



**European Committee
of the Regions**

**Commission for Territorial
Cohesion Policy and EU Budget**

COTER

COTER commission conference on
**Supporting and developing an
efficient cohesion policy which
starts with the EU's local and
regional authorities**

**Cluj-Napoca, Romania
25 March 2019**



**CLUJ NAPOCA
CITY HALL**





European Committee
of the Regions



CLUJ NAPOCA
CITY HALL



25 March 2019 | Cluj-Napoca, Romania

COTER commission conference on

Supporting and developing an efficient cohesion policy which starts with the EU's local and regional authorities

Cohesion policy is the main European investment policy to achieve the EU Treaty objective of economic, social and territorial cohesion. In doing so, cohesion policy has a clear added value in creating jobs, sustainable growth and modern infrastructure, overcoming structural barriers, boosting human capital and improving the quality of life for all citizens across the EU. Cities and regions are the primary beneficiaries of EU cohesion policy. The new cohesion policy after 2020 is therefore one of the key issues for European cities and regions.

The presentation of the proposal for the Multiannual Financial Framework for the years 2021 to 2027 and the subsequent package of proposals for the Regulations on the European Structural and Investment Funds by the European Commission in May 2018 kicked off the legislative process for the new cohesion policy after 2020. The European Committee of the Regions (CoR) provided its recommendations on the various legislative dossiers in a series of opinions, which were adopted at its plenary session on 5 and 6 December 2018, in order to channel the concerns of European cities and regions into the legislative process.

Shortly before the end of the current mandates of the European Parliament and the European Commission, it is now the right time to take stock of the progress made so far and to discuss how the contributions of cities and regions have been taken up in the interinstitutional debate, how regions and cities could best prepare themselves for the new programming period, and how the achievements of cohesion policy could be better communicated.

Interpreting arrangements: 8/8: CS/DE/EL/EN/FR/HU/PL/RO

09.00 a.m. Registration of participants

09.15 a.m. Opening of the Conference

Statements by:

- **Isabelle Boudineau** (FR/PES), Vice-President of the Nouvelle-Aquitaine Regional Council, Chair of the CoR COTER Commission
- **Emil Boc** (RO/EPP), Mayor of Cluj-Napoca
- **George Ciamba** Delegate Minister of European Affairs, Romania (tbc)
- **Robert Negoită** (RO/PES), President of the Romanian delegation to the CoR, President of the Association of Romanian Municipalities and Mayor of Bucharest's Sector 3

**09.45 a.m. Keynote speech by Corina Crețu,
European Commissioner for Regional Policy**

Debate

10.15 a.m. Session 1: Where are we with the implementation of the 2014-2020 Cohesion Policy programmes?

Cohesion policy touches all parts of the EU, and at all levels - from the EU-wide and national scale, to Europe's regions and local communities. It is part of the European Union's strategy to promote and support the overall harmonious development of its Member States and regions. The policy is implemented by national and regional bodies in partnership with the European Commission. The cohesion policy framework is established for a period of 7 years. The current period covers the years 2014-2020. The first session of the conference will therefore provide an opportunity to take stock of the delivery and implementation of cohesion policy in the current programming period and to discuss the remaining challenges for its swift and effective implementation.

Speakers:

- **Rovana Plumb** Minister of European Funds, Romania (tbc)
- **Lambert van Nistelrooij** (NL/EPP), Member of the European Parliament
- **Dana Spinant** Director of Budget, Communication and General Affairs of DG REGIO, European Commission
- **Emil Boc** (RO/EPP), Mayor of Cluj-Napoca
- **Ilona Raugze** Director of ESPON

Debate

11.30 a.m. Coffee break

11.45 a.m. Session 2: How to bring the EU closer to its citizens: Communicating the added value of Cohesion policy

With distrust in the EU still dominating national discourse and elections in the Member States, fostering democratic engagement and advocating for the European project seem to be decisive elements in 2019 for ensuring the future of the EU. Cohesion policy supports projects which are tangible and visible on the ground and therefore have significant potential to affect citizens' perceptions of the EU. Unfortunately, cohesion policy results have not always been well communicated in the past and awareness of its positive effects remains rather low among European citizens. Better communicating the achievements of cohesion policy can significantly contribute towards raising awareness of the positive impact that the European Union can have on the everyday lives of people. The second session of the conference will therefore facilitate an exchange of experiences and best-practices of communication strategies that aim to increase the visibility of projects funded by cohesion policy.

Speakers:

- **Dana Spinant** Director of Budget, Communication and General Affairs of DG REGIO, European Commission
- **Adrian Ovidiu Teban** (RO/EPP), Mayor of Cugir, CoR rapporteur on "Better communication for Cohesion Policy"
- **Pavel Branda** (CZ/ECR), Vice-Mayor of Rádlo municipality, CoR rapporteur on "People-to-people and small-scale projects in cross-border cooperation programmes"
- **Sarah Sheil** Head of Structural Policies Unit, European Parliamentary Research Service
- **Jon Worth** ClearEurope, EU politics specialist and blogger

Debate

01.00 p.m. Lunch

02.30 p.m. Session 3: Where are we heading to after 2020: Cohesion policy legislative package 2021-2027

In May 2018 the European Commission presented its proposals for the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 and the new European Structural and Investment Funds Regulations, which kicked off the legislative process for the new cohesion policy after 2020. Since then, both co-legislators have been working on their positions on the various legislative files, whilst the European Committee of the Regions brought forward its recommendations in a series of opinions, which were adopted at its plenary session on 5 and 6 December 2018. However, as the current mandate of the European Parliament ends with the European elections in May 2019, the legislative process will need to continue under the new mandate of the European Parliament and a new Commission, which is expected to take up its work in November 2019. At the same time, regions and cities already need to start the preparation of the next programming period, in order to enable a timely launch of the programmes. The third session of the conference will therefore provide an opportunity to take stock of the progress that has been made so far, to discuss to what extent the contributions of cities and regions have been taken up, and to look into the question of how cities and regions could best determine their strategic funding priorities for the next programming period, in order to successfully address their challenges and pursue their regional development objectives with the support of the European Structural and Investment Funds and in synergy with other instruments.

Speakers:

- **Virgil-Alin Chirilă** State Secretary, Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration, Romania (tbc)
- **Michael Schneider** (DE/EPP), State Secretary, Representative of the Land of Saxony-Anhalt to the Federal Government, CoR co-rapporteur on the "Common Provisions Regulation"
- **Michiel Rijsberman** (NL/ALDE), Member of the Executive Council of the Province of Flevoland, CoR rapporteur on The financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and on ERDF and CF (tbc)
- **Adam Struzik** (PL/EPP), Marshall of Mazovia Region, CoR rapporteur on "Recommendations for the successful design of regional development strategies beyond 2020"
- **Norbert Hahn** European Investment Bank

Debate

03.45 p.m. Closing of the conference

Closing statements by:

- **Emil Boc** (RO/EPP), Mayor of Cluj-Napoca
- **Isabelle Boudineau** (FR/PES), Vice-President of the Nouvelle-Aquitaine Regional Council, Chair of the CoR COTER Commission

04.00 p.m. End of conference and study visit to Turda Salina



European Committee
of the Regions

Commission for Territorial Cohesion
Policy and EU Budget

Rue Belliard/Belliardstraat 101
1040 Bruxelles/Brussel
BELGIQUE/BELGIË
Tel. +32 22822211

www.cor.europa.eu

@EU_CoR

/european.committee.of.the.regions

/european-committee-of-the-regions



CLUJ NAPOCA
CITY HALL



Venue

Grand Hotel Italia, Str. Vasile Conta nr. 2, 400479 Cluj-Napoca (Romania)