

THE

# ReppORTER

June 2019

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



European elections 2019

Finnish EU Presidency



European Committee of the Regions

# Foreword

by President Schneider



Following the May 2019 EU elections, the EPP will continue to be the largest political group in the European Parliament. I want to once more congratulate the whole EPP family, our Spitzenkandidat **Manfred Weber** as well as all elected EPP MEPs for the campaign. We have shown that by working together as one, united family we can deliver concrete results.

Our EPP-CoR Grassroots Engagement took the EPP campaigning to our cities and regions, where our politicians at the local, regional, national and EU levels discussed EU matters of local importance with hundreds of citizens and gathered their expectations for the future of our continent.

One thing is clear: we need to maintain a close dialogue with the people. Therefore, we will continue our EPP Local Dialogues in order to keep rebuilding people's trust in democracy and to communicate concrete examples where the EU brings added-value to the people – in our cities and regions.

Political work does not end at elections; rather, our focus will be on the political priorities of the European Commission and the new EU mandate for the next five years. The EU elections were a campaign on EU matters, but as it is written in our EPP Regional and Local manifesto, politics knows no boundaries; 70 per cent of the EU legislation that is decided upon in Brussels is implemented by our cities and regions across Europe.

We will want to see a stronger role for regions and cities in EU policy-making. We will strive to establish a new way of working in the EU based on the principle of subsidiarity and a dialogue with the people. We need to work, all levels of government together: European, national, regional and local, and as close as possible to the citizens.

We will be communicating our key messages to the Commissioner-candidates in view of their upcoming hearings. Our Group will also be continuing our close working relations with the new European Parliament once the political and legislative work starts again after the summer.

I wish all my fellow EPP-CoR members a well-deserved summer break!



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

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# Finnish EU presidency places climate action at the heart of EU policies

Finland's third presidency of the Council of the European Union kicks off on 1 July 2019. The presidency will be influenced by the re-organisation of the EU institutions following the European elections and by the nomination procedures for the new EU mandate.

Key priorities include finalising the negotiations on the EU's next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), the Commission's work programme for the next five years as well as Brexit.

Finland wants to place climate action at the centre of all EU policies over the next years to come. During the presidency, the Nordic country will be leading the Council's work on further developing the EU's Single Market, with a strong focus on sustainable growth as well as on digital and circular economy. Defending European values, such as human rights, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law will also feature highly on the presidency's agenda.

*"The EU is currently in a transition phase. The new Parliament has started its work, the new Commission will be appointed and the British exit from the EU is still in process. This timing is a big challenge but also an opportunity for Finland. We have two main goals: to make sure the EU continues to function during this transition phase but also to ensure we will have ambitious plans for a strong and united EU. Sustainability, climate change and security are priorities to which Europeans expect solutions at the EU level."* **Petteri Orpo.**



**Petteri Orpo**, MP and Leader of the National Coalition Party Kokoomus

*"The timing of the Finnish Presidency is excellent for showcasing the crucial role of cities and city-driven regions in tackling EU wide challenges. Together with the Helsinki*

*Region, I will host several small workshops both in Brussels and in Helsinki/Espoo on speeding and scaling up the implementation of city-focused societal innovations covering a wide spectrum of SDGs."*

**Markku Markkula.**



**Markku Markkula**, 1st Vice-President of the CoR, Member of EPP-CoR, City Councillor of Espoo

*"The Finnish Presidency will lead important negotiations on the future of cohesion policy. Local and regional levels should have a stronger role in the national implementation of this policy. I am happy to welcome my colleagues at the Committee of the Regions to the CoR Bureau meeting in Turku in September."* **Pauliina Haijanen.**



**Pauliina Haijanen**, Member of EPP-CoR, City Councillor of Lähtilä

*"Cities play a key role in the fight against climate change. We must also listen to our youth, who are seriously concerned about the future of the entire globe as well as that of their own. In the new programme of the Finnish government, we have committed to an ambitious, consistent and global climate policy, in cooperation with our citizens and all EU Member States."* **Sirpa Hertell.**



**Sirpa Hertell**, Member of EPP-CoR, City Councillor of Espoo

*"Finland bears a heavy responsibility at the EU's helm at this turning point in history. If ever there was a time for Brussels to be nurturing the unity of the Member States and strengthening the Union, it is now. It is particularly important to strengthen the EU's common budget."* **Petri Sarvamaa.**



**MEP Petri Sarvamaa**, EPP Group

*"The Finnish presidency should focus on the importance of know-how; Only by strengthening know-how can European industries stay competitive and we can rise up to the global challenges of climate change, the use of natural resources, migration, security and changing labour markets."* **Henna Virkkunen.**



**MEP Henna Virkkunen**, EPP Group

# Members on the field



EPP-CoR president Michael Schneider

EPP-CoR president **Michael Schneider** congratulated **Manfred Weber** on his campaign for the EU Elections 2019 at the EPP Political Assembly on 3 June: "Citizens have put their trust in our hands. Regional and local leaders offer their full support to Manfred Weber as the next President of the European Commission", said Schneider.



Roberto Pella

**Roberto Pella** highlighted the importance of promoting and stimulating physical activity in schools at the EU Sport Forum in Bucharest on 8 April. "The new Erasmus Programme should be more inclusive and support the participation of small organisations, in particular community-based grassroots organisations that work with all ages, and especially those from the smallest municipalities in Europe", said Pella, presenting good examples from EU-funded projects by Italian municipalities.



Markku Markkula

At the Regions and cities making the SDGs happen Conference on 11 April, **Markku Markkula** presented the city of Espoo's place-based innovation ecosystem. It brings together thousands of business professionals, students and 25 research development organisations to work across sectors and create more synergies to better implement Sustainable Development Goals at local and regional levels. "There is an urgency to act in order to move towards a climate neutral and more efficient Europe and a clear need

to increase the bottom-up approach in order to implement the SDGs locally", added Espoo city councillor and EPP-CoR Member **Sirpa Hertell**.



Sirpa Hertell



Adam Struzik

© KarmenuVella on Twitter

**Adam Struzik** opened the EU Green Week in Warsaw on 13 May in the presence of **Karmenu Vella**, EU Commissioner for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries. "Climate Change affects us all. I invite you to talk together, reflect on the condition of the environment and, above all, take action. One of the most important elements is the implementation of EU legislation in Poland", Struzik said.



Cor Lamers

Speaking about the future of EU environment policy and implementation at the local and regional level during the EU Green Week on 16 May, **Cor Lamers**, Chair of the CoR's ENVE Commission, stressed the need for policy integration, an area-placed approach as well as multilevel governance. He called for a more innovative way of thinking in order to achieve our environmental goals locally and globally.



Adam Karacsony

**Adam Karacsony**, CoR rapporteur on Creative Europe, spoke at the European Heritage - Shared experience and regional specificities - Cultural Heritage Conference in Sighișoara, Romania on 11-12 April. He discussed the importance of architecture and cultural heritage and the sharing of knowledge and best practices on quality standards among regions.



Ricardo Rio

EPP-CoR member **Ricardo Rio**, Mayor of Braga hosted the ERC Summit for Portuguese and Spanish grantees on 8 April. On the occasion, Commissioner **Carlos Moedas** stressed the value of the over 500 European Research Council grants which have helped scientists in both countries to pursue innovative ideas, many leading to breakthroughs.



Alin Nica © European Commission / EU Cluster Conference 2019



Markku Markkula

**Alin Nica** and **Markku Markkula** spoke about strategic interregional cooperation and the need for clusters of change at the European Cluster Conference 2019 on 14 May in Bucharest. Nica also attended the Working Group on "Social Economy Clusters" 15-16 May as CoR observer to the Working Group.



Csaba Borboly

“Local and regional authorities need to cooperate with local employers and entrepreneurs and need concrete instruments aimed at reducing youth migration”, said **Csaba Borboly**, who represented the CoR at the Adult upskilling and reskilling - Balancing the labour market Conference in Bucharest on 7 June.

We congratulate our member **Luc Van den Brande**, who has recently been elect-

ed as president of the European Center for Workers' Questions (EZA). At the occasion of the 108e Annual Centenary Conference of the ILO in Genève, Luc Van den Brande addressed on 17 June the Plenary Assembly, appealing to decent work for all, insisting on the implementation of the recommendations for a “Brighter Future” proposed by the Global Commission and underlined that global economic, social,

climate and sustainable transitions are to be converted from a threat to an opportunity.



## New and leaving members

We are happy to welcome a new member to the Group: **Martin Dlouhy**, CZ, alternate member.

We would also like to thank the members of our Group who have recently lost their mandate for their dedication and cooperation: **Jan Durnez** (BE, full member), **Angel**

**Garrido Garcia** (ES, alternate member), **Brigitte Grouwels** (BE, alternate member) and **Joël Riguelle** (BE, alternate member).

## European Week of Regions and Cities 7-10 October 2019

This year, the European Week of Regions and Cities will focus on the future of the EU and the roles of regions and cities. A Europe closer to citizens, a greener Europe, a more socially integrated Europe, a smarter Europe and a more connected Europe will be the leading themes of the sessions. For the first time, a special programme will be made available for young elected politicians.

Registrations to the EU Regions Week open on **8 July** and close on **27 September**.

More information:  
<https://europa.eu/regions-and-cities/>



## Save the date! EPP-CoR event 9 October

# Building a new Chapter together for the people of Europe

The EPP-CoR will organise an event of the EWRC in the evening of 9 October at the CoR entitled Building a new Chapter together for the people of Europe - setting political priorities for the new EU mandate. The debate will focus on the upcoming

mandate of the European Parliament and Commission from a regional and local perspective. The event will also be an occasion to launch the most recent European View journal by the Wilfried Martens Centre illustrating how subsidiarity can work

positively in practice at European, national and regional levels. More information on the event will be available on the EPP-CoR website soon.

# EUROPEAN ELECTIONS 2019

## The people of Europe have voted.

We congratulate our EPP Spitzenkandidat **Manfred Weber** and all elected EPP Members of the European Parliament on their successful campaign. In particular, we congratulate our EPP-CoR members on their election as MEPs: **Alvaro Amaro**, Mayor of Guarda, Portugal, **Salvatore De Meo**, Mayor of Fondi, Italy, **Gheorghe Falcă**, Mayor of Arad, Romania, **Adam Jarubas**, Member of the Świętokrzyskie Regional Assembly, Poland and **Marion Walsmann**, Member of Erfurt City Council, Germany.

The elections saw the highest turnout in 20 years, which shows a greater interest in European policies and signals that people expect us to deliver concrete solutions to the concerns of their daily life.

*"The higher turnout in the European Elections clearly showed the voters' support for the Spitzenkandidat process,"* said **Joseph Daul**, President of the EPP.

*"I think we showed that together we really*



*have established a European campaign. One key promise of EPP is that we fight for and guarantee stability in Europe,"* **Manfred Weber** said at the EPP European Elections'19 Night in Brussels and continued: *"We will deliver on what the people have asked us in the last months."*

Thanks to the joint efforts of the entire

EPP family in the run up to the elections, the EPP remains the largest party in the European Parliament. Following our Grassroots Engagement, we look forward to continuing our work with the EPP family on a new chapter for Europe. We are stronger together, and together we can build a Better Europe.

## Work ahead – upcoming mandate of the EU and new MEPs

During the next months, our Group will focus on the upcoming mandate of the EU based on the EPP Regional and Local Manifesto adopted on 16 March 2019 in Bucharest. We want to establish a new way of working in the EU based on the principle of subsidiarity and a close dialogue with the people. We are

determined to bring added value in the daily lives of European citizens living in our villages, cities and regions.

We will present our views on key policy topics to the Commissioner-candidates during their upcoming hearings. We will also continue our close working relationship with the new EPP Group in

the European Parliament.

We welcome our members' suggestions and ideas for the new EU mandate. We look forward to continuing our work involving cities and regions in EU decision-making for a sustainable Europe with the people and for the people.



Manfred Weber

# EPP campaign for EU 2019 elections goes local



**Manuel Pleguezuelo**  
**@manupleguezuelo 22 May**  
 As @EPP-CoR member I am informing the foreign residents in the coastal municipalities of the #Region Of Murcia about the importance of #EU elections 2019 and the proposals of our local candidates #Closeness #honesty #Responsability #StrongerTogether #ThePowerOfWE #ThisTimeImVoting  
 ❤️ 10 likes



**Fx Bellamy @fxbellamy May 19**  
 They are the pillars that support our democracy, and know better than anyone the fragilities and hopes of our country: more than 800 mayors of France have signed up @eJDD to support our list. Thanks to them for their trust!  
 ❤️ 264 likes



**Eva Maydell (Paunova)**  
**@EvaMaydell 15 May**  
 I always remember that citizens put their trust in me. It is a pleasure to come back to the cities, towns & villages to hear their thoughts about what kind of #Europe they want, often the answer is achieving, enabling and strong #EUElections2019 #ThisTimeImVoting  
 ❤️ 18 likes



**Adrian Teban**  
**@teban\_adrian 28 May**  
 #EuroParlamentare #PNL #epp With your help, we have proven that Europe starts in Cugir, and our city's future is definitely European, without criminals in public functions! Thank you for your confidence!  
 ❤️ 5 likes



**Mark Weinmeister**  
**@mattium 7 May**  
 Hessen is our home. Germany our fatherland. Europe is our future.  
 #strongertogether #simon4ep #gahler4ep #david4ep #starkesHessen #newchapter4europe



**CDU Deutschlands @CDU May 18**  
 #UnserEuropa Strengthens European democracy. Regional, national and European interests must not be opposites. Our Europe strengthens the role of national parliaments, the Committee of the Regions and Municipalities. #26MaiCDU  
 @manfredweber  
 ❤️ 18 likes

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 @EPP\_CoR  @EPPGroupCoR  @epp\_cor



## EPP Grassroots Engagement - EPP-CoR support to the EPP campaign

*"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."* EPP Spitzenkandidat **Manfred Weber** at EPP Summit of Regional and Local Leaders in Bucharest.

Since the launch of the EPP Grassroots Engagement in Sofia in March 2018, Members of the EPP CoR, together with Members of the EPP Group in the European Parliament and national parties, have organised a number of EPP Local Dialogue events in Europe's 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.

The EPP Grassroots campaign culminated in the adoption of the *EPP regional and local manifesto* with the participation of **Klaus Iohannis**, President of Romania, **Manfred Weber** and 4000 mayors and regional leaders at the EPP Summit of



Regional and Local Leaders in Bucharest in March 2019.

*"Your support to our EPP campaign has been second to nobody else; all the EPP Local Dialogues that you, local and regional politi-*

*cians, have been involved in, listening to our citizens, have been invaluable."*, said **Dara Murphy**, Vice-President of the European People's Party and Campaign Director for the EU elections at the EPP-CoR Group meeting in April, and continued:



*"The reference to strong regions in our EPP Manifesto is there because of your hard work and input. We have a clear position in the EPP on subsidiarity [...] We, with our lead candidate Manfred Weber, have committed in our Manifesto to working together with cities and regions, and our EPP-CoR members who work closely with the citizens."*

What do people expect from their EPP Leaders? Based on the feedback received at EPP Local Dialogues, some of the key topics that people want the EPP and their national parties to focus on in the next 5-10 years include defending European values, rights and democracy, delivering growth and jobs, migration as well as combatting climate change and investing in rural and regional development.



**“ The phenomenon of ‘brain drain’ is a real concern in my region. ”**

**Citizen from Harghita county, Romania**

to organise an EPP Local Dialogue in your city or region, the EPP CoR Secretariat will be happy to assist you with further information.

*"I believe continuing these 'local dialogues' into the future gives us a timely awareness of the issues, the ability to act on them and ultimately help strengthen the European Union as a whole."*

**Deirdre Forde**, Cork County Councillor (IE), EPP-CoR



It 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:

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

**Citizen from Turku, Finland**

**“ Communicate clearly the EU’s benefits for ordinary people. What Sweden was in 1994 compared to today in terms of economy. ”**

**Citizen from Stockholm, Sweden**



**“ I expect the EPP to focus on environmental protection, investments in education and the creation of new jobs. ”**

**Citizen from Toruń, Poland**

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

**Citizen from Cork, Ireland**

**“ How can we make young people feel more optimistic about their future? ”**

**Citizen from Sofia, Bulgaria**

Members of EPP-CoR can continue to organise EPP Local Dialogues in 2019 and receive financial and communication support for this purpose. If you would like



# Overview of the June Plenary

On 26-27 June 2019, the 135th Plenary session of the European Committee of the Regions takes place in the Hemicycle of the European Parliament in Brussels.

The first day of the Plenary will see a

debate on the localisation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals with **Jyrki Katainen**, Commissioner for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness and the upcoming Finnish presidency.

On the second day, members will hold a debate on the role of EU regions in multilevel governance of climate change and energy transition with **Miguel Arias Cañete**, Commissioner for Climate action and Energy.

## EPP-CoR opinions on the agenda

### Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030

#### ECON

Rapporteur **Arnoldas Abramavičius**, Member of Zarasai District Municipal Council (EPP/LT)



The Committee of the Regions' response to the European Commission's Reflection Paper "Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030" supports an overarching EU strategy on Sustainable Development Goals

(SDGs) to guide all actions by the EU and Member States as the best way forward towards achieving the global SDGs.

Given that 65% of the 169 targets linked to the SDGs cannot be reached without the involvement of local and regional authorities, Abramavičius' opinion calls for the use of bottom-up approaches and the active involvement of sub-national actors:

*"SDGs at local and regional level will be instrumental in making sustainable development a reality in the EU. We are game-changers!"* **Arnoldas Abramavičius**

The SDGs are not just another international framework establishing ambitious goals, but rather provide a holistic ap-

proach with time-bound and universal objectives aiming at a collective mobilisation of the world community, the rapporteur states. In this regard, the SDGs go beyond setting objectives: with their strong underlying logic of partnership and broad consultation, most SDGs are – themselves – means to contribute to the achievement of other objectives.

To facilitate the implementation of the SDGs, the rapporteur advocates for the use of existing horizontal tools to mainstream the SDGs in all policies with a special emphasis on the European Semester, the EU Budget and the Better Regulation guidelines which guide the EU to draft good policies.

### Strengthening STE(A)M education in the EU

#### SEDEC

Rapporteur **Csaba Borboly**, President of Harghita County Council (EPP/RO)



The CoR opinion led by EPP-CoR member **Csaba Borboly** focuses on the growing need to better prepare citizens with the skills and knowledge they will need to be successful innovators in a 21st century workforce. The importance of further developing STE(A)M skills – Science, Tech-

nology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics - in Europe is recognized by the various EU institutions.

Empowered in many different ways through multi-level governance and decentralization of educational policy in the EU and in member states, local and regional authorities have become main actors in the process and are called upon to find new ways of thinking regarding the future of education, taking over new concepts and finding new financing sources for the soft and hard investments in order to support the necessary change.

*"We need to break the silos between disciplines, incorporating arts and introducing more project-based and multidisciplinary education approaches."* **Csaba Borboly**

The rapporteur encourages the European Commission, in agreement with local and regional partners, to frame universally-applicable standard curricula for STE(A)M subjects at different levels of education. He points to the need to close the gender gap in STEM courses and professions, and proposes targeted measures for girls of all ages such as career guidance programmes as well as study and apprenticeship programmes.

In view of the future programming period beyond 2020, the rapporteur considers that the Commission and Member States must give priority to supporting STEM related initiatives with EU and Member State funds, as should the Commission in its direct management of relevant EU programmes post 2020.

# Ongoing opinions

## CIVEX

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

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

## COTER

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

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

The CoR's contribution to the renewed Territorial Agenda with special emphasis on Community-Led Local Development – **Radim Sršeň** – Adoption foreseen in October 2019

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

## ECON

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

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

African swine fever and the EU pork market – **Sławomir Sosnowski** – Adoption foreseen in October 2019

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

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

# Upcoming events

→ Seminar on Innovative local action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, Espoo, Finland – 8 July 2019	→ JCC Montenegro, Brussels – 18 June 2019
→ ECON Commission meeting, Brussels – 9 July 2019	→ ENVE commission meeting, Brussels – 19 September 2019
→ COTER Commission meeting, Brussels – 10 July 2019	→ SEDEC commission meeting, Brussels – 30 September 2019
→ SEDEC commission meeting, Brussels – 11 July 2019	→ 136th CoR Plenary Session, Brussels – 8-9 October 2019
→ 9th CORLEAP Annual Meeting, Turku, Finland – 12 September 2019	→ European Week of Regions and Cities – 7-10 October 2019
→ CoR Bureau Meeting, Turku, Finland – 13 September 2019	→ Hearings of new Commissioners – October 2019
→ NAT Commission meeting, Brussels – 16 September 2019	



Secretary General: **Heinz-Peter Knapp**  
epp@cor.europa.eu

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June 2019