

Press release – Parliament mobilised to channel EU funds to those affected by Coronavirus pandemic



EP Regional Development Committee Chair, Younous Omarjee (GUE/NGL, FR) said: “Europe must show solidarity right now. Cohesion policy is intrinsically linked to solidarity and now more than ever, it must rise to the challenge, so that it is implemented as efficiently as possible. The Regional Development Committee will do its utmost to ensure that money is made available where it is most needed.”

Next steps

Amending EU funding rules falls under the co-decision procedure, so both Parliament and Council will need to adopt it. The Regional Development Committee bureau and coordinators will discuss the procedure and announce next steps to be taken as soon as possible. The committee will aim to conclude its examination of the proposal as quickly as possible.

The adoption of the amendment will allow the funding to be channelled towards affected areas and sectors.

Background

On 10 March, the European Commission announced it would bring out a “Corona

Response Investment Initiative” directed at health care systems, SMEs, labour markets and other vulnerable parts of the EU member states’ economies. A legislative proposal to amend the Common Provisions Regulation, the European Regional Development Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund regulations were published on 13 March.

Commission proposed to direct EUR 37 billion under the cohesion policy to the fight against the Coronavirus crisis, by means of relinquishing this year its obligation to request the return of pre-financing for the structural funds. This amounts to about EUR 8 billion from the EU budget, which Member States will be able to use to supplement EUR 29 billion of structural funding across the EU. In addition, the Commission proposed to extend the scope of the EU Solidarity Fund by also including a public health crisis within its scope, in view of mobilising it if needed for the hardest hit Member States.