

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



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*Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development*

**2004/2253(INI)**

24.5.2005

## **OPINION**

of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

for the Committee on Regional Development

on a stronger partnership for the outermost regions  
(2004/2253(INI))

Draftsman: Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos

PA\_NonLeg

## SUGGESTIONS

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

- A. having regard to the constraints to which the outermost regions are subject – remoteness, insularity, small size, difficult climate and economic dependence on a small range of products – the combination of which seriously prejudices their development,
- B. having regard to Article 299(2) of the Treaty,
- C. whereas the Seville European Council called on the Commission and the Council to press ahead with implementation of this provision of the Treaty and to adopt suitable measures to take account of the special needs of the outermost regions,
- D. whereas the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions have repeatedly urged that a strategy be drawn up for the outermost regions,
- E. having regard to the conclusions of the Third Report on Economic and Social Cohesion, which refer, in particular, to the Commission's intention to draw up a special programme to compensate for the specific constraints of the outermost regions,

### **General features of the proposal**

- 1. Welcomes the Commission's Communication, considers it a good working basis for developing the strategy for the outermost regions and for devising appropriate measures to respond to the concerns of convergence and integration in relation to the rest of the European Union;
- 2. Considers as positive the recognition that all the outermost regions should be eligible for the future cohesion policy under any of the following objectives: 'convergence', 'competitiveness and employment' and 'European territorial cooperation';
- 3. Also notes with approval the recommendation to create a specific programme to compensate for the constraints of the outermost regions, adapted to the specific nature of each of them;
- 4. Also considers as positive the approach to the measures that will need to be taken, especially as regards development of human resources, innovation, the information society and research and technological development, clearly including the outermost regions as an integral part of the European Union in the Lisbon Strategy;
- 5. Notes with satisfaction the priority given to the issue of accessibility;

### **Issues directly linked to the agricultural sector**

- 6. Notes with satisfaction, as regards the future Rural Development Fund, the Commission's

commitment to ensuring that the level and intensity of aid will make allowance for the specific constraints of the outermost regions;

7. Considers, as regards the external aspect of the CMO in the banana sector, that a tariff of less than EUR 252 per tonne will be unacceptable. As regards the internal aspect, it is important to ensure that, irrespective of the support measures, the financial resources in future are no less than at present;
8. As regards the sugar sector, notes the Commission's declared intention to ensure differentiated treatment for the outermost regions based on their specific characteristics; deploras, nevertheless, the abolition of sales aid; calls for the restoration of this instrument and full compensation for loss of income in order genuinely to take account of the specific handicaps suffered by the outermost regions; considers, moreover, that it is essential to ensure that sugar production and refining in the Azores are given access to the national market under conditions equivalent to those prevailing before their incorporation into the European Union, in the same way as the Canary islands, since otherwise it will no longer be viable for the industry to continue in the region;
9. Suggests that identical concerns regarding guaranteeing differentiated treatment and the continued viability of the industry in the outermost regions should apply to the milk and fruit and vegetable sectors, subject to their respective specific conditions;
10. Backs, finally, as regards the POSEI, the declared intention to ensure the stability of the resources allocated to maintaining support for the outermost regions and to decentralise and simplify the management mechanisms.

## PROCEDURE

<b>Title</b>	A stronger partnership for the outermost regions
<b>Procedure number</b>	2004/2253(INI)
<b>Committee responsible</b>	REGI
<b>Committee asked for its opinion</b> Date announced in plenary	AGRI 13.1.2005
<b>Enhanced cooperation</b>	no
<b>Draftsman</b> Date appointed	Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos 20.1.2005
<b>Discussed in committee</b>	18.4.2005      24.5.2005
<b>Date suggestions adopted</b>	24.5.2005
<b>Result of final vote</b>	for:                    21 against: abstentions:        0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Peter Baco, Katerina Batzeli, Niels Busk, Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos, Joseph Daul, Albert Deß, Gintaras Didžiokas, Jean-Claude Fruteau, Lutz Goepel, Bogdan Golik, Friedrich-Wilhelm Graefe zu Baringdorf, Diamanto Manolakou, Agnes Schierhuber, Willem Schuth, Czesław Adam Siekierski, Jeffrey Titford, Terence Wynn
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Ilda Figueiredo, Béla Glattfelder, Karin Resetarits
<b>Substitutes under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote</b>	Manuel Medina Ortega