



*Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development
The Chair*

14.11.2023

Mr Younous Omarjee
Chair
Committee on Regional Development
BRUSSELS

IPOL-COM-AGRI D(2023) 37780

Subject: Opinion on Cohesion policy 2014-2020 - implementation and outcomes in the Member States –2023/2121(INI)

Dear Chair,

Under the procedure referred to above, the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development has decided to submit an opinion to the Committee on Regional Development. At its meeting of 28 June 2023, AGRI Coordinators decided to send the opinion in the form of a letter.

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development decided, after the vote on the opinion of 7th December 2023 to call on the Committee on Regional Development, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution.

Yours sincerely,

Norbert Lins

SUGGESTIONS

1. Stresses the importance of supporting rural areas by valuing their diversity and potential, improving transport connectivity, high-speed broadband, the provision of services, economic diversification and job creation, and helping them respond to challenges such as rural desertification, population ageing, depopulation and rural abandonment, the decline of communities in general and insufficient healthcare and education opportunities;
2. Calls for the restoration, under the Common Provisions Regulations, of the Rural Development Fund (currently EAFRD); such a fund should be managed regionally or with decisive regional participation, placing greater emphasis than before on structural policy measures in sparsely populated areas;
3. Highlights the valuable contribution to rural development made by the LEADER programme, which aims to engage local actors in the design and delivery of strategies for their rural areas;
4. Reaffirms the importance of urban-rural linkages and of the development of strategies based on functional areas, with the aim of preventing rural areas from shrinking;
5. Notes that the cohesion policy and regional environmental strategies offer opportunities to support farmers and forest managers' sustainable investments in climate change adaptation, in particular the prevention of floods, drought and fires;
6. Stresses the need to set cohesion policy and CAP objectives that are consistent and comparable with each other; stresses that these processes should take into account the gender perspective;
7. Calls on the Commission to identify and implement the necessary flexibility measures to ensure the transfer of unspent EU funds, channelling them to different agricultural sectors;

**ANNEX: LIST OF ENTITIES OR PERSONS
FROM WHOM THE RAPporteur FOR THE OPINION HAS RECEIVED INPUT**

The following list is drawn up under the exclusive responsibility of the rapporteur for the opinion. The rapporteur has received input from the following entities or persons in the preparation of the draft opinion, under form of letter, until the adoption thereof in committee:

Entity and/or person

This opinion was drawn up in the respect of confidentiality procedure. In that context the rapporteur for the opinion does not receive any input from entities or persons within the meaning of this Annex.