

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
SECRETARIAT-GENERAL

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

Brussels, 9 September 2015

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 April 2015.

Yours faithfully,

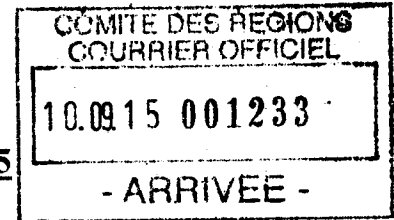
[signed]
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Director

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SUIVI ACCORDÉ PAR LA COMMISSION AUX AVIS DU

COMITÉ des RÉGIONS

SESSION PLENIERE D'AVRIL 2015



64^{ème} RAPPORT

N°	TITRE	REFERENCES
REGIO		
1.	<p>Amélioration de la mise en œuvre de l'Agenda territorial de l'UE 2020</p> <p>Rapporteur: M. Marek Woźniak (président de la voïvodie de Grande-Pologne, PL/PPE)</p>	<p>COR-2015-00487-00-00-PAC-TRA</p> <p>COTER-VI-002</p> <p>Saisine de la présidence lettone du 25 septembre 2014</p>
ENV		
2. DG GROW co-lead	<p>Possibilités d'utilisation efficace des ressources dans le secteur de la construction</p> <p>Communication de la Commission au Parlement européen, au Conseil, au Comité économique et social européen et au Comité des régions</p> <p>Rapporteur: M. Csaba Borboly (président du conseil du comté d'Harghita, RO/PPE)</p>	<p>COM(2014) 445 final</p> <p>COR-2014-04084-00-00-PAC-TRA</p> <p>ENVE-V-049</p>
ECFIN		
3. SG D 1 et DG BUDG associé	<p>Le plan d'investissement et le Fonds européen pour les investissements stratégiques</p> <p>Communication de la Commission au Parlement européen, au Conseil, au Comité économique et social européen, au Comité des régions et à la Banque européenne d'investissement</p> <p>Proposition de règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil</p> <p>Rapporteur général: M. Claude Gewerc (président du conseil régional de Picardie, FR/PSE)</p>	<p>COM(2014) 903 final</p> <p>COM(2015) 10 final – 2015/0009 (COD)</p> <p>COR-2015-00943-00-01-PAC-TRA</p> <p>COTER-VI-003</p>

NEAR		
4.	<p>Stratégie d'élargissement et principaux défis 2014-2015</p> <p>Communication de la Commission au Parlement européen, au Conseil, au Comité économique et social européen et au Comité des régions</p> <p>Rapporteur: M. Franz Schausberger (représentant de la province de Salzbourg au Comité des régions, AT/PPE)</p>	<p>COM(2014) 700 final</p> <p>COR-2014-05726-00-00-PAC-TRA</p> <p>CIVEX-VI-002</p> <p>Avis d'initiative</p>
MOVE		
5.	<p>Mise en œuvre du livre blanc 2011 sur les transports</p> <p>Livre blanc</p> <p>Rapporteur général: M. Spyros Spyridon (conseiller municipal de Poros, EL/PPE)</p> <p>Intervention de M. Wim van de Camp, député au Parlement européen (NL/PPE)</p>	<p>COM(2011) 144 final</p> <p>COR-2015-01426-00-00-PAC-TRA</p> <p>COTER-VI/004</p>
AGRI		
6.	<p>L'avenir du secteur laitier</p> <p>Rapporteur: M. René Souchon (président du conseil régional d'Auvergne, FR/PSE)</p> <p>Intervention de M. Albert Dess, député au Parlement européen (DE/PPE)</p>	<p>COR-2015-00642-00-00-PA-TRA</p> <p>NAT-VI-001</p> <p>Avis d'initiative</p>
EAC		
7.	<p>Vers une approche intégrée du patrimoine culturel européen</p> <p>Communication de la Commission au Parlement européen, au Conseil, au Comité économique et social européen et au Comité des régions</p> <p>Rapporteuse: M^{me} Cristina Mazas Pérez-Oleaga (ministre de l'économie, des finances et de l'emploi de Cantabrie, ES/PPE)</p>	<p>COM(2014) 477 final</p> <p>COR-2014-05515-00-02-PAC-TRA</p> <p>EDUC-V-046</p> <p>Avis d'initiative</p>

<p>N°1 The improvement of the implementation of the Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020 (exploratory opinion) COR 2015/0487 – COTER-VI-002 111th Plenary session - April 2015 Rapporteur: Mr. Marek WOZNIAK (PL/EPP) DG REGIO - Commissioner CREȚU</p>	
<p>Points of the CoR opinion considered essential</p>	<p>Commission position</p>
<p>4. The CoR emphasises that the (place-based) territorial approach is the only policy model through which the Union can address the expectations of European citizens¹. This is also why the European Union, with the active commitment of the Committee of the Regions as well as local and regional authorities and other stakeholders, must play a bigger role in the development of a place-based approach that will improve the way the EU Territorial Agenda is implemented.</p>	<p>A place based approach is one of the core principles of the 2014-2020 programming period of the European Structural and Investment Funds. The Commission will monitor how this is implemented by Member States and regions.</p>
<p>7. The CoR calls therefore for the drawing-up of an integrated spatial development strategy at the European level while ensuring that the existing planning powers at local and regional level are respected.</p>	<p>Spatial planning is a competence of EU Member States.</p>
<p>8. The CoR recommends strengthening the territorial dimension in connection with the effective implementation of Europe 2020 and beyond, which particularly takes into account the territorial impact of EU policies; to this end, it recommends conducting a review of sectoral policies in terms of their territorial impact, and</p>	<p>In the recently published Better Regulation Guidelines², the requirement to assess territorial impacts is present and a tool is available for doing this correctly. This will certainly be applied to the impact assessment of the post-2020 cohesion policy.</p>

¹ Barca Report, p. 108.

² COM (2015) 215 final (http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/better-regulation/documents/com_2015_215_en.pdf)

<p>introducing on a permanent basis into the process of enacting laws on individual EU policies, especially post-2020 cohesion policy, a territorial impact assessment, which would constitute one of the basic elements of assessing the impact of regulation.</p>	
<p>9. The CoR points out the need to monitor steps taken at the EU level that are necessary for counteracting the growing regional disparities throughout the whole EU in the context of the recent crisis, given that these constitute a serious threat to territorial cohesion.</p>	<p>Through its Cohesion Report, the European Commission reports on the state of economic, social and territorial cohesion. The next Cohesion Report is foreseen in 2017.</p>
<p>11. The CoR reiterates that the EU's territorial policy must take into account the impact of the different EU policy strategies on the regions, cities and urban areas and ensure that ongoing challenges can be dealt with comprehensively, going beyond just the structural and investment funds to cover the Environment, Transport, Internal Market, Digital Agenda, to name just a few other EU policies with a clear territorial impact. The spatial aspect should be taken into account when formulating policies to maximise synergy, take advantage of development opportunities and prevent negative policy impacts</p>	<p>See comment under Point 8.</p>
<p>14. The CoR renews its support for new mechanisms and instruments for strengthening the territorial approach through Community Led Local Development (CLLD) and Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI). These create excellent possibilities to empower local authorities, cities and regions to use EU funds to achieve growth and prosperity and get back on the path to convergence. It therefore regrets that, while many Member States have considered implementing them</p>	<p>The European Commission has published 2 guidance notes on CLLD and will soon publish a report on ITI that clarifies the use of this tool in relation with other provisions. The European Commission will monitor and report on the uptake of these tools by the programmes.</p>

<p>in practice, their deployment is being marred by the regulatory barriers that remain in the EU Regulations and the reluctance of Managing Authorities to let go the delivery of EU down to the regional and local levels.</p>	
<p>15. Given the very different degrees of implementation of the above-mentioned instruments in the individual Member States, the system for managing, implementing, monitoring and overseeing these instruments which support territorial development must be simplified and coordinated as much as possible.</p>	<p>See comment under Point 14.</p>
<p>17. The CoR calls for greater compliance with the provisions of Article 174 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) on territorial cohesion. This Article provides that the Union shall aim at reducing disparities between the levels of development of the various regions and the backwardness of the least favoured regions, paying particular attention to rural areas, areas affected by industrial transition and regions which suffer from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps such as the northernmost regions with very low population density and island, cross-border and mountain regions; indeed one of the keys to the eventual success of the TA2020 would be to enable these territories to overcome their structural handicaps to development.</p>	<p>Within cohesion policy there are several provisions that allow for increased co-financing rates in 'Article 174' areas. It is the responsibility of Member States in shared management to use these or not.</p>
<p>18. The CoR also highlights the special case of the outermost regions (OR), whose specific characteristics and constraints, identified in Article 349 TFEU, need to be taken into account in order to enable them to overcome the structural obstacles to their development and thus become another key factor for the success of the Territorial</p>	<p>The Commission has taken into account the specific characteristics and constraints of the ORs identified in Article 349 TFEU and will continue to do so, inter alia, under the EU cohesion policy, where there are several specific measures on the ORs, to achieve the objectives of the Territorial Agenda of</p>

Agenda 2020.	the European Union 2020.
<p>19. Consideration should also be given to other demographic challenges that have a major impact on regions, such as depopulation, an ageing population and highly dispersed populations; the CoR asks the Commission to pay particular attention to the most geographically and demographically disadvantaged areas when implementing cohesion policy.</p>	<p>See comment under Point 17.</p>
<p>20. The CoR calls for a renewed debate on measuring the quality of life using "GDP and beyond" indicators, emphasising that territorial cohesion is complementary to economic and social cohesion and therefore cannot be measured solely by economic indicators.</p>	<p>The ERDF-financed ESPON programme³ has developed indicators for measuring Territorial Cohesion in its INTERCO project. This topic will be taken into account in the reflexion on a possible post-2020 Cohesion period.</p>
<p>21. The CoR calls for implementation of a set of comparable and reliable indices and indicators which could be used to measure, support and monitor territorial cohesion, comprehensive territorial development, structural problems, territorial challenges and opportunities and the territorial effects for different geographical levels and types of region. This will enable decision-makers to make informed spatial planning decisions in accordance with proportionality requirements.</p>	<p>See comment under Point 20.</p>
<p>23. The CoR also points out the need to launch discussions on the future of cohesion policy after 2020, to look in particular at whether the initial objectives, including support for the place-based approach, have been achieved but also to consider if the current allocation methodology for the ESIFs are fully</p>	<p>See comment under Point 20.</p>

³ ESPON 2020 Programme

(http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu_Programme/Menu_ESPON2020Programme/ESPON2020_CP.html).

<p>consistent with the policy's objectives and take sufficient account of territorial diversity.</p>	
<p>27. The CoR points out that cooperation between the most developed cities and regions will provide added value and contribute to the development of the surrounding areas. The Committee therefore stresses that the role of local and regional authorities and their opinions and suggestions must be taken into account when these authorities are directly impacted by European policies.</p>	<p>In the recently published Better Regulation Guidelines there is an increased attention to early stakeholder involvement. The European Commission encourages the local and regional stakeholders and their representatives to make use of this opportunity.</p>
<p>29. The CoR calls for the adoption of a policy approach favourable to the creation of functional regions, both within countries and at cross-border level, given that functional regions include both urban and rural areas and their role in maintaining a critical mass for development and reducing susceptibility to external shocks has been frequently highlighted in economic and spatial studies.</p>	<p>The 2014-2020 period of the European Structural and Investment Funds includes the option to use Integrated Territorial Investments. This tool is specifically designed to tailor investments to functional areas, also in a cross-border setting. The Commission will publish in the course of this summer, 4 ITI scenarios that will illustrate this.</p>
<p>31. The CoR calls for a greater focus of EU policies and funding on effective and efficient connections between urban regions, taking account of the phenomenon of urban sprawl and new forms of land occupation, access to knowledge and education and the effective creation of networks of cities and functional areas in order to share best practices and effective policy solutions and projects.</p>	<p>There is a broad array of EU policies aimed at cities or at connecting cities. An overview is available here: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index.cfm/en/policy/themes/urban-development/portal/. In line with our answer on point 36 the European Commission will focus on better coordinating these initiatives rather than on creating new ones.</p>
<p>36. In the light of the above, the CoR calls for further development and a better coordination of the urban dimension of cohesion policy with other policies</p>	<p>The European Commission has recently published a Staff Working Document on 'Results of the Public Consultation on the Key Features of an EU Urban Agenda'⁴. Better coordination of EU</p>

⁴ SWD (2015) 109 final / 2 (

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/consultation/urb_agenda/pdf/swd_2015.pdf)

<p>affecting urban areas in the framework of an integrated urban agenda and for strengthening the formal system of cooperation between European urban areas and their rural hinterland; it reiterates its call for a white paper for an integrated urban agenda.</p>	<p>policies and better use of existing instruments with impacts on cities, and the continuation of dialogue and cooperation with relevant stakeholders in full respect of the subsidiarity principle, is among the main operational conclusions.</p>
<p>40. The CoR calls on the Commission to continue and to step up its efforts to complete the TEN-T core network, particularly in terms of removing bottlenecks and facilitating cross-border connections, and to strengthen the involvement of local and regional authorities in the corridor platforms.</p>	<p>The European Commission continues its efforts to implement the TEN-T core network according to the timelines defined in the TEN-T Regulation (year 2030).</p> <p>In March 2014, the Commission designated European Coordinators for all nine Core Network Corridors and for two horizontal priorities (ERTMS and Motorways of the Sea). Throughout the year 2014, the European Coordinators were drafting Work Plans for their respective corridors, focusing on cross-border sections and existing bottlenecks. At this stage, the investments' needs identified for the period 2014–2030 amount to more than EUR 650 billion.</p> <p>In order to deepen the analysis and better target the available scarce resources, the Work Plans for the corridors will be updated in the coming years. The more in-depth analysis will cover especially the projects necessary for the development of the network. Moreover, the most complex elements of the corridor activity such as measuring the economic impact of proposed projects and the synchronised implementation thereof, implication of the corridor implementation on the emissions of greenhouse gases, promotion of multimodality, sustainability, etc.</p>

	<p>The Commission also recalls that recent Annual and Multiannual calls for the Connecting Europe Facility explicitly include the objectives of removing bottlenecks and cross-border cooperation.</p> <p>As far as local and regional connections are concerned, the highest possible level of complementarity is sought between TEN-T and other EU instruments related to transport infrastructure. Cohesion policy is expected to support further development of the comprehensive TEN-T and other transport networks with the aim of ensuring regional and local connectivity to the TEN-T. Interconnections between core, comprehensive and local networks are top priorities for the multimodal TEN-T.</p>
<p>42. The CoR notes that the importance of the territorial approach to implementing the Europe 2020 strategy is confirmed in the Territorial Agenda of the EU 2020. Advantage should be taken of the opportunity of the revision of the Strategy to include a stronger territorial dimension. Thus the EU objectives defined in the Europe 2020 strategy can only be achieved if the territorial dimension of the strategy is taken into account, as the development opportunities of the different regions vary.</p>	<p>The active involvement and participation of regions is key for the delivery of the Europe 2020 strategy. The Commission takes note of the proposals from the Committee of the Regions on how the Europe 2020 strategy should be taken forward.</p>
<p>43. The CoR calls again for a white paper on territorial cohesion based on an analysis of interdependencies between the Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020 and the Europe 2020 strategy to counteract the growing disparities between territories in the EU.</p>	<p>The European Commission considers that the 2014-2020 programming period is fully aligned to the Europe 2020 strategy and has fully incorporated territorial cohesion principles. The Commission will now monitor the uptake and implementation of this policy.</p>

<p>44. The CoR recommends that EU cohesion policy, with its objectives of economic, social and territorial cohesion, should continue to make a significant contribution to achieving the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy in future. By strengthening the links between targets for growth and convergence, cohesion policy can help to reduce disparities within the European Union with a view to achieving the strategy's key targets, and thus to increase prosperity throughout Europe. This potential needs to be systematically exploited using the partnership-based approach to cohesion policy within the framework of a strategy based on the specific features of a region, undertaking specific activities geared to local conditions and opportunities.</p>	<p>See comment under Point 43.</p>
<p>45. The CoR therefore supports the idea of proposing a Code of Conduct on Europe 2020 based on the European Code of Conduct on Partnership which will ensure that local and regional authorities and other relevant stakeholders are involved in the planning and implementation of long-term strategic documents that affect territorial development.</p>	<p>See comment under Point 42.</p>
<p>46. The CoR highlights the actions undertaken by ESPON with the aim of drawing up a set of indices and indicators relating to European territorial development which could be used to support decision-makers in terms of measuring and monitoring territorial cohesion; it expressly calls for the formulation of indicators that reflect how territorial and demographic challenges (such as population dispersal, low density, depopulation and an ageing population) affect smart, sustainable and inclusive</p>	<p>The European Commission shares the interest in developing new indicators to better capture territorial and demographic issues. It expects that the new ESPON programme will continue to investigate these areas. In addition, the population grid, which Eurostat will publish this summer, provides many new opportunities to better capture issues of dispersal and density and how these affect smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.</p>

growth.	
<p>47. The CoR believes that it is urgent to develop comparable statistical data on local and sub-local areas as well as translate 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 OECD and the European Commission have harmonised their local and regional classification. Eurostat is already publishing more data for these classifications. In addition, Eurostat is discussing with the national statistical institutes whether these classifications can be included in the NUTS Regulation.</p>

<p>N°2 Resource efficiency opportunities in the building sector COM(2014) 445 - COR 2014/4084 – ENVE-V-049 111th Plenary Session - April 2014 Rapporteur: Mr Csaba BORBOLY (RO/EPP) DG ENV – Commissioner VELLA</p>	
<p>Points of the CoR opinion considered essential</p>	<p>Commission position</p>
<p>The CoR is therefore concerned that the Commission Communication overlooks the role of local and regional authorities, despite the fact that the Committee has drawn attention to this aspect in previous opinions on similar subjects. The CoR stresses the central role of local and regional authorities as investors, not least in the building sector, but also as far as public procurement, the implementation of EU and national legislation on buildings, the support for local business and innovation, and the information of investors and the public at large are concerned. For this reason, the Committee asks the Commission to analyse ways and means in which the Committee and local and regional authorities can be involved in the consultations which are to follow from the present communication;</p>	<p>The Commission appreciates the importance and the value of the experience of local and regional authorities and is making sure that relevant representatives will be directly involved in the steering and commenting of this work and its consultations.</p>
<p>the CoR considers unacceptable that recyclable construction and demolition waste (CDW) of tertiary buildings is often put into landfills without prior assessment of the economic viability of its collection and recycling. The CoR considers that priority should be given to closing the recycling loop for instance by setting individual targets on specific types of waste, mandatory provisions for auditing, dismantling and sorting the CDW, before demolition or renovation of tertiary</p>	<p>The Commission attaches great importance to the Circular Economy and agrees that efforts have to be undertaken to avoid landfilling of valuable resources contained in CDW. The Commission is launching a study to assess the option of pre-demolition audits to ensure that the resources are identified and can be used. The Commission does not intend to set specific targets for individual CDW fractions.</p>

<p>buildings, as is already the case in some regional and local laws;</p>	
<p>the CoR considers necessary to clarify that demolition waste may come from either complete demolition of a building or from renovation, and it therefore needs to be specified that the concept of demolition includes partial demolition in the course of renovation. In most regions, overall waste produced in the course of renovation exceeds the total waste generated by the complete demolition of buildings;</p>	<p>The Commission agrees with this definition.</p>
<p>the CoR underlines in this context that local and regional authorities already play a significant role in promoting sustainable buildings at low or no costs through local or regional building codes. Best practices resulting from the implementation of these codes, such as minimum requirements on daylight levels, energy efficiency or construction materials, could significantly contribute to promote genuine sustainable buildings in Europe and should therefore be promoted;</p>	<p>The Commission is keen on learning more about best practices in local and regional building codes and is therefore including local and regional authorities in its close consultations.</p>
<p>the CoR calls on local and regional authorities to make use of spatial planning and town planning tools and practices when formulating sustainable buildings policy. Renewable energy, energy efficiency, waste management and operation and maintenance issues should also be taken into account;</p>	<p>The Commission is currently using a broad approach when identifying the relevant resource efficiency macro objectives linked to buildings. Later collaboration with stakeholders will identify the most important areas for core indicators.</p>
<p>the CoR believes that an initiative like the Covenant of Mayors could be useful to address also the challenge of resource efficiency. The Committee firmly believes that the appropriate ways to do so should be explored once the EUs resource efficiency targets have been approved;</p>	<p>The Commission welcomes this idea and will investigate this further once the framework of core indicators has been developed. In this development work, representatives from local and regional authorities will be directly involved.</p>

<p>the CoR calls on the Commission to actively involve the local and regional level in developing a framework with core indicators to assess the environmental performance of buildings throughout their lifecycle. The local and regional level should be consulted on and given the opportunity to contribute to these indicators throughout the whole development process;</p>	<p>The Commission is keen on learning more about best practices in local and regional building codes and is therefore including local and regional authorities in its close consultations.</p>
<p>the CoR points out that the technical and performance characteristics of certain construction materials change rapidly after manufacture, and this process continues in some cases even once the materials are in place. It is therefore important to analyse whether, and under which conditions, these materials after demolition are suitable for reuse and whether it may be necessary to introduce a separate certification system for such materials;</p>	<p>The Commission acknowledges the importance of certification schemes. A study is being conducted on behalf of the Commission assessing the situation as regards CDW management in the Member States. The study will include an analysis of certification schemes as a way to promote recycling.</p> <p>Moreover, the Commission is currently developing with stakeholders a standardized protocol for management of C&D Waste recycling inclusive of best practices. This will set up a normative tool to establish a common and safe framework for C&D Waste Recycling activities at the European level in order to ensure reasonable confidence with regard to these activities, the recycled products and the technical, environmental and health conditions of the related operations.</p>
<p>the CoR stresses that re-purposing construction materials from demolition sites, for example for building roads, should be treated as a key research area as many construction materials contain harmful, hazardous or contaminating components and appropriate answers have not yet been found as regards gauging, and where necessary reducing, the inherent risks to the environment and human health;</p>	<p>The Commission is aware of a number of research projects in this area and agrees that further research can be beneficial.</p>

<p>the CoR recommends that when the common criteria are being developed for assessing the environmental sustainability of buildings (as core indicators), renewable raw materials - preferably local or indigenous materials subject to traceability mechanisms - also be explicitly taken into account. It would reiterate that the use of renewable raw materials can significantly contribute to resource conservation in construction: the use of resources in this area is not limited to just construction (e.g. timber construction) and insulation, but also extends to finishings (on floors, walls and surfaces) etc. This applies in particular to the "cascade use" of renewable raw materials, i.e. multiple uses at several levels. Likewise, renewable raw materials can replace fossil fuels for heating buildings and thus reduce the impact on the environment;</p>	<p>The Commission will aim at a holistic approach where the most important aspects of resource efficiency and environmental impact linked to buildings are taken into account.</p>
<p>the CoR would point out that as regards construction, the Commission document does not mention the use of renewable energy, although such energy clearly contributes to a building's sustainability. Solar thermal, photovoltaic and wind power systems integrated into buildings, and the use of biomass to heat buildings or service water, would greatly reduce the environmental impact throughout the lifecycle, particularly as regards CO₂ emissions. Mention should also be made of other technologies, such as geothermal energy, the potential for centralised generation, efficient district heating and cooling infrastructure, renewable energy sources, waste heat or high-efficiency cogeneration. An accurate analysis must take account of the materials and energy used to generate electrical units and energy;</p>	<p>The use of energy during the use phase of the building is not the main focus of this Communication as there are other ongoing Commission policies targeting this particular area. The implementing work following the Communication in question will however closely follow the developments in the specific policies linked to the operational energy of buildings.</p>
<p>the CoR considers that clarification and</p>	<p>There are no definitions in place</p>

<p>common definitions are needed as quickly as possible at EU level for terms which are often used interchangeably: . passive building, environmentally friendly building, sustainable building, low energy building and zero carbon building. Progress through appropriate R&D initiatives and consultations is needed urgently as these definitions will form a basis for common standards and policy measures in this field in the future;</p>	<p>regarding sustainable/green/environmentally friendly buildings and that is one of the reasons the Communication suggests to develop a framework with core indicators, so that a common language and understanding can be built.</p>
<p>the CoR considers that with regard to resource efficiency and specifically in the case of recycling construction and demolition waste, the costs and impact of sorting and transport must also be taken into account. Fully standardised analysis procedures are therefore necessary, and policy and R&D processes must also integrate the comparison of options factoring in transport and on site or local recycling capacity;</p>	<p>The Commission agrees that, in particular for heavy CDW fractions, transport distances can have a big impact on the environmental and economic assessment of options. The questions whether standardised analysis procedures are required and how to take in account local conditions (influencing transport) could be discussed.</p>
<p>the CoR considers that special attention must be given to the specific problems of rural regions and small and medium-sized towns. Their defining features need to be recognised in the definition of standards, targets and other implementation measures to prevent them being disproportionately affected or to allow them to be compensated where necessary. Consequently, the Smart Cities research priority area in Horizon 2020 should instead be called Smart Cities and Regions, and complemented by a new priority area entitled Smart Rural Regions and Towns.</p>	<p>The Smart Cities concept – initiated under the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) of that name – is correctly entitled 'Smart Cities and Communities', precisely in order to take into account similar concerns.</p>

<p>N°3 Investment Plan and European Fund for Strategic Investments COM(2014) 903 final; COM(2015) 10 - COR 2015/0943 - COTER-VI/003 111th Plenary Session – April 2015 Rapporteur: Mr Claude GEWERC (FR/PSE) DG ECFIN – Vice-President KATAINEN</p>	
<p>Points of the CoR opinion considered essential</p>	<p>Commission position</p>
<p>4. The CoR is concerned that the EUR 16 billion guarantee has been drawn from redeployed appropriations initially earmarked for CEF and H2020, which would lead to "disastrous repercussions for ongoing projects", while "loans and guarantees are not adequate support for many basic research projects".</p>	<p>For clarification purposes, only EUR 8 billion will constitute the guarantee fund, i.e. 50% of the outstanding guarantee. The EFSI Regulation adopted on 25 June 2015 foresees that EUR 3 billion will be used from the unallocated margins, while redeployment from the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) and Horizon 2020 (H2020) will amount to EUR 2.8 billion and EUR 2.2 billion, respectively. In addition, it was agreed that the additional EUR 500 million of the margin for CEF will be re-instated to CEF transport grants and EUR 500 million of CEF transport financial instruments will be redeployed towards CEF transport grants. Finally, it was agreed that the following budget lines will not contribute to the funding of EFSI: "Strengthening frontier research in the European Research Council, Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions" and "Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation".</p>
<p>7. The CoR considers it important to ensure that "local small-scale projects can also benefit from EFSI", and that "technical assistance and advice from local authorities is crucial".</p>	<p>The Commission fully agrees. This is why the EFSI will be complemented by the newly created "European Investment Advisory Hub" (EIAH), a one-stop-shop for technical assistance; and the "European Investment Project Portal", a website gathering</p>

	<p>information on current and future investment projects in the Union. Both initiatives implement the second pillar of the Investment Plan. The EIAH will also use the expertise of National Promotional Banks and the managing authorities of the European Structural and Investment Funds.</p>
<p>8. The CoR asks to be fully involved in the "monitoring" of the Plan.</p> <p>10. The CoR also asks that the Investment Committee should be "open to local and regional consultations".</p> <p>13. The CoR suggests that an "Advisory Committee composed of EESC and CoR members" is established "to draw up recommendations" on the fund's investment policy.</p>	<p>The Investment Committee will be composed of eight fully independent experts who will have strong expertise in project financing across different sectors and geographic markets within the Union. It will decide on the granting of the EU guarantee to projects pre-selected by the EIB based entirely on their merit and their compliance with the general objectives and the eligibility criteria set out in the EFSI Regulation. As such, the Investment Committee will not be open to consultations. However, the Steering Board, which sets the strategic orientations of the EFSI and the rules necessary to its functioning, will organise regular consultations with relevant stakeholders.</p>
<p>8. The CoR is of the opinion that the best method for involving local and regional authorities in the success of the EFSI is "geographical or theme-based financing platforms".</p>	<p>The EFSI Regulation indeed foresees the possibility for the establishment of thematic or multi-country investment platforms.</p>

<p>N°4 Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2014-2015 (own-initiative opinion) COM(2014) 700 final – COR 2014/5726 – CIVEX-VI-002 111th Plenary Session - April 2015 Rapporteur: Mr Franz SCHAUSBERGER (AT/EPP) DG NEAR – Commissioner HAHN</p>	
<p>Points of the CoR opinion considered essential</p>	<p>Commission position</p>
<p>4. The CoR reiterates its recommendation to the Commission that it go into greater detail in its future enlargement strategy reports about the situation of regional and local self-government, and points to the need for further regionalising and decentralising reform in the enlargement countries, encouraging them to fully adapt and implement a comprehensive legal framework creating strong sub-national levels of government; it points out that delegated powers should reflect the level of responsibilities to be assumed when introducing the community acquis at local and regional level;</p>	<p>The Commission supports the development of functioning local and regional administrations in the candidate countries and potential candidates. While there is no chapter on decentralisation given the absence of specific acquis in this area, local/regional self-government is addressed in the Commission's annual Progress Reports as part of the political criteria in view of the need for stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy. In this regard the Commission is increasing the focus on public administration reform, which is also relevant at the local and regional levels. It is also addressed in individual chapters insofar as it is relevant for implementation of the acquis in certain areas.</p>
<p>8. the CoR calls for the proper involvement of the local and regional authorities of the candidate and potential candidate countries in the pre-accession process;</p>	<p>While the Commission's main interlocutors in the candidate countries and potential candidates in the context of the pre-accession process are the national authorities, the Commission engages stakeholders at all levels and encourages also the national authorities to ensure proper involvement of all stakeholders, including local and regional authorities in the pre-accession process. The Commission also supports decentralisation and local self-</p>

	government institutions through IPA projects.
10. the CoR underlines the necessity of strengthening democratic institutions and respecting fundamental rights and the rule of law, including fair electoral processes and proper functioning of parliaments, regional assemblies and municipal councils, and constructive and sustainable dialogue across the political spectrum. More needs to be done to foster the involvement of civil society;	As stated in its 2014 enlargement strategy, the Commission's approach of addressing fundamentals first prioritises reforms related to rule of law and fundamental rights and strengthening democratic institutions. As mentioned in the 2014 strategy, strengthening the functioning of democratic institutions also requires sound electoral processes and proper functioning of parliaments, including constructive and sustainable dialogue across the political spectrum. The Commission noted in its 2014 strategy paper that more needs to be done to foster an enabling environment for civil society organisations. A strong civil society enhances political accountability and promotes deeper understanding of accession-related reforms.
19. the CoR calls for efforts to continue as regards upgrading the CoR's Working Group with Turkey to a Joint Consultative Committee.	The Commission is open to an upgrading of the Working Group with Turkey to a Joint Consultative Committee, provided that the Turkish side is in agreement.

<p>N°5 Implementation of the White Paper on Transport 2011 COM(2011)144 final – COR 2015/1426 - COTER-VI-004 111th Plenary Session - April 2015 Rapporteur: Mr Spyros SPYRIDON (NL/EPP) DG MOVE – Commissioner BULC</p>	
Points of the CoR opinion considered essential	Commission position
Wider role of local and regional government in urban and regional transport planning	The Commission takes actions where it brings added value. It is clear that local authorities are better positioned to deal with local issues. However, given the complexity of the transport system and the importance of the urban level for the overall EU transport system, more coordination of policies is indeed needed.
Transport networks for geographically and disadvantaged areas	Establishing an order of priority for projects is inevitable considering the limited resources. The EU policies and programmes focus primarily on the core TEN-T network as this is expected to be the most cost-effective to generate benefits for the entire EU.
Little progress on intermodal ticketing	The Commission agrees that progress has been somewhat slow. To achieve more progress, more favourable conditions are needed, and these may be brought about either by the market or by regulation.
Strengthening of the multimodal transport	Multimodal transport has been and remains one of the main focus areas of the Commission transport policies. Further initiatives to address interoperability and standards are to be examined to allow for more progress in this area.
Equal attention to be given to urban public	The Commission sees the importance

transport	of urban public transport. As already stated in the Communication on urban mobility of 2013 (COM(2013)913, the Commission will reinforce some of the tools to exchange best practices, to showcase best practice examples and to foster cooperation.
More attention to places where traffic flows begin	The Commission agrees with the importance of the last-mile in transport and plans to better cover this aspect in its policies. However, normally local players are better suited to address this issue.
Insufficient progress in switching to rail and waterway or maritime transport	The Commission agrees and will strive to further promote these modes of transport by removing bottlenecks and administrative obstacles as well as creating a fair competitive environment for these modes, so that society can fully benefit from their potential advantages.

<p>N°6 The future of the dairy industry (own-initiative opinion) COR 2015/0642 – NAT-VI-001 111th Plenary Session - April 2015 Rapporteur: Mr René SOUCHON (FR/PSE) DG AGRI – Commissioner HOGAN</p>	
<p>Points of the CoR opinion considered essential</p>	<p>Commission position</p>
<p>8. The CoR notes that the provisions contained in the Milk Package for managing the supply of goods with the status of protected designation of origin (PDO) still seem to be underused (with three cheeses affected in France and two in Italy) and would like to have more information from the European Commission about ongoing applications and calls for awareness of this option to be raised in the Member States and for the Commission to simplify access to the Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indications (PGI) schemes;</p>	<p>Member States may, under certain conditions, lay down binding rules to regulate the supply of PDO/PGI cheeses upon request of a producer organisation, an interbranch organisation or a PDO/PGI group.</p> <p>The information on applications is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/milk/milk-package/index_en.htm.</p> <p>Access to the PDO/PGI schemes has been simplified and accelerated by Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 and its implementing acts.</p>
<p>17. the CoR regrets the paucity of studies into the fate of disadvantaged areas where dairy production has gradually been abandoned, with the Commission's 2014 report stating merely that "it is too early to see significant effects of the Milk Package on the milk sector in disadvantaged regions";</p>	<p>An analysis on future developments in the dairy sector was carried out by Ernst & Young for the Agriculture and Rural Development Directorate-General of the European Commission. It reviewed studies made on the subject, including with regard to disadvantaged regions, and a complete chapter of the study was dedicated to the territorial dimension of sustainable milk production. The external study's report is available at http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/events/2013/milk-conference/ernst-and-young-report_en.pdf.</p> <p>Milk production in disadvantaged regions will also be at the heart of the</p>

	second report on the Milk Package (due in 2018).
34. the CoR proposes that the Commission should make the intervention price more reflective of production costs and better attuned to market changes. The current intervention price, unchanged since 2008, needs to be revised to take into account increasing production and input costs and should be revised on a regular basis;	Intervention prices are fixed by the legislator. The latest review was carried out during the 2013 CAP reform. The legislator decided to keep the intervention prices unchanged.
35. the CoR notes that for the countries that decided to make milk contracts compulsory, the establishment of producers' organisations has not produced the intended results, as processors have continued to negotiate directly with producers by imposing very short contracts and no milk price guarantee. The Committee would therefore propose that priority be given to the establishment of local and regional producer organisations, which are not dependent on a single dairy and which would benefit from much greater negotiating power, to take the place of direct producer-dairy contracts, along the lines of the system operating in Quebec;	The Milk Package offers the necessary flexibility for producer organisations to be established at the appropriate level, to the benefit of milk producers.
39. the CoR proposes supporting EU domestic consumption of dairy products and issuing rules on labelling that provide full information about origin, production method, industrial processes used, etc.;	EU consumption of dairy products is promoted through the EU promotion policy, but also through the school milk scheme as well as through Member States' and private initiatives in the field. With regard to labelling, EU rules are laid down in Regulation EU (No) 1169/2011. The latest development is the adoption by the Commission of reports on origin labelling on 20 May 2015.
40. the CoR proposes prohibiting the marketing sector from using practices that	This kind of concern was dealt with by the Forum for a Better Functioning

<p>lead to the downgrading of milk and dairy products, so that they cannot be used as loss leaders in its marketing policies;</p>	<p>Food Supply Chain (http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/food/competitiveness/supply-chain-forum/index_en.htm). The Commission will cast a fresh look at the persistent concerns about unfair trading practices.</p>
<p>41. the CoR recommends improving the operation of the European Milk Market Observatory and putting in place the necessary resources for this observatory to become a genuine steering mechanism, and not just a tool for post-hoc observation. To this end, the European Milk Market Observatory should have an early-warning system for emerging market crises. For this reason, it is vital for the observatory to produce monthly data on a sub-Member-State scale, to take account of differences in circumstances between the European regions. The Commission should pass on the early warnings to the Member States and stakeholders and immediately take all appropriate measures;</p>	<p>The Milk Market Observatory (MMO) is a tool for sharing information on the dairy market situation and a platform for discussion between market experts of the various steps in the milk supply chain.</p> <p>The MMO's work is evolving constantly to improve the information's quality, timeliness, and readability. The posting of timely information on its web interface, automatically communicated to interested parties, can be regarded as an early warning mechanism to all parties concerned.</p>
<p>43. the CoR considers it necessary, in recognition of the increased production and processing costs in the outermost regions, that additional support be provided for the POSEI programme in order to compensate milk producers for the impact of market deregulation and enable them to remain competitive with producers elsewhere in the EU;</p>	<p>The POSEI regime provides for enhanced coupled support to milk farmers in outermost regions, beyond the support available for producers located elsewhere. Furthermore, the flexibility of the POSEI tool facilitates diversification of production to adapt to new market opportunities. Support for restructuring and diversification in POSEI regions is also available through Rural Development funding.</p>
<p>47. the CoR is of the opinion that this arrangement must also apply to milk producers located in an area subject to natural constraints. These payments are particularly important as a means of preventing the abandonment of farmland</p>	<p>Farmers located in areas with natural constraints have access to a broad range of rural development measures allowing them to receive compensations, in addition to the general possibility to finance</p>

<p>and rural exodus;</p>	<p>investments, be better trained, etc.</p> <p>There is the possibility for Member States to grant an additional payment for areas with natural constraints.</p>
<p>52. the CoR recommends that the support related to milk production in disadvantaged regions should be developed and maintained with a long-term strategic approach. The legal framework for disadvantaged regions should be reinforced;</p>	<p>The CAP framework provides for adequate tools and gives Member States the necessary room for manoeuvre to provide specific support to maintain milk production in disadvantaged regions.</p>
<p>53. the CoR proposes strengthening the "aid scheme for the supply of fruit and vegetables, bananas and milk in educational establishments" and is disappointed at the European Commission's decision, as part of its 2015 Work Programme, to suspend the legislative proposal under discussion in the European Parliament and Council pending the results of a new evaluation of the school milk and school fruit schemes;</p>	<p>The new evaluation decided in the Commission Work Programme 2015 is in progress. The draft report is available for feedback from stakeholders, citizens and other interested parties.</p> <p>The European Parliament adopted its negotiation mandate on 27 May 2015 and Council discussions resulted in two progress reports.</p>
<p>66. the CoR recommends that the European institutions put in place flexible and effective additional instruments so as to stabilise the milk market and dairy producers' incomes in times of crisis, not least by improving the efficiency of risk management measures, in particular those designed to stabilise incomes, combat market price volatility and guarantee milk prices; to ensure food security, it is necessary to simplify and lighten administrative procedures and remove red tape;</p>	<p>Safety net measures are available in the form of public buying in of butter and skimmed milk powder and private storage aid schemes. In addition, the recent CAP reform has increased the Commission's possibility to intervene in the case of exceptional circumstances such as the Russian import ban. Farmers' income is supported by direct payments and a broad range of rural development measures. Farmers can benefit from the quality policy, promotion, research and innovation policies that can play a significant role in designing sustainable milk production. Other initiatives have been developed, such as the Milk Package which strengthens dairy farmers' positions in the supply chain and the MMO for increased</p>

	transparency on the market.
68. the CoR advises European authorities to strengthen the protection of European PDO and PGI products when international agreements are being drawn up, not least with a view to preventing counterfeiting and combating the imitation of EU products;	Agreeing with third countries on the protection of geographical indications is an integral part of the Commission's negotiation mandates for international agreements.
69 with respect to dairy production in mountainous areas and areas north of the 62nd parallel, the CoR calls for convergence of compensation payments for natural handicaps, the restoration of milk collection aid (co-financed by the Common Agricultural Policy budget), and support for the promotion and development of a "mountain produce" label to be applied to dairy products, subject to an adequate level of food self-sufficiency;	Dairy products from mountainous areas can benefit from the protection of the term "mountain product" provided for under the Quality Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012. Milk production in areas north of the 62nd parallel benefit from specific support under the Acts of Accession of the Member States concerned.
70. the CoR calls for a sizeable rural development plan for the Baltic States, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia, a large part of Poland, and Greece. These countries have small herds and dairy farms are in the majority. Their future seems likely to be compromised after the abolition of quotas, even though these farms remain the foundation of rural communities today.	Rural development programmes are established at national or regional level. The relevant authorities are responsible for setting up appropriate rural development strategies in accordance with their specific territorial needs.

N°7 Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe (own-initiative opinion)

COM(2014) 477 final – COR 2014/5515 - EDUC-V-046

111th Plenary Session - April 2015

Rapporteur: Ms Cristina MAZAS PÉREZ-OLEAGA (ES/EPP)

DG EAC – Commissioner NAVRACSICS

Points of the CoR opinion considered essential	Commission position
<p>6. The CoR notes that natural heritage is an intrinsic part of cultural heritage and regrets that the Communication makes no reference to it.</p>	<p>Natural and cultural heritage fall under diverse areas of EU policy and competence. The Commission decided to focus the present initiative on the latter, without prejudice to the importance of natural heritage.</p>
<p>8. [...] The Committee welcomes the introduction of the Internal Market Information System (IMI), established by Regulation (EU) No 1024/2012, and looks forward to the establishment of a module of the IMI system specifically customised for cultural objects, which should facilitate the implementation of Directive 2014/60/EU;</p>	<p>The Commission is working on setting up an IMI module for cultural objects in the context of Directive 2014/60/EU on the return of cultural objects unlawfully removed from the territory of a Member State.</p>
<p>9. the CoR considers that the Commission should effectively address the lack of EU-wide data concerning the contribution of cultural heritage to economic growth and social cohesion. It therefore encourages the setting up and launch of a European data base to which the various projects devised for this purpose could contribute. It also encourages the development of standards that can be a base for making some cost-benefit analyses which can demonstrate the extent of the economic and social contribution of cultural heritage, pointing out the actual benefit of this heritage</p>	<p>The Commission has re-launched the work on cultural statistics, in particular through Eurostat. A Working Group of Member States has been set up to revise the methodological work and allow expanding the collection of relevant statistics.</p> <p>The Commission also supported the project Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe, financed through the Culture programme 2013-2015, which has gathered, analysed, consolidated and disseminated the existing data on the impact of cultural heritage on society and the economy. The final report and</p>

<p>serving as a basis for additional conservation measures;</p>	<p>its recommendations will be publicly presented on 12 June 2015 in Oslo on the occasion of the Europa Nostra Annual Congress 2015.</p>
<p>10. the CoR supports the open method of coordination (OMC) as part of the European agenda for culture [...] The CoR recommends examining, together with the European Commission, the possibility for the Committee also to be represented as of 2015 in the working groups provided for in the new work plan for culture. The Committee would reiterate, moreover, that national representatives should systematically consult local and regional stakeholders so that they can raise questions as reliably as possible and ensure that expertise, knowledge and experience built up at local and regional level, as well as creative and innovative proposals on results obtained in key areas, are turned to good use by publicising good practice;</p>	<p>The role of the Commission is to support the participation of Member States, experts and other stakeholders in the working structures as well as to supplement the work of OMC groups with studies and peer learning exercises.</p> <p>It is up to Member States to appoint representatives to the Working Groups and ensure the best possible consultation process as well as internal dissemination of the results of the work.</p> <p>In line with the provisions of the Culture Work Plan 2015-2018, the Commission regularly consults and informs stakeholders at European level, including civil society, on the progress of the Work Plan in order to ensure the relevance and visibility of the activities.</p>
<p>16. the CoR stresses the need to do more to incorporate the cultural heritage sector, culture, creativity and related flagship initiatives into the revised Europe 2020 strategy, and to ensure that this strategy take account of elements demonstrating the contribution which cultural heritage makes to the economy;</p>	<p>In line with the Commission's work programme for 2015, the Commission will present proposals for the review of the Europe 2020 strategy before the end of 2015.</p>
<p>17. the CoR considers it necessary for more resources to be made available to cultural and creative sectors linked to cultural heritage under the budget of the EU's new funds (e.g. the ERDF, ESF, EAFRD and EFF) and programmes (e.g. the Creative Europe programme and FP7)</p>	<p>The ERDF, ESF, EAFRD and EMFF have played an important role in funding culture-related issues. Regarding for instance the ERDF, the proposed funding in the OPs for culture for the period 2014-2020 is estimated to over EUR 5.269 billion. Member States and</p>

	<p>regions are encouraged to include relevant actions in their OPs, in line with the thematic objectives of the Fund; their territorial strategies for developing endogenous economic potential; and their innovation/smart specialisation strategies.</p>
<p>31. the CoR considers the EU's projects to have a vital role in promoting digitisation, and highlights the importance of the Europeana cultural platform, which brings together online content from European libraries, museums and archives with the aim of giving everyone online access to Europe's cultural and scientific heritage. The Committee acknowledges that issues relating to copyright and clarification of online rights continue to present a challenge, and it is in favour of establishing a legal framework for digitisation;</p>	<p>Issues related to the legal copyright framework are being considered as part of the Commission's work in the context of the Digital Single Market Strategy.</p>
<p>46. [...] the CoR welcomes and supports paragraph 28 of the conclusions of the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council of 25 November 2014, which calls for consideration to be given to a European Year of Cultural Heritage. This would contribute to the attainment of shared goals in the pan-European context;</p>	<p>The Commission is currently considering inviting the Council of the EU to establish a European Year of Cultural Heritage.</p>
<p>47. the CoR underlines the important role that culture can play in foreign affairs in overcoming differences and recognising common and shared values between peoples. The CoR therefore requests that greater visibility be given to high level cultural relations and in this respect takes note of recent efforts to include cultural diplomacy in the European Union's external relations, in particular through the preparatory action</p>	<p>The Commission agrees on the important role that culture and cultural heritage in particular can play in EU external relations, and is working on strengthening this dimension of the Union's foreign policy.</p>

on Culture in EU External Relations.	
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Fougeray Laetitia

From: Hagemann Annette on behalf of Burianek Jiri
Sent: jeudi, 10 septembre, 2015 14:31
To: adonis
Cc: Burianek Jiri; Thieule Laurent; Wobben Thomas; Spinaci Gianluca; Gsodam Christian; Essender Boris; Boele Klaus; Passera Anna; Jouglain Marie-Pierre; sgcab-cor; dir-b-contact-point; dir-c-focal-point
Subject: FW: Ares(2015)3740787 - Suivi des avis du Comité des Régions - session plénière d'avril 2015
Attachments: Note de couverture_suivi CdR avril 2015.pdf; 64e rapport.final.pdf

Pour enregistrement dans Adonis.
Annette

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

From: EC ARES NOREPLY [<mailto:DIGIT-NOREPLYARES@ec.europa.eu>]
Sent: jeudi, 10 septembre, 2015 13:56
To: Burianek Jiri
Subject: Ares(2015)3740787 - Suivi des avis du Comité des Régions - session plénière d'avril 2015

Veillez trouver ci-joint le document Ares(2015)3740787 concernant "Suivi des avis du Comité des Régions - session plénière d'avril 2015" envoyé par M/Mme LEARDINI Pascal le 10/09/2015.

Please find attached document Ares(2015)3740787 regarding "Suivi des avis du Comité des Régions - session plénière d'avril 2015" sent by Mr/Ms LEARDINI Pascal on 10/09/2015.

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>).
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