

THE

ReppORTER

October 2018

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



EPP Congress and EPP-CoR seminar in Helsinki

Citizens' feedback
at EPP Local Dialogues

16th European Week
of Regions and Cities



European Committee
of the Regions

Foreword

by **President Schneider**

Dear Friends,

The last few months, our EPP-CoR rapporteurs have been active working on their opinions related to the MFF and other topics. At our October Plenary, we will see a record number of opinions and amendments – including eight EPP-led opinions to be adopted – and the rest of the year is looking similarly busy.

The annual European Week of Regions and Cities taking place alongside our Plenary will be a great occasion to discuss the future of Europe from a regional and local perspective and to make our voices heard on what the EU's Cohesion Policy should look like after 2020. The aim is to finalise the EU budget negotiations so that programmes can start running on 1 January 2021. We must not repeat the unfortunate experience of 2013 when the current MFF was agreed with considerable delay, causing problems for hundreds of EU-funded projects on the ground.

As for other highlights this autumn, the EPP Political Assembly in September officially launched the Spitzenkandidat process, which will culminate at the EPP Congress in Helsinki 7-9 November, where the Party will elect its candidate for President of the European Commission. During the Congress, our EPP-CoR Group will host a high-level side event on 7 November on "EPP Cities Joining Forces to Deliver Sustainable Solutions for Citizens". The event, organised in cooperation with political party Kokoomus, will showcase EPP cities' common commitment to tackling climate change and present first results from our EPP Local Dialogues. I look forward to welcoming members to this event in Finland.

After Helsinki, all eyes will be on Austria, as we prepare for our high-level EPP / EPP-CoR event on 10 December entitled "A Europe closer to its citizens, a Europe that delivers and protects". Subsidiarity will be a main topic of this event, which will be attended by Chancellor Kurz and the EPP Spitzenkandidat.

Dear colleagues, it seems that we have our work cut out for us in the coming months. I wish you all a productive autumn!



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

Arnoldas Abramavičius First Vice-Chair of the ECON Commission, met on 12 July with the European Commission First Vice-President **Frans Timmermans** and Vice-President **Jyrki Katainen** in the context of the work of the EU Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) multi-stakeholder platform. Mr Abramavičius presented the CoR contribution to the forthcoming EC recommendations in the Reflection Paper on a Sustainable Europe by 2030.



CITIES AS KEY DRIVERS OF GLOBAL CLIMATE ACTION

Cor Lamers, Chair of the CoR's ENVE Commission, took part in the Global Climate Action Summit in San Francisco on 13-14 September. Opening the IUC/EC/CoR/UN side event, entitled Local and national partnerships driving sustainable urban development, Cor Lamers presented the CoR's climate commitments contributing to the Paris agreement and said: "Climate action is global but we, as local leaders, are its driving force. City leaders deliver on climate change not only by setting ambitions but by concrete action on the ground. By working together, involving all levels of governance, we can achieve the Paris objectives and make our cities more sustainable and more attractive for people to live in."



FINNISH REFLECTIONS ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

On 17 July, **Pauliina Haijanen** and **Sirpa Hertell** joined other members of the Finnish delegation of the CoR and an MEP at a debate on the future of the European

Union at Suomi-Areena in Pori, Finland. Part of the CoR's Reflecting on Europe series of local events, the debate was organised in cooperation with the pro-European youth organization Eurooppanuoret. Federal Europe, solidarity between the Member States, the EU's new multiannual budget and young people's participation in European affairs were some of the questions discussed during this debate with citizens ahead of next year's EU elections.



SKOPJE ON ITS WAY TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

On 11 September, EPP-CoR members attended the 15th meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee CoR – Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in Skopje. During the debates, EPP members expressed their positive views on the country's EU accession process, which hopefully will lead to a new phase of negotiation. "From the local perspective, there is a lot still to be done on fiscal decentralisation and the compliance with the European Charter of Local Self-Government" said **Alin Nica** during the meeting. It was recognized that fiscal decentralisation can only bring results if local authorities are empowered with greater fiscal autonomy. **Michael Murphy** provided best practice examples from local and regional authorities in Ireland, including how local authorities are funded through the local property tax. **Spyros Spyridon** underlined that local and regional authorities "need to strengthen current Territorial Cooperation Programmes that target the real needs of local communities and encourage a constant, effective collaboration between local authorities and civil society organizations."

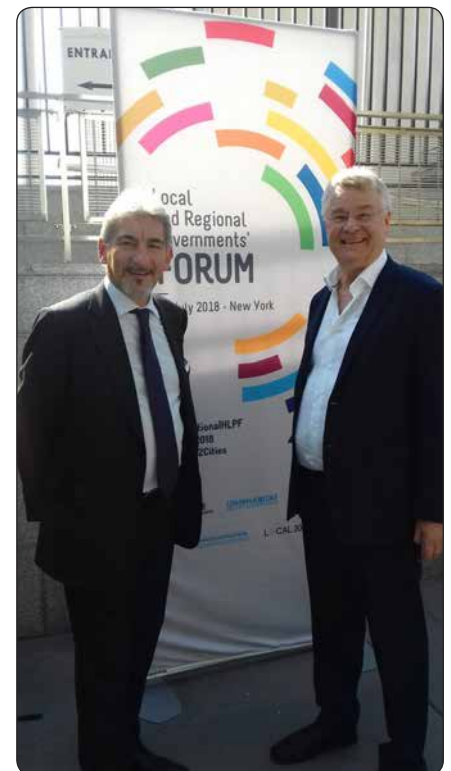
THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN LOCAL AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Paul Lindquist addressed for a third consecutive year the Economic Forum, which

this year took place in Krynica, Poland on 4-6 September 2018. The ECON political coordinator spoke at a panel debate on the challenges European regions and cities are facing concerning the drawing up of balanced economic policies with central governments. "We need to find the right balance between the autonomy of the local authorities, because all businesses are local, and the need for the central government to deliver Cohesion Policy, this way the whole country is prosperous and not just certain areas," underlined Lindquist.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL ACTION AND SDGs

Members **Markku Markkula** and **Raffaele Cattaneo** attended the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development on 16-18 July in New York. The UN has invited the City of Espoo to take part in its leadership programme for pioneers of sustainable development. Markkula, Chair of Espoo city board, highlighted the key role that innovation and learning play in achieving sustainable growth. Speaking at the Local and Regional Governments' Forum, Cattaneo presented the region of Lombardy's 'pact for sustainability', which is an integrated approach based on a regional strategy for sustainable development, and involves all actors from businesses, to citizens and from schools to public administrations.



ACTIVE SUBSIDIARITY AT THE HEART OF EU DECISION MAKING

Task force hands final report to President Juncker

The EU Task Force on Subsidiarity, Proportionality and Doing Less More Efficiently finalised its report on subsidiarity and handed it to Commission President Juncker on 10 July.

The Task Force took a very pragmatic approach to subsidiarity: How can the two principles - subsidiarity and proportionality – be made more effective throughout the EU's political decision-making process? The answer is a new way of working, based on 'active subsidiarity', which would allow local, regional and national levels and other relevant actors to highlight possible infringements of subsidiarity and proportionality, and to contribute constructively to the development of EU legislation.

To achieve this, the Task Force proposes a new framework of criteria and a model of a Subsidiarity Assessment Grid, which

should be used by all levels of governance and EU institutions. Furthermore, a pilot project of regional hubs to assess the implementation of EU policy, based on the CoR Subsidiarity Monitoring Network, will be set up with the aim of being operational in the beginning of 2019.

According to the final report, a greater understanding of the added value of EU legislation is in the interest of the citizens and therefore of the EU. This would require stronger checks throughout the whole policy cycle to ensure the need for European legislation. The Task Force also recommends reducing the density of EU legislation in certain policy areas. This should be examined by a follow-up Task Force, to be set up by the European Commission.

The CoR Bureau in Innsbruck on 14

September welcomed the report of the Task Force in its declaration. It stresses that a proper application of subsidiarity in the European Union is important "in order to reassure citizens and all levels of governance and to build a collective feeling of ownership of the democratic process at EU level."

Subsidiarity is also high on the agenda of the Austrian Presidency. On 10 December, a joint EPP-ÖVP-EPP-CoR high-level event, with subsidiarity as its main theme, will take place in Lower Austria with the participation of Chancellor Kurz.

"Our work is by no means over. In the next period, we will continue developing an active culture of subsidiarity in the EU, working together as the EPP family." EPP-CoR President Michael Schneider, member of the EU Subsidiarity Task Force .



YOUNG AUSTRIANS SUPPORT THE EU, STUDY SAYS

The majority of young Austrians are in favour of their country's EU membership, according to a study published by the Junge Volkspartei, the youth organisation of the Austrian People's Party. Out of a thousand 16-30 year-olds interviewed, 62,4 per cent of would vote to stay in the

EU, and only 14,4 per cent would vote for leave. The euro, free trade and freedom of movement are seen as the most important positive achievements of the EU. Source: <https://noe.orf.at/news/stories/2926711/>



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 Congress in Helsinki 7-8 November 2018

The road to the 2019 European elections

On 7-8 November, Helsinki will be the host city of the 25th EPP Congress. The next European elections, which will take place on 23-26 May 2019, will be decisive for the future of the European Union. The EPP's preparations will gather significant momentum in Helsinki, where the Party will elect its lead candidate,

the 'Spitzenkandidat', for President of the European Commission.

The Helsinki Congress will also be an occasion to celebrate with the pro-European member party Kokoomus the achievements of the Finnish party's first 100 years.

Official website of the EPP Congress: <https://helsinki2018.epp.eu/>

#EPPHelsinki
#Up2EU

EPP Political Assembly launched the Spitzenkandidat process



"We continue listening and talking directly to the citizens about the EPP achievements, values and solutions, on the EU added value, and the importance to vote." Michael Schneider

On the recently completed work of the EU Task Force on Subsidiarity, Proportionality and Doing Less More Efficiently, Mr Schneider, a member of the Task Force, said:

"We need to make sure that subsidiarity, which is a central value for our political family, will have a prominent position in our party's programme for the 2019 EU elections and be supported by our Spitzenkandidat for European Commission President. After all, subsidiarity is all about making decisions closer to the people and this is an essential EPP value."

The EPP Political Assembly met on 6-7 September in the premises of the European Committee of the Regions to prepare for the upcoming party Congress in Helsinki. The assembly also opened the official nomination process for the EPP lead candidates.

"I am looking forward to the process generating a fruitful debate about the future direction of our continent and delivering us a lead candidate who will retain the EPP's position as the first political family in Europe following the May 2019 European elections." EPP President Joseph Daul

All EPP candidates must be nominated in writing to the EPP President by 17 October 2018. The candidates will be reviewed by the EPP Political Assembly in its meeting on 6 November 2018 and will, after validation, be submitted to the vote at the EPP Congress in Helsinki on 8 November 2018.

Speaking at the political Assembly in September, EPP-CoR President Michael Schneider highlighted the EPP-CoR Group's activities and commitment in view of the 2019 elections. More specifically, he mentioned EPP local dialogues that are currently being organised in all EU member states, and encouraged EPP parties to hold such dialogues in their regions and cities:

EPP Local Dialogues and citizens' expectations towards the EU 2019 elections will be a topic of a debate in Helsinki at the EPP-CoR side-event (see box opposite). Other planned high-level events with the Spitzenkandidat include:

- In **Austria on 10 December**, a high-level debate will take place with the presence of Chancellor Kurz and of the EPP Spitzenkandidat on the topic of A Europe closer to its citizens, a Europe that delivers and protects.
- On **16 March 2019, Romania** (Bucharest) will host a Summit of the EPP regional and local leaders.



KOKOOMUS

EPP Cities Joining Forces to Deliver Sustainable Solutions for Citizens – EPP Congress side event

7 November 11.00-12.30, followed by a study visit to the city of Espoo

On the first day of the Congress, the EPP Group in the CoR, together with political party **Kokoomus**, is organising a seminar entitled *EPP Cities Joining Forces to Deliver Sustainable Solutions for Citizens*. The event's purpose is to showcase EPP cities' common commitment to tackling climate change. The theme is linked to the discussions on the EPP Congress Policy Paper on Sustainable Europe.

The strong Finnish line-up at the seminar includes Minister and Vice-Chairman of Kokoomus **Antti Häkkänen**, Mayor of Helsinki **Jan Vapaavuori**, EC Vice-President **Jyrki**

Katainen, MEP **Sirpa Pietikäinen** and Chairwoman of the board, city of Hämeenlinna, **Sari Rautio**.

The second part of the event will focus on the added value of local EPP presence ahead of the 2019 European elections. A session on EPP Local Dialogues and citizens' expectations is foreseen with Dara Murphy, EPP Campaign Director for the 2019 European Elections, with **Apostolos Tzitzikostas**, political coordinator for 2019 EU elections of the EPP-CoR Group and with one or more of the EPP Spitzenkandidaten. CoR Vice-President **Markku Markkula** and EPP-CoR mem-

ber **Deirdre Forde** will join the debate and share their views and experiences on this important topic.

Regionally and locally elected politicians from Finland and from the EU, together with other EPP high-level guests, are expected to attend the seminar.

The seminar will be followed by a study visit to the city of Espoo showcasing Finnish local government's commitment to sustainable development. Mobility and energy, as well as sustainable innovation and entrepreneurship will be at the heart of the visit.

**EPP
CONGRESS**

**HEL
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KI 20
18**

For a strong EU cohesion policy beyond 2020

The European Week of Regions and Cities is the biggest CoR annual event during which cities and regions 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

There are over 170 working sessions in this year's edition, covering topics as varied as the future of cohesion policy and EU budget, new challenges in the health sector, boosting cross-border regions with

eGovernment solutions or improving access to markets for SMEs. Many more topics and themes will be addressed and debated during this busy event, which attracts over 6000 attendees, 600 speakers

and 200 journalists from over 70 countries at the Square conference centre in Brussels. Our EPP-CoR members will be taking part in the debates in the various sessions throughout the week.

Do not miss these key moments:

- Opening Session of the EURegionsWeek on Monday 8th of October with high level speakers such as Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission, Corina Crețu, Commissioner for regional policy, and Karl Heinz Lambertz, President of the European Committee of the Regions.
- The Opening Session is followed by an Opening Event, which will be the moment to launch the new Agora exhibition and networking area. Located at level -2 of the Square, the Agora will for the first time gather the large majority of partners and participants in a unique space.
- It will also be possible to follow one of the Q&A sessions about the future Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2021 to 2027 and Cohesion policy to better understand the changes that are coming.
- Don't miss the Regiostars awards ceremony and the official reception on 9th October, where the most original, innovative and inspiring projects financed under Cohesion Policy; projects that stand out as examples for others around Europe will be rewarded.
- #EUandME young filmmakers campaign on Wednesday evening 10th October at 18:00, to view the films, to vote and to meet the film directors!

The Closing Session on Thursday 11th October will be an opportunity to harvest the conclusions of this year's sessions and

to call for the debates to be kept alive online and for the forthcoming events in 2019.

We hope you enjoy the biggest annual event of Europe's Cities and Regions!

#EURegionsWeek

OCTOBER PLENARY SESSION



The 16th European week of regions and cities is taking place alongside the CoR Plenary Session under the title "For a Strong EU Cohesion Policy Beyond 2020" and will be officially opened with a statement by **Jean-Claude Juncker**, President of the European Commission on Monday 8 October. On the second day of the Plenary, there will be a debate on the State of the Union from the view of regions and cities with **Antonio Tajani**, President of the European Parliament, and **Karl-Heinz Lambertz**, President of the European Committee of the Regions. President **Michael Schneider** will take part in this debate with on behalf of the EPP-CoR.



EPP-led opinions on the agenda

Reflecting on Europe: the voice of local and regional authorities to rebuild trust in the European Union

CIVEX-VI/021

Karl-Heinz Lambertz President of the European Committee of the Regions (PES/BE) and **Markku Markkula** (EPP/FI), City councillor of Espoo and First Vice-President of the European Committee of the Regions

“Our goal is: going local, listening and reporting back to Brussels citizens’ concerns and proposals on what the EU should be.”

Markku Markkula



“More than ever, it is now time to act honestly and to show political leadership in order to rebuild trust in the European project. This effort must not come only from Brussels. It needs input from central, but also local and regional governments.”

Donald Tusk,
president of the European Council



Citizens’ fear of losing their voice in the decision-making process is expressed in different forms of distrust towards the future of Europe. When it comes to rebuilding trust, we need to devote more attention towards citizens and to ensure that their concerns are heard within the EU: therefore we should strengthen inclusiveness and representation.

In this context, local and regional authorities can bring in a more pragmatic and effective take on the way in which the European Union wants to continue to ensure its added value in tackling old and new challenges. The EU needs to listen, notably through local and regional authorities, to its citizens starting from the younger generation, and throughout the future stages of the European integration process.

The Multi-annual Financial Framework package for the years 2021-2027

COTER-VI/042

Rapporteur-General: **Nikola Dobroslavić**
Prefect of Dubrovnik-Neretva County (EPP/HR)



The Committee of the Regions’ opinion welcomes the Commission’s proposals to make the MFF more flexible, which will certainly help address new and unforeseen challenges in a timely fashion. Greater flexibility, however, must not be at the expense of long-term planning and of the strategic direction of programmes, especially those under shared management. Rapporteur Dobroslavić also stresses that the principles of partnership and multi-level governance have to be fully respected in order to ensure that local and regional authorities are involved in the design and the implementation of EU policies under the future Multiannual Financial Framework.

“Nearly two thirds of the EU budget impact directly regional and local authorities. That is why we will work for a long-term EU budget that will reflect the needs of Europe’s regions and cities. While welcoming the new chapters of the budget, we also want to look into how it responds to citizens’ expectations in terms of security, prosperity, boosting innovation and empowering youth. This is the foundation to ensuring a bright future for all Europeans.”

Nikola Dobroslavić

Fair Taxation Package

ECON-VI/033

Rapporteur: **Paul Lindquist**, Commissioner of Stockholm County Council (EPP/SE)

“The fragmentation and complexity of the VAT system result in major compliance costs for businesses, especially when working across borders.”

Paul Lindquist

Value added tax (VAT) is a major source of tax revenue in the European Union and raised around € 1 trillion in 2015 (7% of EU GDP). Despite many reforms, the VAT system has been unable to keep pace with the challenges of today’s global, digital and mobile economy. This leads to a loss of € 150 billion of VAT revenue every year as well as high administrative burden and compliance costs, especially for SMEs and micro-businesses.



As many of these costs are fixed, rather than proportional to their turnover, small businesses bear proportionally an even

higher burden. The European Commission's proposal is expected to reduce those costs by up to 18% per year. Additional support via an electronic portal to allow all businesses to keep track of different VAT systems and extending the scope for the Mini One Stop Shop would help to reduce the burden even further. "Moving to a destination-based tax system will reduce the risk of unfair competition and simplify cross-border trading", said rapporteur Paul Lindquist during the adoption of the opinion at the ECON meeting.



Clean Ports, Clean Seas - port reception facilities for the delivery of waste from ships

COTER-VI/041

Rapporteur: **Spyros Spyridon**, Municipal Councillor of Poros (EPP/EL)

The proposed directive aims to bring European legislation into line with international treaty obligations, while clarifying the practical, legal and economic data and obligations regarding access to ships in EU ports. The challenge now is to create incentives to deliver waste to ports, without placing a financial burden on ships or introducing additional procedures or other time-consuming provisions, rapporteur Spyridon believes. He further points out that port authorities must continue to have the necessary flexibility in setting port fees and charges.

The opinion welcomes the increased clarity and the regional dimension of waste management by ports in the proposal. However, the rapporteur points out that the additional costs related to implementing the new directive in regional ports may cause an increase in their administrative costs, thereby negatively affecting competitiveness. He is also concerned that limiting the directive

to EU ports may restrict the environmental impact and cause further repercussions for competitiveness.

“ *Efforts should be made to apply the directive more broadly to all ports in sea basins and neighbouring areas, by means of incentives and rewards and through more extensive programmes of cooperation in waste management.* ”

Spyros Spyridon

A new deal for consumers

NAT-VI/032

Rapporteur-General: **Samuel Azzopardi**, Councillor, Rabat Citta Victoria, Local Council, Gozo (EPP/MT)

“ *A new deal for consumers is about providing EU citizens with stronger rights and with more tools to defend them. I am convinced that this is a step in the right direction.* ”

Samuel Azzopardi



The long awaited proposal by the EU on consumers' rights is a first step in the right direction, especially when it concerns transparency of contracts concluded in online marketplaces. More needs to be done to have better and more transparent user feedback/review systems as well as on obtaining redress in the case of mass damage, according to this opinion.

The rapporteur calls on the European Commission to explore ways of extending relief to other cases of mass harm, including cases of mass environmental damage, harm done to common goods, and in respect of health and safety regulations or violations

of employment rights, to bring about easier access to justice for all citizens. Moreover, he recommends expanding the scope of the proposal on collective redress to cover all forms of harm occasioned by violations of fundamental rights, as granted under the EU law.

Digital Education Action Plan

SEDEC-VI/039

Rapporteur: **Domenico Gambacorta**, President of the Province of Avellino (EPP/IT)

Education plays a crucial role in creating a space for dialogue and cooperation on the fundamental principles – freedom of expression, tolerance, freedom of research, free movement of students and staff, student involvement and the co-creation of learning – that reflect the basic values of European society.



Acquisition of digital skills needs to start at an early age and carry on throughout life, as part of educational curricula. Developing the digital skills of the EU workforce is essential to tackling the transformation of the labour market and to avoiding skill gaps or mismatches, the rapporteur believes. We should see digital education as an opportunity to address educational challenges, e.g. providing scope for more personalised and inclusive teaching, reducing the learning gap between people from different socio-economic backgrounds, or enabling new migrants to cover subjects with support in both their mother tongue and the language of the host country.

Mainstreaming sport into the EU agenda post-2020

SEDEC-VI/037

Rapporteur: **Roberto Pella**, Mayor of Valdengo and Deputy Vice-president of the National Association of Italian Municipalities (EPP/IT)

“*Sport needs to be better integrated into the existing EU policies, and the establishment of a separate Sports Programme should also be considered.*”

Roberto Pella



Sport should be considered a priority area for EU investment, given that it promotes a healthy lifestyle, contributes to integration and social inclusion and accounts for 7.3 million jobs across the EU, especially for youth. The opinion suggests that the EU should develop 'sport diplomacy' to promote European values, introduce guidelines on promoting physical education at school as well as continue to support a balanced development of inclusive, small-scale "grass-roots" sports facilities through the European Structural and Investment Funds.

Mainstreaming sport into the EU agenda post-2020 aims to look at the economic and human dimension and the social-inclusion role of sport for the European Union and local and regional authorities, as these aspects are inseparable.

It is important to enhance the role of European local and regional authorities in this field. One example would be to actively involve regions in a more coordinated fashion in the annual European Week of Sport – which, since its launch, has been a major source of motivation for undertaking medium and long term policies that have a demonstrable impact on healthy lifestyles and behaviours and on encouraging increased

participation by people in the workforce, thereby ensuring greater professionalism and employability for the sports sector.

Proposal for a single-use plastics directive

ENVE-VI/033

Rapporteur-General: **Sirpa Hertell** Espoo City councillor (EPP/FI)

“*We should not limit ourselves to a few plastic items found in marine environments. Measures to reduce plastic waste require a holistic approach in order to have a real impact in the long term.*”

Sirpa Hertell



The European Commission has proposed a set of measures to reduce the impact of certain plastic products on the environment. While such proposals are welcome, simply listing a limited number of plastic items found on the shore and prohibiting them would prove ineffective and insufficient to solve the actual problems, CoR rapporteur Hertell believes. The rapporteur urges the European Commission to ensure that this proposal is coherent with the Circular Economy Package, especially the Directive on Packaging and Packaging Waste, in order to send a clear and unambiguous signal to businesses and consumers.

The opinion calls for a wider approach that considers ecosystems as a whole and focuses on preventing disposable non-degradable plastic waste entering the economy. The EC should publish a comprehensive impact assessment clearly outlining the social, economic and environmental implications of the proposed measures.

Product design, innovation, support to more sustainable substitutes for plastic, new technologies and routes for plastic recycling as well as better controls to prevent waste-dumping in the seas are some of the measures discussed in this CoR opinion.



“*Soon we will have more plastic than fish in the seas. We cannot let the forecasted tripling in the use of single-use plastics happen. With political determination and innovation, we can turn this challenge into an opportunity to move towards a circular economy based on sustainable materials and producing better modular goods for consumers.*”

Sirpa Pietikäinen, MEP

Upcoming events

→ 18 October	SEDEC
→ 23 October	ECON
→ 24-25 October	COTER
→ 7-8 November	EPP Congress, Helsinki, including EPP-CoR side-event
→ 8-9 November	EuroPCom
→ 15 November	ENVE
→ 27 November	SEDEC
→ 28 November	NAT
→ 29 November	CIVEX
→ 4-6 December	CoR Plenary
→ 10 December	EPP Group meeting, Austria
→ 14 December	COTER

Ongoing opinions

CIVEX

Neighbourhood and the world - **Hans Janssen**
Adoption foreseen December 2018

COTER

Common Provisions Regulation - **Michael**

Schneider

(with **Catusca Marini**/PES)

Adoption foreseen December 2018

Road Safety and Automated mobility - **Jozsef**

Ribányi

Adoption foreseen April 2019

ECON

The InvestEU Programme - **Konstantinos Agorastos**

Adoption foreseen December 2018

The Single Market Programme - **Deirdre Forde**

Adoption foreseen December 2018

ENVE

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

Adoption foreseen December 2018

NAT

Digitalisation in the health sector - **Fernando**

López Miras

Adoption foreseen February 2019

SEDEC

Creative Europe and a new European Agenda for

Culture - **Adam Karacsony**

Adoption foreseen December 2018

Digital Europe programme - **Markku Markkula**

Adoption foreseen December 2018

Artificial Intelligence for Europe - **Jan Trei**

Adoption foreseen February 2019

A renewed European Agenda for Research and

Innovation - **Birgitta Sacrédeus**

Adoption foreseen February 2019

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