

Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999 (repealed)

## TITLE II

### STRATEGIC APPROACH TO COHESION

#### CHAPTER I

##### Community strategic guidelines on cohesion

###### *Article 25*

###### **Content**

The Council shall establish at Community level concise strategic guidelines on economic, social and territorial cohesion defining an indicative framework for the intervention of the Funds, taking account of other relevant Community policies.

For each of the objectives of the Funds, those guidelines shall in particular give effect to the priorities of the Community with a view to promoting the harmonious, balanced and sustainable development of the Community referred to in Article 3(1).

Those guidelines shall be established taking into account the integrated guidelines, comprising broad economic policy guidelines and employment guidelines, adopted by the Council in accordance with the procedures laid down in Articles 99 and 128 of the Treaty.

###### *Article 26*

###### **Adoption and review**

The Commission shall propose, following close cooperation with Member States, the Community strategic guidelines on cohesion referred to in Article 25 of this Regulation. By 1 February 2007 the Community strategic guidelines on cohesion shall be adopted in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 161 of the Treaty. The Community strategic guidelines on cohesion shall be published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

The Community strategic guidelines on cohesion may be subject, following close cooperation with Member States, to mid-term review in accordance with the procedure laid down in the first subparagraph if required in order to take account of any major changes in the priorities of the Community.

The mid-term review of the Community strategic guidelines on cohesion shall not impose an obligation on Member States to revise either the operational programmes or their respective national strategic reference frameworks.

## CHAPTER II

### National strategic reference framework

#### Article 27

#### Content

1 The Member State shall present a national strategic reference framework which ensures that assistance from the Funds is consistent with the Community strategic guidelines on cohesion, and which identifies the link between Community priorities, on the one hand, and its national reform programme, on the other.

2 Each national strategic reference framework shall constitute a reference instrument for preparing the programming of the Funds.

3 The national strategic reference framework shall apply to the Convergence objective and the Regional competitiveness and employment objective. It may also, if a Member State so decides, apply to the European territorial cooperation objective, without prejudice to the future choices of other Member States concerned.

4 The national strategic reference framework shall contain the following elements:

- a an analysis of development disparities, weaknesses and potential, taking into account trends in the European and world economy;
- b the strategy chosen on the basis of that analysis, including the thematic and territorial priorities. Where appropriate these priorities shall include actions relating to sustainable urban development, the diversification of rural economies and areas dependent on fisheries;
- c the list of operational programmes for the Convergence and Regional competitiveness and employment objectives;
- d a description of how the expenditure for the Convergence and Regional competitiveness and employment objectives will contribute to the European Union priorities of promoting competitiveness and creating jobs, including meeting the objectives of the Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs (2005 to 2008) as laid down in Article 9(3).
- e the indicative annual allocation from each Fund by programme;
- f for regions of the Convergence objective only:
  - (i) the action envisaged for reinforcing the Member State's administrative efficiency;
  - (ii) the amount of the total annual appropriation provided for under the EAFRD and the EFF;
  - (ii) the information required for *ex ante* verification of compliance with the additionality principle referred to in Article 15;
- g for Member States eligible for the Cohesion Fund under Articles 5(2) and 8(3), information on the mechanisms for ensuring coordination between operational programmes themselves and between these and the EAFRD, the EFF and, where appropriate, the interventions of the EIB and of other existing financial instruments.

5 In addition, the national strategic reference framework may also contain, where relevant, the following elements:

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- a the procedure for coordination between Community cohesion policy and the relevant national, sectoral and regional policies of the Member State concerned;
- b for Member States other than those referred to in paragraph 4(g), information on the mechanisms for ensuring coordination between operational programmes themselves and between these and the EAFRD, the EFF and the interventions of the EIB and of other existing financial instruments.

6 The information contained in the national strategic reference framework shall take account of the specific institutional arrangements of each Member State.

#### *Article 28*

### **Preparation and adoption**

1 The national strategic reference framework shall be prepared by the Member State, after consultation with relevant partners as referred to in Article 11, in accordance with the procedure that it considers most appropriate and with its institutional structure. It shall cover the period 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2013.

The Member State shall prepare the national strategic reference framework in dialogue with the Commission, with a view to ensuring a common approach.

2 Each Member State shall transmit the national strategic reference framework to the Commission within five months following the adoption of the Community strategic guidelines on cohesion. The Commission shall take note of the national strategy and the priority themes chosen for assistance from the Funds, and make such observations as it considers appropriate within three months from the date of receipt of the framework.

The Member State may present at the same time the national strategic reference framework and the operational programmes referred to in Article 32.

3 Before or at the same time as the adoption of the operational programmes referred to in Article 32(5), the Commission, following consultation with the Member State, shall take a decision covering:

- a the list of operational programmes referred to in Article 27(4)(c);
- b the indicative annual allocation from each Fund by programme referred to in Article 27(4)(e); and
- c for the Convergence objective only, the level of expenditure guaranteeing compliance with the additionality principle referred to in Article 15 and the action envisaged for reinforcing administrative efficiency as referred to in Article 27(4)(f)(i).

## CHAPTER III

### **Strategic follow-up**

#### *Article 29*

### **Strategic reporting by the Member States**

1 For the first time in 2007, each Member State shall include in the annual implementation report on its national reform programme a concise section on the contribution

of the operational programmes co-financed by the Funds towards the implementation of the national reform programme.

2 At the latest by the end of 2009 and 2012, the Member States shall provide a concise report containing information on the contribution of the programmes co-financed by the Funds:

- a towards implementing the objectives of cohesion policy as established by the Treaty;
- b towards fulfilling the tasks of the Funds as set out in this Regulation;
- c towards implementing the priorities detailed in the Community strategic guidelines on cohesion referred to in Article 25 and specified in the priorities set by the national strategic reference framework referred to in Article 27; and
- d towards achieving the objective of promoting competitiveness and job creation and working towards meeting the objectives of the Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs (2005 to 2008) as laid down in Article 9(3).

3 Each Member State shall define the content of the reports referred to in paragraph 2, with a view to identifying:

- a the socio-economic situation and trends;
- b achievements, challenges and future prospects in relation to implementation of the agreed strategy; and
- c examples of good practice.

4 References to the national reform programme in this Article shall relate to the Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs (2005 to 2008) and shall equally apply to any equivalent guidelines defined by the European Council.

#### *Article 30*

#### **Strategic reporting by the Commission and debate on cohesion policy**

1 For the first time in 2008, and annually thereafter, the Commission shall include in its Annual Progress Report to the Spring European Council a section summarising the reports of the Member States referred to in Article 29(1), in particular progress towards achieving the European Union priorities of promoting competitiveness and creating jobs, including meeting the objectives of the Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs (2005 to 2008) as laid down in Article 9(3).

2 In the years 2010 and 2013, and at the latest by 1 April, the Commission shall prepare a strategic report summarising the reports of the Member States referred to in Article 29(2). As appropriate, this report shall be incorporated as a specific section in the report referred to in Article 159 of the Treaty.

3 The Council shall examine the strategic report referred to in paragraph 2 as soon as possible after its publication. It shall be submitted to the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, and these institutions shall be invited to hold a debate on it.

#### *Article 31*

#### **Cohesion report**

1 The report of the Commission referred to in Article 159 of the Treaty shall include in particular:

- a a record of the progress made on economic and social cohesion, including the socio-economic situation and development of the regions, as well as the integration of Community priorities;
  - b a record of the role of the Funds, the EIB and the other financial instruments, as well as the effect of other Community and national policies on the progress made.
- 2 The report shall also contain, if necessary:
- a any proposals on Community measures and policies which should be adopted in order to strengthen economic and social cohesion;
  - b any proposed adjustments to the Community strategic guidelines on cohesion needed to reflect changes in Community policy.