



Contribution to the report on the first 20 years of the Committee of the Regions

January 2014



The CoR as a consultative body for the EU

- **Local expertise for the EU**

Through its diverse membership, the Committee of the Regions (CoR) mirrors the richness of urban, local, and regional authorities throughout the whole EU. It thereby offers a differentiated picture of the issues on the ground and how our territories are affected by EU policy. By using the knowledge of the cities, municipalities and regions, for example by setting up expert panels for certain policy areas, valuable input can be provided to the rapporteurs.

- **Focus on issues of relevance**

The CoR should focus on issues most relevant for urban, local, and regional authorities within the EU. Clear priorities and a limited number of opinions, delivered in a timely manner into the legislative process, is key to influencing. The European Parliament, Council and European Commission are the addressees for CoR opinions. The CoR's remit is not to be a platform for the EU in Europe's cities and regions, but to be an advisory body providing the EU institutions with a local and regional perspective on the most important EU policies. A proper follow-up to the actions of the CoR must be guaranteed. Opinions must add value, combining whenever necessary political recommendations with technical expertise and examples.

- **Europe 2020 platform and participation in the European semester: a good example**

The intelligence gathering and sound analysis carried out through the different platforms of the CoR are good examples of how its work can contribute to the EU legislative process. The platform's work has been developed to fit in the European semester.

- **Territorial impact assessment: adding value to the European policy cycle**

There is a clear need for better knowledge of the impact of EU legislation on our territories. The CoR can play an instrumental role in providing EU institutions with first hand information throughout the EU policy cycle. It would entail a similar kind of work as is carried out by the existing platforms (such as those on the European grouping of

territorial cooperation and Europe 2020), gathering information directly from regions and cities on a focused number of policy areas and providing the evidence needed to inform the EU legislative process.

- **Better integrating CoR opinions with its other activities**

CoR opinions could draw more on the other work the CoR is doing. For example, outputs of the Communications or Consultative Works directorates could support CoR opinions by providing clear examples of what is happening in Europe's territories.

The CoR as a partner for European associations of local and regional authorities like EUROCITIES

- **Structured dialogue**

The structured dialogues are at the heart of the common work carried out by the CoR and the European associations representing local and regional authorities.

The annual meeting between the European Commission President and Presidents of the CoR and European associations to discuss the Commission's work programme for the following year is important in this respect. Ensuring a follow-up to this meeting with the Secretariat General of the Commission would further improve the impact of this meeting on the Commission work programme.

The end of year meeting with the Secretary General of the Commission is also an important opportunity. Adopting a simpler format - a smaller meeting with the Secretary Generals of the European associations of local and regional authorities, rather than a conference - would stimulate the quality of the debate and increase the information exchange.

EUROCITIES is

- The network of major European cities.
- We represent Europe's largest cities that have 250,000 or more inhabitants.
- Our members are local governments from 136 large cities in over 30 European countries, both EU and non-EU.
- Our network connects over 2500 city officers across our 41 technical working groups within six thematic forums: culture, economic development, environment, knowledge society, mobility and social affairs.
- We give cities a voice in Europe by engaging with the EU institutions on all aspects of legislation, policies and programmes that impact on cities and their citizens.
- EUROCITIES' president is Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz, the Mayor of Warsaw.
- EUROCITIES was established in 1986.