The #CohesionAlliance

A new approach to communicating Cohesion Policy objectives

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Background

- Cohesion policy as the key European instrument to achieve EU Treaty objective of economic, social and territorial cohesion

- Securing a strong and effective cohesion policy for all regions beyond 2020 therefore key political objective of the CoR (Opinion on “The future of cohesion policy beyond 2020”, May 2017)

- Problem: Cohesion policy in danger of being jeopardised by budget cuts or diversion of funds after 2020 (new priorities, Brexit, etc.)
#CohesionAlliance brought forward by the CoR together with the major European territorial associations

- Open to all individuals, organisations and institutions that share the common objective of a future with a stronger, effective and more visible cohesion policy for all regions
- Official launch during EWRC 2017

**Objective of the #CohesionAlliance:**
To send a clear message to institutional decision-makers on the importance of securing a strong cohesion policy for all regions beyond 2020
Key aspects of the campaign

- Coordinated action, both in-house and with partners (in particular the territorial associations AER, AEBR, CEMR, CPMR, CALRE, Eurocities)
Key aspects of the campaign

- Long term campaign with a defined objective and clear landing zones (linked to key events in 2018 related to the discussion on the MFF post-2020)
Key aspects of the campaign

- Multiple tools: Promotion of the #CA in speeches and letters, events, dedicated website, monthly news bulletin, brochures and folders, press work, social media, online petition, ...
Results so far

- Since October 2017, more than **450 institutional partners** and more than **11,000 individual supporters** have joined the #CohesionAlliance.

- The political and communication efforts of the #CohesionAlliance have significantly contributed to raising the attention of media and decision makers on the future of cohesion policy.

- Intense and coordinated work on social media has amplified and reinforced these efforts.
#CohesionAlliance: local and regional authority supporters in the European Union

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Results so far (2)

- 97% of European population covered
- 121 Regions
- 135 Cities (95) and counties (40)
- 46 National associations of local and regional authorities
- 35 European associations
- 10619 Individual signatories
Results so far (3)

- more **positive climate with regard to Cohesion policy** in the political debate and helped to **fend off the detrimental proposals** in the White Paper on the future of Europe

- The Commission’s legislative proposals for Cohesion policy 2021-2027 took on board a number of **key concerns** of the #CohesionAlliance, e.g.
  - Cohesion policy remains available for all regions in the EU;
  - The principles of multilevel governance and partnership are maintained in the CPR;
  - The new CPR strengthens the transparency and visibility of the implementation of ESI funds;
  - There are credible steps for simplification, more differentiation and more flexibility.

- There is also **high convergence with the European Parliament’s position** at first reading
Lessons Learned

- Cohesion Policy goes far beyond public administration – CohesionAlliance is about breaking the silos!

- Cohesion Policy is a “sleeping giant” reaching out to politicians, companies, civic society in all places of the EU that needs to be waken up!

- It takes time to mobilise and building networks based on mutual trust, risk taking and co-creating

- “Partnership” must be the key in developing, implementing and communicating Cohesion Policy!
Outlook

- The #CohesionAlliance will continue its political communication in 2019, specifically highlighting the role of Cohesion Policy for the EU strategic agenda 2019-2024 and the importance of the partnership principle;

- A Conference on 11 July will bring together the wider partners of the #CohesionAlliance;

- The #CohesionAlliance will also be prominently featured at the 2019 edition of the European Week of Regions and Cities...

More information can be found on the website:

www.cohesionalliance.eu
Thank you very much for your attention!