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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Fitto
on behalf of the European Commission
(10.1.2025)

In her political guidelines, the President of the Commission underscored the need for a policy-based budget that is more focused, more impactful, and simpler with fewer programmes and a stronger linkage between reforms and investments. It should build on the lessons learned from the implementation of EU programmes financed through the current Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) budget and NextGenerationEU. The future budget will include a strengthened cohesion and growth policy and build on the commitment to defend a fair and sufficient income for farmers, with a common agricultural policy that finds the right balance between incentives, investments and regulation. The Commission will engage with the EU institutions, including the European Parliament, and stakeholders in this process.

2. In her political guidelines, the President also emphasised that regions are at the centre of the strengthened EU's cohesion and growth policy. In its Communication on the ninth Cohesion Report¹, the Commission underscored the importance of partnership and multi-level governance and highlighted that people on the ground have more knowledge of the exact needs of their territory. With a view to the MFF post-2027, these founding principles will need to be preserved. The future cohesion policy will be designed in partnership with national, regional and local authorities. The Commission will address regional and social disparities. Specific challenges of rural areas need to be acknowledged - while responding to the concerns of people in rural areas including through the follow up on the report of the Strategic Dialogue.

¹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the ninth Cohesion Report (COM(2024)149, adopted by the College on 27 March 2024): https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/information-sources/cohesion-report_en