Technical Support Instrument

2020/0103(COD) - 19/01/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 540 votes to 75, with 77 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a technical support instrument.

Parliament adopted its position at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure, amending the Commission proposal as follows:

General objectives

The general objective of the instrument should be to promote the Union's economic, social and territorial cohesion by supporting Member States' efforts to implement reforms to:

- encourage investment, to increase competitiveness and to achieve sustainable economic and social convergence, resilience and recovery;

- support Member States' efforts to strengthen their institutional and administrative capacity, including at regional and local level, to facilitate socially inclusive, green and digital transitions in accordance with the Paris Agreement on climate change, the Union's 2030 climate and energy targets and climate neutrality by 2050 target, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the European Pillar of Social Rights.

Specific objectives

The instrument should have the specific objectives of assisting national authorities in improving their capacity to:

- design, develop and implement reforms;

- prepare, amend, implement and revise recovery and resilience plans pursuant to a Regulation establishing a Recovery and Resilience Facility.

Those specific objectives should be pursued in close cooperation with the Member States concerned, including through exchange of good practices, processes and methodologies, stakeholder involvement, where appropriate, and a more effective and efficient human resources management.

Scope

The instrument should support reforms in policy areas related to cohesion, competitiveness, education, productivity, research and innovation, smart, fair, sustainable and inclusive growth, jobs and investment, with specific emphasis on actions that foster the digital and just green transitions.

Particular focus should be made the following:

- public financial and asset management, budget process, including green and gender budgeting, macro-fiscal framework, debt and cash management, expenditure and tax policy, tax compliance, revenue administration and customs union, as well as fighting aggressive tax planning, tax fraud, tax evasion and tax avoidance;

- enhancing capacity to absorb Union funds, promotion of administrative cooperation, effective rule of law, reform of the justice systems, capacity building of competition and antitrust authorities, strengthening of financial supervision and reinforcement of the fight against fraud, corruption and money laundering;

- business environment, including for small and medium-sized enterprises, the self-employed, entrepreneurs and social economy enterprises, the re-industrialisation and relocation of production to the Union;

- education, life-long learning and training, vocational education and training, youth policies, labour market policies, including social dialogue, for the creation of jobs;

- accessible, affordable and resilient public healthcare, social security systems, care and welfare, and childcare;

- policies for the mitigation of climate change;

- financial sector policies and regulation, including financial literacy, financial stability, access to finance and lending to the real economy, in particular for small and medium-sized enterprises, the self-employed and entrepreneurs;

- preparation for membership of the euro area;

- early detection of and a coordinated response to substantial public health or security risks, as well as ensuring business and service continuity for essential public and private institutions and sectors.

Budget

The Technical Support Instrument would have a budget of EUR 864 million for the period 2021-2027 (in current prices). In addition to this budget, Member States could, at their request, transfer additional resources to the budget of the instrument. The additional resources would be used to finance actions eligible for technical support and would be used exclusively for the benefit of the Member State concerned.

To allow for the rapid mobilisation of technical support in case of urgency, a limited amount of the budget within the work programme of the instrument, not exceeding 30 % of the yearly allocation, should be set aside for special measures.

Transparency

The Commission should establish a single online public repository through which it could, subject to applicable rules and on the basis of consultation with the Member States concerned, make available final studies or reports produced as part of eligible actions.