



What regions expect from a new European Commission

The European Parliament will soon approve the nominations of the new college of European Commissioners which will shape European policy making for the next 5 years. As the largest independent network of regional authorities in the wider Europe, the Assembly of European Regions (AER) calls on the new European Commission President and his new college of Commissioners to:

Act in a European Spirit:

AER members call upon the next European Commission to act in a truly European spirit instead of representing national interests.

Guarantee expertise in regional affairs:

AER asks the Commission to appoint a Commissioner for Regional Policy who has a background in regional policy and who has proven in previous responsibilities a support to regional matters and a sound understanding of regional policy.

Better synchronise policy making:

AER asks the Commission to create a true dialogue between the different DGs and a synchronised strategy for the entire Commission. The Commission should better link policies and different DGs responsible (e.g. climate and energy policies should be integrated with regional policies, transport, research).

Take into account regional expertise and know-how in creating a sustainable Europe:

The recent crisis has shown that regions are best placed to tackle the economic crisis and to employ a variety of actions to fight it, because they can answer to specific needs within their territories that are otherwise not sufficiently addressed at the European or national levels. The European Commission should therefore involve regions in the development of long-term strategies such as the Agenda for Growth and Jobs and the future cohesion policy.

Address collectively the challenges of climate change:

Climate change is global, but it affects citizens at a local level and therefore needs local actions. The Commission should take into account regional answers and initiatives when deciding upon guidelines on environmental matters at European and global level. This also includes the incorporation of regions in managing and developing European funding programmes for energy policies.

Treat innovation as a core priority of the next Commission:

It is in the regions where innovative ideas are born and implemented. Bringing those ideas to the European agenda and putting strong emphasis on the issue of innovation is what regions expect from the Commission. The tasks and responsibilities for innovation could be attributed to a Commissioner for Innovation.

Incorporate a truly territorial dimension into external development policies:

European development and external aid programmes need to support decentralised development cooperation. To enforce this strategy the responsible Commissioner should be renamed Commissioner for

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Decentralised Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid.

Ensure that social inclusion forms a basis for European integration:

The EU is more than a union of markets and this must be illustrated clearly to citizens. We ask that the new Commission project for a social market economy promotes holistic policies that take into account the most vulnerable persons in our societies and strives to bring them within the sphere of the European economic and social project.

Strengthen relations with stakeholders:

The Commissioner for Regional Policy should hold regular meetings with representatives of regions and interregional organisations.

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