

THE

ReppORTER

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The newsletter of the European People's Party Group in the European Committee of the Regions

EPP Local Dialogue in Zagreb: European Investments in Regions and Cities after 2020



FOREWORD

BY PRESIDENT SCHNEIDER



Dear readers,

On behalf of our EPP-CoR Group, I welcome you to our EPP Local Dialogue in Zagreb dedicated to European Investments in Regions and Cities after 2020. We are happy to host our event as part of the EPP Congress in Croatia, in a country which will hold the EU presidency starting in January 2020.

Our event takes place at a time when the negotiations on the European Union's Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027 are still ongoing. A timely overall agreement on the next MFF is crucial for our cities and regions. Delays in the start of the new programming period would badly harm their planned investment projects and the EU's capability to bring concrete results to its citizens.

Our event in Zagreb will highlight the impact that EU investments can have on growth, employment and sustainable development in our regions, cities and villages, while identifying their added value for the European Union. To demonstrate this, we will share concrete examples of excellence in the use of European funds in Croatia and other member states.

We will also discuss ways to make the EU policies and proposals deliver better on the ground and make life easier for people and businesses. A good place to start would be getting rid of bureaucracy and red tape which are the biggest obstacles to the effective use of structural funds.

Regions and cities count on EU-level negotiators and their EPP leaders to take their needs into account when deciding on future EU investment tools so that these can be translated into concrete projects that truly benefit citizens' everyday lives.

Europe starts in my city/village/region - with this motto, we continue our EPP Local Dialogues, listening to the voice of our people on issues that matter to them.

Welcome – Dobrodošli!

 **Michael SCHNEIDER**
President of the EPP-CoR Group

EUROPEAN INVESTMENTS IN REGIONS AND CITIES POST 2020



In the context of the 2019 EPP Congress in Zagreb (Croatia), hosted by the Croatian Democratic Union Party (HDZ), the EPP Group in the European Committee of the Regions will organise a Local Dialogue devoted to **European Investments in Regions and Cities after 2020**.

The EPP-CoR Local Dialogue will take place on **20 November 2019 from 10h30 to 11h45 at the Sports Hall of the Zagreb Arena**. It will be followed by a study visit to a successful project financed with European funds.

The EPP-CoR Local Dialogue will focus on two main topics: *The future EU budget: investing for people in partnership with regional and local authorities* and *Delivering effective solutions for regions and cities to help Europe reconnect with its citizens*.

It will be followed by a Study Visit to an *EU co-funded project on the production of organic food from locally sourced cereals* upon the invitation of **Željko TURK**, Mayor of the Municipality of Zaprešić and EPP-CoR member.

The event is hosted by **Andrej PLENKOVIĆ**, President of Croatian Democratic Union and Prime Minister of Croatia, **Michael SCHNEIDER**, President of the EPP Group in the European Committee of the Regions and **Nikola DOBROSLAVIĆ**, President of Dubrovnik-Neretva Region and EPP-CoR Vice-President.

CROATIA'S COUNTRY PROFILE

CROATIA'S GOVERNMENT

The country is a parliamentary democracy, with the parliament in Croatia's capital city, Zagreb. The last general elections were held in September 2016. Andrej Plenković, leader of the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), became Prime Minister on 19 October 2016.

TERRITORIAL COMPETENCES

Croatia is a unitary State with three levels of governance: the central level, the regional level with the regions (**županija**) and the local level with the municipalities (**općina**) and cities (**grad**). The City of Zagreb has a special status with competences of both a city and a region, and a significant role in performing state administrative tasks in its territory.

Croatia is divided into 21 regional government units: 20 regions (županija) and the City of Zagreb.

Each region (apart from the City of Zagreb) consists of towns and municipalities. In total, there are 127 towns and 428 municipalities. Among the towns, the category of so-called large towns with broader self government competences was introduced in 2005 for local government units with more than 35,000 citizens.

Local government is enshrined in the Constitution. Regions have a relatively large degree of autonomy. They exercise their functions in accordance with the subsidiarity principle, which was recognised as a constitutional principle in 2000.

LOCAL ELECTIONS

All seats of the region prefects, city and municipal mayors and members of regional, municipal and city councils were up for election in 2017. HDZ posted strong results in the elections winning 12 region presidents, 62 city mayors (5 more than in 2013) and 195 municipal mayors.

EU INVESTMENTS IN CROATIA

Over the period 2014-2020, Croatia has been allocated a total budget of EUR 10.7 billion of EU structural and investment funding like the European Regional Development Fund, Cohesion Fund, European Social Fund, European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and Youth Employment Initiative.

Regarding the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), almost 60% of its allocation is aimed at strengthening the economic competitiveness of the country. In the transport sector, ERDF and the Cohesion Fund are aimed at strengthening the connectivity of the

country and the regions to trans-European networks (railway, inland waterway and roads), supporting the modernisation of Dubrovnik airport, connecting islands to the mainland, developing sustainable urban mobility in major cities, as well as improving road safety.

HORIZON 2020 NET EU CONTRIBUTION

On Horizon 2020 the City of Zagreb has received 56.22 million euros, most funds have been directed to the thematic priority of secure, clean and efficient energy.

ERASMUS+ FOR 2017

8094 participants from 253 Croatian projects benefited from mobility in higher education, vocational education and training, school education, adult learning and youth for a total grant amount of EUR 14.50 million in the Erasmus+.





Andrej Plenković

President of the Government of the Republic of Croatia



I want a Europe that is agile, not fragile, that is together, not apart and a Europe that is outward and not inward looking

Following his graduation from the Zagreb Faculty of Law in 1993, Plenković held various positions in the Croatian Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs. After completing a postgraduate degree in 2002, he served as deputy chief of Croatia's mission to the EU. Between 2005 and 2010, he was Croatia's deputy ambassador to France, before leaving the post to become State Secretary for European Integration. He was subsequently elected to the Croatian Parliament in 2011. He became one of eleven Croatian members of the European Parliament, serving from



Croatia's accession to the European Union in 2013 until his resignation as MEP when he took office as Prime Minister

Andrej Plenković was sworn in as Prime Minister on 19 October 2016, thus becoming the 12th Head of Government since Croatia's independence. On 17 July 2016, he was elected President of the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), a member of the European People's Party.

Croatia will hold the EU Council Presidency between January and June 2020. Plenković wants to conclude negotiations on the long-term budget during his country's six-month presidency. ***"Our ambition is to conclude the negotiation on the MFF because it is very clear that this will, at least partly, end up on our table, that will be the key dossier,"*** he told POLITICO in an interview.



Dubravka Šuica

European Commission Vice President-Designate for Democracy and Demography

"Dear participants of the conference and dear EPP colleagues, it is with great pleasure that I welcome you all in the Croatian capital of Zagreb, a city which will in just over one month time become a capital of Europe as Croatia takes presidency over the European Union for the first time in its young membership.

After being elected mayor of Dubrovnik in two terms, a city of high importance to its diverse region and having been a President of Croatian delegation in The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in Council of Europe for ten years, I experienced firsthand how local policies are crucial in the implementation of European goals and

initiatives. Effective policies on the local and regional level will deliver effective solutions for growth and prosperity of cities and entire surrounding regions. With developed regions, we are ready to truly connect Europe as our citizens deserve and wish for.

Pelješki most (Pelješac Bridge) that is currently under construction is a result of our concerted efforts and is an iconic representation of connectivity - of citizens, regions, Croatia, Europe. That is why it is extremely important to continue investments, to deliver European solutions in order to connect our citizens and to connect Europe.

During the six and a half years as a Member of the

European Parliament, I always put an accent on regional development, and now, as Vice-President designate of European Commission for Democracy and Demography my main task will be contact with our citizens on local and regional level.

I am looking forward to the opportunity to work with you on a such exciting and important task!"

CROATIAN DELEGATION IN THE EPP-COR

The European People's Party (EPP) Group is the largest political group in the European Committee of the Regions (CoR). The CoR is the European Unions political assembly of regional and local representatives.

The European CoR allows cities, regions and municipalities to influence European policy-making by giving them a voice on the EU stage so that European legislation can be adapted to the reality on the ground. It expresses and formulates opinions, resolutions and declarations as part of the EU decision making process on issues of importance at local and regional level in accordance with the EU treaties.

EPP-CoR Group members work actively in the CoR's Commissions, which elaborate Europe's cities' and regions' opinions on key policies and legislation. Up to six times a year, all members gather at the CoR's plenary sessions in Brussels to vote on those opinions, holding high-level debates with representatives from EU Institutions on topics of great interest to local and regional authorities.

MEMBERS OF THE EPP-COR GROUP:

- **DOBROSLAVIĆ** Nikola
HDZ - President of the Dubrovnik – Neretva Region
- **HRANIĆ** Bruno
HDZ – Mayor of the Municipality of Vidovec

- **MARUŠIĆ** Danijel
HDZ – President of Brod-Posavina Region
- **PAUK** Goran
HDZ – President of Šibenik-Knin Region
- **TURK** Željko
HDZ - Mayor of the City of Zaprrešić Member of the board of the HDZ Party

MEMBERS OF THE EPP-COR GROUP:

- **BARIČEVIĆ** Martin
HDZ - Mayor of the Municipality of Jasenice
- **OZIĆ** Antonija
HDZ – Mayor of City of Pleternica
- **PIRAK** Dinko
HSS – Mayor of the city of Čazma
- **PRIŠČAN** Slavko
HDZ – Mayor of Rovišće Municipality

A EUROPEAN UNION WITH THE PEOPLE AND FOR THE PEOPLE



We want a European Union with the people and for the people that starts in our villages, cities and regions. We need a European Union deep-rooted in the territories, based on democratic values. We need a European Union that meets peoples' expectations. We want a strong and efficient European Union that empowers and safeguards our peace, freedom and prosperity. We wish to be proud of our identity as European citizens belonging to our cities, regions and Member States, united in diversity.



"Regional and local politicians represent a great added value for the EPP family. They are best placed to connect the Union with its people in the places where they live, work and pursue opportunities. This Grassroots

Engagement will allow an honest dialogue with people on areas that are often decided upon in Brussels or in Strasbourg, but actually implemented in Europe's cities and regions." - Michael Schneider, President of the EPP Group in the EU Committee of the Regions."

Michael Schneider

President of the EPP Group
in the EU Committee of the Regions

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Boyko Borissov

Prime Minister of Bulgaria



"I am very grateful for the collaboration with the EPP Group in the CoR. It is regional and local leaders who better know our citizens. You are the first point of contact to all. Elections cannot be won without your engagement and support. We need you and we know we can count on you."

Antonio López-Istúriz White

MEP and Secretary General of the EPP

A EUROPE THAT PROTECTS AND CREATES OPPORTUNITIES



We hope for a European Union that protects us, our families, our way of life and our planet. We want a European Union that guarantees security by reinforcing its external borders and combatting extremism and nationalism within its borders. We need a family friendly European Union that offers equal opportunities, embraces the less advantaged and promotes a rich and inclusive society; a European Union that enables good education, quality health care, and job opportunities. We want a European Union that invests in local businesses, research and innovation that impacts people's lives by treating incurable diseases, making our transport cleaner and our buildings more energy efficient.

Sebastian Kurz highlighted the importance of strong regions and remaining united in diversity. Themes such as safety, jobs and competitiveness are sure to be topics, which will benefit people's everyday lives.



"Politicians should put their focus on issues that truly matter to people."

Sebastian Kurz
Chancellor of Austria

"A better Europe starts at home, at local and regional level. The fight for a better Europe is our fight, the fight of all those for whom Europe is synonymous with peace, prosperity and liberty of all."

Klaus Iohannis

President of Romania



"Europe and politics must start by listening and taking the concerns of people into consideration. I cannot imagine a better place than the Committee of the Regions. As mayors, as representatives of the local level, you are every day close to the citizens and to listen to our mayors is the most important thing."

Manfred Weber

Chairman of the EPP Group in the European Parliament



COHESION BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION'S REGIONS, CITIES AND RURAL AREAS



We need a European Union of solidarity that ensures economic, social and territorial cohesion. We support cohesion as a fundamental European value since it creates opportunities for people from both richer and poorer regions, strengthens the single market and increases the sense of belonging in the European project. We believe it is crucial to reduce disparities between Europe's

territories and increase their competitiveness. We call for a digitalized, user-friendly and interconnected public European, national, regional and local public administration, as a precondition to provide efficient and effective services to citizens and businesses alike.



"The big project "European Union", which is without any alternative, could be much closer to the citizens with the notion of subsidiarity put to a more practical level. This would mean a stronger involvement of national, regional and local politics."

Reinhold Lopatka

Chair of the EU Affairs Committee
in the Austrian National Council

"Since we are today with regional representatives, mayors and local politicians, I would like to add that we are the only party in Europe that gives a clear commitment to the principle of subsidiarity and strong regions. We think & act together"

Manfred Weber

Chairman of the EPP Group
in the European Parliament



A EUROPE THAT LISTENS AND DELIVERS



We stand for an efficient and democratic Union closer to its citizens. We believe that ownership and trust make people feel Europe, see Europe, be Europe. We must remember that politics knows no boundaries. This is conveyed through the trust of the people who vote for one European Parliament, 41 national chambers of parliament, 74 regional legislative assemblies, 280 regions and 80 000 local authorities. Local and regional authorities implement 70% of all EU legislation. They represent half of public employment, one third of public spending and two thirds of public investment. Regional and local leaders rely on the highest level of people's trust so that they can solve local problems with European solutions in fields such as transport, energy, climate change, digitalization, but also migration, security and the fight against terrorism. Therefore, Europe and its Member States need more decentralisation and stronger regions with the necessary competences and resources to deliver results as close as possible to the people. European, national, regional and local politicians must work together for a Europe of proximity in order to respond to the realities of Europe's territories. Together we must strengthen the Union's democratic legitimacy in pace with the 21st century. President of the EPP Group

"No one better than you, local & regional elected representatives, can talk to Europeans, listen to their expectations, know the problems they face on a daily basis & offer them fair, realistic & ambitious solutions."



Joseph Daul

EPP President



"We must continually remain in close contact with the citizens and communicate the positive achievements of the EU."

Nikola Dobroslavić

President of Dubrovnik-Neretva Region, EPP-CoR
Vice-President and Rapporteur

COHESION BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION'S REGIONS, CITIES AND RURAL AREAS



We, the EPP family of national, regional, local and European leaders are responsible for reaching out to all citizens, listening to their voices, meeting their needs and reinforcing the foundations of the European Union. Major reforms were successful and they have undoubtedly improved peoples' lives. As the EPP family, we shall not limit the European project to Brussels based institutions. We have to communicate with courage and determination both what we have achieved on the ground and what we will achieve in the future, if we want to avoid the EU falling into the hands of Eurosceptics and populists. Together, we want to make our Europe a more dynamic, open and attractive home for its people. We commit to teaming up with the EPP Spitzenkandidat, Manfred Weber, to work as one, strong, united and responsible political family in the interest of our people.

"We started our journey in Sofia last year in March with Prime Minister Borissov, we have continued in Austria in December with Chancellor Kurz and we are here today with PNL President Orban and President Iohannis. In these three flagship events and in all our EPP Local Dialogues across the EU, one particular force was clear: the strength of elected politicians representing all three levels of politics: local, national and European who have teamed-up together. This is about the trust of our people in their political leaders. This is how we want to work: together, as a united family, in the interest of our people! This is about subsidiarity and solidarity."



Michael Schneider

President of the EPP Group in the EU Committee of the Regions

"It is our local and regional leaders together with our national and European representatives that have the power to make a change. That is why, we must all unite our forces and fight the populists who want to destroy what we have built and achieved so far. Only together we can serve our citizens, communities and regions, and make them fall in love with Europe again."



Joseph Daul

EPP President



2018 Helsinki



2019 Bucharest



2018 Helsinki



19 Bucharest



2019 Bucharest

BUILDING TOGETHER THE NEW POLITICAL MANDATE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION



Ursula von der Leyen

President-elect of the European Commission



Our Union's democratic system is unique, bringing together directly elected parliamentarians at local, regional, national and European levels with elected Heads of State or Government.

On 16 July 2019, the European Parliament elected Ursula von der Leyen as the future President of the European Commission. She is the first woman to be President-elect of the European Commission.

Presented in July, von der Leyen's Political Guidelines set out the priorities and ambitions for the next European Commission 2019-2024. The priorities are centered around six themes: (1) the European Green Deal, (2) Europe fit for the Digital Age, (3) Economy that works for people, (4) Protecting our European way of life, (5) Stronger Europe in the world and (6) a new push for European democracy.

The President-elect's Agenda for Europe clearly refers to regional and local authorities:

"Our Union's democratic system is unique, bringing together directly elected parliamentarians at local, regional, national and European levels with elected Heads of State or Government."

EPP-CoR Members welcome the President-elect's ambitious and inclusive agenda for Europe's future path and look forward to working alongside the new European Commission, fellow parliamentarians and Heads of State or Government to bring these critical priorities to fruition over the coming years.

On 10 September, the President-elect presented the Commissioner-designates and their portfolios. The mission letters reflect and further detail the objectives outlined in the Political Guidelines of July. From the viewpoint of local and regional authorities, the following aspects are of utmost importance when it comes to strengthening our democracy and embarking towards a sustainable future for Europe:

CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

Ursula von der Leyen has proposed to give Europeans a say on how their Union is run and what it delivers via a Conference on the Future of Europe beginning in 2020 and running for two years. She has entrusted European Commission Vice-President-elect for Democracy and Demography Dubravka Šuica (EPP/HR) with the task to *"Lead the Commission's work to make the Conference on the Future of Europe a tangible success [...] bringing together citizens of all ages from across our Union, as well as civil society and European institutions. We need a wide debate, clear objectives and a tangible follow-up on what is agreed. As a first step, you should work closely with the European Parliament and the Council to agree on the concept, structure, timing and scope of the Conference."*

As they are not only closest to citizens, but also the most trusted, local and regional authorities are best placed to engage meaningfully diverse stakeholders with the Conference on the Future of Europe. In this context, EPP-CoR Members are very well positioned to support the planning, organisation and functioning of the Conference of Europe by drawing on their experiences from the EPP Local Dialogues and the Committee of the Regions' Reflecting on Europe Dialogues. Reconnecting with citizens and fostering wide debates can only happen with the active partnership of local and regional authorities across Europe.

THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

One of the overarching political priorities of the new European Commission will be the **European Green Deal**. von der Leyen announced: *"I want the European Green Deal to become Europe's hallmark. At the heart of it is our commitment to becoming the world's first climate-neutral continent. It is also a long-term economic imperative: those who act first and fastest will be the ones who grasp the opportunities from the ecological transition. I want Europe to be the front-runner. I want Europe to be the exporter of knowledge, technologies and best practice."* Reflecting this objective, the Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal has been asked to present a strategy for the Green Deal within the first 100 days of his mandate.

The CoR members are in a good position to contribute to the debate on these objectives since they have been at the forefront of pioneering and implementing ambitious climate, energy and environment policies in their cities and regions over the last decades. To leverage their expertise, to truly achieve the objectives of the Green Deal, local and regional authorities need to have a central role in shaping the strategy for the European Green Deal.

We wish the very best of luck to Ms von der Leyen and her College of Commissioners in the new mandate and very much look forward to working closely with them for the Future of Europe.

EPP family delivers results that protect and improve citizens' lives

"In my city, 20% of the taxes are reinvested in education. For this reason, all schools in Cluj-Napoca are equipped with internet and modern teaching facilities. We have to prepare the young generation with the necessary skills they need for the future."

Emil Boc,

Mayor of Cluj-Napoca, PNL and former Prime Minister of Romania 2008-2012



"...combatting fake news and disinformation is crucial especially ahead of the European Elections where citizens need to make a well informed choice on a better future for a more secure and prosperous EU."

Olgierd Geblewicz,

President of the Westpomerania Region

"Democracy has to be dynamic and never taken for granted. It takes decades to build and seconds to destroy. All European citizens, all ages, deserve a future where they can expect their lives to be better."

Jelena Drenjanin,

EPP-CoR member from Stockholm Region, Municipal Assembly of Huddinge



"From the region of Sibiu, we demonstrate with concrete examples that the basic principles that make us a great European family are caring for citizens, democracy and the rule of law."

Daniela Cîmpean,

President of Sibiu County Council, member of the PNL and EPP-CoR





“Strong local leaders with their EPP partnerships is the answer for delivering innovative solutions for citizens. We need regional and local partnerships, the involvement of the citizens, universities and a good business environment. Only together can we create a better future for our communities.”

Markku Markkula,
President, Helsinki Region, First Vice-President
of the European Committee of the Regions

“Europe endeavours for a better life for its people: better education, environmental responsibility and the preservation of cultural historical heritage are sound investments.”

Yordanka Fandakova,
Mayor of Sofia



“As a local leader, I recognise that we need more Europe in my region, likewise Europe needs more regional and local level representation in the EU decision making process. I am happy to see that the EPP is leading a dialogue with the citizens and bringing their message to the EU level.”

Gheorghe Flutur,
President, Suceava County, President of the
PNL League of Locally Elected Politicians

“The young people are the future of Europe and should be represented at a European, national, regional and local level. We need to create policies that address the concerns of young Europeans and have a tangible effect on their day to day lives.”

Ana Lidia Pereira,
President, Youth of the European People’s
Party



Citizens' feedback at EPP Local Dialogues – Need for more communication on Europe at local level



Since the launch of the EPP Grassroots Engagement in Sofia last March, Members of the EPP-CoR, together with Members of the EPP Group in the European Parliament and national parties, have been busy organising EPP Local Dialogue events in their cities and regions. These exchanges in different Member States have provided the EPP with direct feedback from citizens on European issues that matter on the ground.

A first analysis of the feedback from the local events suggests that people have a similar understanding of the benefits of the EU across the continent: Peace, free movement, the Erasmus programme, EU-funded projects and the euro were highlighted as some of the positive things that the EU has brought about in people's daily lives.

People's concerns, on the other hand, seem to vary slightly depending on the country: In Ireland, the currently uncertain economic and other consequences of Brexit were mentioned by many, whereas in Romania, the lack of job and training opportunities and brain drain in the country's regions were amongst people's top concerns.

And what do people expect from their EPP Leaders? Defending European values, rights and democracy, delivering growth and jobs, as well as climate change and rural development and agricultural policy were some of the varying topics that people want the EPP and its national parties to focus on in the next 5-10 years.

But is also clear that there is a need for better communication on European issues

at local level. People want the EPP, as a European Party, to act as a link between what is happening in the EU and on the ground.



What people said at EPP Local Dialogues:

“ People do not know the good things the EU gives us every day. ”

“ The EU Institutions do not take into account the opinion of citizens. ”

“ [The EPP should] Carry info to Brussels, bring policy decisions back to local grassroots. ”

“ We need more structured dialogue with people. ”

Thanks to our active members, dozens of more local dialogues are scheduled to take place this and next year, with the aim of engaging with people and making sure that their expectations will be

taken on board by the EPP in the run up to the 2019 EU elections and beyond.

Secretariat will be happy to assist you with further information.

If you would like to organise an EPP Local Dialogue in your area, the EPP-CoR

#EPPLocalDialogue

EPP Local Dialogues – highlights

Education is the Future of Europe



On 5 October, Mayor **Gheorghe Falcă** (EPP/RO) organised an EPP Local Dialogue in Arad, Romania in the context of World Education Day, with the participation of **Franz Schausberger**, Vice-president of the EPP-CoR, representative of the Landtag of Salzburg, Austria. The debate focused on the importance of education on local and regional levels and on how education is essential for our young citizens and for the future of Europe.

The impacts of Brexit on local economy and businesses



On 24 September, Councillor **Michael Murphy** (EPP/IE) organised an EPP Local Dialogue in Clonmel, Ireland on the theme of Brexit, with the participation of the Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, **Simon Coveney** and MEP **Sean Kelly**. Brexit will bring changes and challenges across all sectors of Tipperary from small to medium size businesses, multinationals and agriculture. The local event was about creating further awareness around the challenges, providing information on the supports available at local and national level.

European issues in the Belgian-Dutch border region



Life in the border region of Belgium and the Netherlands was the topic of two EPP Local Dialogue events organised by MEP **Esther de Lange** (EPP/NL). On 26 September, an event in Maastricht with MEP **Jeroen Lenaers** (EPP/NL) brought together Dutch and Belgian students, cross-border workers and local residents to exchange views on European matters that are important to this cross-border region. On 21 November, the focus was on the municipality of Baarle-Nassau, which is partially located in both the Netherlands in Belgium. MEP **Ivo Belet** (EPP/BE) joined this local debate together with the Mayors of Baarle-Nassau and of the Belgian city of Baarle.

Stockholm region and Sweden's EU membership

Europa börjar i Stockholm

Sverige har påverkats och utvecklas med ett EU-medlemskap. Stockholmregionen anses vara en av de mest dynamiska och innovativa regionerna inom EU. Nu när Brexit har skakat oss Europa så diskuteras och värderas medlemskapet.

Majörerna av kommunerna är positiva till EU-medlemskapet, men i slutgiltig av Brexit så finns risker som faktiskt Sverige. Vår lokal dialog EU till stora möten för att ge oss på oss om vi vill se en framtida bättre och säkra förhållanden till oss. Det är inte på alla platser i hela Europa och även så i Stockholm där 19 kommuner. Då kan du som EU-medlemmare möjlighet att delta i dialogen om Europeisk framtid.

Källens dialog sker med en av Sveriges största politiska kommentatorer **Mikela Schenström**, EU experten **Måkan Jansson** samt ledamot av Regionkommittén **Jelena Drenjanin**.

Datum: Måndag den 11 november kl 18.00
Plats: Basishotelsgården 4A, Sönderplan

Anmälan sker till:
jelena.drenjanin@eppdialog.se
eller via Facebook

Vi har 10 platser och därför är anmälan nödvändig, se ovan.

Talare:

- Jelena Drenjanin**
Ledamot av Regionkommittén
- Mikela Schenström**
Politisk kommentator
- Måkan Jansson**
EU expert

Vad är EPPs lokala dialoger?

EPPs lokala dialoger är en serie möten där vi arbetar i hela Europa, där vi möter politiska och EPP-ledare i alla 27 av EU-landens EU-politiska och lokala nivåer och samla in medlemmarnas förväntningar.

Dialogerna är en del av EPPs gruppens engagemang efter 2019 års val till Europaparlamentet.

Syftet med EPPs lokala dialoger är att lyssna på medlemmarna och se till att lokala förväntningar beaktas i EU-politiken, samt att lyssna in om kommande utmaningar på lokala nivå som jämföras på lokal och regional nivå.

#EPPLocalDialogue

The majority of Swedes hold a positive view of their country's EU membership, but in the shadow of Brexit, Sweden's

role in the EU is being debated. On 19 November, EPP-CoR member **Jelena Drenjanin** hosted a citizens' dialogue with the political party **Nya Moderaterna** to hear what expectations the people living in the Swedish capital hold for the future of Europe.

Citizens' expectations ahead of 2019 European Elections



On 21 November, **László Majthényi** (EPP/HU), President of County Council of Vas Megye organised an EPP Local Dialogue on "What can we expect after the 2019 European Parliament elections?" The event, moderated by EPP-CoR member **József Ribányi**, collected citizens' expectations expectations towards their regional and local leaders ahead of the 2019 European Elections. The guest of the EPP Local Dialogue in Szombathely was EPP MEP **Gyula Winkler**.

Showcasing the local impact of EU funding



On 22 November, Mayor **Emilian Oprea** (EPP/RO) hosted an EPP Local Dialogue in Chitila, sharing the example of an EU-funded project which has supported the building of a primary and secondary school in this Romanian town.

#EPPLocalDialogue

EPP Local Dialogues – highlights

Future of CAP and opportunities at regional level



On 7 December 2018, **Csaba Borboly**, President of the Harghita County Council, Romania, hosted his second EPP Local Dialogue in the region. Members of the EPP Group in European Parliament **Herbert Dorfmann**, **Csaba Sógor** and **Gyula Winkler** participated in the debate on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy and the opportunities at local and regional level.

"Romania's EU membership has brought opportunities for local development and better infrastructure in our region. Focus needs to be put in reducing obstacles in trading local products." – Citizen from Harghita

Moving towards a digital society



Innovation in the public sector, with special focus on the digitalisation of public services, was the topic of an EPP Local Dialogue that took place in the Kujawskie-Pomorskie region in Poland on 12 December 2018. The event, which attracted over 100 local participants, was organised by EPP-CoR member **Piotr Całbecki**, Marshal of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship.

"I would like my party to focus on renewable energy, e-mobility, and the reduction of air pollution." - Citizen from Kujawskie-Pomorskie

Future of the main railway line in Finland



On 18 December, CoR Vice-President **Markku Markkula** participated in an EPP Local Dialogue in Hämeenlinna, Finland. Organised by the political party Kokoomus, the event focused on the future of the Finnish main railway line, which secures an important connection for local businesses, residents and commuters. MEP **Henna Virkkunen** spoke about the possibilities to fund the main line as part of the EU's TEN-T network. Other speakers included **Sari Rautio**, Chair of Hämeenlinna city board, local Kokoomus politicians and rail transport experts.

"I want the EPP to find a balance between larger European issues and a local approach." – Citizen from Hämeenlinna

Members can continue organising EPP Local Dialogues in 2020 and benefit from financing from the CoR - please contact the EPP-CoR secretariat for more information.

#EPPLocalDialogue

Europe starts in Attica, Greece



Employment and opportunities for the local people and youth were the topics of an EPP Local Dialogue in Peristeri, Greece on 6 March. The event was hosted by EPP-CoR member **Dimitrios Kalogeropoulos**, with MEP **Georgios Kyrtos** and 1st Vice-President of EPP-CoR **Eleni Loucaïdou** also taking part in the engaging debates with local residents on how the EU is supporting the Attica region.



EU working for the Brussels region



On 5 February, EPP-CoR member **Brigitte Grouwels** hosted an EPP Local Dialogue in Brussels. MEPs **Tom Vandekendelaere** and **Ivo Belet** joined

the discussions on what the EU is doing for the benefit of the people living in the region of Brussels.

Local aspects of the implementation of the European Roma-strategy



Livia Jaroka, Vice-president of the European Parliament, joined the EPP Local Dialogue in Heves County, Hungary on 26 February to discuss how to support the implementation of EU and national Roma strategies at the local level. "The status of the Roma communities is important for Heves County as a whole", said **Robert Szabo**, President of the Heves County Council, and continued: "We can work towards real solutions in our county by encouraging the participation of the Roma in the different programmes and by getting to know them better."

Border regions and future enlargement of the European Union



On 1 February, an EPP Local Dialogue took place in Nyíregyháza, Hungary hosted by EPP-CoR member **Oszkár Seszták** and with the participation of MEP **Andrea Bocsko**. The event

attracted many locals to discuss the future of the European Union from the perspective of border regions.

EU support to local development

On 18 February, **István Bóka**, Mayor and Member of EPP-CoR hosted a local debate in Balatonfüred, Hungary with **Tibor Navracsics**, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, **Szabolcs Takács**, State Secretary for EU Affairs. The discussions focused on the next EU budget and the perspectives of EU development for the Lake Balaton area.

Dialogues bringing the EU closer to its citizens



On 25 February, **Adrian Teban**, Mayor and member of EPP-CoR organised an EPP Local Dialogue in Cugir, Romania on subsidiarity and multilevel governance in view of the upcoming European elections. "These dialogues are an opportunity to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the European Union. The populism in many European countries is also a result of misinformation", Teban said. MEP **Siegfried Muresan** and **Florin Roman**, member of the Romanian parliament from the National Liberal Party (PNL) also took part in the debates. "It is very important for the decisions to be taken as close as possible to the citizens because nobody knows better what is best for a community than those who live there and those who administer the community", said **Siegfried Muresan**.

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