



**European Committee
of the Regions**

Brussels, 2 March 2023

**217th MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE
REGIONS**

- 14 MARCH 2023 -

ITEM 9 A

IMPACT OF COR OPINIONS: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Submitted by the secretary-general

FOR DECISION

SUMMARY

Bureau meeting: 217

Date: 14/3/2023

Item 9a

Executive Summary on the impact of the CoR – Current Achievements

Type:

- Document for information / debate
- Document for decision
- Recommendation to the Assembly

Short description:

Under Rule 59 of the Rules of Procedure, the Secretariat-General is required to submit a report to the Plenary Assembly once a year on the impact of European Committee of the Regions (CoR) opinions.

The Annual Impact Report for 2022 is presented in the bureau and plenary. In terms of content, the report is structured around the three political priorities of the CoR's 2020-25 term of office.

The 50-page report is presented in point 7b. This short executive summary is available in all languages. In addition to these documents, a visually attractive, graphic-based communication product (similar to the EU Regional and Local Barometer teaser) will be made available for the plenary session in one language.

The Bureau is asked to:

- Take note of the 2022 Annual Impact Report;
- Take note of the improvements in terms of content and methodology compared to previous reports adopted under Rule 59.

Remarks: N/A

The CoR's Impact: Current Achievements - Executive Summary

As a consultative body to the European institutions, the main role of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) is to represent the European Union's local and regional authorities in the EU decision-making process. The impact of the CoR is assessed in terms of:

- achievements in the EU legislative process and in general European debates (impact on preparatory or final legal texts);
- visibility for local and regional authorities in the setting of the EU's agenda;
- tangible changes in the EU's working methods, notably through alliance building and interinstitutional cooperation or in the day-to-day life of citizens through EU legislation or EU actions promoted or initiated by the CoR.

In 2022, the CoR adopted eight resolutions and 55 opinions.

It is also important to assess how the CoR's views and opinions are presented to the other EU institutions and how CoR rapporteurs interact – before and after the adoption of their opinion – with the representatives of the legislative institutions, namely the European Parliament and the Council of the EU (and its rotating Presidencies) and the European Commission. In addition, the CoR President and the First Vice-President, the CoR commission chairs and the Presidents of political groups participate in these inter-institutional relations. Meetings and exchanges with EU institutions during the course of the year are essential outcome indicators for our work. The overall interaction with the EU institutions remained steady or even increased.

Overall, the output and outcome indicators clearly show that the CoR has maintained its crucial role as the local and regional voice at EU level. Moreover, the full report shows the progress made with regard to each of the three political priorities of the CoR's 2020-25 term of office.

First, in relation to bringing Europe closer to its people, the following key impacts have been highlighted:

- Significantly extending **the participation of local and regional politicians in the Conference on the Future of Europe** from four to 30 representatives and pushing for the acceptance of reform concerning the CoR, giving it an enhanced role in the EU's institutional architecture and the importance of active subsidiarity as a guiding principle for EU policy - and decision-making;
- Increasing outreach to the one million elected regional and local politicians by developing the "CoR Regional and Local EU Councillors' Initiative" (2032 councillors by the end of 2022) and finding synergies with the European Commission's pilot-project on "Building Europe with Local Councillors";
- Publishing the **third edition of the EU Annual Report on the State of Regions and Cities 2022** highlighting the main findings on the most relevant topics for local and regional authorities at the EU level. The Report generated unprecedented media and political attention;
- Organising the Marseille Summit, which brought together 1 500 local and regional politicians to discuss key topics. The adoption of the Marseille Manifesto paved the way for the Conference on the future of Europe (COFE) conclusions on increasing LRA's role at EU level;

- Adopting the Marseille Summit Declaration of EU's Regions and Cities on Solidarity with Ukraine just days after the Russian invasion and the declaration by European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the reconstruction of Ukraine to the International Expert Conference on the Recovery, Reconstruction and Modernisation of Ukraine in Berlin later on in October;
- Launching the European Alliance of Regions and Cities for the reconstruction of Ukraine and launching the summer camps initiative which led to the organisation of 15 camps by cities, municipalities and regions across the EU on the CoR's initiative.
- Lastly, the CoR led the work on the "EU Charter on Youth and Democracy", which represents one of the key CoR actions on both the COFE recommendations relating to the democratic participation of young people in social, political and civic life and the European Year of Youth (EYY).

Second, in relation to building resilient local and regional communities, the key impacts were:

- A CoR proposal of having stress tests on serious cross-border health threats was included in the European Parliament report.
- Around 30 points of the Digital Services Act and the Digital Markets Act opinion were taken up in the reports by the European Parliament.
- Important CoR recommendations were taken on board in the European Commission proposal for a Regulation on Industrial Policy and Craft Geographical Indications.
- The Partnerships for Regional Innovation (PRI) was included in the European Commission's Communication on a New Innovation Agenda for Europe.
- More than 20 references are made to the local and regional level in the European Commission Communication on the New European Bauhaus (NEB), which acknowledges that the local and regional authorities, being key actors in increasing public participation, must be the drivers of NEB projects; they should be directly involved in designing and implementing these projects.
- Trees for Life initiative resulted in 300 000 trees pledged by local and regional authorities across the EU.
- The launch of the Green Deal Handbook on Adaptation, a practical tool developed in house, triggered the interest of other EU institutions.
- The CoR Delegation influenced the European Parliament Resolution and the Council conclusions on COP27.
- The participation of the CoR at the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) resulted in the CoR being explicitly mentioned in the COP15 decision as a key partner to support the implementation of its Plan of Action. It is the first time that the role of the CoR is recognised in such a text.

Third, in relation to promoting cohesion as a fundamental value of the EU, key impacts included the following:

- In its conclusions, on the 8th Cohesion Report, the Council called on the European Commission to consider including territorial impact assessments (regional proofing) in relevant EU policies.
- The European Commission followed CoR's suggestions to extend the 100% EU co-financing rate for 2014-2020 cohesion policy funding under the CARE programme to the 2021-2022 accounting year.

- The new Cohesion Alliance was launched in October 2022 to provide a new momentum to strengthen Cohesion policy as part of the debate on the future of the policy.
- The CoR's "Automotive Regions Alliance" is legally mentioned in the legislative text concerning the revised Regulation on CO₂ emission standards for cars and vans, whereby the European Commission must consult the CoR when identifying financial needs to guarantee a just transition.
- The 20th edition of the EU Week of Regions and cities involved 20 000 participants overall, confirming itself as the largest event dedicated to cohesion-related topics across the EU. It provided an impactful platform to renew the commitment of the over 12 000 partners of the Cohesion Alliance.
- Rural Proofing is part of the European Commission's internal guidelines for impact assessment of new legislative proposals.
- The CoR is now part of the European Commission working group shaping the governance of the Rural Pact.
- The European Parliament's report on the implementation of the Resilience and Recovery Fund takes on board the CoR's call to better involve local and regional authorities in the preparation of national recovery and resilience plans.

The CoR's visibility increased in 2022 through three communication campaigns reflecting the [2020-2025 political priorities](#), showing that the CoR's political work goes hand in hand with communication. The three campaigns focus on taking local and regional needs and concerns into account in order to increase legitimacy, ownership and added value, both for the EU's policies and their effectiveness on the ground, in order to serve the well-being of citizens. Initial results indicate an increase in all key performance indicators such as media mentions and web and social media outreach, which rose again in 2022 compared to 2021. As part of its Annual Strategic Planning Cycle (ASPC) the CoR also continues to reinforce its strategic planning and cross-commission collaboration. The CoR Conference of Presidents (CoP) adopted strategic guidance in view of bringing the different activities of the CoR together under its ASPC in order to ensure consistency and maximise impact. A substantial number of the proposals by the CoR impact oversight coordinator, in the person of the chair of the NAT commission until mid-mandate and by the President of the Renew Europe group for the period 2022-2025, continued to be successfully implemented in 2022.

Finally, on the administrative level, the "**Going for Impact!**" strategy launched by the Secretary General in 2020, continues to strengthen the impact of the CoR's political work, enhance its outreach and set a standard of administrative good practice and support for CoR members. Its implementation is on track and has already produced a tangible impact in the modernisation of the CoR administration. Almost all work processes have been digitalised; amongst the most successful examples are the improvement of the electronic management of documents and their approval workflows, including full use of electronic signatures and the management of financial actors.

PROPOSAL

Members of the Bureau are invited to take note of this Executive Summary and overview of the main achievements as part of the 2022 report on the impact of the Committee's opinions.

