

THE

# ReppORTER

January 2018

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



## EPP grassroots engagement for the 2019 elections

Europe starts in your village/city/region

**Bulgarian Presidency of the EU**

**January/February Plenary Session**

**Upcoming events**

**EPP Regions and Cities for  
a realistic and ambitious EU budget**



European Committee  
of the Regions

# Foreword

by **President Schneider**

A strong and united EU is the best guarantee for a good future in peace, freedom and prosperity. And so it should remain in the future.

European citizens want an EU which meets their expectations and that convinces by its problem-solving capacities. This was not always the case in the last years. The way some crises have been handled disappointed and unsatisfied more and more citizens, who in turn lost their trust, confidence and enthusiasm in European politics and the unique European project.

People want an EU that is delivering solutions, that is tangible, transparent and accountable. People want to have a real say on Europe. They want a Europe based on local, regional and national realities; a Europe with a heart and a soul. A Europe that first listens and understands, a Europe that protects and empowers and defends the interest of the people.

The EPP is the biggest party in Europe, represented in all 27 Member States at all levels of governance, this means local, regional, national and European.

The success of the EPP in the 2014 elections was a collective achievement. Given the current political situation, for the 2019 elections we must do even better and work more intensively as one, united and responsible political family.

United we stand strong. United we want to reach out to the people in Europe's villages, cities and regions.

The EPP Group in the CoR is launching an EPP grassroots engagement for the 2019 European Elections to listen to the people, restore trust and increase their ownership of the EU project.

This goes in line with the objectives of President Tusk's "Leaders Agenda" and his demand "to hear the voice of regional and local authorities to rebuild trust in the EU" and with one of the objectives of President Juncker's Task Force on Subsidiarity: "identification of ways to better involve regional and local authorities in the preparation and the follow up of Union policies". Many EPP Heads of State or Government stand behind a strong Europe based on subsidiarity, democratic values, and the rule of law, deepened at all levels of government.

With the EPP grassroots engagement, we will put this into practice and allow Europe to blossom from its roots.



**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

## Making EU agriculture work for farmers and consumers

Ensuring European added value for both farmers and consumers in the future Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) after 2020 was the discussion for a joint meeting between European Parliament's Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI) Committee and the European Committee of the Regions' Commission for Natural Resources (NAT) on 11 January. In the fraught negotiations over the future EU budget, the EPP Group in the CoR insists on a balance between market competitiveness and a minimal financial security for farmers. *"Post 2020 there needs to be an improvement in the investment environment so that farmers can be provided with tailor made financial instruments and keep up to date with technological change"* **Samuel Azzopardi**,



the EPP Group in the CoR's NAT coordinator, proposed. However, he also warned: *"Any increase for the rural development funds cannot be allowed to happen at the expense of the farmers' direct payments. Instead, Member States should have a greater degree of subsidiarity to transfer funds from the first pillar to the second pillar, if they wish so."* **Olgierd Geblewicz**, Marshal of West Pomerania, responded at the end of the meeting with a call for support in rural areas. *"Depopulation and ageing societies in rural areas have become dangerous challenges for Europe, yet they are common phenomenon in many regions. The only tool preventing this occurrence is a stronger and more smartly managed second pillar of the CAP."*



## Improving the implementation of structural reforms

It is a widely shared view that delivery on structural reforms, as laid down in the Country-specific Recommendations, is not satisfactory and that the European Semester needs to be further strengthened. This was the starting point for a workshop on the implementation of structural reforms at the CoR on 14 December. Chairing the debate, **Paul Lindquist**, Member of the



CoR Steering Committee of the Europe 2020 Monitoring Platform noted: *"Any policy initiative which touches upon of the local and regional authorities without involving them would result in an infringement of the principle of subsidiarity"* before adding *"we need to encourage the Commission to support our proposal of a Code of Conduct."* **Arnoldas Abramavičius** also agreed that there needs



to be a stronger involvement of the local and regional authorities as partners. *"Multi-level governance arrangements would make the European Semester more effective and increase its ownership on the ground"* he concluded.

## CoR–Montenegro joint consultative committee



The 9th meeting of the CoR–Montenegro joint consultative committee took place in Danilovgrad, Montenegro on 8 December, under the chairmanship of **Jelena Drenjanin** and **Aleksandra Bogdanović**. During the meeting, Montenegro's local leaders projected optimism about the country's progress towards membership of the European Union noting that public support for accession to the EU remains strong and expressing confidence that the country's communities will be well prepared to meet EU obligations. **Arnoldas Abramavičius** and **Mario D'Attis** were also part of the EPP-CoR delegation. As **Jelena Drenjanin** said: *"We consider the*



*knowledge and involvement of local and regional players to be the key to success in democracy-building based on trust and stability. More needs to be done here to strengthen local self-government, in both financial and legislative terms. Montenegro is a small country with huge potential to become a major year-round tourist destination. The sea, nature and mountains could attract visitors with activities in every season. This will require investment in human resources, e.g. adult education, development of business skills and support for innovation. A further increase in infrastructure investment will also be needed to enable continuous economic growth."*

# EPP grassroots engagement for the 2019 elections

## Europe starts in your village/city/region



Under the motto “Europe starts in your village/city/region”, the EPP-CoR is encouraging people to go into their cities and regions to pass a message of unity in diversity e.g. “Europe starts in Sofia” or “Europe starts in Gabrovo” or “Europe starts in Innsbruck”. The EPP-CoR’s roadmap foresees a series of local events in all EU member states, which will be shaped following the model of town hall debates with citizens, complemented by three flagship events in Bulgaria, Austria and Romania.

Ideally, the EPP local dialogues should bring together politicians from the local/regional, national and European

level i.e.:

- a local or regional politician
- a politician from the national party and
- a member of the European parliament or a candidate running for the elections, or a personality from an European institution, associations, etc.

Topics will be chosen by the local host according to the specificity of the city or region and the particular political landscape. Political leaders from local, regional, national and European level must be ready for honest talks, open to

citizens’ concerns and to the opportunities provided by the EU.

The European Committee of the Regions’ initiative “reflecting on Europe” initiative was a source of inspiration. This bottom-up movement triggered by a demand by Donald Tusk, President of the European Council, has led to the organization of about 140 events in one year, gathering thousands of citizens. The aim is “to provide a platform for citizens, as well as regional and local authorities, to share their thoughts and possible concerns about the past-present-future of Europe”.

### From Sofia to Austria to Romania

Together with our EPP parties in Bulgaria, Austria and Romania, the three countries holding the Presidency of the EU over the next 18 months, the EPP-CoR proposes the following flagship events:

The launch of the EPP grassroots engagement will take place on 9 March 2018 in Sofia, following an invitation from Prime Minister **Boyko Borisov**, EPP President **Joseph Daul** and the EPP-CoR’s President **Michael Schneider**. More than 400 local mayors and regional politicians, members of the EPP group in the European Parliament and members of the European Committee of the Regions are expected to attend along with eminent guests from all over Europe. After the launch in Bulgaria, a larger event is planned in Austria for the beginning of December 2018, together with the EPP Spitzenkandidat, who will have been just elected at the EPP Congress in November in Helsinki. The high point will be a summit of regional and local leaders, with the participation of the EPP Spitzenkandidat, in Romania in 2019, just before the European Parliament elections. On this occasion,

the fruits of the local EPP dialogues will be harvested the, to show “unity in diversity” and to give a strong message of support to the EPP Spitzenkandidat.

The organization of the three flagship events is grounded on the experience of previous European elections. During the electoral campaign of 2014, the EPP Group in the CoR organised a summit of regional and local leaders in Poznań (Poland) with the EPP and Platforma Obywatelska. The Prime Minister of Poland and about 800 regional and local politicians debated with the Spitzenkandidat, **Jean-Claude Juncker**, on how the EU should listen and respond efficiently to the needs of people living in cities and regions.

This bottom-up initiative could provide a credible and sustainable platform for interaction on key issues related to the European reform agenda and the future of Europe.

In 2014, at the EPP summit of regional and local leaders in Poznan, **Jean-Claude Juncker**, at that time the EPP’s Spitzenkandidat stated: “As president of

*the European commission, i will promote regional and local authorities’ involvement in decision making into the future. I will fight for a strong role for the committee of the regions throughout the legislative process and I will work closely with you”.*

His commitment was reinforced by the Rome declaration, co-signed on 25 March 2017 by all 27 Member States and EU institutions, which stated that in the future we need to ‘*work together at the level that makes a real difference, be it the European union, national, regional, or local, in line with the principle of subsidiarity*’.



## Expected outcomes:

- **raise awareness** of the importance of the European Parliament elections on 23-26 May 2019 and **mobilise** them to make an informed choice as EU citizens
- **present concrete proposals** from the people living in cities and regions to the EU political agenda; the proposals will be presented to the EPP members of the two political assemblies of the European Parliament and European Committee of the Regions.
- **ensure the local and regional dimension of EU politics is part of the EPP manifesto**, and of the political priorities of the EPP Spitzenkandidat;
- local dialogues will offer the opportunity to **address local challenges** at the local level. They shall **strengthen political subsidiarity** and **allow better dialogue** with citizens on areas which are often decided in Brussels and Strasbourg, but implemented in Europe's cities and regions as is the case for over 70% of the EU legislation.



“ We are all from the same political family and the countries, the regions and the cities that have strong EPP leadership can be seen to be the parts of Europe that are proving to be the most successful. We must therefore work together to demonstrate that the EPP is strong, united, has its own vision and is capable of implementing the policies that will benefit the people of Europe collectively. Our citizens must see that EPP leaders at European, national, regional and local levels work hand in hand for them on the ground. ”

**Michael Schneider,**  
President of the EPP Group in the European Committee of the Regions

# BULGARIAN PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EU

*"We have set a goal to ourselves to respond to the needs of the citizens of Europe to the maximum extent – more security, more stability and more solidarity. The priorities we have set are part of the common European agenda"*



**Liliana Pavlova**, Minister for the Bulgarian Presidency

On January 1, 2018, a decade after its accession to the EU, Bulgaria took over the rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU for the first time. The political priorities include working for.

A **Secure Europe**, because the migration crisis and the terrorist acts over the past years have shown how vulnerable we are.

A **Stable Europe**, because the citizens want to know that the European Union is taking care of their prosperity and wellbeing.

**Solidary Europe**, because all member states are faced with the main challenges and they can be overcome only with joint action, not at national or local level.

## A FOCUS ON COHESION POLICY

More specifically, some of the highlights over the next 6 months include: Economic growth and social cohesion where the Bulgarian presidency will strive to demonstrate that *Cohesion Policy provides a real added value for EU citizens and is a proven example of a working instrument for reducing the differences between us, which guarantees the success of the European model.* This will take place in the context of an active and constructive debate on the Multiannual Financial Framework. Investing in young people, the digital economy and skills for the future, security and stability in a strong and united Europe and a European Perspective and Connectivity of the Western Balkans are also high on the agenda.



## The Western Balkans: a Presidency referral to the CoR



When talking about united Europe, the Bulgarian presidency is keen to underline that the Western Balkans need a clear European perspective and connectivity between them and the EU's member states. The ambition of the Bulgarian Presidency is to achieve a clear action plan with each of the countries, without creating unrealistic expectations, but with concrete steps. **Franz Schausberger**, CoR rapporteur general on the Western

Balkans agrees with this priority: *"The Bulgarian government wants its presidency to be remembered, first and foremost, for having advanced the cause of western Balkan countries keen to join the EU. When talking about united Europe, we should not forget that the Western Balkans needs a clear European perspective and connectivity between them and with the member states. The ambition of the Bulgarian Presidency is to achieve a clear action plan with each of*

*the countries, without creating unrealistic expectations, but with concrete steps. The further inclusion of the Western Balkans in the process of European integration demands a much clearer view about potential of Local and Regional Authorities from this region and in the neighbouring countries, to step up this process. Consequently, a key objective would be to establish the state of readiness of the LRAs in Enlargement countries to participate in the process of EU enlargement and to engage in various cross-border and regional initiatives."*



# 2018: the cities and regions to watch

## European Capitals of Culture: Leeuwarden and Valletta

"The European Capitals of Culture help bring communities together through culture with long-lasting benefits for the respective cities, their citizens and their economies. 2018 will be a special year as it is the European Year of Cultural Heritage." Commissioner **Tibor Navracsics**

## European Green Capital: Nijmegen

Today more than two thirds of Europeans live in towns and cities. Urban areas concentrate most of the environmental challenges facing our society but also bring together commitment and innovation to resolve them. The European Green Capital Award has been conceived to promote and reward these efforts. A key objective of Nijmegen's



winning European Green Capital Award campaign for 2018 is to involve citizens and

entrepreneurs as much as possible in order to become a healthy and prosperous city.

## European Capital of Sport: Sofia

Sofia was designated as European Capital of Sport in 2018. The decision was announced in November 2014 by the Evaluation Committee

of ACES Europe, on the grounds that "the city is a good example of sport for all, as means

to improve healthy lifestyle, integration and education, which are the basis of the initiative."

## European Entrepreneurial Regions: Central Macedonia, Northern and Western region of Ireland and Paris

The European Entrepreneurial Region (EER) is a project that identifies and rewards EU regions which show an outstanding and innovative entrepreneurial policy strategy, irrespective of their size, wealth and competences. The regions with the most credible, forward-thinking and promising vision plan are granted the label "European Entrepreneurial Region" (EER) for a specific year and this year the honour goes to Central Macedonia, Northern and Western region, Ireland, and the Paris region of France.

// *We need to enable our regions to run their economies in their best advantage and to focus on job creation. Exchange of good practices from local entrepreneurial ecosystems is key in achieving that.* //

**Eva Maydell**, Jury EER 2019



# Subsidiarity conference in Vienna: EU decisions must be taken closer to citizens



Bringing EU decision-making as close as possible to citizens and making it more effective was the focus of the 8th subsidiarity conference organised by the CoR in cooperation with the Austrian Federal Council in Vienna on 4 December. On this occasion it was decided that **Michael Schneider**, State-Secretary of Saxony-Anhalt and President of the EPP Group, who is also chair of the CoR's steering group of the Subsidiarity Monitoring Platform, will join the CoR's delegation to the Task Force on Subsidiarity and Proportionality, which was recently set up by the European Commission. Its

objective is to draw up proposals to improve the application of subsidiarity and proportionality in the work of EU bodies, identify areas in which EU powers could be re-delegated or permanently returned to the Member States and find ways to involve local and regional authorities more effectively in the framing and implementation of EU policy. The first meeting of the task force took place on 25 January and it is scheduled to deliver its report to the European Commission by 15 July.

# JANUARY/FEBRUARY PLENARY SESSION:



**António Costa**, Prime Minister of Portugal and former member of the CoR, will join the 127th Plenary Session on 31 January. **Frans Timmermans**, First Vice-President of the European Commission, will also be present to discuss the Commission work programme for 2018 and the Task Force on subsidiarity. Following up on President Juncker's State of the Union Address of 13 September, the European Commission presented its 2018 Work Programme on 24 October, with plans for

completing the work on President Juncker's ten political priorities before the end of its mandate, as well as a series of forward-looking initiatives for the future of Europe. In December 2017, the three institutions, the European Commission, European Parliament and European Council, agreed to deliver a positive agenda for a more inclusive and more united EU and a forward looking new financial framework for the years after 2020, supporting the objectives of the Union and ensuring the right balance between EU



policies in the interest of citizens. The following day, **Tomislav Donchev**, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria, will present the priorities of the Bulgarian Presidency to the CoR Plenary. The CoR members are also set to adopt two resolutions: one on the Annual Growth Survey 2018 and the second concerns the ESI common Provisions Regulation to support structural reforms.



## Initiative for the sustainable development of the blue economy in the western Mediterranean

NAT-VI/023

Rapporteur: **Samuel Azzopardi** (MT/EPP)



*While there is real political will to resolve environmental, fisheries challenges and aquaculture, the region is still lacking appropriate awareness, dissemination and cross-sectoral evidence-based policymaking.*

The opinion broadly welcomes the European Commission's communication and its proposed measures to ensure a safe, secure and clean maritime space, better

governance of the sea and sustainably managed oceans as well as the Union for the Mediterranean Ministerial Declaration on the Blue Economy. Specifically, the CoR supports the establishment of the WestMED task force jointly with the Union for the Mediterranean and offers to ensure the participation of regional and local authorities. However, when it comes to cooperation, there is room for improvement in many areas including culture, fisheries, trade, migration and protecting the Mediterranean's notorious biodiversity and marine protected areas. The three goals: safer and more secure maritime space, smart and resilient blue economy and better governance of the sea have specific challenges, which would all benefit from a greater exchange of best practices, capacity building and cross-border cooperation between LRAs from all sides of the Mediterranean as well as shared knowledge and policy expertise when it comes to the shared management of resources. Turning to concrete proposals, the opinion recommends that stakeholders from the southern shore be invited to

participate in the BLUEMED initiative and reiterates its call for the creation of a specific Knowledge and Innovation Community for the blue economy. Financing for economically sustainable projects on a local and regional level should be provided through the pooling of regional, national and European funds within a simplified framework. Lastly, education and retraining projects should be promoted along with measures directed at lowering youth unemployment in cooperation with local and regional authorities and promoting labour mobility between sectors of the blue economy.



## Promoting coexistence with conflict species within the framework of the EU Nature Directives

ENVE-VI/025 Own-initiative



Rapporteur: **Csaba Borboly** (RO/EPP)

*We must raise awareness of the fact that human life has absolute priority and that protected species represent a moral value both for the Member States and for Europe, which we will only be able to safeguard through efficient management based on scientific evidence.*

As the relevant EU bodies have repeatedly confirmed, there is no need to amend environmental objectives and directives: from now on we have to focus on implementation. However, this opinion

advocates improving the balance between conflict species and human activity. For this we have to focus on avoiding conflicts and knowing how to manage them. The lack of long term planning or a management plan jeopardises both the preservation of protected species and human life and property. As is stated in the directives, avoiding conflicts and/or damages warrants preventive measures. This in turn requires a carefully developed management plan at national, regional or local level.

We have to make full use of EU funds that support preventive measures; however, efficient wildlife management also offers a solution in handling current conflicts, as it contributes to preserving biodiversity. Traditional agricultural activity is still alive in underdeveloped regions, so it is particularly important that both national authorities and the EU identify, recognise and support its potential.



*In many places, such as in the Alps, there are stable wolf populations and they are by no means threatened with extinction. Therefore, the protection of the wolf should be downgraded and adapted to local conditions. With the Resolution in the European Parliament for the first time, a large majority of MEPs recognised that the protection of the wolf must not be absolute and that the development of other sectors such as traditional agriculture and tourism are at least equally important. However, it requires the cooperation of all political levels, the EU, the Member States and also the Regions, to find an acceptable solution for all.*

**Herbert Dorfmann**, MEP

## Digital Single Market: Mid-term review

SEDEC-VI/031

Rapporteur: **Alin-Adrian Nica** (RO/EPP)



*The digital single market strategy has a tremendous impact on our societies. We cannot underestimate the importance of connecting all EU regions to broadband and improving prevention, detection and response to incidents whilst constantly exchanges between the Member States and the Commission.*

The draft opinion aims at highlighting the impact of the digital single market strategy on our society and identifying those

measures that could improve economic growth, ensure the modernization of copyright regulation. We must pay attention to ensuring all security requirements at all levels to guarantee the optimal degree of respect for privacy and the protection of personal data in the light of the digital revolution and the changing consumer behaviour. It is also important to support efforts to connect all areas to broadband services and to create tools to help bridge the digital divide, especially at regional and local level, and in this context the Committee of the Regions will pay particular attention to the evolution of the WiFi4EU, which could lead to the development of digital network infrastructures in local communities. Cross-border cyber incidents are currently alarming in their frequency and degree of risk and can generate substantial financial losses, undermining user confidence and causing major damage to the EU economy. To this end, the European Cyber Security Agency is required to regulate and monitor the field and to deal with the prevention and detection of cyber incidents and the response to them. I also think it is impor-

tant to analyze together the option of recommending and supporting a unified VAT for cross-border online commerce, an initiative that could encourage business activities for businesses, especially SMEs.

## Europe on the Move: promoting seamless mobility solutions

COTER-VI/032

Rapporteur: **Ivan Žagar** (SI/EPP)



*Local and regional authorities are responsible for shaping and implementing regional and urban transport policy and for ensuring public passenger transportation in their area. However, decision-making at local level is closely tied in with the framework laid down by national and European policies.*

The opinion deals with a socially just transition to clean, competitive and integrated mobility for all.

The Commission wants to make progress with the change in tolling tools where it is dormant today, which should be reflected

in reducing emissions, eliminating congestion and eliminating discriminatory risks for citizens. This orientation is welcomed by the Committee of the Regions as the consequences of transport are burdened by cities and local environments. However, we need to be careful, as the risks of unsuitable implementation can affect the local population. Problems are also significant in our regional / local environment, but inadequate implementation of the problem can be further increased when we talk about the outflow of vehicles from tolling to local infrastructure and the possible negative social consequences.

## Europe on the Move: labour aspects of road transport

COTER-VI/033

Rapporteur: **Spyros Spyridon** (GR/EPP)



*The deepening of the single market in transport will follow on progressively from the strengthening of economic and social cohesion between the regions of the EU, which itself should reduce the need for special arrangements for the industry.*

This opinion highlights the fact that wide divergences in economic and social

cohesion between Member States have led to market distortion and forms of unfair competition such as letter-box companies or non-compliance with the labour law of the country where the transport takes place. In addition, the wide disparities in the remuneration of workers in the sector, as referred to in the opinion, adversely affect the smooth functioning of the single market for road transport. And yet, as stated by President Jean-Claude Juncker, the principle of equal pay for equal work in the same place must also apply to this job sector. According to the opinion, the Commission's proposals are a step in that direction. For the CoR, the primary concern is to provide decent working conditions for drivers and a high level of road safety. More flexibility in the definition of time and rest conditions, which will have positive effects, should be combined with a clearer definition of driving time, as well as the creation of secure and guarded parking areas, so that rest does not involve having

to supervise the goods transported. The opinion further emphasises that the systematisation of audits and the exchange of information between control authorities will be facilitated by speeding up the installation of smart tachographs and upgrading other common computer databases. Finally, in order to simplify the posting procedure, the rapporteur makes an innovative suggestion - to consider a weighted daily allowance as a possible solution: this would be paid to drivers in accordance with the country providing the transport work combined with the country of origin. In order to calculate this allowance, use could be made of the proven classification of Member States on the basis of per capita GDP, in exactly the same way as when implementing cohesion policy.

## Reflection paper on the Future of EU Finances

COTER-VI/034

Rapporteur: **Marek Woźniak** (PL/EPP)



Bearing in mind the need to maintain an adequate level of financing of current policies and make good the shortfall in resources resulting from Brexit, we need a fundamental reform of the funding system, which will underpin an ambitious budget. We therefore need to abolish all rebates, introduce new own resources, and the Member States need to consider the possibility of increasing their contributions to the EU budget. This would ensure that the future EU budget has greater resources available from different sources, which would make it possible to achieve Scenario 5, "Doing much more together". The main purpose of the future budget will be to support the EU's common objectives and policies. The post-2020 Multiannual

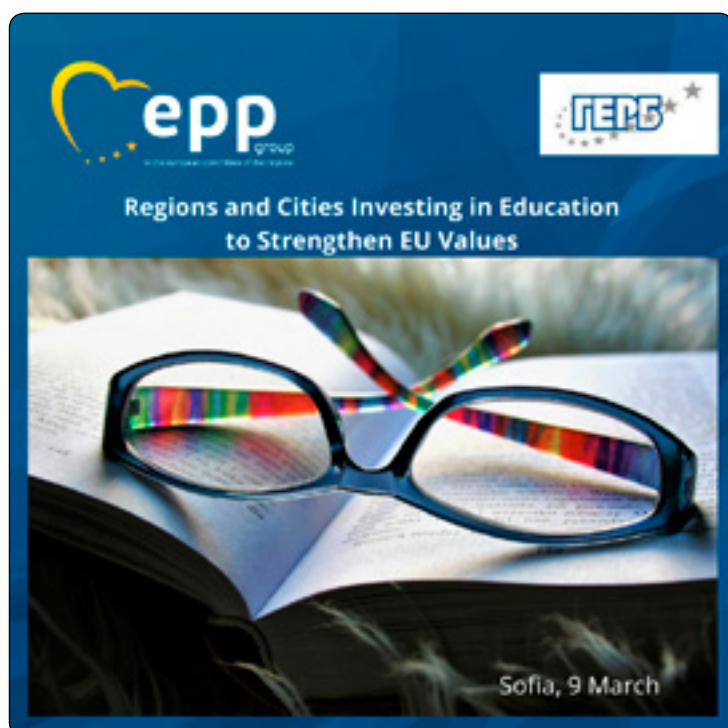
Financial Framework (MFF) will therefore have to be both forward-looking and flexible. This will make it possible to maintain a strategic approach and planning certainty and will ensure the ability to respond to new challenges, such as migration. It must be ensured that the future budget is simpler and more transparent, thus providing consistency and greater complementarity between existing EU financial instruments. It should also be results-orientated and deliver greater European added value. Despite early signs of renewed convergence, there are still development disparities between European regions, hence the continued need for a territorial approach that takes account of the different economic, social and environmental conditions in all regions. We

call for the current level of funding of cohesion policy at least to be maintained and for it and the MFF as a whole to be made more flexible. We support the introduction of reserves, but these must not undermine the stability and strategic character of the budget, which should have a seven- or

ten-year (5 + 5) programming period. The key question remains timing. The next MFF will be published in May 2018 and every effort should be made to ensure that the legislative package is formally presented as soon as possible.

## Upcoming events

→ 6 February, CIVEX, Brussels
→ 8 February, ENVE, Brussels
→ 21 February, SEDEC, Brussels
→ 27 February, COTER, Brussels
→ 5 March, CAFA, Brussels
→ 9 March, NAT, Brussels
→ 22-23 March, CoR Plenary Session, Brussels



### 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

Boosting Growth and Cohesion in EU Border Regions - **Ádám Karácsony**  
Adoption foreseen July 2018

The cost and risk of non-cohesion: The strategic value of the Cohesion Policy pursuing the Treaty's objectives and facing new challenges for the European Regions - **Mieczysław Struk** Adoption foreseen March 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

Towards an 8th Environment Action Plan - **Cor Lamers**  
Adoption foreseen December 2018

Common rules for the internal market in natural gas - **Mauro D'Attis**  
Adoption foreseen May 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 May 2018

#### SEDEC

Strengthening European identity through education and culture - **Tanya Hristova**  
Adoption foreseen May 2018

# Regional and local authorities demand realistic and ambitious EU budget post 2020



The future vision of EU finances must be both far-sighted yet flexible according to the EPP Group in the European Committee of the Regions, who held a debate on with **Tomislav Donchev**, Deputy

Prime Minister of Bulgaria and **Günther Oettinger**, European Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources on the future of the EU's finances on 5 December. There was broad consensus that the

budget should provide greater European added value and have a positive impact on people's daily lives whilst being simpler to use, more fairly distributed and in line with the EU's democratic principles.

// *The regions and cities of Europe need sustainable investment in their infrastructure, education, health and human capital. For me Cohesion policy is a clear illustration of the EU added value, it is an essential part of the future of the European project as it brings concrete results to the citizens.*



**Michael Schneider**, President of the EPP Group

// *The discussion concerning the allocation of money, instruments and financing are possible only after the consensus regarding the goals and the priorities has been reached. The Cohesion policy is not just a part of the European budget. It is much more than that. The Cohesion policy is an instrument for investing in the Union as a Union itself.*



**Tomislav Donchev**, Deputy Prime Minister of Bulgaria

// *We need more than the current 1% ceiling for the future budget post-2020. I count on Europe's regions and cities to make proposals on how the future budgetary chapters should be shaped and be better understood by citizens so that it corresponds to their concerns.*



**Günther Oettinger**, European Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources

// *This opinion, for which I am the rapporteur, enables the CoR to make a significant contribution to the current discussion on the next MFF, which we hope will be useful for the European Commission when it is drawing up an ambitious budget and final legislative proposals for all Member States and regions.*



**Marek Woźniak**, CoR rapporteur on the Reflection paper on the Future of EU Finances

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