Resolution on EU cohesion and regional policy after 2013

2010/2835(RSP) - 07/10/2010 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution tabled by the Committee on Regional Development on EU cohesion and regional policy after 2013.

Parliament insists that **cohesion policy has proved to be essential to the process of European integration**. It stresses the fact that stresses the fact that cohesion policy implementation is indispensable for the success of the Europe 2020 strategy while always remaining an independent policy providing a framework for establishing strong synergies between all European policies.

Rejecting any attempt to renationalise the policy; considers, Members consider that the regional dimension must be fully considered in the proposed review of the EU budget and the future Financial Framework, and that a strong and well-financed EU regional policy is a condition sine qua non for achieving social, economic and territorial cohesion.

The resolution stresses the following points :

- territorial cohesion implies a **targeted approach to territorial development, ensuring polycentric development**, by creating synergies and avoiding the sectoral dispersion of regional policy resources, to which end there must also be sufficient flexibility to accommodate regional specificities and support regions which are lagging behind in their efforts;
- **multi-level governance** is one of the key principles of cohesion policy and is fundamental to ensuring the quality of the decision-making process, strategic planning and implementation of objectives, and in future an integrated approach to policy implementation should be mandatory;
- it is necessary to use past experience, examples of best practices and successful past Community initiatives in order to adopt a more focused approach to the urban dimension of **cohesion policy**: in the next programming period financial resources should be allocated for investments in urban as well as suburban projects, and an appropriate instrument should be considered in order to achieve these objectives;
- GDP must remain the main criterion for determining eligibility for regional policy assistance, while other measurable indicators might be added, leaving room for national authorities to apply, at the appropriate level of decision-making, other indicators which take into account the specific attributes of regions and cities;
- cohesion policy and its delivery system should be more result-oriented and aim at increased efficiency and effectiveness, establishing an optimal balance between quality of performance and financial control;
- the architecture of post-2013 cohesion policy should offer a **simple, fair and transparent transition regime** taking into account past experiences and the latest trends in the social and economic situation of the regions concerned, as well as enabling them to continue on their paths towards growth and development.

Members share the view that **simplification of policy implementation has to continue**. They encourage the use of **financial engineering instruments**, revolving funds and global grants, and calls for simplified access to risk capital and micro-finance. They also call for rural development, in the framework of the 2nd pillar of the CAP, to be coordinated with cohesion development objectives and be managed at regional level to ensure that it is adapted to needs.

Lastly, Parliament considers that regional development policy merits a **formal ministerial structure** to provide a political platform, and that the management and policy design role of the Commission should also be enhanced.