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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Fitto
on behalf of the European Commission
(5.9.2025)

Economic, social and territorial cohesion is a core element of the EU budget and will remain so. Cohesion policy puts a particular focus on disadvantaged regions – including less developed and outermost regions -, and citizens, helping tackle unemployment. Thanks to its place-based character, it addresses urban, rural and mountainous challenges or challenges linked to the remoteness of certain regions.

Through targeted amendments to the fund-specific regulations, the Commission's mid-term review legislative proposals¹, adopted on 1 April 2025, will make cohesion policy more agile and aligned with today's priorities by strengthening support for investments in defence, affordable housing, water resilience, the energy transition and competitiveness.

In its proposal for the 2028-2034 multiannual financial framework of 16 July 2025², the Commission proposes to allocate EUR 865 billion to the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security, of which EUR 783 billion for the National and Regional Partnership (NRP) Plans. These Plans will streamline funding, enhance policy coherence, focus on results and empower Member States and regions to tailor support to their specific needs. For an NRP Plan to be approved, Member States will also have to demonstrate that it provides an effective and balanced response to the specific needs and challenges of all regions, and concentrates resources on less developed regions, which will continue to benefit from a higher EU cofinancing rate. Furthermore, social inclusion is reinforced by a binding 14% spending target, supporting employment, skills and housing.

¹ COM (2025) 123; COM (2025) 164.

² COM (2025) 570-571.