

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Committee on Regional Development

2008/2236(INI)

20.1.2009

OPINION

of the Committee on Regional Development

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs

on the review of the "European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument"
(2008/2236(INI))

Rapporteur: Petru Filip (taken over by Lambert van Nistelrooij as from
19/12/2008)

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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. Welcomes the inclusion of cross-border cooperation within the scope of the ENPI Regulation as a strategic tool for developing common projects and strengthening relations between ENP countries and Member States; insists, however, on the need to create specific instruments in order to ensure regular monitoring of the management and process of implementation of joint operational programmes on both sides of the EU's border;
2. Points out that cross-border cooperation should contribute to integrated and sustainable regional development between neighbouring border regions and to harmonious territorial integration between the Community and neighbouring countries; notes that the best means of attaining this goal is to coordinate external policy objectives with economic, social and territorial cohesion policy objectives and action;
3. Stresses the need to improve coordination of territorial cooperation under the economic, social and territorial cohesion policy with the external component of cross-border cooperation, with candidate countries, ENP countries, the Russian Federation and countries neighbouring the outermost regions;
4. Calls on the Commission to prepare a detailed overview of all joint operational programmes approved for the period 2007-2013, together with an assessment of the degree to which the principles of transparency, efficiency and partnership have been respected in the implementation of projects ; encourages the Commission to prepare an inventory of the most frequent problems faced by the managing authorities both in EU border regions and in the ENP countries, in order to identify more appropriate solutions for them for the next programming period;
5. Laments the limited application of the subsidiarity principle indicated in the first reports on programme implementation; calls, therefore, on the Commission, to promote greater involvement of the regional and local bodies, under a more decentralised approach both in programme management and in project implementation; observes that establishing workable decentralised structures is an essential precondition for the successful implementation of ENP projects;
6. Regrets the lack of coordination between ENPI and ERDF funding that has been ascertained and calls for the simplification of procedures and the harmonisation of rules in order to achieve better implementation of the existing instruments and avoid overlap; awaits, in this context, information from the Commission about the controls put in place in order to avoid double funding;
7. Considers that an integrated approach should be applied which ensures the requisite coordination between different levels (from the local to the European), sectoral policies and subsidy programmes;
8. Encourages the Commission to facilitate the exchange of experiences of and best

practices in cross-border cooperation between ENP programmes and projects and action taken under the 'European Territorial cooperation' objective and under the already completed Interreg III A Community initiative; believes, in particular, that training (including programmes for learning the languages of neighbouring countries) and twinning initiatives for civil servants should be fostered; suggests, in this context, periodical analyses of the improvements made in terms of capacity and institutional building on both sides of the EU's border;

9. Considers that greater contacts between people and personal experiences of democracy and the rule of law are a precondition for optimal implementation of ENP projects;
10. Urges the Commission and national, regional and local authorities to promote twinning programmes between towns and regions and to provide appropriate assistance therefore, with a view to building administrative capacity at local and regional levels in neighbouring countries and promoting both exchange programmes for civil society, as well as micro-projects;
11. Calls on the Commission actively to promote cross-border economic, social and institutional links, in view of the low level of interaction in this respect between border regions;
12. Believes that the sums allocated to cross-border cooperation are insufficient, as they represent only 5% of the total ENPI budget, given both the political added value of these programmes as instruments of regional stability and the concrete improvements they can achieve in terms of administrative capacity building, the transparency of procedures and the involvement of civil society in decision-making; invites the Commission to consider the possibility of increasing funding limits, when calculating the provisions for the next programming period;
13. Stresses the importance of mainstreaming gender issues, equal opportunities and the special needs of persons with disabilities and older persons in ENPI-funded projects;
14. Considers, that in order to fulfil the objectives of the main programming documents related to the ENP, the ENPI should focus upon a balanced strategy between the East and South, with specific approaches for both areas, thus, helping certain regions to adopt innovative development concepts with common goals;
15. Points out that the ENP provides a first-rate framework for regional cooperation in matters such as the environment, energy security, culture, transport, border management and migration; supports the negotiation, wherever possible, of legally binding sectoral agreements facilitating the integration of joint policies; stresses, in particular, the need to invest in extending the trans-European transport and energy networks to the ENP countries;
16. Stresses that action against climate change and promotion of energy efficiency are key areas for enhanced cooperation between the EU and all ENP partners; consequently, takes the view that projects which comply with the principles of sustainable development should have priority in terms of receiving assistance;

17. Encourages the Commission to submit a proposal for an enhanced neighbourhood policy which will enable neighbouring countries whose accession negotiations currently have little chance of success to nonetheless establish lasting ties with the EU.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	20.1.2009
Result of final vote	+: 45 -: 2 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Emmanouil Angelakas, Stavros Arnaoutakis, Elspeth Attwooll, Jean Marie Beaupuy, Rolf Berend, Jana Bobošíková, Victor Boștinaru, Wolfgang Bulfon, Giorgio Carollo, Antonio De Blasio, Gerardo Galeote, Iratxe García Pérez, Eugenijus Gentvilas, Monica Giuntini, Ambroise Guellec, Jim Higgins, Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmenova, Mieczysław Edmund Janowski, Rumiana Jeleva, Gisela Kallenbach, Tunne Kelam, Evgeni Kirilov, Miloš Koterec, Constanze Angela Krehl, Florencio Luque Aguilar, Jamila Madeira, Sérgio Marques, Yiannakis Matsis, Miroslav Mikolášik, James Nicholson, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Jan Olbrycht, Maria Petre, Markus Pieper, Pierre Pribetich, Giovanni Robusti, Wojciech Roszkowski, Grażyna Staniszevska, Catherine Stihler, Andrzej Jan Szejna, Oldřich Vlasák, Vladimír Železný
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Brigitte Douay, Madeleine Jouye de Grandmaison, Zita Pleštinská, Samuli Pohjamo, Richard Seeber