



CEMR key political messages  
on Cohesion Policy and  
the Europe 2020 Strategy



Conseil des Communes  
et Régions d'Europe  
Council of European  
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**Council of European Municipalities and Regions**

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**CEMR key political messages on  
Cohesion Policy and the Europe 2020 Strategy**

**1. Cohesion Policy and the Europe 2020 Strategy can both contribute to achieving the new EU objective of territorial cohesion enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty**

Whereas the Europe 2020 Strategy is a strategy to overcome the crisis and to respond to the challenges the EU is facing ahead, territorial cohesion, together with economic and social cohesion, is an aim of the EU, embedded in the Treaty. Cohesion policy, with a devolved approach and multilevel governance, is the only EU policy to link the goals of the Europe 2020 Strategy with the local and regional level.

**2. Cohesion Policy is not a subsidiary of the Europe 2020 Strategy**

Cohesion Policy is a policy in its own right that aims to reduce the existing regional disparities and to promote harmonious development of all the regions in the EU. Both Cohesion Policy and the Europe 2020 Strategy are aiming at the sustainable development of the EU. Therefore, the EU institutions and Member States should identify synergies and define the coordination mechanisms between the two. The financial instruments that will be used by the EU to achieve both cohesion and Europe 2020 objectives include structural and cohesion funds, but these instruments must be complemented with other EU and national funds, including new and innovative financial engineering solutions.

**3. Multilevel governance and an integrated approach are necessary to make Europe 2020 a success.**

Unfortunately, the Europe 2020 Strategy is based on a thematic, sectoral approach. In order to be successful, it should follow an integrated and territorial approach, based on multilevel governance and functional areas. In this respect, Cohesion Policy as a horizontal, place-based development policy, can serve as a model for Europe 2020.

**4. Europe 2020 needs a strong and broad ownership at all levels of government**

In order to create ownership the EU institutions and Member States, in close cooperation with local and regional authorities, must present a roadmap for making the strategy operational. This will include recommendations for the delivery of the strategy, recognising the crucial role of local and regional authorities.

The CEMR also advocates a strong involvement of the local and regional authorities in the design, implementation and evaluation of the national action plans for the implementation of Europe 2020.

## **5. Financial engineering for an integrated policy approach**

The budget architecture should also reflect an integrated approach, aiming at combining funds of different programmes. The European budget should prioritise its financial allocations for Cohesion Policy. The EU institutions, in cooperation with Member States, should develop guidelines and recommendations about how different programmes and initiatives of the EU, financed from the EU budget and Member States' budgets, can be used to achieve Europe 2020 objectives.

## **6. Need to identify parts of Europe 2020 that can be better delivered by Cohesion Policy than by a sectoral approach**

Identifying which types of projects or themes related to Europe 2020 can be better dealt with via Cohesion Policy rather than via thematic funds will improve the future delivery. It is also important to define, at the level of EU rules, the demarcation between funds, following a similar methodology to the one used between rural and structural funds at operational level. EU rules covering thematic funds should clearly indicate which themes, programme stages, or priorities do have a link with Cohesion Policy and the structural funds.

## **7. Cohesion Policy is a policy for development and restructuring of Europe's regions and cities, not an instrument to punish Member States**

CEMR is strongly against the proposed conditionality related to the stability and growth pact. Cohesion Policy is a development policy not a corrective instrument for sound financial management by the Member States. The EU institutions and the Council must use other tools to insure that the stability and growth pact is respected.

## **8. The EU needs its regions and municipalities to make Europe 2020 a success**

As the success of the Europe 2020 Strategy depends on regions and municipalities, the Commission and Member States should envisage capacity building measures for local authorities in the form of technical assistance and external support.

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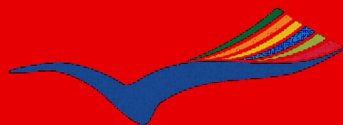


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