

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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REPORT CONCLUSIONS
Art. 25 of Regulation (EEC) No 4253/88

ERDF IN 1990

(presented by the Commission)

C O N C L U S I O N S¹

"The ERDF in 1990," the second annual report since the reform of the structural Funds, has been drawn up in accordance with Article 25 of Council Regulation (EEC) No 4253/88 to report on the progress made in implementing ERDF assistance operations, taking account of the particulars given in the Community support frameworks.

While 1989 was mainly devoted to the determination of areas eligible under Objectives 2 and 5(b) (Objective 1 regions having been determined in 1988²), the definition of priorities, the appraisal of plans prepared by the Member States and adoption of the CSFs and a number of implementing decisions (operational programmes and projects), 1990 saw the putting into effect, even down to the forms of assistance and monitoring, of the principles, which had begun to be implemented from the time the new rules entered into force.

Implementation of the CSFs

1. The CSFs for regions whose development is lagging behind (Objective 1), initially awarded ERDF appropriations of ECU 20 960 million (ECU 3 685 million in 1990), were adopted at the end of 1989 (except for the Greek and Spanish Objective 2 CSFs, adopted in March 1990). They were implemented in 1990 through approval of more than 110 operational programmes and projects. They received an annual commitment of ECU 3 738 million, ECU 2 512 million of which was intended for new measures (67.20%).

Besides regional schemes, it should be noted that in the seven Member States in question a number of decisions applied equally to transregional or national projects and are consequently administered centrally.

2. In regions affected by industrial decline (Objective 2), almost 70 decisions (operational programmes and projects) were adopted in 1990 for the nine Member States.

Of the ECU 1 691 million of ERDF funds initially set aside for three years for implementing the CSFs (ECU 722 million in 1990), the 1990 commitment amounted to ECU 1 040 million, of which ECU 716 million was for new measures (68.84%).

The region was given priority in this case and nearly all the programmes are to be implemented regionally.

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- 1 In accordance with Article 25 of Council Regulation No 4253/88, the Commission will forward the text together with the opinion of the Committee on the development and Conversion of Regions to the European Parliament for information.
 - 2 List annexed to Regulation No 2052/88 of 15 July 1988.

3. As for the Objective 5(b) areas, the first half of 1990 was entirely devoted to the appraisal of the plans for developing rural areas presented by the Member States at the end of 1989 and the approval of 44 CSFs; several operational programmes were submitted in the second half of the year and some decisions adopted at the end of the year.

Community initiatives

Lastly, in 1990, concomitantly with the CSFs and in addition to the measures covered by the latter, the Commission adopted a number of Community initiatives. Some ECU 2 700 million will thus be mobilized over four years from all three Funds to implement operations in fields which the Commission regards as essential for the development of the regions and to the objective of economic and social cohesion.

Putting into effect the underlying principles

Through the many decisions adopted for each Member State, 1990 emerges as the key year for the application of the forms of assistance and major principles introduced by the reform, namely: programming, additionality, subsidiarity, concentration and partnership.

The programme approach was implemented throughout the Community despite difficulties being encountered which proved to be related to the various Member States' previous experience of programming.

The verification of the principle of additionality, initially envisaged at the stage of drafting the CSFs, actually began in the course of the year, in compliance with a standard clause inserted in each CSF. At year end the majority of the Member States had not yet forwarded the quantitative information requested by the Commission so that it could undertake this initial verification.

The principle of concentration of resources in the weakest areas was established in 1990 at the level of 75.8% of commitments made.

Lastly, the partnership mechanism, while remaining dependent on the institutional structures of the various countries, was strengthened in 1990. In relation to both the Member States and those decentralized authorities where it has been introduced, the principle of partnership has already been hailed as a significant non-financial improvement introduced by the reform of the structural Funds.

Opinion of the Committee on the Development and Conversion of Regions

On 9 December 1991, the Committee decided that it would deliver its opinion after it had received the text in nine languages. After being consulted in writing, it gave a favourable opinion on 21 February 1992.