

THE

ReppORTER

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The newsletter of the European People's Party Group in the European Committee of the Regions



Summit of EPP regional and local leaders in view of the 2019 European elections



European Committee of the Regions

Foreword

by President Schneider



Just over two months ahead of the European elections, on 16 March, our EPP-CoR Group organised the Summit of EPP Regional and Local leaders in Bucharest together with the political party PNL of Romania and the EPP.

The event was a real success: close to 4000 mayors and regional and local leaders from Romania joined the Summit to promote a pro-European vision for the future of Europe with EPP Spitzenkandidat **Manfred Weber**. In Bucharest, we showed the strength of our EPP family at all levels delivering real solutions in people's daily lives all over Europe. Quoting **Klaus Iohannis**, President of Romania: "A better Europe starts at home, at local and regional level."

The Summit was the perfect occasion to present our **EPP Regional and Local Manifesto** in view of the 2019 European elections. It builds upon our EPP Grassroots Engagement in view of the elections and reflects our citizens' expectations towards their EPP leaders at local, regional, national and European levels.

We want a Europe for the people and with the people: At our EPP Local Dialogues across Europe, we have been listening to our citizens' hopes and concerns on matters related to their local and regional communities and the EU. As the European People's Party, we are ready to work together for a European Union that is based on democratic values, safeguards our peace, freedom and prosperity, offers equal opportunities and invests in local businesses and jobs while responding to the challenges of climate change and terrorism as well as combats the rising nationalism which threatens the existence of our European project.

As two thirds of EU legislation is implemented in our cities and regions, our EPP regional and local leaders play a crucial role in translating European policies into local solutions. As the level of governance with the highest level of citizens' trust, our involvement and support is also integral to the success of the EPP in the European elections. We offer our full support to our Spitzenkandidat Manfred Weber, who is committed to working together with the local and regional levels for a strong, smart and kind Europe for all.

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

Michael Schneider
President of the EPP-CoR Group

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Members on the field



On 5 April, **Michael Schneider** and **Nikola Dobroslavić** took part in the Friends of Cohesion meeting in Dubrovnik with Commissioner **Corina Crețu**. President Schneider called on the representatives of 28 Member states to keep the current share of the EU Budget for Cohesion Policy for all three categories of regions based on Multilevel Governance, as reaffirmed in the reports of the CoR and the European Parliament. "Financing of additional priorities must not be at the expense of Cohesion Policy and CAP, which have clear added EU value", underlined Nikola Dobroslavić.



Markku Markkula addressed 300 Norwegian municipality leaders in Trondheim on 7 March on the topic of implementing the UN Sustainable Development Goals at the local level. "The IPCC report was a wake-up

signal for us. Cities and city-driven regions are powerhouses that are crucial for reaching the development goals", he said.

"Sports is a crucial part of European collaboration and regional development: 1 € invested in sports brings 10 € back", **Markku Markkula** said on 6 March at a high-level event on sport at the European Parliament.



On 22 February, **Michael Murphy** met with **Phil Hogan**, Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development in Brussels to discuss the impacts of Brexit on Europe's regions and the agri-food sector.



Tibor Navracsics, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, visited Harghita County, Romania, on 31 January upon the invitation of **Csaba Borboly**,

President of Harghita County Council. They discussed measures to prevent brain drain and how the European Commission can support regions in attracting talented and educated young people. In another meeting in Brussels on 25 February, they discussed Borboly's opinion on "Strengthening STE(A) M education in the EU" and how to build the European Education Area by 2025 to enable more young people to develop skills, knowledge and key competences.



Alin Nica, the CoR representative on the European Commission's Expert Group on the Social Economy took part in the first meeting of the new sub-group on 'The role of clusters and similar forms of business cooperation in fostering the development of social economy', in Brussels on 7 March. The first phase of work consists in finding an EU-wide typology and design features enabling to scale up and multiply Social Economy clusters. As 1st Vice President of the SEDEC Commission, Alin Nica also represented the CoR in a High-Level conference on Implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights in the European Parliament, hosted by Eurocities on 21 February.

Overview of the April Plenary session



On 10-11 April, Members of the European Committee of the Regions meet at the 134th CoR Plenary session in the Hemicycle of the European Parliament in Brussels.

The Plenary session starts with the launch of the 'Cities and Regions for Integration of Migrants' Initiative with **Dimitris Avramopoulos**, Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship. Members will also hold debates on a future EU budget that matches the ambitions of Europe's cities and regions and on fundamental rights and EU values.



EPP grassroots engagement fo



„Regional and local politicians represent a great added value for the EPP family. They are best placed to connect the Union with its people in the places where they live, work and pursue opportunities. This Grassroots

Engagement will allow an honest dialogue with people on areas that are often decided upon in Brussels or in Strasbourg, but actually implemented in Europe’s cities and regions.”

Michael Schneider,

President of the EPP Group in the EU Committee of the Regions



„As the European elections are fast approaching, it is our local and regional leaders together with our national and European representatives that have the power to make a change. That is why, we must all unite our forces

and fight the populists who want to destroy what we have built and achieved so far. Only together we can serve our citizens, communities and regions, and make them fall in love with Europe again.”

Joseph Daul,

President of the European People’s Party



„We, in the EPP, have a great story to tell European citizens of what we have achieved so far: we must lead the debate at regional, national and European levels.”

Dara Murphy,

EPP Vice-President, Campaign Director for the 2019 EU elections

r the 2019 European elections



„Europe must be present in every city, region or municipality, regardless of its size. Citizens need not only to hear about Europe, they must see and feel it in their everyday lives, and local authorities have a key role to play here.”

Boyko Borissov,
Prime Minister of Bulgaria

In March 2018, in Bulgaria, Sofia, we launched the campaign of **EPP Local Dialogues**. The dialogues are part of the **EPP grassroots engagement for the 2019 European elections**.

EPP local dialogues are a series of events organised across Europe, bringing citizens and EPP leaders together to discuss European policies of local interest and gathering people's expectations on the ground.

The purpose of the EPP local dialogues and the EPP grassroots engagement is to listen to citizens, and to make sure that **local expectations are taken on**

board in EU politics, as well as to highlight concrete good examples of projects implemented at the local and regional level by EPP leaders.

The outcomes of these debates will be shared with the EU's two political assemblies – the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions – as well as with the EPP “Spitzenkandidat” for the President of the European Commission. Our engagement will provide an opportunity for citizens to make their voice heard on the future of the European Union.

EPP Congress in Helsinki

7-8 November 2018

On 7 -8 November, the European People's Party (EPP) held its 25th Congress in Helsinki, Finland. Co-hosted by the Finnish political party Kokoomus, the Congress focused on the preparations for the 2019 European elections and the election of the EPP's lead candidate (Spitzenkandidat).



EPP-led cities joining forces to deliver sustainable solutions to citizens



and regions across Europe have implemented in the field of environmental protection, climate change mitigation, sustainable development and protection of biodiversity. In his address, **Jyrki Katainen**, European Commissioner for Jobs, Growth, Investment & Competitiveness, gave some good examples of cities that are implementing the transition towards a circular economy and invited cities and regions to look into the possibilities offered by the European Funds for Strategic Investments (EFSI).

Markku Markkula, First Vice-President of the CoR, moderated the panel on citizens' expectations towards the future European Commission to achieve a sustainable Europe. EPP-CoR members **Apostolos Tzitzikostas**, **Deirdre Forde**, **Nikola Dobroslavic** as well as **Bianca Debaets**, State Secretary, Brussels Government, took part in this debate and shared the lessons learned from concrete projects in their regions.

Other speakers of the event included Minister of Justice, Vice-Chair of Kokoomus **Antti Häkkänen**, EPP-EP Group Vice-Chair and coordinator of the EU 2019 elections, MEP **Esther De Lange**, and **Dara Murphy**, EPP Vice-President and Campaign Director for the 2019 European Elections.

On 7 November, the EPP Group in the CoR organised a side event of the Congress entitled *EPP-led cities joining forces to deliver sustainable solutions for citizens*. This theme linked to the discussions at the EPP Congress, which adopted a policy paper on Sustainable Europe.

"We are here today to highlight the political commitment and work of EPP-led cities and regions to tackle climate change, which is currently considered by EU citizens as one of the most pressing issues to be addressed", said EPP-CoR President **Michael Schneider** in his opening statement.

He spoke about the EPP Local Dialogue initiative as a tool for listening to people and making sure that European policies can better respond to the needs of our citizens. Speaking after President Schneider, EPP President **Joseph Daul** affirmed:

"No one better than you, local & regional elected representatives, can talk to Europeans, listen to their expectations, know the problems they face on a daily basis & offer them fair, realistic & ambitious solutions."

Both EPP Spitzenkandidat candidates took part in the discussions. **Manfred Weber** spoke about the future of European politics and campaigning ahead of the EU 2019 elections. Regionally and locally elected representatives are in direct contact with their citizens, and the EPP needs

to make better use of this important connection:

"I invite local and regional politicians to have a close cooperation in view of the EPP Spitzenkandidat programme to make a successful future of our continent," said Weber.

Alexander Stubb focused his speech on the importance of investing in infrastructure and in digitalisation to make future cities better places to live: *"Digitalisation is crucial. It will provide new jobs, modern infrastructure and it will help to advance science, improve health and reduce pollution."*

In the first panel, moderated by MEP **Sirpa Pietikäinen**, Mayors **Jan Vapaavuori** of Helsinki and **Yordanka Fandakova** of Sofia and **Raffaele Cattaneo** of EPP-CoR presented concrete solutions that cities



City of Espoo implementing UN sustainable development goals

The morning's side event was followed by a study visit to the city of Espoo, upon the invitation of **Markku Markkula** and the Mayor of Espoo, **Jukka Mäkelä**. During this informative visit, EPP-CoR members and Finnish Kokoomus guests had the chance to visit Espoo by electric

buses, see the newly built metro station in Otaniemi and learn about the emission-free geothermal energy heating plant currently under construction in the area. During lunch at Espoo Innovation Garden, **Sirpa Hertell** (EPP/FI) and the representative of energy company Fortum spoke

about Espoo's commitment to become a carbon-neutral city by 2030, and Markku Markkula presented Espoo's role in the UN Leadership programme, under which selected cities undertake to serve as pioneers of sustainable development.



For a Better Europe - Manfred Weber elected EPP Spitzenkandidat



On the second day of the Congress, The European People's Party (EPP) elected **Manfred Weber** as the EPP's candidate for President of the European Commission, ahead of the May 2019 European Parliament elections. Following the announcement of the result, EPP President **Joseph Daul** gave the following statement:

"I want to congratulate Manfred Weber on his election as our lead candidate for the 2019 European elections. For the upcoming elections, the EPP Campaign will address the

concerns of all European citizens. Our lead candidate will travel to the four corners of Europe, north, south, east and west. We will listen to our citizens' concerns and engage with them about the direction Europe should take for the next 5 years. We will work tirelessly to continue placing the EU at the service of the people."

EPP-CoR President **Michael Schneider** congratulated Manfred Weber:

"I was happy to see that both of our candidates stand behind the principle of multi-level

governance. The European Commission will continue to be in safe EPP hands with Manfred Weber at the helm and I congratulate him on his Spitzenkandidat nomination. Manfred has long been a friend of the EPP Group at the Committee of the Regions and has a deep appreciation for giving the regions and cities of Europe a voice in the EU."

The EPP-CoR Group is committed to ensuring a successful outcome to the 2019 European elections for the party and for the citizens of Europe, and Mr Weber can rely on his EPP colleagues at the Committee of the Regions for their support.

Addressing the EPP Congress on 7 November, President Schneider said:

"I am pleased to say that the cooperation between our EPP-CoR group and the EPP, led by Joseph Daul, has never been better. Thanks to our EPP Local Dialogue events in Europe's cities and regions, our leaders can engage with citizens on the ground and talk about EU politics that matter for people's everyday lives."



Stronger regions for a stronger Europe

EPP high-level debate in Austria 10 December 2018

'A Europe closer to its citizens, a Europe that delivers and protects' was the focus of the EPP high-level debate that took place on 10 December 2018 in Klosterneuburg, Austria. EPP Spitzenkandidat **Manfred Weber** and the Federal Chancellor of Austria **Sebastian Kurz** joined EPP-CoR members and international and local guests to discuss the role of strong regions and the importance of making decisions close to the people ahead of the May 2019 European elections.

"Preparing EU elections is about an approach on the ground. Europe starts in our own towns and regions", said **Dara Murphy**, Vice-President of the EPP and Campaign Director for the 2019 European Elections, who moderated the event.

This was confirmed by President **Michael Schneider** in his opening statement: EPP-CoR members are in close contact with people in their cities and regions, reinforcing the EPP's presence on the ground. *"This is an important factor for winning the elections",* Schneider said, and continued: *"Together with Manfred Weber we are working for a common Europe."*

The first Roundtable discussion focused on the theme of subsidiarity and how the EU delivers on the ground. *"We must continually remain in close contact with the citizens and communicate the positive achievements of the EU",* stressed **Nikola Dobroslavić**, EPP-CoR.

"Europe is the solution, not the problem... Making decisions closer to the citizens will strengthen the fundamental values of the



European Union and create the basis for a society that is united in diversity", continued **Arno Kompatscher**, EPP-CoR.

Reinhold Lopatka, Chair of the EU Affairs Committee in the Austrian National Council, summed up the discussion: *"The big project "European Union", which is without any alternative, could be much closer to the citizens with the notion of subsidiarity put to a more practical level. This would mean a stronger involvement of national, regional and local politics."*

Strengthening unity in diversity: our cultures, identities and common values was the theme of the second Roundtable.

Jelena Drenjanin, EPP-CoR spoke about the important role of local and regional authorities in supporting education and entrepreneurship and emphasised: *"We need the local and regional levels to build a strong Europe."*





"The upcoming European elections take place in very challenging circumstances", said **Günther Oettinger**, European Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources. He thanked the Austrian Presidency for the progress made on the EU's next multiannual budget, but stressed the need to conclude the negotiations as soon as possible to avoid delaying European investments in 2021.

Ludovic Orban, President of the National Liberal Party of Romania, announced the

“ **Regions are at the heart of Europe** ”

Spitzenkandidat Weber



upcoming Summit of EPP regional and local leaders with the Spitzenkandidat in view of the EU 2019 elections, which will take place on 16 March 2019 in Bucharest.

The event's highlight was the debate with Sebastian Kurz and Manfred Weber who were welcomed by **Johanna Mikl-Leitner**, President of Lower Austria, EPP-CoR. "Since we are today with regional representatives, mayors and local politicians, I would like to add that we are the only party in Europe that gives a clear commitment to the principle of subsidiarity and strong regions. We think & act together", underlined Manfred Weber.

Sebastian Kurz spoke about the importance of strong regions and remaining united in diversity ahead of the European elections. Themes such as safety, jobs and competitiveness are sure to be topics, which will benefit people's everyday lives. "Politicians should



put their focus on issues that truly matter to people," he concluded.



Summit of EPP regional and local leaders in view of the 2019 European elections



The day of the Summit of EPP Regional and Local Leaders in Bucharest on 16th of March, started with an early morning meeting of Manfred Weber, EPP Lead Candidate for the Presidency of the European Commission, with PNL leadership at EU, national, regional and local levels.

The discussions focused on:

- The implementation of EU funds (current funding and post 2020)
- Strengthening the internal market through a better integration of the Romanian economy
- Improving transport infrastructure and public services, including health
- EU values, subsidiarity, decentralisation and bureaucracy and rule of law



After the meeting, PNL mayors and presidents of County Councils presented Manfred Weber, the future President of the European Commission, the successful partnerships between the liberal administrations and the European Union.



Summit of EPP Regional and Local leaders in view of the 2019 European elections

The forthcoming European elections will determine the future of the European Union.

The EPP Group in the European Committee of the Regions, together with the National Liberal Party of Romania and the European People's Party organised a **Summit of EPP regional and local leaders in view of the 2019 European elections** on Saturday, 16 March 2019 in Bucharest, Romania.

More than 4000 politicians from Romania and across the EU gathered

for the largest events of the EPP 2019 electoral campaign together with the EPP Spitzenkandidat **Manfred Weber**, **Klaus Iohannis**, President of Romania and **Ludovic Orban**, President of the National Liberal Party to promote a pro-European vision for the future of Europe and to adopt the EPP Local and Regional Manifesto in view of the 2019 European elections.

In all Member States, the EPP takes its strengths from the trust the people put in their local and regional

politicians. In order to once again reach a clear pro-European majority in the European Parliament, we need to further strengthen our joint efforts at all levels of governance within the European People's Party family.

United together, in Bucharest we sent a strong signal for a united and value-based Europe, closer to its citizens, delivering solutions to their daily lives and protecting them on the ground.



"You are the key for these European elections, you, the 4000 regional and local leaders from Romania and across Europe, who have the direct link with our citizens and their concerns."

Robert Sighiartău,
Secretary General of the PNL



"A better Europe starts at home, at local and regional level. The fight for a better Europe is our fight, the fight of all those for whom Europe is synonymous with peace, prosperity and liberty of all!"

Klaus Iohannis,
President of Romania



“Europe and politics must start by listening and taking the concerns of people into consideration. I cannot imagine a better place than the Committee of the Regions.

As mayors, as representatives of the local level, you are every day close to the citizens and to listen to our mayors is the most important thing.”

Manfred Weber,

EPP Lead Candidate for the Presidency of the European Commission



“There are no miracles, no miracle solutions. There is only our education, there is the work that our mayors of the National Liberal Party have done for the benefit of the communities they have led.”

Ludovic Orban,

President of the Romanian National Liberal Party



“I am very grateful for the collaboration with the EPP Group in the CoR. It is regional and local leaders who better know our citizens. You are the first point of contact to all. Elections cannot be won without your engagement and support. We need you and we know we can count on you.”

Antonio López-Istúriz White,

MEP and Secretary General of the EPP



“We started our journey in Sofia last year in March with Prime Minister Borissov, we have continued in Austria in December with Chancellor Kurz and we are here today with PNL President Orban and President Iohannis. In these three flagship events and in all our EPP Local Dialogues across the EU, one particular force was clear: the strength of elected politicians representing all three levels of politics: local, national and European who have teamed-up together. This is about the trust of our people in their political leaders. This is how we want to work: together, as a united family, in the interest of our people! This is about subsidiarity and solidarity.”

Michael Schneider,

President of EPP-CoR

EPP family delivers results that protect and improve citizens' lives

The Summit of Regional and Local Leaders also showcased concrete examples on how the EPP delivers results to improve the daily lives of people in our cities and regions; a number of the projects were also presented by the speakers

during the two panels which were moderated by Michael Murphy, Vice-Chairman of Tipperary County Council, EPP-CoR, and Mara Mareş, President of the Youth Liberal Party in Romania.

"In my city, 20% of the taxes are reinvested in education. For this reason, all schools in Cluj-Napoca are equipped with internet and modern teaching facilities. We have to prepare the young generation with the necessary skills they need for the future."

Emil Boc,

Mayor of Cluj-Napoca, PNL and former Prime Minister of Romania 2008-2012



"...combatting fake news and disinformation is crucial especially ahead of the European Elections where citizens need to make a well informed choice on a better future for a more secure and prosperous EU."

Olgierd Geblewicz,

President of the Westpomerania Region

"Democracy has to be dynamic and never taken for granted. It takes decades to build and seconds to destroy. All European citizens, all ages, deserve a future where they can expect their lives to be better."

Jelena Drenjanin,

EPP-CoR member from Stockholm Region, Municipal Assembly of Huddinge



"From the region of Sibiu, we demonstrate with concrete examples that the basic principles that make us a great European family are caring for citizens, democracy and the rule of law."

Daniela Cîmpean,

President of Sibiu County Council, member of the PNL and EPP-CoR





“Strong local leaders with their EPP partnerships is the answer for delivering innovative solutions for citizens. We need regional and local partnerships, the involvement of the citizens, universities and a good business environment. Only together can we create a better future for our communities.”

Markku Markkula,

President, Helsinki Region, First Vice-President of the European Committee of the Regions

“Europe endeavours for a better life for its people: better education, environmental responsibility and the preservation of cultural historical heritage are sound investments.”

Yordanka Fandakova,

Mayor of Sofia



“As a local leader, I recognise that we need more Europe in my region, likewise Europe needs more regional and local level representation in the EU decision making process. I am happy to see that the EPP is leading a dialogue with the citizens and bringing their message to the EU level.”

Gheorghe Flutur,

President, Suceava County, President of the PNL League of Locally Elected Politicians

“The young people are the future of Europe and should be represented at a European, national, regional and local level. We need to create policies that address the concerns of young Europeans and have a tangible effect on their day to day lives.”

Ana Lidia Pereira,

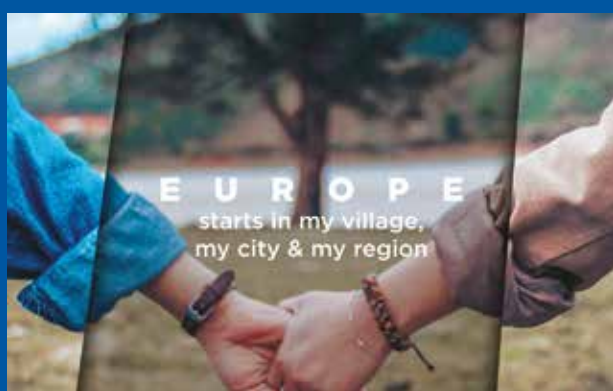
President, Youth of the European People’s Party



EPP Regional and Local Manifesto in view of the 2019 European elections

Introducing the EPP Local and Regional Manifesto in view of the 2019 European elections, Michael Schneider, President of EPP-CoR, presented the long-term vision of local and regional politicians that work closest to EU citizens and are therefore best placed to rebuild trust in the European project:

“We are ready to work together with national and European leaders, and with Manfred Weber for a Europe that meets our citizens’ expectations. We want a sustainable, democratic European Union that is rooted in our villages, cities and regions and delivers results as close as possible to the people.”



1. We want a European Union with the people and for the people

We want a European Union with the people and for the people that starts in our villages, cities and regions. We need a European Union deep-rooted in the territories, based on democratic values. We need a European Union that meets peoples’ expectations. We want a strong and efficient European Union that empowers and safeguards our peace, freedom and prosperity. We wish to be proud of our identity as European citizens belonging to our cities, regions and Member States, united in diversity.



2. We want to live in a sustainable European Union that protects and creates opportunities for its people

We wish for a European Union that protects us, our families, our way of life and our planet. We want a European Union that guarantees security by reinforcing its external borders and combatting extremism and nationalism within its borders. We need a family friendly European Union that offers equal opportunities, embraces the less advantaged and promotes a rich and inclusive society; a European Union that enables good education, quality health care, and job opportunities. We want a European Union that invests in local businesses, research and innovation that impacts people’s lives by treating incurable diseases, making our transport cleaner and our buildings more energy efficient.



3. We need more cohesion between the European Union's regions, cities and rural areas

We need a European Union of solidarity that ensures economic, social and territorial cohesion. We support cohesion as a fundamental European value since it creates opportunities for people from both richer and poorer regions, strengthens the single market and increases the sense of belonging in the European project. We believe it is crucial to reduce disparities between Europe's territories and increase their competitiveness. We call for a digitalized, user-friendly and interconnected public European, national, regional and local public administration, as a precondition to provide efficient and effective services to citizens and businesses alike.



4. We want a European Union that takes decisions closer to citizens based on the principle of subsidiarity

We stand for an efficient and democratic Union closer to its citizens. We believe that ownership and trust make people feel Europe, see Europe, be Europe. We must remember that politics knows no boundaries. This is conveyed through the trust of the people who vote for one European Parliament, 41 national chambers of parliament, 74 regional legislative assemblies, 280 regions and 80 000 local authorities. Local and regional authorities implement 70% of all EU legislation. They represent half of public employment, one third of public spending and two thirds of public investment. Regional

and local leaders rely on the highest level of people's trust so that they can solve local problems with European solutions in fields such as transport, energy, climate change, digitalization, but also migration, security and the fight against terrorism. Therefore, Europe and its Member States need more decentralisation and stronger regions with the necessary competences and resources to deliver results as close as possible to the people. European, national, regional and local politicians must work together for a Europe of proximity in order to respond to the realities of Europe's territories. Together we must strengthen the Union's democratic legitimacy in pace with the 21st century.



5. The EPP family proposes a concrete way forward in the interest of all EU citizens

We, the EPP family of national, regional, local and European leaders are responsible for reaching out to all citizens, listening to their voices, meeting their needs and reinforcing the foundations of the European Union. Major reforms were successful and they have undoubtedly improved people's lives. As the EPP family, we shall not limit the European project to Brussels based institutions. We have to communicate with courage and determination both what we have achieved on the ground and what we will achieve in the future, if we want to avoid the EU falling into the hands of Eurosceptics and populists. Together, we want to make our Europe a more dynamic, open and attractive home for its people. We commit to teaming up with the EPP Spitzenkandidat, Manfred Weber, to work as one, strong, united and responsible political family in the interest of our people.

#BucharestEPPCoR on social media



🗨️ **@ManfredWeber** - Mar 16
I cannot imagine a better place to present my initiative for the **#FutureofEurope** than among **@PnlRomania** mayors & regional representatives today at **#BucharestEPPCoR**. A strong **#PNL** at all levels means a better future for **#Romania** & I thank Ludovic **#Orban** for such strong leadership.
❤️ 25 likes



🗨️ **@EPP** - Mar 16
We believe that Europe starts in its regions. Today, our candidate **@ManfredWeber** is in **#Bucharest**. A great opportunity to exchange views with **@PnlRomania** leaders on the implementation of EU funds & how to address our citizens' concerns better. **#BucharestEPPCoR** **#BetterEurope**
❤️ 22 likes



🗨️ **@siegfriedmuresan** - Mar 16
PNL candidates for this **#EU** election are being presented now at **#BucharestEPPCoR**, in front of 3000 colleagues. I am glad to represent **#PNL** and **@EPP** in the next #elections. Together we will win these elections and make **@manfredweber** **@europeancommission** President.
❤️ 217likes



🗨️ **@KlausIohannis** - Mar 16
A pleasure to be at **#BucharestEPPCoR**, in the company of fellow EPP leaders deeply committed to the EU project and its values and determined to make a change in the lives of the European citizens. A **#BetterEurope** starts at home, at local and regional level.
❤️ 253 likes



🗨️ **Partidul Național Liberal** - 17 March
Summitul liderilor locali și regionali ai Partidului Popular European, organizat de Partidul Național Liberal a fost un real succes. Pentru o zi am demonstrat tuturor că România poate sta în primul rând. Am arătat tuturor că propaganda antieuropeană dusă de PSD este o minciună. **#Europa** respectă **#România!**
❤️ 1.6K likes



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Citizens' feedback at EPP Local Dialogues – Need for more communication on Europe at local level



Since the launch of the EPP Grassroots Engagement in Sofia last March, Members of the EPP-CoR, together with Members of the EPP Group in the European Parliament and national parties, have been busy organising EPP Local Dialogue events in their cities and regions. These exchanges in different Member States have provided the EPP with direct feedback from citizens on European issues that matter on the ground.

A first analysis of the feedback from the local events suggests that people have a similar understanding of the benefits of the EU across the continent: Peace, free movement, the Erasmus programme, EU-funded projects and the euro were highlighted as some of the positive things that the EU has brought about in people's daily lives.

People's concerns, on the other hand, seem to vary slightly depending on the country: In Ireland, the currently uncertain economic and other consequences of Brexit were mentioned by many, whereas in Romania, the lack of job and training opportunities and brain drain in the country's regions were amongst people's top concerns.

And what do people expect from their EPP Leaders? Defending European values, rights and democracy, delivering growth and jobs, as well as climate change and rural development and agricultural policy were some of the varying topics that people want the EPP and its national parties to focus on in the next 5-10 years.

But is also clear that there is a need for better communication on European issues

at local level. People want the EPP, as a European Party, to act as a link between what is happening in the EU and on the ground.



What people said at EPP Local Dialogues:

“ People do not know the good things the EU gives us every day. ”

“ The EU Institutions do not take into account the opinion of citizens. ”

“ [The EPP should] Carry info to Brussels, bring policy decisions back to local grassroots. ”

“ We need more structured dialogue with people. ”

Thanks to our active members, dozens of more local dialogues are scheduled to take place this and next year, with the aim of engaging with people and making sure that their expectations will be

taken on board by the EPP in the run up to the 2019 EU elections and beyond.

If you would like to organise an EPP Local Dialogue in your area, the EPP-CoR

Secretariat will be happy to assist you with further information.

#EPPLocalDialogue

EPP Local Dialogues – highlights

Education is the Future of Europe



On 5 October, Mayor **Gheorghe Falcă** (EPP/RO) organised an EPP Local Dialogue in Arad, Romania in the context of World Education Day, with the participation of **Franz Schausberger**, Vice-president of the EPP-CoR, representative of the Landtag of Salzburg, Austria. The debate focused on the importance of education on local and regional levels and on how education is essential for our young citizens and for the future of Europe.

The impacts of Brexit on local economy and businesses



On 24 September, Councillor **Michael Murphy** (EPP/IE) organised an EPP Local Dialogue in Clonmel, Ireland on the theme of Brexit, with the participation of the Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, **Simon Coveney** and MEP **Sean Kelly**. Brexit will bring changes and challenges across all sectors of Tipperary from small to medium size businesses, multinationals and agriculture. The local event was about creating further awareness around the challenges, providing information on the supports available at local and national level.

European issues in the Belgian-Dutch border region



Life in the border region of Belgium and the Netherlands was the topic of two EPP Local Dialogue events organised by MEP **Esther de Lange** (EPP/NL). On 26 September, an event in Maastricht with MEP **Jeroen Lenaers** (EPP/NL) brought together Dutch and Belgian students, cross-border workers and local residents to exchange views on European matters that are important to this cross-border region. On 21 November, the focus was on the municipality of Baarle-Nassau, which is partially located in both the Netherlands in Belgium. MEP **Ivo Belet** (EPP/BE) joined this local debate together with the Mayors of Baarle-Nassau and of the Belgian city of Baarle.

Stockholm region and Sweden's EU membership

Europa börjar i Stockholm

Sverige har påverkats och utvecklas med ett EU-medlemskap. Stockholmsregionen anses vara en av de mest dynamiska och innovativa regionerna inom EU. Nu när Brexit har skakat oss Europa så diskuteras och värderas medlemskapet.

Majoriteten av svenskarna är positiva till EU-medlemskapet, men i skuggan av Brexit så finns frågor som kolar om Sverige. När ska det EU till stora delar byggas för att kunna på ett bra sätt hantera utmaningarna och utvecklingsområdena? Det är en fråga som vi ska diskutera i hela Europa och även i Stockholm den 19 november. Då kan du som EU-medlemmare möjlighet att delta i dialogen om Europeisk framtid.

Kvalitets dialog sker med en av Europas främsta politiska kommentatorer **Mikla Schenström**, EU experten **Måkan Jansson** samt ledamot av Regionkommittén **Jelena Drenjanin**.

Café: Måndag den 19 november kl 18.00 **Plats:** Basishotorgatan 4A, basstegen

Anmälan sker till: jelena.drenjanin@europarl.europa.eu eller via Facebook

Vi har 30 platser och därför är anmälan nödvändig, se ovan.

Talare:

- Jelena Drenjanin**
Ledamot av Regionkommittén
- Mikla Schenström**
Politisk kommentator
- Måkan Jansson**
EU expert

Vad är EPP:s lokala dialoger?

EPP:s lokala dialoger är en serie möten som anordnas i hela Europa, där medlemmar och EPP-ledare träffas för att diskutera EU-politik av lokalt intresse och samla in medlemmarnas förväntningar.

Dialogerna är en del av EPP:s gränsöverskridande engagemang efter 2019 års val till Europaparlamentet.

Syftet med EPP:s lokala dialoger är att lyssna på medlemmarna och se till att lokala förväntningar beaktas i EU-politiken, samt att lyfta fram konkreta exempel på lyckade projekt som genererats på lokal och regional nivå.

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The majority of Swedes hold a positive view of their country's EU membership, but in the shadow of Brexit, Sweden's

role in the EU is being debated. On 19 November, EPP-CoR member **Jelena Drenjanin** hosted a citizens' dialogue with the political party **Nya Moderaterna** to hear what expectations the people living in the Swedish capital hold for the future of Europe.

Citizens' expectations ahead of 2019 European Elections



On 21 November, **László Majthényi** (EPP/HU), President of County Council of Vas Megye organised an EPP Local Dialogue on "What can we expect after the 2019 European Parliament elections?" The event, moderated by EPP-CoR member **József Ribányi**, collected citizens' expectations expectations towards their regional and local leaders ahead of the 2019 European Elections. The guest of the EPP Local Dialogue in Szombathely was EPP MEP **Gyula Winkler**.

Showcasing the local impact of EU funding



On 22 November, Mayor **Emilian Oprea** (EPP/RO) hosted an EPP Local Dialogue in Chitila, sharing the example of an EU-funded project which has supported the building of a primary and secondary school in this Romanian town.

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EPP Local Dialogues – highlights

Future of CAP and opportunities at regional level



On 7 December 2018, **Csaba Borboly**, President of the Harghita County Council, Romania, hosted his second EPP Local Dialogue in the region. Members of the EPP Group in European Parliament **Herbert Dorfmann**, **Csaba Sógor** and **Gyula Winkler** participated in the debate on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy and the opportunities at local and regional level.

"Romania's EU membership has brought opportunities for local development and better infrastructure in our region. Focus needs to be put in reducing obstacles in trading local products." – Citizen from Harghita

Moving towards a digital society



Innovation in the public sector, with special focus on the digitalisation of public services, was the topic of an EPP Local Dialogue that took place in the Kujawskie-Pomorskie region in Poland on 12 December 2018. The event, which attracted over 100 local participants, was organised by EPP-CoR member **Piotr Całbecki**, Marshal of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship.

"I would like my party to focus on renewable energy, e-mobility, and the reduction of air pollution." - Citizen from Kujawskie-Pomorskie

Future of the main railway line in Finland



On 18 December, CoR Vice-President **Markku Markkula** participated in an EPP Local Dialogue in Hämeenlinna, Finland. Organised by the political party Kokoomus, the event focused on the future of the Finnish main railway line, which secures an important connection for local businesses, residents and commuters. MEP **Henna Virkkunen** spoke about the possibilities to fund the main line as part of the EU's TEN-T network. Other speakers included **Sari Rautio**, Chair of Hämeenlinna city board, local Kokoomus politicians and rail transport experts.

"I want the EPP to find a balance between larger European issues and a local approach." – Citizen from Hämeenlinna

Members can continue organising EPP Local Dialogues in 2019 and benefit from financing from the CoR - please contact the EPP-CoR secretariat for more information.

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Europe starts in Attica, Greece



Employment and opportunities for the local people and youth were the topics of an EPP Local Dialogue in Peristeri, Greece on 6 March. The event was hosted by EPP-CoR member **Dimitrios Kalogeropoulos**, with MEP **Georgios Kyrtos** and 1st Vice-President of EPP-CoR **Eleni Loucaidou** also taking part in the engaging debates with local residents on how the EU is supporting the Attica region.



EU working for the Brussels region



On 5 February, EPP-CoR member **Brigitte Grouwels** hosted an EPP Local Dialogue in Brussels. MEPs **Tom Vandekendelaere** and **Ivo Belet** joined

the discussions on what the EU is doing for the benefit of the people living in the region of Brussels.

Local aspects of the implementation of the European Roma-strategy



Livia Jaroka, Vice-president of the European Parliament, joined the EPP Local Dialogue in Heves County, Hungary on 26 February to discuss how to support the implementation of EU and national Roma strategies at the local level. "The status of the Roma communities is important for Heves County as a whole", said **Robert Szabo**, President of the Heves County Council, and continued: "We can work towards real solutions in our county by encouraging the participation of the Roma in the different programmes and by getting to know them better."

Border regions and future enlargement of the European Union



On 1 February, an EPP Local Dialogue took place in Nyíregyháza, Hungary hosted by EPP-CoR member **Oszkár Seszták** and with the participation of MEP **Andrea Bocsko**. The event

attracted many locals to discuss the future of the European Union from the perspective of border regions.

EU support to local development

On 18 February, **István Bóka**, Mayor and Member of EPP-CoR hosted a local debate in Balatonfüred, Hungary with **Tibor Navracsics**, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, **Szabolcs Takács**, State Secretary for EU Affairs. The discussions focused on the next EU budget and the perspectives of EU development for the Lake Balaton area.

Dialogues bringing the EU closer to its citizens



On 25 February, **Adrian Teban**, Mayor and member of EPP-CoR organised an EPP Local Dialogue in Cugir, Romania on subsidiarity and multilevel governance in view of the upcoming European elections. "These dialogues are an opportunity to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the European Union. The populism in many European countries is also a result of misinformation", Teban said. MEP **Siegfried Muresan** and **Florin Roman**, member of the Romanian parliament from the National Liberal Party (PNL) also took part in the debates. "It is very important for the decisions to be taken as close as possible to the citizens because nobody knows better what is best for a community than those who live there and those who administer the community", said **Siegfried Muresan**.

Upcoming events

→ ECON Commission and conference on SDGs at local level, Druskininkai, Lithuania – 6-7 May 2019
→ NAT Seminar on the implementation of the EU forest strategy, Szombathely, Hungary – 13-14 May 2019
→ COTER Commission meeting, Brussels – 17 May 2019
→ European elections – 23-26 May 2019
→ CFAA meeting, Brussels – 4 June 2019
→ ENVE Commission meeting and conference, Bucharest, Romania – 12-13 June 2019
→ NAT Commission meeting, Brussels – 17 June 2019
→ JCC Montenegro, Brussels – 18 June 2019
→ JCC North Macedonia, Brussels – 18 June 2019
→ Working Group on Western Balkans, Brussels – 18 June 2019
→ JCC Serbia, Brussels – 18 June 2019
→ Enlargement Day, Brussels – 19 June 2019
→ CIVEX Commission meeting, Brussels – 25 June 2019
→ EPP Bureau meeting, Brussels – 25 June 2019
→ CoR Bureau meeting, Brussels – 25 June 2019
→ EPP Group meeting, Brussels – 26 June 2019
→ 135th CoR Plenary session, Brussels – 26-27 June 2019
→ ECON commission meeting, Brussels – 9 July 2019
→ COTER commission meeting, Brussels – 10 July 2019
→ SEDEC commission meeting, Brussels – 11 July 2019

Ongoing opinions

CIVEX

Better regulation – **Olgiard Geblewicz** – Adoption foreseen in October 2019

COTER

Better Communication of Cohesion Policy – **Adrian Ovidiu Teban** – Adoption foreseen in June 2019

Recommendations for the successful design of regional development strategies beyond 2020 – **Adam Struzik** – Adoption foreseen in October 2019

Contribution of the CoR to the renewed territorial agenda with specific focus on CLLD – **Radim Sršeň**

The potential of the rail sector in delivering EU policy priorities – **Pascal Mangin**

ECON

Implementation report on public procurement – **Thomas Habermann** – Adoption foreseen in October 2019

Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030 – **Arnoldas Abramavičius** – Adoption foreseen in June 2019

Socioeconomic transformation of coal regions in Europe – **Mark Speich** – Adoption foreseen in June 2019

ENVE

Sustainable Europe by 2030: Follow-up to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, ecologic transition and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change – **Sirpa Hertell** – Adoption foreseen in October 2019

Implementing the Paris Agreement through innovative and sustainable energy transition at regional and local level – **Witold Stępień** – Adoption foreseen in October 2019

Implementing the Clean Energy Package: the INECs as a tool for a transversal approach to climate, active and passive energy' – **József Ribanyi** – Adoption foreseen in October 2019

NAT

Active and healthy ageing – **Birgitta Sacrédeus** – Adoption foreseen in June 2019

Agro-pastoralism – **Jacques Blanc** – Adoption foreseen in June 2019

SEDEC

Strengthening STE(A)M education in the EU – **Csaba Borboly** – Adoption foreseen in June 2019

Summit of EPP Regional and Local Leaders
in view of the 2019 European Elections
Summitul liderilor regionali și locali ai PPE
in vederea alegerilor europene din 2019



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