



European Committee of the Regions

COTER

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The future of Cohesion policy

Cohesion policy improves quality of life for all

Cohesion policy helps people and places all over Europe to build a better future, where no people and places are left behind. To better tackle the green and digital transitions and other rising challenges, this policy has to evolve with flexibility, predictability, partnership and accountability at its core.



Cohesion policy funding 2021- 2027 is expected to

Help create 1.3 million jobs



Support 850 000 enterprises



Assist at least 6.5 million unemployed people



Help 723 000 dwellings to improve their energy performance

Connect 3.1 million dwellings with high-speed mobile network

and fixed digital infrastructure



What is at stake?

Major challenges ahead to ensure that people and places all over Europe enjoy the same opportunities to face the structural transformation Europe is undergoing.

A united and fairer future for the EU

Economic, social and territorial cohesion is a fundamental objective of the EU. And yet disparities between people and places are on the rise in Europe.

Social exclusion

Over 32.5 million Europeans cannot afford a proper meal every other day



Energy

About 40 million EU citizens **unable to keep their homes adequately warm** in 2022



Rural depopulation and industrial transition

They have a diversified impact with peaks of vulnerability spread across the EU



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Cohesion policy needs a comprehensive renovation, so that its place as the main EU investment instrument covering all regions is consolidated. The opinion lays down key principles for the future of cohesion policy to consolidate its foundations, whilst making it more agile and equipped to face future needs and challenges. ”

Vasco Alves Cordeiro (PT/PES)

President of the European Committee of the Regions
Opinion co-rapporteur

The European Committee of the Regions calls for action

- Cohesion policy has proven its worth as a **long-term, place-based development policy** with **partnership** and **multi-level governance** at its core.
- Cohesion policy must be reformed while remaining the main EU investment tool to achieve **economic, social and territorial cohesion** for all European Regions so that all regions can implement key EU policies related to the green and digital transition.
- The role and mission of post-2027 cohesion policy should be strengthened vis-à-vis other EU investment policies by orienting more explicitly the policy toward addressing grand societal challenges and vulnerabilities.
- The “**do no harm to cohesion**” principle should apply to all EU policies so that they support the objectives of social, economic and territorial cohesion.
- Cohesion policy should operate under the aegis of a single strategic framework defining the main scope and goals for the post-2027 period. The European Committee of the Regions calls for a “**European partnership pact**”, also covering the European agricultural fund for rural development.
- Re-orienting funds should be made more flexible so that local and regional authorities can address emerging priorities; hereby adapting the policy to the fast-changing nature of our times.
- The European Commission should launch a wide-ranging consultation and assessment of **simplification** measures undertaken since the 1990s, including in comparison to alternative delivery models (e.g. the Recovery and Resilience Facility).
- The provisions for a Just Transition Fund for all regions undergoing structural transformation should be streamlined within cohesion policy to **avoid a fragmentation of funds** and achieve further simplification.
- The **European Territorial Cooperation** component should represent no less than 8% of the total amount of cohesion policy funding.



Together with the leading European associations of cities and regions, the European Committee of the Regions is a founding partner of the #CohesionAlliance, the widest EU-coalition whose mission is to affirm cohesion as a fundamental value of the European Union and a key objective for all its policies and investment.



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The Future of **cohesion policy** is the **key for a better Europe**. The success of the future of cohesion policy relies on a multi-level governance and shared management, the strengthening of the partnership principle and the need to implement the ‘**do no harm to cohesion**’ principle across the entire EU budget and policies.”

Emil Boc (RO/EPP)

Chair of the COTER Commission and Mayor of Cluj-Napoca
Opinion co-rapporteur



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Opinion co-rapporteurs

Vasco Alves Cordeiro (PT/PES),
President of the European Committee of the Regions

Emil Boc (RO/EPP),
Chair of the COTER Commission
Mayor of Cluj-Napoca

Created in 1994, after the entry into force of the Maastricht Treaty, the European Committee of the Regions is the EU's assembly of 329 regional and local representatives from all 27 Member States, representing over 447 million Europeans.

Its main objectives are to involve regional and local authorities and the communities they represent in the EU's decision-making process and to inform them about EU policies. The European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council have to consult the Committee in policy areas affecting regions and cities. It can appeal to the Court of Justice of the European Union as a means of upholding EU law where there are breaches to the subsidiarity principle or failures to respect regional or local authorities.

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Rue Belliard/Belliardstraat 101 | 1040 Bruxelles/Brussel | BELGIQUE/BELGIË

Tel. +32 22822211 | e-mail: visuals@cor.europa.eu | www.cor.europa.eu

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