

## CALL FOR EVIDENCE FOR AN INITIATIVE (without an impact assessment)

This document aims to inform the public and stakeholders about the Commission's work, so they can provide feedback and participate effectively in consultation activities.

We ask these groups to provide views on the Commission's understanding of the problem and possible solutions, and to give us any relevant information they may have.

<b>TITLE OF THE INITIATIVE</b>	10th report on economic, social and territorial cohesion, including report on the outcome of the mid-term review of cohesion policy programmes – Competitive regions for a competitive Union
<b>LEAD DG – RESPONSIBLE UNIT</b>	Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy – Unit B2
<b>LIKELY TYPE OF INITIATIVE</b>	Communication accompanied by a staff working document
<b>INDICATIVE TIMING</b>	Q4-2026
<b>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</b>	<a href="https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/information-sources/cohesion-report_en">https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/information-sources/cohesion-report_en</a>

*This document is for information purposes only. It does not prejudice the final decision of the Commission on whether this initiative will be pursued or on its final content. All elements of the initiative described by this document, including its timing, are subject to change.*

### A. Political context, problem definition and subsidiarity check

#### Political context

According to Article 175 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), the Commission must submit a report to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions every three years on the progress made towards achieving economic, social and territorial cohesion in the EU. The next report is planned for adoption at the end of 2026. It will take the form of a communication accompanied by a staff working document.

It will include legally required information on the mid-term review of cohesion policy programmes. This will fulfil the Commission's obligation under Article 18(6) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 (the 'Common Provisions Regulation', CPR) to prepare a report on the outcome of the mid-term review and submit it to the European Parliament and to the Council by the end of 2026.

#### Problem the initiative aims to tackle

The 10th Cohesion Report will be prepared in parallel with the negotiations on the Commission proposal for the next multiannual financial framework and the 2027 European Semester Autumn Package. The report is intended to provide analysis, including socio-economic data, and to serve as a policy reference document for cohesion policy.

The report will present data and economic analysis on the impact of the place-based dimension of EU policies and on the role of regional policy in reducing economic, social and territorial disparities and enhancing competitiveness. It will provide an evidence base for identifying challenges and opportunities, highlighting EU priorities at regional level and indicating territorial needs.

The document will also report on the mid-term review of cohesion policy programmes.

#### Basis for EU action (legal basis and subsidiarity check)

Preparing the 10th Cohesion Report is a Treaty requirement (Article 175, second paragraph, TFEU). The report will take the form of a Commission communication accompanied by a staff working document. This is a non-legislative initiative. It will also fulfil the Commission's obligation under Article 18(6) CPR to report to the European Parliament and to the Council on the outcome of the mid-term review by the end of 2026.

<b>Legal basis</b>
Article 175, second paragraph, TFEU and Article 18(6) CPR.
<b>Practical need for EU action</b>
The Report is required under the Treaty.
<b>B. What does the initiative aim to achieve and how</b>
<p>This report aims to bolster the evidence base for tackling territorial disparities, offering insights into the effectiveness of place-based policies at both EU and national levels. The analysis assesses the current state of economic, social and territorial cohesion, synthesising in-house and external research to highlight trends in regional convergence and divergence across Member States. It does so in line with recent EU strategies, such as those under the Agenda for Cities, the strategy for the eastern border regions and upcoming strategies like the strategy for the Outermost Regions and the strategy for Islands.</p> <p>Furthermore, the report examines EU political priorities and challenges, focusing on place-based policies. It analyses the impact of cohesion policy at EU, national and regional level, using Commission modelling and econometric studies to explore spillover effects from investments in less developed areas.</p> <p>A dedicated chapter will outline the results of the mid-term review of cohesion policy programmes. Adopted on 19 September 2025, the mid-term review package (Regulations (EU) 2025/1913 and (EU) 2025/1914) aligned the cohesion policy framework with the most pressing EU political priorities and introduced additional incentives to encourage reallocations towards these priorities. Under Article 18 CPR, the 2025 review is mandatory for each programme supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), Just Transition Fund (JTF) or Cohesion Fund (CF). It constitutes an assessment mechanism that enables Member States, through analytical work and targeted discussions, to develop an informed view of the current situation and future trends that may affect the implementation of the funds, and to adjust programmes to changing needs. Based on this assessment, managing authorities may either release the flexibility amount – around 15% of the programme allocation set aside and not available for project selection – or propose targeted amendments to their programmes.</p>
<b>Likely impacts</b>
The communication accompanied by a staff working document, will also include the reporting on the outcome of the mid-term review, will provide useful input for both the Commission and the Member States for future policymaking.
<b>Future monitoring</b>
The Commission will continue to monitor the progress made towards achieving economic, social and territorial cohesion in the EU as required by the TFEU. It will provide a new report within three years of the publication of this report.
<b>C. Better regulation</b>
<b>Impact assessment</b>
As the initiative does not introduce policy options, no impact assessment is required. The report relies primarily on data produced by Eurostat, the Joint Research Centre, the European Environment Agency, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the World Bank. It also draws on studies by academics and other researchers on regional development traps, the contribution of national policies to cohesion, regional quality of government, access to education and healthcare in towns and rural areas, and the impact of migration on regional development, as well as other studies linked to regional analysis. It considers the aspects described in the adopted strategies under the Agenda for Cities, for the eastern borders as well as the upcoming strategies like the strategy for the Outermost Regions and the strategy for Islands. The report on the mid-term review will analyse the concrete results of the mid-term review amendments submitted by Member States by the end of December 2025. This will include, in particular, the uptake of political priorities, financial incentives and simplification measures introduced through the targeted amendments to the ERDF/CF, JTF and ESF+ Regulations (through Regulations (EU) 2025/1913 and (EU) 2025/1914).
<b>Consultation strategy</b>

Through this call for evidence, the Commission will gather evidence on how EU cohesion policy and national policies contribute to the EU's cohesion objectives. This will help ensure that the Commission draws on comprehensive stakeholder inputs in a transparent and participatory way. The target groups include the general public, national, regional and local authorities, civil society including non-governmental organisations and social partners, and cohesion policy beneficiaries.

This call will be published on the Commission's central public consultations portal, [Have your say](#), for four weeks to gather stakeholder feedback. An event with stakeholders linked to this report will be organised.