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**CALL FOR PAPERS**

**CHALLENGES FOR THE NEW COHESION POLICY IN 2014-2020:**

**AN ACADEMIC AND POLICY DEBATE**

**SECOND EU COHESION POLICY CONFERENCE**

**RIGA, LATVIA**

**4th -6th FEBRUARY 2015**

In 2013, the budgetary and regulatory reform of Cohesion policy for 2014-20 was finally agreed following the most extensive process of reflection, consultation and analysis in the history of the policy. The cornerstones of the reformed policy are a more strategic use of the renamed European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), concentration of spending on the objectives of Europe 2020, improved performance and achievement of results, better governance, and more attention to urban and local development. However, as the recently published Sixth Cohesion Report makes clear, the new ESIF programmes face a difficult task, with increasing regional and urban disparities and cuts in government spending.

Against this background, the Second EU Cohesion Policy Conference organised by the RSA and DG Regio, together with the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, aims to take stock of the challenges and opportunities for Cohesion policy in 2014-20. It will bring together a limited number of participants from academia, the European institutions and Member State authorities to debate where Cohesion policy is going and how its contribution to growth and jobs can be maximised.

Papers are invited on the following questions and themes which will form the basis for workshop sessions, panel debates and discussion groups at the Conference.

1. **Economic geography and Cohesion policy: how are the economic and social challenges for European Structural & Investment Funds changing?**

* the implications of the crisis for regional and urban disparities and convergence in Europe
* the contributions and limits of Cohesion policy in dealing with the crisis and its legacy
* the regional dimensions of Europe 2020 and the scope for the Funds to promote smart, sustainable and inclusive growth
* the role of the funds in addressing youth unemployment

1. **Institutions and governance: what can Cohesion policy do to strengthen public administration and effective management of the Funds?**

* administrative reform, capacity-building and Cohesion policy
* strategic management and delivery of Cohesion policy programmes
* integration of Funds and policy outcomes
* the scope for conditionalities to improve the policy environment for the Funds

1. **Performance and results: how can Cohesion policy resources be used most effectively and efficiently?**

* the achievements of Structural and Cohesion Funds in 2007-13
* the contribution of performance frameworks to transparency and accountability
* improving methods for Cohesion policy evaluation

1. **Instruments: what kind of Cohesion policy interventions make a difference?**

* the role of financial instruments in improving access to finance in less-developed regions
* the use of integrated investments to promote sustainable urban development
* lessons from local and community development for 2014-20
* improving the visibility of results from European Territorial Cooperation programmes and projects

1. **EU economic governance and Cohesion policy: what are the implications of governance reforms for Cohesion policy**

* the relationships between Cohesion policy and EU macroeconomic governance objectives
* inter-institutional relations in economic governance and Cohesion policy
* scenarios for economic and monetary union and implications for Cohesion policy

**Submission of papers**

Please submit proposals for papers in the form of a 500-word abstract through the Regional Studies Association online portal (https://members.regionalstudies.org/lounge/Meetings/Meeting?ID=120) by **31 October 2014**. Given the purpose and audience of the conference, the abstracts should demonstrate policy implications or lessons insofar as possible.

Proposers will be notified of the selected papers by 30 November 2014, with the expectation of a full paper being submitted by 11 January 2015.

**Conference organisation**

It should be noted that the organisation of the Conference is being managed jointly by the RSA, DG Regio and the Latvian EU Presidency.

Academic organiser: Professor John Bachtler, European Policies Research Centre, University of Strathclyde, UK

RSA organiser: Daniela Carl, Email [daniela.carl@regionalstudies.org](mailto:daniela.carl@regionalstudies.org)

**Contact**

Please contact Elizabeth Mitchell at [elizabeth.mitchell@regionalstudies.org](mailto:elizabeth.mitchell@regionalstudies.org) for further details and questions regarding this event or visit the conference’s website at <http://www.regionalstudies.org/conferences/conference/challenges-for-the-new-cohesion-policy-in-2014-2020-an-academic-and-policy>