

VICTOR BOSTINARU'S CONSIDERATIONS ON THE FUTURE OF COHESION POLICY

1. The financial means will not rise according to the rise of challenges to face, but it is important that they do not decrease, neither in absolute terms (quantity of the funds), nor in relative terms (percentage of the EU budget allocated to Cohesion Policy).
2. It is ok to set down the key priorities of the new Cohesion policy, but infrastructures are too important to be left out, being also relevant in fundamental fields like energy for example.
3. Rural development could either continue to be supported by the EAFRD with adequate coordination with the Cohesion Policy, or put back in the domain of Cohesion Policy itself. However, it is important to maintain the current level of funds, and to make sure that the allocation criteria are able to boost the development of the most disadvantaged rural areas.
4. For the achievement of the objectives and priorities of the future Cohesion Policy, it is of utmost importance to further improve a multi-level governance, in order to have a coordinated action between the European Union, Member States, and regional and local authorities. Partnerships should be reinforced also between regional and local authorities, and the civil society.
5. For the support of areas below the regional level, it is important to reflect on the criteria to be adopted, as it is extremely important for them to be adequately balanced, in order to avoid any possible inconveniences in the correct implementation of the objectives of Cohesion Policy.
6. The $n+2$ rule currently applying for the reimbursement of expenditures, should be made more flexible, as it is essential to guarantee the highest possible absorption of funds, and often the neediest regions are the ones encountering more problems in the compliance with this rule.
7. The simplification process must constantly be hand in hand with transparency, always keeping into consideration the importance of avoiding frauds and misuse of funds. More flexibility would also be desirable, to make it possible for the policy to easily counter unexpected issues.