

Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2002/2119(INI)	Procedure completed
Disadvantaged regions in the context of the cohesion policy and its institutional perspectives		
Subject 4.70.06 Outlying and outermost regions, overseas countries and territories		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	RETT Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism	PPE-DE POMÉS RUIZ José Javier	20/01/2003

Key events			
04/07/2002	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
21/05/2003	Vote in committee		Summary
21/05/2003	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0188/2003	
02/09/2003	Debate in Parliament		
02/09/2003	Decision by Parliament	T5-0360/2003	Summary
02/09/2003	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2002/2119(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	RETT/5/16343

Documentation gateway					
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0188/2003	21/05/2003	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0360/2003	02/09/2003	EP	Summary

Disadvantaged regions in the context of the cohesion policy and its institutional perspectives

The committee adopted the own-initiative report by José Javier POMES RUIZ (EPP-ED, E) on structurally disadvantaged regions in the context of cohesion policy. MEPs stressed that a Community cohesion policy was crucial for the development of the EU and flatly rejected any attempt to renationalise this policy. They said that the principle of solidarity underpinning cohesion policy should apply in particular to regions with permanent geographical handicaps, in other words, island regions, mountain areas, and sparsely populated areas. They argued that such regions suffer from manifest structural disadvantages which can only be overcome by means of an all-embracing structural policy and if everyone contributes. The report also pointed out that, although the Treaty makes provision for measures to assist the outermost regions, no specific provision is made for other areas affected by permanent geographical handicaps. The committee proposed that, whatever their level of eligibility for future structural policies (Objective 1, 2 or phasing out), regions suffering from such permanent constraints should be able, within their respective classifications, to benefit from a Community co-funding rate upgraded from 5% to 10% depending on the severity of the constraints suffered. It also made a number of other recommendations: - there should be an explicit reference in the Treaty to areas of the Union with low population density according to Protocol 6 of the Act of Accession for Austria, Finland and Sweden; - a wide-ranging assessment should be carried out of the favourable effects information technologies can have on sparsely populated areas; - there was an urgent need to tackle the problem of emigration and its causes; - reform of Community competition policy must make it possible to enhance the impact of regional aid on regions with permanent geographical handicaps and to ensure that quality public services are preserved there; - given the important role which major trans-European networks can play in the transport and energy sectors to overcome the handicap of inaccessibility, the TEN should in future focus more on areas suffering from permanent handicaps. Lastly, the committee called on the Convention and the forthcoming Intergovernmental Conference to include the principle of 'territorial cohesion' in a concrete form among the fundamental objectives of the Union's constitutional treaty and to include in the chapters of the second part of the Treaty, concerning common policies, provisions to remedy the permanent structural constraints affecting some regions of the Union.?

Disadvantaged regions in the context of the cohesion policy and its institutional perspectives

The European Parliament adopted the own-initiative report drafted by José Javier POMES RUIZ (EPP-ED, Spain) on structurally disadvantaged regions. (Please see the summary dated 21/05/03.) The resolution was adopted by 443 votes in favour, 42 against and 30 abstentions. Parliament proposed additional Treaty changes: - current provisions governing state aid, and specifically Article 87, should be amended so that aid to promote the economic development of areas where the standard of living is abnormally low or which suffer from permanent demographic handicaps might be compatible with the common market; - Article 158 of the Treaty should be amended to acknowledge that the Community takes account of the permanent structural handicaps linked to island status, mountainous geography and low population density, and will implement, where justified, specific measures in proportion to the severity of the constraints suffered.?