



Newsletter

A word from the Chair



Dear Colleagues,
Dear Friends,

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"Cohesion policy is still an excellent method to meet today's challenges at various levels."

Karl-Heinz Lambertz, President of the European Committee of the Regions

The MFF presented by the Council on Monday is not a good proposal. It is too far from Parliament's position, and Cohesion is severely cut. It is a proposition the Parliament cannot accept as it will weaken all EU objectives.

Furthermore, the negotiation box covers dimensions and articles that involve sectoral proposals, including for cohesion, that exceed Council's power as defined by the Treaties where co-decision is the rule. Our Committee will address its position regarding Council's position before the next Council Summit of December.

Apart from this, our Committee is focusing fully on the ongoing negotiations on the CPR, ERDF-CF, Interreg and Cross-Border Mechanism dossiers, where we will do our utmost to secure the future of Cohesion Policy and all its many beneficiaries.

Also last week the European Parliament appointed the new college of Commissioners. We will therefore know quite soon how cohesion will be involved in the new Green Deal, and political discussions will start around the future Just Transition Fund. Those two files will be strategic and of key importance to our Committee.

In this regard during our December REGI meeting we will have an exchange of views with the Committee of the Region's rapporteur on Europe's coal regions. This will also be an opportunity for our Committee to discuss this new Fund and how we think it should be designed.

Looking ahead, during this REGI Committee meeting, we will also hear a presentation of a study that explores how the Treaty of Lisbon changed the Parliament's role in Cohesion Policy, and have an exchange of views with Eurocities to speak about the way we foresee the urban dimension of Cohesion Policy.

You can watch our Committee meetings live via webstreaming, and keep up-to-date on the main developments by following us on Twitter [@EP_Regional](#).

I wish everyone a productive December and happy holidays,

Yours,
Younous Omarjee

Legal disclaimer

The items contained herein are drafted by the REGI Secretariat and are provided for general information purposes only. The Newsletter may contain links to websites that are created and maintained by other organizations. The REGI Secretariat does not necessarily endorse the views expressed on these websites.

Last time

REGI meeting

4 - 5 November 2019

Exchange of views with Ms Ivanova, Member of European Court of Auditors (ECA)

In our November meeting, Ms Ivanova, Member of the European Court of Auditors (ECA), gave a general introduction to the work of the Chamber II of ECA and presented 3 publications linked to Cohesion Policy; i.e. the "Opinion on the Common Provisions Regulation" ([Opinion No 6/2018](#)); the rapid case review on the "Allocation of Cohesion Policy funding to Member States for 2021-2027" ([Rapid case review/March 2019](#)) and the briefing paper on "Delivering performance in Cohesion" ([Review No 08/2019](#)).

Ms Ivanova's presentation was followed by an exchange of views with REGI members where questions and comments were related to the current Cohesion Policy implementation and expenditure, as well as to Cohesion Policy post-2020. ECA highlighted the importance of finding a right balance between simplification, control and flexibility but at the same time ensuring accountability. On the allocation of Cohesion Policy (the so-called "Berlin Formula"), ECA confirmed the complexity of this process but recognised improvements in the proposals being discussed at the moment between the co-legislators. ECA underlined the need for a future strategic framework for Cohesion Policy that could replace the Europe 2020 Strategy as for the moment it seems that there are many and sometimes competing EU objectives which might lead to a lack of coherence in terms of future EU spending. Alignment between funding and EU priorities is of major importance also in the light of measuring future performance and long-term impacts through well-targeted indicators.

The latest ECA publications and 2020 Work Programme can be found on their [website](#).

Exchange of views with Karl-Heinz Lambertz, President of the European Committee of the Regions

During the REGI Committee meeting on the 5th of November 2019, the Committee welcomed Mr Karl-Heinz Lambertz, outgoing President of the Committee of the Regions, for an exchange of views. Both Mr Lambertz and Mr Omarjee praised the quality of the relationship between CoR and REGI. Mr Lambertz described the cooperation as an intense and fruitful alliance between two institutions that hold very similar positions on a large variety of issues.

Mr Lambertz described Cohesion Policy as the cornerstone of European solidarity, which should continue to be strongly supported politically. He highlighted the work that will have to be carried out to ensure that Cohesion continues to be a success for all Europeans.

Exchange of views with Mariana Kotzeva, Director-General of Eurostat

The Director-General of Eurostat, Mariana Kotzeva, attended the REGI Committee meeting on 4 November to present their recent publication, [the Eurostat 2019 regional yearbook](#). Ms Kotzeva said that out of their three main publications, the regional yearbook is the most requested among the stakeholders and the public.

The yearbook gives a detailed picture on a broad range of statistical topics, such as EU policies for regions and cities, population, health and the labour market, across the regions of the EU Member States, as well as the regions of the EFTA and candidate countries. The information is illustrated by maps, tables, figures and infographics. According to the Director-General, maps are very important in regional statistics, as they tell the story in greater detail.

In addition to telling the members about the regional yearbook, Ms Kotzeva presented the Eurostat [website section for regions and cities](#), and said that there are now also handy [Youtube tutorials](#) that explain how the information can be used. Eurostat has also created a mobile application entitled "[My region](#)" where useful comparisons between regions can be made.

You can watch the whole discussion on the [REGI website](#) (starting at 16:17).

Presentation of the study "Gender dimension of the EU Cohesion Policy"

Ms Manuela Samek Lodovici, Project Manager at Istituto per la Ricerca Sociale, presented the conclusions of the [study "Gender dimension of the EU Cohesion Policy"](#). The purpose of the study was to analyse how the gender dimension and the principle of gender equality are taken into account in the EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020. It focused on the European Regional Development Funds and the European Social Fund in the period 2014-2020. The researchers had reviewed Partnership Agreements and Operational Programmes in eight EU Member States and undertook interviews with different stakeholders.



Ms Samek highlighted gaps between programming (where gender issues are usually well-addressed) and implementation of Cohesion Policy. In addition she provided the recommendations for the current work on the Cohesion Policy in the programming period 2021-2027.

The presentation was followed by an exchange of views, during which members raised a wide range of issues and questions including simplification versus improvement of gender equality and best practices as examples for future financial programming period.

Ahead of us

REGI meeting

(*) agenda of the forthcoming meetings might be changed after publication of the Newsletter

4 - 5 December 2019

Presentation of the study "Cohesion Policy: The European Parliament's role since the Treaty of Lisbon"

At the request of the REGI Committee, Policy Department B commissioned a [study on "Cohesion Policy: The European Parliament's role since the Treaty of Lisbon"](#).

This study assesses the role of the European Parliament in the field of Cohesion Policy since the Treaty of Lisbon introduced the 'co-decision' procedure, which gives Parliament and Council formal equal powers in agreeing the regulations of the EU Structural and Investment Funds. In addition to the formal processes, the study also considers the informal ones from policy development at the pre-legislative stage to the inter-institutional negotiations as well as the Parliament's scrutiny role over Cohesion Policy.



Regional Development

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The study was completed and circulated to REGI members in July 2019. It will be presented on 4 December, by Mr Haris MARTINOS and Dr Serafin PAZOS-VIDAL.

Exchange of views with Eurocities

In the course of its meeting on the morning of Thursday 5 December, the Committee will hold an exchange of views with EUROCITIES, the principal civil society umbrella organisation speaking for cities at EU level. Founded in 1986, Eurocities now brings together 140 of Europe's largest cities and voices a specifically urban perspective on European policy-making. The work of the organisation will be presented by one of the members of its executive committee, Matthias De Clerq, mayor of Ghent: his presentation will be followed by a question and answer session.

Exchange of views on COR opinion on "Socioeconomic structural change in Europe's coal regions"

In its opinion, the COR argues that EU support for targeted energy transition away from carbon must be accompanied by support for structural change in coal-producing regions. In this respect, the COR supports the European Parliament's call, in the context of the ongoing negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), for additional funds to be made available to mitigate the social, socio-economic and environmental impact of change through a EUR 4.8 billion new Fair Energy Transition Fund. However, the COR stresses that this scheme should be financed from additional resources and not from the envelope provided for the European Structural and Investment Funds. Nevertheless, the COR considers that these resources should be closely linked to Cohesion Policy.

Upcoming events

in Brussels or near to your home

Date	Event	Place	Additional info
4-5 December	REGI Committee meeting	Brussels	
4-5 December	137th plenary session of the European Committee of the Regions	Brussels	
12 December	Annual meeting of the European Committee of the Regions with the participation of the European Semester Officers	Brussels	
16 December	26th COTER Commission Meeting	Brussels	

Useful links

[REGI Website](#)

[EP studies Website](#)

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

[OEIL - The Legislative Observatory](#)

[EUR-Lex](#)

[EC Regional Policy - InfoRegio](#)

[European Committee of the Regions](#)

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