

REGI News

Newsletter from the European Parliament Committee on Regional Development

VII Legislature N. 1 - 16 July 2009



Dear Members,
Dear Readers,

As you probably know on 16th July the European Parliament adopted a decision on parliamentary committees. With 49 members the Committee on regional Development is one of the largest committees in the House demonstrating the importance that cohesion policy has for the European Parliament and for its Members.

The constitutive meeting of the new committee will take place on 20 July at 16.15 and we all hope that it will go smoothly. Immediately after the setting up of the committee there will be a short ordinary meeting and a coordinators meeting.

...[continues at page 2](#)

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NEXT REGI MEETING

Monday 20 July 2009

16.15-18.30

PHS 3 C 50

Brussels

INDEX

PART I: NEXT MEETING.....2

I. REGI Constitutive meeting

II. REGI ordinary meeting

1. Distribution of minutes of the previous meeting

2. Confirmation of meeting calendar 2009

3. Budget 2010

PART II: LAST MEETING.....4

1. Adoption of agenda

2. Exchange of views with Danuta Hübner and Luc Van der Brande on the VI legislature

3. Any other business

PART III: OTHER NEWS.....5

Useful Internet links

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

[OEIL - The Legislative Observatory](#)

[Regional Policy Info regio](#)

[EUR-Lex](#)

[Committee of the Regions](#)

LAST MEETING (Brussels)

Monday 16 April 2009

15.00-18.30

THE REGI SECRETARIAT

at page 8

...continues from the first page

REGINEWS is normally published a week before the meeting.

Our aim is to provide you with accurate and detailed information on the incoming REGI meeting, on every point in the draft agenda.

Part II of the weekly bulletin will be devoted to reviewing the main points of the previous committee meeting.

Part III is open to contributions from Members, political groups' advisers, assistants and other stakeholders. Conferences, seminars, and other events may also be announced be the subject of short reviews. The same goes for articles, press and book reviews.

Please send us your contribution.

The editorial deadline for those who want to contribute to PART III of the publication is eight days before the REGI meeting.

While keeping the old structure of the REGINEWS we have tried to improve it, with a new lay out simplifying on line consultation and by adding more useful links.

We remain of course ready to help you with any other information and for receiving suggestions on how we can improve this publication.

Miguel Tell Cremades
Secretariat of the Committee

PART I

Here you will find the topics according to the draft agenda which will be discussed at the next REGI Committee meeting on 20 July 2009

I. REGI Constitutive Meeting

On 20 July in Brussels from 16.15 to 16.45 the constitutive meeting of the Committee on Regional Development of the VII EP legislature will take place.

The 49 Members will appoint the Chair of the Committee as well as four Vice-Chairpersons.

Here below the complete list of official and substitute Members:

Official Members

PPE (17)

BALDASSARRE Raffaele, BRIARDAUCONIE Sophie, CADEC Alain, DEUTSCH Tamás, ESTARAS FERRAGUT Rosa, HÜBNER Danuta Maria, KELL Y Seán, LUHAN Petru Constantin, MATULA Iosif, MAZZONI Erminia, MIKOLÁŠIK Miroslav, VAN NISTELROOIJ Lambert, OLBRYCHT Jan, PIEPER Markus, TEIXEIRA Nuno, WINKLER Hermann, ZELLER Joachim

S-D (12)

ALVES Luís Paulo, BOŠTINARU Victor, BRZOBOHATÁ Zuzana, CARONNA Salvatore, CORTÉS LASTRA Ricardo, DE ANGELIS Francesco, KIRILOV Evgeni, KREHL Constanze Angela, OLEJNICZAK Wojciech Michał, SMOLKOVÁ Monika, STAVRAKAKIS Georgios, WESTPHAL Kerstin

ALDE (6)

BEARDER Catherine, HYUSMENOVA Filiz Hakaeva, MĂNESCU Ramona Nicole, MANNER Riikka, THEURER Michael, USPAS KICH Viktor

Verts/ALE (4)

ALFONSI François, DELLI Karima, HUDGHTON Ian, TREMOPOULOS Michail

ECR (4)

H ELMER Roger, KURSKI Jacek Olgierd, POREBA Tomasz Piotr, VLASÁK Oldřich

GUE/NGL (2)

HOARAU Elie, PAFILIS Athanasios

EFD (2)

BUFTON John, IMBRASAS Juozas

NI (2)

OBERMAYR Franz, SZEGEDI Csanád

Substitute Members

PPE (17)

BŘEZINA Jan, JELEVA Rumiana, KOLARSKA-BOBINSKA Lena Barbara, KRATSA-TSAGAROPOULOU Rodi, LOPE FONTAGNÉ Veronica, MATERA Barbara, MORKŪNAITĖ Radvilė, PATRICIELLO Aldo, PONGA Maurice, SANCHEZ-SCHIDT Marie-Thérèse, SCURRIA Marco, SEEBER Richard, SIEKIERSKI Czesław Adam, SURJÁN László, VERHEYEN Sabine, WEBER Manfred, WINKLER Iuliu

S-D (10)

DĂNCILĂ Vasilica Viorica, DOMENICI Leonardo, FALBR Richard, GARCÍA PÉREZ Iratxe, GEIER Jens, HONEYBALL Mary, KADENBACH Karin, OBIOLS Raimon, SIMON Peter, TIROLIEN Patrice

ALDE (6)

BENNAHMIA Jean-Luc, DE MAGISTRIS Luigi, GALLAGHER Pat the Cope, GODMANIS Ivars, LYNNE Elizabeth, SAVISAAR Vilja

Verts/ALE (3)

GREZE Catherine, RÜHLE Heide, SCHROEDTER Elisabeth

GUE/NGL (2)

DE BRÚN Bairbre, ERNST Cornelia

EFD (1)

PAŠKA Jaroslav

NI (1)

STOYANOV Dimitar

Click [here](#) for more info on the newly appointed REGI Members (available as from 22 July).

II. REGI ordinary meeting

Immediately after the end of the constitutive meeting, the ordinary Committee meeting will start. The following items will be discussed as foreseen in the [draft agenda](#).

1. Distribution of minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2009 in Brussels, last meeting of the VII EP legislature, will be distributed for information purposes to Committee Members (see Part II for contents).

2. Confirmation of meeting calendar 2009

The calendar of REGI meetings for the remaining months of 2009 will be distributed for confirmation. It was adopted by unanimity by the previous Committee.

The proposal foresees the following dates:

- 2-3 September
- 5-6 October
- 3-4 November
- 2-3 December

You can find [here](#) the calendar for REGI meetings of 2009.

3. 2010 budget: Section III - Commission

Judging the European Commission as being the only institution possessing an overview of budgetary needs for the coming year, the Committee systematically proposes the re-establishment of the preliminary draft budget with any amounts Council has reduced in its draft budget. 2010 is no exception to the rule.

Public spending in 2010 will be crucial to the European Economic recovery plan and in this context the use of Structural funds will be central to the Union's strategy. With this in view overall payments have been significantly increased most of which will be interim payments made in accordance with the modified legislation and aimed at accelerating investment and stimulating economic activity.

In 2009, on the initiative of the REGI committee Parliament requested the setting up of three pilot projects covering the integration of the ROMA communities, the promotion of EU regional policy on a global scale, and an ERASMUS programme for elected local and regional representatives.

At this early stage of the legislature, and in the interest of ensuring sound financial management, before proposing any new pilot projects, the Committee should be informed in as much detail as possible, of the actions taken to implement the projects financed under the 2009 budget.

Lastly at a time when European Economic recovery is still at an embryonic stage and is highly dependent on large scale government spending and despite the mechanistic manner in which Cohesion policy allocations are managed it appears somewhat paradoxical that ERDF commitments for the Regional competitiveness and employment objective are reduced by Euro 372.536.823 compared with 2009.

It is therefore legitimate to ask if this reduction is consistent with the need to stimulate the economy and create jobs in the advanced economies of Europe in order to maintain and increase competitiveness at the global level.

PROCEDURE	TIMETABLE
Draftsperson: Committee Chair (tbc)	Consideration of draft opinion: 21/07/2009
Lead Committee: BUDG	Planned deadline for Ams: 07/08/2009
Responsible administrator: Christian Chopin	Planned adoption REGI: 02/09/2009
Procedure n. 2009/2002(BUD)	Planned adoption in plenary: by 31/12/2009

PART II

Here you will find information on the issues discussed in the last REGI meeting held on 16 April 2009

1. Adoption of agenda

The agenda of the meeting held on 30-31 March 2009 in Brussels was adopted without changes.

2. Exchange of views with Danuta Hübner, Commissioner for Regional Policy and Luc Van den Brande, President of the Committee of the Regions on the

achievements of cohesion policy during the VI legislature

The exchange of views with Commissioner Hübner and the President of the Committee of Regions Van Der Brande was aimed at summing up the achievements of cohesion policy during the current legislature by the respective institutions.

Commissioner Hübner highlighted the main objectives of the legislature:

1. *Promoting Growth and Jobs in the EU* to improve the competitive position of the EU regions. Some key concepts are at the heart of this priority:
 - strategic approach (embodied in the EC Community Strategic Guidelines);
 - earmarking on the renewed Lisbon Agenda;
 - sustainable development in order to balance economic, social and environmental concerns;
 - innovative investments through the launch of JASPERS, JEREMIE and JESSICA initiatives;
 - mobilisation of regional and local networks through the exchange of best practices and the launch of new awards (i.e. REGIOSTARS) incentivising a better delivery of the cohesion policy;
 - transparency in order to improve communication on the impact of cohesion policy (e.g. publication of the list of final beneficiaries of the Structural Funds)
 - multi-level governance.
2. *Integrating the new Member States* entering the EU in 2004 and 2007 (i.e. 56 new regions meaning an increase by 20% of the population and by 5% of the GDP), which produced unprecedented disparities in terms of economic development of the EU.
3. *Analysing territorial cohesion*, concept which takes into account the specificities of the regional territories of the EU; the debate, generated by the Green paper published in October 2008, showed the need to invest more on territorial cooperation not only as a way to share best practices but also to find shared solutions to common problems (like in the Baltic Sea Strategy).
4. *Facing the financial crisis*, which represents an opportunity to move forward the simplification of the cohesion policy through the adoption of both legislative and non legislative measures.

In his speech **President Van Der Brande** mentioned the following key points:

1. capacity of the institutions to *adapt to global challenges* (focussing in particular on the Lisbon priorities) and flexibility demonstrated against the current financial crisis;
2. need to *simplify the cohesion policy*; opportunities in this direction are offered by the new instrument of GECT as well as by the concept of territorial cohesion;
3. *Future of the cohesion policy after 2013*, which should be imprinted on the maintenance of the policy at Community level, on the focus on the original purposes of the cohesion policy (overcoming regional disparities in development) and on the integration of territorial cohesion in other Community policies with strong territorial impact

3. Any other business

The Chair announced that the constituent meeting of the new Committee on Regional development will take place between 16 and 21 July 2009.

PART III - Other News

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

Vademecum on cohesion policy



In view of the new start of the EP legislature, the existing version of the **Vademecum on cohesion policy** has been completed with latest developments and updated, including a balance of REGI activities during the VI legislature.

This document represents a useful and concise instrument for MEPs and stakeholders explaining cohesion policy and giving practical and useful information which can be of help for their daily work.

The [updated version](#) of the Vademecum will be available as from 22 July.

Hearing of the new European Commissioner for regional policy

Following the resignation of Commissioner Hübner, the Polish government has designated **Mr Pawel Samecki** for appointment as Member of the European Commission.

With a view to the replacement of the two Commissioners who have resigned, and in view of the imminent demise of the present Commission's term and the risk of overlap with the appointment procedure of the next Commission, the Conference of Presidents decided at its meeting of 9 July, to approve the following proposal of a *lighter* appointment procedure,

- the nominees should reply to a "general questionnaire" with a view to assessing the nominees' European commitment and personal independence,
- an exchange of views should be held in the competent committee during the week from 31 August to 3 September, with a duration of 1h - 1:30h followed by an evaluation of the coordinators that will be summarised by a letter of the committee chair to the President,
- consideration of the outcome of the exchanges of views by the Conference of Presidents and vote of approval during the September part-session.

The hearing will therefore take place according to the above-described procedure during the REGI meeting in September, given the agreement of the Committee's coordinators in this sense.

The "Barca report" on future cohesion policy

In the context of the ongoing debate on the future of cohesion policy, **Mr. Fabrizio Barca** (Director General, Ministry of Economy & Finance, Italy) was asked by the Commission to prepare an independent [report](#) containing an assessment of the effectiveness of cohesion policy as well as a series of proposals how to reform cohesion policy for the period post 2013.

The report includes contributions collected in a series of eight hearings and seminars with academic experts and policy makers.

The proposals of the report provide a set of interesting ideas for the ongoing debate on future cohesion policy.

Training seminar to MEPs on cohesion policy

A technical seminar will be held for Members of the REGI Committee, policy advisers and assistants by officials of the DG REGIO (European Commission) in September 2009 (date tbc).

The seminar will be the occasion for a general refreshing over the activities in the field of cohesion policy during the past years as well as for an overview on the current and future priorities.

For further information, please contact the REGI Secretariat.

Baltic Sea Strategy

Following a request by the Member States, the European Commission adopted a [Communication](#) on the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region on 10 June 2009. This is the first time that a comprehensive Strategy, covering several Community policies, is targeted on a 'macro-region'. It represents a first cross-sectoral initiative to coordinate different instruments and policies in a territory which is homogeneous from the point of view of the challenges faced (pollution, demographic change, differences in economic development, etc.) but not of the administrative structure (it involves eight Members States as well as parts of the Russian Federation).

This initiative represents by now the most advanced example of the Community general objective to coordinate operational programmes insisting on the same territory in order to ensure synergies in planning.

According to the Swedish presidency calendar, the Council is likely to take a decision on the Baltic Sea Strategy in its meeting on 29-30 October 2009.

Sixth Progress Report on economic and social cohesion

The European Commission adopted the 6th Progress [report](#) on cohesion on 25 June 2009.

This document on the one hand includes information on the state of the debate on the future of cohesion policy; on the other hand it sums up the results of the public consultation on the Green Paper on territorial cohesion and contributes to build up a consensus to define concept and objectives of territorial cohesion in view of a possible White Paper.

THE REGI SECRETARIAT

is glad to welcome you into the VII legislature of the European Parliament!

Our team is made up by



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Please contact us for any information or question you may have!

For detailed information on role and tasks of the REGI Secretariat please check our [Vademecum](#) (Third Part)

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