
REGI News

Newsletter from the European Parliament Committee on Regional Development

VII Legislature N. 24 - 12 septembre 2011



Meeting on

***Monday 19 September 2011
15.00 - 18.30***

Room ASP 3 G 3

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Date of next meeting:

Wednesday 5 October 2011
15.00 - 18.30

Thursday 6 October 2011
9.00 - 12.30 and 15.00 - 18.30

Brussels

Comments and subscriptions at
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[EP Library - Info on items related to regional development](#)
[OEIL - The Legislative Observatory](#)
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PART I

Here you will find the topics which will be discussed at the next REGI Committee meeting on 19 September 2011

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. Exchange of views with Mr Rudols Niessler, Policy Coordination Director of European Commission DG REGIO, on the following recent proposals:

- **Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) N° 1083/2006 as regards repayable assistance and financial engineering - 2011/0210(COD)**
- **Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) N° 1083/2006 as regards certain provisions relating serious difficulties with respect to their financial stability - 2011/0211(COD)**
(Point 5 of the draft agenda)

Mr Niessler will present to REGI Members two recent proposals of the Commission amending the General Regulation governing Structural Funds.

The proposal regarding financial engineering instruments aims at providing a clear legal basis for repayable forms of assistance, which currently seems not to be clearly established in Regulation 1083/2006. Moreover, the amending regulation intends to clarify that. Having regard to this current practice, for reasons of legal certainty, it is opportune to clarify that the provisions on major projects, revenue generating projects and on durability of operations do not apply to the operations falling under Article 44 on financial engineering instruments.

The objective of the other proposal is to help countries particularly hit by the financial crisis by provide additional financial resources to these countries, also ensuring the continued implementation of projects. This would be done through temporarily topping-up the EU co-financing of cohesion policy programmes, and would not modify their overall allocation under cohesion policy for the period 2007-2013. The assisted countries would

include to date: Hungary, Romania, Latvia, Portugal, Greece and Ireland.

Both proposals fall under the ordinary legislative procedure.

2. Parliament's position on the 2012 Draft Budget as modified by the Council - all sections (Point 6 of the draft agenda)

The REGI Committee held an exchange of views on the draft opinion on its meeting of 11-12 July, where the Rapporteur considered that the only institution which has the available information to have an overview of the real budgetary needs of all regions is the Commission, and therefore proposes that any reductions proposed by the Council be cancelled and that the sums initially proposed by the Commission in the Draft Budget, be reinstated.

Furthermore, the Rapporteur referred the pilot projects and preparatory actions that should be adopted: "**Enhancing regional and local cooperation through the promotion of EU regional policy on a global scale**", and "**The definition of governance model for the European Union Danube Region — better and effective coordination**", "**Towards a common regional identity, reconciliation of nations and economic and social cooperation including a Pan-European Expertise and Excellence Platform in the Danube macro-region**", as well as the new preparatory action entitled "**Atlantic Forum for the EU Atlantic Strategy**".

Finally, in its draft opinion, the Rapporteur welcomed the intention of the Commission, as endorsed by the European Council, to enhance synergies between the current loan programmes to certain Member States and the Structural Funds, with a view to boost competitiveness and growth, and calls the Commission to enhance its effort in finding ways to effectively improve the capacity of Member States in general to efficiently implement Cohesion policy programmes.

6 amendments were tabled to this draft report and one compromise amendment is under negotiation and will be put forward before the vote on 19 September. These amendments aim at reinforcing the disagreement towards the cuts proposed by the Council, at highlighting the particularly difficult economic and fiscal context Europe is now facing, and at enhancing the added value of the current measures to support the macro-regional strategies in place, while reminding of the need for a more effective and purposeful implementation of those to the benefit of the regions concerned.

PROCEDURE	TIMETABLE
Rapporteur: László Surján	Consideration of draft opinion: 11/07/2011
Responsible administrator: Carla Carvalho	Deadline for amendments: 14/07/2011
Procedure: 2011/2020 (BUD)	Adoption REGI: 19/09/2011
Lead committee: BUDG - <i>Francesca Balzani</i>	Adoption in lead committee: 4-6/10/2011
	Plenary:

3. Demographic change and its consequences for the future Cohesion Policy of the EU (Point 7 of the draft agenda)

In her report Ms Westphal points to the fact that the effects of demographic change vary according to the type and characteristics of each region and that these effects are not

always negative. She stresses the need to ensure that regions suffering from a depletion of population must make themselves family attractive. and calls on the European Commission to include demographic change as one of the thematic priorities of the future cohesion policy. She advocates the use of ERDF funds to provide loans with low interest rates which could support the adaptation of housing to the needs of the elderly and proposes that funds should be provided for sheltered housing complexes and multi-generational housing

Turning to migration, Ms Westphal calls on the Member States to agree on a common migration strategy, since Europe is reliant upon the immigration of skilled workers for demographic reasons, and proposes that more funding should be provided for the integration of immigrants in order to dispel prejudices

170 amendments and 17 compromise amendments have been tabled to this report and the vote in committee will take place on 19 September

PROCEDURE	TIMETABLE
Rapporteur: Kerstin Westphal	Working document: 14/02/2011
Responsible administrator Christian Chopin	Consideration of draft report: 25/05/2011
Procedure: 2010/2157(INI)	Deadline for amendments: 30/05/2011
	Adoption REGI 19/09/2011
	Plenary: October(tbc)

4. A resource-efficient Europe (Point 8 of the draft agenda)

The REGI Committee held an exchange of views of the draft opinion on its meeting of 11 July, where the draftsman presented his draft opinion. He welcomed the flagship initiative and pointed to its crucial influence on the quality of life for present and future generation. He stressed that in order to achieve a resource-efficient Europe, increased coordination and synergies between a wide range of policy areas and their various instruments should be implemented at regional, national and EU level and noted that trade-offs between certain policy areas exist, and these need to be addressed. He also pointed to the crucial role of regional policy in supporting initiatives aiming at efficient use of resources. He emphasized that resource efficiency should be addressed at regional and local level, and regional and local authorities and partners should be directly involved in the planning and implementation of relevant measures. He further pointed out that decision-takers at national and regional level should be fully aware of the importance of decoupling growth from resource use and called on every Member State and region to make further efforts in the efficient use of resources.

58 amendments were tabled to this draft opinion. Amendments concern inter alia energy efficiency, renewable energy, green jobs, eco-innovation, importance of the dissemination of best practice, partnership principle and territorial cooperation.

PROCEDURE	TIMETABLE
Rapporteur: Derek Vaughan	Consideration of draft opinion: 11/07/11
Responsible administrator: Monika Makay	Deadline for amendments: 14/07/2011
Procedure: 2011/2068(INI)	Adoption REGI: 19/09/2011 (tbc)
Lead committee: ENVI - <i>Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy</i>	Adoption in lead committee: February 2012 (tbc)

5. Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area - Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system (Point 9 of the draft agenda)

Since the 2001 White Paper on Transport, much has been achieved, but the transport system is still not sustainable, transport cannot develop along the same path in the future. The Roadmap of the Commission takes a global look at developments in the transport sector, at its future challenges and at the policy initiatives that need to be considered.

The transport industry in itself represents an important part of the economy: in the EU it directly employs around 10 million people and accounts for about 5% of GDP. Coherence at EU level is vital. The EU and Governments need to provide clarity on the future policy frameworks for manufacturers and industry so that they are able to plan investments. The objective for the next decade is to create a genuine Single European Transport Area by eliminating all residual barriers between modes and national systems, easing the process of integration and facilitating the emergence of multinational and multimodal operators.

The various actions and measures indicated in this Roadmap will be further elaborated. The Commission will prepare appropriate legislative proposals in the next decade with key initiatives to be put forward during the current mandate. Each of its proposals will be preceded by a thorough impact assessment, considering EU added value and subsidiarity aspects.

In the exchange of views the draftsman will present his draft opinion, in which he notes that large divergences exist in terms of transport infrastructure and geographical accessibility on the one hand between the eastern and western parts of the EU and on the other hand between central and peripheral regions, which need to be tackled. He takes the view that the transport system of the EU should support balanced regional development and territorial cohesion, which will lead to the creation of a Single European Transport Area. He points to the role that cohesion policy plays in developing transport infrastructure and draws attention to the lack of financial resources in several Member States, in this context he takes the view that new financing instruments are necessary for the transport sector. He notes that cities suffer most from congestion and air and noise pollution. In this context he believes that cities can make a major contribution towards combating climate change through intelligent local public transport systems and sustainable city-district planning, including building of bicycle paths. He also calls for transport arrangements between cities and the countryside to be improved.

PROCEDURE	TIMETABLE
Rapporteur: Wojciech Michał Olejniczak	Consideration of draft opinion: 19/09/11
Responsible administrator: Monika Makay	Deadline for amendments: 20/09/2011 (tbc)
Procedure: 2011/2096(INI)	Adoption REGI: 05-06/10/2011 (tbc)
Lead committee: TRAN - <i>M. Grosch</i>	Adoption in lead committee: 22 November 2011 (tbc)

6. The review of the European Neighbourhood Policy (Point 10 of the draft agenda)

The Committee of Foreign Affairs decided to draw up an own-initiative report on the Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy under rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure. This report aims at providing the opportunity to set down the Parliament's priorities for the ENP having

regard to the current discussions on the new multiannual Financial Framework.

The AFET's draft report develops a variety of issues including every aspect of EU's Neighbouring Policy, such as democracy, sustainable economic and social development, sectorial cooperation, migration, or conflict resolution.

Considering that one of the main pillars of the ENP is cross border cooperation, and that the EU Cohesion policy can be of outstanding use, the REGI committee has prepared an opinion document to be discussed in this meeting.

PROCEDURE	TIMETABLE
Rapporteur: Lena Kolarska-Bobińska	Consideration of draft opinion: 19/09/11
Responsible administrator: Gabriel Alvarez	Deadline for amendments: 20/09/2011 (tbc)
Procedure: 2011/2157(INI)	Adoption REGI: 05-06/10/2011 (tbc)
Lead committee: AFET - Marek Siwec, Mário David	Adoption in lead committee: 14/11/2011 (tbc)

7. Temporary suspension of autonomous Common Customs Tariff duties on imports of certain industrial products into the Canary Islands (Point 11 of the draft agenda)

The Commission proposal concerns the exercise of an implementing measure under Article 349 of the TFEU. These measures will have a negligible effect on the Union's own resources, they will have a positive effect on the competitiveness of the economic operators and in the present economic climate are conducive to assisting economic recovery. Viewed in this light and in order not to unduly delay adoption and implementation of this Regulation, the rapporteur proposes that this proposal be adopted without amendment.

PROCEDURE	TIMETABLE
Rapporteur: Danuta Hübner	Consideration of draft report: 19 September
Responsible administrator Christian Chopin	Deadline for amendments: 20 September 2011 (tbc)
Procedure: 2011/0111(CNS)	Adoption 6 October 2011 (tbc)
COM(2011)0259	Plenary: (tbc)

8. Report on the visit of a REGI delegation to the United Kingdom from 14 to 16 June 2011

This topic has been postponed to the next committee meeting.

The full report of the visit will be shortly available on the committee's web site [REGI](#).



PART II

Here you will find information on the issues discussed in the last REGI meetings held on 11-12 July 2011

1. A resource-efficient Europe (point 4 of agenda of 11-12 July)

In the exchange of views, the draftsman presented his draft report, in which he welcomes the flagship initiative and points to its crucial influence on the quality of life for present and future generations.

In his presentation, Mr. Vaughan focused in particular in the role of regional and local authorities. Indeed, he highlighted the importance of regional and local authorities in putting together plans to create a resource efficient Europe, and insisted that they should not only be consulted whenever Member States are putting together national plans but they should also be involved in the implementation of such plans, so that all levels of administration actively participate at all stages.

Members who took the floor agreed that the efficient use of resources is key to sustainable development. Resources should however be understood largely, including not only fossil fuels, but also water and food, and the waste management was referred to as an essential issue at regional and local levels. Moreover, focus should be put on the opportunities that will emerge from this for local and regional economies. As far as the governance is concerned, Members insist that action is needed so that Member States know how to involve regions and local authorities in the implementation of the flagship initiatives, in the framework of a territorial pact. In fact all the decisions, in particular when structural funds are involved, should be taken at regional and local levels. Furthermore, coordination of all levels of administration as well as cross-borders is viewed as essential in the effective and rational management of resources.

Highlighting the multi-policy and multi-level governance nature of this flagship, the Commission agrees with the need to further involve all levels of administration. In this context, the Commission highlights the role of the Covenant of Mayors, which should indeed be further explored, in particular regarding energy. The Commission has further underlined the special cross-cutting character of this flagship initiative as compared to the other flagships, because it concerns at least 10 policy areas. In conclusion, the Commission is firmly convinced of the need to involve all actors and stakeholders, and of reaching out to the citizen, by explaining all the win-win situations but also the trade-offs which are at stake.

2. Parliament's position on the 2012 Draft Budget as modified by the Council - all sections (point 5 of agenda of 11-12 July)

1. DECISION ON THE PROCEDURE

Concerning the procedure for amending the Draft Budget as modified by the Council, after its presentation by the Rapporteur, the Committee endorsed the procedural proposal presented, in the following terms:

- 1. The Commission's Draft Budget is acceptable as minimum amounts;**
- 2. The Chair and the Rapporteur are given a mandate to amend any Council's cuts and reinstate the Draft Budget and to table the pilot projects, preparatory actions and technical assistance measures which have already been agreed by the political groups.**
- 3. The Chair and the Rapporteur are given mandate to table any amendments to the Council position being necessary to safeguard the objectives of Cohesion policy, in accordance with the ceilings of the multi-annual financial framework and the relevant provisions of the Interinstitutional Agreement. These eventual amendments will be consulted with the shadow rapporteurs on Budget. Members can suggest Amendments to the Rapporteur, if considered necessary.**

2. EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON DRAFT OPINION

The Rapporteur presented his draft opinion, in which he proposes that any reductions proposed by the Council be cancelled and that the sums initially proposed by the Commission in the Draft Budget, be reinstated, given that that the only institution which has the available information to have an overview of the real budgetary needs of all regions is the Commission.

Furthermore, the Rapporteur reminded the committee that the Commission was informally consulted on the need to extend the pilot projects and preparatory actions currently in force, which has supported the continuation of the preparatory actions entitled "**Enhancing regional and local cooperation through the promotion of EU regional policy on a global scale**", and "**The definition of governance model for the European Union Danube Region — better and effective coordination**", as well as the pilot project entitled "**Towards a common regional identity, reconciliation of nations and economic and social cooperation including a Pan-European Expertise and Excellence Platform in the Danube macro-region**".

In the list submitted to the BUDG committee there was a new preparatory action entitled: "**Atlantic Forum for the EU Atlantic Strategy**", proposing the definition of a transversal action plan with concrete priorities to be implemented from 2014 onwards, with the active involvement of Atlantic stakeholders.

Members agreed that amounts have indeed to be restored to the level of the draft budget, reminding that it needs to be pointed out to Member States and citizens alike that the money spent at European level is of more added value and we should be more proactive in "selling" the benefits of regional policy and structural funds. We have therefore to counteract the negativity of the media and of the Member states, which are merely playing a political game,

at the detriment of citizens.

3. Evolution of EU Macro-Regional Strategies: Present Practice and Future Prospects, especially in the Mediterranean (Point 6 of the draft agenda)

Macro-regional strategies are place-based policies that seek to promote development in functional regions, based on the specific resource endowments, growth potentials and vulnerabilities of these regions, and involving policy coordination at multiple levels.

In considering the future role of existing macro-regional strategies and the establishment of new macro-regional strategies the European Commission's Fifth Cohesion Report emphasises that 'further work on new macro-regional strategies should be based on a thorough review of existing strategies (...)'. The last European Council on 23-24 June has endorsed the Baltic Sea Strategy and called the Member States and the Commission to assess the feasibility of a macro region for the Adriatic and Ionian region

The aim of the proposed INI report is such a review in order to (i) identify commonalities and policy achievements of the macro-regional strategies for the Baltic Sea Region and the Danube Region in order to promote better coordination and more strategic use of resources as potential development gains for future macro-regional strategies and (ii) look into possible future macro-regional strategies, especially in the Mediterranean where regions have been the object of cohesion policy for a long time and where strong interdependencies on environment, agriculture, energy, transport and social issues exist and need to be addressed more adequately.

During this first exchange of views, the Rapporteur, Mr Alfonsi, made a general assessment of the commonalities across the Mediterranean (maritime dimension, accessibility, environment and forest fires, renewable energies' potential, and link with the neighbourhood policy). The two big areas in which the EU is present, the western and the eastern Mediterranean, call for integrated strategies that should inter alia create real synergies between the continental and insular regions sharing the same Mediterranean basin. To this end the macro-regional framework can be developed and its interaction with the EU neighbourhood policy can be considered without going beyond the scope of competences of REGI.

He also pointed out the lessons learnt from the past macro regional strategies in the Baltic and Danube, insisting on the importance of a bottom-up approach to decide them.

This is the reason why the Rapporteur has planned a consultation process with stakeholders before presenting his working document and report, through a hearing in October meeting.

In this first the exchange of views, Members agreed on the working methods, and on the common challenges to be raised for the Mediterranean. They discussed about the need to define common criteria to assess the feasibility of new potential macro regions, also including the experience of cooperation in the framework of the Council of Europe, and based upon the lessons learnt from existing macro regions (Baltic and Danube) . If this demonstrates a potential added value for the existing cooperations, new macro regions can be therefore considered. The European commission insisted on the need for high level commitment coming from Member States and regions to justify a new macro region, relying on their capacities and possibilities to then implement it into concrete projects.

4. Exchange of views with Mr Tamás Iván Kovács, Deputy State Secretary, on the balance of the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union (point 7 of agenda of 11-12 July)

Highlighting that a *Strong Europe* was the motto, the Hungarian Presidency declared that Regional policy was considered a key element during its term, as a stronger Europe requires stronger competitiveness and employment. Moreover, a stronger Cohesion policy can become a fundamental tool in the implementation of the EU2020 Strategy.

Mr. Kovács gave an overview of its most important achievements in the context of Cohesion policy, underlining that in its case for a Stronger Europe as referred to above, Cohesion policy was in fact given a fundamental role for ensuring growth, employment and competitiveness, as well as in the context of the implementation of the EU 2020 strategy, account being taken of the general economic situation.

The Hungarian Presidency aimed at ensuring greater efficiency and results and also at increasing the policy's visibility and raising its profile, while putting an emphasis also on the territorial aspects of the policy and bringing them to the centre of the debate of the future Cohesion policy.

The major achievements highlighted by the Deputy Secretary of State were the Council Conclusions on the 5th Cohesion Report, in which Member States agreed that Cohesion policy is one of the most important tools of European integration and the effectiveness of this policy must therefore be enhanced. Reference was also made to the revised Territorial 2020 Agenda, which constitutes the mapping of the territorial issue in the context of the EU2020 agenda. The Presidency conclusions were finally mentioned, reference being made to the fact that Member States have unanimously concluded on the need for an integrated territorial development executed on the basis of multi-level partnerships.

As for the future, the Hungarian Presidency advocates for increased effectiveness and a result oriented approach, underlining that any conditions should be defined on the basis of past experience, while not increasing administrative burden, and guidelines were given to the Commission in this sense before the end of this presidency.

5. Exchange of views with Elżbieta Bieńkowska, Minister of Regional Development acting as President-in-Office of the Council, on the work programme of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union (point 9 of agenda of 11-12 July)

Claiming the high importance of Cohesion policy for the Polish Presidency, who aims at putting the EU on a fast tracking development, the Minister gave quite a detailed overview of the programme of the Polish Presidency in the area of Cohesion policy, insisting on the importance of this policy as a key investment tool.

The Polish Presidency sees Cohesion policy as an efficient, effective and territorial response to the development challenges of the EU.

Although recognising the difficulty of some of the issues that will be on the table, the Polish Presidency insists on the need to respect the deadlines, and intends to close the negotiations on the legislative package for Cohesion policy, coordinating them with the talks on the multi-annual financial framework, so that the programming and the implementation can start on

due time and without any delays.

The implementation of Cohesion policy has to be put in the context of the EU2020, through strategic programming, thematic concentration, effectiveness and conditionality, and focusing on the efficiency of the policy.

The Minister is planning a meeting on 16 December 2011 in order to hold a strategic debate in the context of GAERC where the outcome of the negotiations will be discussed, which will increase the visibility of the policy.

Among the most difficult issues that are facing the Presidency, according to the Minister, are:

- the proposal to create the Connecting Europe Facility, which will have to be carefully analysed as to its added value;
- the transition regions; and
- the possibility of Member States deciding freely on how to allocate funds among different areas.

The programmes in the framework of territorial cooperation are considered very important, as they contribute to create cooperation networks among regions, institutions and local partners. The harmonisation of rules within objective 3 is therefore crucial, while taking also a look at the ENPI.

The revision of the EGTC is also one of the objectives of the Polish Presidency. This will be done in two stages: first at the level of the working group on structural actions in the Council; second, through the preparation of a report after the publication of the proposal.

The Minister has also given details on other specific issues that will be of importance in the Presidency's agenda, and in particular the European territorial cooperation; the links between cities and rural areas; the macro-regional strategies; the future of URBACT; the revised territorial agenda as well as the territorial dimension of the European Social Fund, theme about which a conference is being organised towards the end of September in Warsaw.

Finally, the Minister said that the informal ministerial meeting is now planned for 25 November in Poznan.

6. Votes:

- **Absorption of Structural and Cohesion Funds: lessons learnt for the future cohesion policy of the EU**
Rapporteur: Michael Theurer (ALDE)
The report was adopted by 43 votes in favour, 2 against and 1 abstention.
- **Modernisation of public procurement**
Rapporteur: Ramona Nicole Mănescu(ALDE)
The opinion was adopted by 44 votes in favour and 2 against (no abstentions).
- **The European Semester for economic policy coordination**
Rapporteur: Michael Theurer (ALDE)

The opinion was adopted by 41 votes in favour, 4 against and 1 abstention.

- **The Agenda for New Skills and Jobs**

Draftsperson: Monika Smolková (S&D)

The opinion was adopted by 42 votes in favour, 3 against and 1 abstention.

- **Green Paper: From Challenges to Opportunities: Towards a Common Strategic Framework for EU Research and Innovation funding**

Draftsperson: Hermann Winkler (PPE)

The opinion was adopted by 41 votes in favour, 2 against and 1 abstention.

- ***For technical reasons, the vote on the draft report on Demographic change and its consequences for the future Cohesion policy of the EU (2010/2157(INI)) (Rapporteur: Kerstin WESTPHAL (S&D)) was postponed to September.***

7. Hearing on Interregional co-operation in the EU Cohesion Policy (point 12 of agenda of 11-12 July)

The interregional component of the 'territorial cooperation' objective can provide support, coordination, pooling of know-how, exchanges of good practices and strategic back-up for projects implemented in this way.

This hearing gives the opportunity to exchange views with the directors of one of the main programmes of interregional cooperation: INTERREG and URBACT. The guest speakers Michel Lamblin, Programme Director of INTERREG IVC, and Jean-Loup Drubigny, Head of URBACT Secretariat, have exposed to the Members, respectively, the INTERREG programme features, its results and achievements, as well as the future perspectives of interregional cooperation, and the features of URBACT II, its main objectives, methods and achievements.

They concluded by exposing proposals for further strengthening their results in the future.

PART III - 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

Ms Hübner has participated as a chairperson of the Committee in the following events since the last meeting:

06 July	Video speech for Hungary	Hungarian National Parliament	Hearing on Energy Efficiency & Regional EU Policy Hearing
07 July	Gdansk, PL	Invitation sent by PL Minister Ms Bieńkowska	Conference - Evidence Based Cohesion Policy
11 July	Warsaw, PL	Center of European Strategy demosEUROPA	Press Conference Breakfast
12 July	Brussels	Cocktail sponsored by Mrs SANCHEZ-SCHMID, INTERREG VI C and URBACT	"the future of Objective 3 with actors of the European Territorial Cooperation
18 July	Warsaw, PL	Polish Sejm and Senat in the framework of Polish Presidency.	Meeting of Chairpersons of Economic Affairs, Regional Policy and Infrastructure Committees
28 - 31 August	Krakow, PL	URBACT	Urbact LSG Summer University
1st September	Freising, DE	Renovabis	15th International Congress Renovabis on "Structural Changes in Rural regions of Middle and Eastern Europe and their Impacts on the Living and Religious Behaviour of the people"
2nd-3rd September	Athens, Tripolis, Greece	Meeting with Ministers in charge of Cohesion Policy and Committee of the Periphery of Peloponnese	Special CEPS Task Force on Budget

05 September	Podkarpackie, PL	Marshal of Podkarpackie Region	Seminar with Mayors and Presidents of the Cities and regions about the new MFF 2014-2020
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Ms Hübner, representing the committee, has accepted so far an invitation to participate (during the coming weeks) in the following events:

27 September	Strasbourg	MEPs Mr Hermann Winkler and Mr MEP Jacek Protasiewicz	Conference on Regional conditions, goals of development and opportunities of the crossborder-area, on both sides of the Saxon-Czech, Polish-Czech and Saxon-Polish border
30 September	Aarhus (Midtjylland, Denmark)	CPMR General Assembly, invitation of Mr Bent Hansen, President of Region Midtjylland	The General Assembly of the 160 Regions of CPMR
02 October	Glasgow (UK)	European Policies Research Centre	32nd Meeting of the EoRPA Regional Policy Research Consortium
04 October	Brussels, EP	General Electric (GE)	Launch of GE's Polish Innovation Barometer

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Visit of Ms Hübner to the Peloponnese Periphery (Greece)

2-3 September 2011

Following the REGI delegation in July, The Chair held meetings in Athens with the ministers in charge of Cohesion Policy in Greece, Members of the Greek Parliament, and participated to a roundtable in Peloponnese region ('Periphery') with the main stakeholders and to an extraordinary meeting of the new elected Committee of the Periphery of Peloponnese.

During her visits, the Chair expressed the support of the European Parliament to Greece with his legislative work on the modification of existing regulation and on the approval of the new regulation for 2014-2020. She then insisted on the importance to promote abroad a more positive image of Greece in order to promote growth and attract investments there: Mr Chrysochoidis, the Greek Minister in charge of cohesion policy, has accepted her invitation to come to the November REGI meeting. Regarding the implementation of Cohesion Policy in Greece, she strongly supported and advised on the current efforts of Greek authorities on three points :

- to reinforce the good cooperation between the central and regional government
- to increase the use of financial engineering and PPPs
- to focus on the implementation and the absorption of the current projects, avoiding too many changes in the current programmes, time consuming changes that are not necessary to ensure the full absorption of the current funds available to Greece until 2013.

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

REGI delegation July to Northern Greece 13-15 July 2011

In view of the financial crisis and related economic downturn that is strongly affecting Greece, the Committee on Regional development visited Northern Greece with a view to:

- Discuss with the Greek Authorities the importance, despite the austerity plans implementation, to maintain the existing national contribution level to prevent any projects stop and about the necessity to ensure that Cohesion policy receives at least the same resources for the forthcoming programming period as it enjoys at present.
- Learn how the 2010 Greece administrative reform of local authorities entering into force since 1st July 2011 will have a positive impact on the management of EU funds and the implementation of the policy, especially its levels of absorption.
- Be informed about ongoing programmes and projects and see them in action on the ground.
- Note the different positions between central and local government authorities as to the necessity of ensuring adequate EU funds.

The delegation began with a roundtable in Thessaloniki's Town hall in presence of the Mayor and Mr Xinidis, Minister in charge of Cohesion Policy about "Greece 2020 : the way for a new deal". Participants came to the conclusion that this strong crisis Greece is facing can be turned positively into an opportunity to strongly reinforce and improve the implementation of cohesion policy, especially for the projects of this region.

A visit to the first project of Thessaloniki Metro and of the main regional TV ET3 followed, giving the MEPs the opportunity to deliver to the media the first outcomes of this delegation.

On the following day, Members visited the Lake Koronia where they had the possibility to gain more insight into the use of ERDF for environment measures, and the main reasons why this project did not work in a satisfactory way (The European Commission in January 2011 referred Greece to the European Court of Justice for its failure to protect Koronia). They went on visiting the Vergina ruins, the royal tombs of the father of King

Alexander of Macedonia: This famous touristic site is a catalyst to develop the economy of the region. They followed with visits to the main important project financed through cohesion policy in Greece : the motorway Egnatia Odos, that the MEPs used to go on their journey :

The delegation went on with an exchange of views in Kozani with the regional and local authorities that enabled to have a frank discussion on the main problems this region is facing : being the first energy producer in Greece, the level of Gdp per capita is quite overrated (above 75% of the EU average) and does not reflect the real business and economic situation in Western Macedonia : MEPs could announce their support and the project of the European Commission to create an intermediate regions category that could help this kind of region between 75% and 90% of the EU average GDP per capita. Then followed presentations of a selected number of EU funded projects aiming at increasing e-connectivity and developing renewable energy sources.

Afterwards the group visited the main Company of Waste Management of Western Macedonia and then travelled to Kastoria, the capital of declining fur production in Greece, to visit the alternative development touristic project of the Cavern of Drakos, financed by EU funds.

The last day of the delegation started with a Round table at the Region of Epirus' offices with the regional and local Authorities: The current challenge is now to reinforce the helps to Small and Medium enterprises that have now access to quality infrastructures but need further financial and technical support to emerge within the region.

The MEPs ended up their meeting by thanking the local Authorities to provide them written suggestions on what could be improved in the EU Cohesion policy regulation, in order to prepare the adoption of the new legislative framework in the European Parliament in the forthcoming months.

The media followed the delegation to the visit of an EU-project funded at the main hospital of Ioannina (a new centre dedicated to the alcoholism and drug abuse rehabilitation).

This delegation ended to convince the MEPs that EU structural funds, through adequate and targeted projects can turn initially disadvantaged territories of Europe into huge potential for sustainable growth and jobs : they are confident that Greece central administration and local authorities will now better work together to manage and accompany the implementation of these projects and increase the absorption of EU funds: they became optimistic, that in spite of the huge difficulties Greece is facing now, there is an open space, with the strong support of cohesion funds, for paving the way for a new Deal in Greece 2020.

In general, the objectives set by the delegation are considered to be achieved, and thanks to the very fruitful and frank discussion with the Greek officials met there, went beyond expectations. The MEPs all agreed on the vital necessity that the European Parliament fully supports Greece efforts towards the current events happening there, even also by reinforcing the efficiency of overall management of structural funds. They also agreed on the reinforced necessity to go on struggling for that Solidarity within EU members remains the essence of the European Construction project.

Library News

Publications



European urban and regional studies / Harlow, Essex, England: Longman Group, quarterly

European Urban and Regional Studies provide an original contribution to academic and policy debate related to processes of urban and regional development in Europe. It offers a European coverage from the Atlantic to the Urals and from the Arctic Circle to the Mediterranean. Its aims are to explore the ways in which space makes a difference to the social, economic, political and cultural map of Europe; highlight the connections between theoretical analysis and policy development; and place changes in global context. (Available in the Library - see catalogue entry [here](#))

Selected articles from vol. 18, issue 3, 2011:

A cosmopolitan analysis of the contradictions in EU regional and enlargement policies as drivers of Europeanization / by Christian Sellar and Laurel McEwen, pages 289 - 305. ([full text](#) - click on IP authentication)

Innovation, regional development and relations between high- and low-tech industries / by Teis Hansen and Lars Winther, pages 321 - 339. ([full text](#) - click on IP authentication)



Regional studies / Regional Studies Association, monthly

Regional Studies is an international journal in theoretical development, empirical analysis and policy debate in the multi- and inter-disciplinary field of regional studies. It contains: high-quality research, critical surveys, policy debates and special thematic issues. (Available in the Library - see catalogue entry [here](#))

Selected articles from vol. 45, issue 8, August 2011:

Unemployment volatility and regional specialization in the European Union / by Roberto Ezcurra, pages 1121- 1138 ([full text](#) - click on IP authentication)

Iceland: crisis and regional development - Thanks for all the fish? / by Karl Benediktsson and Anna Karlsdóttir, pp. 228 - 235 ([full text](#) - click on IP authentication)



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 vol. 19, issue 7, August 2011:

From concept to policy: building regional innovation systems in follower regions / by Alexandre Almeida, António Figueiredo and Mário Rui Silva, pages 1331-1356 ([abstract](#); for the full text please contact the [Library](#))



Journal of European Public Policy / Routledge, 8 issues per year

Journal of European Public policy provides analytical, theoretical and methodological articles in the field of European public policy. Focusing on the dynamics of public policy in Europe, the journal encourages a wide range of social science approaches, both qualitative and quantitative.

Selected articles from vol. 18, issue 5, July 2011:

Administrative reform and unintended consequences: an assessment of the EU Cohesion policy 'audit explosion' / by Carlos Mendez and John Bachtler, pages 746-765 ([full text](#) - click on IP authentication)

Structuring the European administrative space: policy instruments of multi-level administration / Eva G. Heidbreder, pages 709 - 727 ([full text](#) - click on IP authentication)

Library Keysources



[The Urban Agenda of the European Union](#) / Library Keysource by Anna SCHOBER and Sorina Silvia IONESCU, August 2011

Recognising the importance of urban issues and the challenges cities face more and more, an urban agenda of the European Union was started with the European Commission's communication 'Towards an urban agenda in the European Union' in 1997. Since then, several EC communications, council's conclusions and statements followed leading to the emergence of a common European "acquis urbain". Through the introduction of the urban dimension into the current programming period 2007-2013, the urban agenda was enhanced within the cohesion policy. The aim of this key issue is to provide an overview of documents, reports and analysis forming and relating to the urban agenda of the European Union.



[The EU Territorial Agenda](#) / by Anna Schober and Sorina Ionescu, August 2011

The Territorial Agenda was subject to an evaluation and revision process under the Hungarian EU Presidency. The new Territorial Agenda was approved in June 2011 at the Informal Ministerial Meeting of the Ministers responsible for Spatial planning and Development held on 19 May 2011 in Gödöllő, Hungary.

The concept of the "Territorial Agenda" launched in 2004 was agreed upon at the Informal Ministerial conference held in Leipzig on 24 and 25 May 2007. This policy paper aimed at providing a political framework for the polycentric territorial development of Europe defining six key priorities to focus on territorial cohesion and mobilise the diverse territorial potentials of all regions of Europe. Seeing territorial cohesion as a prerequisite for achieving sustainable economic growth and implementing social and economic cohesion, the Territorial Agenda also contained a package of actions for the period 2007 - 2011 demanding the integration of the territorial dimension by all stakeholders into their policies.

Latest analysis



[The financial execution of Structural Funds](#) / By Rocco L. Bubbico and Nicola De Michelis, DG Regional Policy, Regional Focus, no 3, July 2011

This Regional Focus contributes to the debate on the financial absorption of Structural Funds. It analyses the functioning of Structural Funds' financial execution and outlines the limitations in the use of financial indicators for assessing the implementation of Cohesion Policy on the ground. It shows that the long term trend of ERDF and ESF payments per capita is fairly stable considering the last 15 years of Cohesion Policy's implementation. This confirms the stability of Cohesion Policy's investments at aggregate level, with no gaps even in years characterized by the ending of a programming period and the beginning of a new one. The paper also examines the 2007-2013 dynamic up to 2010, with the identification of current challenges in financial execution.



[Estimating the capital stock for the NUTS 2 regions of the EU-27](#) / By James Derbyshire, Ben Gardiner and Sevrin Waights, DG Regional Policy, Working Papers, no 1, 2011

This paper assesses the feasibility of producing comparable estimates of the capital stock at NUTS 2 regional level for the EU-27 and makes some initial estimates. The paper outlines the method and data employed, and the techniques used to fill missing values. The approach is a Perpetual Inventory Method based on that outlined in the

OECD Manual (2001; 2009) on capital estimation, and the data employed were taken from Eurostat or other publicly available sources wherever possible. The paper analyses the robustness of the capital stock estimates produced, as well as their impact on productivity analysis, and suggests how they can be improved in future updates.



[It takes two to tango: an EESC study on developing the partnership principle in EU cohesion policy](#)
/ Section for Economic and Monetary Union and Economic and Social Cohesion, May 2011, 29 p

This publication builds on the EESC opinion adopted in July 2010 on developing the Partnership principle in EU Cohesion policy and describes examples of best practice in several Member States. The aim is to provide interested stakeholders with practical information on how to improve the performance of partnership in the light of recorded examples of best practice. The EESC has an essential role to play in encouraging greater involvement and participation of organised civil society in European policies; it has therefore always argued the need to develop genuine partnership. It is available in [French](#) language.