



Council of the European Union

PRESS
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BACKGROUND¹

Brussels, 16 November 2022

General Affairs Council (Cohesion)

Brussels, 22 November 2022

Chair: Ivan Bartoš, Czech Deputy Prime Minister for Digitisation and Minister of Regional Development

The meeting will begin at 10.00.

The Council will exchange views on the long-term impacts of cohesion policy on EU regions and approve conclusions on cohesion policy.

A press conference will take place at the end of the meeting (+/- 13.15).

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[General Affairs Council \(Cohesion\), 22 November - meeting page](#)

[Press conferences and public events by video streaming](#)

[Video coverage in broadcast quality \(MPEG4\) and photo gallery](#)

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

Long-term impacts of cohesion policy on EU regions

Ministers will hold a policy debate on the long-term impacts of cohesion policy on EU regions.

The Presidency background note for the debate points out that cohesion policy is a key lever to promote long-term convergence within the EU. As highlighted in the 8th Cohesion Report, it has effectively contributed to closing the economic gap between less and more developed regions and member states. The policy has also demonstrated its adaptability, notably by redirecting funding within existing programmes and added fresh money to help the recovery process of the EU regions in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the past decades, the governance arrangements for programmes have also evolved.

As for the future, the EU faces a number of challenges stemming from demographic and technological changes as well as from the digital and green transitions that will likely lead to new disparities.

Against this background, ministers will be invited to outline their views on the key goals and principles of cohesion policy, the added value of cohesion policy compared to other EU policies and instruments, and national frameworks, as well as possible adjustments to the policy to strengthen the delivery of its key objectives and to address the challenges it will face.

[Background note for the debate](#)

Council conclusions on cohesion policy

The Council is expected to approve conclusions on cohesion policy.

The conclusions will provide a general assessment of the role of cohesion policy in fostering regional development in the EU, as well as the main implementation strengths and challenges and a possible outlook for the future.

The conclusions are divided into several sections, each of which focuses on a different aspect of cohesion policy, including the added value of the policy, its role in addressing the recent crises, territorial elements, and the future of the policy post-2027. Key benefits of the policy are highlighted, such as the fact that it generates an estimated €2.7 of additional GDP at EU level for each €1 spent. The Council also proposes areas for further improvement, such as simplifying and harmonising the rules, preventing an overlap with other EU programmes, and the need to consider the specificities of each region.

[Draft Council conclusions on cohesion policy](#)