

Basic information	
2006/0131(AVC) AVC - Assent procedure (historic)	Procedure completed
Growth and jobs: cohesion policy, Community strategic guidelines, 2007-2013 Subject 4 Economic, social and territorial cohesion 4.15.02 Employment: guidelines, actions, Funds	

Key players					
European Parliament	Committee responsible		Rapporteur	Appointed	
	REGI Regional Development		KREHL Constanze (PSE)	12/09/2005	
	Committee for opinion		Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed	
	EMPL Employment and Social Affairs		The committee decided not to give an opinion.		
	ITRE Industry, Research and Energy		The committee decided not to give an opinion.		
	IMCO Internal Market and Consumer Protection		The committee decided not to give an opinion.		
	TRAN Transport and Tourism		The committee decided not to give an opinion.		
	Council of the European Union	Council configuration		Meetings	Date
		Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)		2752	2006-10-06
	European Commission	Commission DG		Commissioner	
Regional and Urban Policy		HÜBNER Danuta			

Key events			
Date	Event	Reference	Summary

13/07/2006	Initial legislative proposal published	COM(2006)0386 	Summary
18/08/2006	Legislative proposal published	11807/2006	Summary
05/09/2006	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
11/09/2006	Vote in committee		Summary
15/09/2006	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	A6-0281/2006	
26/09/2006	Debate in Parliament		
27/09/2006	Decision by Parliament	T6-0379/2006	Summary
27/09/2006	Results of vote in Parliament		
06/10/2006	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		
06/10/2006	End of procedure in Parliament		
21/10/2006	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2006/0131(AVC)
Procedure type	AVC - Assent procedure (historic)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	REGI/6/38324

Documentation gateway				
European Parliament				
Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE376.731	09/08/2006	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A6-0281/2006	15/09/2006	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T6-0379/2006	27/09/2006	Summary
Council of the EU				
Document type	Reference	Date	Summary	
Legislative proposal	11807/2006	18/08/2006	Summary	
European Commission				
Document type	Reference	Date	Summary	
Initial legislative proposal	COM(2006)0386 	13/07/2006	Summary	

Document attached to the procedure	SEC(2006)0929 	13/07/2006	
Follow-up document	COM(2007)0798 	11/12/2007	Summary

Additional information		
Source	Document	Date
National parliaments	IPEX	
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act
Decision 2006/0702 OJ L 291 21.10.2006, p. 0011-0032 Summary

Growth and jobs: cohesion policy, Community strategic guidelines, 2007-2013

2006/0131(AVC) - 18/08/2006 - Legislative proposal

The Council approved common guidelines on the proposal for a Council decision relating to strategic guidelines on cohesion.

The purpose of these strategic guidelines is to foster an increase in the strategic content of cohesion policy with a view to strengthening synergies with, and helping to deliver, the objectives of the renewed Lisbon agenda. The guidelines will act as an as an indicative framework for the Member States for the preparation of the national strategic reference frameworks and operational programmes for the period 2007 to 2013.

For details of the proposal, please refer to the document dated 13/07/2006.

Growth and jobs: cohesion policy, Community strategic guidelines, 2007-2013

2006/0131(AVC) - 11/12/2007

The Commission has prepared this Communication in order to set out an initial overview of the new generation of cohesion policy strategies and programmes for the period 2007-2013. It forms part of the Lisbon package, which is central to the new cohesion policy strategies and programmes. The report also reflects on the potential role of the cohesion programmes in taking the Lisbon Strategy forward.

To recall, the revised cohesion policy, approved in 2006, introduced a number of reforms including the need to take on a more explicit and transparent focus expressed through the "Community Strategic guidelines on Cohesion" (CSGs). This framework encourages the Member States and regions to focus on those areas of investment that help deliver the National Reform Programmes (NRPs) whilst taking account of national and regional circumstances. In addition, the Member States have been asked to " earmark" major parts of their financial allocations to investments that can make a significant contribution to the Lisbon objectives. Further, the reformed cohesion policy provides for greater decentralisation of responsibilities to local and regional partners. By pooling local and regional knowledge, expertise and resources, the cohesion policy is well placed to focus on investments with the highest impact on growth and jobs.

The strategies drawn up by the Member States for the 2007-2013 programming period indicate that a clear change of emphasis is underway, in favour of the key Lisbon priorities. Under the earmarking provisions, the EU-15 Member States are required to invest the predominant part of their financial allocations (in other words 60% of Funds for their Convergence regions and 75% for their Regions competitiveness and employment regions) into

categories that are central to growth-enhancing and job-creating investments. For the EU-12, the targets are voluntary but all new Member States have engaged in the earmarking exercise, albeit to varying degrees.

Globally, the results have been encouraging. For the less developed regions under the Convergence objective in EU-27, which together account for over 80% of cohesion policy resources, 65% of the funds are to be invested in the Lisbon-related objectives. This represents an increase of 11 percentage points compared to the previous programming period. Regions with programmes falling under the Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective, which account for 16% of cohesion policy resources, and which traditionally have had to concentrate their more limited allocations on the more productive investments, plan to continue to invest a high proportion of the funds, 82% of the total for 2007-2013, on Lisbon-related priorities.

For the EU15 Member States, for which earmarking is obligatory, the corresponding figures are, as is to be expected, somewhat higher at 74% for the Convergence Objective and 83% for the Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective, although these percentages vary significantly both across Member States and between different regions.

For the EU-12 Member States (and for which the earmarking provisions are not compulsory), the figure is some 59% under the Convergence Objective, which is also the same figure attained in the very limited number of programmes in these Member States that are supported by the Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective.

The report concludes by noting that resources for the new generation of cohesion policy strategies and programmes (2007-2013) will be used to take the Lisbon objectives on growth and jobs forward. Thanks, primarily, to the implementation of reforms agreed upon for the 2007-2013 period. Encouraged by new earmarking provisions, the cohesion policy appears to have changed the nature of discourse between the Commission, national governments and regional governments. The paper calls upon the Member States and the regions to implement and deliver, within their programming documents, policies that prioritise and strengthen the Lisbon Agenda on jobs and growth. Indeed, the Commission will continue to work closely with the Member States using the systems and procedures that have been put in place for monitoring, evaluation and, where necessary, the adjustment of the programmes. In Spring 2008, the Commission will provide a more detailed report following the conclusions of all negotiations on the programmes for 2007-2013.

To conclude, the Commission argues, that for the cohesion policy to be a real success, it is critical that strong economic growth, more and better jobs and higher standard of living for all of the EU's citizens is continually promoted.

Growth and jobs: cohesion policy, Community strategic guidelines, 2007-2013

2006/0131(AVC) - 27/09/2006 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Constanze Angela **KREHL (PES, DE)** and gave its assent to the proposal by 575 votes in favour to 40 votes against with 37 abstentions.

Growth and jobs: cohesion policy, Community strategic guidelines, 2007-2013

2006/0131(AVC) - 13/07/2006 - Initial legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to present the Community Strategic Guidelines on cohesion.

PROPOSED ACT : Council Decision.

CONTENT : the Community Strategic Guidelines form the basis for preparing national strategies, or national strategic reference frameworks, and, in a second stage, the individual operational programmes. They are based on the following objectives and principles:

- cohesion policy has become a key instrument at Community level to deliver the renewed Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs as defined by the integrated guidelines for growth and jobs;
- the new framework for cohesion policy in 2007-2013 is based on both the concentration of financial resources on the least developed regions and a strong thematic concentration within the new programmes on the renewed growth and jobs agenda;
- the financial instruments at the disposal of cohesion policy are the Structural Funds (the ERDF and the ESF) and the Cohesion Fund. It should be noted in this context, that in the guidelines, there is, intentionally, no analysis by Fund. The question of the appropriate instrument under each heading is a matter for the programming phase and depends on the nature of the planned expenditures (infrastructure, productive investment, human resource development, etc);
- the Guidelines concern only the part of national and regional investments co-financed by the Structural Funds and the Cohesion fund;
- the Guidelines need to be read alongside the legislative framework. The latter define the purpose and the scope of assistance of each Fund, while the Community Strategic Guidelines seek to identify within that scope those areas where cohesion policy can most effectively contribute to the realisation of Community priorities, particularly those of the renewed Lisbon Growth and Jobs Strategy;

- within the Guidelines, governance is a transversal element underpinning all actions in the interest of better and more efficient management of cohesion policy programmes and improving the quality of public policy-making;

- within the new framework for cohesion policy in 2007-2013, the territorial dimension is equally seen as a transversal element requiring that particular attention be paid to the impact of programmes in terms of promoting balanced sustainable development and exploiting the opportunities in cities, rural areas and areas with natural handicaps.

According to the guidelines and in line with the renewed Lisbon strategy, programmes co-financed through the cohesion policy should seek to target resources on the following three priorities:

- **improving the attractiveness of Member States, regions and cities** by improving accessibility, ensuring adequate quality and level of services, and preserving their environmental potential;

- **encouraging innovation, entrepreneurship and the growth of the knowledge economy** by research and innovation capacities, including new information and communication technologies; and

- **creating more and better jobs** by attracting more people into employment entrepreneurial activity, improving adaptability of workers and enterprises and increasing investment in human capital.

The Commission goes on to examine key aspects of each of these broad areas with specific guidelines under each heading. Not all of these more detailed guidelines will be relevant to all regions. The most appropriate mix of investments ultimately depends on the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of each Member State and region and specific national and regional circumstances. The guidelines rather represent a single framework which Member States and regions are invited to use when developing national, regional, and local programmes, in particular with a view to assessing their contribution to the objectives of the Union in terms of cohesion, growth and jobs. In taking on board the Lisbon agenda in the new programmes, attention is drawn to the following principles:

- cohesion policy should focus to a greater extent on **knowledge, research and innovation, and human capital**. Accordingly, the overall financial effort in support of these fields of action should be significantly increased;

- Member States and regions should pursue the objective of **sustainable development** and boost synergies between the economic, social and environmental dimensions;

- Member States and regions should pursue the objective of **equality between men and women** at all stages of the preparation and implementation of programmes and projects;

- Member States should take appropriate steps to **prevent any discrimination** on the basis of gender, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation during the various stages of implementing the Funds. In particular, accessibility for disabled persons is one of the criteria to respect in defining operations cofinanced by the Funds and to take into account during the various stages of implementation.

Growth and jobs: cohesion policy, Community strategic guidelines, 2007-2013

2006/0131(AVC) - 06/10/2006 - Final act

PURPOSE: to adopt the "Community Strategic Guidelines" on the EU's cohesion policy.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision 2006/702/EC on Community strategic guidelines on cohesion.

CONTENT: the strategic guidelines complete the legislative framework of the EU's cohesion policy. To recall, in July 2006 the EU adopted a number of legislative acts which define the cohesion policy. They are:

- Council Regulation 1083/2006/EC *laying down general provisions on the ERDF, ESF and CF*. For a summary see AVC/2004/0163.
- Council Regulation 1081/2006/EC *on the European Social Fund*. See COD/2004/0165;
- Council Regulation 1084/2006/EC *establishing the Cohesion Fund*. See AVC/2004/0166;
- Council Regulation 1080/2006/EC *on the European Regional Development Fund*. See COD/2004/0167;
- Council Regulation 1082/2006/EC *on a European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC)*. See COD/2004/0168.

Background

The strategic guidelines set out the principles and priorities of the EU's cohesion policy. They act as an indicative framework for the Member States when preparing their "National Strategic Reference Frameworks" or NSRFs for the period 2007-2013..

The EU's Cohesion Policy is based on Treaty Article 158 which states that the Community must strive to strengthen the economic and social cohesion of an enlarged Union; the intention being to promote economic sustainable development across the EU's regions and to correct current economic imbalances between the regions. The Funds, together with the help of the European Investment Bank (EIB) as well as other existing financial instruments, are the means with which the Community realises this objective.

The strategic guidelines recommend how to make best use of the EUR 308 billion set aside for the ERDF, the ESF and the CF. Under the new legal framework, the guidelines represent the first stage in a three-stage procedure for implementing the cohesion policy. In a second stage the Member States produce their own national strategies based on the Guidelines, which take account of their specific challenges and opportunities. The national strategies, in turn, form the basis of the individual programmes which set out detailed expenditures plans for the development of individual sectors such as transport or telecommunications or the development of individual regions.

The Community Strategic guidelines on economic, social and territorial cohesion.

The guidelines are based on three priorities:

- 1) **Making Europe and its regions more attractive places in which to invest and work.** A number of actions are listed under this guideline and include, inter alia, support for rail infrastructure, supporting environmentally sustainable transport networks in urban areas and improving the connectivity of landlocked, insular or outermost territories of the TEN-T projects. Attention must also be given to the "motorways of the sea" and to short-sea shipping as a viable alternative to long-distance road and rail transport. In the energy sector, the guidelines propose projects which improve energy efficiency; the development and use of renewable and alternative technologies for heating (wind, solar biomass etc.) and investment in traditional energy sources to develop networks where there is evidence of market failure.
- 2) **Improving knowledge and innovation for growth.** A number of actions are foreseen under this guideline and include, amongst others, strengthening business co-operation; helping SME's access RT&D funding; strengthening R&D capacity building; ensuring the availability of electronic services to both businesses and households and ensuring the availability of the ICT infrastructure in cases where the market fails to provide it at an affordable cost. This applies especially to remote and rural areas. Under this heading the guidelines also pay particular attention to improved access to finance. The Member States should consider supporting non-grant instruments such as loans and grants and to facilitate SME access to micro-credit.
- 3) **More and better jobs.** The drive for full employment and higher productivity depends on a wide variety of actions, which have been showcased above. The challenge is to create both high quality and permanent jobs. In terms of human capital development, three priorities for action have been set: to attract and retain more people in employment and to modernise social protection systems; to improve the adaptability of workers and enterprises and the flexibility of the labour markets and to increase investment in human capital through better education and skills. The type of action foreseen under this third heading includes developing policies that achieve full, quality employment; that promote a life-cycle approach to work and that recognise inclusive labour markets.

In addition, the guidelines establish four key principles that need to be applied whilst preparing national programmes. Firstly, attention must be given to the renewed Lisbon Agenda. Focus should, therefore, be given to knowledge, research and innovation and human capital. Secondly, the Member States are asked to pursue the objective of sustainable development. When preparing programmes for growth the national authorities will be obliged to take environmental considerations into account. Thirdly, the Member States must apply the principle of equality between men and women when preparing and implementing their programmes and fourthly, Member States are requested to take the necessary steps to prevent any discrimination on the basis of gender, race, ethnic origin, religion, belief or sexual orientation.