

Cohesion's Action for Refugees in Europe (CARE)

2022/0075(COD) - 24/03/2022 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 562 votes to 2, with 3 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 223/2014 as regards Cohesion's Action for Refugees in Europe (CARE).

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

The proposal for a Cohesion's Action for Refugees in Europe (CARE) will enable Member States and regions to **provide emergency assistance to people fleeing Ukraine after its invasion by Russia**. These needs include access to services such as temporary accommodation, food and water supplies or medical care. The CARE action can also strengthen the capacity of Member States by contributing, for example, to the provision of additional staff or infrastructure equipment needed to meet the needs of refugees.

This initiative will provide **increased flexibility** to fund a wide range of measures for people fleeing Ukraine under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD).

For example, these cohesion funds can be used for investments in education, employment, housing, health and childcare and, in the case of the EDF, for basic material assistance such as food and clothing.

The 2022 envelope of EUR 10 billion of the Recovery Assistance for Cohesion and the Territories of Europe ('REACT-EU') funds can also be used to address these new demands within the overall aim of post-pandemic recovery.

The changes to the cohesion policy rules and the FEAD regulation aim to make it as quick and easy as possible for Member States to provide assistance to people fleeing Ukraine, while continuing to support the recovery of the regions. They introduce the following changes:

- to ease national budgetary pressures, notably due to the extended impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the possibility of 100% EU co-financing for 2014-2020 Cohesion policy funding will be extended for the accounting year 2021-2022;

- Member States and regions will have the possibility to use resources from either the European Fund for Regional Development (ERDF) or the European Social Fund (ESF) for any type of measures to support people fleeing Ukraine. Thanks to this flexibility either fund will also be able to support projects even if these would normally be funded by the other one;

- Member State spending on all actions helping people fleeing Ukraine will be eligible for EU support **retroactively** as of the start date of the Russian invasion (24 February 2022);

- the reporting and the programme modifications will be simplified.