Development issues and Objective 1 structural measures in Ireland. Report

1994/2105(COS) - 24/09/1996

A report backing further Community structural support for Ireland was unanimously adopted. Noting that the first phase of the support framework (1989-1993) had made a significant contribution to Ireland's development, the report by Mr Gerard COLLINS (UFE, IRL) endorsed the increase in resources for the second phase (1994-1999), which is already under way. It also agreed with the main priorities of the support framework, ie. strengthening the productive sector and developing human resources. The report stressed the need for measures to combat the current high level of unemployment in Ireland, such as investment in training and education and measures to help women to enter the labour market. To boost Ireland's future economic development, the report called for measures to develop its agriculture, to modernize its fisheries industry and to support the creation of a year-round tourist industry. Finally, the report pointed out that Ireland's GNP would be roughly on par with the Community average by 1999, which means that the country as a whole would no longer be eligible for Objective 1 funds, which are intended for regions whose development is lagging. While Ireland is currently treated as a single region, the report makes clear that some parts of the country will still need Objective 1 funds in 1999. To ensure that such areas are still eligible for this help, the rapporteur suggested that one solution could be to create several regions in Ireland. The report also called for a new approach to defining eligibility for Objective 1 assistance by including unemployment as a priority criterion.