

"EU Budget risks being a failure for people and a gift to populism"; warns CoR President Apostolos Tzitzikostas



□□□□**The European Committee of the Regions (CoR) asks to preserve funds for hospitals, schools, local transport, environment, universities and small businesses.**

“I am launching, on behalf of the European Committee of the Regions, an appeal to avoid cutting investment that helps make people’s lives better in cities and regions” said the CoR President, Apostolos Tzitzikostas, two days ahead of the Special European Summit on the EU budget.

“We must continue to invest taxpayers’ money in local communities, as this benefits both EU budget net payers and net beneficiaries. Reducing EU funds for hospitals and schools, local transport, environment, universities and small businesses, would be a failure for people and a gift to populism” added the CoR President.

“For the majority of our Member States, EU funding for cohesion, agriculture and rural development accounts for around 50% of total public investment. This is not only EU solidarity in action, but a boost for economic growth, job creation and the single market, that benefits us all”, continued President Tzitzikostas.

“I am deeply concerned about the risks of undermining those policies that bring Europe closer to citizens, and citizens closer to Europe. We are aware of the financial impact of Brexit, but the costs should not be placed on the shoulders of cities and regions. This is not about money, it is an investment on the future of our people”, he concluded.

The Vice-President of the European Committee of the Regions, Vasco Alves

Cordeiro, also commented in view of the Summit.

“The last MFF proposal hits hard cohesion policy by a decrease of 12% compared to the current framework and with co-financing rates still below the current period. Deciding to reduce the support to regional development, notably through cohesion policy, will not bring the EU closer to its citizens. Regions and cities will not be able to do more for their citizens and the EU with less EU support. The EU needs to take into account the growing inequalities above all. This MFF is the only chance EU leaders have to put the EU on the path towards sustainable equality and a just transition that leaves no places and no people behind. A failure would cost the credibility of the European Union project. Time has come for EU Members States to put the money where their mouth is.”

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