



**NEMZETI
KÖZZSZOLGÁLATI
EGYETEM**
LUDOVIKA

Cohesion Summit 2025

Venue: Várkert Bazár

Date and Time: 21 October 2025, 13.30 – 17.30

Expected number of participants: 80

Press event, held in English

Organizers:

Ministry of Public Administration and Regional Development
Ludovika University of Public Services, Eötvös József Research Centre, Europe Strategy
Research Institute

Background:

On 18 April 2024, the Europe Strategy Research Institute organized the first Cohesion Summit at the University of Public Service (UPS). As a continuation of this initiative, the second international Cohesion Conference will take place on 21 October 2025.

As emphasized by Tibor Navracsics, Minister of Public Administration and Regional Development and founder of the Institute for European Strategy, cohesion policy is one of the European Union's most successful policies, and Hungary has a vested interest in its future success. Reducing economic and social disparities among EU regions represents a decisive challenge for the future of the entire Union.

Building on the experience of Hungary's EU Council Presidency in the second half of 2024, the conference aims to examine key areas such as promoting comprehensive cohesion, addressing regional inequalities, and adapting policies to a changing economic environment, with particular attention to bridging the innovation gap observed in less developed regions.

The aim of **Cohesion Summit II** is to foster a forward-looking dialogue on strengthening cohesion, drawing on the outcomes of the ongoing European debates, within the ever-evolving framework of the EU's single market.

Central Theme: *What will the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) look like?*



Programme:

MC: Rawand Ben Brahim, Associate Researcher, Europe Strategy Research Institute, Eötvös József Research Centre, University of Public Service

Plenary Sessions

13.30–13.45 Changes in the new programming period – examining the place of Cohesion Policy in a new framework 15'

Tibor Navracsics, Minister, Ministry of Public Administration and Regional Development

13.45–14.00 Cohesion Policy to stay strong from inside 15'

Kata Tüttő, President of the European Committee of the Regions

14.00–14.15 MFF post 2028 – The Hungarian Position 15'

Balázs Péter Molnár, Deputy State Secretary for European Policy, Ministry of European Union Affairs

14.15–14.25 Keynote on Slovenia's Perspective 10'

Aleksander Jevšek, Slovenian Minister of Development, Strategic Project and Cohesion

14.25–14.35 Keynote on Romania's Perspective 10'

Dragoș Pîslaru, Romanian Minister of European Investments and Projects

14.35–14.50 An Ambitious Budget for a Stronger Europe 15'

Liliána Zúgó, Senior Economic Analyst, Representation of the European Commission in Hungary

14.50–15.10 Regional Disparities in a Cohesive Europe 20'

Bernadett Petri, Ministerial Commissioner, Ministry of Public Administration and Regional Development, Director, Europe Strategy Research Institute, Eötvös József Research Centre, University of Public Service

15.00–15.30 Coffee break

15.30–16.30 Roundtable 1.

The future of Cohesion – under what conditions can EU regional policy be sustained in the next financial cycle – "Right to stay – the future of regional policy"

This discussion will explore the long-term sustainability of EU cohesion policy in light of the upcoming Multiannual Financial Framework. Speakers will examine the conditions under which regional policy can remain a cornerstone of European integration, while addressing shifting political, economic, and demographic realities. The debate will focus on how cohesion funds can continue to reduce disparities between regions, while adapting to new challenges such as innovation divides and global competition. Ultimately, the roundtable seeks to highlight whether cohesion can maintain its role as the "right to stay" for less developed regions within the Union.

Panelists:



Bernadett Petri, Ministerial Commissioner, Ministry of Public Administration and Regional Development, Director, Europe Strategy Research Institute, Eötvös József Research Centre, University of Public Service

Bence Cseke, Head of Unit, Hungarian Development Promotion Office

Richard Schenk, Research Fellow, MCC Brussels

Moderator: Viktória Lilla Pató, Associate Researcher, Europe Strategy Research Institute, Eötvös József Research Centre, University of Public Service

16.30–17.15 Roundtable 2.

The Multiannual Financial Framework at the service of competitiveness within and beyond EU borders

This panel will analyze how the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) can be shaped to strengthen Europe's competitiveness both internally and globally. The discussion will address how financial instruments can be designed to foster innovation, productivity, and sustainable growth across all regions. Particular emphasis will be placed on balancing cohesion with strategic investments that enhance Europe's position in the global economy. By linking funding priorities to competitiveness, the roundtable will explore how the EU can remain resilient in an increasingly interconnected world.

Panelists:

Gábor Kutasi, Head of Research Institute of Competitiveness and Economy, Ludovika University of Public Service

Juhász Tamás, Senior Economic Analyst, Representation of the European Commission in Hungary

Borbála Schenk, Head of Unit, National Research, Development and Innovation Office

Orsolya Ráczova, Senior Analyst, Eurasiagroup

Moderator: Réka Csepeli, Senior Researcher, Europe Strategy Research Institute, Eötvös József Research Centre, University of Public Service

17.15–17.30 Concluding remarks