

Flexible Assistance to Territories (FAST-CARE)

2022/0208(COD) - 04/10/2022 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 592 votes to 12, with 10 abstentions, a legislative resolution 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 deal with the consequences of military aggression by the Russian Federation - FAST (Flexible Assistance to Territories) - CARE.

The European Parliament adopted its position at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure by taking over the Commission's proposal.

The Regulation on the Cohesion Action for Refugees in Europe (CARE) amends two legislative acts in order to provide for exceptional and targeted changes to the overall 2014-2020 legal framework governing the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds) and the European Fund for Assistance to the Most Deprived (EFAH). It aims to **facilitate the use and increased flexibility** in the implementation of cohesion policy resources by Member States and regions to support measures to address the migration challenges resulting from Russia's military aggression under the 2014-2020 and 2021-2027 programmes.

This measure will also reinforce ongoing efforts by Member States to address the prolonged impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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 addressing the migratory challenges resulting from Russia's military aggression under the 2014-2020 and 2021-2027 programmes.

This Regulation amends Regulations (EU) No 1303/2013 and (EU) 2021/1060 to:

- derogate from the requirements related to the location of the operation in a given Member State;
- introduce the possibility to declare expenditure for operations which are already physically completed or fully implemented;
- introduce **flexibilities between funds** - allowing the use of the Cohesion Fund for operations addressing the migratory challenges resulting from the Russian aggression, and between thematic objectives - allowing for transfers within programmes;
- allow for a **co-financing rate of up to 100%** to be applied until 30 June 2024 for a separate priority established under a programme of support for operations promoting the socio-economic integration of third country nationals. The total amount programmed under these priorities in any one Member State may not exceed 5% of that Member State's initial national allocation from the ERDF and ESF+ combined. At least 30% of the financial allocation of such a separate priority should be allocated to operations whose beneficiaries are local authorities or civil society organisations active at local community level;
- EUR 100 per week for each week or part thereof spent by the person in the Member State concerned, for a maximum duration of 26 weeks from the date of arrival of the person in the Union;

- increase the flexibility for payments of the final balance for each priority by Fund and by category of regions in the final accounting year from 10% to 15%;
- **increase the rate of pre-financing** of ERDF, ESF+ and Cohesion Fund programmes under the ‘ Investment for jobs and growth’ objective to 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;
- consider as eligible for support under the 2021-2027 programmes operations with a total cost of **more than EUR 1 million** which have been selected for support under the 2014-2020 programmes and have started before 29 June 2022, and which allow for the award of direct grants by the Managing Authority, provided that a limited number of key conditions are met.