



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Committee on Regional Development

2011/2157(INI)

19.10.2011

OPINION

of the Committee on Regional Development

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs

on the review of the European Neighbourhood Policy
(2011/2157(INI))

Rapporteur: Lena Kolarska-Bobińska

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SUGGESTIONS

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

1. Considers that the territorial cooperation principles apply also to external borders and are a key tool to improve EU economic development as well as the EU's overall ENP political goals, including the promotion of democracy; takes the view that these targets can only be achieved with the cooperation of both civil society and regional and local authorities, in order both to find practical ways of meeting citizens' needs on the ground and to take into account the diversity of territorial situations within the ENP countries while promoting the principles of subsidiarity and multi-level governance; underlines that the Commission should extend its integrated approach in order to clearly support the local and regional authorities as one of the pillars of the ENP and guarantors of the general interest;
2. Considers that the ENP, in order to reduce the development gap and tensions between cross-border communities, should support practical projects by cross-border local and regional authorities towards sustainable mutual development, social and economic cohesion and a strong business regulatory framework, free of corruption; believes that cross-border local and regional authorities should learn to better coordinate and exchange their best practices in order to exploit shared development opportunities;
3. Stresses the high potential of European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTCs) involving regions beyond the external borders; encourages specific agreements with neighbouring third countries with regard to the introduction of national laws allowing EGTC structures under their national laws and interstate agreements enabling local and regional authorities of third countries to participate in EGTCs;
4. Stresses the outstanding role of Euroregions for the achievement of the cohesion policy goals and encourages the Commission to promote and help their development, particularly in border regions, in order to boost Euroregions' role within the ENP policy;
5. Considers that the future ENP should take into account the role of the outermost regions in the EU external relations policy; notes that they represent a real opportunity to influence EU external policy since they allow the EU on the one hand to have closer relations with a large number of third countries and on the other hand to tackle complex issues like irregular migration; calls on the Commission to provide greater flexibility as regards innovative funding opportunities for selected cohesion policy projects so as to enable these to become established in, and benefit, both European regions and those in non-member countries;
6. Is of the opinion that the new ENP approach must allow the EU's macro-regional strategies and that the potential of the EU macroregions which include EU neighbouring countries should be fully used for better coordination of priorities and projects of common interest to the EU and the ENP countries in order to achieve mutually positive results and to optimise invested resources;
7. Underlines that the ENP should be considered broadly in order to fuel the economic development of bordering areas; stresses the positive impact of relaxing visa requirements

for the implementation of cross-border cooperation (CBC) projects, local border traffic and the development of regional markets, particularly regarding such groups as students, researchers, businesspeople, artists or journalists; in this respect, calls on the Commission to adjust the definition of 'border area' according to territorial needs in order – where such action would be desirable – to increase the number of holders of local border travel rights, allowing them to move freely in the whole border region;

8. Understands that the Commission's DG Regional Development possesses vast experience of the management of the ERDF and is convinced that it would be in the interest of ENPI goals to draw on DG Regio's advice regarding the management of funds; therefore believes that the management of these financial tools in relation to CBC programmes should be returned to DG Regio, which was responsible for it in the past;
9. Points out that the role of regions is crucial to ensure the success of long-term social and economic reforms and guarantee sustainable development; considers, therefore, that partner countries should actively mobilise domestic resources and involve civil society and business community representatives in project implementation, broadening their responsibilities with a view to achieving favourable results;
10. Believes that the strengthening of the Eastern Partnership will be central for the development of EU border regions; stresses that the Eastern Partnership and regional development must work hand in hand and should encourage bi- and multilateral cooperation, such as free trade agreements, as well as properly funded joint projects, such as cultural and civil society exchanges;
11. Stresses that the Barcelona Process and the Mediterranean Union should be revitalised in relation to regional development, encouraging appropriate bi- and multilateral cooperation, such as free trade agreements or cultural and civil society exchanges, especially in the light of the recent encouraging events in North Africa;
12. Stresses that both the Eastern Partnership and Mediterranean Union are vital to regional development; underlines that, important political events notwithstanding, these policies should be treated in an even-handed manner, so as to ensure a properly balanced approach, especially in the financial and institutional sense;

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	6.10.2011
Result of final vote	+: 40 -: 2 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	François Alfonsi, Luís Paulo Alves, Charalampos Angourakis, Catherine Bearder, Jean-Paul Besset, Victor Boştinaru, Philip Bradbourn, Zuzana Brzobohatá, John Bufton, Alain Cadec, Salvatore Caronna, Tamás Deutsch, Rosa Estaràs Ferragut, Brice Hortefeux, Danuta Maria Hübner, Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmenova, Juozas Imbrasas, María Irigoyen Pérez, Seán Kelly, Mojca Kleva, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Ramona Nicole Mănescu, Riikka Manner, Iosif Matula, Erminia Mazzoni, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Jan Olbrycht, Monika Smolková, Georgios Stavrakakis, Nuno Teixeira, Michail Tremopoulos, Viktor Uspaskich, Oldřich Vlasák, Kerstin Westphal, Joachim Zeller
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Jens Geier, Lena Kolarska-Bobińska, Maurice Ponga, Elisabeth Schroedter, Patrice Tirolien, Gionmmaria Uggias, Derek Vaughan, Sabine Verheyen