

RESOLUTION
OF THE SEJM OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND

of 7 June 2018

on the future shape of the cohesion policy in the European Union

The Sejm of the Republic of Poland closely follows the ongoing debate in the European Union forum on the future of the cohesion policy post 2020. As part of this exchange of positions, the Sejm of the Republic of Poland voices the conviction that the sustenance of the EU regional development policy and its financing from the common budget will significantly affect an effective fulfillment of the Community goals.

The Sejm of the Republic of Poland voices the conviction that the EU budget must be ambitious and designed to guarantee the solutions of most important problems for the citizens and the European Union integration process without creating a Europe of different speeds. The EU should broadly support development-oriented projects while sparing no effort to preserve its internal cohesion in the social, economic and territorial dimensions.

The Sejm of the Republic of Poland believes that the EU needs a flexible and forward-looking policy which, while implementing the present Treaty objectives, can equally live up to the current challenges, such as, for example, the structural transformation. Its implementation should engage in a coordinated manner all of the relevant policies (EU-wide and national) and their respective instruments.

The Sejm of the Republic of Poland emphasizes that the cohesion policy is the key investment policy of the European Union and serves to tackle the development issues in the most comprehensive way. It should form an important part of the EU budget, covering all regions within its geographic scope. An adequate support should be extended to the least developed regions, whereas the GDP per capita should remain the basic index for the distributed allocations of the cohesion policy funds.

The Sejm of the Republic of Poland holds the position that the cohesion policy reform and enhanced focus on outcomes in the context of implementation of the EU's structural transformation policy, necessitate the functional changes as follows:

- 1) strengthening of the thematic focus mechanisms while maintaining a wide range of cohesion policy interventions since the actionable measures need to be adapted to the identified deficits and potentials of individual territories;
- 2) amending the logic of the system which links the cohesion policy to the support for structural reforms by basing this logic rather on the incentives to encourage structural changes;
- 3) harmonizing the implementation rules for the cohesion policy funds while maintaining their current structure consisting of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Cohesion

Fund (CF);

4) strengthening the territorial approach through a wider application of territorial instruments which should also be simplified and made more flexible;

5) reforming the multi-tiered shared management model so that its main axes are mutual trust and results orientation, and more competences are delegated to the national and regional levels (in the scope of implementation, including audit and control);

6) simplifying the application of the financial instruments.

At the same time, the Sejm of the Republic of Poland points out that the cohesion policy does not work in isolation – its success being conditioned on the coherence and effectiveness of the entire economic governance system. Thus, the system should be modified as follows:

1) The recommendations for the individual Member States should be of a multi-annual nature and encourage structural reforms at the EU-wide and Member State levels. It is also necessary to strengthen the Commission - Member States dialog so that the countries can fully identify with the recommendations;

2) The horizontal rules and requirements for project implementation under the cohesion policy and the centrally governed instruments and programs need to be harmonized.

We believe that the European taxpayer's money should be spent efficiently, transparently and fairly. Poland, with her high standards of the EU money spending, is looking critically at the recent proposals to tie the European Union budget to the rule of law control. The absence of a clear definition and precise criteria for the assessment of the rule of law in the Member States gives rise to serious concerns about discretion and sets a dangerous precedent for a mechanism of exerting political pressure on the sovereign decisions of the Member States. The discretionary nature of such a mechanism will lead to a limitation beyond the Treaty of the Member States' rights.

The Sejm of the Republic of Poland authorizes the Speaker of the Sejm to forward the text of this Resolution to the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission and appeals to these institutions of the EU to take account of the conclusions of this Resolution in the work on the future of the cohesion policy for the period post the year 2020.

THE SEJM SPEAKER

/ - / Marek Kuchciński