



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2014 - 2019

Committee on Regional Development

2015/0010(APP)

27.3.2015

OPINION

of the Committee on Regional Development

for the Committee on Budgets

on the draft Council regulation amending Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020
(05479/2015 – C8-0047/2015 – 2015/0010(APP))

Rapporteur: Victor Boștinăru

PA_Leg_Consent

SHORT JUSTIFICATION

The late adoption of the Cohesion Policy regulations for the period 2014-2020 led to the impossibility of a timely adoption of all Operational Programmes. The forecast made by the Commission resulted in being too optimistic, as by the end of 2014 only a small percentage of programmes¹ (39 % or 252 Union programmes) had been adopted. The adoption of the remaining programmes was postponed, either through the carry-over procedure set out in point (a) of Article 13(2) of the Financial Regulation, or based on a revision of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF).

Carry-over programmes (14 % or 93 Union programmes) do not require a revision of the MFF, as they were ready for adoption before the end of 2014, and were not adopted only due to a lack of time. For them, even though the adoption was postponed to early 2015, the 2014 appropriations can still be used.

All other programmes (47 % or 300 Union programmes) require - in order not to lose the 2014 appropriations - a revision of the MFF under Article 19 of the MFF Regulation, whereby 2014 allocations are transferred to following years.

Your rapporteur therefore welcomes the proposal for a Council regulation amending Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020. He recommends that the Parliament give its consent, as this is an indispensable step to complete the starting process of the new Cohesion Policy programming period avoiding any negative impact for regions and cities and consequently for European citizens. The European Structural and Investment Funds are the Union's most important investment policy and it is essential that all resources are used in as timely a manner and as effectively as possible, to generate growth and jobs. The new programming period has already experienced significant delays, and it must be ensured that there are neither further delays, nor any losses.

The proposal aims to transfer almost all of the 2014 unused appropriations for heading 1b Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion to 2015, with the exception of the contributions from the ERDF to the cross-border programmes under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) and the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) which are transferred to 2017. Your rapporteur acknowledges the principle of equality between Member States and programmes which lies behind the proposal, but underlines the necessity for the Commission to cooperate with Member States and regions in order not only to swiftly adopt all remaining programmes, but also to carefully implement the programmes themselves, with the aim of achieving full and effective use of all resources. He therefore welcomes the statement of the Commission where it declares that it *"will be an active partner in the programming process for the concerned programmes, that it will collaborate fully with the national and regional authorities, and will take all available measures with the aim of achieving the adoption of the programmes in line with the provisions of the Common Provisions Regulation as soon as possible after the adoption of the amended Council Regulation laying down the MFF for the years 2014-2020, and in any event before the end of 2015"*.

¹ This includes the European Structural and Investment Funds as well as the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and the Internal Security Fund.

Concerning the transfer of the whole 2014 ERDF contribution to cross-border programmes under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) and the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) to 2017, the rapporteur acknowledges the delays in the adoption of such programmes, and the complexity which characterises them. However, he believes that, as a matter of coherence and for the purposes of quicker implementation of the programmes, it would have been advisable to follow the same logic as for the rest of the allocations.

The proposal does not include any changes in payment appropriations, based on the assumption that the transfer of commitment appropriations from 2014 to 2015 will not bring about any particular obstacles to payments in the coming years. Your rapporteur expresses reservations in this regard, and hopes that calculations made by the services of the Commission will prove to be realistic and that the existing flexibility provisions of the MFF Regulation will be sufficient to face any increase in interim payment claims in 2017 and 2018. He stresses that the issue of a payments backlog - as already reiterated by the European Parliament on many occasions - is unsustainable and needs to be addressed once and for all, and that any additional problems with payments must be avoided by all necessary means and efforts.

The Committee on Regional Development calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to recommend that Parliament give its consent to the proposal for a Council regulation amending Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	26.3.2015
Result of final vote	+: 39 -: 0 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Pascal Arimont, José Blanco López, Franc Bogovič, Victor Boștinaru, Mercedes Bresso, Andrea Cozzolino, Rosa D'Amato, Michela Giuffrida, Anna Hedh, Krzysztof Hetman, Ivan Jakovčić, Constanze Krehl, Andrew Lewer, Louis-Joseph Manscour, Martina Michels, Iskra Mihaylova, Andrey Novakov, Younous Omarjee, Stanislav Polčák, Fernando Ruas, Monika Smolková, Ruža Tomašić, Monika Vana, Matthijs van Miltenburg, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Derek Vaughan
Substitutes present for the final vote	Isabella Adinolfi, Martina Anderson, Enrique Calvet Chambon, Salvatore Cicu, Andor Deli, Elena Gentile, Ivana Maletić, James Nicholson, Jan Olbrycht, Bronis Ropė, Julie Ward, Milan Zver
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Daniela Aiuto