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EU Regions Week

Cohesion Policy: an effective tool for solidarity?

Annekatriin Langer, European Court of Auditors



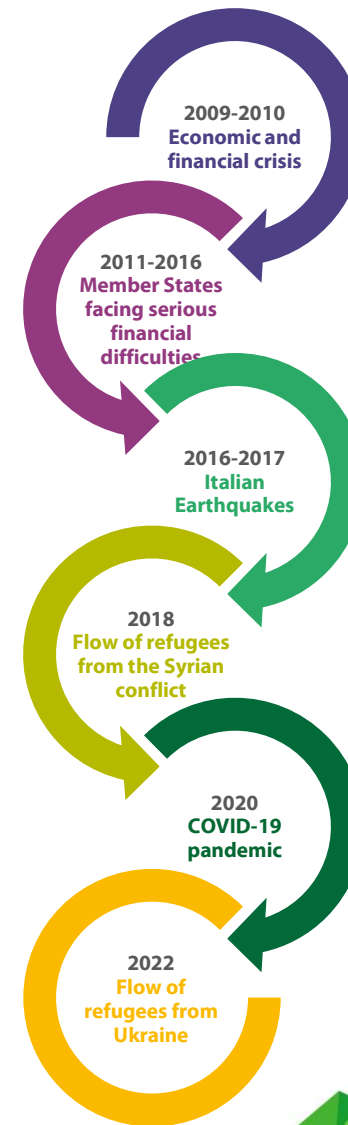
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COHESION POLICY SINCE 2009

Primary aim of Cohesion Policy:

- Long-term regional development
- Strengthening the economic, social and territorial cohesion
- Reducing disparities between European regions (Art. 174 TFEU)

Since 2009, Cohesion Policy is increasingly used as short-term **crisis response tool**



THE IDEA OF SOLIDARITY

Solidarity*

... among Member States

*"Promote economic, social and territorial cohesion, and **solidarity** among Members States"*

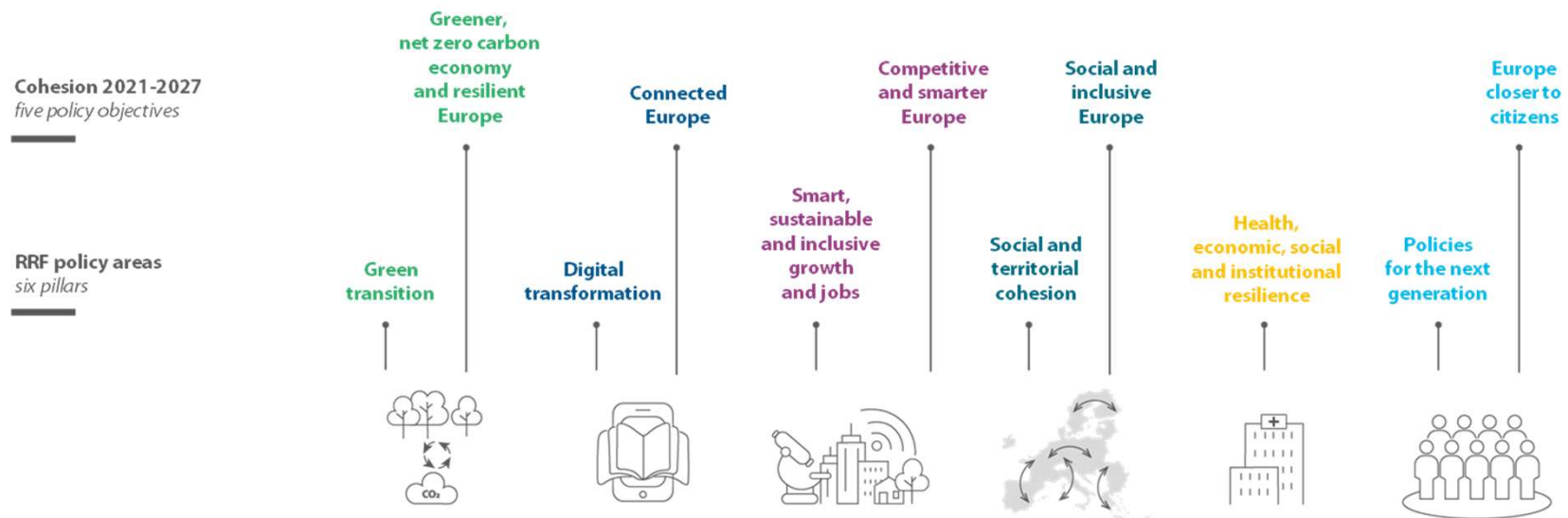
... with socio-economically disadvantaged people

*"Combat social exclusion and discrimination, and shall promote social justice and protection, equality between women and men, **solidarity** between Generations and protection of the rights of the child"*

Cohesion Policy

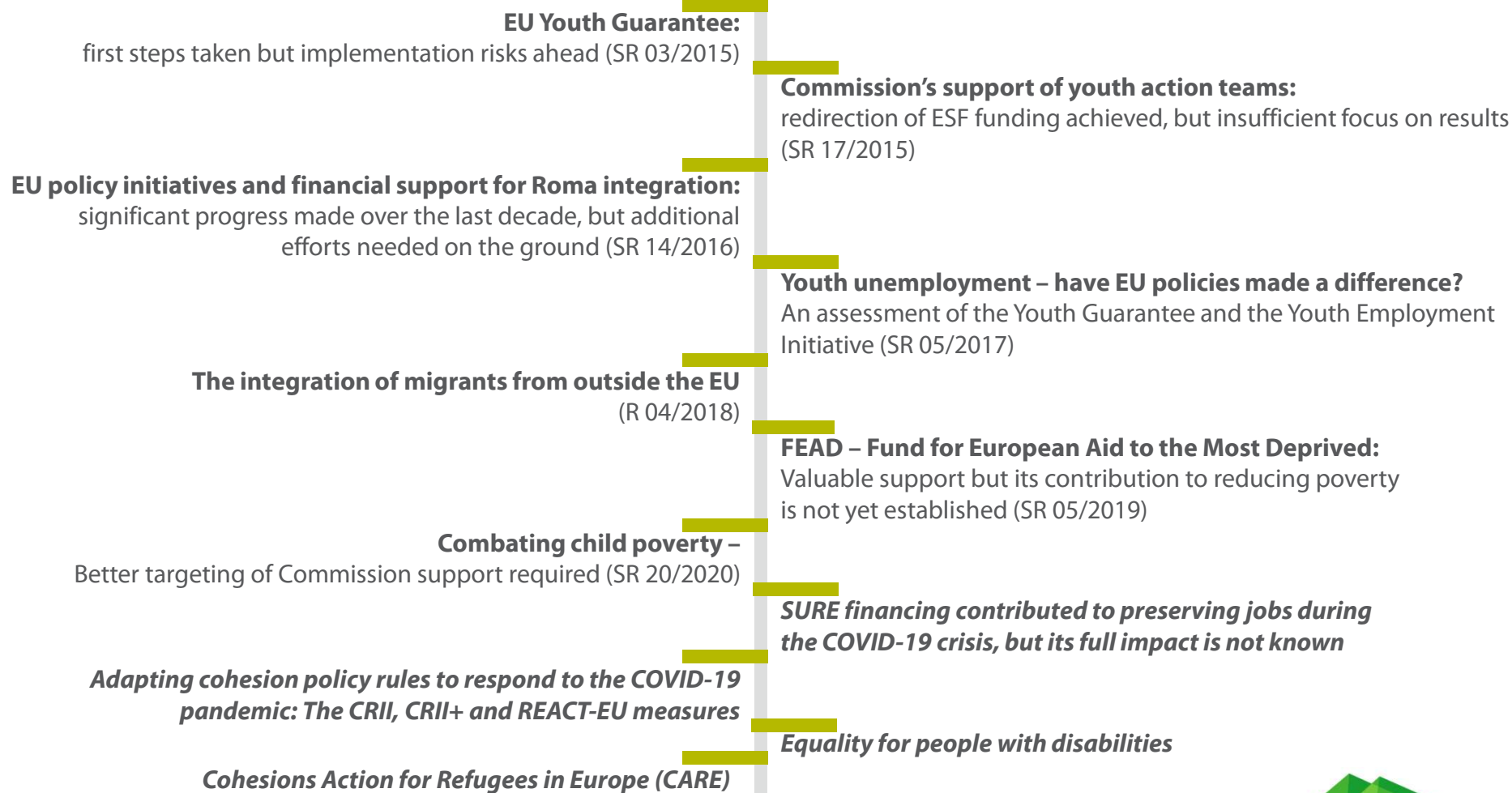


SOCIO-ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED GROUPS ARE ONE FOCUS OF ECA AUDITS



Source: ECA, based on the primary and secondary contribution of each measure as reported by the Commission in the ['Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard'](#) for the 25 NRRPs adopted by the Council by August 2022.

SOLIDARITY UNDER THE COHESION POLICY – SELECTED REPORTS



KEY POINTS EMERGING FROM OUR AUDITS

Responsibility for supporting socio-economically disadvantaged groups resides with the **member states**; **EU support** measures can only **complement national programmes** and initiatives.

Socio-economically disadvantaged groups are only **one of several target groups** of EU support.

Lack of detailed information about EU funding allocated to measures supporting socio-economically disadvantaged groups.

Degree to which **EU support** helps socio-economically disadvantaged groups in a member state **depends on** what **national policies, initiatives and programmes** are in place and the relative size of EU financing compared to national financing.

KEY POINTS EMERGING FROM OUR AUDITS

Effectiveness of EU-funded measures **depends on** how well **designed** and **implemented** they are by the member states.

Cohesion Policy increasingly used as **crisis response tool**, which may go against its long-term orientation.

Risk that long-term investments are replaced by EU support of traditional government/ national spending to support the groups most affected by the crises.

THANK YOU

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