



**European Committee  
of the Regions**

Brussels, 17 January 2022

**209th MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS BUREAU**

**- 25 JANUARY 2022 -**

**ITEM 8 A**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ON THE IMPACT OF THE COR**

*Submitted by the secretary-general*

**FOR**

**DEBATE, DECISION AND RECOMMENDATION TO THE ASSEMBLY**

<b>SUMMARY</b>	
<b>Bureau meeting: 209</b>	<b>Date: 25.1.2022</b>
<b>Item 8 a</b>	
<b>Executive Summary on the impact of the CoR – Current Achievements</b>	
<b>Type:</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Document for information / debate</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Document for decision</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Recommendation to the Assembly</b>	
<b>Short description:</b>	
<p>Under Rule 59 of the Rules of Procedure, the Secretariat-General is required to submit a report to the Plenary Assembly once a year on the impact of European Committee of the Regions (CoR) opinions.</p> <p>The Annual Impact Report for 2021 sets a new standard. In terms of timing, it is presented immediately in January the following year rather than in June or July. In terms of content, the report is structured around the three political priorities of the CoR's 2020-25 mandate of. In terms of methodology, it is the first report to take full account of the Impact Oversight Coordinator's report.</p> <p>The 60-page report is presented in point 8b. This executive summary has been prepared so there is a short document for the Bureau which will available in all languages. In addition to these documents, a visually attractive, graphic-based communication product (similar to the EU Regional and Local Barometer teaser) will be made available for the Plenary session in one language.</p>	
<b>The Bureau is asked to:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve the 2021 Annual Impact Report;</li> <li>• Take note of the improvements in terms of timing, content and methodology compared to previous reports adopted under Rule 59.</li> </ul>	
<b>Remarks: N/A</b>	

## The CoR's Impact: Current Achievements - Executive Summary

As a consultative body to the European institutions, the core business of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) is to represent the European Union's local and regional authorities in the EU decision-making process. The impact of the CoR is assessed in terms of:

- achievements in the EU legislative process (impact on preparatory or final legal texts);
- visibility for local and regional authorities in the EU's agenda-setting;
- concrete changes in the EU's working methods or tangibly in the day-to-day life of citizens through EU legislation or EU actions promoted or initiated by the CoR.

In 2021, the CoR adopted 9 resolutions and 59 opinions. This represents a 20% increase of our consultative output compared to 2020. The 2021 impact report is based on a newly developed system of Key Performance Indicators (KPI). One example is the ability of the CoR to provide feedback on territorial impacts of EU legislation and about local feedback on the implementation of EU rules and programmes. This is done in a consistently timely way through Territorial Impact Assessments (TIAs - three in 2021) and Regional Hubs reports (RegHub – four in 2021).

It is also important to assess how the CoR's views and opinions are presented to the other EU institutions and how CoR rapporteurs interact – before and after the adoption of their opinion – with the representatives of the legislative institutions. Also, commission chairs, Presidents of political groups, the President and the First-Vice-President participate in these inter-institutional relations. Meetings and personal contact with EU institutions during the course of the year are essential outcome indicators for our work. Although these decreased as a consequence of the COVID-19 measures that did not allow personal meetings, the overall interaction with the EU institutions remained steady or even increased.

Overall, the output and outcome indicators clearly show that the CoR has maintained its crucial role as the local and regional voice at EU level. Moreover, the full report shows the progress made with regard to each of the three political priorities of the 2020-25 CoR mandate.

First, in relation to bringing Europe closer to its people, the following key impacts are highlighted:

- Significantly extending **the participation of local and regional politicians in the Conference on the Future of Europe** from 4 to 30 representatives;
- Increasing outreach to the one million elected regional and local politicians by launching the **"CoR Regional and Local EU Councillors' Initiative"** (over 1000 councillors by the end of 2021) and linking it to the European Parliaments initiative "Building Europe with Local Entities";
- Publishing the **second edition of the local and regional Barometer Report** with an unprecedented outreach;
- **Launching the RegHub 2.0 network** as part of the Fit for Future Platform for better regulation and playing a central role in the platform by **leading on three of the platform's nine dossiers**;
- Including the partnership principle in the implementation of the **Brexit Adjustment Reserve**.

Second, in relation to building resilient local and regional communities, the key impacts were:

- Strengthening the role of the local and regional level in the implementation of the **National Recovery Plans** through regular cooperation with the Recovery & Resilience Fund (RRF)

working group in the European Parliament and a clear commitment given by the European Commission to include the territorial dimension in the future RRF Scoreboard;

- Establishing a number of strategic co-operations in **implementing the Green Deal** such as the Zero Pollution Stakeholder Platform, the launch of the Trees for Life campaign and others;
- Establishing a key role of the CoR in the design and implementation of the **Horizon Europe Missions** by encouraging a close alignment of the EUR 1.5 billion provided for the Missions, to be linked with the EUR 30 billion foreseen under the structural funds for implementing regional innovation strategies.

Third, in relation to promoting cohesion as a fundamental value of the EU, key impacts included:

- Maintaining a strong **cohesion policy** based on partnerships and multi-level governance and profiling the role of cohesion as a fundamental value of the EU;
- Ensuring the inclusion of a **Rural Pact** in the proposals of the European Commission for a long term vision for rural areas in Europe;
- **Ensuring a EUR 300 million investment by the Digital Europe programme** for the financing of **European Digital Innovation Hubs** in each EU region and playing an active role in the **New European Bauhaus Initiative** at the very early stages of the collaboration with the Joint Research Centre and the European Parliament.

It is important to underline that this is the first CoR Impact Report to take account of the work of the **CoR impact oversight coordinator**, in the person of the Chair of the NAT commission who presented a report to the CoP in December 2020. In addition to the improved timing, content and methodology of the 2021 Impact Report, this has also strengthened the strategic planning work of the CoR through a joint session of the CoP and the CoR commission Chairs at the end of November 2021. The session confirmed the progress made in improving the CoR's impact and adopted strategic guidelines for 2022.

Beyond the impact of opinions themselves, the CoR's visibility increased in 2021 through three communication campaigns reflecting the [2020-2025 political priorities](#), showing that the CoR's political work goes hand in hand with communication. The three campaigns focus on taking local and regional needs and concerns into account in order to increase legitimacy, ownership and added value, both for the EU's policies and their effectiveness on the ground so as to serve the well-being of citizens. Initial results indicate an increase in all key performance indicators such as media mentions and web and social media outreach, which rose again in 2021 compared to 2020, despite the pandemic. A full report on communication activities will be presented at the next Bureau meeting.

Finally, on the administrative level, the "**Going for Impact!**" strategy launched by the Secretary General in 2020 continues to modernize the administration and to make it more efficient and effective. Key elements are the digitisation of workflows and methods and a more strategic use of resources to strengthen the impact of the CoR's political work, enhance its outreach and set a standard of administrative good practice and support for members. Despite the difficult circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the implementation of the plan is on track and examples of this strategy in action are also included in the annual impact report. A full report on the Going for *impact!* plan will be presented to the Bureau later in 2022.

## **PROPOSAL**

**Members of the Bureau are invited to approve this Executive Summary and overview of the main achievements as part of the 2021 report on the impact of the Committee's opinions.**