



European Committee  
of the Regions



# Impact of CoR opinions

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

May 2026



European Committee  
of the Regions

## 239th Bureau meeting

3 March 2026, 18:00-21:00

Brussels, 20 February 2026

Item 11 a

For decision with debate

### Impact of CoR opinions: Executive summary

Submitted by the Secretary-General

With this decision, the Bureau is asked to:

- approve the 2025 Annual Impact Report and;
- take note of the consistent and stable methodology that enabled the content and communication product to be ready more quickly compared to previous reports adopted under Rule 61.

### Short description

Under Rule 61 of the Rules of Procedure, the General Secretariat 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 2025 is presented at the second Bureau meeting and plenary session of 2026. Regarding its content, the report is structured around the three political priorities of the CoR's 2025-2030 term of office and provides examples that confirm that the CoR has maintained its crucial role as the local and regional voice at EU level.

The 52-page report is presented in item 11b. This executive summary is available in all languages. In addition to these documents, a visually attractive, graphics-based communication product (similar to the EU Regional and Local Barometer teaser) will be made available in time for the plenary session in one language.

#### 1. 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 CoR opinions 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 lives of citizens, brought about through EU legislation or EU actions promoted or initiated by the CoR.

In 2025, the CoR adopted a total of 42 opinions and seven resolutions.

It is also important to assess how CoR members interact with the representatives of the legislative institutions, namely the European Parliament, the Council of the EU (and its rotating presidency), and the European Commission. To this end, more detailed figures in relation to each of the main EU institutions were collected for 2025 compared to previous years.

As in previous years, the report describes the progress made with regard to each of the three priorities of the CoR's 2025-2030 term of office and provides examples that confirm that the CoR has maintained its crucial role as the local and regional voice at EU level.

In relation to the **cohesion** priority, the following key impacts have been highlighted:

- Uptake of the CoR's key messages on cohesion policy in the [Council conclusions \(28 March 2025\)](#), particularly regarding the need to guarantee the 'active involvement' of local and regional authorities in the future cohesion policy.
- The clear policy messages to all EU institutions and partners ahead of the publication of the post-2027 MFF proposals were partly picked up in the European Commission proposals in July 2025 and strongly echoed in the responses of other stakeholders to those proposals.

- The Committee of the Regions contributed to the European Commission's revised budget proposal by strongly opposing centralisation and advocating multilevel governance. Through formal opinions, political pressure, and strategic messaging, the CoR influenced both the Commission and the European Parliament as regards safeguarding cohesion policy and territorial equity. The CoR's actions and its cohesion/MFF communication campaign increased the political pressure on the co-legislators and ultimately contributed to pushing the European Parliament's leading groups to write a letter to President von der Leyen calling for a revision of the MFF proposal. The letter echoed the main demands repeatedly voiced by the CoR. Moreover, the EP's draft interim report on the MFF reflects the CoR's positions to a very large extent.
- The 23rd edition of the European Week of Regions and Cities (EURegionsWeek) provided the platform for the CoR political leadership to convey a unified message in support of a strong EU cohesion policy, supported by the State of Regions and Cities address delivered by the CoR President Kata Tüttő, and the publication of the CoR's 2025 EU Annual Report and the Flash Eurobarometer survey. Alongside the week, the Cohesion Alliance organised a highly visible and impactful campaign to protest against the proposed cuts to the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) post 2027. The resolution on the future MFF, the public demonstration, and the consistent messaging since the opening press conference attracted wide visibility in EU media and on social platforms, resulting in significant political recognition and high-level engagement, with strong statements from MEPs and the EP President, reinforcing the Alliance's commitment to defending cohesion policy funding. With 6 500 people attending the event, this was one of the most significant and engaging weeks of the year for the CoR. The Annual Report was referred to in the [EU Agenda for Cities](#) published on 3 December 2025. Key CoR messages on housing were taken up in the [EPSCO Council conclusions](#) adopted on 1 December 2025<sup>1</sup>, in the EP resolution on the current housing crisis and in the draft report of the EP special committee on the housing crisis (HOUS).
- There was recognition by the Council of the EU added value of the Interreg programmes and assurance of distinct governance reflecting the cross-border nature of Interreg cooperation in the Commission's post-2027 legislative proposal.
- Commission Executive Vice-President Stéphane Séjourné identified the CoR and its RegHub network as key partners in the consultation process for the [evaluation of the 2014 Public Procurement Directive](#), and the [European Commission 2025 evaluation report](#) referred to the contributions from the CoR and RegHub.
- Many elements from the CoR's opinion on the forthcoming Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (FP10)/Horizon Europe<sup>2</sup> were reflected in the legislative proposals for the EU Regulation and the [Council Decision](#) published on 16 July 2025.
- The [23 May](#) and [30 September](#) COMPET Council conclusions reflected elements of the CoR's demands for research and innovation policies that are more territorially-based.
- The European Commission – answering a call made in the CoR's opinion on *Zero long-term unemployment*<sup>3</sup> – launched a pilot project, which took tangible form with the signing of contracts, and saw programmes earmarked for EU funding from ESF+.
- The CoR's proposal for a New European Bauhaus (NEB) funding scheme for small municipalities evolved, with the CoR's idea turning into tangible EU action supporting small municipalities.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/epsco/2025/12/01/> (Overview of 1 December EPSCO conclusions) and <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-15709-2025-INIT/en/pdf> (conclusions on housing).

<sup>2</sup> [SEDEC-VII/043 – Recommendations for the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation \(FP10\)](#) – rapporteur: Anne Besnier (FR/PES).

<sup>3</sup> [SEDEC-VII/037 – Zero long-term unemployment: the local and regional perspective](#) – rapporteur: Yonnec Polet (BE/PES).

- The European Commission Report on the European Year of Skills formally recognised the CoR's substantial contribution to local and regional engagement and highlighted its key role in advancing territorial participation in Europe's skills agenda.
- The CoR fostered structured dialogue between EU institutions and LRAs, reinforcing the shared responsibility for cohesion policy through initiatives such as the flagship European Week of Regions and Cities, with its *EURegionsWeek close to you* events and 33 EU local dialogues organised by CoR members and alternate members in 2025.

In relation to the **resilience** priority, the key impact included the following:

- The CoR president participated in the Local Leaders Forum in Rio de Janeiro, an important pre-COP event. This further elevated the profile of the CoR within the global climate debate. By representing European LRAs at this high-level forum, the president reaffirmed the unwavering commitment of subnational governments to the EU's climate ambition and ensured that the perspectives and priorities of EU local actors were reflected. The CoR also convened the first European Subnational Pre-COP, uniting EU subnational voices ahead of COP30.
- The CoR's outlook opinion on the European Ocean Pact was largely used by the European Commission to elaborate the new strategy on oceans: at least 11 proposals from the CoR were translated into the final strategic documents. The legislative follow-up to the strategy, namely the elaboration of an Ocean Act, requested by the CoR, in association with the European Parliament, will result in a specific regulation to be adopted in 2026-2027.
- There was high-level visibility of the CoR when it participated, as part of the official EU delegation, in the third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3), held in Nice in June.
- Proposals from the CoR opinion on the *State of the Energy Union: Getting prepared for a smooth implementation of energy transition in line with Fit for 55 targets* on permitting, funding and upskilling staff were successfully integrated in the 2025 [Annual Progress Reports on Simplification, Implementation and Enforcement](#).
- The [European Parliament Resolution on the Implementation of the RRF](#) is very well aligned with the key points of CoR opinions on the RRF and supportive of its demands, including recognition of the insufficient involvement of local and regional authorities in the Recovery and Resilience Facility.
- The local and regional perspective was further advanced, as regards supporting automotive regions in their ongoing transition, with the adoption of a CoR resolution on *Strengthening the territorial dimension in the implementation of the Industrial Action Plan for the European Automotive Sector*<sup>4</sup> and with contributions to the 'Strategic Dialogue for the European Automotive Industry through the work of the CoR's Automotive Regions Alliance.
- CoR recommendations on the European Mobility Data Space (EMDS)<sup>5</sup> contributed to the shaping of subsequent EU actions, reflected in the launch of the [deployEMDS](#) pilots, the clarification of governance through [National Access Points](#), the preparation of a [Mobility and Logistics European Digital Infrastructure Consortium \(EDIC\)](#), and the European Commission's [Final Report – Study in support of EMDS](#) confirming a federated, FAIR-by-design architecture, echoing the CoR's demand for interoperability combined with regional flexibility.
- The Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU invited the CoR to present its opinion on the Challenges and opportunities of artificial intelligence in the public sector: defining the role of

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4 [RESOL-VIII/002 - Urgent resolution on strengthening the territorial dimension in the implementation of the industrial action plan for the European automotive sector](#).

5 [COTER - VII/036 - Creation of a common European mobility data space](#) - rapporteur: Zdeněk HŘIB (CZ/Green+Pro).

regional and local authorities <sup>6</sup> and its [study on AI and GenAI adoption by local and regional administrations](#) at the TELECOM Working Party of the Council of the European Union.

- The first joint EP ENVI – CoR ENVE meeting took place in October, strengthening interinstitutional cooperation and common political objectives, and aligning CoR and Parliament efforts on climate adaptation and resilience.
- With water resilience being a CoR strategic priority, work in this area culminated with the organisation of the first European Water Resilience Forum, hosted in December by the CoR in partnership with the Commission, EESC and JRC, with Commissioners Ribera and Roswall present. This landmark event highlighted the CoR's key role in driving a shared European agenda for water resilience.
- Reflecting CoR opinions and the recommendations of the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine, European Parliament resolutions emphasised a decentralised approach to reconstruction and the need for local and regional authorities to be involved in the planning and, decision-making and in the implementation of the Ukraine Plan.
- Thanks to proactive CoR engagement with the German, Italian and Ukrainian governments, the local and regional perspective was a key dimension at the Ukraine Recovery Conference in July 2025 in Rome. Over 400 LRA representatives were invited.
- After its launch as a pilot programme in March 2025, the Training and Internship Programme Support for Ukrainian Municipalities (TIPS4UA) provided training and internship to 44 local government leaders and officials from Ukraine. The importance of this CoR flagship initiative was widely acknowledged at the Ukraine Recovery conference (URC2025).

In relation to the **proximity** priority, the key impact included the following:

- The messages put forward in the [CoR's opinion on the rule of law](#) triggered a high level of interest resulting in broad engagement with EU institutions and relevant stakeholders: the CoR's views were promoted at [European Parliament](#) and EESC hearings, [Commission meetings](#) and expert workshops, increasing recognition of the role of local and regional authorities in safeguarding the rule of law on the ground.
- The increased involvement of the European Parliament in the [Mayor Paweł Adamowicz Award](#), which aims to promote democratic values such as freedom of thought, diversity and solidarity, and fight xenophobia and hate speech, was demonstrated by the participation of the LIBE committee chair, Javier Zarzalejos, in the Jury of the Award, as well as by the presence of the LIBE committee vice-chair, Alessandro Zan, at the award ceremony in February. The fourth round of the award saw an increase in nominations, and the profile of the laureate – the Mayor of Kyiv, Vitaliy Klitschko – triggered a huge media outreach in 15 countries.
- The CoR's engagement in multilateral and UN processes helped to connect the global agenda to local realities through decentralised cooperation – this was apparent through the inclusion of the CoR's first vice-president in the EU delegation to the [Fourth Financing for Development Conference](#) in Seville. The work of the CoR on the localisation of the EU Global Gateway strategy, with a dedicated opinion on the topic and the co-organisation of a forum gathering 350 local representatives from all over the world also resulted in the inclusion of a dedicated paragraph in [the European Parliament report on the Global Gateway](#).
- The EU Local Councillors Network is a unique EU-branded initiative jointly managed by the Commission and the CoR, which brings together more than 3 000 local and regional elected representatives from all EU Member States to bring Europe closer to its citizens by actively promoting EU values. In 2025, the network achieved remarkable results: 1 700 local and

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6 [ECON-VII/038 - Challenges and opportunities of artificial intelligence in the public sector: defining the role of regional and local authorities](#) – rapporteur Alberto Cirio (IT/EPP).

regional authorities engaged, 1 200 communication initiatives drove dialogue across communities, and 350 councillors participated in study visits to Brussels, strengthening the link between local voices and EU decision-making. Councillors not only informed citizens and organised public debates but also shaped discussions in local councils and provided direct feedback to the EU institutions – making this network a cornerstone of participatory democracy.

- The Young Elected Politicians (YEP) programme strengthened its role as a key platform for engaging young leaders across the EU and its neighbourhood. Building on previous successes, the programme welcomed a geographically, politically, and gender-balanced cohort of 150 new YEPs, ensuring diversity and representation. The YEPs actively contributed to CoR statutory sessions, milestone events, and high-profile external opportunities, amplifying the voices of regions and cities at European level. Tailored training sessions and seminars equipped selected participants with advanced skills to serve as effective ambassadors of the CoR and the EU. These achievements paved the way for deeper integration of YEP activities into all outreach initiatives, reinforcing the programme’s impact on participatory governance. In total, 78 YEPs participated in CoR and external events, as well as in other outreach activities, as speakers or active participants.
- EuroPCom 2025, Europe’s largest public communication conference, took place from 3 to 4 July with the theme *Beyond words – a story of trust*, exploring trust in institutions, technology, and communities. It gathered 40 renowned speakers from Europe and beyond and attracted 2 150 participants, half of them communication professionals. A defining feature was its pioneering embrace of AI-driven technology in outward communication, featuring tools for disinformation analysis, personalised content platforms, and avatar-based promotion. The *Echoes of EuroPCom* initiative, launched in October 2025, will continue the dialogue towards the 2026 edition.
- The European elections and the new institutional cycle: The CoR’s 2024 European elections outreach campaign supported the mobilisation of citizens. The positive impact of that campaign was recognised in the September 2025 EP report entitled *Stock-taking of the European Elections 2024*. The CoR brought local and regional priorities such as cohesion policy into the discussions and party manifestos ahead of the European elections. The CoR engaged in institutional debates and was a recognised player in the campaign, linking LRA and EU issues. The cooperation with the European Parliament was particularly successful, with a specific memorandum of understanding signed and implemented. At the start of the new institutional cycle, cohesion policy and citizen engagement saw increased emphasis in EU strategic documents, thanks to the CoR’s ongoing influence.

In 2025, media and social media communication activities generated a consistent impact, maximising the CoR’s visibility and credibility. The CoR’s communication priorities adapted to the overarching priorities for the five-year term of office, as adopted by the Bureau on 1 July 2025, with three key performance indicators:

- **Press & media:** the ‘media mentions’ KPI reached **15 202 media mentions** in the first half of 2025, representing the **highest level of coverage in a six-month period ever measured**, and a total of **28 281 media mentions in 2025**. This represents an increase of more than 60% compared to 2024, when over **17 600 mentions** were achieved, confirming a marked strengthening of media outreach under the current strategy. This growth is attributed to effective communication campaigns and improved coverage quality. On top of the broad coverage in regional and local media, 2025 was marked by high-quality coverage in key national and European outlets.

- **Social media:** the new mandate represents a generational transition in the CoR membership, with **85% of members** engaging in several social media platforms, alongside the president, first vice-president and many commission chairs. Since the start of 2025, the CoR registered an **18.7% increase in followers** on its social media channels, bringing the total to **261 307** (220 233) **followers**. In terms of engagement, 2 314 own posts (1 831) generated **83 178 organic engagements – nearly doubling compared to the same period in the past two years – and an unprecedented 1.21 million organic views**; this was thanks to content diversification, and a focus on reels and collaborations.
- **Website and streaming:** The CoR website recorded **2.4 million page views**, representing a **41% increase** compared to the previous year. News and press releases generated 200 ,000 views (8.3%), while opinion factsheets received 130 000 views (5.4%). Three DDoS cybersecurity incidents caused minimal service disruption, and website migration to Commission servers continues through mid-2026. Live streams and videos-on-demand had more than 45 000 views in 2025.

As part of its Annual Strategic Planning Cycle (ASPC), the CoR also continues to boost its strategic planning and cross-commission cooperation. Following the adoption of the CoR's priorities for 2025-2030 in May 2025, the CoR sought to influence the Commission Work Programme. It is also proactively implementing its renewed cooperation agreements with the European Commission and with the European Parliament. The EP CCC chair notably took part in the CoR CoP in December 2025.

The CoR enhanced its foresight capacity, notably by hosting (for the first time) the ESPAS Practitioners' Day and through the third edition of its foresight workshop at EU Regions Week, organising and participating in foresight workshops and training sessions in partnership with the JRC, the EPRS and LRAs, participating in the Advisory Board of the Strategic Foresight Partnership Interreg project, and helping to ensure a foresight component in all commissioned studies.

The work of the CoR's impact oversight coordinator, in the person of the president of the Renew Europe group, evolved into Coordinator for the Annual Impact Report, and in 2025 measurably contributed to further boosting the CoR's transition to an impact culture.



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Created in 1994, the European Committee of the Regions is the EU's political assembly of 329 regional and local representatives such as regional presidents or city-mayors from all 27 Member States, representing over 446 million Europeans.

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Rue Belliard/Belliardstraat 101 | 1040 Bruxelles/Brussel | BELGIQUE/BELGIË

Tel. +32 22822211 | e-mail: [visuals@cor.europa.eu](mailto:visuals@cor.europa.eu) | [www.cor.europa.eu](http://www.cor.europa.eu)

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