

JOINT LETTER OF EUROPEAN REGIONS ON THE FUTURE OF COHESION POLICY

Ms. Ursula VON DER LEYEN, President of the European Commission
200 Rue de la Loi, 1049, Brussels

In copy to:

Ms Elisa FERREIRA, Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms

Mr Nicolas SCHMIT, Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights

Mr Johannes HAHN, Commissioner for Budget and Administration

Brussels, 31 May 2024

Dear President von der Leyen,

We are writing to you as representatives of **120 regions of Europe from 15 Member States**. We kindly request a meeting with you to express our concerns on the future of Cohesion Policy.

We, the Regions are at the heart of Europe, bringing Europe closer to the citizens and the territories. 70% of European policies and legislation have a direct impact at regional and local level.

Europeans are facing many challenges, throughout history, citizens have found Cohesion Policy as a tangible solution. Cohesion Policy is uniquely positioned to mobilise funds, to address citizens pressing concerns such as increasing global competition, EU enlargement, climate change, ecological, digital, and demographic transitions, talent and development traps, and the growing need for security. Cohesion Policy complements the single market, contributes to the reduction of disparities across the EU, an important objective of the EU treaties, and plays a key role in fostering long term sustainable growth, as underlined by the European Council on 17/18 April 2024.

At a time when citizens' mistrust of Europe may be strongly expressed at the ballot box, we must strengthen the policies that are most visible in the territories and cohesion policy is certainly one of these. Cohesion of the European Union is therefore a major democratic objective in the current geopolitical context.

The 9th Cohesion Report confirmed that Cohesion Policy has continued to create strong innovation ecosystems, build key mobility infrastructure, enhance sustainable development and facilitate a rapid response to multiple crisis facing Europe and its citizens. Cohesion Policy has achieved this through shared management, the partnership and the multilevel governance principles.

We acknowledge that cohesion policy needs to evolve. In order for Cohesion Policy to continue to deliver we ask for:

1. A future cohesion policy, available to all regions, that respects a territorial, place-based approach, and honors the principles of partnership and subsidiarity by granting Europe's regions a paramount role in the programming and implementation process, through shared management and multilevel governance. A centralised approach does not allow that.
2. A budget to match the long-term investment approach of Cohesion Policy addressing the diverse challenges in all EU Regions.
3. An enhanced dialogue between the European Commission and the European regions to further improve the performance of the cohesion policy post 2027. The appointment of a new Vice-President of the Commission in charge of economic, social and territorial cohesion could be useful for this dialogue.

On the eve of the new mandate of European institutions, we would appreciate an opportunity to discuss with you these strategic matters for the future of Europe.

Ms. Marie-Pierre Mesplède from the regional office of Nouvelle-Aquitaine acts as Point of Contact for this joint initiative (bureau-bruxelles@nouvelle-aquitaine.fr).

Thank you for your attention, and we look forward to your positive response.

Sincerely,

The president of the Nouvelle-Aquitaine region



Alain Rousset



Abruzzo



Aragon



Açores



Asturias



ADR Nord-Est



**Auvergne-
Rhône-Alpes**



Andalucía



**Baden
Württemberg**



Balears



Campania



Bayern



Canarias



Berlin



Cantabria



Bourgogne-Franche Comté



Catalunya



Bratislava Region



CCDR Lisboa e Vale do Tejo



Bremen



Central Finland



Bretagne



Centre-Val de Loire



Burgenland



City of Prague



Corse



Galicia



Crete



Gelderland



Drenthe



Gotland



Eastern Slovenia



Grand est



Emilia-Romagna



Groningen



Extremadura



Guadeloupe



Flevoland



Guyane



Fryslân



Holland



Häme



Kujawsko-Pomorskie



Hauts-de-France



Kymenlaakso



Helsinki-Uusimaa



La Réunion



Hessen



La Rioja



Île-de-France



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Ionian Islands



Limburg



Jämtland Härjedalen



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Kärnten



Lubelskie



Madeira



Navarra



Madrid



Niederösterreich



Małopolska



Noord-Brabant



Marche



Noord-Holland



Mayotte



Nordrhein-Westfalen



Mazovia



Normandie



Mecklenburg-Vorpommern



Norrbotten



Murcia



Norte



Occitanie



Pays de la Loire



Opolskie



Pays Vasco



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Östergötland



Podlaskie



Ostrobothnia



Pomorskie



Oulu



Provincia Autonoma di Bolzano/Alto Adige



Overijssel



Puglia



Päijät-Häme



Sachsen



Sachsen-Anhalt



Southwest
Finland



Saint-Martin



Stockholm
Region



Sardegna



Sud Provence-
Alpes-Côte
d'Azur



Satakunta



Swietokrzyskie



Silesia



Tampere Region



Skåne



Thüringen



South Moravian
Region



Toscana



South
Ostrobothnia



Uppsala



Utrecht



Warmia and Masuria



Valencia



West Pomerania



Valle d'Aosta



Western Greece



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