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

2022/2194(INL) - 14/09/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 521 votes to 36, with 13 abstentions, a resolution 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. According to estimations, the setting up of a **legislative tool at Union level to address cross-border obstacles**, combined with existing tools, could bring about economic benefits of EUR 123 billion, while removing all obstacles would bring up benefits up to EUR 460 billion.

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, Parliament considered that 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.

Parliament requested that the Commission submit, on the basis of third paragraph of Article 175 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, a **proposal for a regulation** on a Border Regions' Instrument for Development and Growth in the EU.

The amendment to the ECBM proposal should concentrate on creating a simple and straightforward coordination framework allowing authorities at various levels to remove legal and administrative obstacles, while preventing the duplication of bodies and authorities, and the creation of unnecessary administrative burden.

Members believe 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.

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. Cross-border Coordination Points should establish Cross-border Committees when addressing a complex obstacle that requires higher cooperation among the relevant authorities of border regions on all levels.

Member States, when voluntarily deciding to trigger the instrument, should dispose of various policy measures to address the obstacle, such as a review of its administrative or legal framework through unilateral actions taken at the relevant level, soft-law instruments, the deferral of the management of the obstacle to the competent bodies established by existing bilateral or plurilateral treaties, or finally through the setting up of a Cross-border Committee tasked with the drafting of an ad-hoc solution to address one or more of the obstacles identified.

The adoption of a decision on the implementation of any ad-hoc solution drafted by the Cross-border Committee should remain at the discretion of the competent authorities at the relevant level of the Member State concerned.

Members stressed that **sufficient funding** for the proposals set out herein is required and considers that the financial implications of the requested proposals should be covered by the relevant Union budgetary allocation.