

Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) 2014-2020

2012/0295(COD) - 25/02/2014 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 592 votes to 61 with 31 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived.

The matter had been referred back to the competent committee for re-examination during the session of 12 June 2013.

Parliament adopted its position at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure. The amendments adopted in plenary are the result of a compromise between Parliament and Council. They amend the Commission proposal as follows:

Definitions: certain definitions have been amended, including 'basic material assistance' and 'most deprived persons'. The text includes two new definitions regarding:

- food and/or basic material assistance operational programme' (also referred to as 'OP I') meaning an operational programme supporting the distribution of food and/or basic material assistance to the most deprived persons, combined where applicable with accompanying measures;
- social inclusion of the most deprived persons operational programme' (also referred to as 'OP II') meaning an operational programme supporting the activities outside active labour market measures, **consisting in non-financial, non-material assistance**, aimed at the social inclusion of the most deprived persons.

Objectives: the Fund shall promote social cohesion, enhance social inclusion and therefore ultimately contribute to the objective of **eradicating poverty in the Union** by contributing to achieving the poverty reduction target of at least 20 million of the number of persons at risk of poverty and social exclusion in accordance with the Europe 2020 strategy, whilst complementing the Structural Funds. The Fund shall **complement sustainable national poverty eradication** and social inclusion policies, which remain the responsibility of Member States.

Scope of support: the Fund shall support **national schemes whereby food and/or basic material assistance**, are distributed to the most deprived persons through partner organisations selected by Member States. With the view to augmenting and diversifying the supply of food for the most deprived persons, as well as reducing and preventing food wastage, the Fund may **support activities related to the collection, transport, storage and distribution of food donations**. It may also support accompanying measures, complementing the provision of food and/or basic material assistance.

Implementation: support from the Fund shall be implemented in close co-operation between the Commission and the Member States **in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity**. Member States and the bodies designated by them for that purpose shall be responsible for implementing the operational programmes and carrying out their tasks. It is clearly stated that the Fund is **not meant to replace public policies undertaken by the Member States to fight poverty and social exclusion**, in particular policies that are necessary to prevent the marginalisation of vulnerable and low-income groups.

In accordance with their respective responsibilities, and to **prevent double funding**, the Commission and the Member States shall ensure coordination with the ESF, and with other relevant Union policies, strategies and instruments, in particular Union initiatives in the field of public health and **against food waste**.

Gender perspective: the Commission and Member States shall ensure that **equality between men and women** and the integration of the gender perspective are taken into account and promoted during the various stages of the preparation, programming, management and implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Fund, as well as in information and awareness raising campaigns and exchanges of best practices. The Commission and the Member States shall use data broken down by gender, where available.

Aid provided in the framework of the Fund respects **the dignity of the most deprived persons**.

Nutritional quality of aid: the choice of food and/or the basic material assistance, shall also take into consideration climatic and environmental aspects, in particular with a view to reduction of food waste. Where appropriate, the choice of the type of food products to be distributed shall be **made having considered their contribution to the balanced diet of the most deprived persons**.

Budget: the resources for the Fund available for budgetary commitment over the period 2014 - 2020 shall be **EUR 3 395 684 880** in 2011 prices, in accordance with the annual breakdown set out in Annex II. The allocation of the appropriations of the Fund between the Member States for the 2014-2020 period takes into account in equal measure the following indicators assessed on the basis of data from Eurostat on the population suffering from severe material deprivation and the population living in households with very low work intensity. Furthermore, the allocation also takes into account the different ways of assisting the most deprived persons in the Member States. However, each Member State should be allocated the **minimum amount of 3 500 000 EUR** for the 2014-2020 programming period in order to set an operational programme with a meaningful level of resources.

The Member State's allocation for the Fund should be deducted from the Member State Structural Funds allocation.

Co-financing: the co-financing rate at the level of the operational programme amounts up to 85% of the eligible public expenditure. It may be increased in certain cases and Member States shall be free to support the Fund's initiatives with additional national resources.

Operational programmes: each Member State shall submit to the Commission, within six months of the entry into force of this Regulation, an OP I and/or an OP II, covering the period from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2020. The text sets out the precise content of operational programmes in the annex of the draft regulation.

The Commission shall assess the consistency of each operational programme with the Regulation and its contribution to the objectives of the Fund, taking into account the ex ante evaluation. It shall ensure that there is no overlap with any operational programme financed by the ESF in the Member State.

Monitoring committee for an OP II: an OP II shall set out the specific objectives of the operational programme based on an identification of **national needs**, having regard to the results of the ex ante evaluation carried out in accordance with the Regulation. It must also contain a financing plan specifying, the amount of the total financial appropriation in respect of support from the operational programme, indicatively broken down by type of action. The OP II shall be overseen by a **monitoring committee to review the effective application of OP II**. Provisions are made setting out the tasks of the committee.

Exchange of good practices: the Commission shall facilitate, including by means of a website, the exchange of experience, capacity building and networking, as well as dissemination of relevant outcomes in the area of non-financial assistance to the most deprived persons.

Relevant organisations that do not make use of the Fund may also be included.

The Commission shall consult, at least once a year, the organisations which represent the partner organisations at Union level on the implementation of support from the Fund and, following such consultation, shall **report back to the European Parliament** and to the Council in due course.

Implementation reports: from 2015 to 2023, the Member States shall submit to the Commission, by 30 June of each year, an annual implementation report for the operational programme implemented in the previous financial year. Member States shall draft the annual implementation report in accordance with a delegated, including **the list of common indicators**, and for the social inclusion operational programmes, of the **programme specific indicators**. Member States shall consult the relevant stakeholders, while avoiding conflicts of interest, on the implementation reports of OP I. The Commission shall present a summary of the annual implementation reports and the final implementation reports to the European Parliament and to the Council in due course.

Evaluations: the Commission shall present a mid-term evaluation of the Fund to the European Parliament and to the Council by 31 December 2018. The text sets out the framework under which this evaluation will take place, and the latter must be based on information regarding the beneficiaries of the aid.