



Special Session Proposal

Leave no one behind! The role of the EU Cohesion Policy in a changing world

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Abstract

Taking all together, inflation, war, pandemics, demographic challenges, geopolitical tensions and multiple types of hazards translate into a state of permacrisis, which seems to become the rule rather than the exception. The new EU Cohesion Policy 2021-2027 delivers on the Union's political priorities – set back in 2019 - to achieve the smart, green and digital transitions. Long-term social, economic and territorial cohesion still remain at the center of EU Cohesion Policy, yet within a different implementation context. The NextGenerationEU Recovery Plan, in particular the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), complements the EU Cohesion Policy investments in navigating the socio-economic shocks and stresses, yet it is planned as a temporary instrument.

In relation to this background, there is an evident need to reflect on evolving regional divides, but also on new and recalibrated mechanisms to ensure more effective responses to both long-term, structural challenges and to short-term shocks. Based on a starting point that acknowledges the diversity of regional contexts, this Special Session addresses, but is not restricted to, the following questions: *How does the future EU Cohesion Policy should look like? Should the RRF become a permanent mechanism? What are the synergies and the trade-offs that should be further addressed? How the EU and its regions could better navigate the complexities of permacrisis and its social, economic and environmental impacts? What is the right balance between short-term reactivity and the long-term objectives?*

Submissions covering conceptual, empirical and methodological contributions to the topic are welcome.

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