PILOT ACTION FOR AUTHORITIES MANAGING COHESION FUNDS TO **INVOLVE CITIZENS** AND **PROMOTE TRANSPARENCY**

Five national and regional authorities will receive top class expertise from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and tailored assistance in setting up new initiatives

The context

With more than €350 billion total budget over 7 years, Cohesion Policy is the EU's main investment policy and one of its most concrete expressions of solidarity. Sound institutions and good administrative capacity are necessary for the success of these investments. Citizens have an important role to play in making public authorities more transparent and accountable and in making public investment more efficient and effective.

The goal

From July 2020, the OECD will guide selected authorities on how to engage closer with civil society. The support will consist of analysing the state of play, structuring internal discussions with relevant stakeholders, and help preparing an action plan.

The selected authorities and programmes:

Member States	Name of Operational Programme	Name of Managing Authority/Intermediate body/Urban authority	Scope
🇪🇸	ERDF Operational Programme	Regional Ministry of Economy and Finance of the Government of Cantabria	The region aims to set-up collaborative mechanisms, to involve individuals in the transition to a green and low-carbon economy
🇵🇱	The Infrastructure and Environment 2014-2020 Operational Programme	Centrum Unijnych Projektów Transportowych (eng. Centre forEU Transport Projects)	The managing authority aims to foster public participation on the implementation of large-scale transport infrastructure projects, creating a platform for social participation.
🇧🇬 🇷🇴	Interreg V-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme	Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration – Managing Authority for Interreg V-A Romania-Bulgaria	The managing authority aims to set up good governance structures, develop tools for active participation, involve citizens in investment decisions on environmental protection.
🇧🇪 🇳🇱	Interreg Flanders – The Netherlands	Province of Antwerp	The managing authority of Interreg BE-NL aims to further develop "citizens science" project model, extend the use of online tool for participation and organize micro projects.
🇮🇹	ERDF ROP 2014-2020 – Regione Emilia-Romagna	Regione Emilia-Romagna	The region aims to involve citizens in the elaboration of a roadmap for implementation of SDGs and develop an accountability strategy.

Regional and urban policy

The Background

The Commission held a High-Level Conference on the issue of Engaging Citizens for Good Governance in Cohesion Policy on 6 February 2020, in Brussels. The participants examined what initiatives under Cohesion Policy have worked in strengthening citizen engagement to get inspiration for cohesion policy next steps.

Under a second pilot action, the Commission will provide "grassroots" financing to support innovative ideas and initiatives for promoting citizen engagement coming from smaller and local civil society organisations in particular. The goal will be to test new approaches of citizen engagement and stimulate, promote and support citizen engagement in cohesion policy for a better implementation of the projects and a stronger sense of ownership of their results among citizens.

The other initiatives

• **Integrity Pacts** – an innovative way of ensuring civic monitoring in public procurement for EU-funded projects for improved transparency and efficiency.

https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/how/improving-investment/integrity-pacts/

• At the **School of Open Cohesion** – engaging school students to discover and monitor EU-funded projects

https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/communication/inform-network/asoc

• In order to exchange good practices in the field of citizen engagement, national and regional authorities can use the **TAIEX REGIO PEER 2 PEER** instrument

https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/how/improving-investment/taiex-regio-peer-2-peer/

More information

Good governance for Cohesion Policy – Administrative capacity building

https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/brochures/2018/good-governance-for-cohesion-policy-