



COHESION POLICY 2014-2020

The EU aims to reduce the gap between rich and poor regions through its cohesion policy, an instrument of mutual support that draws national and regional economies closer together by promoting development and investment, particularly in weaker economic regions.

Cohesion policy allows the EU to work with member states and local government to tailor action to local needs.

New rules and priorities, 2014-2020

EU cohesion policy is reviewed every seven years, in parallel with the EU's long-term budget (the "multi-annual financial framework"). For the seven years from 2014, the S&D Group pushed for a revised EU cohesion policy, more closely linked to the EU's wider economic strategy and with simpler, more flexible rules.

The chief focus of the 2014-2020 cohesion policy is on the poorest regions and on those that have undergone profound changes linked to globalisation and structural modifications, but cohesion policy remains an EU-wide policy, providing resources and experience in tackling economic and social problems in all EU regions.

The main aims of cohesion policy are clearly defined and few in number. We have insisted on more coordination between cohesion policy and EU support for **research and development, innovation and creativity, entrepreneurship and job creation.**

This approach avoids overlapping and ensures more effective and coordinated use of EU funds. We put special emphasis on **"green" jobs, on education and training, climate change and renewable energies**, taking account of the financial, economic and social crisis, globalisation, climate change, demographic change and technological progress.

Following S&D pressure, the new rules on cohesion policy are designed to give local and regional authorities and civil society, including NGOs, a more decisive role.

Regional development and social cohesion

Cohesion policy makes a strong link between regional development and social cohesion, with measures to tackle **unemployment, social exclusion and poverty**; promote

vocational training, gender mainstreaming and **equal opportunities**; and to respond to the needs of **the disabled** and **the elderly**.

New concepts - such as the macro-regional approach, community-led development and local action groups - have been introduced to help develop local comparative advantages or overcome obstacles to development. Integrated strategies will be supported in regions such as the Baltic, the Alps and the Danube region.

In addition to the European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund and Cohesion Fund programmes, **rural development** and **fisheries** programmes will also be better designed and coordinated, with a common cross-border framework.

Measuring success

The impact of structural measures on prosperity, unemployment, the technology gap and the environmental quality of growth will be closely monitored and Member States and regions will be encouraged to set targets for better access to public services, structural reforms and social inclusion measures.