

EURegions Week

Cohesion Policy: an effective tool for solidarity?

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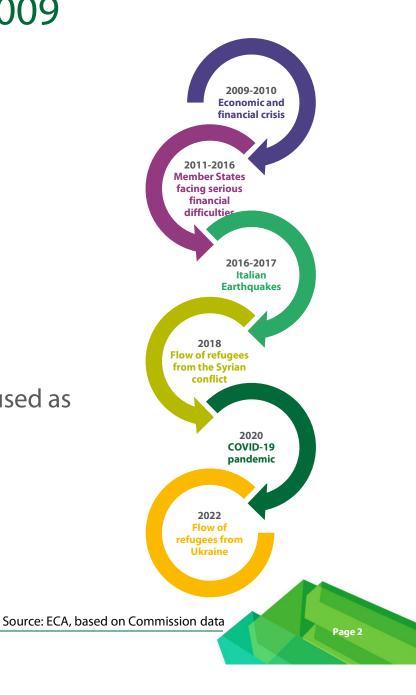
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COHESION POLICY SINCE 2009

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

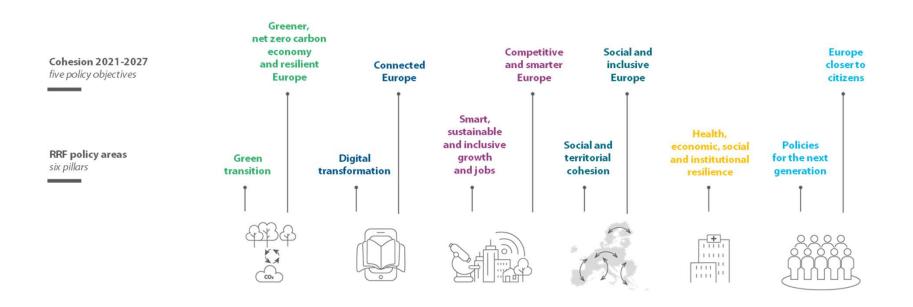
"Combat social exclusion and discrimination, and shall promote social justice and protection, equality between women and men, **solidarity** between Generations and protection of the rights of the child"

Cohesion Policy



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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 '<u>Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard</u>' for the 25 NRRPs adopted by the Council by August 2022.





SOLIDARITY UNDER THE COHESION POLICY – SELECTED REPORTS

EU Youth Guarantee: first steps taken but implementation risks ahead (SR 03/2015)	
	Commission's support of youth action teams: redirection of ESF funding achieved, but insufficient focus on results (SR 17/2015)
EU policy initiatives and financial support for Roma integration: significant progress made over the last decade, but additional efforts needed on the ground (SR 14/2016)	
	Youth unemployment – have EU policies made a difference? An assessment of the Youth Guarantee and the Youth Employment Initiative (SR 05/2017)
The integration of migrants from outside the EU (R 04/2018)	
	FEAD – Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived: Valuable support but its contribution to reducing poverty is not yet established (SR 05/2019)
Combating child poverty – Better targeting of Commission support required (SR 20/2020)	
	SURE financing contributed to preserving jobs during the COVID-19 crisis, but its full impact is not known
Adapting cohesion policy rules to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic: The CRII, CRII+ and REACT-EU measures	
Cohesions Action for Refugees in Europe (CARE)	Equality for people with disabilities
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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 for your attention!

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