Wolfgang Petzold

**EU cohesion policy and the regions: after the reform is before the reform**

Although the 2021-2027 funding period of EU cohesion policy has only just begun with around 400 national and regional programmes expected to receive almost EUR 380 billion from EU funds, there is already pressure to reform the policy. With the EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), there is now an instrument that serves similar funding priorities with an apparently simpler administrative model in which regional aspects no longer play a role. At the same time, cohesion policy is meant to continue to promote the economic, social and territorial cohesion of the regions in the long term, react more flexibly to new challenges and crises and help to implement the EU's rule of law mechanism. The article aims to answer the following questions: (1) What role do regions play in EU cohesion policy’s roll-out in the 2021-2027 period? (2) Does the RRF represent the “silent reform” of cohesion policy’s delivery arrangements? (3) Which topics and left-overs from the 2021 reform could inform the policy’s post-2027 design? (4) How does the possible roadmap for reform look like and what options are at hand for regions and cities to influence it?

Angaben zur Person:

Wolfgang Petzold, EU-Beamter im Ruhestand.