#RegHub Q&As

Since the launch of the application process for the pilot phase of the Network of Regional Hubs (#RegHub), practical questions have emerged on how the network will work.

This Q&A covers the most frequently asked questions and will be updated by the #RegHub secretariat.

CONTACT POINT

Who can apply and act as a contact point (at the centre of a regional hub)?

RegHub should give regional and local authorities the opportunity to share their experiences in the implementation of EU law directly with the European institutions. To give just a few possible examples of possible applicants: regions, communities, departments, Länder, provinces, counties, metropolitan areas, large cities or groups of smaller ones, large local authorities or groups of smaller ones, cross-border territories such as EGTCs and Euroregions.

The hubs in the participating regions should therefore be part of the public administration. They should act as a point of contact for all those stakeholders involved in implementing a specific EU policy. Participating hubs can, as appropriate and relevant, involve and partner up with associations of regional and local authorities.

What will be the main tasks of the contact point?

The contact point will be responsible for coordinating the input from the relevant stakeholders (acting as a "Regional Hub"): by distributing locally/regionally the questionnaire for the consultations on specific EU policy areas and for collecting and consolidating answers to the questionnaire; preparing inputs for and attending 3 workshops/year.

In general, we expect the hubs/contact points to be part of your regional or local authority (or potentially of joint structures in case of a grouping of local/regional authorities). As the task of the hub/contact point entails some coordination of different inputs and feedbacks from different departments of your authority as well as from different players at local/regional level, a department/unit capable of such coordination would best be chosen.

Do we need to commit a full time equivalent to the regional hub/contact point?

We expect the workload of the contact point to be less than a full-time equivalent. The person in charge of the regional hub/contact point will attend 3 (one day) workshops in Brussels and

work on 3-4 consultations per year, meaning he will coordinate the input from the relevant stakeholders.

What costs will be covered by the CoR?

During the pilot phase, the CoR will cover the contact point's travel and accommodation expenses (in accordance with the applicable financial rules) for 3 meetings/workshops per year.

In which language will the contact point have to work?

Although the working language of the network of regional hubs will be English, the questionnaires for the consultations will be translated into the languages of the participating Hubs and the workshop will have interpretation in maximum 3 languages (the 3 languages will be decided on the basis of languages of the attendees).

RegHub ARCHITECTURE and PILOT PHASE

What is the difference between RegHub and the Subsidiarity Monitoring Platform[1]?

The Subsidiarity Monitoring Platform intervenes at an early stage of the EU legislative process, when the European Commission presents a proposal for a new piece of legislation. It is a political tool for national and regional parliaments to safeguard the Subsidiarity Principle[2] in the EU legislative process.

RegHub on the other hand collects and channels the experiences on the ground of local and regional administrations in charge of implementing existing EU policies and legislation. It gathers feedback and technical input from subnational authorities, which is to feed into the EU's evaluation of existing legislation and into a political review process.

On which criteria will the selection of the 20 hubs for the pilot phase be based?

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[1] "The SMN was set up to facilitate the exchange of information between local and regional authorities and the Union level regarding various documents and legislative and political proposals from the European Commission which, once adopted, will have a direct impact on these authorities and the policies for which they are responsible." http://portal.cor.europa.eu/subsidiarity/thesmn/Pages/default.aspx

[2] "The general aim of the principle of subsidiarity is to guarantee a degree of independence for a lower authority in relation to a higher body. It therefore involves the sharing of powers between several levels of authority, a principle which forms the institutional basis for federal states. When applied in the context of the European Union, the principle of subsidiarity serves to regulate the exercise of the Union's non-exclusive powers. It rules out Union intervention when an issue can be dealt with effectively by Member States at central, regional or local level and means that the Union is justified in exercising its powers when Member States are unable to achieve the objectives of a proposed action satisfactorily and added value can be provided if the action is carried out at Union level." (2018: 2) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ftu/pdf/en/FTU_1.2.2.pdf

The candidates will be shortlisted by the CoR president, in close consultation with the political groups and the Steering Group of the Subsidiarity Monitoring Platform, by taking the following criteria into account:

• The quality of the nomination with regard to the political and personal commitment to contribute and the capacity to take part in the pilot action;

• The institutional role of the local/regional authority in implementing EU policies: a certain number of regions with legislative powers should therefore be considered. Due to their immediate implementation experience, they would most likely be able to meet the needs of the pilot project;

• An adequate geographical balance across the EU should be observed.

Which policy areas will RegHub focus on during the pilot phase?

Prior to the first workshop end of January 2019, the CoR will select a number of priority areas and some reserve areas for review. First, the RegHub coordinating team will propose topics for consultation in the pilot phase, which are of political interest to and involve local and regional authorities in their implementation, and which are relevant in forthcoming legislative or policy review processes at EU level. The topics will, then, be shortlisted by the CoR President in close consultation with the Subsidiarity Steering Group. The 20 participants will have the chance to discuss topics and/or express their opinion on topics in future selection processes.

How will the results of the RegHub consultations reach the other EU institutions and be linked to the European Commission's policy review exercises such as REFIT and the better regulation agenda?

The organisation of the consultations will take into account the work and the timing of the European Commission in this field. Furthermore, the relevant services of the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council will be involved. The reports resulting from the consultations will be sent to these institutions and the CoR will ensure the appropriate follow-up.

How should the regional hubs organise themselves and what should their structure look like?

There is a wide range of possible structures and ways of organising that depend on the specificities and requirements of the applicant; some applicants will be able to use their existing

structures, while others will come up with new ones. What matters is the applicants' capacity to compile the required feedback in a timely manner.

Will the results of the RegHub consultations be used in the CoR's opinions?

Yes. The quality and technical relevant of the RegHub consultation reports will be used to strengthen the content of the CoR's opinions.

Can regions that have little or no legislative powers play a role in RegHub?

Yes. Depending on the governance context of Member States, Regions have very different degrees of legislative powers. However, most EU law is implemented and applied in the regions, regardless of the legislative powers.

Will the RegHub also review transposition of EU law, beyond a review of policy implementation? Would this help to limit infringement procedures?

Yes. The main focus will be on the evaluation of the implementation of EU policies, but that does not exclude RegHub working on transposition at issues at a local and regional level.

Can local and regional authorities from the United Kingdom apply?

Yes. The UK's regional and local authorities will be implementing EU law at least up to the deadline for applications and even beyond. Their feedback can therefore be relevant for RegHub's purposes. Should applicants from the UK be selected to become members of RegHub, their role within and membership of the network will be evaluated in view of relevant developments relating to Brexit.