



25.4.2017

OPINION

of the Committee on Budgets

for the Committee on Regional Development

on Building blocks for a post-2020 EU cohesion policy
(2016/2326(INI))

Rapporteur: Jan Olbrycht

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Budgets calls on the Committee on Regional Development, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Underlines that cohesion policy is the most visible, tangible and quantifiable expression of European solidarity and fairness and has been instrumental in mitigating the effects of the recent crisis within the EU; stresses that over the last few decades cohesion policy has, as a structural policy, become the main EU investment policy and a tool for attaining the general political objectives of the Union in addition to the specific goals enshrined in the Treaties; is of the opinion that cohesion policy post 2020 should continue to serve this goal, as well as remaining a policy for all Member States and regions; considers that this policy must not be weakened under any circumstances, Brexit included, and that its share in the total EU budget should be maintained in the future and not weakened by siphoning off means to pay for new challenges;
2. Notes the shortcomings of the financial planning and implementation system that led to the accumulation of unpaid bills and the build-up of an unprecedented backlog that rolled over from the last multiannual financial framework (MFF) to the current one; is increasingly concerned about the slow start-up of the implementation of the 2014-2020 operational programmes, which may lead to the same situation in the future and hinder growth; calls on the Commission to come up with a structural solution to solve such problems before the end of the current MFF and to prevent them from spilling over into the next MFF; underlines that the level of payment appropriations must match past commitments, especially towards the end of the period, when the level of payment claims from the Member States increases significantly;
3. Underlines the increasing need for flexibility in the implementation of the EU budget as a whole, including in cohesion policy, in order to address new challenges during a programming period and facilitate reprogramming as and where may be necessary; encourages the Commission to explore different solutions in this respect; considers the creation of a reserve at EU level an interesting option in this context; believes, however, that efforts in this regard should be made both at EU level and at national and regional levels; calls for more flexibility for Member States and regions, and for the swift allocation of the performance reserve, while supporting the shared management implementation method; stresses that the success of the shared management system hinges on Member States' programming and implementation efforts, as well as on the overall management and control system and its proper and sound functioning;
4. Encourages the Commission to reflect on different indicators beyond GDP which would allow for a fair distribution of funds under cohesion policy, in order to respond to newly emerging types of inequalities between EU regions over and above those relating to economic development;
5. Stresses the importance of espousing a simplified and coherent approach to cohesion policy, so as to streamline the many different sets of rules and make financing more efficient;
6. Notes the increasing role of financial instruments which, by their very nature, provide a

complementary means of financial support from the EU budget, as compared to subsidies and grants; encourages the Commission to consider a proper balance between grants and financial instruments under cohesion policy in the next MFF, while stressing that financial instruments are not suitable for all types of intervention, many of which are notably supported under cohesion policy; underlines the fact that the growing use of financial instruments should not lead to a reduction in the Union budget in general;

7. Calls for sufficient auditing and control of programme financing, so as to ensure scrutiny and maximise the visibility of the cohesion policy;
8. Points to the importance of normative stability and maintains that continuity of regulation can do much to ensure that EU funding is used efficiently; calls on the Commission, when drawing up the implementation provisions for cohesion policy under the next MFF, to keep changes to a minimum so as to enable the administrations responsible for implementing and overseeing EU funds to benefit from experience and the lessons that have been learned;
9. Points out, in view of the discussion on the duration of the next MFF, that the multiannual nature of cohesion policy is of crucial importance; calls, therefore, for either the maintenance of its seven-year programming period or the establishment of a programming period of five + five years with an obligatory mid-term revision.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	24.4.2017
Result of final vote	+: 26 -: 3 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Lefteris Christoforou, Gérard Deprez, José Manuel Fernandes, Eider Gardiazabal Rubial, Ingeborg Gräßle, Bernd Kölmel, Zbigniew Kuźmiuk, Clare Moody, Siegfried Mureşan, Jan Olbrycht, Paul Rübig, Petri Sarvamaa, Jordi Solé, Patricija Šulin, Monika Vana, Daniele Viotti, Tiemo Wölken, Marco Zanni, Stanisław Żółtek
Substitutes present for the final vote	Ivana Maletić, Pier Antonio Panzeri, Nils Torvalds, Marco Valli, Derek Vaughan, Rainer Wieland, Tomáš Zdechovský, Nicola Caputo
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Karin Kadenbach, Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

26	+
ALDE	Gérard Deprez, Nils Torvalds
ECR	Zbigniew Kuźmiuk
EFDD	Marco Valli
PPE	Lefteris Christoforou, José Manuel Fernandes, Ingeborg Gräßle, Ivana Maletić, Siegfried Mureşan, Jan Olbrycht, Paul Rübig, Petri Sarvamaa, Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso, Rainer Wieland, Tomáš Zdechovský, Patricija Šulin
S&D	Nicola Caputo, Eider Gardiazabal Rubial, Karin Kadenbach, Clare Moody, Pier Antonio Panzeri, Derek Vaughan, Daniele Viotti, Tiemo Wölken
VERTS/ALE	Jordi Solé, Monika Vana

3	-
ECR	Bernd Kölmel
ENF	Stanisław Żółtek Marco Zanni

0	0

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention