

Cohesion policy: call for greater deployment of Recovery Plans in EU regions and swift delivery of partnership agreements

MEPs and local leaders call for a greater deployment of the Recovery Plans in EU regions and for a swift delivery of partnership agreements.

Members of the European Parliament and the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) discussed with Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms Elisa Ferreira the new programming period 2021-27 and the territorial aspects of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF). They asked the European Commission to ensure the full respect of the partnership principle and the multilevel governance, and to provide recommendations to Member States and relevant managing authorities to improve partnership processes. They also called on Member States to guarantee a broader territorial implementation of the RRF, and on the European Commission to guarantee that the National Recovery Plans will be built in full respect of [articles 175 and 174 TFEU](#) and prioritise less developed and transition regions, as well as the Regions most impacted by the socio-economic repercussions of the COVID-19 crisis.

With a volume of **EUR 392 billion for the 2021-2027 period**, cohesion policy remains the main EU investment policy to reduce disparities between EU regions, strengthening the economic, social and territorial cohesion in the Union. With the objective to focus at least 30% of the EU funds on the fight against climate change, the new generation of cohesion funds also became one of the main investment tools of the Green Deal. Its implementation is now more than ever awaited on the ground to boost recovery and prepare all EU regions for the new challenges and transitions ahead.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the whole entry into force of the new cohesion policy legislation, as well as the submission of Partnership Agreements by Member States to the European Commission, have been delayed. The [regulation](#) governing the 2021-27 funds entered into force on 1 July 2021 and only the Partnership Agreement from Greece has been adopted by the Commission so far.

During a joint meeting, members of the European Parliament's Committee for Regional Development ([REGI](#)) and of the European Committee of the Regions' commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy and EU Budget ([COTER](#)) discussed the challenges of the new programming

period. They underlined the importance of the principles of partnership and multilevel governance and, at the same time, they recalled the importance of maintaining the flexibility measures introduced last year to mobilise EU structural funds in the fight against COVID-19.

Moreover, they called on European and national authorities to speed up the preparation of the new investments programmes and to strengthen synergies between the National Recovery and Resilience Plans and the Cohesion policy, keeping in mind the necessity to avoid overlaps and to guarantee that the objectives of the national recovery plans do respect cohesion principles as set up in article 174 and defined in the [Common Provision Regulation](#).

REGI and COTER members shared their concerns and priorities with Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms **Elisa Ferreira**, who declared: *"Cohesion policy is more important than ever: investing in a recovery for all regions, in a green transition for all regions, in a digital transition which leaves no one behind and avoids a new digital divide is our mission for the next ten years. Let us use responsibly and purposefully this once-in-a-generation opportunity of exceptional levels of cohesion funding and favourable public perception, to create something which future generations will be proud of."*

Younus Omarjee, Chair of the European Parliament's REGI committee, highlighted that *"the impact of the crisis is extremely high and EU funds are now awaited on the ground to boost a quick recovery. The short, middle and long term priorities of cohesion policy remain the reduction of social, economic and territorial gaps between EU regions. This is a central pillar of the European Union. The principles of cohesion policy that governed our negotiations must now be respected in the implementation of funds and programs as well as in Member States' recovery plans."*

Isabelle Boudineau, Chair of the CoR COTER commission and member of the Regional Council of Nouvelle-Aquitaine, said: *"European regions and cities need the European Union as much as the EU needs regions and cities to succeed in the recovery and ecological transition. The Union and its Member States must trust regional and local authorities. We know our territories and their needs. We are therefore best placed to implement European priorities in different territorial contexts. The re-nationalisation in the preparation of the European Recovery Plan was a mistake. Let's not repeat the mistake again by excluding regions and cities from its implementation."*

The meeting took place in the framework of the [19th European Week of Regions and Cities](#) on 14 October.

The CoR assessed the involvement of regional and local authorities in the ongoing programming exercise for the 2021-2027 period, and put forward its recommendations for enhancing their engagement, through an opinion adopted on Tuesday 12 October by its Plenary. The final text will be available [here](#).


Further information


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