |
| Derek Vaughan | DRAFT REPORT on "EU Member States preparedness to an effective and timely start of the new Cohesion Policy Programming period" 2013/2095(INI) - (PE519.777) | adopted with amendments 351/3 |
| Joachim Zeller | DRAFT OPINION on "Green paper: Long-term financing of the European economy" 2013/2175(INI) - (PE522.948) | adopted with amendments 35/1/3 |
| Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska | DRAFT OPINION on the "Proposal for a Council regulation on the Bio-Based Industries Joint Undertaking" 2013/0241(NLE) - (PE522.783) | adopted with amendments 36/2/1 |
| Danuta Maria Hübner | DRAFT REPORT on the "Proposal for a Council Decision authorising France to apply a reduced rate of certain indirect taxes on 'traditional' rum produced in Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique and Réunion and amending Decision 2007/659/EC" 2013/0413(CNS) - (PE526.050) | Adopted by Simplified procedure (Rule 46(1), without amendments) |

3. Deadline for amendments

The deadlines for tabling amendments have been set the following:

| Rapporteur / Draftsperson | Report / Opinion | Deadline for amendments | Tabling procedure |
|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Younous Omarjee | DRAFT REPORT on " Optimise the potential of Outermost Regions (OR) by creating synergies between the EU structural funds and other EU programmes " 2013/2178(INI) - (PE524.718) | 07.01.2014 at 12:00 | AT4AM application |
| 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) - (PE524.730) | 06.01.2014 at 12:00 | AT4AM application |
| François Alfonsi | DRAFT OPINION on the " 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) | 20.12.2013 at 12:00 | AT4AM application |

4. European Union Solidarity Fund

The Rapporteur, Ms Estaràs Ferragut, presented the draft rapport with her amending proposals. This presentation was followed by a debate to which the CoR's rapporteur was also invited and who presented the Committee of the Regions opinion. Following the debate a deadline for amendments was set in order to vote the Negotiating Mandate at the January meeting.

5. European Commission's 7th and 8th progress reports on the EU Cohesion Policy and the Strategic Report 2013 on programme implementation 2007-2013

A debate was held on the draft Report, including the amendments already tabled. The rapporteur, Vilja Savisaar-Toomast, showed her willingness to work on Compromise Amendments.

6. Cohesion Policy and Demographic Change

The afternoon session began at 15.10 with the presentation of the study "*How can regional and cohesion policies tackle demographic challenges*" The speaker was:

- **Manuela Samek Lodovici**

Head of the Labour Market Area at IRS; Professor of Public Economics at the Università Cattaneo (LIUC) in Castellanza and Labour Economics at the Università Cattolica in Milan.

This presentation was followed by a Public Hearing on Cohesion Policy and Demographic change. The speakers were:

- **Albert Esteve Palós**

Deputy Director, Research Scientist (I3), Center of Demographic Studies, Barcelona, ES

- **Lars Rademacher**

Professor, Macromedia University for Media and Communication, Munich, DE

The presentations were followed by an exchange of views with the Members.

7. Exchange of views with Nicholas Martyn, Deputy Director General for Policy, Performance and Compliance at European Commission DG REGIO, on the Delegated and Implementing Acts following the adoption of the legislative package on EU Cohesion Policy

Mr Nycholas Martyn Deputy Director General of DG REGIO made a presentation on the content and calendar of adoption of the Delegated and Implementing Acts related to the new cohesion policy.



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**

| | | | |
|------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| 13/12/2013 | Warsaw | EP information Office | Conference debate on the "EU Budget 2014-2020 – from the Polish and European point of view" |
| 17/12/2013 | Brussels, CoR JDE 52 | COTER | REGI/COTER meeting |
| 17/12/2013 | Brussels, French RP | French Permanent Representation | Conference "Towards an EU Strategy for the Alpine Region" |

More information is available at the Chair's website <http://danuta-huebner.pl/> or with the secretariat.



Members' Research Service - News

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Latest analysis



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[Taking stock of 'single audit' and the Commission's reliance on the work of national audit authorities in Cohesion](#) / European Court of Auditors, Special Report, no 16, 18 December 2013, 83 p.

The European Commission faces challenges to its reliance on the results of audits carried out by Member States of EU regional funds, according to the special report published by the European Court of Auditors in December 2013. The situation may cause the Commission, in its reporting to the European Parliament and the Council, to underestimate the problems and not appropriately assess what is needed to achieve a clean audit opinion in this policy area. (Source: [ECA' press release](#))



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[Focusing on preparing the new programmes - state of play with 2014-20 and 2007-13 programmes](#) / by Heidi Vironen, Rona Michie and Kaisa Granqvist, IQ-Net Review Paper 33(1), December 2013, 10 p.

"On the basis of the information available in October and November 2013, the aim of this paper is two-fold: to provide a review of the preparation, content and delivery implications of the PAs (Partnership Agreements) and OPs (Operational Programmes) for 2014-20; to provide an update on the financial and physical progress of the 2007-13 OPs and the preparations for programme closure." (Source: the paper)



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[EU Cohesion policy and Youth \(Un\)employment](#) / by Sara Davies and Stephen Miller, IQ-Net Thematic Paper 33(2), EPRC, December 2013, 9 p.

"Cohesion policy is an important component of the EU response to youth unemployment, and relates directly to a number of new approaches introduced since 2011, notably the Youth Employment Initiative, the Youth Guarantee and the Youth Action Teams. Cohesion policy programmes already allocated significant funding to youth employment at the beginning of 2007-13 (around €10 billion per year of ESF funding alone, according to European Commission estimates). Preparations for 2014-20 indicate a strong focus on youth employment, partly due to the theme's political and economic prominence but also because of the EU-level decision to allocate specific quotas of total funding to the ESF; the inclusion of three themes of particular relevance for youth employment among the Thematic Objectives; and the application of related thematic ex ante conditionalities." (Source: the paper)



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[The Subsidiarity Early Warning System of the Lisbon Treaty – the role of regional parliaments with legislative powers and other subnational authorities](#) / Committee of the Regions, November 2013. 241 p.

"The aim of the present study is to provide an overview and an assessment of the involvement of regional parliaments having legislative powers (part 1 of the report), and other regional assemblies and relevant stakeholders (part 2 of the report) in the Subsidiarity EWS in the wake of the Lisbon Treaty.2 (Source: the study)



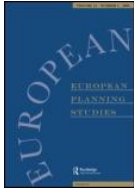
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Regional Studies, Regional Science / Regional Studies Association, annual

[Regional Studies, Regional Science](#) is a new interdisciplinary open access journal from the Regional Studies Association on regional issues in economics, geography, planning, political science, and related fields. With streamlined peer-review the journal accommodates research articles, shorter policy briefings and a new 'regional graphics' section, reflecting the growing importance of data visualisation in this field.

Selected articles from first issue, December 2013:

Mobilizing leadership in cities and regions / by Andrew Beer and Terry Clower, pp. 1-16. ([full text](#))



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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 1, 2014:

Regional Competitiveness in Central European Countries: In Search of a Useful Conceptual Framework / by Jan Ženka, Josef Novotný and Pavel Csank, pages 164-183. ([full text](#))

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ⁱ 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