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COVER NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
date of receipt:	5 December 2018
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL establishing the Asylum and Migration Fund - Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions

Delegations will find attached the letter from the European Committee of the Regions.

Please note that opinion (reference COR-2018-04007-00-01-AC-TRA procedure CIVEX-VI/035) will be soon published in the Official Journal of the EU and is available in all the EU languages in the following link:

https://dm.cor.europa.eu/CoRDocumentSearch/Pages/opinionssearch.aspx?LANG=EN

IM 12687 2018
05.12.2018

European Committee of the Regions

The Secretary General

Brussels, 03.12.18 01959
SGCAB/DGA/ (2018) D2680

Mr Jeppe Tranholm-Mikkelsen
Secretary General
Council of the European Union
Rue de la Loi 175
B-1048 Bruxelles

Dear Secretary General,

On behalf of President Lambertz I would like to thank you for your letter of 26 July 2018 consulting the Committee on the proposal for *establishing the Asylum and Migration Fund (COM 92018)0471 final-2018/0248(COD))*.

I am pleased to notify you that the Committee adopted its opinion during the plenary session of 9 October. The rapporteur was Mr. Peter Bossman (SL/PES), Mayor of the Municipality of Piran.

The CoR suggests a series of amendments to the proposal of Regulation, and raises some main points:

- reiterates the need for a coordinated approach by the EU and the Member States to build a common asylum and migration policy based on the principles of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility
- welcomes the increases in funding for, migration in the EU budget, but is concerned by the bias in these increases which are far more significant for measures on border protection, than for the AMF. Consequently suggests to increase the overall envelope for the AMF from the 10 415 000 000 EUR currently proposed by the European Commission to 16 188 000 000 EUR (à 2.4-fold increase)
- believes that partnerships and cooperation with third countries are an essential component of EU migration policy and tackling its root causes and that the Fund should therefore provide financial incentives for such cooperation. External development funding should not, however, be instrumentalised solely to prevent migration
- notes the new approach of distinguishing between short-term and long-term integration measures, the latter being financed now from the ESF+. Stresses that the financial provisions for the ESF+ must fully reflect this new task
- welcomes the fact that the new Fund allows a higher co-financing rate (up to 90%), but regrets that its repeated calls to make LRAs partially responsible for the management of the AMF have not been answered
- suggests to give equal weight to the three distribution keys proposed by the European Commission: asylum (33.3%), legal migration and integration (33.3%), and countering irregular migration including returns (33.3%)

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- calls for the introduction of minimum allocation and spending requirements for integration (20%) and asylum (20%)
- believes that decentralised cooperation can play an important role in strengthening good governance in origin and transit countries and so reduce migration flows

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We expect that this opinion will contribute positively to the legislative work of the Council.

Yours sincerely,

Jiří Buriánek

c.c. Mr Jim Cloos, Deputy Director-General, Council of the European Union,