Structural Funds. 8th annual Report 1996

1997/2261(COS) - 22/04/1998

Mrs Christa KLASS (EPP, D) will be reporting for the committee on the Eight Annual Report on the Structural Funds for 1996. She notes that 1996 marks the half way point in the current programming period and that in the two previous years there was unsatisfactory take-up of funds. She welcomes the fact that in 1996 this had improved with a take up of 98% of available commitments and 95% of available payments. However she wants future reports to provide data on the transmission of funds to final beneficiaries which would give a fuller picture on actual implementation in the field. However, Mrs Klass is concerned that provisional figures for 1997 show a deterioration in the situation. Among other issues, she welcomes the fact that the percentage of financing by the European Investment Bank (EIB) is again on the increase. She stresses the importance of making policy compatible with other EU policies, and she regrets the continuing problems with implementation of the partnership principle, particularly in respect of local authorities and social partners. Finally, she stresses the importance of an improved and simplified evaluation system, in particular in the field of environmental protection.