

## Local leaders, MEPs and EVP Fitto underline the importance of a strong Cohesion Policy with regions and cities at its heart



REGI and COTER members discussed the future of Cohesion policy with Commission EVP Fitto. © European Union / David Martín Díaz

**MEPs and Committee of the Regions (CoR) members discussed the future of cohesion policy after 2027 together with Raffaele Fitto, EC Executive Vice-President for Cohesion and Reforms.**

Reinforcing, reforming and improving Cohesion Policy while ensuring the comprehensive involvement of local and regional authorities in its decision-making and implementation processes was the focus of the annual joint meeting between the [Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy and EU Budget \(COTER\)](#) of the CoR and the [Committee on Regional Development \(REGI\)](#) of the European Parliament on 12 December.

In his first public appearance after his entry into office, the European Commission Executive

Vice-President **Raffaele Fitto** joined the meeting to address both the representatives of EU territories and members of the European Parliament. EVP Fitto, who was member of both REGI and COTER in the past, underlined that the EU cannot go forward without a strong Cohesion Policy with regions at the centre. He said that the policy needs to be better aligned with the Union's priorities while preserving its core principles of a place-based approach, multi-level governance and partnership. Moreover, EVP Fitto emphasised that every European has the right to equal opportunities, no matter where he lives, including the right to stay in his home region. Cohesion Policy must respond to challenges with tailor-made solutions, and in this, regions and cities have a central role. They must be "in control of their own destinies", since they all have unique needs and specificities best known to local actors, said EVP Fitto.

While recognizing the need for further simplification of Cohesion Policy, participants opposed any possible centralisation in the future. They called for the preservation of the 'golden principles' of the policy, such as a management shared between European, national and local authorities, and a place-based approach.

Furthermore, CoR members and members of the European Parliament (MEPs) highlighted the need for a long-term budget of the European Union that prioritises economic, social and territorial cohesion after 2027, when the current budgetary period will end.

### Quotes

**Emil BOC** (RO/EPP), Chair of the COTER commission and Mayor of Cluj-Napoca: "It is now more critical than ever to ensure we keep cohesion at the centre of European policymaking. Fostering inclusion through this policy is essential to counter euroscepticism and ensure a Europe where citizens enjoy both the freedom to move and the freedom to stay in the place they call 'home'."

**Dragoş BENEĂ** (RO/S&D), Chair of the REGI committee: "This is a crucial moment for European regional development, where we will soon shape the next multi-annual budget, and with it, the structure of our Union's future. Going forward, we need a well-funded Cohesion Policy that is modern, efficient, and resilient, supported by a strong budget. In future, Cohesion Policy cannot be weakened nor excessively centralised, nor its long-term objectives compromised. At the same time, we must strengthen climate change adaptation and housing policies, and prepare for future enlargement. Having an adequate budget for all this is a necessity. Together we can create a cohesion policy fit for the future."

### Further information

[Rewatch the debate](#)

[Pictures of the event](#)


[Committee on Regional Development](#)


## Contacts

---

Janne OJAMO

Press Officer

 (+32) 2 284 12 50 (BXL)

 (+32) 470 89 21 92

 [janne.ojamo@europarl.europa.eu](mailto:janne.ojamo@europarl.europa.eu)

 [region-press@europarl.europa.eu](mailto:region-press@europarl.europa.eu)

 [@EP\\_Regional](https://twitter.com/EP_Regional)

---