
REGI News

Newsletter from the European Parliament Committee on Regional Development

VII Legislature N. 23 - 4 July 2011



Meeting on

Monday 11 July 2011

15.00 - 18.30

Tuesday 12 July 2011

9.00 - 12.30

Room ASP 3 G 3

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Date of next meeting:
Monday 19 September 2011
15.00 - 18.30
russels

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PART I

Here you will find the topics which will be discussed at the next REGI Committee meeting on 11-12 July 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. A resource-efficient Europe (Point 4 of the draft agenda)

A resource-efficient Europe is one of seven flagship initiatives as part of the Europe 2020 strategy. This flagship initiative aims to create a framework for policies to support the shift towards a resource-efficient and low-carbon economy. The initiative provides a long-term framework for action in many policy areas, supporting policy agendas for climate change, energy, transport, industry, raw materials, agriculture, fisheries, biodiversity and regional development. The key components of the long-term framework will come in the form of a series of coordinated roadmaps.

The Commission considers that continuing our current patterns of resource use is not an option. It will be necessary to develop new products and services and find new ways to reduce inputs, minimise waste, improve management of resource stocks, change consumption patterns, and optimise production processes, management and business methods in order to boost employment in the “green technology” sector and sustain EU trade.

The Commission will make concrete proposals for strategies to improve resource efficiency in the various policy areas. In the meantime, it invites the European institutions, national parliaments, the Committee of the Regions, the European Economic and Social Committee, candidate countries and stakeholders to contribute to the further development of these strategies and the promotion of resource efficiency.

In the exchange of views the draftsman will present 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 generation. He stresses 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 notes that trade-offs between certain policy areas exist, and these need to be addressed. He

also points to the crucial role of regional policy in supporting initiatives aiming at efficient use of resources. He emphasizes 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 points out that decision-takers at national and regional level must be fully aware of the importance of decoupling growth from resource use and calls on every Member State and region to make further efforts in the efficient use of resources.

PROCEDURE	TIMETABLE
Rapporteur: Derek Vaughan	Consideration of draft opinion: 11/07/11
Responsible administrator: Monika Makay	Deadline for amendments: 14/07/2011 (tbc)
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)

2. Parliament's position on the 2012 Draft Budget as modified by the Council - all sections (Point 5 of the draft agenda)

1. DECISION ON THE PROCEDURE

As it has been the case in previous years, the amounts for regional policy entered by the Commission in the 2012 Draft Budget have not raised controversy at the Committee on Regional Development. It has been recognised that they correspond to the needs of the Union in the areas covered by heading 1b. This clearly results from the debates that have been held in the past months at the Committee, where a wide consensus with the Commission's proposals has been declared by a big majority of Members. This consensus on the EC estimation of expenses should consequently result on the committee supporting all budget lines of heading 1b as proposed by the Commission in its Draft.

Indeed the amounts and figures that are contained in the Draft Budget proposal are in line and consistent with the ceilings of the multi-annual financial framework for the current programming period. Moreover, in its Draft Budget proposal the Commission has highlighted that the focus will be on an effective and efficient implementation of the 2007-2013 programmes, proposing in this context a significantly higher degree of Commission's involvement, aiming at facilitating the implementation of Cohesion Policy in certain Member States.

A more objective and specific linkage with the Europe 2020 Strategy is also sought, as Cohesion Policy is deemed by the Commission to be better placed to translate the strategy's objectives into development on the ground.

Other issue of particular importance for REGI are the pilot projects, preparatory actions and technical assistance measures.

REGI has already decided on the 2012 set of such measures through an ad hoc procedure. A deadline was opened and the Members presented projects that were sent to the BUDG Committee and to the EC, which, on its turn, checked and advised on their feasibility. Following this assessment, the REGI coordinators established a list of projects to be presented as amendments to the Draft Budget when the moment would come.

As far as the procedure is concerned, due to the new rules and the subsequent convenience for Parliament to debate the Budget at the first plenary session early October, the BUDG

committee had to set the deadline for amendments to the Draft Budget on 8 September 2011.

REGI Committee is holding its ordinary meeting on 19 September, that is, after the deadline for amendments to the Draft Budget (in the last year's budgetary procedure, the REGI voted the amendments to the Draft Budget in an extraordinary meeting on 6 September 2010, in Strasbourg, arrangement that is not possible this year).

The Council is expected to adopt its position on the draft budget and forward it to Parliament at the end of July this year. However, most probably the COREPER position will be known before the transmission of the Council formal position.

Due to this particular calendar's constraints, and in order to deliver in time REGI's amendments to the Budget Committee which, due to calendar constraints, has had to fix the deadline on 8 of September, the Rapporteur, in agreement with the Chair, and provided that there is a wide consensus on the issues referred to above in point 1, will propose to the committee to decide on its meeting of 12 July the following:

- 1. That the Commission's Draft Budget is acceptable as minimum amounts;**
- 2. That the Chair and the Rapporteur are given a mandate to amend any Council's cuts and reinstate the Draft Budget;**
- 3. That the Chair and Rapporteur are given a mandate to table the pilot projects, preparatory actions and technical assistance measures which have already been agreed by the political groups.**
- 4. That 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 coordinators and/or with the shadow rapporteurs on Budget.**
- 5. A brief draft opinion, reflecting the messages above-mentioned in point 1, will be presented at the July meeting and a deadline will be opened with a view to the vote in September.**

If for any reason, the above procedure does not gather a majority of the committee at the 12 July meeting, a deadline for amendments to the EC Draft Budget and to the draft opinion will be opened and the usual procedure will be applied. The vote of the amendments and the draft opinion would take in an extraordinary meeting at the end of August (29-31), provided that it can be organised. In this case the political groups should ensure a sufficient quorum to vote the opinion.

2. EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON DRAFT OPINION

The Budget committee will vote the draft Resolution on the Budget on **4-6 October**. To this, REGI will have time to present an opinion which, as always, should reflect the amendments proposed to the Draft Budget.

In his draft opinion, the Rapporteur considers 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 reminds 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 is a new a 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. The action plan should be strongly connected with the regional policy and the Integrated Maritime Policy, and should also facilitate synergies with other EU policies. In this context the preparatory action should finance a platform for dialogue of stakeholders – the Atlantic Forum -, aiming at defining the priority projects and the governance of the Atlantic Strategy, and at the elaboration and adoption of the action plan.

Finally, the draft opinion welcomes 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.

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

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.

The rapporteur, François Alfonsi will present the first outcomes of his preparatory works and propose a working methodology to the Members.

The European Commission's report on the Implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region has just been published and, jointly with the last developments on the Danube Strategy, they will feed the first evaluation part of his report : capitalizing on the key success factors and best practices identified, this framework will enable to identify and "ex-ante" evaluate the possible and feasible macro regions for the Mediterranean : the Adriatic and Ionian region has already been put on the political agenda of the Member States.

Other macro region initiatives can emerge both from the micro level (the needs of the EU citizen's in the territories concerned) and from the macro level (market failures in the current internal market framework that are putting at risk the achievements of EU 2020 objectives in these territories) that justify an additional intervention from each level of the EU governance model (EU, Member States, and especially the Regional and Local Authorities helping and orienting the private sector to meet these objectives)

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.

PROCEDURE	TIMETABLE
Rapporteur: François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE)	Exchange of views: 11 July 2011
Responsible administrator: Franck Ricaud	Consideration of working document:
Procedure: (INI)	Consideration of draft report:
	Deadline for Ams:
	Planned adoption REGI:
	Planned plenary:

4. Exchange of views with Mr Tamás Fellegi, Minister of National Development, on the balance of the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union (Point 7 of the draft agenda)

With the Hungarian presidency that has come to its end, Mr Fellegi will summarise and discuss with Members the achievements of the Presidency in the field of Cohesion Policy.

5. Exchange of views with Ms 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 EU (Point 9 of the draft agenda)

As it customary, the Polish presidency will present before the committee its programme for the next six months. Following the intervention of the Minister there will be an exchange of views with the Members.

6. Absorption of Structural and Cohesion Funds: lessons learnt for the future cohesion policy of the EU (Point 10 of the draft agenda)

The REGI Committee held an exchange of views of the draft report on its meeting of 25 May, where the rapporteur presented his draft report and called on the Commission to deliver regularly a report containing information on the absorption of Cohesion and Structural Funds for each region enabling the European Parliament to monitor the implementation of Cohesion Policy. He underlined the need for simplification of rules and procedures at both EU and national level without creating major difficulties for the beneficiaries. He stressed that proportionality between the volume of support and control requirements should be strengthened, and emphasised that the coordination of audit activity should be enhanced and the single audit principle followed in the next programming period. He also stressed that timely adoption of multiannual financial framework and of clear and definitive rules and guidance to the Member States is of utmost importance. Furthermore he called on the Member States to pay more attention to project preparation, to draw up a project pipeline and make further efforts to attract and retain qualified staff to manage EU funds. Finally, he reiterated that multi-level governance and decentralisation are key elements in the effectiveness of operational programmes and in high absorption capacity.

98 amendments were tabled to this draft report and a set of compromise amendments are under negotiation and will be put forward before the vote on 12 July.

Majority of the amendments aim at strengthening and specifying the messages of the draft report focussing on simplification and stability of the rules, administrative capacity, proportionality principle as regards controls, synergies between different funds, public private partnerships, capacity building and partnership principle. In addition the Commission is called on to develop a periodical early warning system on the absorption of the funds and to deliver an annual report on the absorption of Cohesion and Structural Funds.

PROCEDURE	TIMETABLE
Rapporteur: Michael Theurer (ALDE)	Consideration of working document: 21/03/2011
Responsible administrator: Monika Makay	Consideration of draft report: 25 May 2011
Procedure: 2010/2305(INI)	Deadline for Ams: 08/06/2011
	Planned adoption REGI: 12/07/2011 (tbc)
	Planned plenary: 09/2011 (tbc)

7. Demographic change and its consequences for the future Cohesion Policy of the EU (Point 11 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; 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 have been tabled to this report. The rapporteur will negotiate between 10 and 15 compromises.

PROCEDURE	TIMETABLE
Rapporteur: Kerstin Westphal	Working document: 14/02/2011
Responsible administrator Christian Chopin	Consideration of draft report: 25 May 2011
Procedure: 2010/2157(INI)	Deadline for amendments: 30 May 2011
	Adoption REGI 12 July 2011 (tbc)
	Plenary: September II 2011 (tbc)

8. Modernisation of public procurement (Point 12 of the draft agenda)

In the draft opinion submitted to the Committee in the meeting of May, Ms. Manescu, while acknowledging the role of procurement in the efficiency of public spending and its impact in economy, growth and innovation, had insisted that local and regional authorities should be given the leading role in the current process of review of the legal framework. Furthermore, the Rapporteur defended a cautious line of intervention in the current legislation in order to avoid all negative impacts on local and regional authorities, asking that all derogations and exceptions to be applied in the future by contracting authorities be reduced to the minimum.

51 amendments were subsequently tabled to this draft opinion, and compromise amendments are now under negotiation. The amendments as tabled insist on the need of transparency, credibility and simplification, while insisting that not the price but the economic sustainability and efficiency should be the criteria influencing the quality of the services procured.

The role and relevance of SMEs in the framework of public procurement is also emphasised, by insisting that procedures should be optimised in order to effectively encourage SMEs to further participate in public procurement procedures.

In this context, the role of e-public procurement, operating on a transparent basis and easily accessible to smaller local and regional applicants, is also emphasised.

Regarding the failures to comply with public procurement rules as identified by the Court of Auditors in the implementation of projects under the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund, Members underline that these are mainly due to the complexity of public procurement procedures, imposing therefore legal clarification of the regulatory environment in order to avoid the continuation of lack of compliance.

PROCEDURE	TIMETABLE
Rapporteur: Ramona Nicole Mănescu	Consideration of draft opinion: 25/05/11
Responsible administrator: Carla Carvalho	Deadline for amendments: 30/05/2011
Procedure: 2011/2048(INI)	Adoption REGI: 12/07/2011
Lead committee: IMCO - Heide Rühle	Adoption in lead committee: 19/09/2011 (tbc)

9. The European Semester for economic policy coordination (Point 13 of the draft agenda)

The REGI Committee held a first exchange of views on this file on its meeting of 21 June 2011, where the draft opinion was presented. The draftsman took inter alia the view that a strong and well-financed cohesion policy was an efficient and effective mechanism for EU2020 strategy delivery. He stressed that a stronger territorial dimension of the strategy would lead to a greater sense of ownership of its goals at all levels and ensure a better awareness of objectives and outputs on the ground. Furthermore, he called on the Member States to involve more closely the national parliaments, the social partners, regional and local authorities and civil society into the preparation of National Reform Programmes and to regularly consult them. He also called for an integrated approach and efficient coordination of Community, national, regional and local policies.

28 amendments were tabled to this opinion. They aim on the one hand at strengthening and specifying the messages of the draft opinion focussing on the available budget, the role of the cohesion policy in achieving the EU 2020 objectives, the involvement of regions and local authorities, importance of multi-level governance, national goals . On the other hand amendments concern inter alia environmentally harmful subsidies and the role of the Committee of the Regions.

PROCEDURE	TIMETABLE
Rapporteur: Michael Theurer	Consideration of draft opinion: 21/06/2011
Responsible administrator: Monika Makay	Deadline for amendments: 22/06/2011
Procedure: 2011/2071(INI)	Adoption REGI: 12/07/2011 (tbc)
Lead committee: ECON - <i>Pervenche Beres</i>	Adoption in lead committee: 12/09/2011 (tbc)
	Plenary: October 2011

10. The Agenda for New Skills and Jobs (Point 41 of the draft agenda)

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs is preparing a report in reaction to the European Commission's communication on An Agenda for new skills and jobs that was published on 23.11.2010. Within the framework of EU 2020 strategy, this agenda is a flagship initiative consisting of 13 priority actions in order to meet the objective decided by the EU on an employment rate target for women and men of 75% for the 20-64 years age group by 2020.

In his draft opinion, the rapporteur welcomes this agenda, pointing out that only a workforce that is skilled is of fundamental importance for the development of a competitive, sustainable and innovative economy.

She consequently recalls the more effective use of funds for the development of new skills and the creation of new jobs, including in the burgeoning 'green economy', and advocates for financial concentration, but with tailor made policies for SMEs (which provide two thirds of all jobs in the private sector)

She supports Lifelong Learning focusing on ICT and digital literacy, and strengthening

networking and sharing experience between education, research and business sectors. She also points out that the main responsibility for achieving the aims of the Agenda for new skills and jobs lies with the Member States, and that it is therefore essential for the Commission to ensure that the aims of the Agenda are adopted by each Member State.

She finally Calls on the Commission to adopt measures to remove administrative and legal obstacles in order to increase labour mobility, both in the recognition of qualifications and in the portability of supplementary pension rights.

59 amendments were tabled to this opinion and a set of compromise amendments may be put forward before the vote on 12 July.

PROCEDURE	TIMETABLE
Rapporteur: Monika Smolková (S&D)	Consideration of draft opinion: 21/06/11
Responsible administrator: Franck Ricaud	Deadline for amendments: 23/06/2011
Procedure: 2011/2067(INI)	Adoption REGI: 12/07/2011 (tbc)
Lead committee: EMPL	Adoption in lead committee: 19/09/2011 (tbc)
	Plenary: October 2011 (tbc)

11. Green Paper: From challenges to opportunities: towards a common strategic framework for EU research and innovation funding (Point 15 of the draft agenda)

The Communication (COM (2011)048) of the Commission, entitled Green Paper 'From Challenges to Opportunities: Towards a Common Strategic Framework for EU Research and Innovation Funding', launches a public debate on the key issues to be taken into account for future EU research and innovation funding programmes.

REGI Committee has decided to draw up an opinion to the report prepared by the lead committee (ITRE). The draft text points to the necessity to coordinate the future 'Common Strategic Framework' for regional policy and the future 'Common Strategic Framework' for research and innovation programmes. The draftsman advocates for "innovation" to be a binding priority for regions, and for the 'smart specialisation' approach to be adopted by the regional level. Support for applications and SMEs should be in the focus of cohesion policy support with regard to research and innovation. Finally the Commission is called upon to step up efforts to harmonise rules of different funds and programmes as well as to examine whether it is appropriate to make mixed financing legal and to extend cross-financing.

73 amendments have been tabled to this opinion, covering issues such as simplification of instruments, synergy between policy areas and funds, the relevance of territorial cooperation, relations to the EU2020 Strategy and the importance of Cohesion Policy in supporting R&D and innovation. A set of compromise amendments may be put forward before the vote on 12 July.

PROCEDURE	TIMETABLE
Rapporteur: Hermann Winkler (PPE)	Exchange of views -
Responsible Administrator: Diana Haase	Consideration of draft opinion 21 June 2011
Procedure: 2011/000(INI)	Adoption REGI: 11-12 July 2011
Lead committee ITRE; Rapporteur: Mrs Marisa MATIAS (GUE/NGL)	Vote in lead committee: 30 August 2011 Vote in plenary: September II 2011

12. Hearing on Interregional co-operation in the EU Cohesion Policy (Point 16 of the draft agenda)

Guest speakers :

- Michel Lamblin, Programme Director of INTERREG IVC
- Jean-Loup Drubigny, Head of URBACT Secretariat

In the framework of the objective 3 of Cohesion policy and Ms Sanchez-Schmidt report adopted in plenary in June, with a proposal awaited from the European Commission for a new regulation specifically dedicated to European Territorial Cooperation (ETC), REGI Committee has stressed once again "the importance of interregional cooperation, deploring the lack of funds allocated" and suggesting, therefore, a "reconsideration of the EU cofinancing rate limit of this component". It also called "for the thematic areas of cooperation to be widened to encompass governance and management of operational programmes as well as territorial development"

The rapporteur had stressed in her explanatory statement that interregional cooperation (4% of the budget) concerns cooperation among all the regions of the 27 Member States, regardless of their geographical location, and focuses on exchanges of information, experience and good practices.

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.

Mr Vlasak's report on the European urban Agenda adopted in plenary stressed the positive role that URBACT initiative play in networking of cities, sharing best practice and generating innovative solutions and noted that cooperation between European cities is fully in line with Objective 3 (European territorial cooperation). It considered that, during the period 2014- 2020, the urban dimension of the European territorial cooperation objective should be enhanced, encouraging the involvement of cities in inter-regional and cross-border cooperation networks;

This hearing gives the opportunity to exchange views with the directors of one of the main programmes of interregional cooperation: INTERREG and URBACT. Their directors will present a balance of what has been achieved in the current and past programming periods, and proposals for further strengthening their results in the future. The European Commission will also be there to exchange views.



PART II

Here you will find information on the issues discussed in the last REGI meetings held on 21 June 2011

1. Exchange of views with Mr Johannes Hahn, Commissioner on Regional Policy on the post 2013 legislation and the implementation of the ongoing programming period (Point 3 of the draft agenda)

Commissioner Johannes Hahn and the Members of the Committee on Regional Development held for two hours an intense debate on the post 2013 Regional Policy, regarding mainly its governance at the end of the current programming period.

Commissioner Hahn stated that the legislative package to implement the regional funds from 2013 onwards will probably be adopted by the EC at the end of September. This package will include the General Regulation as well as specific EP and CON regulation for every big Fund. He stressed his confidence that the legislative package would be adopted by the co-legislators before the end of 2012 allowing this the EC to make all the preparative works.

In which respects the Common Strategic Framework, he highlighted that the Commission is still debating on the pertinent legal basis. He personally favours it to be presented under the legislative procedure but the decision is still on the air. Regarding the European Groupings for Territorial Cooperation, he affirmed that it will be ready by the end of the year.

Other very important topic of the debate was the establishment of an 'intermediate' category for regions with GDP between 75% and 90% of the union's average.

2. Green Paper: From challenges to opportunities: towards a common strategic framework for EU research and innovation funding (Point 4 of the draft agenda)

In the exchange of views the draftperson presented his report in which he stressed the need for a better funding in research and innovation policies. The lines of work would include a simplification in the procedures, the need to define priorities always within the frame of innovation, the particular support to SME and the convenience of a broad net of regional cooperation.

In the subsequent debate MEPs pointed out that there are also other fields to pay attention to in connection with innovation, like the environmental dimension and energetic efficiency of industries. Furthermore, a closer approach to the business sphere was found as convenient, as well as the improvement of commercialization channels. Moreover, MEPs asked for a better definition of objectives and a regional coordination of investments.

3. Financial rules applicable to the annual budget of the Union (Point 5 of the draft agenda)

In the exchange of views, the draftperson described his perception of how the financial rules should be applied, with the inclusion of the concept of "acceptable risk of mistake" and the reformulation of the shared management of funds. This approach raised hackles among other MEPs who found that the main issue is to implement efficient control systems and prevent errors from the very beginning of the programmes, avoiding speaking about an "acceptable risk of mistake".

4. Votes

- **Towards a stronger European disaster response: the role of civil protection and humanitarian assistance**

Draftsperson: Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D)

The draft opinion (2011/2023(INI)) was adopted by 36 votes in favour, 0 against and 4 abstentions

- **Financial rules applicable to the annual budget of the Union**

Draftsperson: Jan Olbrycht (PPE)

The draft opinion (2010/0395(COD)) was adopted by 38 votes in favour, 0 against and 2 abstentions

5. Presentation of the ongoing activities of the Special EU Programmes Body and the International Fund for Ireland (Point 7 of the draft agenda)

This presentation consisted on an exchange of views with Mr Pat Colgan, Chief Executive of the Special EU Programmes Body, and Mr Denis Rooney, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland.

The Northern Ireland Peace process is assisted by on the one hand the ongoing European Union Peace programme and on the other the International Fund for Ireland with the financial participation of the UK, Ireland, USA, Canada, Australia New Zealand and the EU.

Mr Colgan and Mr Rooney made a presentation on the advancements in the Peace programme for Northern Ireland. In their speech they highlighted that, so far, results have been rather satisfactory. However, they stated that after so long a conflict many aspects remain still to tackle in order to achieve a wide normalization in the day-to-day life within the region. They described the ideal areas to work on in the future, concentrating on few areas: integrated education, urban regeneration, work with youngsters and the improvement of relations between communities.

The introductory speech was followed by a debate with questions and answers. The program's results were found by the MEPs as very fruitful and they considered that this appropriation should be also included in post 2013 financial perspectives since there is still many fields to work in despite the good results of the program so far.

6. Public Hearing on International, extra-European dimension of regional policy (Point 10 of the draft agenda)

To this public hearing were invited both Mr Raphael Goulet, Head of the Unit B1, DG REGIO and Mr. Peter Berkowitz, Head of the Unit C1, DG REGIO.

They described the actions taken in this field by the Commission. Mr Goulet described the 2009 and 2010 works as well as the activities now being prepared for this year. He highlighted the regional policy dialogues with China, Russia, Brazil and Ukraine in which one of the main topics treated was the situation of monosectorial cities. Publications about the EU regional policy have been prepared in several non-EU languages. Moreover, he stated that some seminars were organized in different parts of the world as well as study visits.

Mr Berkowitz presented a study titled "EU Cohesion Policy in a Global Context: Comparative Study on EU Cohesion and Third Country and International Economic Development Policies". This study focuses on the specificities of EU cohesion policy in comparison with the same policies applied in a selected number of other OECD countries and International Financial Institutions. Mr Berkowitz pointed out as the main conclusions of the study that the EU Cohesion policy has been well implemented so far although it has room for improvement regarding different areas such as the coordination between the Commission, MS and regions, the definition of more accurate incentives and the possible use of more financial instruments.

The interventions of MEPs concentrated on the need of fostering this policy since it could become a tool for international relations with southern countries and the possibilities of achieving a better implementation of the policy if it incorporates ultra-peripheral regions to it.

7. The Agenda for New Skills and Jobs (Point 11 of the draft agenda)

In the exchange of views the draftperson presented her draft report. She pointed to the fact that the EU lacks enough skilled workforce. Hence, the Commission will concentrate on the creation of adequate labour posts, but it needs the financial help of other political entities.

MEPs referred to the need of focusing also on gender and age equality measures and on the convenience of reach agreements with SME to tie up the training with companies' concrete needs.

8. The European Semester for economic policy coordination (Point 12 of the draft agenda)

The draftperson, in his presentation of the draft document, highlighted that Structural Funds are being used in a short-term basis and are following national targets not ambitious enough. Moreover, he stated that the regional policy should be more visible among the regions.

In the subsequent debate, MEPs pointed out that improving cooperation between the regional and the national level could be quite useful to improve the situation and that some trilateral cooperation including the EP would be also needed to enhance coordination in the field of regional policy.

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:

2 June	Brussels	Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) Task Force	Special CEPS Task Force on Budget
23 June	Brussels	The Union of Italian Provinces (UPI)	Regions and their possibilities to contribute to the Europe 2020
28 June	Brussels	Seminar co-organised by the European Commission, the Committee of the Regions, the European Economic and Social Committee and FEANTSA (the European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless)	Social Innovation to Tackle Homelessness: Re-enforcing the role of the European Structural Funds
29 June	Brussels	Convent of Polish Marshals	Future Cohesion Policy
30 June	Eisenstadt, Austria	Foster Europe, Foundation for strong European Regions	First General Assembly of the Danube Civil Society Forum in the framework of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region

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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:

6 July	Video speech for Hungary	Hungarian National Parliament	Hearing on "EU 2020 Objectives in Central and Eastern Europe: National and Regional Strategies towards Energy Efficiency"
7 July	Gdansk, PL	PL Minister Ms Biankowska	Conference - Evidence Based Cohesion Policy
11 July	Warsaw, PL	Center of European Startegy demosEUROPA	Integration means cohesion (to discuss future cohesion policy in the context of starting negotiations of MFF crisis and synergies between innovation and cohesion policy)
12 July (12.30)	Brussels	Cocktail sponsored by Mrs SANCHEZ-SCHMID, INTERREG VI C and URBACT	"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 on "Cohesion policy as an effective and territorially varied response to development challenges faced by the European Union"
28-31 August	Krakow, PL	URBACT	Urbact LSG Summner University
1st September	Letter for the conference in Freising, DE	Renovabis	15th International Congress on "Structural Changes in Rural regions of Middle and Eastern Europe and their Impacts on the Living and Religious Behaviour of the people"
5 September	Podkarpackie PL	Marshal of Podkarpackie Region	Seminar with Mayors and Presidents of the Cities and regions about the new MFF 2014-2020
9 September	Poznan, PL	Committee of the Regions Bureau in the framework of Polish Presidency	Debate on "Challenging cohesion policy in view of theEurope 2020 objectives. Taking stock of Structural

			Funds Implementation"
15-16 September	Katowice, PL	PL Minister Ms Biankowska	Joint Conference of ETC Transnational Cooperation Programmes

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

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 2, 2011:

New forms of territorial governance in metropolitan regions? A Polish-German comparison / by Marta Lackowska and Karsten Zimmermann, pp. 156 - 169 ([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

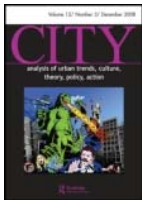
European Planning Studies focus upon specific spatial development problems, as well as emerging explanations of new urban, regional, national or supranational developmental tendencies.

Selected articles from vol. 19, issue 6, June 2011:

Distances, Knowledge Brokerage and Absorptive Capacity in Enhancing Regional Innovativeness: A Qualitative Case Study of Lahti Region, Finland / by Satu Parjanen, Helinä Melkas and Tuomo Uotila, pages 921-948 537 ([abstract](#); for the full text please contact the [Library](#))

Clustering in Dresden / by Udo Brolla and Antonio Roldán-Poncea, pages 949-965 ([abstract](#); for the full text please contact the [Library](#))

Regional Employment Growth in the Cultural and Creative Industries in Germany 2003-2008 / by Ivo Mossig, pages 967-990 ([abstract](#); for the full text please contact the [Library](#))



City / Routledge, 6 issues per year

City combines an analysis of trends, culture, policy and action, and features both historical and theoretical work alongside detailed case studies, policy commentary and open debate. City is multi-, trans-disciplinary and holistic, drawing on work from academics in geography, the social sciences, the political economy, philosophy, cultural studies, and the humanities, as well as from policy makers and other actors who play key roles in sustaining and constructing cities and urban futures.

Selected articles from volume 15, Issue 2, June 2011:

Building resilience and well-being in the Margins within the City: Changing perceptions, making connections, realising potential, plugging resources leaks / by Rachael Unsworth, Sue Ball, Irena Bauman, Paul Chatterton, Andrew Goldring, Katie Hill and Guy Julier, pp. 181-203 ([abstract](#); for the full text please contact the [Library](#))

Latest analysis



[EU budget 2014-2020 and cohesion policy](#) / DG Regional Policy

The European Commission presented its proposals for a [Multi-annual Financial Framework](#) covering the period 2014-2020 on 29 June 2011.

The Commission proposes to allocate [€376 billion for the 2014-2020 period for spending under cohesion policy instruments](#). This amount comprises:

- €162.6 billion for convergence regions,
- €38.9 billion for transition regions,
- €53.1 billion for competitiveness regions,
- €11.7 billion for territorial cooperation
- €68.7 billion for the Cohesion Fund

It also includes €40 billion for a new Connecting Europe facility designed to boost investment in transport, energy and information communication technologies.

The European Social Fund will represent at least 25% of the cohesion envelope, not taking into account the [Connecting Europe facility](#), i.e. €84 billion.



[Key figures on Europe: 2011 edition](#) / Eurostat, June 2011

Key figures on Europe presents a selection of statistical data on Europe. Most data cover the European Union and its Member States, while some indicators are provided for other countries, such as members of EFTA, candidate countries to the European Union, Japan or the United States. The pocketbook treats the following areas: economy and finance; population; health; education and training; the labour market; living

conditions and social protection; industry, trade and services; agriculture, forestry and fisheries; international trade; transport; the environment; energy; and science and technology.



[Regional Policy for smart growth in Europe 2020](#) / DG Regional Policy, May 2011, 29 p

Sustainable growth is one of the three main pillars of the new 'Europe 2020' strategy. This brochure sets out the how EU's regions and cities can exploit the opportunities offered by Cohesion Policy to boost local and regional sustainable growth. A number of good practice examples provide practical support and underline the potential of the low-carbon and resource efficient economy to provide jobs, growth and preserve the environment and resources.