

## Letter of appreciation for the participation in the informal Meeting of EU Ministers responsible for cohesion policy, territorial cohesion and urban matters on 20-21 May

Warsaw, 28 May 2025

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation for your participation in the informal Meeting of EU Ministers responsible for cohesion policy, territorial cohesion and urban matters held on 20-21 May 2025 in Warsaw.

We had a unique opportunity to hold a debate on regional development in the extended format of the Ministers of these three portfolios. Such a meeting was organised for the first time during the Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU in 2011. I am very glad that 14 years later we were also able to gather in this format.

I am sure we all felt inspired and encouraged by the **insightful keynote speech given by Professor Andrés Rodríguez-Pose** and the opinion entitled 'Cohesion policy as a key driver for achieving EU goals and reforms: how to further build on its performance-based approach while respecting decentralisation, partnership and multilevel governance' **presented by the European Committee of the Regions**. We highly value all your thoughts and opinions raised during the meeting. Some of our joint key messages are:

- economic, social and territorial cohesion is one of key EU priorities and future cohesion policy should be based

- on its core values and principles, such as shared management, place-based approach, multi-level governance and partnership principle;
- territorially sensitive policies, including cohesion policy, have an important role to play in addressing the challenges and priorities of the EU, which affect European regions in different ways;
  - an EU territorial development vision should guide policy development for a long-term impacts;
  - each territory is unique, has its own potential to be unlocked and individual needs to be addressed, and therefore tailor-made solutions should be continued, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach;
  - the role of local and regional authorities is of utmost importance - in the future, the participation of sub-national authorities should be strengthened at every stage of policy design and implementation;
  - cities of all sizes are indispensable to the achievement of EU goals and priorities;
  - interregional, cross-border and transnational cooperation is significant and should be continued in the next programming period.

I would like to especially thank you for your efforts and contribution to the joint declaration, the so-called Warsaw Declaration on territorial dimension. It offers a strong political message to place cohesion, integrated territorial development and multi-level governance at the core of the EU future development. Please, find attached the approved version of the document.

I may assure you that as the Presidency, we will continue to actively promote the Warsaw Declaration on territorial dimension and use it as a reference point in upcoming political and technical debates. Therefore, I would like to kindly invite

you to do the same by sharing the Declaration with relevant authorities, institutions and stakeholders in your countries, especially with those responsible for EU sectoral policies.

I look forward to our further cooperation,

Yours sincerely,

Katarzyna Pełczyńska-Nałęcz

Minister of Development Funds and Regional Policy

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