

THE

# ReppORTER

October 2019

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



**Building together the new political mandate  
of the European Union**

**European Investments in Regions and Cities  
post 2020 - EPP-CoR event at EPP Congress,  
Zagreb, Croatia**



European Committee  
of the Regions

# Foreword

by President Schneider



This October marks a new beginning for the European Union. The newly-elected European Parliament is already working at full steam and the next five-year mandate of the European Commission is about to begin. In a few weeks, we shall see how our common journey with the United Kingdom will continue.

President-elect **Ursula von der Leyen** has the full support of our EPP-CoR Group at the helm of the European Commission. We welcome her commitment to an inclusive and open approach to the way the Commission works, and to leaving national, regional and local actors to deliver where they are best placed to do so. Our EPP-CoR Group looks forward to working closely with von der Leyen and her

new team. EPP Commissioners will again be in charge of key policy areas that matter to our citizens, including democracy and demography, health, innovation and youth as well as an economy that works for people.

Von der Leyen's political initiatives for the Union, such as the European Green Deal and a Europe fit for the digital age, are very much dependent on how well our cities and regions are taken on board in the preparation and implementation of these policies.

The annual European Week of Regions and Cities will once again be an opportunity to show our contribution to achieving these common European goals that will ultimately benefit all Europeans. This year, we are also happy to welcome young elected local and regional politicians from all over Europe to take part in the week and provide their input to the discussions.

At our October Plenary, we will debate a number of policy proposals that clearly demonstrate the need of all levels of governance to work closely together. EPP-CoR rapporteurs will lead the discussions on topics such as Europe's sustainable energy transition and the transformation of coal regions, the future of cohesion policy and how to communicate it better, the UN sustainable development goals and the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework, to name a few. Overall, 12 opinions led by the EPP will be up for adoption – I wish to thank my fellow EPP-CoR members for their hard work and dedication in the preparation of these opinions.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome members and delegates to our upcoming EPP Congress side-event in Zagreb on 20 November on the topic of European investments in regions and cities post 2020. Organised together with the HDZ political party of Croatia, the seminar will focus on the future EU budget and on investing in effective solutions that benefit our citizens in partnership with regional and local authorities.



**Michael Schneider**  
President of the EPP-CoR Group

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# European Investments in Regions and Cities post 2020

## EPP-CoR side event at EPP Congress in Zagreb 20 November 2019



In the context of the 2019 European People's Party Congress in Zagreb, Croatia, hosted by the Croatian Democratic Union Party (HDZ), the EPP Group in the European Committee of the Regions will organise a seminar devoted to **European Investments in Regions and Cities after 2020**.

The seminar will take place on 20 November 2019 at the Sports Hall of the Zagreb Arena. Following the European Elections and the new leadership of the European Union, the objective of our seminar will be to look at the impact that

EU investments can have on growth, jobs and sustainable development in our regions, cities and villages, while identifying their added value for the European Union. It will also discuss ways to deliver more effective solutions for the citizens to help Europe reconnect with its regions and cities.

EPP regional and local leaders from across the European Union and Croatia will participate in this event. The seminar will be followed by a study visit to a successful project financed with European funds, where participants will be able

to see on the ground a good example of a partnership with regional and local authorities.

Members participating in the seminar will also have the opportunity to attend the EPP Congress 20-21 November. The Zagreb Congress will be an important moment as the Party elects its new President, Secretary General and 10 Vice-Presidents.

The final programme of the EPP-CoR seminar and EPP Congress will soon be available on the EPP-CoR website.

# Members on the field



Witold Stępień

**Witold Stępień** represented the CoR at the 5th Working Group meeting of the Coal Regions in Transition Platform on 15 July in Brussels. "Coal regions need already now technical assistance to prepare effective strategies and good projects, based on experience and knowledge at EU level. These should be implemented from the beginning of 2021. Climate protection cannot wait, therefore it is important to have a swift adoption of the EU budget with appropriate funding for coal regions", said Stępień.



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On 29 August, members **Pauliina Haijanen** and **Sirpa Hertell** took the floor at a debate entitled 'Municipalities in the EU and EU in the municipalities' at

Europe Forum in Turku, Finland. **Pauliina Haijanen** spoke about the daily benefits the EU brings to its citizens and underlined the importance of European values and working towards common goals in today's changing world. She also listed some examples of EU funding benefitting the region, from Leader projects in the rural areas to funding for education and universities as well as support to the local maritime industry. In Espoo, the EU provides funding for the city's actions for sustainable development as well as supports activities and partnerships in other areas, including education, said **Sirpa Hertell**.



Markku Markkula

CoR 1st Vice-President **Markku Markkula**, **Anders Knappe** and **Raffaello Cattaneo** took part in the UN Climate Action Summit and related workshops in New York. Presenting the ambitious commitments towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals by his city of Espoo, Finland, **Markku Markkula** underlined the importance of worldwide cooperation between regions and cities for climate action at the session on Local Leadership

for Climate: "We need to invent our future - that is what the future generations ask for. Forerunner activities such as the SDG 25+5 Cities are needed."



Arnoldas Abramavicius with EESC President Luca Jahier

The Sustainable Development Goals are a global strategy towards a better and more sustainable future for all. **Arnoldas Abramavicius** was a keynote speaker at the "6th Conference on Sustainable Development in Municipalities" in Dusseldorf on 23 September where he highlighted that for mayors and local leaders, the SDGs provide a roadmap for more balanced and equitable urban development. On 2 October at the EESC conference "Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030" in Brussels he called on the European Commission to make use of existing horizontal tools. "As the main EU investment instrument for regions and cities to implement the SDGs, cohesion policy should be reinforced to ensure their economic, social and territorial development".

## EPP Local Dialogues – call to members

EPP-CoR members have the possibility to organise EPP Local Dialogues in their city or region in 2019.

These local events bring citizens and EPP leaders together to discuss European matters of local/regional interest in an open dialogue. They are an excellent occasion to present the work of our EPP-CoR members in their local communities and address local concerns and also opportunities provided by the EU.

Financial and communication support is available.

Please contact the EPP-CoR secretariat for further details – we are happy to assist you in the organisation of your event.

More information:  
<http://epp.cor.europa.eu/epplocaldialogue/>



# European Week of Regions and Cities



**7-10 October, we welcome** officials from regions' and cities' administrations, as well as experts and academics to exchange good practices and know-how in the field of regional and urban development at the European Week of Regions and Cities (EWRC).

This year, the week takes place at the start of the new mandate of the European Commission and at a moment when the negotiations on the new Multiannual Financial Framework 2019-2027 are restarted.

The week's aim is to raise decision-makers' awareness about the fact that regions and cities matter in EU policy-making. It gives cities and regions the opportunity to showcase their capacity to create growth and jobs, implement European Union cohesion policy, and prove the importance of the local and regional level for good European governance. This year's edition focuses on the the future of the EU and the roles of regions and cities, on a Europe closer to citizens, a greener Europe, a more socially integrated Europe, a smarter Europe and a more connected Europe.

The #EURegionsWeek is the biggest European public event of its kind. Around 6 000 participants and 600 speakers from all over Europe and beyond gather together in Brussels for a programme of some 100 working sessions, exhibitions and networking events on regional and local development.

## What is new?

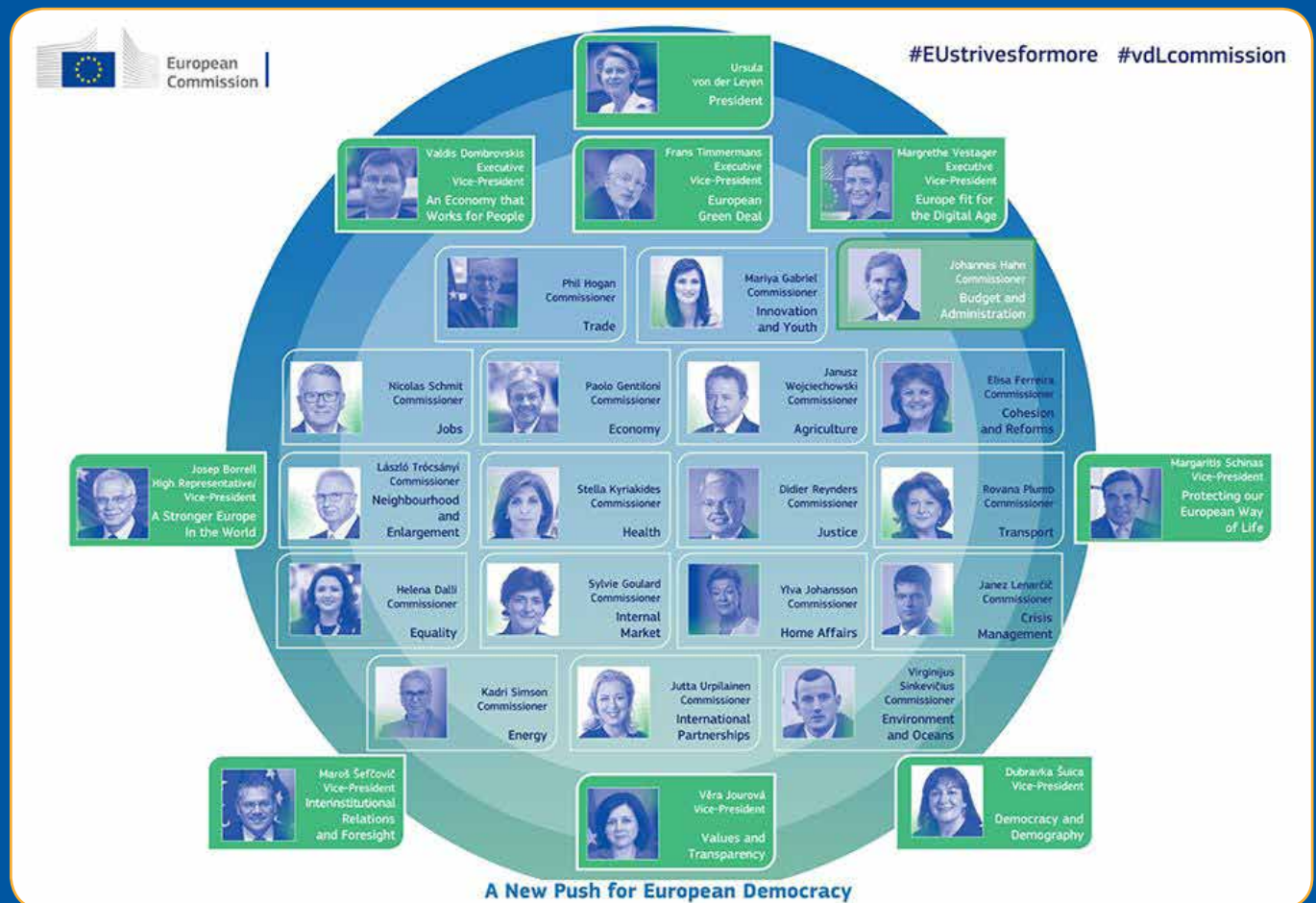
This year, the European Committee of the Regions has invited a selection of young elected politicians (YEPs) to enable them to network with politicians at European, national and local levels present at the event. The objective is to offer an opportunity to actively involve and engage young politicians from our cities and regions, and potential future CoR members, by raising their awareness and interest in the mission, role and work of the CoR. 33 Young elected politicians representing EPP member parties from all Member States will be taking part in the YEPs programme.

Follow the event on social media: #EURegionsWeek

## Upcoming events

→ <b>JCC Montenegro, Tivat, Montenegro</b> – 15 October	→ <b>9th Subsidiarity Forum Developing Active Subsidiarity in Europe, Rome, Italy</b> – 22 November
→ <b>ARLEM commission meeting, Brussels</b> – 18 October	→ <b>5th Broadband Platform meeting, Brussels</b> – 26 November
→ <b>WG Western Balkans, Mostar, Bosnia and Herzego</b> – 22 October	→ <b>ECON External Seminar, Helsinki, Finland</b> – 26-27 November
→ <b>ECON Commission meeting, Brussels</b> – 22 October	→ <b>SEDEC Commission meeting, Brussels</b> – 27 November
→ <b>COTER Commission meeting, Brussels</b> – 23 October	→ <b>JCC Serbia, Kanjiža, Serbia</b> – 27 November
→ <b>EuroPCom, Brussels</b> – 8-9 November	→ <b>COP 25, Santiago, Chile</b> – 2-13 December
→ <b>NAT Commission meeting, Brussels</b> – 12 November	→ <b>CoR Plenary Session, Brussels</b> – 4-5 December
→ <b>CFAA meeting, Brussels</b> – 13 November	→ <b>CIVEX Commission Meeting, Brussels</b> – 9 December
→ <b>CIVEX Commission meeting, Brussels</b> – 14 November	→ <b>JCC North Macedonia, Skopje, Macedonia</b> – 11 December
→ <b>Energy Globe World Award 2019 Ceremony, Espoo, Finland</b> – 12-13 November	→ <b>ECON Commission meeting, Brussels</b> – 13 December
→ <b>EPP Congress, Zagreb, Croatia</b> – 20-21 November	→ <b>COTER Commission meeting, Brussels</b> – 16 December
→ <b>ENVE Commission meeting, Brussels</b> – 21 November	

# Building together the new political mandate of the European Union



## A Union that strives for more

The incoming European Commission will be structured around the priorities set by President-elect **Ursula von der Leyen** (EPP/DE).

At the heart of its work is the need to address the changes in climate, technology and demography that are transforming our societies and way of life. Existing powers are going down new paths alone. New powers are emerging and consolidating. This has left a feeling of unease and anxiety in many communities across Europe. The EU must lead the transition to a healthy planet and a new digital world. But it can only do so by bringing people together and upgrading our unique social market economy to fit today's new ambitions.

The new Commission will focus on equality and creating chances for all, whether for women or men, for the young and the old, from all parts of our continent. We must defend our common

values and uphold the rule of law. In the next 5 years all of the European institutions have to work together closely to allay fears and create opportunities.

President-elect Ursula von der Leyen said: *"We must strengthen the links between people, nations and institutions. Between expectations and delivery. Between words and deeds. My Commission will listen to the people of Europe and be bold where it makes sense for us to act, leaving national, regional and local actors to deliver where they are best placed to do so. Cohesion Funds play a crucial role in supporting our regions and rural areas from East to West, from South to North to keep up with the transformations of our world. But we need to do more."*

The new Commission's Political Guidelines focus on six headline ambitions for Europe over the next five years and well beyond:

- A European Green Deal
- An economy that works for people

- A Europe fit for the digital age
- Protecting our European way of life
- A stronger Europe in the world
- A new push for European democracy

## Next steps

The European Parliament's committees will assess if each nominee is fit for the position proposed in public hearings between 30 September and 8 October.

After the hearings, the committees will prepare evaluation letters on the candidates. The Parliament is expected to vote on the new Commission as a whole on 23 October, during the Plenary Session of the EP.

The EPP-CoR Group looks forward to working closely with Ursula Von der Leyen and her new team of Commissioners in bringing Europe closer to the people, together with directly elected politicians from local, regional, national and EU levels.

# Upcoming priorities of the EPP Group in the European Parliament



"We will continue to fight for a more democratic Europe and a Europe that is closer to its citizens."

**Manfred Weber**, *Chairman of the EPP Group in the European Parliament*



"The AGRI Committee faces new challenges in the current legislature given the structure of the new parliament and the need to respond to the environmental concerns. Practically, the main priority in the upcoming period shall focus on maintaining the committee's position on the next CAP package. In addition, the committee has to defend a robust budget for agriculture and rural development in the next MFF and to avoid any further cuts. The committee has to ensure a smooth process in the inter-institutional negotiations, aiming to defend the ambitions of the future CAP:

- A more efficient, adapted and simplified CAP to respond to the farmers and consumers needs
- strengthening the resilience of agricultural sectors and the capacity to adapt to market trends
- increasing competitiveness and sustainability of agricultural sectors, investing in digitalisation and smart development of rural areas
- ensuring territorial balance of the EU and generational renewal, reversing the depopulation trend of rural areas."

MEP **Daniel Buda**, *Vice-Chair of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development*



"We call for maximum flexibility within existing instruments together with the necessary predictability and efficiency. Addressing new priorities while still supporting successful existing European programmes will require new funding."

MEP **Niclas Herbst**, *Vice-Chair of the Budgets Committee*



"The reform of the Common Agricultural Policy will be the main priority for the AGRI committee in this new legislative term. We will try to resume the work with the mandate voted by the AGRI committee in April 2019 and hope to adopt a legislative text that creates a successful balance between sufficient support for farmers and the needs of climate and nature conservation."

MEP **Norbert Lins**, *Chair of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development*



"Transport and tourism are part of the most important political sectors, especially when it comes to climate and environmental challenges. Therefore, it is essential to find solutions for cleaner transport that involves also economic aspects and is available and affordable to everyone."

MEP **Sven Schulze**, *Vice-Chair of the Committee on Transport and Tourism*



"I intend to promote measures that will support a flexible and competitive business environment. I will also promote the most efficient use of ESF+ funding. I want to seek and address various legislative and administrative gaps which can create obstacles for EU citizens."

MEP **Tomas Zdechovský**, *Vice-Chair of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs*



"The Budgets Committee of the European Parliament will always support regions and cities across the EU - united in diversity!"

MEP **Janusz Lewandowski**, *Vice-Chair of the Budgets Committee*



# October Plenary session

The October Plenary session kicks off with the official opening of the 17th #EUregionsweek at the Hemicycle of the European Parliament on 7 October with the theme "Regions and cities, pillars of the EU's future".

On 8-9 October, members of the CoR gather for the Plenary session where they will hold a debate on regional development policy beyond 2020 with Younous Omarjee, Chair of the REGI Committee of the European Parliament.

Members will also debate the developments in the interinstitutional negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027 in the presence of Günther H. Oettinger, Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources.

## EPP-CoR opinions on the agenda

### Better Communication for Cohesion Policy

**Adrian Ovidiu Teban (EPP/RO)**



*"Communication for cohesion policy has to resonate with the people, it has to involve more storytelling that reaches local citizens and not numbers and charts about some*

*far-away job markets or infrastructure."*-  
rapporteur **Adrian Teban**

Cohesion policy finances concrete and visible projects in Europe's cities and regions, and therefore has a lot of potential to influence citizens' perception of the European Union on the ground. However, only one third of European citizens have heard of EU co-financed projects in the area in which they live and only half have heard of EU development funds.

Better visibility of the European structural and investment funds (ESIF) could contribute to improving citizens' perceptions about the effectiveness of cohesion policy and to restoring their confidence in the European project, believes rapporteur Adrian Teban. His opinion provides recommendations on better policy communication in the upcoming programming period 2021-2027.

### Recommendations for the successful design of regional development strategies beyond 2020

**Adam Struzik (EPP/PL)**



While the EU-level negotiations for the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) for the years 2021-2027 are still ongoing, regions and cities already need to start preparing for the launch of the new programmes.

Adam Struzik's opinion makes recommendations for effective planning of a post-2020 regional development strategy, drawing on the analysis of the specific strategic circumstances of regions. Future development policies must take into account not only the challenges countries and regions are facing, but also future trends, including environmental, technological, social and economic transformations towards a knowledge-based economy. They should also take advantage of the regions' experience of cohesion policy to-date.

The rapporteur also stresses the need to take the current statistical divisions and indicators of socio-economic development in EU's regions into account when shaping the future development policies beyond 2020.

The European Union needs a framework for a long-term and place-based development policy that will replace the Europe 2020 strategy and contributes to the achievement of the global sustainable development goals.



### The CoR's contribution to the renewed Territorial Agenda with special emphasis on Community-Led Local Development

**Radim Sršeň (EPP/CZ)**

*"The European Union's Territorial Agenda after 2020 and Community-Led Local Development play a key role in bringing the European Union closer to citizens."* -  
rapporteur **Radim Sršeň**

The European Union's Territorial Agenda after 2020 needs a stronger territorial dimension in a wider range of policy fields. By actively involving all local stakeholders and citizens, Territorial

instruments such as Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) or integrated territorial investments (ITI) are able to respond to European needs using local

means and, as a result, help boost the legitimacy of the EU.

Sršeň's opinion calls for a much higher uptake of these instruments in the EU

Member States in the next programming period in 2021-2027, while supporting mandatory earmarking across all funds in order to fulfil the renewed Territorial Agenda and cohesion goals.

## Socioeconomic structural change in Europe's coal regions

**Mark Speich (EPP/DE)**



*"Climate Change is a challenge for the whole of Europe and the transformation of coal regions is a crucial contribution to achieving our climate goals."* - rapporteur **Mark Speich**

Nowadays, in Europe, there are 185 000 people employed in coal mines, and a further 52 000 work in coal-fired power

plants. The coal industry is also indirectly linked to various economic sectors, such as production of inputs, equipment, services and consumer goods. According to a European Commission study, 160 000 jobs could be lost by 2030 as a result of current plans to phase out coal mining and coal use for power generation.

Building up new industries in the regions is a lengthy business that requires considerable financial resources. Local and regional authorities in coal regions need support in this, particularly since they will initially lose revenue as a result of coal production and coal-powered electricity generation being phased out.

Structural change should also be supported by the future Cohesion Policy and by European Funds such as the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, Horizon 2020 and the resources of the European Investment Bank, believes EPP-CoR rapporteur Mark Speich.

"Coal regions in transition are facing huge challenges. My investigations have shown that the existing EU instruments do not provide an adequate answer to those challenges. Funding for coal regions in transition should be allocated under cohesion policy", the rapporteur concludes.

## Implementation report on public procurement

**Thomas Habermann (EPP/DE)**



*"The opinion shows that there is no need for another reform of public procurement law in the near future. Instead it highlights that local and regional authorities are still struggling to apply very complex European rules."* - rapporteur **Thomas Habermann**.

There is a need to clarify the circumstances in which local and regional authorities are permitted to promote local economic growth and local structures in the interests of sustainability and positive environmental impact, by using short supply chains in line with the "buy local" principle.

The resulting administrative burden for local and regional authorities must be proportional to the benefits that public procurement can bring for the public. Public procurement is not primarily intended to achieve policy goals regarding, for example, environmental sustainability, social inclusion or

innovation, or to further specific socio-political development. However, it is increasingly being used as a vehicle for steering and achieving other policy goals. It is nonetheless important not to lose sight of the aim and purpose of public procurement: determining the best price-quality ratio in line with the principles of sound financial management and efficiency of the public administration.

"Public procurement plays a crucial role in the economic development of the European Union; the rules ensure public money is spent in the most efficient way," says rapporteur Habermann.

## Implementing the Paris Agreement through innovative and sustainable energy transition at regional and local level

**Witold Stępień (EPP/PL)**



*"To reach the objectives of the Paris Agreement and to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals, a broad transition to a sustainable, low-emission energy system is needed. The scale of this transition requires integrated solutions and close cooperation*

*across all levels of government and civil society."* rapporteur **Witold Stępień**.

An innovative and sustainable energy transition provides an opportunity to invest in future-proof infrastructure and to improve the quality of life all Europeans. The energy system needs to be considered as a whole, from production and supply to distribution and consumption.

Local and regional authorities are best placed to engage their communities, attract private investors and implement ambitious action, acting not only

as administrators but also as service providers and significant purchasers of energy services. Stępień's opinion calls on the Commission and the Member States to provide LRAs with adequate resources and support to speed up the energy transition in coal regions, carbon intensive regions and islands across Europe.

Rapporteur Stępień fully supports the 40% goal for renewable energy and the imperative of energy efficiency and highlights the close link between circular economy and sustainable energy transition.

## Sustainable Europe by 2030: Follow-up to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, ecologic transition and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change

**Sirpa Hertell (EPP/FI)**



*"Cities and regions are leaders in climate change mitigation and adaptation, and decision makers at all levels in the EU need to officially recognise their active role in the drafting of climate policies and regulations."*

- rapporteur **Sirpa Hertell**

**Sirpa Pietikäinen, MEP (EPP/FI)**



Cities account for 70% of world greenhouse emissions, with local governments being responsible for more than 70% of climate change reduction measures and up to 90% of climate adaptation actions. Cities and regions are also responsible for 65% of the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Europe. The opinion therefore calls for integrated, inclusive local goals and targets, implementation actions and indicators in line with the principle of multi-level governance.

*"We need to solve big challenges facing the humankind, including globalisation, resource efficiency, climate change and digitalisation, which are linked to one another. In order to solve these challenges, we need science and fact-based political decisions. Circular economy and resource efficiency are some of the most important*

Sirpa Hertell's opinion stresses the importance of defining the new European strategy "Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030" as a basis for a long-term European Future. It calls for a holistic, systemic climate change policy for the European Union as opposed to the current fragmented approach. The rapporteur calls for more synergies between funding sources and stronger links between public and private funding for the environment.

*solutions to climate change. What we need next is a roadmap from the European Commission towards achieving a circular economy, including strategies for textiles and construction, policies for sustainable food as well as common circular economy indicators."*

## Implementing the Clean Energy Package: the INECPs as a tool for a transversal approach to climate, active and passive energy'

**József Ribanyi (EPP/HU)**



Cities and regions are important actors in a number of key priorities of the Energy Union. They have a right to be directly involved in measures touching on energy efficiency, climate change and the shift away from fossil fuels and also have an important role to play in managing energy poverty.

Member States' national energy and climate plans (NECPs) will help ensure that

the Energy Union objectives, particularly the EU's energy and climate targets for 2030 and 2050, are in line with the Paris Agreement. Local and regional authorities' (LRA's) expertise, responsibilities and financial resources should be harnessed in order to complete the Energy Union. A better involvement of cities and regions will enable the EU to achieve the targets set in an efficient manner, underlines rapporteur József Ribányi in his opinion. The challenges and obstacles encountered at local level – closest to consumers – must be understood and overcome in order to give credibility to national and European commitments.

Rapporteur Ribányi supports the proposed Multilevel Climate and Energy Pol-

icy Dialogue insofar as it will boost LRA participation in policy discussions carried out in conjunction with the NECPs. This dialogue is also crucial for upholding the subsidiarity and proportionality principles, and so the CoR should be involved as mediator. Coordination is needed to identify inconsistencies and potential synergies between the NECPs and the Multiannual Financial Framework, the European Semester and the EU's long-term strategy for 2050.

Finally, the opinion emphasises that the NECPs must promote energy innovation with a view to a shift to a low-carbon economy which supports employment, growth and investment.

## Better regulation: taking stock and sustaining our commitment

**Olgierd Geblewicz (EPP/PL)**



*"Citizens from regions and cities deserve good quality legislation that brings Europe an added value that is clear and well communicated."* – rapporteur **Olgierd Geblewicz**

Because local and regional authorities implement and use 70 % of EU legisla-

tion, while also having the closest links to citizens, they must be directly engaged in the process of creating good EU rules and the process of assessing their effectiveness.

*"As regional and local authorities we have to make sure that our citizens are part of the*

European law-making process. The European Committee of the Regions is an asset and we need to strengthen its role because the voice of our citizens needs to be heard at European level” says rapporteur Olgierd Geblewicz.

In his opinion, Olgierd Geblewicz highlights the necessity to strengthen multi-level cooperation based on mutual trust both when evaluating existing rules and when creating new ones. In this sense, he recommends including

local and regional experts in the work of national expert groups and in the REFIT platform’s management structure so that it can decide on the orientation and work plans of the platform together with the European Commission.

## African swine fever and the EU pork market

**Ślawomir Sosnowski (EPP/PL)**



The African Swine Fever (ASF) is a real challenge that local and regional authorities are struggling to cope with. In Poland, hundreds of pig farms have ceased to exist due to the outbreak of the virus, states rapporteur Ślawomir Sosnowski in his opinion.

ASF is a serious problem for the European Union as a whole, also for economic and trade-related reasons. The disease poses an enormous threat to rural development, the local and regional economy, the environment, farming and, as a result, to humans and public health. In addition to farmers, meat processing plants are facing the negative consequences of the disease, and falling pork prices are a real concern.

Local and regional authorities, hunters and farmers, veterinary services, national authorities of individual Member States

and the media should all play an active and dynamic role in combating ASF in Europe under the leadership of the European Commission and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

Sosnowski’s opinion calls upon the European Commission to undertake stronger measures and legislative solutions to fight against ASF. It also calls for increased funding and research, including an effective vaccine for the virus. Farms affected by ASF should receive specific support, such as financial support and assistance in implementing better biosecurity.

## Active and healthy ageing

**Birgitta Sacrédeus (EPP/SE)**



“If we want to support active and healthy ageing, we need to focus on prevention at all ages”. –rapporteur **Birgitta Sacrédeus**

A key measure to support active ageing is digital development and innovation, working together with the silver econo-

my and SMEs, underlines rapporteur Birgitta Sacrédeus.

Her opinion calls on all local and regional authorities to embrace the opportunities of e-Health and digitalisation as tools and to step up their efforts to modernise health services for all ages, using digital innovation to reduce health inequalities and improve access to care, especially in sparsely populated areas. More cross-border cooperation is needed to allow for easier access to health care services also for the elderly.

Sacrédeus’ opinion calls for a strong public health programme and for the budgetary prioritisation of health promotion, disease prevention and reduction of health inequalities in the EU’s post-2020 research programmes, including Horizon Europe.

Local and regional authorities define, deliver and manage a whole range of services than can make a positive difference and influence how people age in their communities. The rapporteur hopes that the new Commission which will start its work later in the year will be keen to work on active and healthy ageing together with the Committee of the Regions.

## Pastoralism

**Jacques Blanc (EPP/FR)**



Pastoralism is a traditional activity based on extensive farming and practiced in rural areas across Europe. Pastoralism is, however, under threat due to many different factors, including land pricing, challenges of passing on know-how, en-

vironmental constraints, competition in the use of land as well as coexistence with certain large carnivores, states rapporteur Jacques Blanc.

Pastoralism supports farming as an economic activity and helps maintain population in rural areas by allowing people to continue to live in areas where intensive farming methods cannot be applied. The extensive farming activities of pastoralism deliver benefits related to climate and biodiversity and help combat forest fires and avalanches.

Rapporteur Blanc calls for more support for pastoralism and extensive, sustainable grazing in the reform of the European Union’s Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and by the Member States. The next revision of the EU Habitat directive should be an opportunity to better adapt to the growing populations of large carnivores such as wolves, the rapporteur states. The next revision of the EU Habitat directive should be an opportunity to better adapt to the growing populations of large carnivores such as wolves, the rapporteur states.

# Social media for political communication

## December session – call for registrations

On 4 December 2019, the EPP-CoR Group is organising a second session on **social media for political communication**.

The aim of this session is to show how social media can help **strengthen the impact of your political work** as local and regional leaders and as members of the CoR.

Join this session for insights and practical guidance on **how to make most of social media** as a **local or regional politician** and when communicating about your work at EU level. You will also have the opportunity to share with us **your needs and expectations** in terms of social media and communication and to learn about the tools and resources that the EPP-CoR Group can offer.

We invite **Members** and their **communicators who work on social media** to attend this session. Travel and accommodation will be paid for a

maximum of 15 participants by the EPP-CoR Group on a first-come-first-served-basis for those who are not based in Brussels.

*Where:* **JDE 62, CoR**

*When:* **9.00-10.15 on Wednesday, 4 December 2019**

Please send your registrations to the EPP-CoR Secretariat by 31 October: [epp@cor.europa.eu](mailto:epp@cor.europa.eu)



## Ongoing opinions

### CIVEX

Regional and local cooperation with Africa to counteract migration – **Robert Zeman** – Adoption foreseen in 2020

### COTER

The potential of the rail sector in delivering EU policy priorities – **Pascal Mangin** – Adoption foreseen in December 2019

### ENVE

Towards sustainable neighbourhoods and small communities: environment policy below municipal level – **Gaetano Armao** – Adoption foreseen in February 2020

### SEDEC

Brain Drain in the EU: addressing the challenge at all levels – **Emil Boc** – Adoption foreseen in 2020

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