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*Committee on Regional Development  
The Chair*

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2.3.2021

Mr Johan Van Overtveldt  
Chair  
Committee on Budgets  
BRUSSELS

Subject: Opinion on the draft report on general guidelines for the preparation of the 2022 budget, Section III – Commission (2020/2265(BUI))

Dear Mr Van Overtveldt,

In the course of their meeting 24 February, the REGI coordinators decided to send the Committee input to the Guidelines 2022 resolution in the form of a letter. I would be grateful if your staff would incorporate in the BUDG voting list the following suggestions:

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General remarks

1. Article 174 TFEU states the need for strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion in order to promote the overall harmonious development of the Union. In particular, the Union shall aim at reducing disparities between the levels of development of the various regions and the backwardness of the least-favoured regions.
2. Investments made under cohesion and regional development policy have been shown to represent substantial European added-value, and contribute to achieving EU policy goals such as the Green Deal, the European Pillar of Social Rights, promoting innovation, and supporting the transition to the digital economy.
3. Recalls that EU cohesion policy contributes significantly to sustainable economic growth, investments and competitiveness, as well as safe and secure working and living conditions, including equal opportunities and non-discrimination.
4. Strongly supports regional and cohesion policy as the prime investment instrument of

the EU budget, that enables economic, social and territorial cohesion, and is one of the cornerstones of the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### A late start to cohesion policy 2021-27

5. Acknowledges that, because of the very late adoption of Council positions on MFF-related legislative proposals, a delayed start to the new 2021-27 generation of cohesion policy is inevitable.
6. Calls on the budgetary authority, in view of the two overlapping programming periods (2014-2020/n+3 & 2021-2027), and in view of the need to relaunch the economy following the COVID-19 pandemic, to ensure sufficient liquidity in the 2022 annual budget to be able to honour the incoming payment applications.
7. Calls for more resources for European Territorial Cooperation (ETC, INTERREG) in order to respond better to the COVID-19 and ensure the continuation of the necessary interregional cooperation at local and regional level.

#### The need for budgetary coordination

8. Notes the proliferation of EU instruments with policy goals adjacent and complementary to those of cohesion policy, such as React-EU, JTF, RRF, CRII and CRII+. Stresses the need for careful coordination of the budgetary aspects of the roll-out of these new instruments if their effect is to be maximised; and invites the Commission to consider whether, to this end, additional administrative resources are needed.
9. Underlines that multi-level governance and the involvement of regional and local authorities and other actors are prerequisites for effective, transparent and targeted investments.

Yours sincerely,

Younous Omarjee