

EU COHESION POLICY CONFERENCE

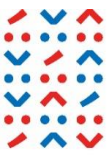
„Past Evidence, Current Experience and Future Perspectives“

*September 15 – 16, 2016
Bratislava, Slovak Republic*

The conference is held at a time when new evaluation evidence on the performance of Cohesion policy during the 2007 - 2013 period and the first experience from the 2014 – 2020 period have become available. The conference will provide an opportunity to take stock of the performance and result-orientation of Cohesion policy. This evidence will be relevant both for the implementation of the current 2014 – 2020 period and the upcoming debate on the future of Cohesion policy.

The development of the EU economic governance has significant influence on the evolution of Cohesion policy, with important implications for economic, social and territorial cohesion of the EU. The conference will explore the current knowledge and a possible evolution of the relationship between EU economic governance and Cohesion policy.

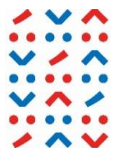
The EU institutions have devoted significant attention to simplification of Cohesion policy. Progress has been made in identifying potential changes to the current regulatory framework and implementation procedures. The Conference will take stock of the recent debate and discuss the emerging priorities for simplification in the future perspective – for the implementing bodies as well as for the beneficiaries.



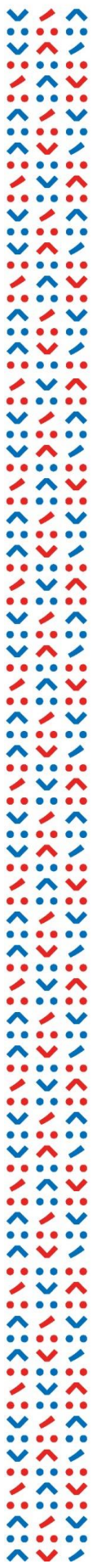
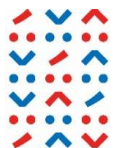
Thursday, 15 September 2016 – 1st day of the Conference

Venue: Bratislava, Hotel Crowne Plaza

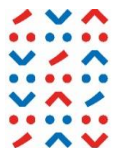
09:00 – 09:30	Registration and welcome coffee
09:30 – 10:15	<p>Opening Keynote</p> <p>Opening of the Conference by Peter Pellegrini, Deputy Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic for Investments and Informatization, Corina Crețu, Commissioner for Regional Policy, Iskra Mihaylova, Chairwoman of the European Parliament's Regional Development Committee and Petr Osvald, 1st Vice-president of the European Committee of the Regions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Moderator:</i> Denisa Žiláková, Director General, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic for the Investments and Informatization
10:15 – 11:45	<p>Panel discussion 1: Performance and result orientation of the ESIF</p> <p>The current regulatory framework enhances performance through the clearer definition of objectives underpinned by the intervention logic and corresponding monitoring arrangements, including a performance framework and a performance reserve to incentivise performance of the ESIF. In addition, new arrangements have been established to improve the effectiveness of investments through ex ante conditionalities, ensuring that the right regulatory, strategic and institutional frameworks are in place for better investment.</p> <p>The increased importance and changing nature of Cohesion policy underlines the need for an open discussion and honest assessment of its performance and achievements to date. Cohesion policy has the potential to support growth, boost employment, reduce social and economic exclusion, and to promote efforts to increase regional competitiveness, especially in lagging regions.</p> <p>This panel will initiate an exchange of views on the implementation of the new elements on performance and result orientation of Cohesion policy 2014 - 2020. Discussions will take account of the new evaluation evidence and experiences from the 2007 - 2013 programming period. It will also explore aspects of performance and the results orientation in the context of the upcoming debate</p>



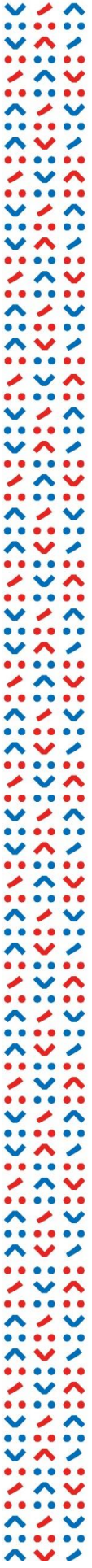
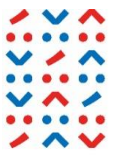
	<p>on the future perspective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Moderator: Jiří Blažek</i>, Charles University in Prague• <i>Panellists:</i><ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Mariana Hristcheva, Head of Unit, DG REGIO2. Ladislav Balko, Member of the European Court of Auditors3. Santiago Loranca Garcia, Head of Unit, DG EMPL4. Tomasz Kot, Ministry of Economic Development of Poland5. Jürgen Hein, Head of Department IV – General EU Affairs, State Chancellery of North Rhine-Westphalia6. Lambert van Nistelrooij, Member of the EP
11:45 – 12:15	Coffee Break
12:15 – 14:00	<p>Panel discussion 2: Links between Cohesion policy and European economic governance</p> <p>The new legislative framework creates closer linkages between Cohesion policy and sound economic governance and European Semester processes. In the 2014 - 2020 programming period, Cohesion policy has to be coherent with the wider economic governance of the EU and improve the environment for growth and investment. Programmes have to be consistent with National Reform Programmes agreed with Member States which form part of the cycle of economic and fiscal policy coordination within the EU known as the European Semester. Country-specific recommendations (CSR) are a reference point for the programming process. Cohesion policy funding depends on Member State compliance with economic governance procedures, notably through macro-economic conditionality. In the eventuality that a country fails to take corrective measures, recommended under the instruments of macroeconomic surveillance, its EU funds could be suspended.</p> <p>An important question for the current debate on the future perspective is the future relationship of Cohesion policy with European economic governance, also taking account of the role of the economic and monetary union. As outlined in the Five Presidents' Report, further implementation of measures to improve economic governance have significant implications for economic, social and territorial cohesion – although only social cohesion is explicitly mentioned in the Report. This panel will explore implications of completing economic and monetary union for economic, social and territorial cohesion and the role of</p>



	<p>Cohesion policy, especially in addressing the territorial specificities and development needs of individual regions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Moderator: John Bachtler</i>, Director, EPRC • <i>Panellists:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nicola de Michelis, Head of the Cabinet of Commissioner for Regional Policy Corina Crețu 2. Joaquim Oliveira Martins, Head of the Regional Development Policy Division, OECD 3. Zoltan Kazatsay, Deputy Director General, DG EMPL 4. Dirk Heiner Kranen, Head of Division, Federal Ministry of Finance, Germany 5. Michel Houdebine, Chief economist, Directorate general of the Treasury, France 6. Vazil Hudák, Chief Negotiator on the EU budget, Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic
14:00 – 15:00	Lunch
15:00 – 15:20	<p>Launch of European Cooperation Day 2016 (www.ecday.eu)</p> <p>The launch will showcase the evidence of Interreg contribution to the overall Cohesion policy by concrete examples of successful Interreg projects. The launch itself will be presented by:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Vicente Rodriguez-Saez, Deputy Head of Unit DG REGIO.D.1, Competence Centre Macro-regions and European Territorial Cooperation</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Petra Masáková, Head of Interact Programme Managing Authority</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Erwin Siweris, Programme Director, Interreg Europe</p>
15:30 – 17:30	<p>Panel discussion 3: Further simplification of Cohesion policy and the future perspectives</p> <p>Simplification of Cohesion policy is an important issue for increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the policy. The importance of this topic is evident in the work of the High-Level Group and its inclusion in programmes of several EU Presidencies, and debates organised by the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions. The Council conclusions endorsed by the meeting of the GAC dedicated to Cohesion policy of November 2015 stated that the simplification of rules is necessary for an effective contribution to smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and bringing the policy closer to EU citizens.</p> <p>Previous debates have provided valuable lessons on issues such as</p>



	<p>simplified cost options, legal (un)certainty, proportionality/differentiation, and further harmonization of rules of Cohesion policy with some other EU policies/instruments. Looking to the future perspective of Cohesion policy, the lessons should be further explored to identify possible options that can deliver simplification for both beneficiaries and those responsible for managing and implementing programmes, and involve all relevant actors and institutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Moderator: Johannes Rossbacher</i>, Director, ÖROK • <i>Panellists:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Olga Letáčková, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Regional Development of the Czech Republic 2. Florence Clermont-Brouillet, CGET, Head of European Affairs 3. Preben Gregersen, Regional Policy Director/Head of DK MA on EDRF/ESF, Danish Business Authority 4. Martin Weber, Director, European Court of Auditors 5. Andriana Sukova – Tosheva, Director, DG EMPL 6. Nicholas Martyn, Deputy Director General, DG REGIO
17:30 – 17:45	Closing remarks of the 1st day presented by the moderators of the panels
20:00 – 22:30	Reception in Hotel Crowne Plaza
Friday, 16 September 2016 – 2nd day of the Conference	
Venue: Bratislava, Hotel Crowne Plaza	
08:45 – 09:00	Registration and welcome coffee
09:00 – 10:00	<p>Parallel workshop sessions – 1st Part</p> <p>Workshop 1: Performance and result orientation of the ESIF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Chair: John Bachtler</i>, Director, EPRC ○ <i>What are the main lessons of experience ‘on the ground’ in 2007- 2013 for improving performance in the 2014 - 2020 period?</i> ○ <i>Based on initial experience of programming and programme implementation in 2014-20, how well are the new performance/results requirements working in practice? Are there any preliminary lessons for future period?</i> <p>Workshop 2: Links between Cohesion policy and European</p>



	<p>economic governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Chair: Piotr Żuber</i>, Director, Ministry of Economic Development of Poland○ <i>To what extent are Country-Specific Recommendations influencing the management of Cohesion policy at national/regional levels?</i>○ <i>To what extent, do current and prospective developments in Economic governance have implications for economic, social and territorial cohesion?</i> <p>Workshop 3: Further simplification of Cohesion policy and the future perspectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Chair: Vasilis Margaras</i>, DG for Parliamentary Research Services○ <i>What are the additional possibilities for further simplification that could be achieved?</i>○ <i>What are the priorities for specific simplification of Cohesion policy in the future perspective?</i>
10:00 – 10:15	Coffee break
10:15 – 11:15	Parallel workshop sessions – 2nd Part
11:30 – 12:00	Conclusions of the Conference for the future perspective of Cohesion Policy presented by the Chairs of individual workshops
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch
13:00	End of the Conference