

Flexible Assistance to Territories (FAST-CARE)

2022/0208(COD) - 21/09/2022 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Regional Development adopted the report by Niklas NIENAU (Greens/EFA, DE) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Regulation (EU) No 2021/1060 as regards additional flexibility to address the consequences of the military aggression of the Russian Federation FAST (Flexible Assistance for Territories) – CARE.

The committee responsible recommended that the European Parliament adopt its position at first reading in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure by taking over the Commission's proposal.

The proposal aims to amend Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 laying down common provisions for the Funds for the period 2014-2021 and the period 2021-2027, respectively. It aims to facilitate the use and increased flexibility in the implementation of cohesion policy resources by Member States and regions in order to support measures to respond to the migration challenges resulting from Russia's military aggression under the 2014-2020 and 2021-2027 programmes.

Given the increasing scope and impact of Russian military aggression, the proposal aims to provide a range of flexibilities to address it. These concern several key aspects covered by the two regulations, such as:

- a derogation from the location requirements of the operation in a given Member State;
- a pre-financing rate for ERDF, ESF+ and Cohesion Fund programmes increased by 0.5% in 2022 and 0.5% in 2023 of the total support from the Funds set in the decision approving the programme in all Member States;
- a co-financing rate of up to 100% for the priority axis dedicated to the integration of third-country nationals; at the same time, at least 30% of the support under such priority will need to be granted to local authorities and civil society organisations operating in local communities;
- flexibilities between funds - allowing for the use of the Cohesion Fund for operations addressing the migratory challenges resulting from the Russian aggression, and between thematic objectives - allowing transfers within programmes;
- possibility to declare expenditure for already completed operations related to migratory challenges;
- additional flexibilities allowing support under the 2021-2027 programmes for operations that were selected for support under the 2014-2020 programmes and started before 29 June 2022.

The rapporteur believes that the legislative proposal is justified and necessary in order to support Member States and their citizens facing the consequences of Russia's military aggression against Ukraine. It is essential that the proposed measures enter into force without unnecessary delay.