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COVER NOTE

From:	European Committee of the Regions
date of receipt:	26 November 2024
To:	Ms Thérèse BLANCHET, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union

Subject:	Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council: RESTORE – Regional Emergency Support to Reconstruction amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1058 and Regulation (EU) 2021/1057 [14753/24 - COM(2024) 496 final] Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) 2020/2220 as regards specific measures under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) to provide additional assistance to Member States affected by natural disasters [14767/24 - COM(2024) 495 final] - Resolution of the European Committee of the Regions
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Delegations will find attached a copy of the above-mentioned resolution.

This resolution is available in all language versions on the following website: [DM Search v4.6.0 \(europa.eu\)](#)



**European Committee
of the Regions**

RESOL-VII/036

163rd plenary session, 20 and 21 November 2024

RESOLUTION

**on Regional Emergency Support to Reconstruction (RESTORE) and
EAFRD measures to provide assistance to Member States affected by
natural disasters**

Resolution of the European Committee of the Regions – on Regional Emergency Support to Reconstruction (RESTORE) and EAFRD measures to provide assistance to Member States affected by natural disasters

HAVING REGARD TO:

- the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), and in particular Articles 43(2), 164, 174, 175(3), 178, and 307 thereof;
- the proposal from the European Commission for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on RESTORE – Regional Emergency Support to Reconstruction amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1058 and Regulation (EU) 2021/1057 (COM(2024) 496 final);
- the proposal from the European Commission for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) 2020/2220 as regards specific measures under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) to provide additional assistance to Member States affected by natural disasters (COM(2024) 495 final);
- the CoR opinion on the future of Cohesion Policy post-2027 (CoR-2023 2250);
- the CoR opinion on the Review and proposal for the revision of the MFF 2021-2027 (CoR 2023-3512); and
- the CoR opinion on the Mid-term review of the Multiannual Financial Framework: The local and regional perspective (CoR 2023-00138).

WHEREAS:

1. the recent natural disasters, and in particular the floods in southern, eastern and central Europe, have had a devastating effect on the populations living in those regions, including unprecedented environmental and material damage and the longer-term damage on local and regional economies. Such events require a timely and flexible response and support from the EU to alleviate the socio-economic consequences and for the reconstruction of damaged and destroyed infrastructures;
2. in light of the increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather events due to climate change, it is necessary not only to reconstruct but to adapt the rebuilt infrastructure and improve its resilience against a broad spectrum of disasters, fully embracing the **‘build back better’ principle**;
3. cohesion policy’s main mission is to strengthen territorial, economic and social cohesion in the European Union, in line with Article 174 TFEU. Any measures to reallocate cohesion policy resources to respond to emergencies must keep this goal in mind and must not diminish the policy’s capacity to achieve its long-term objectives;

4. in view of the urgency of the matter, the co-legislators have requested the CoR to provide its position within short deadlines that require the CoR to respond in the form of this urgent resolution.

THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS (CoR):

5. expresses its strong solidarity with the people and local and regional authorities that have been affected by the recent natural disasters;
6. sees the increasing frequency of these disasters as a direct consequence of climate change that will persist and pose increasing challenges and asymmetric impact on territories in the EU, particularly those suffering permanent geographic handicap, like islands and mountain areas;
7. underlines the need for a strong partnership, with regions and municipalities and close collaboration across all levels of government, to be able to effectively deal with disasters and to mitigate the consequences on local and regional communities;
8. **welcomes the European Commission's proposals and its recognition of the urgent need for support** for EU regions affected by recent natural disasters;
9. notes however that the **European Commission's proposals** do not bring fresh or additional funding for such regions but merely **promote reallocation of amounts already earmarked for these regions** under the EAFRD, ERDF and ESF+;
10. **therefore, calls on the European Commission to urgently propose genuine additional resources** for the affected regions; such as a revision of the **national Recovery and Resilience Plans**, additional funding under the **European Union Solidarity Fund** and the **Civil Protection Mechanism** as well as a top-up to funding under shared management programmes as was the case for **Recovery assistance for cohesion and the territories of Europe (REACT-EU)**;
11. notes that the proposal, if implemented as proposed, may reduce total investment in regions due to the possibility of applying a 100% EU co-financing rate; **calls on Member States nevertheless to ensure continued national co-financing in the affected regions** and to **maintain the level of total investment as originally planned in the programmes adopted** for these regions;
12. emphasises that natural disasters are increasing in frequency and severity and that all investments supported by EU funds need to be conceived and implemented with this in mind; therefore, also **calls on the co-legislators to fully embed the 'build back better' principle in the legislative framework for this proposal**;
13. underlines that the future cohesion policy after 2027 should allocate more resources to **reinforce the preparedness and the resilience of regions and municipalities** in order for them to sustainably adapt to climate change and its consequences; reminds that the costs of inaction far outweigh the investments required.

14. reiterates its position that the **future Multiannual Financial Framework** should be designed to ensure **flexibility and agility across all pillars and management modes** in case of new priorities and natural disasters, including for example by providing a **larger emergency fund and general flexibility crisis reserve embedded in the MFF right from the outset**;
15. calls on the European Commission to establish a **learning platform** among the affected regions to enable and encourage exchanges on and learning from these reconstruction processes.

Brussels, 21 November 2024.

*The President
of the
European Committee of the Regions*

Vasco ALVES CORDEIRO
