



**THE SENATE
OF THE PARLIAMENT OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC
8TH TERM
604th**

RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE

delivered on the 21st meeting held on 26th April 2012

on the proposals laying down the future cohesion policy

(Senate Press no. N 088/08, N 090/08, N 091/08, N 092/08, N 093/08 and N 094/08)

The Senate

I.

- 1. Holds the view** that the Cohesion policy must remain a significant policy of the EU fully reflecting the determination of the Member States to support economic, social and territorial cohesion and solidarity between the developed and less developed regions, and therefore welcomes the proposal of the Commission to allocate in total 376 billion EUR for the Cohesion policy in the years 2014 - 2020;
- 2. Recalls** Senate Resolution No. 153 of 15 March 2011, in which the Senate presented its position regarding the proposals contained in the Communication from the Commission called Conclusions of the fifth cohesion report that also dealt with the future of the Cohesion policy;

II.

- 1. Takes note of** the Commission's efforts to link the Cohesion policy with the implementation of the strategy EU2020; thematic concentration on a smaller number of pre-defined goals and their clear link to the financing from individual funds can contribute to a higher degree of effectiveness of the Cohesion policy and, at the same time, to the fulfilment of the main goals set in the strategy EU2020;
- 2. Is, however, convinced** that such a link must not prevent the locally orientated approach towards the development of regions which would take into account specific development requirements of a given region that do not necessarily have to reflect the pre-defined thematic goals set out in Article 9 of the proposal for the common provisions regulation;
- 3. Points out**, in this context, the obligation laid down in Article 4 of the proposal for the ERDF regulation, based on which the less developed regions in the Czech Republic would have to allocate at least 50 % of disposable funds to three pre-determined thematic goals, which significantly limits flexibility when drawing up development strategies tailored to the specific needs of a given region;
- 4. Considers it essential** that the new regulatory framework of rules creates a stable and predictable environment enabling successful implementation of medium-term development

projects and drawing of funds; in this context, the Senate warns against too frequent changes in basic programme documents (e.g. on the basis of regular annual implementation reports and annual review meetings);

5. **Does not find it appropriate** that the common strategic framework should be adopted by the Commission by way of a delegated act, because it believes that such a document represents an essential element of the proposal for regulation; therefore it would welcome involvement of the Council of the EU and the European Parliament into the process of adoption of this framework;
6. **Admits** that the conditional providing of funds (the so-called macroeconomic conditionalities) within the cohesion policy while adhering to economic policy recommendations of the Council within the European Semester or during the excessive deficit procedure can be perceived as an instrument to enforce the rules of the game more effectively in the context of a newly created model of economic governance in the EU;
7. **States**, however, that the cohesion policy should not serve as an instrument for enforcement of other EU policies; it primarily has to fulfil its main purpose laid down in Article 174 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, i.e. to strengthen economic, social and territorial cohesion by reducing disparities between the levels of development of the various regions and the backwardness of the least favoured regions;
8. **Considers it therefore proper** that the support for less developed regions, which fall under the former "convergence" objective, remains a key task of the cohesion policy, which is reflected in the Commission proposals to allocate nearly 163 billion EUR for these regions;
9. **Is not convinced** of the appropriateness of the transfer of funds from the Cohesion Fund in favour of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) given the still significant deficit of cohesion states as regards their domestic infrastructure, the construction of which is co-financed by the Cohesion Fund;
10. **Does not agree** with the exclusion of support for housing construction from the scope of support from the Cohesion Fund, as laid down in Article 2, paragraph 2 of the proposal for the Cohesion Fund regulation;
11. **Considers it essential** that air protection be included into the scope of priority investments within the environment protection to be financed from the Cohesion Fund;
12. **Takes a negative stand towards** the change in the current rule that is based on the practice that in case of unduly paid funds, which cannot be recovered from a responsible beneficiary (project partner), the ultimate liability shall lie with the Member State, on whose territory the responsible beneficiary is located, and not with the Member State, on whose territory the lead beneficiary is located;

III.

1. **Requests** the Government to inform the Senate about the way this position was taken into account, and about further development of negotiations;
2. **Authorises** the President of the Senate to forward this Resolution to the European Commission.

Milan Štěch
sign manual
President of the Senate