

ES & REGIONS PAVILION  
2017 | COP23 BOGOR



# THE ReppORTER

November 2017

Activity report of the EPP Group in the European Committee of the Regions

**COP23**

**EU finances and the future of Europe**

**A look back at the European Week of Regions and Cities**

**Fake news**

**Interview with EPP Vice-President Dara Murphy**



# Foreword

by **President Schneider**

Dear Members,  
Dear friends,

As the year draws to a close, and we feel the winds in Europe finally turning for the better, we must not lose the momentum to work together for our common future. There is broad consensus that future Europe needs more democracy, partnership and participation in our Union and this can only be achieved by working with people in their cities and regions.

To give just one topical example: a delegation from our EPP Group has just returned from the 23rd United Nations Climate Change Conference, led by the ENVE Chair, Cor Lamers. Our message was clear: local and regional authorities deserve better recognition and a stronger role in the implementation of the Paris Agreement. This goes much beyond just climate change into global challenges such as migration, digital transformation and demographic change where we have shown that we can also provide added-value to the debates.

We, the EPP members of the Committee of the Regions who represent cities and regions and enjoy greater trust from our citizens, have a personal responsibility to keep our ears to the ground and to stand up for Europe. When citizens vote in the next European elections they should do so with a conviction that this is the Union they want. We will continue to work to rebuild trust between the EU and its people. We will listen to their concerns in an open and honest way and deliver results on the ground, thus allowing everyone to feel the benefits of being a citizen of the European Union.

But this task is not to be embarked upon alone. We seek a Union of Unity. In the spirit of the Rome Declaration we must work together at the level that makes a real difference, be it the European Union, national, regional, or local, and in a spirit of trust and loyal cooperation, in line with the principle of subsidiarity.

In the months ahead, and with the European elections in mind, our political objective in the EPP-CoR Group must be to strengthen the bonds between local, regional, national and European politics. Within our large EPP family, it is our duty to join our forces in order to provide the best solutions to and for our citizens. On this road, we gladly welcome Dara Murphy Vice-President and Campaign Director for the EPP in our Group meeting this Plenary. Our CoR Citizens' Dialogues under the "Reflecting on Europe" initiative have proven to be successful by involving around 140 CoR members and 8,500 citizens in local debates and collecting feedback from more than 6000 citizens via its "Have your say on Europe" survey. We should see how we can develop this further to promote the values of our EPP family ahead of the European Parliamentary elections in 2019.

Last but by no means least; I would like to use this occasion to welcome the 40 students and 30 local and regional journalists who will be visiting us these days. Please use this opportunity to ask questions and to get to know our work better so we can help you to present the EU's efforts and achievements in Europe's regions and cities.



**Michael Schneider**

President of the EPP-CoR Group

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Schneider".

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# Members on the field

## Wielkopolska' competition on the best „Reflecting on Europe” debate

On 20th of November, the winning students from the Wielkopolska region came to Brussels for a study visit where they handed over a “letter to the European Union” as the conclusions to a competition, which has been organised on the initiative of **Marek Woźniak**, President of the Wielkopolska region. Students from high schools, vocational schools and technical schools were invited to submit the best „Reflecting on Europe” debate from the Wielkopolska region in Poland, within the context of the European Committee of the Regions’ initiative. The competition has obtained the patronage of the European Commission and media patronage of euractiv.pl and aims to stimulate a discussion among young people about the EU by giving them a possibility to expand their knowledge and express their opinions. It also raises awareness about the opportunities that European integration brings. The competition was carried out in two parts: debates “reflecting on Europe” executed in schools and written conclusions in the form of a “letter to the European union”. Teams consisted mostly of students but also some representatives of local communities and organisations. The conclusions from the competition will be submitted as a contribution to the forthcoming CoR opinion on “Reflecting on Europe”.



## Working Group on Western Balkans meeting in East Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

On 25 October 2017, the 21st session of the CoR-Working Group on the Western Balkans took place in East Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the Administrative Center of the Government of the Republika



## CoR First Vice-President receives prestigious Finnish award for his work

**Markku Markkula** (Finland/EPP), 1st Vice-President of the CoR, received the Gold Badge of Honour from the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities last week, in recognition of his work for local government in Europe. The 1st Vice-President was also active during the European Robotics Week between 20 and 23 November. “During the Robotics week, cities and regions presented their latest

Srpska. Under the chair of **Franz Schausberger** (Austria / EPP), two expert panels on “The involvement of local and regional authorities in cross-border cooperation projects and the IPA II funds” and “Economic cooperation between local authorities in the two entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)” were held with the involvement of political representatives from both the EU and the Western Balkans. Many mayors shared their experiences and problems with the instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II). It was agreed that local administrations should be more actively involved in programming and cross-border projects and that local communities should have more opportunities to share their experiences with people in other countries so as to avoid repeating the same mistakes. This also applies to cross-border cooperation, which should be intensified. Participants also expressed regret that no meetings of the Steering Group for IPA II are taking place within BiH. **Željko Turk** (HR) and **Dimitrios Kalogeropoulos** (EL) actively participated in this meeting.



*robotics applications and successful regional initiatives and explore funding possibilities and ways to cooperate. Developing strategies to build smart specialisation in robotics and optimising the use of structural funds to complement the identified R&I topics is important for exploiting the particular potential that robotics has for Europe’s regions. Robotics can provide solutions to major societal challenges and raise productivity in every region’s specific industrial and civil competencies” he underlined.*



# A LOOK BACK AT THE EUROPEAN WEEK OF REGIONS AND CITIES



*"The state of the European Union should be seen from a human perspective":* **Michael Schneider**, President of the EPP Group in the European Committee of the Regions, underlined in his response to the first ever Regions and Cities' State of the European Union. *"My belief – confirmed by recent experi-*

*ences in Germany – is that citizens do not reject democracy, but they want open minded leaders to be brave enough to face the reality and to tell the truth"* he added. It was also during this week that the European Committee of the Regions, together with leading associations of EU cities and regions, launched

a #CohesionAlliance. This Europe-wide coalition calls for the EU budget after 2020 to make cohesion policy stronger, more effective, visible and available for every region in the Union. President Schneider took the opportunity to voice the CoR's ambition for a strong cohesion policy backed up with a realistic budget saying *"Social, economic and territorial cohesion is so vital for the future of the EU. It is not simply a matter of money, but a matter of securing our regions' common future in the EU. We will do everything in our power to support it, as demonstrated by the launch of the Cohesion Alliance."* This message was repeated at the EPP Group workshop for the European Week of Regions and Cities, which took place on 11 October with the title: **"Cohesion Policy and Europe's Strategic Investments"** and included the participation of President Schneider, **Markku Markkula**, **Olgierd Geblewicz**, **Andrey Novakov**, Member of European Parliament, **Iliyana Tsanova**, Deputy Managing Director of the European Fund for Strategic Investment, European Investment Bank and **Nicola De Michelis**, Head of Cabinet of the Commissioner for Regional Policy, European Commission.

## JOIN THE COHESION ALLIANCE

Currently worth one third of the EU budget, the EU's cohesion policy reduces regional disparities, creates jobs, opens new business opportunities and addresses major global issues such as climate change and migration. The #CohesionAlliance was created through cooperation between the leading European associations of cities and regions and the European Committee of the Regions. It demands that the EU budget after 2020 makes cohesion policy stronger, more effective, visible and available for every region in the European Union.



**SHOW YOUR SUPPORT, SIGN THE DECLARATION**

<http://cor.europa.eu/en/takepart/Pages/cohesion-alliance.aspx>

## Enhancing cooperation with the European Parliament

A Joint meeting of the European Parliament's REGI Committee and the CoR's COTER Commission took place on 10 October in the presence of European Commissioner Corina Crețu with a view to addressing "The State of play of Cohesion in the EU: conclusions to be drawn from the 7th Cohesion Report". The meeting provided an excellent occasion for Members to express their support for the #CohesionAlliance. Participating in this meeting, **Olgierd Geblewicz**, Marshal of the Westpomeranian Region, stressed:

*"A radical change must be made in how the impacts of Cohesion Policy are communicated to EU citizens. CP's economic, social, spatial, environmental, cultural, political and even civilizational achievements need to be highlighted. CP should retain its strategic nature, ensuring a sustainable and adaptable investment framework to support long-term development*



*impacts. By extension, CP should also be closely aligned with the broader objectives underlying*

*the EU's strategic development vision beyond 2020 without losing its territorial focus."*

## Selected highlights from the European Week of Regions and Cities workshops



The 15th **European Week of Regions and Cities** gathered around 5700 local administrators, EU fund managers, regional policy experts and practitioners in Brussels from 9 to 12 October 2017. High-level political debates and more than 130 workshops allowed an exten-

sive exchange of views and experiences on three principal themes: Building resilient regions and cities – [#LocalResilience](#); Regions and cities as change agents – [#TakeAction](#); Sharing knowledge to deliver results – [#SharingKnowledge](#).



“ *Local products represents the community themselves, traditional methods and knowledge passed on from generation to generation. The conservation and valorisation of local traditional products could increase the adoption of more sustainable agricultural system: that is why the EU's new agriculture policy should protect small-scale farmers.* ”

**Borboly Csaba**

“ *Go local!-Best practices of sustainable food policy on local level” is the seminar where I will speak during the European Week of Cities and Regions. Traditional food from our regions can be one of the best European ambassadors in the world. Let's eat local!* ”

**Alin-Adrian Nica**

“ *The EU Alpine Strategy enables coordinated solutions that bring tangible benefits to everyone. Closing gaps in the rail network and thus improving connections not only on the highest-ranking routes shortens travel times for people, makes rail freight transport more attractive and is also a valuable contribution to the environment.* ”

**Harald Sonderegger**

# NOVEMBER/DECEMBER PLENARY SESSION:



The 126th Plenary Session of the European Committee of the Regions takes place on 30 November-1st December in the European Commission's Charlemagne Building. Thirteen opinions and a Resolution on the European Commission's Work Programme

2018 will be on the agenda as well as a topic debate on the likely impact of Brexit for the local and regional authorities in the EU. **Pierre Moscovici**, European Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs, is expected to deliver a

statement and Commissioner **Margrethe Vestager**, responsible for Competition Policy will address the Plenary Session in relation to Michael Murphy's opinion on EU competition policy report for 2016.

## EPP-CoR to step up its contribution for 2019 European elections

**Dara Murphy**, EPP Vice-President and Campaign Director for the 2019 European elections, will present the EPP campaign to members of the EPP Group in the European Committee of the Regions on 29 November. Having already met bilaterally with President Michael Schneider earlier this month, the intention of this meeting is to further step up the cooperation of local and regional elected politicians during the campaign and beyond, as a contribution to the EPP family's work. As Minister for European Affairs,

Deputy Murphy brings a wealth of experience having represented Ireland at the General Affairs Council, and both the Foreign Affairs Council and the Justice and Home Affairs Council in his previous ministerial capacity. Within the EPP family, Minister Murphy is a well-known figure having co-chaired meetings of the EPP Foreign Affairs Ministers and represented Fine Gael at EU level. During his appointment as the campaign director in September, Taoiseach Leo Varadkar congratulated Deputy Dara Murphy saying: "At this crucial time with Brexit negotiations underway and discussions also taking place about the future direction and shape of the European Union, Deputy



*Dara Murphy's appointment is further evidence of the important role that Fine Gael plays within the EPP, Europe's largest political party."*

## EPP Opinions at the November/December Plenary Session

### The European Commission Report on Competition Policy 2016

ECON-VI/023



**Michael Murphy**, Councillor, Tipperary County Council, Ireland

*"There is a positive story to tell about the work that the Commission is undertaking to support EU consumers and businesses. For many citizens competition policy is an area in which the*

*positive role of the EU can be seen – examples of e-commerce and geo blocking is one that people encounter on a day to day basis so good to see that the Commission is tackling this and sends an important message to citizens."*

The Report on Competition policy, published annually, provides detailed information on the most important policy and legislative initiatives, and on decisions adopted by the European Commission in the application of EU competition law during the previous year. The opinion addresses the enormous body of work undertaken by the Commission in 2016 and highlights major issues of relevance to our body as regional legislators from across Europe. The opinion focuses on a number of key points,

- Emphasises the benefits of competition policy via widening of choice for citizens and encouraging innovation, enterprise and efficiency;
- Argues for the importance of local and re-

gional authorities as providers of Services of General Economic Interest (SGEIs) and the need to ensure sustainable public services for EU citizens. As such welcomes the Commission's efforts to simplify the application of State Aid rules in relation to SGEIs, while also recommending further actions that could be taken;

- Raises concerns about on-going barriers to cross border trade in the Digital Single Market, for example geo blocking and potential competitors being artificially excluded from opportunities by dominant players;
- Welcomes the Commission's efforts to improve the effectiveness of National Competition Authorities;
- Urges the Agriculture and Competition Commissioners to work more closely in supporting efforts towards market diversification for the agri-food sector, particularly for those Member States most affected by Brexit.

### The implementation of EU macro-regional strategies

COTER-VI/029

**Raffaele Cattaneo**, Regional Councillor and President of Lombardia Regional Council, Italy

*"The Three No's (no new EU funding, no additional EU formal structures and no new EU*

*legislation) should be replaced by Three Yes's.*

*CoR says Yes to better synergies with funding instruments, Yes to better embedding of existing structures in MRS and Yes to better implementation of existing rules."*

The CoR notes that the EU needs a territorial vision which goes beyond borders to develop a "global approach" and welcomes the European Commission's first ever single report on the implementation of EU MRS. The advan-



## Council recommendation on tracking graduates

SEDEC-VI/029

**Csaba Borboly**, President of Harghita County Council, Romania

*“Young people should be encouraged to use the knowledge gained through mobility programmes back in their home countries. Competitive regions need competitive specialists.”*

Education systems based on the principle of effectiveness, equality and equity represent the basis of an open, democratic and competitive society. In order to achieve our common goals, local and regional authorities should be more involved into the planning and development of education policies.

When it comes to the development of education strategies, we should take into consideration not only the differences between Member States, but also the differences between regions. In this regard we have to focus more on the development of educational infrastructure in less developed

tage of MRS is that national, regional and local actors come together under a common and functional framework to work out an overarching strategy and joint programming processes that contribute to the achievement of the EU Treaty objective of economic, social and territorial cohesion and that address local needs effectively. Moreover, macro-regional strategies help to engage citizens in the European project and bridge the gap between EU and local policy-making. We need a closer relationship between MRS and Cohesion policy by supporting the governance of MRS

regions. It is also very important to recognise the important role of small universities in the economic and social development of regions. The idea of the Citizens’ University can become a reality only if the Union and the Member States genuinely and appropriately consult the local and regional authorities when drawing up their higher education policies.

In order to reduce the high rate of migration and reduce the phenomena of brain drain – which is most characteristic of Eastern European countries – beside the development of mobility programs, more focus should be given to facilitate the return of young people to their home country. Young people should be encouraged to use their knowledge gained through mobility programs at home, because a competitive region presupposes competitive specialists. However, this requires qualified instructors with pedagogical and methodological skills.

at a technical level and funding the implementation of specific actions and projects via the Cohesion funds, strengthening the European Territorial Cooperation Programme. In order to strengthen the MRS governance it’s necessary to improve administrative capacity based on increased ownership, better cooperation and coordination between all levels of governance, give more to the regions and more flexibility, trust and financial incentives to regional and local players and other actors in implementing goals of common European interest adapted to local and regional needs.



Furthermore, an effective education system has to provide the access to quality education, the acquisition of key competencies, regardless of young people’s economic and social status, religion or ethnicity. In the case of educational, training and higher education institutions operating in the language of national and ethnic minorities, efforts should be made to avoid limiting the access of minority students to education.

## Extraordinary EPP Group meeting: EU finances and the future of Europe from a regional and local perspective, 5 December, Brussels



Against the backdrop of future discussions on the EU’s finances, the EPP Group in the CoR is holding an extraordinary meeting on 5 December focused on the **EU finances and the future of Europe from a regional and local perspective**. Guest speakers include **Günther Oettinger**, European

Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources, and **Tomislav Donchev**, Deputy Prime Minister of Bulgaria and Jan Olbrycht, Member of the European Parliament. On this occasion, the EPP Group is set to underline that the EU budget must follow a place based approach in order to respond to the needs of municipalities, cities and regions. The EPP Group seeks to promote a pragmatic and visionary budget, where the EU’s added value can be understood by the citizens. The timing of this meeting coincides with major reflections within the EU on how resources should be prioritised and how the EU budget should be financed. In June this year, the European Commission published a reflection paper, which draws on the report on ‘Future financing of the EU’ drafted by a high-level group made up of the European Parliament, the Council of the EU and the European Commission

and chaired by Mario Monti. The CoR is responding to this paper via an opinion drafted by **Marek Woźniak** and which is set to be adopted in early 2018. A new draft budget beyond 2020 is expected to be released by the European Commission during the first half of 2018.

*“Thanks to investment under cohesion policy and other instruments, the EU helps countries, regions, and cities to improve the quality of life of their citizens... At the same time, a variety of new challenges have arisen since the current budget was designed... The pressure created by these competing demands on finite resources has underscored the urgent need to reflect on what kind of budget is needed for the Europe of the future.”* Commissioners **Günther H. Oettinger** and **Corina Crețu** in the reflection paper on the Future of EU finances.

# Bonn Climate Conference Becomes Launch-Pad for Higher Ambition



**COP23 | FIJI**  
UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE  
**BONN 2017**

*// Nature is the original smart and sustainable system, and there is a lot we can learn from its closed loop processes that have evolved over the course of millions of years. We need to reconnect with nature, and it will help make our lives more resilient and sustainable.*

*//*

**Siim Kiisler**, Estonian Minister for the Environment

Climate action needs to be both global and coordinated so that we can learn how to mitigate and adapt to the impact of climate change together: this was the main message of the European People's Party Group in the European Committee of the Regions' delegation to the 23rd United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bonn. Following their active participation in the Climate Summit of Local and Regional

Leaders, where they endorsed a Declaration calling for local and regional authorities to be formally part of the global governance system to combat climate change, the EPP/CoR Group delegation joined "The Global Covenant of Mayors Day".

The chair of the CoR's Commission for Environment, Climate Change and Energy, **Cor Lamers** moderated a high-level debate on the Transatlantic Dialogue on Climate

Change. Speaking from Bonn, he underlined: "With the impacts of climate change being increasingly felt in our local communities, the COP23 has even a more important role to play to advance the Paris Agreement. We need to make our cities more resource efficient, more climate-friendly, more innovative and more competitive. This will create new jobs, develop new skills and make our local communities more sustainable."



The EPP/CoR members are observers within the delegation of the European Union to COP23 and included **Cor Lamers**, **Apostolos Tzitzikostas**, **Michel Lebrun**, **Witold Stępień** and **Sirpa Hertell**.

Speaking at the plenary session of the Eu-

ropean Committee of the Regions just a few days before, Commissioner for Climate Change and Energy, **Miguel Arias Cañete**, stated that delivering the EU's 2030 targets and global commitments will largely depend upon concrete action on the ground. "Successful implementation relies on Europe's

local actors – we cannot succeed without supporting them" – he stated – "Elected leaders of Europe's cities and regions have a unique role: by taking action, they lead by example and push other decision-makers to join the low-carbon transition".

## EPP Study Visit: Europe's Youth as Partners for Sustainable Change



Following their return from Bonn, the EPP Group delegation discussed their impressions and the follow-up with a group of students visited the European Committee of the Regions for the EPP/CoR Study Visit on 22-23 November. This is the eighth time that the EPP Group has invited young people to debate topics with a strong local and regional dimension with the aim to give them an insight into how the work of the EPP Group fits into EU decision-making. Following two days of interactive debates and dis-

cussions, the young representatives presented their ideas to Eva Maydell, Member of the European Parliament on the following three topics:

- Improving the role of local and regional authorities in the EU's climate and environmental activities
- Giving young people a greater voice in EU decision-making
- Policy priorities for the next EU Presidency.



# Fake news - when freedom of expression becomes suppression of freedom



The problem of fake news has grown so much that it needs to be discussed at all level of governance. **Olgierd Geblewicz**, Marshal of the Westpomeranian Region, has therefore proposed to organize a seminar for members of the European Committee of the Regions on fake news, propaganda and hate speech in Szczecin next year. Below, he outlines his reasons:

Seventy two years after the end of the Second World War and sixty years after signing the Treaty of Rome Europe is one of the most prosperous part of the world. Nevertheless, in recent years, we have seen the rise of right wing political forces, which feed citizens with a narrative of national selfishness, mistrust of foreign societies, and fear. To convince people of their points,

they have started to create a parallel reality, by producing fake news, which have been spread, read and increasingly believed.

*"Fake news factories have become a world-wide phenomenon."*

The European Union is constantly being attacked by negative narration from external countries. Russian anti EU propaganda has become such a powerful foreign policy tool that the EU had to initiate the East Strat-Com Task Force, which counters the flow of fake news on a daily basis. News, which is produced abroad, is easily absorbed by internal anti-EU circles and that leads to an unnecessary crisis of mutual trust of the European nations, and mostly to the EU Institutions. The growth of Euroscepticism reflects in elections results in many European countries. The number of parliamentary representatives, and also governments, unfavorable to the idea of European unity has increased dramatically over the past few years. Political representatives more often use the public media to spread propaganda, and fake news, to keep their power. Simultaneously they stigmatize journalists,



who oppose their narration and sometimes use public institutions to intimidate the most defiant ones. The green light for the dissemination of fake news given by authorities is one of the most dangerous enemies of democracy. This phenomenon became particularly visible in Poland, where, now called, National Media feed the audience with pro-government propaganda, at the same time insulting opposition, foreign partners, and institutions undermining unlawful actions of Polish public institutions.



The Internet is bringing an ultra-fast dissemination to the information. Not facts, but fake news, hate speech, trolls, bots attacks and emotions create today the mind-set of the society. Fake news is a tool in the new model of war, having impact not only globally but also on local and regional communities; misinformation and disinformation are part of the new cyberwar.

**Michał Boni**, MEP and co-chair of the EPP Expert Group on Digital Europe

## 11<sup>th</sup> EPP-CoR Winter University for local and regional media

The 11th edition of the EPP Group in the European Committee of the Regions' Winter University for local and regional media is taking place at a time when the media industry is undergoing a period of self-reflection. Despite enjoying higher levels of trust, local and regional media have been hit particularly hard by the pressure for digital transformation and the decline in revenue from copy sales and advertising. Moreover, there is pressure at all levels to fight fake news through better media literacy at all levels and highly trusted local media journalism. These will be just some of the topics debated over the two-day event, which will gather 30 local and regional journalists from across Europe with the following aims:

1) To share the EPP Group in the CoR's position on the future of the EU budget and the importance of keeping Cohesion Policy as the main investment tool in Europe

2) To gain a better understanding of local media developments and journalists' needs when reporting on EU affairs.

#EPPWU



# Upcoming events

→ 4.12. <b>Subsidiarity Conference, Vienna</b>
→ 4-5.12. <b>EPP/CoR Winter University for local media</b>
→ 5.12. <b>Extraordinary EPP Group meeting, Brussels</b>
→ 8.12. <b>JCC Montenegro in Danilovgrad</b>
→ 13.12. <b>COTER</b>
→ 18.01. <b>CAFA</b>
→ 22.01. <b>NAT</b>
→ 23.01. <b>ECON</b>
→ 30.01 – 01.02. <b>CoR Plenary Session</b>



As the preparations for the 2019 European elections get under way, the European Committee of the Regions has offered its full support and welcomed the European Parliament's commitment for the two EU institutions to work together and align resources in a shared effort to increase citizens' engagement. The roadmap towards the elections and the partnership between the two political EU institutions were discussed at the CoR's November Bureau with the European Parliament's Vice-President for Communication - and former CoR President - Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso. The debate was followed by the adoption of the CoR Communication Plan for 2018, which puts the European elections at the centre of its strategy.

*"The way Europe works and the way it communicates needs to change. Europe can only look forward by pulling its resources and working in partnership, which is why I am pleased that the Committee will be a partner in supporting the European election campaign by listening and talking local. We*

*all need to work to explain what the EU is, what it does and why it matters: who can do this better than mayors, regional presidents or councillors in their communities? The aligning of our communication efforts is a significant step towards maximising the potential of our outreach which must continue into the future.* " **Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso**, European Parliament's Vice-President

This was also the occasion to discuss a report prepared by **Luc Van den Brande**, President Juncker's Special Adviser on outreach towards citizens and member of the EPP Group in the CoR entitled "Reaching out to EU citizens: A new opportunity", which takes stock of the Commission's communication outreach and includes concrete communication guidelines and recommendations. The report looks at synergies with other European and national actors around promoting dialogue with the public and sets out a framework for a more citizen-focused Europe as well as the role of communication technologies whilst highlighting the importance of engaging with Europe's youth.

## Ongoing opinions

### CIVEX

Reflecting on Europe: the voice of regional and local authorities to rebuild trust in the European Union – **Markku Markkula (with Karl-Heinz Lambertz/PES)**

Adoption foreseen October 2018

Regulation on the European citizens' initiative – **Luc Van den Brande**

Adoption foreseen March 2018

Mid-term review of the implementation of the European Agenda on Migration – **Dimitrios Kalogeropoulos**

Adoption foreseen March 2018

### COTER

Europe on the Move: promoting seamless mobility solutions – **Ivan Žagar**

Adoption foreseen January 2018

Europe on the Move: labour aspects of the road transport – **Spyros Spyridon**

Adoption foreseen January 2018

The future of EU finances until 2025 – **Marek Woźniak**

Adoption foreseen January 2018

Boosting Growth and Cohesion in EU Border Regions (working title) – **János Ádám Karácsony**

Adoption foreseen July 2018

### ECON

A European strategy for industry: the role and perspective of regional and local authorities – **Heinz Lehmann**

Adoption foreseen March 2018

Public Procurement Package – **Adrian Teban**

Adoption foreseen July 2018

### ENVE

Promoting coexistence with conflict species within the framework of the EU Nature Directives – **Csaba Borboly**

Adoption foreseen anuary 2018

Towards an 8th Environment Action Plan – **Cor Lamers**

Adoption foreseen October 2018

Common rules for the internal market in natural gas – **Mauro D'Attis**

Adoption foreseen July 2018

### NAT

Sustainable development of the blue economy in the western Mediterranean – **Samuel Azzopardi**

Adoption foreseen January 2018

Local and regional incentives to promote healthy and sustainable diets – **Nikolaos Chiotakis**

Adoption foreseen July 2018

The EMFF beyond 2020 – Investing in Europe's Coastal Communities – **Alberto Núñez Feijóo**

Adoption foreseen July 2018

### SEDEC

Digital Single Market: Mid-term review – **Alin Nica**

Adoption foreseen January 2018

Strengthening European identity through education and culture – **Tanya Hristova**

Adoption foreseen May 2018

