Cohesion Fund. Annual 1996 Report

1997/2147(COS) - 10/12/1997 - Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report

With specific regard to the Cohesion Fund’s interventions, the Committee mainly recommended for the future: - that the Commission make the Member States more aware of the need for better regional distribution of resources, with particular attention to the least advantaged inland rural and urban areas; - greater diversification and a better balance in the distribution of resources between the various types of transport infrastructure, giving priority to those modes of transport, i.e. rail and maritime, which were most environment-friendly; - greater focus, in the environmental sector, on the protection and conservation of natural resources, landscapes of particular ecological value and quality of life; - greater support for completion of environmental and transport infrastructures in the most remote regions; - greater involvement of the social and economic interest groups in the monitoring committees and the use of cross-border committees wherever actions covering more than one Member State were involved. As regards the continuation of the Cohesion Fund beyond 1999, the Committee supported the Commission’s proposal in this respect in its ‘Agenda 2000’ document. The Committee also highlighted the need to increase complementarity and coordination between the structural policies associated with the various funds in order to bring them closer into line with each other and increase their combined effect, ensuring more harmonious economic and social development.