

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF): support to the European territorial cooperation goal 2014-2020

2011/0273(COD) - 20/11/2013 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 629 votes to 25, with 35 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on specific provisions for the support from the European Regional Development Fund to the European territorial cooperation goal.

The European Parliament's position at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure amended the Commission proposal as follows:

Cross-border cooperation: this should aim to tackle common challenges identified jointly in the border regions (such as poor accessibility, especially in relation to ICT connectivity and transport infrastructure, declining local industries, etc).

Interregional cooperation: this should aim to reinforce the effectiveness of cohesion policy by encouraging exchange of experience between regions on thematic objectives and urban development, including urban-rural linkages.

Geographical coverage: the Commission shall adopt a decision, by means of implementing acts, on the list of cross-border areas to receive support, broken down by cooperation programme. When submitting draft cross-border cooperation programmes, Member States may request that **additional NUTS level 3 regions are included** to those listed in the decision.

At the request of those Member States concerned, **in order to facilitate cross border cooperation on maritime borders for outermost regions**, the Commission may include in the decision referred to as cross border areas which may receive support from the corresponding allocation of those Member States, NUTS level 3 regions in outermost regions along maritime borders separated by more than 150 km.

Resources: resources for the European territorial cooperation goal shall amount to **2.75 %** of the global resources available for budgetary commitment from the Funds for the period 2014 to 2020 (i.e., a total of **EUR 8 948 259 330**) and shall be allocated as follows:

- **74.05%** (i.e., a total of **EUR 6 626 631 760**) for cross-border cooperation;
- **20.36%** (i.e., a total of **EUR 1 821 627 570**) for transnational cooperation;
- **5.59%** (i.e., a total of **EUR 500 000 000**) for interregional cooperation.

The Commission shall communicate to each Member State **its share of the global amounts for cross-border and transnational cooperation**, broken down by year.

The Commission shall, on the basis of the information provided by Member States, adopt a decision setting out a list of all cooperation programmes and indicating the global amount of the total ERDF support for each programme by means of implementing acts.

Thematic concentration: at least **80% of the ERDF** allocation to each cross-border cooperation and transnational programme shall be concentrated on up to four thematic objectives set out in the [Regulation on common provisions for the Structural and Investment Funds](#).

Investment priorities: Members added several new elements to the list of investment priorities:

- promoting employment and supporting labour mobility through the integration of **cross-border labour markets**, including information services and advice and joint training;
- the promotion of **social inclusion and combating poverty** through the integration of communities across borders;
- investment in **skills, education and lifelong learning**;
- the enhancement of **institutional capacity** and an efficient public administration through developing and coordinating macro-regional and sea-basin strategies to promote information exchange.

Contents of the cooperation programme: a cooperation programme shall contribute to the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and to the achievement of economic, social and territorial cohesion.

It should include a justification of the choice of thematic objectives, corresponding investment priorities and financial allocations, having regard to the Common Strategic Framework. It should be based on an analysis of the situation of the programme area as a whole in terms of needs and the strategy chosen in response, addressing where appropriate missing links in cross-border infrastructure, taking into account the results of the ex ante evaluation.

The resolution has provided clarification on what a programme should include for each priority axis other than technical assistance.

Participation of third countries: in order to strengthen the Union's economic, social and territorial cohesion and to reinforce effectiveness of its cohesion policy, third countries are allowed to participate through contribution of IPA and ENI resources in transnational and interregional cooperation programmes.

It is appropriate to involve third countries or territories already in the preparatory process of cooperation programmes, when they have accepted the invitation to participate in such programmes, for which purpose special procedures should be established in the Regulation.

The programme implementation conditions should be consistent with the provisions of applicable Union law.

Programme evaluation: the managing authority should ensure that evaluations of cooperation programmes are carried out including evaluations to assess effectiveness, efficiency and impact on the basis of the evaluation plan.

At least once during the programming period, an evaluation should assess how the support provided has contributed to the achievement of objectives of the programme. These evaluations should inform about any proposed adjustments during the programming period.