



Intermediate arrangements for transition regions in future Cohesion Policy

The Assembly of European Regions,

- Considering the conclusions of the Fifth Report on Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion and the proposal by the European Commission to consider the creation of a new intermediate category for regions whose GDP per capita lies above the 75% threshold and below a certain percentage still to be defined,
- Recalling the AER White paper on cohesion policy, where it is stated *“Should transition regions become a category of its own, it should be named as a 4th objective, in order to keep the architecture clear. A transition objective would aim at reducing the phasing-out and mitigate negative effects that many regions face at a certain point of their development. The criteria for this objective should therefore be made as fair as possible and straightforward enough to avoid any ambiguity on the status of one region or another. Regions situated at the different thresholds should especially be considered.”*,
 1. Acknowledges that the current system induces some serious inequalities of treatment between regions with similar GDP per capita.
 2. Is aware of the difficult budgetary situation in most EU member states, the many problems at stake presently in the EU and the inherent tensions that will accompany the budget negotiations.
 3. Reiterates that whatever the budgetary decision made, cohesion policy is a key policy for improving the overall EU economic situation and that this role shall not be underestimated.
 4. Insists therefore on the need to base any decision regarding an intermediary objective on a need point of view and not only on a budgetary angle.
 5. Agrees with the large consensus saying that the regions leaving the convergence objective should be accompanied in their transition.
 6. Stresses, that appropriate, transparent and fair transitional arrangements must be provided for regions which are currently receiving assistance as part of the

convergence objective, but whose GDP per-capita exceeds 75% of the EU average.

7. Recommends, that in case of the introduction of a new geographically defined transition objective, this should not split the current “regional competitiveness and employment” objective but follow the aim of transition assistance in order to pursue the already achieved progress on a long-term basis.
8. Underlines, that the creation of a new intermediate objective is only acceptable if the budget for regions under the “regional competitiveness and employment” objective is not consequently reduced as these regions contribute to strengthening the competitiveness of the entire EU.
9. To this end, recalls that Cohesion policy should remain a policy for all Europeans and continue to support all regions for competitiveness, innovation and employment.

Adopted by the AER Bureau in s'Hertogenbosch (NL) on 29 April 2011