

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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## **REPORT**

on best practices in the field of regional policy and obstacles to the use of the structural funds  
(2008/2061(INI))

Committee on Regional Development

Rapporteur: Constanze Angela Krehl

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## MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

### on best practices in the field of regional policy and obstacles to the use of the structural funds (2008/2061(INI))

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the URBACT Programme, carried out as part of the URBAN initiative, which is facilitating and developing good practices and exchanges of experience involving more than 200 European Union cities,
- having regard to its resolution of 21 October 2008 on governance and partnership at national and regional levels and a basis for projects in the sphere of regional policy<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 of 5 July 2006 on the European Regional Development Fund<sup>3</sup>,
- having regard to Articles 158 and 159 of the EC Treaty
- having regard to the Presidency Conclusions of the European Council held in Lisbon on 23 and 24 March 2000,
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 19 June 2008 entitled Fifth progress report on economic and social cohesion: Growing regions, growing Europe (COM(2008)0371)
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 6 October 2008 entitled Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion: Turning territorial diversity into strength<sup>1</sup> (COM(2008)0616),
- having regard to the Commission Communication entitled Regions for economic change (COM(2006)0675),
- having regard to the study by its Structural and Cohesion Policies Policy Department entitled Good practice in the field of regional policy and obstacles to the use of the structural funds,
- having regard to the public hearing of 17 July 2008 organised by its Committee on Regional Development,
- having regard to Rule 45 of its Rules of Procedure,

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<sup>1</sup> Texts adopted, P6\_TA(2008)0492.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 239, 1.9.2006, p. 248.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L 210, 31.7.2006, p. 1.

- having regard to the report of the Committee on Regional Development and the opinion of the Committee on Budgets (A6-0095/2009),
- A. whereas cohesion policy is among the most important policy areas in the European Union, not only in terms of its budget but also and in particular because it is an essential pillar in the process of European integration and owing to its importance for the social, economic and territorial cohesion of the European Union and the development of its 268 regions, reducing development deficits and disparities and improving life for all EU citizens.
- B. whereas the regions of the European Union are confronted with broadly similar challenges, though their impact differs greatly from region to region, given their specificities as regards their character (for example, island or mountain regions) and population: globalisation and the accelerated economic restructuring that goes with it, the opening up of trade relations, the consequences of the technological revolution, and climate change, the development of the knowledge-based economy, demographic change, depopulation and the rise in immigration.
- C. whereas the best results, strengthening the knowledge base and improving competition, are often achieved in projects by means of cooperation between the public sector, businesses, the education sector and local stakeholders,
- D. whereas cohesion policy cannot develop its full potential to meet these challenges since potential applicants for aid are faced with major obstacles in relation to utilising the European Union's structural funds, including:
  - excessive bureaucracy
  - too many complex regulations, which in certain cases are available on-line only, thereby excluding many potential beneficiaries of these funds from access to these resources
  - frequent modification, by certain Member States, of eligibility criteria and requisite documentation;
  - lack of transparency in decision-making processes and co-financing schemes and delays in payments
  - slow and cumbersome centrally managed administration in Member States and the application of rules in a way which adds to the existing bureaucracy, and leads to inadequate provision of information,
  - inadequate decentralised administrative capacity and different models of regional administration in Member States, which prevent the existence of comparative data and the exchange of best practices
  - inadequate arrangements for interregional coordination,
  - lack of a functioning cooperation scheme between national, regional and local authorities,
- E. whereas a number of the current errors in the field of cohesion policy can be traced back to these existing obstacles,
- F. whereas the delays in implementing structural policy are due in part to the excessive rigidity of procedures and that, consequently, consideration should be given to

simplifying those procedures and clearly dividing responsibilities and competences among the EU, the Member States and regional and local authorities,

1. underlines that, although the added value of disseminating best practices among the broader public in terms of improved communication and cost-benefit has to be taken into account, attempts to introduce those practices in EU regional policy should be directed chiefly to Managing Authorities, guiding them to draw up rules governing access to structural resources, so that exchanges of information and experience can contribute to a substantive improvement in project quality, by providing solutions to joint problems and choosing more effective and targeted interventions;
2. Points to the need to simplify the procedures governing the implementation of Structural Funds projects and programmes, particularly as regards management and control systems; welcomes, therefore, in this regard, the regulatory revision of the Structural Funds package in response to the current financial crisis; eagerly awaits the further Commission proposals in this area, to be announced within the next few months.

### ***Removal of obstacles***

3. Calls on the Commission, with a view to removing the above obstacles, inter alia:
  - to gear the evaluation criteria for projects co-financed by the structural funds of the European Union to the long term,
  - not to assess innovative projects using the same evaluation criteria as apply to other types of projects, but to develop specific evaluation criteria - tailored to the innovative nature of the projects - that in essence allow for a higher failure rate,
  - to reduce the maximum period for which project documents must be stored, for the purposes of monitoring by the Commission, from the current ten years to three years,
  - to draw up special policy measures and new qualitative indicators for regions with specific geographical characteristics, such as mountainous and sparsely populated regions, and the outermost, border and island regions, and accordingly to adapt the territorial scale of policy interventions, with the aim of promoting territorial cohesion in the European Union;
  - to simplify the control system and seek to introduce a single control system
  - to adapt standards in the field of public contracts with a view to simplification and harmonisation;
  - to coordinate the rules on cost eligibility with the Member States;
  - to ensure advance payments to beneficiaries to a greater extent;
  - to improve coordination of measures carried out and co-financed under the Cohesion policy and under CAP II (Development of rural areas);
  - to make technical aid programmes more flexible;
  - to introduce mechanisms to promote network cooperation and facilitate group project management;
  - to lighten the administrative burden created by these projects and to keep it in proportion to the size of a project
  - to simplify, clarify and accelerate project practices and make them more result-oriented;

- to actively encourage Member States to set-up an effective system of cooperation and responsibility sharing between national, regional and local levels;
  - to facilitate access to funds through closer cooperation with national governments to reduce processing time
  - to prepare a timetable to take active steps to remove obstacles and improve the accessibility to funds;
4. Recommends that the Commission go further and develop a concerted, generally accessible, approach to the interregional exchange of best practices, with a view to enabling actors involved in cohesion policy to draw on the experiences of others;
  5. Points out expressly that identifying best practices must not lead to additional red tape for applicants and project promoters;
  6. Demands that bureaucracy in the use of Structural Funds be kept to a minimum, and not needlessly increased by individual conditions imposed by the Member States;
  7. Reiterates its support for practice aimed at ensuring that each Member State produces an annual national declaration of assurance covering Community funds coming under the shared management arrangement, and calls for this to become standard practice;

***General and subject-specific criteria for identifying best practices***

8. Welcomes the approach laid down in the context of the Regions for Economic Change initiative, firstly, to identify and to publicise best practices with the annual award of 'REGIO STARS' and, secondly, to set up a website for best practices; draws attention to the limited effectiveness of an Internet site alone;
9. Criticises the lack of transparency in the Commission's objective bases for identifying best practices;
10. Calls on the Commission, in the light of the widespread use of the term 'best practices', and also the frequent parallel use of the terms 'good practices' or 'success stories', to draw up a set of criteria tailored specifically to cohesion policy that will enable these 'best practices' to be distinguished from those applying to other projects;
11. Recommends that the Commission take account of the following points in identifying best practices:
  - project quality
  - assurance of partnership principle
  - sustainability of the measure concerned
  - positive contribution to equal opportunities and gender mainstreaming
  - innovativeness of the project
  - integrated approach between the EU's sectoral and territorial policies
  - effective use of resources
  - duration of project before implementation
  - implementation of the project on time and to plan
  - significant driving force for the region or the EU overall
  - impact on employment
  - facilities for SMEs

- the facilitation of networking and territorial cooperation between regions
  - transferability of the project, that is, its applicability in other regions of the European Union;
  - added value of activities, within European Union policies
  - positive impact of the project on citizens, regions and Member States and society as a whole;
12. Stresses that all the criteria for highlighting best practices must be clearly measurable and reliable, so as to avoid friction, undesired effects and subjective judgements which may undermine the entire project grading procedure based on these criteria; calls, therefore, on the Commission clearly to describe the content of these criteria and how they should be implemented;
13. Recommends that, on the basis of analysis of a large number of projects from many EU regions, additional factors be taken into account for the identification of best practices in cohesion policy areas that are of particular importance for the development of specific regions and of the EU as a whole and that display a marked variety of approaches to implementation;
14. Recommends that account be taken of the following factors for the area 'Research and development/innovation':
- qualitatively significant investment in science and research
  - links between industry, academia and research institutes with a special emphasis on strengthening SMEs, not least as a means of leveraging territorial development
  - links between science and research institutes
  - development and/or innovation in respect of forward-looking technologies and/or practical applications for them
  - bringing new technologies to bear in traditional sectors
  - application to the business world
  - solutions in key EU sectors - environment, energy, etc.
15. Recommends that account be taken of the following factors for the area 'Environment, climate and sustainable energy policy':
- protective measures for areas at particular risk, tailored to those areas (sensitivity) in particular waters
  - conservation and efficient use of scarce resources
  - responsible approach to the use of resources
  - measures to address energy poverty,
  - significant increase in energy efficiency
  - significant reduction in energy consumption
  - increased share of renewable energy sources
  - measures to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions
  - methods and/or procedures which conserve scarce or endangered resources;
16. Recommends that account be taken of the following factors for the area 'Creation of high-quality jobs':
- improvement in working conditions

- increase in the number of high-quality jobs
- forward-looking sustainable job creation
- guarantee of equal access to the labour market for both genders
- increased productivity
- improved competitiveness
- creation of jobs that are not tied to a particular location, such as e-business
- measures to achieve greater specialisation of the workforce
- use of modern information and communication media;
- conciliation of family and working life
- measures aimed at the most vulnerable sectors of the population (for example, young people, women, persons with disabilities, immigrants, the long-term unemployed, unemployed persons aged over 45, those without any formal education)
- improved accessibility and availability of transport, telecommunications, education and health services;

17. Recommends that account be taken of the following factors for the area 'Lifelong learning':

- qualitative improvement of training standards and quantitative increase in the training on offer, particularly with regard to the opportunities for sections of the population who are most disadvantaged or most at risk (for example, young people, women, persons with disabilities, immigrants, the long-term unemployed, unemployed persons aged over 45, people without schooling)
- the close link between education, training and working life
- training projects that are tailored to requirements in terms of both quality and quantity
- introduction and use of modern technologies and procedures
- measures to stimulate and maintain willingness to undertake training
- increased take-up of training opportunities
- life-long language training;

18. Recommends that account be taken of the following factors for the area 'Integrated urban development':

- long-term integrated policy for local public transport, pedestrians, cyclists and car use with a view to effective integration between the various modes of transport, both public and private
- efficient traffic management
- promotion of the economic development of cities
- increase in entrepreneurial investment, measures to stimulate and secure employment with a special emphasis on youth employment and entrepreneurship - and to improve social life
- regeneration and integration of neighbourhoods in decline and deindustrialised areas improved quality of life in urban areas; for example the availability and accessibility of public services
- creation of green spaces and recreational areas and increased water and energy efficiency, in particular in the housing sector
- facilities for people with disabilities



- promotion of actions aimed at binding the population, in particular young people, to their cities
  - taking account of the living environment: urban, suburban and nearby rural environment
  - reduction of excessive land usage by much greater redevelopment of waste land and avoiding urban sprawl
  - better accessibility of urban and transport amenities for persons with reduced mobility,
  - Increasing the interaction between towns and rural areas
  - employment of an integrated approach;
19. Recommends that account be taken of the following factors for the area 'Demographic change':
- universal access to services
  - enhanced measures to attract skilled workers
  - enhanced involvement of the most vulnerable sectors through improved education and training
  - measures on flexible working time
  - measures to facilitate the life of working parents allowing reconciliation between family and working life
  - measures to promote the smooth integration of migrants
  - the special needs of persons with disabilities and senior citizens
  - contribution towards the maintenance of population levels (in areas suffering from depopulation);
20. Recommends that account be taken of the following factors for the area 'Cross-border cooperation':
- increase in quality and quantity of cross-border contacts
  - creation of permanent networks or of long-term cooperation schemes
  - harmonisation of different systems and procedures
  - involvement of new partners
  - establishment of financial independence
  - permanent cross-border knowledge transfer and exchange
  - joint exploitation of potential in partner regions
  - infrastructure connections between partner regions;
21. Recommends that account be taken of the following factors for the area 'Public-private partnerships':
- qualitative improvement of project implementation in terms of effectiveness and profitability
  - faster project implementation
  - transparent risk-spreading mechanism
  - better project management
  - increased participation of local and regional authorities and players in public-private partnerships

- clear and transparent rules on conduct with regard to the activities of public-sector bodies and enterprises;
22. Calls on the Commission to take account of the need to promote best practices as regards financial arrangements, in particular financial arrangements in public/private partnerships and those supported by the European Investment Bank and the European Investment Fund;
  23. Is aware that it is exceptionally difficult for a project cumulatively to meet all of the above criteria; calls on the Commission, therefore, before applying these criteria, to list them in order of priority and to determine those that represent a higher priority, so as to make it easier to designate noteworthy projects as best practices; stresses the need to use the commonly agreed criteria on best practices in an open and transparent way, which will allow a better management, acceptance and comparability of best practices and prevention of confusion with other similar terms;
  24. Calls on the Commission, with a view to the future use of the terms 'best practices', 'good practices' and 'success stories', to work out a clear and transparent subdivision or gradation of these terms for the purposes of project description;

#### **Exchange of best practices**

25. Calls on the Commission to organise and coordinate the exchange of best practices through a network of regions, and to create a public website containing key information about the projects in all Community languages for this purpose;
26. Recommends that the Commission set up within the current administrative framework a specific office in the Directorate-General for Regional Policy to organise, in cooperation with this network of regions, the evaluation, collection and exchange of best practices and to act as a permanent contact point for both the supply and the demand side, with the aim of establishing a long-term, continuous, reliable and successful exchange of best practices in the field of cohesion policy; calls on the Commission to disseminate this good-practice culture to all its departments;
27. Proposes within this framework that the evaluation mechanisms should study and take into account tried and trusted methodologies which have already been implemented; believes that particular emphasis should be given to cooperation with a network of regional authorities and specialised agencies which are the key source for the primary material of best practices for evaluation;
28. Points out that, while the European Union provides funding and good practices, it is for national, regional and local office holders to capitalise on them; welcomes in this connection the establishment of an Erasmus programme for local and regional elected representatives.
29. Recommends that the Commission use the available tools of the Committee of the Regions, in particular the Lisbon Monitoring Platform and the Subsidiarity Monitoring Network in order to exchange best practices between regions and Member States with a view to identifying and jointly determining the objectives, subsequently planning actions and, finally, undertaking a comparative evaluation of the results of cohesion policy;

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30. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Regional and structural policies are among the most important policy areas in the European Union, not only in terms of their budget but also and in particular owing to their importance for the social, economic and territorial cohesion of the European Union and the development of its 268 regions. In many places the regions of the European Union are confronted with broadly similar challenges. For example, they have to contend with globalisation and the accelerated economic restructuring that goes with it, the opening up of trade relations, the consequences of the technological revolution, the development of the knowledge-based economy, demographic change and the rise in immigration.

### **Obstacles to the implementation of the structural funds**

Although it is the goal of EU structural policy to support the regions in overcoming these challenges, potential applicants for aid are faced with major obstacles to utilising the EU's structural funds. These include excessive bureaucracy, too many regulations which are hard to understand and which may only apply in the short or medium term, and lack of transparency on co-financing schemes.

Thus, with regard to bureaucracy, project leaders must currently keep project documents for a period of ten years after termination of the project in order to be able to produce them for inspection by the Commission. This regulation imposes an excessive bureaucratic burden for small projects in particular. In order to minimise this burden and cut red tape, the European Parliament calls for this period to be reduced to three years.

Alongside such bureaucratic issues, project applicants face sometimes substantial difficulties in making provision for the technical resources required, which are of considerable importance for project implementation. Whereas projects co-financed by the ESF are eligible for flat-rate support for technical resources, this arrangement does not apply to projects receiving funding from the ERDF. The European Parliament therefore calls on the Commission to make similar flat-rate funding for technical resources available to projects co-financed by the ERDF.

A further problem for projects is that the evaluation criteria used by the European Commission are not geared to the long term. In view of the uncertainty which this creates for project leaders, the European Parliament calls on the Commission to gear the evaluation criteria to the long term and to assess projects according to the criteria which applied when the project was implemented. There is, however, a further significant problem with the Commission's evaluation criteria that regularly affects innovative projects too: the fact that the same criteria are applied to them as to other types of projects. This is unfair to innovative projects, which by their very nature run a much greater risk of making mistakes or indeed of failing than other projects do. Bearing in mind the Lisbon goal of making the EU the most innovative economic area in the world, the European Parliament recommends that a higher failure rate be permitted for innovative projects. Otherwise there is a risk that innovative approaches will be stifled, which would hinder the EU in achieving the Lisbon goal and detract from the impact of cohesion policy.

Further obstacles to efficient use of structural fund money are the current lack of opportunities for exchanges of experience between project promoters and the inadequate arrangements for interregional coordination. Overcoming this considerable obstacle for project leaders and for

the regions would also, even in the short term, indirectly help them to deal with the problem of excessive bureaucracy and to understand the existing regulations and untransparent co-financing rules.

### **Best practices - An approach to overcoming the existing obstacles**

One way of overcoming these obstacles and the shortcomings in the use of EU cohesion funds connected with them is to develop a coordinated approach of interregional exchange of best practices, so as to enable regional actors to draw on the experience of others. That is the aim of this report. However, in order to achieve this, there are a number of problems both of substance and of organisation. One of the most important of these is how to define what constitutes best practice. Though the term is used frequently and in many fields, and also partly in parallel with other terms such as 'good practices' or 'success stories', there is a lack of a clear and unambiguous definition. The European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional Policy has thus, for example, adopted the approach in the context of the Regions for Economic Change initiative of identifying best practices with the annual award of 'REGIO STARS' and publicising them via the internet, among other means. The drawback to that is the lack of transparency under which the selection is made, on an objective basis that is not precisely defined.

#### General and subject-specific criteria for identifying best practices

With regard to the current challenges, there are a number of factors which could serve to identify best practices for the European Union's cohesion policy. The European Parliament recommends the following:

- project quality
- assurance of partnership principle
- sustainability of measure
- respect for equal opportunities
- innovative nature of project
- effective use of resources
- duration of project before implementation
- implementation of the project on time and to plan
- significant driving force for the region or the EU overall
- transferability of project, i.e. its applicability in other regions of the European Union.

For cohesion policy areas that are of particular importance for the development of specific regions and of the EU as a whole and that display a marked variety of approaches to implementation, it is necessary to supplement the above general factors by specific factors for each area in order to determine what constitutes best practice. There are eight such areas.

- Research and development/innovation
  - qualitatively significant investment in science and research
  - links between industry and academia
  - links between science and research institutes
  - development and/or innovation in respect of forward-looking technologies
- Environment - climate - sustainable energy policy
  - protective measures for areas at particular risk, tailored to those areas (sensitivity)
  - conservation and efficient use of scarce resources

- responsible approach to the use of resources
- significant increase in energy efficiency
- significant reduction in energy consumption
- increased share of renewable energy sources
- measures to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions
- methods and/or procedures which conserve scarce or endangered resources
  
- Creation of high-quality jobs
- improvement in working conditions
- forward-looking job creation
- increased productivity
- improved competitiveness
- creation of jobs that are not tied to a particular location
- use of modern information and communication media
  
- Lifelong learning
- qualitative improvement of training standards and quantitative increase in the training on offer, particularly with regard to the opportunities for sections of the population who are most disadvantaged or most at risk
- close link between education and training
- training projects that are tailored to requirements in terms of both quality and quantity
- introduction and use of modern technologies and procedures
- measures to stimulate and maintain willingness to undertake training
- increased take-up of training opportunities
  
- Integrated urban development
- enhanced compatibility between local public transport, pedestrians and car use
- increase in entrepreneurial investment, measures to stimulate and secure employment and to improve social life
- redevelopment of derelict land in urban areas
- improved quality of life in urban areas
  
- Demographic change
- application of measures to permit ubiquitous access to services (e.g. by creating IT platforms for healthcare provision, e-learning, etc.)
- measures to train / attract more skilled workers
- enhanced involvement of older workers
  
- Cross-border cooperation
- increase in quality and quantity of cross-border contacts
- creation of permanent networks or long-term cooperation schemes
- harmonisation of different systems and procedures
- involvement of new partners
- establishment of financial independence
- permanent cross-border knowledge transfer and exchange
- joint exploitation of potential in partner regions
- infrastructure connections between partner regions

- Public-private partnerships
- qualitative improvement of project implementation
- faster project implementation

In view of the often parallel use of the terms 'good practices' and 'success stories' alongside the term 'best practices', the European Parliament suggests that the Commission work out, by means of the above factors, a clear and transparent subdivision - in terms of a gradation - of the terms which will help to distinguish between them.

#### Exchange of best practices

There are various options for organising the exchange of best practices. On the one hand it would be possible for project developers to launch and themselves run a network or, on the other, the exchange could take place within the Regional Policy DG, without a network being organised.

In view of the tasks connected with the exchange, such as the evaluation of best practices, the European Parliament would prefer to see a specific office set up - within the current administrative framework - in the Commission's Directorate-General for Regional Policy, which would, in cooperation with the network of the regions, organise the evaluation, collection and exchange of best practices and act as a permanent contact point for both the supply and the demand side. Parliament considers that it is only by means of such a model that a long-term, continuous, reliable and successful exchange of best practices in the field of cohesion policy will be possible.

#### **Projects for the identification of best-practice factors (selection)**

Research and development / innovation

- Lasers for Micromachining and Diagnostics (Lithuania)
- NaMLab - Nanoelectronic Materials Laboratory (Germany)
- Research of Carbon Materials (Slovakia)

Environment - Climate - sustainable energy policy

- Centre of Excellence for Environmental Technologies (Slovenia)
- MOBIZENT - Mobilitätszentrale Burgenland [Burgenland Mobility Centre] (Austria)
- Reconstruction of a Minor Water Plant (Slovakia)

Creation of high-quality jobs

- 'Brainhunt' - Competition of business plans (Estonia)
- Neubau des Fraunhofer Instituts für Zelltherapie und Immunologie [New building of the Fraunhofer Institute for Cell Therapy and Immunology] (Germany)
- Development of tools for Knowledge Management in SMEs (Austria)

Lifelong learning

- Fachkraft für Biotechnologie [Biotechnology Specialists] (Germany)
- Development of training and training environment of Narva Vocational Training Centre (Estonia)

- People for modern office (Slovakia)

#### Integrated urban development

- Entwicklung des problematischen Stadtgebietes „Leipziger Osten“ [Development of the problem district of East Leipzig] (Germany)
- Project of Enlargement Parque de las Ciencias in Granada (Spain)
- Städtebauliche Attraktivierung des Ortsbildes Hörnum [Urban planning improvements to the townscape of Hörnum] (Germany)

#### Demographic change

- Personalmanagement im Handwerk [Personnel management in the skilled trades] (Germany)
- TELEWORK (Estonia)
- BSR eHealth - Integrated regional health care structures: e-health in the Baltic Sea Region (DE- DK- SE- NO- FI- LT- PL)

#### Cross-border cooperation

- ECRN - European Chemical Regions Network (ES - DE - EST - PL - NL - IT - UK)
- Baltic Sea Virtual Campus (DE- DK- SE- FI- LV- LT- RU- PL)
- New Hansa (DE - DK - SE - FI - LV - LT - PL)

#### Public-private partnerships

- ‘Brainhunt’- Competition of business plans (Estonia)
- NaMLab - Nanoelectronic Materials Laboratory (Germany)



23.1.2009

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGETS**

for the Committee on Regional Development

on best practices in the field of regional policy and obstacles to the use of the Structural Funds (2008/2061(INI))

Rapporteur: Nathalie Griesbeck

### **SUGGESTIONS**

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

1. Draws attention to the urgent need to establish a clear definition of ‘best practices’, also including the principle of good governance; considers, in this connection, that quantitative and qualitative performance indicators common to all Member States should be introduced and that a cost-benefit ratio should be determined for projects; points out that employees’ pay, the poverty indicator, the standard of living, life expectancy, competitiveness, variations in long-term unemployment levels and the level of general-interest services in the regions, in particular, could be taken into account as qualitative indicators;
2. Calls on the Commission to conduct a scientific assessment of the rate of transferability of ‘best practices’ in administrative, financial and IT management of projects and to promote the visibility and transferability of ‘best practices’ between management authorities within a Member State and between management authorities of different Member States; considers that the Commission should also encourage the transferability of best practices, so that Member States can rationalise their application by taking account of specific sociological, economic, geographical and administrative features in each of the regions concerned;
3. Calls on the Commission to take account of the need to promote best practices as regards financial arrangements, in particular financial arrangements in public/private partnerships and those supported by the European Investment Bank and the European Investment Fund;

4. Calls on the Commission to coordinate the departments responsible so as to measure the effectiveness and transferability of practices relating to the administrative, financial and IT management of projects;
5. Calls for an expert report in relation to the work of the management authorities, in particular with a view to the end of the 2007-2013 programming period, to be completed a reasonable length of time before the approval of a new financial framework so as to enable the legislator to gain a better understanding of its work within the renegotiation of the next financial framework;
6. Demands that bureaucracy in the use of Structural Funds be kept to a minimum, and not needlessly increased by individual conditions imposed by the Member States;
7. Reiterates its support for the best practice aimed at ensuring that each Member State produces an annual national declaration of assurance covering Community funds coming under the shared management arrangement, and calls for this to become standard practice;
8. Calls for appropriate administrative resources to be allocated under the budget procedure to management authorities responsible for the European Social Fund, in particular in order to ensure that microprojects fully meet eligibility requirements.

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

<b>Date adopted</b>	22.1.2009
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 27 -: 0 0: 0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Richard James Ashworth, Reimer Böge, Herbert Bösch, Paulo Casaca, Valdis Dombrovskis, Brigitte Douay, James Elles, Hynek Fajmon, Ingeborg Gräßle, Nathalie Griesbeck, Catherine Guy-Quint, Anne E. Jensen, Wiesław Stefan Kuc, Janusz Lewandowski, Vladimír Maňka, Mario Mauro, Jan Mulder, Esko Seppänen, Nina Škottová, Theodor Dumitru Stolojan, László Surján, Kyösti Virrankoski
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Michael Gahler, Marusya Ivanova Lyubcheva, Paul Rübig, Peter Šťastný

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

<b>Date adopted</b>	12.2.2009
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+:            49 -:            0 0:            3
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Emmanouil Angelakas, Stavros Arnautakis, Elspeth Attwooll, Rolf Berend, Jana Bobošíková, Victor Boștinaru, Wolfgang Bulfon, Giorgio Carollo, Bairbre de Brún, Gerardo Galeote, Iratxe García Pérez, Monica Giuntini, Ambroise Guellec, Pedro Guerreiro, Gábor Harangozó, Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmenova, Mieczysław Edmund Janowski, Gisela Kallenbach, Evgeni Kirilov, Miloš Koterec, Constanze Angela Krehl, Florencio Luque Aguilar, Jamila Madeira, Miguel Angel Martínez Martínez, Iosif Matula, Miroslav Mikolášik, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Jan Olbrycht, Maria Petre, Markus Pieper, Giovanni Robusti, Bernard Soulage, Catherine Stihler, Margie Sudre, Oldřich Vlasák
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Jan Březina, Den Dover, Emanuel Jardim Fernandes, Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg, Stanisław Jałowiecki, Zita Pleštinská, Samuli Pohjamo, Christa Prets, Miloslav Ransdorf, Flaviu Călin Rus, Richard Seeber, László Surján, Nikolaos Vakalis, Iuliu Winkler
<b>Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote</b>	Wolf Klinz, Sepp Kusstatscher, Toine Manders