# Amending the proposed mechanism to resolve legal and administrative obstacles in a cross-border context

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The Committee on Regional Development adopted the own-initiative report by Sandro GOZI (Renew, FR) with recommendations to the Commission on amending the proposed mechanism to resolve legal and administrative obstacles in a cross-border context.

Internal border regions cover 40 % of the EU's territory, account for 30 % of its population (150 million people) and are home to almost 2 million cross-border workers. Despite Parliament's adopted mandate on the proposed European Cross-Border Mechanism in 2018 and repeated calls on the Council to adopt its first-reading position, Member States halted this draft legislation. Moreover, in light of recent trends on intra-EU labour mobility, and in order to face various demographic, social, economic and environmental challenges, to reduce disparities, and prevent brain drain, the Union needs to step up its efforts to address persisting cross-border legal and administrative obstacles in the broader context of cohesion through a far more efficient cooperation of border region authorities as well as a new effective instrument.

In order to ensure that a new legislative proposal aimed at removing cross-border obstacles in the EU is prepared by the European Commission, Members suggest this new regulation using legislative initiative procedure.

The removal of complex cross-border obstacles requires a high degree of cooperation among Member States. The underlying assumption of the draft report is that this task could be carried out more easily and rapidly by allowing national, regional and local authorities of the Member States concerned to formulate ad-hoc solutions in a joint effort. The direct involvement of regional and local authorities would additionally rule out the need to establish regional Cross-border Coordination Points, while the collective formulation of the solution to a cross-border obstacle would avert protracted exchanges of draft texts between national authorities.

***Cross-border Coordination Points***

Members consider that the establishment of Cross-border Coordination Points is crucial to provide public authorities, civil society, citizens, and private bodies with an interlocutor capable of addressing legal or administrative obstacles hampering the implementation of a joint project. They maintain that through Cross-border Coordination Points, Member States should assess on a voluntary and a case-by-case basis whether and how to address the request for assistance in removing the obstacles and administrative burden. A way to boost multilevel governance, innovation, and stronger cooperation between border regions is to enable Cross-border Coordination Points to establish Cross-border Committees when addressing a complex obstacle that requires higher cooperation among the relevant authorities of border regions on all levels.

Public and private bodies, organisations supporting cross-border cooperation and initiatives would be able to come up with projects identifying obstacles halting cross-border development. The Cross-border Coordination Point would analyse it and suggest the next steps. If the solution required cooperation of another Member State, national Cross-border Coordination Point can ask its counterpart to set up a Cross-border Committee representing all authorities that would need to be involved to design a joint solution. However, Member States will be free to decide whether to use the cross-border mechanism or not.

Moreover, countries could also decide to follow the same arrangements for border regions with candidate countries.

The report also called on the European Commission to be in touch with cross-border coordination points, provide technical assistance, promote best practices and set up a public database listing all ad-hoc solutions.