

Common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund; general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

2011/0276(COD) - 11/09/2012 - Initial legislative proposal

The Commission presents an amended proposal for a Regulation laying down common provisions for the ERDF, the ESF, the Cohesion Fund, the EAFRD and the EMFF covered by the Common Strategic Framework and general conditions applicable to the cohesion policy funds.

This proposal, presented on 6 October 2011, foresaw the adoption of a common strategic framework (CSF) to facilitate the sectoral and territorial coordination of union intervention under the CSF funds and with other relevant Union policies and instruments. The Common Strategic Framework was to establish the key areas of support, territorial challenges to be addressed, policy objectives, priority areas for cooperation activities, coordination mechanisms and mechanisms for coherence and consistency with the economic policies of Member States and the Union.

The proposal foresaw that the CSF would be adopted by the Commission as a delegated act. Both the Council and Parliament's Committee on Regional Policy have signalled that they wish to see the CSF adopted as an annex to the regulation and not as a delegated act.

In view of this and in order to facilitate a compromise between the institutions, the Commission presents this amended legislative proposal which splits the elements of the CSF between a new annex (Annex I) to the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) and a delegated act.

The new annex contains four sections on

- 1) means to achieve coherence and consistency with the economic policies of Member States and the Union,
- 2) coordination mechanisms among CSF Funds and with other relevant Union policies and instruments,
- 3) horizontal principles and cross-cutting policy objectives and
- 4) arrangements to address territorial challenges.

The delegated act will in turn contain two sections:

- 1) sections on indicative actions of high European added value and corresponding principles for delivery and
- 2) priorities for cooperation.

The Commission maintains, however, that all elements of the CSF, whether included in the annex or in the delegated act, remain non-essential elements for the purpose of Article 290 Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union and can thus be amended by delegated act. The essential elements are contained in Articles 11 and 12 of the CPR.