



European Commission



European Committee  
of the Regions

## Broadband Platform 2021

### List of Members

#### EPP Group

**Ms Vanessa Charbonneau (FR/ECON, NAT)** is Vice-President of the Région des Pays de la Loire with responsibility for European Affairs, who was elected to the Regional Council in 2015. She was previously a member of the municipal council of Le Mans. In January 2020, she was appointed member of the CoR and elected Vice-President of the French delegation. Originally from a rural area, she is fully aware of the digital transition issues facing such areas. Within the Regional Council, she has worked on the implementation of a policy to support investment in networks and mobilization of Cohesion Policy funds for networks and development of uses. Within the finance and human resources committee of the regional council, she works in particular on the adaptation and digitization of work in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Accelerating the digitization of the economy is one of the enumerated priorities of the Recovery Plan voted by the Regional Council of the Pays de la Loire.

**Mr Markku Markkula (FI/ENVE, SEDEC)** is the Past President and Vice-President of the CoR of which he is a member since 2010. He is President of the Helsinki Region and Chair of the Espoo City Board. He has also been a member of several High Level Expert Groups, such as the EU Smart Specialisation Mirror Group and Vice-Chair of the EU Open Innovation Strategy and Policy Group. In Finland he has among others been the Chair of the Board of the TIEKE Finnish Information Society Development Center. His relevant CoR rapporteurships include subjects such as “Digital Agenda for Europe”, “Closing the innovation divide”, “Creation of high-tech start-up ecosystems” and “Enhancing and focusing EU international cooperation in research and innovation”.

**Michael Murphy (IE/ECON, CIVEX)** is a member of Tipperary County Council, Head of the Irish Delegation to the CoR and Chair of the Economic Policy commission. In parallel to his commitments as an elected local representative, Mr Murphy brings a wealth of private sector experience as a Senior Executive with Enfer, a bio-technology based group of companies, firmly rooted in local communities. Mr Murphy sees untapped potential in new and digital technologies in particular as a way for Europe to increase its sustainability and competitiveness.

**Tanya Hristova (BG/COTER, SEDEC)** is Head of the Bulgarian CoR Delegation. She specialized academically in the domain of project and programme management. From 2008 to 2010 she was Deputy Mayor of Gabrovo Municipality, responsible for “sustainable development“. In 2010 and 2011 she was

Chief of the political office of the Minister of EU Funds, Head of the Central Coordination Unit and Secretary of the Council of control and management of EU funds. Ms. Hristova was Mayor of Gabrovo Municipality in the period 2011 - 2015 and in the period 2015 – 2019 and is now on her third term, winning the vote in the first round. At present, Mrs. Hristova is the leader of the Bulgarian delegation of the local authorities at the Committee of the Regions and a full member of the Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy and EU Budget and Commission for Social Policy, Education, Employment, Research and Culture. Ms. Hristova has recently chaired the Commission for Social Policy, Education, Employment, Research and Culture (SEDEC).

## **PES Group**

Member of Nagykanizsa Municipal Council, **Jácint Horváth (HU/NAT, SEDEC)** is an long-standing member of the Broadband Platform and the coordinator of the PES Group in the CoR in the SEDEC commission. He was the CoR's rapporteur on the Review of the audio-visual and media services Directive (AMSD) in 2019.

**Anne Karjalainen (FI/SEDEC, ECON)** is a member of Kerava City Council. She is the chair of the CoR Commission for Social Policy, Education, Employment, Research and Culture (SEDEC) for the period 2020-2022 and an outgoing member of the Broadband Platform. Ms Karjalainen is currently the CoR's rapporteur on the communication A Strong Social Europe for Just Transitions and a former rapporteur on opinions on « Digital Europe for All: delivering smart and inclusive solutions on the ground », « European Cloud Initiative and ICT Standardisation » as well as on the review of the directive on re-use of public sector information and open data ».

**Christophe Rouillon (FR/ECON, CIVEX)** is the CoR's current rapporteur on the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) and president of the PES Group in the CoR. He is mayor of Coulaines, vice-President in charge of Finances and European funding of the Le Mans agglomeration and member of the Sarthe (département) council. He is also Vice-President of the French Association of Mayors in charge of European Affairs. 98% of the housing in Coulaines is connected to high-speed broadband, while the municipality counts more than 50% of social housing.

**Mindaugas Sinkevičius (LT/CIVEX, ECON)** is Mayor of Jonava District Municipality (2011–2016 and since 2019) and is former Minister of Economy of Lithuania (2016–2017). He is currently the chair of the Lithuanian delegation in the CoR.

## **Renew Europe Group**

**Gillian Coughlan (IE)** alternate member; full member to provide mandate: Kate Feeny ECON/SEDEC. Ms Coughlan is a member of the County Cork Council. She has experience with the County's implementation of the National Broad Plan, the Irish Government's plan to deliver high-speed broadband services to all businesses, farms and households in Ireland. As a teacher, Mrs Coughlan personally has to rely on everyone having access to fast internet during the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the geography and the importance of the digital sector for the Irish economy, the rollout of broadband is one of the national priorities. However, it is a complex and costly exercise and a lot has been learned in the past years.

**Mart Vorklaev (EE/CIVEX, ENVE)** is currently a member of the Estonian Parliament. As a member of the CoR he has already contributed to the work of the Broadband platform in the previous CoR mandate and as a Rapporteur on two relevant opinions: Boosting Broadband Connectivity in Europe and Review of the Telecom package. Mr Vorklaev, as a mayor of the Rae municipality is strongly aware of the need to expand equally high quality broadband to all citizens and businesses. Furthermore, he is a strong advocate of the role of digitalisation and artificial intelligence for the upcoming Renovation Wave.

## ECR

**Mr Ilpo Heltimoinen (FI/ECON, NAT):** Lappeenranta City Councilor and Finnish delegation member of the CoR, Mr Heltimoinen is a member of the Commission for Economic Policy (ECON) and Commission for Natural Resources (NAT) in the CoR and a board member of South Karelia Social and Health Care District in Finland. Mr Heltimoinen perceives the access to fixed and reliable broadband connection as a basic service that needs to be offered for citizens in both urban and rural areas and be supported by local and regional authorities. He is a strong supporter of entrepreneurship and cutting red tape. His interests include history, foreign and security policy.

## European Alliance

**Dr Kieran McCarthy (IE/SEDEC, COTER)** is an elected member of Cork City Council and an Irish delegate member of the European Committee of the Regions (COR). He holds membership of the Commission for Social Policy, Education, Employment, Research and Culture (SEDEC) and has personal interests in heritage and culture, informal and formal education, and lifelong learning. Kieran's Discover Cork: Schools' Heritage Project', was founded by Kieran in 2003 and is now annually implemented in 20 schools in Cork City with 800 students participating every year. At the Committee of the Regions, he has prepared several opinions linked to Broadband Platform issues.

## Greens

**Florian Siekmann (DE)** alternate member; full member to provide mandate: Bernd Voss ENVE/NAT. Mr Siekmann has been involved in the following former initiatives of the Greens in the Bavarian State Parliament: Strategy paper on smart schooling, Fiber optic connection for all households in Bavaria (Motion and study), Fighting online hate speech, Digitalising public services. His points of interest and priorities for the Broadband Platform are data strategy as a major interest, building a data secure and safe digital environment for educational purposes (Covid-19 once more showed how dependent we are on US software solutions and how much they are used especially within the educational sector) and access to fast internet in rural areas.