Structural Funds. 6th annual 1994 Report

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After examining the content of the two documents and recalling the Commission's aims during the second revision of the Structural Funds regulations, the Opinion makes a number of comments. The Committee reaffirms the importance of the principles behind structural operations, and in particular the need to apply strictly the principle of geographical concentration. The Opinion notes the existence of some problems regarding observance of the principle of additionality, which is sometimes difficult to check, and the actual implementation by the Member States of the partnership principle. The ESC endorses the Commission's emphasis on the objective of creating jobs, but considers that job creation should not become the sole criterion in the allocation of Structural Fund support, since economic development is a long-term process. The ESC welcomes the simplification of the procedures for implementing Structural Fund support as now provided for in the regulations and calls upon the Commission to continue its efforts to speed up the operation of support measures. The Opinion welcomes the use of independent outside assessors to appraise plans, CSFs and SPDs and stresses the need for the results of such assessments to be distributed rapidly.