



Council of the European Union

PRESS
EN

BACKGROUND¹
Brussels, 29 November 2018

GENERAL AFFAIRS Council (Cohesion) **Friday 30 November 2018 in Brussels**

The Council session will be chaired by **Elisabeth Köstinger**, Austrian federal minister for sustainability and tourism. The meeting will **start at 11.00**.

Ministers will hold a policy debate on the **legislative package for cohesion policy after 2020**. The discussion will take place in public session.

A presidency press conference will be held at the end of the meeting (+/- 14.15).

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General Affairs Council (Cohesion) meeting page

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¹ This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the press office.

Legislative package for cohesion policy after 2020

The Council will hold a policy debate on the legislative package for cohesion policy post-2020 presented by the Commission on 29 and 30 May 2018.

The package includes five regulations:

- the Common Provisions Regulation;
- the European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund Regulation;
- the European Social Fund Plus Regulation;
- the European Territorial Cooperation (Interreg) Regulation;
- the European Cross-Border Mechanism Regulation.

Ministers are expected to take note of the progress achieved in the examination of these regulations. They will be invited to provide political guidance for further work on the following issues concerning the Common Provisions Regulation and the Interreg Regulation:

- the future scope and nature of Partnership Agreements;
- the Commission proposal for a mandatory re-programming in 2025 ('mid-term review'), based on the 2024 country-specific recommendations;
- the 'architecture' of the Interreg Regulation, notably the five new components proposed.

Ministers will also have the opportunity to raise other key issues related to the cohesion package and not covered by the horizontal discussions on the multiannual financial framework for 2021-2027.

The debate will take place on the basis of a [document](#) prepared by the Austrian presidency under its responsibility.

The Council started discussions on the cohesion package immediately after its publication. After presentations and first discussions during the Bulgarian presidency, the Austrian presidency has focused on an in-depth examination of the different legislative proposals.

In doing so, it has prioritised those parts of the package most needed for regional and national administrations to start planning and programming, in order to ensure a timely start and implementation of the 2021-2027 programmes.

Discussions at technical level have focused mainly on the Common Provisions Regulation, for which article-by-article examination started in September. Three thematic blocks in particular have been examined in detail:

- (1) Programming and strategic planning,
- (2) Management and control, and
- (3) Enabling conditions and performance framework.

The aim of the Austrian presidency is to achieve as much progress as possible on these blocks and agree, if possible, on the Council's negotiating mandate on some or all of these blocks by the end of the year. The Austrian Presidency also intends to agree, if possible, on the Council's position on the European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund Regulation.

Work on all files of the cohesion package is expected to continue during the Romanian presidency, building on the good progress achieved during the Austrian presidency.

See also

- [Commission proposals for regional development and cohesion beyond 2020 \(press release and legal acts\)](#)
- [Commission proposal for 'European Social Fund Plus' \(press release and proposal for a regulation\)](#)