Economic, social and territorial cohesion; Investment for growth and jobs goal; European territorial cooperation goal: resources

2017/0247(COD) - 17/11/2017 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Regional Development adopted the report by Iskra MIHAYLOVA (ALDE, BG) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 as regards the changes to the resources for economic, social and territorial cohesion and to the resources for the Investment for growth and jobs goal and for the European territorial cooperation goal.

The committee recommended that the European Parliament adopt its position at first reading, taking over the Commission proposal.

As the explanatory statement accompanying the report pointed out, the legislative proposal introduces several technical changes to the Common Provisions on the European Structural and Investment Funds (Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013) in order to take into account the most recent statistical data available and to bring the figures in that regulation into line with the outcome of various financial decisions that have already been taken.

The data in the Common Provisions Regulation should be updated and adjusted to take account of:

- regulatory provisions for the adjustment of cohesion policy instruments for the period 2017-2020. The procedure provides for the adjustment of the total allocation for each Member State where the national GDP has changed by more than 5%. This is the case for 16 Member States;
- the new eligible status of Cyprus under the Cohesion Fund;
- transfers of appropriations between the various goals of cohesion policy. It is not normally possible to transfer appropriations between the Investment for growth and jobs goal and the European territorial cooperation goal. However, Article 94 of the CPR allows the Commission to authorise such transfers if certain conditions are met;
- the 2017 amendment to the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) (Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2017/1123) made a change to the rules on the margins left available below the ceilings for commitment appropriations of the MFF (Global MFF Margin), allowing those funds to be used, inter alia, for an extension of the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) for the 2017-2020 period;
- a decision was adopted in 2015 (Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2015/623) to redistribute unused cohesion programme funds for 2014 (the first year of the current period) to the following years.

The rapporteur advocated the approval of the proposed amendments without amendment given the urgency of continuing the YEI. It noted, however, that this proposal was submitted at a very late stage and regretted that no steps had been taken to give Parliament advance notice of this urgent proposal. The Commission is called upon to give both co-legislators equal consideration in future.