



## North Calotte Council

### Statement on Cohesion Policy

The North Calotte Region, encompassing the northernmost EU regions of Sweden (Norrbotten), Finland (Lapland), and Norway (Finnmark, Troms, Nordland), is in the core of geopolitical tensions. This sparsely populated area faces challenging climatic conditions and long distances to European market

The North Calotte Council endorses Cohesion Policy while advocating for focused, effective, and simplified improvements to ensure a greater impact in fostering a just, competitive, and safer Europe. Based on the above, **the North Calotte Council wants to highlight** the following to be taken into notice both for national and EU consideration in the next programming period.

**Cohesion and Security Link:** The Arctic, as a geopolitical hotspot, positions the North Calotte Region as a significant border area for Western Europe. Addressing its specific needs and potential is integral to EU security policy, making strong Cohesion Policy essential. **It is crucial to maintain the cohesion policy's strategic, long-term approach, which connects local and regional efforts to EU objectives. This creates an attractive society where people want to live and work, which in turn contributes to a robust and safe society.**

**Coherence with EU Strategic Priorities:** Cohesion Policy should better align with broader EU objectives, embracing greater flexibility in fund usage rather than creating new instruments for every challenge. It is crucial for the region, where small organizations and micro-enterprises face funding access issues due to complex procedures.

**Community Engagement:** Local community play a vital role in EU policy processes, connecting EU initiatives with community needs. Grassroots initiatives require tools to build capacity in line with EU objectives, supported by a result-oriented approach and effective monitoring mechanisms. A place-based approach is essential to effectively address the specific challenges in each region and sub-region. The North Calotte exemplifies a region with limited capacity that, with targeted support, can unlock potential benefits for all of Europe.

**Competitiveness from the Bottom Up:** Achieving competitiveness requires a bottom-up approach that empowers local communities to enhance their strengths and invest in long-term capacity and innovation. Principles of partnership and multilevel governance are crucial for aligning policies with actual needs, fostering collective commitment, and facilitating cross-border collaboration.

**Focus on Long-term Objectives:** Cohesion Policy should prioritize the promotion of local innovation ecosystems to attract capital and investments. This aligns with EU goals, strengthens competitive value chains, and fosters sustainable and inclusive growth across Europe.