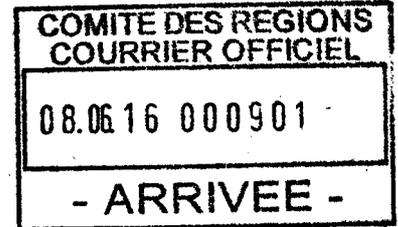


EUROPEAN COMMISSION
SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

Direction F – Relations with other Institutions
SG.F.3 - National Parliaments, Consultative Committees, Ombudsman

Brussels, 7 June 2016
SG F3/ESZ/



Dear Secretary General,

In conformity with the Protocol on Cooperation between the Commission and the Committee of the Regions, I am pleased to send you the follow-up given by the Commission to the opinions adopted by the Committee of the Regions during the plenary session of February 2016.

Yours faithfully,

[signed]
Pascal LEARDINI
Director

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**FOLLOW-UP PROVIDED BY THE COMMISSION TO THE
OPINIONS OF THE**

COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

PLENARY SESSION OF FEBRUARY 2016

68th REPORT

N°	TITLE	REFERENCES
REGIO		
1.	Indicators for territorial development – GDP and beyond Rapporteur: Catuscia Marini (President of the Umbria Region, IT/PES)	COR-2015-04287-00-00-PAC-TRA COTER-VI/009
EMPL		
2.	The integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market Proposal for a Council Recommendation Rapporteur: Enrico Rossi (President of the Tuscany Region, IT/PES)	COM(2015) 462 – final COR-2015-04871-00-00-PAC-TRA SEDEC-VI/006
GROW		
3.	Age-friendly tourism Rapporteur: Annemiek Jetten (Mayor of Sluis, NL/PES)	COR-2015-03637-00-01-PAC-TRA NAT-VI/005 Own-initiative opinion
MARE		
4.	Union framework for data collection in fisheries Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council Rapporteur: Olgierd Geblewicz (President of Westpomerania Region, PL/EPP)	COM(2015) 294 – final – 2015/0133 (COD) COR-2015-05241-00-00-PAC-TRA NAT-VI/007

AGRI		
5.	<p>Innovation and modernisation of the rural economy</p> <p>Rapporteur: Randel Länts (Member of Viljandi City Council, EE/PES)</p>	<p>COR-2015-02799-00-00-PAC-TRA</p> <p>NAT-VI/004</p>
EAC		
6.	<p>The implementation of the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018)</p> <p>Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Draft 2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission</p> <p>Rapporteur: Csaba Borboly (President of Harghita County Council, RO/EPP)</p>	<p>COM(2015) 429 – final</p> <p>COR-2015-04872-00-00-PAC-TRA</p> <p>SEDEC-VI/007</p>

<p>N°1 Indicators for territorial development – GDP and beyond COR 2015/4287 – COTER-VI/009 116th Plenary Session - February 2016 Rapporteur: Ms Catuscia MARINI (IT/PES) DG REGIO – Commissioner CREȚU</p>	
Points of the CoR opinion considered essential	Commission position
<p>23. The CoR believes that it is urgent to develop comparable statistical data at the local and sub-local level as well as translating the existing OECD and Commission urban-rural classification into Eurostat categories that can, drawing from reliable information from the ground, assist both EU policymaking and evaluation.</p>	<p>The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Commission have harmonised their definition of urban and rural regions. Eurostat is preparing a modification of the NUTS¹ Regulation to include this definition. Eurostat already publishes data using this harmonised definition.</p>
<p>24. The CoR points out the lack of quantitative information on the various regions with particular territorial features in the EU - namely geographical, environmental, economic and social features - which have an influence on development; outermost regions are singular examples thereof. It also suggests that Eurostat adopt the territorial categories identified by the Treaty, such as that of outermost regions, on the basis of which statistics could be produced contributing to the proper adjustment and alignment of EU policies and measures in keeping with territorial considerations.</p>	<p>Eurostat is currently working on an internal analysis tool called TERRA, which should enable the aggregation of regional datasets by several kinds of typologies. The tool should be flexible enough to also work with, for instance, outermost regions and other ones with particular conditions.</p>
<p>34. The CoR points out the close alignment of the Cohesion Policy with the Europe 2020 strategy but criticises the mismatch between the measurement and intervention methods of the Europe 2020 strategy on the</p>	<p>The Commission considers that the coordination between the Europe 2020 strategy and Cohesion Policy is beneficial. The bulk of cohesion funding benefits less developed regions and</p>

¹ Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics.

<p>one hand and the Cohesion Policy on the other.</p>	<p>Member States, where the biggest gaps vis-a-vis the Europe 2020 objectives can be observed. Through its thematic concentration requirements, Cohesion Policy interventions are concentrated on policy areas which bring the greatest added value in relation to the Europe 2020 strategy.</p>
<p>41. The CoR questions the ability of NUTS level 2 to reflect real communities and real geographies when in many Member States NUTS areas are purely statistical geographies based on population rather than reflecting real boundaries or functional geographical areas. While noting that NUTS are also used to date to allocate EU Structural Funds, their use to formulate and evaluate the territorial impact of EU cohesion, transport, environment and other policies has a pervasive effect which results in EU policies being out of step with the situation on the ground. In this respect, for the sake of a fairer allocation of the funds it is crucial that decisive shortcomings of GDP, such as the territorial bias caused by commuting over NUTS borders, need to be counterbalanced by taking into account the social and environmental situation in the regions when decisions on eligibility are made.</p>	<p>The Commission agrees that commuting can cause a bias in the indicator of GDP per head. The Commission is investigating methods using official statistics to account for this effect and ways to take into account the social and environmental situation in the regions.</p> <p>In some cases NUTS-2 regions may indeed be purely statistical geographies, however the cost and response burden pose genuine limits on how much more geographical detail can be obtained using surveys. Other sources of information, including registers can be a more cost-effective production method of data with more geographic detail.</p>
<p>42. The CoR stresses in this respect that the application of the Structural Funds, including the Cohesion Fund, should open up to include measures to complement GDP in the next multiannual financial period as far as they are politically acceptable at all levels of governance.</p>	<p>The Commission will investigate to what extent complements to GDP can be found which could be used in the next multiannual financial framework.</p> <p>In particular, the Commission is investing in the regionalisation of the indicators from the Statistics on Incomes and Living Conditions (SILC) to have a better insight and complement GDP at regional level.</p>
<p>48. The CoR welcomes the fact that, since</p>	<p>Eurostat is always committed to</p>

<p>the last CoR Opinion on " GDP and beyond", the data available at EU level, particularly with regard to the local and regional level, has steadily grown, but regrets that it still contains significant gaps; it therefore suggests that the Commission provide – as early as possible – an analysis of the current and future gaps in the provision of a comprehensive set of economic, social, environmental and demographic data in Europe, going beyond GDP.</p>	<p>enlarging and expanding the data coverage on local and regional level, with its resources being as limited as they are. A future main objective is certainly the regionalisation of the SILC. However, with the resources limited not only in Eurostat but also in the national statistical institutes (NSIs), priorities will have to be set.</p>
<p>49. The CoR particularly regrets, in this regard, that currently the regionalisation of Europe 2020 indicators is not satisfactory, because only some of the indicators needed to track the Europe 2020 headline targets at regional level (NUTS level 2 and 3) are available, and sometimes with a considerable time lag. The same applies to the alternative indicators that regions and cities might deem necessary in their territories as a pre-condition for progress towards the EU goals and targets. Updated regional statistics would make it possible to build a synthetic Regional Progress Indicator, as proposed by the Committee of the Regions.</p>	<p>The Commission is in the process of regionalising the risk of poverty or social exclusion indicator to NUTS-1 or -2 level. Regionalising renewable energy consumption and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions will not be feasible in the short term.</p>
<p>50. The CoR requests the Commission/Eurostat to set out a timeline to engage the local and regional authorities in the process of (realistic) target-setting and to deliver the regional statistics needed to design, implement, monitor and evaluate the renewed Europe 2020 strategy by setting territorially differentiated targets.</p>	<p>The Commission agrees that the contribution of local and regional authorities to the Europe 2020 strategy is important. Furthermore the Commission agrees that territories should devise differentiated strategies to contribute to this strategy. However, it does not see a need for setting sub-national targets.</p> <p>In addition, the Europe 2020 Index (Regional Focus 1/2015) measures the distance to the 2020 targets at national, regional and urban levels. These</p>

	measures will be updated annually and can help identify policy priorities for different regions and types of territories ² .
<p>53. The CoR urges the Commission to include in the European statistical programme the measures needed for dealing with shortcomings in statistical information on territorial diversity and specific features in the EU, namely measures for compiling data and building up indicators on regions' remoteness and isolation, so as to improve the process of devising and implementing European policies better adapted to regions affected by these phenomena, in keeping with the principle of territorial cohesion.</p>	<p>Eurostat's TERRA tool currently in development will help in compiling data on regions with specific features. The limited number of remote regions combined with the limited resources makes any further specific action on remote regions rather unlikely for the near future.</p>
<p>54. The CoR considers it necessary to establish a decision-making support model that sets out a ranking system for local well-being priorities in order to set out specific local needs in a common framework for all EU regions, and to use this ranking system to carry out ex-ante and ex-post assessments of policy effectiveness, not least during negotiations between the Commission and local authorities or consultations with local stakeholders.</p>	<p>The Commission will continue to investigate and invest in developing regional well-being indicators. However, these indicators are currently not yet sufficiently robust to be included in a decision-making support model for ex-ante and ex-post assessment of policy effectiveness.</p>

² For more information see:
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/regional-focus/2015/the-europe-2020-index-the-progress-of-eu-countries-regions-and-cities-to-the-2020-targets.

<p>N°2 The integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market COM(2015) 462 final - COR 2015/4871 - SEDEC-VI/006 116th Plenary Session - February 2016 Rapporteur: Mr Enrico ROSSI (IT/PES) DG EMPL – Commissioner THYSSEN</p>	
<p>Points of the CoR opinion considered essential</p>	<p>Commission position</p>
<p>The CoR welcomes the text of the Commission proposal addressing the economic and social consequences of long-term unemployment, including poverty, with emphasis on re-integrating unemployed people into the labour market and the one-stop-shop strategy, as well as the importance of forecasting skills needs and matching them with labour market needs.</p>	<p>The Commission considers this point positively. However, further amendments to the text of the Commission proposal were not possible, as the Council Recommendation was adopted by the Council on 15 February 2016.³ The Recommendation as it stands proposes better integration of services towards the long-term unemployed through better coordination under a single point of contact and calls for the active involvement of employers through partnerships with the public authorities.</p>
<p>The CoR puts the emphasis on the capacity of public employment services, including their staff/client ratios, their effectiveness and efficiency, the closer collaboration with private employer services and temporary work agencies, as well as regional authorities, and the better promotion of the EURES network.</p>	<p>The European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Funds provide financing for enhancing the capacity of public employment services. In this context, the Commission is monitoring the fulfilment of ex-ante conditionalities regarding the personalised support of jobseekers, the improvement of labour market information and the development of strategic partnerships.</p> <p>The Commission continues to support the European Network of Public Employment Services in developing the bench-learning process aiming at</p>

³ Council Recommendation of 15 February 2016 on the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market (2016/C 67/01).

	<p>improved performance and effectiveness of employment services and in fostering better cooperation between public and private employment services. In accordance with the forthcoming Regulation on EURES, cooperation between different service providers will be further encouraged for intra-EU labour mobility and EURES member organisations will seek to promote actively the opportunities that labour mobility in the EU offers.</p>
<p>The CoR identifies a need to distinguish between structural unemployment (for which each country must use its own resources or those granted under the ESF thematic objective "strengthening administrative capacity") and unemployment deriving from more intense and prolonged periods of recession that, by leading to significant increases in unemployment levels, would subject employment services to additional strain.</p>	<p>The Council Recommendation addresses better support through employment and social services of the long-term unemployed. The distinction between structural and cyclical unemployment remains an important one for understanding the root cause of unemployment. The Commission has emphasised through the European Semester that employment services need to be adequately resourced in times of strain.</p>
<p>The CoR recommends evaluating the priorities that are granted EU resources as part of the review of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, to take more suitable action against long-term unemployment through extraordinary initiatives such as the creation of an ad hoc fund (an adult guarantee based on the model of the Youth Guarantee) to tackle long-term unemployment.</p>	<p>More than EUR 25 billion is currently programmed until 2020 from the European Social Fund in areas relevant to long-term unemployment. The main challenge in this regard is the efficient use by Member States of the existing funds. The Commission is examining options for the mid-term review of the Multiannual Financial Framework, scheduled for the end of 2016, which should be used to orient the EU budget further towards the key political priorities, including more jobs, growth and competitiveness.</p>
<p>The CoR emphasises the importance of investing in human capital, of incentives to</p>	<p>The Commission takes note of these points in supporting the</p>

<p>retrain and of promotion of life-long learning which aims to retrain the existing workforce and unqualified workers. Training courses to get people back into work must be organised in close cooperation with the institutions concerned.</p>	<p>implementation of the Council Recommendation in the Member States. In addition, the Commission Work Programme 2016 includes a New Skills Agenda aiming to promote life-long investment in people, from vocational training and higher education through to digital and high-tech expertise and the life skills needed for citizens' active engagement in changing workplaces and societies.</p>
<p>The CoR notes the need, moreover, to make any access to support for those in poverty contingent on accepting community service work, for a limited time-period and as a part of a reintegration training pathway.</p>	<p>The Council Recommendation emphasises the importance of an individualised approach to supporting the long-term unemployed under job integration agreements. Such agreements are based on a mutual responsibilities approach. The content of such agreements needs to take into account an individual assessment of employability prospects, barriers to employment and previous job-search efforts. The Recommendation emphasises the need to develop closer links with employers. Among the active measures, community work and other forms of direct employment creation in the public sector have the lowest effectiveness in increasing the employability of beneficiaries.</p>
<p>The CoR points out the need to put greater emphasis on demand-side measures, including greater integration of Structural Funds initiatives in order to strengthen demand for labour. Links between the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) on the one hand and training activities financed by the ESF on the other hand support reintegration of the unemployed.</p>	<p>An integrated approach to addressing the specific needs of geographical areas most affected by poverty or of target groups at highest risk of discrimination or social exclusion, with special regard to the long term unemployed, has already been implemented in the Partnership Agreements, in line with Regulation 1303/2013 of 17 December 2013. The Commission takes note of these points in further guidance supporting the implementation of the</p>

	Council Recommendation in the Member States.
The CoR highlights the central role of regional and local authorities, in improving employment services and in the implementation of Structural Funds, in the organisation and development of vocational and adult learning programmes and in contact with local employers.	An active effort to involve regional and local stakeholders and their representatives will be promoted in the follow-up actions for the implementation of the Council Recommendation.

<p>N°3 Age-friendly tourism (own-initiative opinion) CoR 2015/3637 - NAT-VI/005 116th Plenary Session - February 2016 Rapporteur: Ms Annemiek JETTEN (NL/PES) DG GROW –Commissioner BIENKOWSKA</p>	
Points of the CoR opinion considered essential	Commission position
<p>1. The CoR underlines the need to identify the different groups within the community of elderly, defining their market preferences and needs in order to develop business plans adjusted to ensuring the best possible development of age-friendly tourism in the EU, and stresses the need to identify the different barriers that older tourists may face as well as suggesting ways and means to overcome these barriers.</p>	<p>The Commission launched three calls for proposals from 2013 to 2015 to facilitate and increase low season tourism flows of senior and young citizens in Europe. The co-funded projects⁴ contributed to identifying and defining senior needs, characteristics and typologies⁵, as well as to designing and developing transnational products, public and private partnerships and identifying obstacles and possible recommended solutions.</p> <p>The Commission compiles European statistics on tourism⁶ that allow distinguishing age groups and their participation in tourism, their travel preferences and behaviour.</p>
<p>2. The CoR notes that it will be important in future to work on the basis of a single age range or definition when discussing senior tourism.</p>	<p>For the purpose of its work, the Commission defined the common age range for seniors at 55+, as it is measurable by Eurostat. However, there is no consensus among stakeholders, including national statistical services, on a single definition.</p>
<p>6. & 29. The CoR underlines the importance of a European database containing facts and figures on age-</p>	<p>The Commission has already put in place a dedicated European repository of statistical information, reports and</p>

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/seniors-youth/index_en.htm.

⁵ For example: http://www.age-platform.eu/images/ESCAPE_Needs_and_expectations_FINAL.pdf.

⁶ Regulation 692/2011 concerning European statistics on tourism

[<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:192:0017:0032:EN:PDF>].

<p>friendly tourism.</p>	<p>information on policy and legislation relevant for the EU tourism sector, the Virtual Tourism Observatory⁷. The publication of relevant data and reports on age-friendly tourism under the Virtual Tourism Observatory is possible and could bring an added value in terms of supporting policy makers and businesses to develop better strategies for a more competitive European tourism sector, including for age-friendly tourism.</p> <p>Eurostat releases in its online database⁸ tourism statistics that can be broken down by age group. Where relevant, statistical articles on tourism include an analysis of age effects.</p>
<p>4. The CoR calls on the Commission to make senior tourism central to the Digital Agenda for Europe, as a mechanism for bridging the digital divide.</p>	<p>Digital Single Market is one of the Commission's top priorities. A connected Digital Single Market requires Europe to overcome barriers related to infrastructure, broadband accessibility, copyright and data protection, by enhancing the use of online services and digital technologies.</p> <p>The Commission is measuring progress in the European digital economy through an annual digital scoreboard. In this sense, the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI)⁹ provides relevant information on Europe's digital performance (across all sectors) and tracks the evolution of EU Member States in digital competitiveness.</p>
<p>5., 23., 25. 28. & 32. The CoR pleads in favour of an integrated approach to promote age-friendly tourism and recommends enhancing the link with the</p>	<p>The Commission has set up an inter-service group on the "silver economy" to explore synergies between different EU policies and initiatives on active</p>

⁷ <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/vto/>.

⁸ <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>

⁹ <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/desi>.

European Innovation Partnership (EIP) on Active and Healthy Ageing in relation to promoting mobility, safety, accessibility to public places, healthcare and social services. It also pleads in favour of providing support to SMEs to improve relevant skills and calls for exchange of best practice in relation to easier access to information, transport infrastructure and products adapted to all age-group needs. It also encourages supporting social networks and involving stakeholders (e.g. research centres and institutes, private IT companies, civil society and local communities) in designing and developing technological interfaces for age-friendly communities.

and healthy ageing.

Age-friendly tourism is an integral part of Silver Economy with potential both in the public and consumer markets.

In this context, the Commission published, amongst others, a background document with a common narrative on needs and opportunities of the European Silver Economy arising from demographic change¹⁰.

Moreover, the Commission organised a High Level European Summit on Innovation for Active and Healthy Ageing on 9 - 10 March 2015 and launched a Study on the Silver Economy¹¹ to help underpin and support the development of a Silver Economy Strategy for Europe.

In addition, the Commission launched the Action Group D4: Innovation on Age-Friendly houses, Building and Environments¹² under the European Innovation Partnership of Active and Healthy Ageing. The overall objective is to contribute to the creation of a more inclusive society, communities and R&D systems across Europe by empowering older people to actively participate in the creation of age-friendly environments through scaled up inclusive solutions.

The Commission has paid special attention to road safety for the elderly during 2015, since there is a trend of there being a higher share of elderly among road traffic crash victims (linked to the ageing population). A study on road safety for the elderly was

¹⁰http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/index_en.cfm?pg=silvereconomy§ion=active-healthy-ageing.

¹¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/study-silver-economy-smart-20150038>.

¹² https://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/pdf/active-healthy-ageing/d4_achievements_2015.pdf.

	completed in early 2016 and is available via the Commission website.
<p>8. The CoR calls on the Commission to earmark a greater share of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) for tourism development, to mobilise financial support for tourism companies in the COSME programme and to introduce Erasmus+ funding for older people.</p>	<p>Appropriate financial resources are available for funding tourism-related projects through different EU programmes (European Structural and Investment Funds, ESIF), including European Regional Development Fund, European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, European Social Fund, European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, but also Horizon 2020, COSME, Erasmus+, Creative Europe, etc.) In order to raise awareness about those opportunities, the Commission published a dedicated Guide on funding opportunities for tourism¹³ and organised a high-level event "Attracting investment in Tourism" (5 April 2015). The event focused on improving the business environment to attract more investment and to better use EU funds to boost the competitiveness of the sector and on raising awareness about the investment needs to boost skills and mobility of the tourism workforce.</p> <p>In addition, the Commission also published targeted guidance for possible tourism investments under ESIF¹⁴. As for Erasmus+, there is no age limit for participation in the Programme. Consequently, Erasmus+ is also open to older people.</p> <p>The Commission published specific information on financial allocations available for potential Information and Communications Technology (ICT)</p>

¹³ <http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tourism-funding-guide>.

¹⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/informat/2014/guidance_tourism.pdf.

	<p>investments under ESIF, including e-tourism¹⁵.</p> <p>An online database¹⁶ was also launched through the smart specialisation platform to help strategy development for knowledge-driven growth. Regions are requested to introduce/update input in the database, which is producing a realistic map of the process of RIS3 development.</p> <p>The database provides information on the envisioned smart specialisation priorities, also in tourism, of European regions in order to enable other EU regions to position themselves, to find their unique niches and to seek out potential partners for collaboration.</p>
<p>10. The CoR seconds the proposal of the European Parliament Intergroup on European Tourism Development to declare 2018 a European Year of Tourism.</p>	<p>Although EU institutions have in the past decided to organise European years on topical issues, currently no decision has been taken on possible future European years.</p> <p>Any consideration on designating a European Year would need to demonstrate how such action would be complementary and could add value to the range of activities that are already being carried out by the Commission and by Member States on the specific theme.</p>
<p>16. & 20. The CoR notes that health and food-related tourism represent growing elements of the EU tourism sector and asks for support to medical healthcare and wellness tourism.</p>	<p>The Commission has already supported a number of initiatives in the tourism sector related to health tourism, wellness and accessible tourism¹⁷. Moreover, it will continue to raise awareness about age-friendly, health, gastronomy, cultural and accessible tourism transnational products in the framework</p>

¹⁵ <http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/ict-monitoring/>.

¹⁶ <http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/eye-ris3>.

¹⁷ For more information: <http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/>.

	<p>of its promotion campaign "Europe. Wonder is all around", to be deployed during 2016, as well as in the context of business-to-business events under the COSME Work Programme 2016.</p>
<p>9. The CoR underlines that accessibility is fundamental to ensuring the smooth running of any tourism activity, especially for older people, and encourages the involvement of the providers of transportation, such as airlines, passenger shipping and bus companies, train operators and cruise lines, to ensure intermodality between the different modes of transport so that the elderly can easily and comfortably reach their tourism destinations.</p>	<p>The Commission acknowledges the role of accessibility for the smooth running of tourism activities and for tourists and is committed to increasing accessibility in tourism through a number of actions, which includes targeted calls for proposals to co-finance projects related to implementing and marketing accessible tourism itineraries¹⁸. The Commission also developed a web tool to collect information on existing tourism services and products for travellers with special needs, called PANTOU¹⁹. The tool gathered information about almost 100 000 services. It is unique of its kind because it provides a thorough overview of the whole "accessible" tourism supply chain in EU 28.</p> <p>Moreover, on 2 December 2015, the Commission proposed a European Accessibility Act²⁰, which will set common accessibility requirements for certain key products and services that will help people with disabilities at EU level to participate fully in society. The proposal for a Directive aims to improve the functioning of the internal market, making it easier for companies to provide accessible products and services across borders. Common accessibility requirements will also apply in the frame of EU procurement rules and for the use of EU funds. The initiative will</p>

¹⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/accessible/index_en.htm.

¹⁹ http://www.accessibletourism.org/?i=enat.en.enat_projects_and_good_practices.1512.

²⁰ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1202&langId=en>.

	<p>stimulate innovation and increase the offer of accessible products and services for the around 80 million persons with disabilities in the EU.</p> <p>The Transport White Paper (2011) stressed the importance of a seamless door-to-door transport system and the effective integration of different transport modes to tackle growing environmental and urbanisation challenges. The societal dimension of a seamless door-to-door is important as different types of passengers have different travelling requirements. In this context, multimodal travel information services can play a key role in supporting the travelling needs of all types of passengers, including the elderly and persons with reduced mobility, by providing them with the required travel information that may allow them to plan and undertake journeys across Europe with multiple modes of transport, e.g. lift and remote assistance availability at transport stations. In this regard, the Commission is currently preparing specifications through the ITS Directive (2010/40/EU) to support the access and exchange of travel and traffic data across Europe and data to support the provision of EU-wide multimodal travel information services. Accessibility and persons with reduced mobility have been identified as one of the most important datasets that needs to be included in the national access points.</p>
<p>24. The CoR reminds the EU Institutions and the Member States that local and regional authorities play an important role in coordinating sectoral policies such as transport, care, urban planning and rural development.</p>	<p>The Commission acknowledges the crucial role that local and regional authorities play in coordinating sectoral policies such as transport, care, urban planning and rural development. The Commission closely cooperates with public authorities and private</p>

	<p>stakeholders at all levels (European, national, regional and local) and encourages dialogue and exchange of good practice through meetings and events.</p> <p>For example, within the CIVITAS2020 Initiative²¹, mobility for the ageing population is one of the topics of best practice exchange between cities. The Guidelines on Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (annex to the 2013 Urban Mobility Package²²) also indicate "social inclusion and equity" as an area to be taken into consideration when designing and implementing urban mobility solutions.</p>
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²¹ <http://www.civitas.eu/content/horizon-2020-provide-welcome-boost-civitas>.

²² http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/urban/urban_mobility/ump_en.htm

<p>N°4 European Union Framework for Data Collection in Fisheries COM(2015) 294 final - EESC 2015/5241 - NAT-VI/007 116th Plenary Session - February 2016 Rapporteur: Mr Olgierd GEBLEWICZ (PL/EPP) DG MARE – Commissioner VELLA</p>	
Points of the EESC opinion considered essential	Commission position
<p>The CoR requests the participation of representatives of coastal local and regional authorities in the data collection Regional Coordination Groups.</p>	<p>Regional Coordination Groups (RCGs) have a scientific and technical purpose, where Member States experts in charge of data collection and representatives of regional fisheries management organisations agree on methods, sampling plans and coordination of research surveys. No public authority which will be recipient of the scientific advice is represented in these groups.</p>
<p>The CoR emphasises the importance of data collection for the qualitative and quantitative analysis.</p>	<p>The Commission agrees. The proposal aims at reinforcing the coverage and reliability of data to support scientific advice for fisheries management.</p>
<p>The CoR calls upon all stakeholders to work, where possible, towards ensuring the open availability of collected data.</p>	<p>The Commission agrees. In line with its policy of fostering marine knowledge, it has proposed provisions to strengthen the interoperability of data storage and exchange systems that also ensure the widest possible dissemination of fisheries data.</p>
<p>The CoR proposes that the legislator establishes a classification of the main types of end-users.</p>	<p>Such proposal is not in line with the definition already provided for by Regulation (EU) n°1380/2013.</p>

<p>N°5 Innovation and modernisation of the rural economy (own-initiative opinion) COR 2015/2799 – NAT-VI/004 116th Plenary Session - February 2016 Rapporteur: Mr Randel LÄNTS (EE/PES) DG AGRI – Commissioner HOGAN</p>	
<p>Points of the CoR opinion considered essential</p>	<p>Commission position</p>
<p>34. Increase overall EU financial support for rural development in order to counterbalance the growing concentration of agricultural production, which is leading to major regional disparities, and put a cap on transfers from the second to the first pillar.</p>	<p>There is already an upper cap on the transfers from pillar II to pillar I (and vice versa). Please see Article 14 of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013.</p>
<p>35. Consider, within the Multiannual Financial Framework mid-term review, allocating more EU funds for local development in the 2014-2020 programming period.</p>	<p>Under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), the decision of allocation of funds to specific focus areas (such as 6B Local Development) are taken by Member States/regions, reflecting the SWOT analysis and needs assessment of the territory. In addition to this there is a minimum spending requirement for Community-led Local Development (CLLD) (5% of EAFRD).</p>
<p>38. Support the call made by the European Countryside Movement (ECM) and the enlarged European Parliament Intergroup on Rural, Mountainous and Remote Areas to the Commission to draw up a white paper to serve as the starting point for a post-2020 development policy for rural areas.</p>	<p>The Commission considers that results and implications of the 2013 reform of the CAP should first be examined and evaluated before drawing up a document containing proposals for EU action in the field of rural development.</p>
<p>55. Call, with the help of new-generation access networks promoting the implementation of the Digital Agenda for Europe 2020, for more intensive efforts to</p>	<p>This issue is given high priority in the Commission. EAFRD aims to support the provision of better access to ICT infrastructure and services to 18 million rural citizens. In addition to</p>

<p>develop high-speed internet in rural areas.</p>	<p>this, it supports the setting up of a Broadband Competence Office which can help authorities find appropriate funding for rolling out broadband.</p>
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N°6 The implementation of the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018)
COM(2015) 429 final – COR 2015/4872 - SEDEC-VI/007
116th Plenary Session - February 2016
Rapporteur: Csaba BORBOLY (RO/EPP)
DG EAC – Commissioner NAVRACSICS

Points of the CoR opinion considered essential	Commission position
<p>The CoR expresses its concern that the Commission fails to mention the role of local and regional authorities (LRAs) in relation to youth policy, despite it being very obvious that in the majority of Member States – where there are national policies on youth matters – LRAs are, to varying degrees, the competent authorities in this area.</p>	<p>The Youth cooperation framework is based on an open method of coordination agreed at national level; it is up to Member States to decide which action they implement at national, regional or local level.</p> <p>This being said, the Commission is aware that the regions and municipalities are key policy actors in the youth field; the EU Youth Report includes many examples of actions taken at regional level. Also, 11 Member States underline that the EU Youth Strategy has reinforced existing youth priorities at regional and local level; seven mention that cooperation at EU level made them reorient their youth policy at sub-national level.</p>
<p>The CoR calls on the Commission to systematically assess the territorial impact of youth policy at sub-national level, at least to NUTS 2 level. At the same time, within the framework of the Open Method of Coordination among EU Member States, it considers necessary the development of measurable indicators, of concrete youth-related action plans involving all levels of government and of strong partnerships between youth organisations and public authorities.</p>	<p>Currently available data make an analysis at sub-national level possible only for some youth indicators (employment and inclusion mainly). In fact, data collection is already difficult and incomplete at national level for some of the indicators (participation, health). A cost-benefit reflection should be conducted regarding the collection of data at sub-national level. The ongoing mid-term evaluation of the EU Youth Strategy will feed into</p>

<p>After consulting stakeholders, the CoR considers that while the Erasmus+ Programme and the Youth Guarantee are essential tools for achieving strategic objectives, the problems are far more complex and EU action in the area of youth affairs already goes beyond these two effective tools. Consequently, the CoR highlights the need to make other information on the results of youth policy accessible in an appropriate format, particularly in relation to subjects such as youth unemployment, employability and social inclusion, amongst other things. This would also help determine whether it would not be appropriate to provide for specific assistance from the Structural Funds. Given the complexity and magnitude of the challenges at hand, youth policy should be mainstreamed into all EU policies. Moreover, the economic case for education and training, which was debated at the meeting of the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council of 12 December 2014²³ within the context of the mid-term review of the Europe 2020 strategy, should now be translated into concrete investments in education as part of the EU's long-term youth and growth agendas.</p>	<p>this reflection.</p> <p>In 2014-2020, the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Youth Employment Initiative invest at least EUR 12.7 billion into measures to integrate youth into the labour market. In addition, the ESF allocates over EUR 26 billion to education measures, including higher education.</p> <p>The Commission continues to analyse the investment of Member States in education and training, recommending, wherever appropriate, to step it up to an adequate level and make it more effective in order to enhance learning outcomes.</p> <p>The Commission is working on ways to improve knowledge on youth policies:</p> <p>It is developing a special website, the Youth wiki, which will provide online information on national policies and EU level activities in the field of youth. The first part should be available online in late 2016.</p> <p>The Commission has also developed the Youth monitor to allow user-friendly visualisation of youth indicators on the basis of Eurostat data and Eurobarometer surveys.²⁴</p> <p>The European Youth portal offers information to young people and is more and more used for interactive communication.²⁵</p>
<p>The CoR recommends that the Commission assess best practice in Member States and regions with regard to political literacy</p>	<p>Voting age is a purely national competence; the Commission could only assess practices in this area if</p>

²³ Press Release of 3358th Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council meeting.
<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/workarea/downloadAsset.aspx?id=40802190967>.

²⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/youth/dashboard/index_en.htm.

²⁵ <https://europa.eu/youth>.

<p>taught through citizenship education curricula in schools and to the lowering of the voting age and more precisely, the direct or indirect influence that these two elements have on political engagement among young people and their willingness to get involved. The Commission should then share the results of this assessment with Member States and the regions.</p>	<p>requested to do so by the Council.</p> <p>The Commission has recently launched a new Working Group on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination, which will provide a forum for exchange of best practice on citizenship education. In this context, particular attention will be paid to exploring synergies with the youth sector.</p>
<p>The CoR considers that intra-EU migratory flows as a result of the economic crisis, and the subsequent brain drain in some European regions, combined with demographic challenges, need to be addressed through a variety of EU policies, with youth being a key pillar. Furthermore, in response to the current migration crisis and within the context of the European Agenda for Migration, the CoR calls for directly accessible financial resources for local and regional authorities to allow them to fulfil their obligations where migration and integration are concerned;</p>	<p>Measures that facilitate the circulation of young people in the EU should be underpinned by sustainable strategies that boost the competitiveness of all regions concerned.</p> <p>Regarding migration, the EU's working age population will decline by 17.5 million in the next decade without it. Thus, the Commission recognises that migration will increasingly be an important way to enhance the sustainability of the European welfare system and to ensure sustainable growth of the EU economy.</p> <p>Regional and local authorities are key actors for preparing and implementing the most suitable measures in response to migration and integration challenges. Therefore, the Commission is intensifying the dialogue with stakeholders at regional and local levels to improve information flows, share good practice and strengthen capacities.</p> <p>Regarding the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), the role of local and regional actors is explicitly recognised in the legal framework of the Fund. The Commission has encouraged Member States to closely</p>

	<p>involve regional actors.</p> <p>The European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) also support effective integration policies covering education, employment, housing and non-discrimination for disadvantaged groups, including migrants and refugees.</p> <p>Similarly, inclusion of refugees and migrants is one of the priority themes under the EU Urban Agenda. A specific partnership will be built with Member States, cities and stakeholders to prepare an Action Plan. The call launched in December 2015 for the Urban Innovative Actions (EUR 80 million) invites cities to present innovative projects in the field of inclusion of migrants and refugees.</p>
<p>The CoR believes that it is essential to share best practice. These include the talent management programme and the initiative to support vocational training set up by the Lublin Voivodeship and the medium-term strategy for youth recently adopted by Harghita County, dealing with vocational training issues and traditional culture as a basis for creating favourable living conditions for young people in the county.</p>	<p>The Commission supports this view. Sharing best practice and mutual learning activities are indeed a core element of EU youth policy.</p>
<p>The CoR suggests developing a basic package that each Member State could guarantee for young people and that would focus on access to high speed internet, learning a second foreign language to the equivalent of at least B2 level within the public education system, career guidance and continuous mentoring, appropriate involvement in volunteering, promoting the right to a first job, and flexible and accessible forms of funding in order to carry out studies that offer career prospects. At the same time, it calls on the Commission to</p>	<p>The Commission believes that a one-size-fits-all approach might not be appropriate as challenges and priorities differ across Member States. This view is supported by national data from the EU Youth indicators dashboard.</p> <p>The Commission is working on an initiative to promote flexible upskilling pathways for the low skilled and low qualified. The pathways would allow low skilled people to improve their proficiency in literacy, numeracy and digital skills and/or to reach a minimum</p>

<p>propose actions to ensure that all young people in the EU have a "minimum qualifications and skills guarantee", empowering them to access and complete a minimum level of educational attainment, accompanied by the relevant level of appropriate skills.</p>	<p>educational attainment, equivalent to upper secondary education leading to the acquisition of a broader set of skills.</p>
<p>The CoR stresses the need to determine how to face challenges in the area of youth policy, such as the issue of matching skills with employers' needs, equal opportunities for young people who live in small communities, located in peripheral and rural areas that are facing demographic challenges, or furthermore, how to promote professional training initiatives tailored to regional specificities and specific skills and the exchange of best practice in this policy area; the CoR underlines that matching skills with employers' needs is an important factor in youth unemployment and further development of young people's career prospects, and calls for further attention to be paid to this issue.</p>	<p>The Commission is developing an EU Skills Agenda, which will propose actions to better identify and anticipate skills needs at the EU, national and regional level, in cooperation with stakeholders. The Commission will use modern techniques, such as big data and web-crawling, and will disseminate this intelligence in a user-friendly manner to support informed decision-taking. The Commission will also update and streamline EU tools and services regarding skills and qualifications; and promote coordinated career guidance to help people make better work and study choices.</p>
<p>The CoR calls on the Commission and Member States to check that young people are properly informed on employment law, employment protection legislation and legislation on volunteering, and that they receive the necessary protection, when they are carrying out paid work or volunteer activities or when they undertake a traineeship or internship in their country of residence or in a Member State other than where they are habitually resident.</p>	<p>Directive 94/33/ EC on the protection of young people at work sets out specific requirements to protect the health and safety of young people and ensure that their work suits their age and does not jeopardize their schooling. More generally, EU labour law sets minimum requirements regarding appropriate information on employment relationships²⁶ as well as fair working conditions, notably for those working part-time or under temporary contracts²⁷.</p> <p>The Commission promotes a set of quality criteria for traineeships through</p>

²⁶ Directive 91/533/EEC.

²⁷ Directives 97/81/EC, 99/70/EC and 2008/104/EC.

	<p>the Council Recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships. Among these is a written traineeship agreement that indicates the duration, the educational objectives, the working conditions, whether an allowance or compensation is provided, and the rights and obligations of the parties.</p>
<p>The CoR deems it necessary to bolster the role of young people in the democratic process, to make their voices heard. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to promote dialogue among young people, building on the involvement of civil society and, in particular, of youth organisations, local authorities, informal groups and NGOs, which have always represented the section of the population most open to change and social innovation and capable of driving the renewal of society as a whole. Precisely for this reason, the Committee stresses the importance of extending structured dialogue and lends its support to the new measures put forward by the Commission in this area, in relation to enhancing opportunities to participate both for young people in general and for the organisations that represent them. Finally, the CoR points out that in order to achieve these objectives, it might be useful to provide for structured intervention, as was done for the Youth Guarantee with the YEI.</p>	<p>The Commission believes that the Structured Dialogue with youth should be made more inclusive to reach a wider group of young people who have fewer opportunities and a weaker political voice.</p> <p>The Commission is also promoting alternative ways in which young people can make their views known, such as the New Narrative for Europe, where young people share their views on the future of the European Union.</p>
<p>The CoR believes it is important to promote the inclusion of young people with disabilities and to develop genuine equal access for those young people to the opportunities provided by the Member States and the regions.</p>	<p>The Commission shares this view. Enhancing access to inclusive education and training for young people with disabilities/special needs is a priority under the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training. As a Party to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities²⁸, the EU has</p>

²⁸ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32010D0048&rid=1>.

	<p>committed to inclusive education systems. Also, within the framework of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020²⁹, the Commission works closely with, and supports financially, the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education³⁰.</p>
<p>The CoR highlights the need to give priority, in both EU and Member State policies, to the inclusion of at-risk young people, such as NEETs (young people not in education, employment or training) and to young people from migrant backgrounds, who are more likely to move into this category.</p>	<p>The Commission supports this recommendation. The Erasmus+ "Inclusion and Diversity Strategy" is designed to ensure that the programme reaches out to disadvantaged young people to the greatest extent possible. The integration of migrants and refugees is an additional target for 2016.</p>
<p>The CoR believes that, given the extremely serious terrorist threat that Europe is currently facing, along with the political and religious radicalisation that unfortunately is gaining ground among young people, it is a priority – in accordance with the EU Security Agenda – to boost participation and confidence in the Institutions, so as to prevent violence, radicalisation and extremism and to guarantee young people the right to live in pluralist communities underpinned by democratic European values, the rule of law and fundamental rights.</p>	<p>The Commission shares this view. Tackling these issues has been turned into a priority for the Erasmus+ Programme in 2016. In March 2016, an expert group started work on the contribution of youth work to fostering active citizenship and preventing marginalisation and radicalisation. The Commission is also working on concrete actions in the fields of education, youth, sport and culture to prevent violent radicalisation.</p>
<p>The CoR recommends that European LRAs establish local and regional strategies that expressly address problems and opportunities that are specific to young people, taking into account EU and Member States' youth policies. The Committee proposes that they should endeavour, when drawing up such plans, to enhance mutual learning opportunities while seeking to ensure that the target group –young people –</p>	<p>The Commission supports this recommendation.</p>

²⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/disabilities/disability-strategy/index_en.htm.

³⁰ <http://www.european-agency.org/>.

are involved as widely as possible in designing these plans and strategies, as well as in monitoring their implementation.	
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Martinez de Antonana Lourdes

From: Hagemann Annette on behalf of Burianek Jiri
Sent: mardi, 07 juin, 2016 18:06
To: adonis
Cc: Burianek Jiri; Spinaci Gianluca; Gsodam Christian; Passera Anna; Essender Boris; Boele Klaus; Jouglain Marie-Pierre; Muscat Rita; Camblor Frechilla Cristina; Wobben Thomas; Thieule Laurent; dir-b-contact-point; dir-c-focal-point
Subject: FW: Ares(2016)2643264 - Suivi des avis du Comité des Régions - session plénière de février 2016
Attachments: 68th Report_final.pdf; Note de couverture_suivi CdR février 2016.pdf

Pour enregistrement dans Adonis.
Annette

-----Original Message-----

From: EC ARES NOREPLY [<mailto:DIGIT-NOREPLYARES@ec.europa.eu>]
Sent: mardi, 07 juin, 2016 16:47
To: Burianek Jiri
Subject: Ares(2016)2643264 - Suivi des avis du Comité des Régions - session plénière de février 2016

Veillez trouver ci-joint le document Ares(2016)2643264 concernant "Suivi des avis du Comité des Régions - session plénière de février 2016" envoyé par M/Mme LEARDINI Pascal le 07/06/2016.

Please find attached document Ares(2016)2643264 regarding "Suivi des avis du Comité des Régions - session plénière de février 2016" sent by Mr/Ms LEARDINI Pascal on 07/06/2016.

Note: This e-mail was automatically generated by the European Commission's central mail registration system. Replies by e-mail must be addressed to the original sender LEARDINI Pascal (<mailto:pascal.leardini@ec.europa.eu>).
Remarque : Cet e-mail a été généré automatiquement par le système d'enregistrement central du courrier de la Commission européenne.
Toute réponse éventuelle par e-mail doit être adressée à l'expéditeur en personne, à savoir LEARDINI Pascal (<mailto:pascal.leardini@ec.europa.eu>).