



## **RESOLUTION**

### **An effective EU cohesion policy for the citizens – only with the municipalities and regions of Europe!**

With its cohesion policy unique in the world, the European Union makes a significant contribution to countering the very different economic and demographic developments of the European regions and increases the GDP of member states through leverage. The aim of cohesion policy is to counteract the economic and social disparities in the EU, to implement common European strategies regionally and to strengthen the economy and competitiveness of all regions, to enable them to realize their potential in the internal market. Solidarity and sustainable EU funding for structurally weak districts and rural areas strengthens Europe's territorial and social cohesion and shows people the added value of our European Union. With funds from cohesion policy, the EU supports, for example, the development of infrastructure, measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change, the support of structural change in old industrial regions, the creation of new jobs and the qualification of the unemployed, the renovation of urban districts or projects in rural areas. We will continue to need sustainable EU funding for structurally weak cities, neighborhoods and rural areas in the future.

PES Local reiterates that cohesion policy must remain and be strengthened as a fundamental pillar of the EU development model and the core of long-term, decentralized investment policy within the EU's post-2027 multiannual financial framework. Cohesion policy must continue to exist as a guarantee for the participation of local authorities and regions in the European project.

We support the objectives and demands of the CohesionAlliance# as well as the resolution of the European Committee of the Regions on the proposal for the Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2034 and the resolution of the PES Congress in Amsterdam "Quality of life in cities and regions" of October 2025.

We are particularly committed to the following points:

- Cohesion policy must be adequately funded for the many challenges that lie ahead.
- In the future, all regions in the EU must remain eligible for funding.
- Cohesion policy must be less bureaucratic and more flexible and transparent.
- Local and regional partners must be more closely involved.

We fundamentally reject centralization of EU cohesion policy! Shifting decision-making to the national level without strong local and regional involvement would run counter to the principle of subsidiarity, significantly weaken proven multi-level governance and be in strong contradiction to the partnership principle.

The local level can make an important contribution to the design of citizen-oriented policies through its knowledge of local conditions and problems and its expertise.

Centralization limits the say of local authorities and regions and their participation in designing a needs-based and efficient cohesion policy.

Through centralization, cohesion policy in states under the control of right-wing populist and nationalist governments must not become an instrument of pressure against municipalities and regions which stand for the fundamental values of the European Union. A decentralized cohesion policy strengthens the resilience of democracy in Europe.

Only together with strong and capable municipalities can the upcoming transformation processes be mastered and a good future for Europe secured.