C/2026/5143

26.10.2026

Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions – Union Support for Asylum, Migration and Integration Management 2028-2034

(C/2026/5143)

Rapporteur:	Arnoldas ABRAMAVIČIUS (LT/EPP), Councillor of the local government council, Zarasai District Municipality Council
Reference document:	Proposal for a Regulation establishing the Union support for asylum, migration and integration for the period from 2028 to 2034 COM(2025) 540 – 2025/0540(COD)

I. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AMENDMENTS

Amendment 1

Preamble paragraph 2

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
(2) The entry into force of the Pact on Migration and Asylum in June 2024 has reshaped the Union's asylum and migration policy. To foster the implementation of the Pact and to support efforts to ensure a comprehensive approach to the management of migration that is grounded on solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility between Member States, Union institutions and agencies, Member States should be supported by adequate financial resources. This Union support will be provided under the horizontal rules of the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security established by Regulation (EU) […].	(2) The entry into force of the Pact on Migration and Asylum in June 2024 has reshaped the Union's asylum and migration policy. To foster the implementation of the Pact and to support efforts to ensure a comprehensive approach to the management of migration that is grounded on solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility between ***and within*** Member States, Union institutions and agencies, Member States ***and their local and regional authorities involved in the reception and social and/or labour market integration of third-country nationals,*** should be supported by adequate financial resources. This Union support will be provided under the horizontal rules of the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security established by Regulation (EU) […].

Reason

As the reception, provision of essential services and integration of third-country nationals are primarily carried out at subnational level, with the direct involvement of local and regional authorities in migration management, it is important that they are recognised as eligible to receive adequate financial resources under this Regulation.

Amendment 2

Preamble new paragraph 2

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	Regions and local authorities play an essential role in the daily management of reception, integration, social inclusion, housing, education, health and communal living policies linked to migrants and applicants for

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	international protection. Their effective and structured involvement in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating national and regional plans financed under this Regulation must therefore be ensured.

Reason

The effective implementation of migration and integration policies is, by and large, the responsibility of regional and local administrations, which directly manage the main public services linked to reception and social cohesion.

Amendment 3

Preamble new paragraph 2

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	In implementing this Regulation, due account should be taken of the specific circumstances of border regions and migratory transit areas, whose public services and reception systems face continuous pressure, ensuring adequate mechanisms for financial support, institutional coordination and operational capacity.

Reason

Certain European regions, while not EU border regions, are faced with the task of systematically managing migratory transit flows, which has a direct impact on their social and community-based systems.

Amendment 4

Preamble new paragraph 2

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	EU funding should provide sufficient predictability, stability and flexibility to national, regional and local authorities responsible for the reception, integration and inclusion of migrants and applicants for international protection, especially in areas subject to continuous migratory pressure or transit flows.

Reason

Sustained pressure on reception systems requires stable and structural financial mechanisms that allow use of resources to be properly planned and avoid improvised or purely reactive responses.

Amendment 5

Preamble paragraph 3

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
(3) This Regulation lays down the objectives of the Union support on asylum, migration and integration policy. Member States should ensure that their National and Regional Partnership Plans address each of the objectives set out by this Regulation.	(3) This Regulation lays down the objectives of the Union support on asylum, migration and integration policy. Member States should, ***in accordance with the minimum levels of funding laid down in this Regulation,*** ensure that their National and Regional Partnership Plans address each of the objectives set out by this Regulation ***and are prepared in close and structured partnership with local and regional authorities, ensuring their active involvement in the design, programming, implementation and monitoring of those Plans.***

Reason

Local and regional authorities are responsible for the implementation of migration and integration policies. Therefore, their involvement in the planning, implementation and evaluation of National and Regional Partnership Plans (NRPP), needs to be safeguarded to ensure that the objectives of this Regulation are successfully addressed – in line with the partnership principle.

Amendment 6

Preamble, a new paragraph 4

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	Local and regional authorities play a key role in reception, integration, housing, education and social inclusion of migrants and beneficiaries of international protection. Their effective participation in the planning and implementation of this Regulation is therefore essential.

Amendment 7

Preamble, a new paragraph 4

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	Given the increased complexity of managing migration and asylum within the Union, it is crucial to ensure that the objectives set out in Article 3 of this Regulation are effectively pursued through the design, programming and implementation of the National and Regional Partnership Plans. This includes providing the relevant national, local and regional authorities with sufficient predictability and stability, thereby demonstrating the Union's commitment

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	to a comprehensive, sustainable, human-rights and dignity-based approach to the management of asylum, migration and integration, including social and labour integration.

Reason

This addition addresses concerns related to the predictability and stability of financial resources under the NRPP's planning and implementation, important for achieving this Regulation's objectives.

Amendment 8

Preamble paragraph 6

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
(6) Europe's geopolitical context has significantly changed, profoundly affecting the Union's migration management, also due to the role of State actors in ***artificially creating*** and facilitating irregular migration, instrumentalising migratory flows as a tool for political purposes, and to the use of hybrid warfare tactics, such as the weaponisation of migration, to destabilise the European Union and its Member States. Member States need to be able to rapidly and effectively respond to developments of migratory flows and receive Union support for that purpose. To respond to these European challenges, the allocation of Union support should reflect the Union's priorities. Therefore, the Union support implemented under the rules governing the Member States National and Regional Partnership Plans should contribute to effectively addressing the challenges identified in the context of the long term European Asylum and Migration Management Strategy and the annual migration management cycle established in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024[13], including the annual solidarity mechanism and the Union Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Framework.	(6) Europe's geopolitical context has significantly changed, profoundly affecting the Union's migration management, also due to the role of State actors in ***deliberately manipulating*** and facilitating irregular migration, instrumentalising migratory flows as a tool for political purposes, and to the use of hybrid warfare tactics, such as the weaponisation of migration, to destabilise the European Union and its Member States. Member States ***and, in particular, communities at the affected border regions*** need to be able to rapidly and effectively respond to developments of migratory flows and receive Union support for that purpose***, in full respect of international law, fundamental rights and humanitarian obligations***. To respond to these European challenges, the allocation of Union support should reflect the Union's priorities ***and be guided by a comprehensive evidence and risk-based assessment of migratory pressures, exposure to structural vulnerabilities at national, regional and local level, ensuring an integrated, coherent and coordinated approach to the management of migration flows and the Union's response to hybrid threats, such as instrumentalisation of migration***. Therefore, the Union support implemented under the rules governing the Member States National and Regional Partnership Plans should contribute to effectively addressing the challenges identified in the context of the long term European Asylum and Migration Management Strategy and the annual migration management cycle established in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024[13], including the annual solidarity mechanism and the Union Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Framework.
This Union support under this Regulation should finance measures tailored to the needs of third-country nationals that are generally implemented in the early stages of integration, as well as horizontal measures supporting	This Union support under this Regulation should finance measures tailored to the needs of third-country nationals that are generally implemented in the early stages of integration ***at national, regional and local level***, as well as

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
Member States' capacities in the field of integration, whereas interventions for third-country nationals with a longer-term impact should be pursued under other Union supports.	horizontal measures supporting Member States' ***and their local and regional authorities'*** capacities in the field of integration, whereas interventions for third-country nationals with a longer-term impact should be pursued under other Union supports.

Reason

In the context of the weaponisation of migration at the EU-Belarus border, it is relevant to refer to 'the border regions', which are most affected. It is also relevant to emphasise the need for an integrated, coordinated approach that coherently addresses both migration flow management and responses to hybrid threats.

As local and regional authorities are at the frontline, providing essential services, as well as early and long-term integration, to arrivals, this needs to be highlighted in this context, along with the need for the necessary support in capacity building.

Amendment 9

Preamble paragraph 7

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
(7) As challenges in the area of migration and asylum are constantly evolving, there is a need to adapt the allocation of the Union support under this Regulation to the changes in migration flows and asylum. To respond to pressing needs and changes in policy and Union priorities, and to steer funding towards actions with a high level of Union added value, part of the Union support under this Regulation should be implemented in direct, shared and indirect management via the EU Facility established pursuant to Regulation (EU) […] establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security. The EU Facility offers flexibility in the management of the Union support, and, for shared management, it should be implemented through the Member States' National and Regional Partnership Plans**.**	(7) As challenges in the area of migration, asylum ***and integration*** are constantly evolving, there is a need to adapt the allocation of the Union support under this Regulation to the changes in migration flows and asylum. To respond to pressing needs and changes in policy and Union priorities, and to steer funding towards actions with a high level of Union added value, part of the Union support under this Regulation should be implemented in direct, shared and indirect management via the EU Facility established pursuant to Regulation (EU) […] establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security. The EU Facility offers flexibility in the management of the Union support, and, for shared management, it should be implemented through the Member States' National and Regional Partnership Plans***, prepared and reviewed in structured partnership with local and regional authorities.*** ***In this context, the European Committee of the Regions should be associated with the implementation of the EU Facility, in particular by contributing assessments of territorial needs, multilevel governance considerations, and the suitability of proposed support measures. The Commission should take the utmost account of the views expressed by the Committee of the Regions when preparing guidance, work programmes or calls for proposals under the EU Facility. Flexibility in programming should not result in the systematic reallocation of resources away from protection and integration actions***.

Reason

The first proposed addition underscores the importance of the local and regional authorities' participation in the preparation and revision of NRPPs in the circumstances of changes in policy and Union priorities, given that the proposal points out that the Union's support should be implemented through direct, shared and indirect management via the EU Facility.

The second proposed addition provides a formal role for the CoR as part of the EU Facility.

Amendment 10

Preamble paragraph 8

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
(8) The Commission and the Member States should ensure that the knowledge, expertise and experience of relevant Union bodies, offices and agencies are taken into account in the development of Member States' National and Regional Plans and when implementing measures or addressing challenges in relation to migration management, border control and management and internal security. Where appropriate, the Commission should also be able to involve the relevant Union bodies, offices and agencies in activities aiming to ensure that the measures supported by the Union support comply with the relevant Union acquis and agreed Union priorities.	(8) The Commission and the Member States should ensure that the ***early, structured, and meaningful involvement,*** knowledge, expertise and experience of relevant Union bodies, offices and agencies***, as well as of competent local and regional authorities,*** are taken into account in the development of Member States' National and Regional ***Partnership*** Plans and when implementing measures or addressing challenges in relation to migration management, border control and management and internal security. Where appropriate, the Commission should also be able to involve ***local and regional authorities,*** the relevant Union bodies, offices and agencies, in activities aiming to ensure that the measures supported by the Union support comply with the relevant Union acquis and agreed Union priorities***, are implemented in a manner that safeguards human rights, promotes inclusion and protects the dignity of all individuals affected and that they are consistent with territorial considerations and the specific needs at local and regional level. Also the knowledge, expertise and experience of non-profit organisations that can provide lived-experience viewpoints on asylum, migration and integration should be taken into account during decision making processes.***

Reason

Underlines the added value of the expertise of local and regional authorities and their necessary involvement in the development and implementation of NRPPs, as well as the relevance of the CoR's involvement in ensuring that the measures supported by the Union support follow the agreed priorities.

The reference to territorial considerations is pertinent, as it reinforces the approach that the actions supported under this Regulation must fully comply with the territorial needs of regions and municipalities.

Amendment 11

Preamble paragraph 10

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
(10) The Member States should build on the principle of partnership in the implementation of the Union support to ensure continuity in the governance approach.	(10) The Member States should build on the principle**s** of partnership, ***active subsidiarity and multilevel governance*** in the implementation of the Union support to ensure continuity in the governance approach***, through the systematic and structured involvement of competent local and regional authorities in the design, programming, implementation and monitoring of the National and Regional Partnership Plans.***

Reason

These proposed additions clarify the partnership principle and how it should be put into practice, while also endorsing the multilevel governance approach.

Amendment 12

Preamble paragraph 11

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
(11) The Union support should contribute to ensuring consistency, coherence, synergies and complementarities between the Union's internal and external policies. An increased coherence is needed between migration, asylum, return and external policies and it is important to ensure that the Union's external assistance and Union support under this Regulation contribute to a coordinated, holistic and structured approach to migration, maximising synergies ***and*** increasing leverage. Union support under this Regulation may also include support to the relevant resources of the EU delegations in duly justified cases, and be coordinated between the Member States and the Commission in programming and implementation stages.	(11) The Union support should contribute to ensuring consistency, coherence, synergies and complementarities between the Union's internal and external policies. An increased coherence is needed between migration, asylum, return and external policies and it is important to ensure that the Union's external assistance and Union support under this Regulation contribute to a coordinated, holistic and structured approach to migration, maximising synergies, increasing leverage ***and, while avoiding the externalisation of migration control and ensuring that all measures reinforce cooperation based on partnership, respect for human rights and sustainable development. Such support should also contribute to strengthening effective border management, addressing unauthorised residence, and supporting the efficient implementation of return and readmission procedures where the legal conditions for stay are not fulfilled***. Union support under this Regulation may also include support to the relevant resources of the EU delegations***, as well as to local and regional authorities involvecred d in the delivery of such actions,*** in duly justified cases, and be coordinated between the Member States and the Commission in programming and implementation stages.

Reason

This recognises local and regional authorities as actors who can contribute to the coordinated, holistic and structured approach to migration management and who can facilitate not only the internal dimension of this approach, but also the external dimension – by promoting legal pathways for protection, city-to-city and region-to region diplomacy, and by participating in reintegration. It also ensures that they are entitled to receive the Union's support for taking these actions.

Amendment 13

Preamble paragraph 12

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
(12) Europe must protect its security interests against suppliers which could represent a persistent security risk due to the potential interference from third countries as well as their cybersecurity practices. It is therefore necessary to reduce the risk of persisting dependency on high-risk suppliers in the internal market, as they could have potentially serious negative impacts on security for users, companies and authorities across the EU in terms of the integrity of data and services as well as the availability of service. ***This exclusion*** should be based on a proportionate risk ***assessment*** and associated mitigation measures ***as defined*** in the Union policies and ***laws***.	(12) Europe must protect its security interests against suppliers which could represent a persistent security risk due to the potential interference from third countries as well as their cybersecurity practices. It is therefore necessary to reduce the risk of persisting dependency on high-risk suppliers in the internal market, as they could have potentially serious negative impacts on security for users, companies and authorities across the EU in terms of the integrity of data and services as well as the availability of service. ***Such exclusions*** should be based on ***transparent and*** a proportionate risk ***assessments*** and associated mitigation measures, in ***accordance with*** the Union policies and ***law, and should take due account of the need to ensure compliance with fundamental-rights standards and data-protection safeguards, in particular where systems support asylum, migration and integration management***. ***At the same time, reducing strategic dependencies requires sustained investment in the development of secure European technologies, services and innovation capacities, to strengthen the Union's technological resilience, strategic autonomy and competitiveness within the internal market. Greater strategic autonomy and competitiveness requires the successful integration of skilled workers from third countries and measures to prepare them for the domestic labour market. This means that the actions set forth in this document must not come at the expense of integration.***

Reason

This addition underlines that mitigating security risks must go hand in hand with strengthening the Union's own technological capacity, ensuring long-term resilience and reducing structural dependencies.

Amendment 14

Preamble paragraph 15

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
(15) Given that Member States subject to migratory pressure should be able to rely on Union support, this Regulation should set out the rules in order to make available to benefitting Member States the respective share of the financial contributions included in the Annual Solidarity Pool established by Regulation (EU) 2024/1351[17].	(15) Given that Member States subject to migratory pressure should be able to rely on Union support, this Regulation should set out the rules in order to make available to benefitting Member States the respective share of the financial contributions included in the Annual Solidarity Pool established by Regulation (EU) 2024/1351[17].

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	Such support should also benefit local and regional authorities particularly exposed to migratory pressure, including those of an insular or coastal nature and those located at the Union's external borders, given their key role in reception at local level, as well as the outermost regions of the Union which, due to their geographical position and permanent structural constraints, face specific challenges and, in some cases, are one of the main gateways to the Union for certain migratory routes.

Reason

This highlights the impact of migratory pressure on external border regions and municipalities, which are on the front line, receiving migrants and refugees and dealing with their accommodation, support services and integration issues.

Amendment 15

Preamble, a new paragraph 16

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR Amendment
	(16) Integration measures for third country nationals entitled to reside in the EU, should begin as early as possible facilitating access to language training and access to education, labour market integration, housing and healthcare in line with national systems. Such measures should be based on mutual responsibility and should promote respect for the law, democratic values, civic duties, equality between women and men, and the social and cultural norms of the host society.

Amendment 16

Article 2, paragraph 2

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
(2) 'beneficiary of international protection' means a ***beneficiary of*** international protection as defined in Article ***2***, point (***7***) of Regulation (EU) 2024/ ***1351***;	(2) 'beneficiary of international protection' means a ***third-country national or a stateless person who has been granted*** international protection as defined in Article ***3***, point (***4***)***,*** of Regulation (EU) 2024/ ***1347***;

Amendment 17

Article 3, paragraph 1

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
1. In order to ensure an efficient management of migration flows, the Union support shall contribute to each of the following objectives:	1. In order to ensure an efficient management of migration flows, the Union support shall contribute to each of the following objectives:
(a) strengthening and developing all aspects of the Common European Asylum System;	(a) strengthening and developing all aspects of the Common European Asylum System***, with particular attention given to ensuring that asylum procedures remain fair, effective and accessible to applicants in vulnerable situations and with special needs***;
(b) enhancing ***effective***, safe and dignified return and readmission, promoting and contributing to the effective reintegration in third countries, and contributing to countering irregular migration ***by preventing*** and ***combating*** migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings as well as instrumentalisation ***and weaponisation*** of irregular migration;	(b) enhancing ***sustainable***, safe and dignified return and readmission***, measures to prepare for return, programmes to promote voluntary return, including advice at regional level, where appropriate and on an individual basis***, promoting and contributing to the effective reintegration in third countries, and contributing to countering irregular migration ***through measures to prevent*** and ***combat*** migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings***,*** as well as ***the*** instrumentalisation ***and weaponisation*** of irregular migration ***in a manner consistent with fundamental rights and humanitarian principles***;
(c) strengthening and developing legal migration to the Member States in accordance with their needs, and promoting and contributing to the effective integration and social inclusion of third-country nationals during the early phases of settlement;	(c) strengthening and developing legal migration to the Member States in accordance with their needs, and promoting and contributing to the effective integration, social ***and labour market*** inclusion of third-country nationals during the early phases of settlement*;*
(d) ensuring solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility between the Member States, including through practical cooperation innovative methods and new technologies, and contributing to a comprehensive approach for the internal and external components of migration and asylum management.	(d) ensuring solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility between the Member States, including through practical cooperation innovative methods and new technologies***, with a view to strengthening protection, reception and integration***, and contributing to a comprehensive approach for the internal and external components of migration and asylum management;
	(e) promoting a strong local and regional approach to migration and integration management, recognising that regions and local communities play a key role in providing early reception, housing, social inclusion and essential services. Union support shall therefore strengthen the capacity of local and regional authorities and civil society actors, taking due account of gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background and other factors that shape migrants' experiences.
	(f) ensuring simplified access to EU funding for cities and regions with higher migratory pressure, thus avoiding administrative bottlenecks

Reason

The first proposed addition highlights the importance of strengthening and developing the Common European Asylum System – with full respect for the fundamental rights safeguards of asylum applicants in vulnerable situations and with special needs – as a key element.

The second proposed addition highlights labour market inclusion as one of the key priorities outlined in the European Asylum and Migration Management Strategy for the next five years.

Amendment 18

Article 3, paragraph 2

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
2. The Union support shall be implemented in accordance with the relevant Union acquis and in full respect of the international obligations of the Union and the Member States arising from the international instruments to which they are party.	2. The Union support shall be implemented in accordance with the relevant Union acquis, ***the fundamental rights safeguards, enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,*** and in full respect of the international obligations of the Union and the Member States arising from the international instruments to which they are party***, in particular by ensuring compliance with the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination***.

Reason

Emphasis on the fundamental rights safeguards as an essential point of reference to ensure that all actions supported under this Regulation are fully compliant with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

Amendment 19

Article 3, paragraph 3

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
3. The Member States shall ***ensure*** that the priorities of their National and Regional Partnership Plans include actions to achieve each of the objectives of the Union support under this Regulation, and that the allocation of resources between objectives is proportionate to the identified challenges and needs.	3. The Member States shall ***guarantee*** that the priorities of their National and Regional Partnership Plans include actions to achieve each of the objectives of the Union support under this Regulation, and that the allocation of resources between objectives is proportionate to the identified challenges and needs***, taking due account of the specific needs and challenges at local and regional level, including urban pressure indicators such as migrant population, demand for social services, housing pressure and emergency care.*** ***Member States shall ensure the effective involvement of local and regional authorities in the design, programming, implementation and monitoring of National and Regional Partnership Plans, which shall be subject to multi-level governance assessment and be prepared in the spirit of subsidiarity, especially in EU border regions.***

Reason

Highlights that Member States should involve local and regional authorities in the identification of priorities and the allocation of resources, ensuring that their needs are duly reflected throughout all phases of planning, implementation and assessment of NRPPs and that the resources are allocated proportionally, respecting the principle of partnership and multilevel governance.

Amendment 20

Article 3, a new paragraph 4

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	4. The Member States shall ensure that the actions planned and implemented within their National and Regional Partnership Plans are supported by targeted capacity-building, training and technical assistance to the national, regional, and local authorities and relevant stakeholders involved in the management of asylum, migration and integration, including measures aimed at improving the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery, optimising administrative processes and strengthening institutional capacities at local and regional level. At the same time, special attention should be paid to how vulnerable groups – as defined under Article 5 of the Regulation – are treated. The aim is to ensure the efficient delivery of the Union's objectives. This shall include technical support for the deployment of integrated digital and AI-enabled case-management systems, the development of innovative digital solutions and the provision of targeted training to ensure the proper and responsible use of new digital tools by competent authorities, as well as the continuous professional development of the staff of regional and local administrations.

Reason

It is essential that all authorities involved in migration management, under the Union's support, are entitled to receive proper training and capacity-building – to ensure efficient and accountable delivery of the objectives of Union support at all levels of governance. This also addresses the need for training to ensure the proper use of these new digital tools, including AI-enabled case management solutions.

Amendment 21

Article 5, paragraph 6

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
6. The amounts referred to in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 5 shall be allocated from the EU Facility to the Member State's National and Regional Partnership Plan pursuant to Article 31 of Regulation (EU) […] establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime,	6. The amounts referred to in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 5 shall be allocated from the EU Facility to the Member State's National and Regional Partnership Plan pursuant to Article 31 of Regulation (EU) […] establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime,

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
prosperity and security. Those amounts may be included in the payment applications to the Commission in accordance with Article 65 of Regulation (EU) […] establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security, provided that the person in respect of whom the amount is allocated was effectively resettled or admitted.	prosperity and security. ***At the request of local and regional authorities and where appropriate, Member States shall ensure that those amounts benefit reception structures and the provision of services at local and regional level.*** Those amounts may be included in the payment applications to the Commission in accordance with Article 65 of Regulation (EU) […] establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security, provided that the person in respect of whom the amount is allocated was effectively resettled or admitted.

Reason

This aims to ensure that any additional funding for resettlement and humanitarian admission is also used to support local and regional reception systems.

Amendment 22

Article 6, paragraph 5

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
5. The amounts referred to in paragraphs 1 to 3 of this Article shall be allocated from the EU Facility to the Member State's National and Regional Partnership Plan pursuant to Article 31 of Regulation (EU) […] establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security, provided that the person in respect of whom the amount is allocated was effectively transferred to that Member State or was registered as an applicant in the Member State responsible in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2024/1351, as applicable.	5. The amounts referred to in paragraphs 1 to 3 of this Article shall be allocated from the EU Facility to the Member State's National and Regional Partnership Plan pursuant to Article 31 of Regulation (EU) […] establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security, provided that the person in respect of whom the amount is allocated was effectively transferred to that Member State or was registered as an applicant in the Member State responsible in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2024/1351, as applicable. ***At the request of local and regional authorities and where appropriate, Member States shall ensure that those amounts benefit relocation structures and the provision of services at local and regional level.***

Reason

This aims to ensure that any additional funding for relocation is also used to support local and regional levels involved in the relocation and their reception systems.

Amendment 23

Article 7, paragraph 1

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
1. The Union support under this Regulation shall be open to third countries that fulfil the criteria listed in paragraph 2, in accordance with the conditions laid down in a specific agreement covering the participation of the third country in the Union support.	1. The Union support under this Regulation shall be open to third countries that fulfil the criteria listed in paragraph 2, in accordance with the conditions laid down in a specific agreement covering the participation of the third country in the Union support***, and provided that such participation contributes to strengthening protection standards, reception capacities and durable solutions for persons in need of international protection***.

Reason

This amendment links EU cooperation with third countries to stronger protection standards, reception capacity and durable solutions for people needing protection. It ensures cooperation supports asylum and migration management and fully respects international refugee law and fundamental rights.

Amendment 24

Article 7, paragraph 2

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
2. In order for a third country to be eligible to be associated to the Union support as referred to in paragraph 1, it shall have concluded with the Union an agreement on ***the criteria*** and ***mechanisms for establishing*** the ***State responsible for examining an application for international*** protection ***registered in a Member State or registered in that third country***.	2. In order for a third country to be eligible to be associated to the Union support as referred to in paragraph 1, it shall have concluded with the Union an agreement ***limited to cooperation*** on ***resettlement, humanitarian admission, reception capacity-building*** and the protection ***of persons already present on its territory, in full respect of international refugee law and the principle of non-refoulement. Such an agreement shall not provide for the transfer, registration, processing or examination of applications, which were lodged in a Member State, to a country outside the territory of the Union***.

Reason

This amendment clarifies that EU agreements with third countries must fully respect international refugee law and not prejudice access to asylum in the Union. It ensures legal certainty and coherence with the EU acquis, while safeguarding fundamental principles of international protection.

Amendment 25

Article 7, paragraph 3, a new point (c)

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
3. The specific agreement referred to in paragraph 1 shall at a minimum:	3. The specific agreement referred to in paragraph 1 shall at a minimum:
(a) enable cooperation with the Member States and the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies in the area of asylum, migration and return in the spirit of the ***principle*** of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility;	(a) enable cooperation with the Member States and ***their regional and local authorities, where they have a remit in this area, and*** the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies in the area of asylum, migration and return ***as part of a comprehensive and balanced approach,*** in the spirit of the ***principles*** of solidarity***, multi-level governance*** and fair sharing of responsibility;
(b) be underpinned, throughout the duration of the Union support, by the principles of non-refoulement, democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights;	(b) ***be justified and respect the protection of applicants, and*** be underpinned, throughout the duration of the Union support, by the principles of non-refoulement, democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights;
(c) ensure a fair balance as regards the contributions made by, and the benefits received by, the third country participating in the Union support;	***(c) require that the third country in question provide reception conditions equivalent to those foreseen under Directive (EU) 2024/1346 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection;***
(d) lay down the conditions of participation in the Union support, including the calculation of financial contributions to the Union support, and its administrative costs;	***(d)*** ensure a fair balance as regards the contributions made by, and the benefits received by, the third country participating in the Union support;
(e) not confer on the third country any decision-making power in respect of the Union support;	***(e)*** lay down the conditions of participation in the Union support, including the calculation of financial contributions to the Union support, and its administrative costs;
(f) guarantee the rights of the Union to ensure sound financial management and to protect its financial interests;	***(f)*** not confer on the third country any decision-making power in respect of the Union support;
(g) provide that the third country grants the necessary rights and access required for the authorising officer responsible, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the European Court of Auditors in accordance with Article 28(2), point (d) of Regulation (EU) […] establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security.	***(g)*** guarantee the rights of the Union to ensure sound financial management and to protect its financial interests;

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	(h) provide that the third country grants the necessary rights and access required for the authorising officer responsible, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the European Court of Auditors in accordance with Article 28(2), point (d) of Regulation (EU) […] establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security***. The agreement shall also include appropriate monitoring and safeguard mechanisms, including the possibility to suspend Union support in the event of serious or persistent breaches of the principles set out in point (b)***.
The contributions referred to in point (d) of the first subparagraph shall constitute assigned revenues in accordance with Article 21(5) of the Regulation (EU, Euratom 2024/2509).	The contributions referred to in point (d) of the first subparagraph shall constitute assigned revenues in accordance with Article 21(5) of the Regulation (EU, Euratom 2024/2509).

Reason

The aim is to ensure that the agreement with a third country requires that the reception conditions are equivalent to those set out in the Reception Conditions Directive.

II. **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS (CoR),

Funding and governance of asylum, migration and integration

1. calls for the Union's support for asylum, migration and integration to be firmly aligned with the objectives of the Pact on Migration and Asylum and the European Asylum and Migration Management Strategy, ensuring that adequate resources are allocated to the relevant authorities, including local and regional authorities involved in reception, asylum and return procedures, as well as the integration of migrants and refugees, including municipalities and regions with limited administrative capacity, particularly in rural, mountainous, minority-populated and border areas, which are often responsible for the practical implementation of integration and reception policies; this should also include island and outermost regions and other areas located at the EU's external borders that face structural and permanent migratory pressure, including weaponisation of migration, and bear significant costs related to the reception of migrants and the provision of essential services;

2. suggests incorporating a reference to migration already in the title of the proposed European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security policies, as part of the policy areas covered by this fund. Although the policies covered by this fund are interconnected, using 'cohesion' and 'security' as an umbrella term for potential asylum, migration and integration funding is misleading and undermines the priorities and objectives of migration management;

3. recommends the introduction of dedicated provisions in the National and Regional Partnership Plans (NRPPs) for asylum, migration and integration, along with the establishment of an efficient and accountable governance framework;

4. supports greater flexibility within the NRPPs to enable a swift response to emerging challenges, while underlining the need for predictable and long-term funding for migration and integration management. This balance should be underpinned by clear spending priorities for asylum, migration and integration, adequate and proportionate co-financing conditions, and arrangements that ensure access to funding for local and regional authorities;

5. expresses concerns that the disbursement of funding according to performance-based criteria may encourage activities focused solely on measurable outcomes, which do not always effectively address regional or local needs. Points out that quantifiable indicators may, in certain cases, penalise regions due to their geography or structural exposure, and therefore may discourage long-term integration investments, potentially affecting the quality and continuity of support available to migrant communities;

6. underlines that for successful participation in the NRPPs, local and regional authorities need to be supported by targeted capacity-building, training and technical assistance;

Multilevel governance and partnership principle

7. reiterates the importance of reinforcing the principles of multilevel governance, partnership and a place-based approach as the core elements of the governance model, bearing in mind that in many Member States local and regional authorities have direct responsibilities in key areas of migration management. The Committee underlines that, in order to ensure that the NRPPs properly reflect these local and regional responsibilities and needs, it is crucial for local and regional authorities to play a structured part in setting priorities and in accessing funding for comprehensive and effective migration and integration management; underlines that this place-based approach must also address regions affected by significant outmigration, demographic decline and brain drain, where the loss of working-age population constitutes a migration-related challenge that requires dedicated Union support for community resilience, youth retention and local economic development;

8. points out that the proposed horizontal funding rules specify that the minimum national contribution rate to the estimated costs of a measure under the Plan must not be lower than 15 % for less developed regions, 40 % for transition regions, and 60 % for more developed regions, and that this will therefore result in a higher self-financing requirement for many Member States; therefore warns that there is a risk of both local and regional authorities and civil society in more developed regions in certain Member States having such high co-financing requirements that projects cannot go ahead;

9. calls for introducing regional and local safeguards within the NRPP Regulation proposal, ensuring that clear legal backstops or guarantees are in place to secure the involvement of local and regional authorities in the design, management, implementation and monitoring of the NRPPs. This would ensure that the partnership principle is put into practice, thereby supporting the efficient management of asylum, migration and integration;

10. calls for the systematic engagement of the European Committee of the Regions when setting the priorities on integration, through the established cooperation with the European Commission, including the Cities and Regions for integration of migrants initiative;

11. endorses the involvement of local and regional authorities in the EU Facility, while also encouraging the development of clear and transparent rules for the local and regional authorities' participation in decision-making over the Flexibility envelope of the NRPPs framework intended for crisis response and financing new political priorities, as well as in case of crisis situations, such as increased migration flows and the weaponisation of migration, when the NRPPs need to be amended;

12. Member States shall provide for multi-level governance mechanisms that ensure the continued active involvement of local and regional authorities in drafting, planning, implementing and evaluating national and regional plans;

Labour market integration and harnessing skills and talents

13. stresses the importance of ensuring the efficient implementation of European Union migration and integration policies by fully involving local and regional authorities in the financial governance for 2028-2034 period, including in the development of sustainable legal pathways, in promoting the humane and fair treatment of migrants, and in efforts to harness migrants' skills and talents to address labour shortages across the European Union;

14. calls on the Commission to ensure that Union support under this Facility also contributes to strengthening community cohesion, media literacy and resilience against migration-related disinformation and foreign information manipulation at local and regional level, through support for local awareness campaigns, fact-checking capacities, training for local media and community dialogue initiatives, with particular attention to rural, border and minority-populated regions where vulnerability to such manipulation is highest and where resources for countering it are most limited;

15. in line with the priorities set out in the European Asylum and Migration Management Strategy, advocates that labour and talent mobility should be promoted in a targeted and demand-driven manner, by ensuring predictable and sustainable funding for the integration of third-country nationals into the labour market. Stresses that coordinated actions across all levels of governance are necessary to recognise the opportunities migrants provide, tackle skills shortages, and ensure inclusive access to the labour market. Highlights that these efforts should be accompanied by tailored support measures, mentorship, training and guidance to help migrants fully participate and thrive in society, which benefits both individuals and local communities; further stresses the need to address persistent barriers to the recognition and validation of qualifications, diplomas and professional experience obtained abroad, which often lead to skills underutilisation, occupational downgrading and exclusion from employment opportunities;

16. underlines that fair integration must go hand in hand with the promotion of quality jobs, decent working conditions and effective enforcement of labour standards; strongly condemns the exploitation of migrant workers, who are disproportionately exposed to precarious employment, undeclared work and abusive practices, and calls for reinforced labour inspections, effective sanctions against abusive employers, and improved access to complaint mechanisms and trade union support, in order to ensure equal treatment and protection in the workplace;

17. welcomes the strategic use of migration diplomacy and international cooperation as a relevant migration management instrument that can promote safe, legal and humane pathways for migration, while guaranteeing these measures are proportionate, respect human rights, contribute to equal opportunities for people and attract talent and skills. It also stresses the need for increased coherence between migration, asylum and external policies to ensure that the Union's external assistance helps partner countries manage migration more effectively, including through stronger cooperation on readmission and dismantling smuggling networks;

18. stresses that, in addition to the cases already identified at the EU's eastern borders, the weaponisation of migration by state or non-state actors in third countries can also be a means to put political pressure on the EU, particularly on certain migratory routes towards the EU's external borders. The Committee underlines, therefore, the need to step up cooperation with countries of origin and transit, while improving the response capacity of regions and communities on the frontline of these migratory routes, including the outermost regions;

Synergies between policy and funding instruments

19. by acknowledging that the weaponisation of migration is part of Russia's – and its ally Belarus' – hybrid warfare, which poses serious external security challenges to the European Union, recommends that consideration be given to the importance of synergies between the various policy and funding instruments, allocating dedicated resources to strengthening the preparedness, reception capacities and resilience of communities, in particular in the Member States and their border areas. This would help to ensure that security measures and migration management tools reinforce each other and enhance the resilience of communities, rather than competing for funding with other policy areas;

20. EU support should promote reception and integration models based on proximity, social and labour-market integration, community participation, an intercultural approach and equal rights and obligations;

21. all activities financed under this Regulation shall be carried out with full respect for fundamental rights, human dignity, the best interests of children and the principle of non-discrimination;

22. this Regulation shall recognise the essential role played by social and community-based organisations in developing reception, support and integration policies, promoting stable cooperation frameworks between public administrations and civil society.

Brussels, 1 July 2026.

The President
of the European Committee of the Regions
Kata TÜTTŐ