

The European Committee of the Regions and the Alps-Mediterranean Euroregion call for a strong and ambitious cohesion policy after 2020

On 20 March 2018 the member regions of the Alps-Mediterranean Euroregion (Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Piedmont, Liguria and the Aosta Valley) and the Lyon metropolitan region welcomed Karl-Heinz Lambertz, president of the European Committee of the Regions, at the premises they share in Brussels.

Elected representatives of the six local authority members of the Euroregion called for a strong and ambitious cohesion policy for the post-2020 period, which would cover all European regions and rely on the potential of the most developed regions. They also called for simplified and decentralised implementation of funding and drew attention to their specific sub-regional features (upland and urban areas) and to the importance of European territorial cooperation.

Karl-Heinz Lambertz, president of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR), the EU's assembly of local and regional elected representatives, drew attention to the CoR's support for a cohesion policy covering all Europe's regions. He also mentioned his wish to see closer cooperation between the CoR and the representative offices of the regions and cities in Brussels: *"The Alps-Mediterranean Euroregion proves that cohesion policy has added value even in the most advanced regions, whether it be to finance territorial, and especially cross-border, cooperation or to improve the lives of the most vulnerable Europeans in disadvantaged urban and upland areas"*, he stressed.

Renaud Muselier, president of the Sud-Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region, added his support, saying that *"the Alpine and Mediterranean regions have for some months been lobbying very intensively for the post-2020 cohesion policy. Today we are more united than ever in this essential task."*

David Kimelfeld, president of the Lyon metropolitan region, stressed the impact of the European regional funds at local level: *"Cohesion policy is an essential lever for local public policies. In the Lyon conurbation, the ESF is crucial to helping more than 8 000 people annually to find jobs. It also makes it possible to support a hundred or so projects each year. It is therefore a fundamental contribution to urban development that benefits everyone."*

Yannick Neuder, vice-president of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, responsible for higher education, research, innovation and European funds, said that *"the European regions are facing real competitiveness challenges and are relying on innovation and training to reduce digital, energy and medical divides: cohesion policy is essential to achieving these objectives."*

The six local authorities represented then signed the Cohesion Alliance in the presence of Mr Lambertz, to formalise their support for the initiative.

Note for editors:

The [#CohesionAlliance](#) is a grassroots campaign open to all who believe that EU cohesion policy must continue to be a pillar of the European Union's future under the post-2020 EU budget. The Alliance was launched by the European Committee of the Regions in partnership with the leading European associations of local and regional authorities to defend a cohesion policy that is stronger, more effective, visible and available to all cities and regions after 2020.

Since its launch in October last year, the Alliance has gained almost 4 000 signatories, including local and regional authorities, MEPs, EU ministers, and business, university and trade union associations.

More information at <https://cohesionalliance.eu>.

The Alps-Mediterranean Euroregion brings together five French and Italian regions in a single, integrated geographical framework straddling the frontier: Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Liguria, Piedmont, the Aosta Valley and Auvergne Rhône-Alpes. It has a population of 17 million inhabitants and covers an area of 110 460 km² in France and Italy.

The Alps-Mediterranean Euroregion is an interregional cross-border association whose first institutional meetings were launched in 2006; its member regions signed a memorandum of understanding in 2007 at a meeting at Bard in the Aosta Valley. The objective of this association is to consolidate its role in Europe, influence the European institutions and develop joint projects in the framework of integrated cross-border cooperation. The member regions have shared offices in Brussels and cooperate to make their voices heard more clearly in the European institutions.

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