COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Brussels, 26 October 2010

15501/10
ADD 1

FSTR 33
FC 13
REGIO 73
SOC 704
FIN 517
CADREFIN 59

COVER NOTE

from:	Secretary-General of the European Commission, signed by Mr Jordi AYET PUIGARNAU, Director
date of receipt:	22 October 2010
to:	Mr Pierre de BOISSIEU, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union
Subject:	COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Accompanying the 21ST ANNUAL REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRUCTURAL FUNDS (2009) PARTS 1 - 4

Delegations will find attached Commission document SEC(2010) 1230 final, parts 1-4.

Encl.: SEC(2010) 1230 final, parts 1-4

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 21.10.2010
SEC(2010) 1230 final

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

Accompanying the

21ST ANNUAL REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRUCTURAL FUNDS (2009)

PARTS 1 - 4

COM(2010) 587

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Part 1: General analysis of activities

1. INTRODUCTION

As required by Article 45(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999, this report sets out to give an overview of the implementation of the Structural Funds (2000-2006) in 2009.

2009 was the tenth year in which Structural Funds programmes and projects for the 2000-2006 programming period were implemented. Altogether 226 Objective 1 and Objective 2, 47 Objective 3, 12 Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG) (outside Objective 1), 81 INTERREG, 71 URBAN, 27 EQUAL, 73 LEADER+ and 181 Innovative Action programmes were managed in 2009.

Even though no further commitments could be made in 2009, sums were disbursed in respect of 2000-2006 Structural Funds assistance. Implementation of the 2009 budget was very good. In terms of payment appropriations, 100.0% of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), 97.0% of the European Social Fund (ESF), 97.9% of the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF)-Guidance budget available at the end of 2009 (after a reduction of EUR 417.9 million — see section 2.1.3 below) and 69.5% of FIFG resources were used (compared to 99.9% ERDF, 98.0% ESF, 97.2% EAGGF and 97.8% FIFG in 2008).

Member States and regions whose programmes have high absorption rates were able to start preparing for closure. The general framework for the closure of 2000-2006 Structural Funds assistance was set out in Commission Decision C(2006)3424 in 2006, amended by Commission Decisions C(2008)1362 and C(2009)960.

In view of the financial crisis and the recovery package proposed by the Commission, an extension of six (or twelve) months has been granted on a programme-by-programme basis for those Member States which opted for it. Altogether 385 programmes have chosen to extend their final date of eligibility. This flexibility should allow full implementation of the allocated funds by addressing unexpected programme absorption challenges and, consequently, achieve the objectives of the programmes.

In addition to the implementation of 2000-2006 Structural Funds programmes and projects and preparation for their closure, in 2009 the Commission was also heavily involved in implementing 434 programmes (317 ERDF, 117 ESF)[1] for the 2007-2013 period.

The partnership model, set up between the Commission and the national and regional authorities in the Member States to implement the programmes, has produced very high-quality results. The case of Ireland is a good example, where the national

[1] See Communication on the results of negotiations on strategies and programmes for the programming period 2007-2013.

government decided to apply the same partnership structure used to implement ERDF-financed programmes in the execution of national development funds.

The Commission continued to carry out the ex post evaluation of Objectives 1 and 2 for the 2000-2006 period, using a total of fourteen phased and interlinked 'work packages' to explore various aspects of the effectiveness and efficiency of cohesion policy. The results are useful for the next programming period and the drafting of the Cohesion Report. The synthesis report of the ex post evaluation was published in April 2010[2]. The ex post evaluations for Community initiatives URBAN and INTERREG, launched in 2008, were published in June 2010. The ex post evaluation of the EQUAL Community Initiative was launched in early 2009, and its preliminary results presented in early 2010. (The European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) Guidance Section and LEADER+ are evaluated separately.). As for the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG), the ex post evaluation was undertaken in 2009 and is available on the website.

Sharing of experience was promoted, notably through interregional and urban networks and the conference 'Regions for Economic Change: Networking for results' held on 16-17 February 2009, where for the second time RegioStars awards were awarded to four good practice innovation projects from the period 2000-2006 in different categories as well as a communication award.

The 7th edition of OPEN DAYS 'European week of regions and cities', with more than 6000 participants (including 298 journalists and over 400 speakers) took place from 5-8 October 2009. The OPEN DAYS offer the ideal opportunity to highlight the synergies between cohesion policy and other EU policies, such as innovation, research, environment, transport, energy, etc. This large-scale event is also a good example of the strong collaboration between the Commission and the Committee of the Regions.

The Swedish presidency organised a two-day conference (19-20 November 2009) on Partnership and Social Dialogue in the European Social Fund. This conference focused on the crucial role of the social partners in the ESF and their involvement in the design and implementation of the national recovery plans. Two sessions of parallel workshops were organised to present and discuss Member States' best practices for partnership in ESF projects.

2. ANALYSIS OF IMPLEMENTATION

2.1. Budget Implementation

2.1.1. ERDF

In spite of the continuing bad economic climate, 2009 was an excellent year in terms of budgetary execution. The overall absorption rate for payments reached 100% of the annual payment credits allocation (the best result when compared with the previous years) with EUR 4100 million being disbursed to Member States for regional programmes and projects.

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[2] published on: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/evaluation/expost_reaction_en.htm.

However, while the execution of payment appropriations for Objective 1 (EUR 3 100 million) was higher than initially foreseen (EUR 187 million more), payments to Objective 2 and INTERREG programmes have been lower than the initial budget for 2009 (respectively EUR 575 million and EUR 334 million have been paid). An additional EUR 53.0 million was paid for other programmes: URBAN and Innovative Actions. The lower level of payments to Objective 2 and INTERREG programmes is explained by extraordinarily high execution in 2008, where in order to cover the excess demand for payments, transfers were made from the budget lines for the 2007-13 programmes. This was due to the slower start-up of 2007-13 programmes and thus the Member States opted to balance the delay by focusing on the implementation of the 2000-2006 programmes. In 2009, the trend was reversed, so the outstanding 2000-2006 payment appropriations were transferred to the 2007-13 budget lines, which allowed for 100.0% execution of payment credits for ERDF programmes financed under both programming periods.

For the entire 2000-2006 period, as at the end of 2009, EUR 121 200 million have been paid to the Member States. This gives an average absorption rate for all Member States at 93.5% of the EUR 129 600 million overall allocation.

According to the rules on Structural Funds, eligible expenditure for the 2000-2006 programmes could continue only until the end of 2008. However, in view of the financial crisis and the recovery package proposed by the Commission, an extension of six months (or twelve months for some Greek and eighteen INTERREG programmes) was granted on a programme-by-programme basis for those Member States which opted for it. Out of 379 programmes, 281 (or 74.0%) chose to extend their eligibility dates. In value terms, 90.0% of ERDF funds have an extension of the eligibility period. This flexibility should allow a full implementation of the allocated funds. Given that there is no limit on when the EU can refund the expenditure incurred until the end of the eligibility date, the Commission can still reimburse payment claims related to expenditure until 30 June 2009. The 2010 budget contains sufficient payment appropriations to cover the gap to reach the 95.0% payment limit for the outstanding programmes.

The deadline for submission of closure documents for the 2000-2006 programmes falls between 31 March 2010 (for programmes that did not ask for extension of the final eligibility date) and 31 March 2011. The bulk of closure files is expected by 30 September 2010.

RAL

At the end of 2009, commitments from previous years on which payments were still to be made (RAL) amounted to EUR 8400 million, compared with EUR 12 600 million at the end of 2008. This represents 6.4% of total commitments for the period 2000-2006 and is equivalent to five months of commitments, on the basis of an average EUR 20 000 million being committed per year. It is worth mentioning that in 2009 the first 2000-2006 programmes were closed (four Objective 2 programmes for Austria) and final balances were paid for an amount of EUR 16 million.

Out of the RAL of EUR 8400 million, nearly EUR 2000 million relate to interim payments still to be paid out in the course of 2010, while the remaining EUR 6400 million relate to final balance payments.

'n+2' rule

As in 2008, the so-called "n+2" rule did not apply in 2009. As a general rule, the last commitment tranche (i.e. 2006) will be used to execute final payments once the closure of the programme is agreed between the Member State and the Commission. Accordingly, the amount to be decommitted will only be calculated at the closure stage of the operational programme[3].

2.1.2. ESF

In terms of budgetary execution, 2009 was a satisfactory year for the European Social Fund, despite the exceptional circumstances due to the bad economic climate.

For the 2000-2006 programming period, the payment credits consumption during 2009 reached EUR 1540 million. This corresponds to 97.0% of the annual payment credits allocation.

The total outstanding commitments (RAL) at the end of 2009 stood at EUR 4800 million (compared to EUR 6400 million in 2008). This represents 7.0% of total commitments for the period 2000-2006 and is equivalent to five months of commitments on the basis of an average EUR 11000 million being committed per year.

In 2009, as in the previous year, the so-called 'n+2' rule did not apply. The total amount to be decommitted under the 'n+2' rule for the programming period 2000-2006 will be finalised at the closure of the operational programmes (Article 105(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006).

For the whole period, as at the end of 2009, EUR 63800 million have been paid to Member States. This represents an absorption rate for all Member States of 93.0% of the EUR 68600 million overall allocation.

According to the regulations, payments for the 2000-2006 period could continue until the end of 2008. However, in view of the financial crisis and the recovery package proposed by the Commission, an extension of six (or twelve) months was granted on a programme-by-programme basis for the Member States which opted for it. Out of 91 programmes where the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities is 'chef de file', 68 chose to extend their eligibility dates.

2.1.3. EAGGF

The total amount paid in 2009 was EUR 468.2 million or 97.9% of the annual payment credits allocation (an amount of EUR 417.9 million was transferred during

[3] Article 105(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006.

the year to other budget lines outside the EAGGF). The absorption rate of the initial budget for payment appropriations was 52.3%.

In absolute terms, the amount paid is far below the amount paid in 2008 (EUR 1 500 million less). There are two main reasons for this reduction:

- The rural development programmes financed by EAGGF-Guidance had a very high rate of implementation in previous years. At the end of 2008, 91.9% of the Fund contribution programmed for the whole period had already been paid, and a substantial number of programmes (66 out of a total of 152), had already reached the 95.0% payment limit for interim payments. In these cases, no further payments were possible until closure.

- The low EAGGF-Guidance expenditure in 2009 was very largely compensated for by EUR 8210 million of European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) expenditure under rural development programming for 2007-2013 (now distinct from the Structural Funds).

EAGGF-Guidance outstanding commitments (RAL) at the end of 2009 amounted to EUR 1 354.6 million, equivalent to 6.0% of the whole allocation for 2000-2006. This amount is EUR 468.2 million lower than the EUR 1 800 million RAL at the end of 2008.

2.1.4. FIFG

The overall absorption rate for payments was 69.5%, with EUR 114.2 million of the available EUR 164.4 million being disbursed to Member States.

Concerning the execution level of payment appropriations, EUR 103.0 million was paid under Objective 1 and EUR 11.1 million outside Objective 1.

The total RAL for the FIFG at the end of 2009 reached EUR 306.2 million (compared with EUR 449.3 million in 2008). This represents 7.8% of total commitments for the period 2000-2006.

For the whole period, as at the end of 2009, EUR 3 629 million have been paid to Member States. This represents an absorption rate for all Member States of 92.2% of the EUR 3 935 million overall allocation.

2.2. Programme Implementation

2.2.1. Objective 1

Expenditure on Objective 1 programmes followed much the same path as in 2008 (for details, see part 5). Objective 1 programmes focused on basic infrastructure projects (40.2%), with almost half of all investment in this category spent on transport infrastructure (49.9%). More than a third (34.9%) of Objective 1 resources was invested in the productive environment, where the focus continues to be on assisting SMEs and the craft sector (26.6%). Projects geared to human resources account for 22.5% of resources in Objective 1 regions. The main areas of assistance in this field are almost equally split between labour market policies (30.6%) and education, and vocational training (31.2%).

2.2.2. *Objective 2*

The main focus of programmes in Objective 2 regions continues to be on productive investments, with over half of all financial resources devoted to this category (55.4%). Within this field, assistance to SMEs and the craft sector is the most dominant (55.6%). The second most supported field is basic infrastructure, with 29.2% of all Objective 2 resources. Unlike Objective 1 programmes, the most important areas in financial terms are planning and rehabilitation of areas (45.6%). In the category of human resources (10.5% of all investment in Objective 2 regions), workforce flexibility, entrepreneurial activity, innovation, information and communication technologies are the main fields of investment (31.6%).

2.2.3. *Objective 3*

ESF programme implementation in 2009 continued to be focused on the European Employment Strategy, particularly on the measures aimed at improving employability in the labour market (30.6% of certified expenditure), lifelong learning (activities developing educational and vocational training represented 22.8% of certified expenditure), social inclusion (20.8%) and equal opportunities (6.5%).

2.2.4. *Fisheries outside Objective 1*

Expenditure of the FIFG programmes outside Objective 1 focused on the processing, marketing and promoting of fisheries products (26.7%). The second most important measure was adjustment of the fishing effort (17.8%), followed by the renewal and modernisation of the fishing fleet (17.5%), fishing port facilities (16.9%) and actions by professionals (vocational training, small coastal fishing) (12.8%).

2.2.5. *Community Initiatives*

2.2.5.1. INTERREG

INTERREG supports cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation to encourage the harmonious, balanced and sustainable development of the EU. By the end of 2009 the 81 INTERREG III/Neighbourhood programmes had selected about 18000 projects and networks aimed at reducing the effects of national borders, language barriers and cultural differences and developing border areas, supporting strategic development and territorial integration across larger zones of the EU and better integration with its neighbours. Effectiveness of regional development policies and instruments was also supported by sharing of good practice and exchange of experience.

The first 54 INTERREG III programmes were adopted in 2001 and were followed by 15 programmes in 2002 and 3 in 2003. Enlargement increased the overall number of EU borders and resulted in nine new programmes being adopted in 2004, many of which are Neighbourhood Programmes. In 2004 most programmes were modified to take account of the mid-term evaluations and the distribution of indexation funds. For some programmes changes were also necessary due to enlargement and/or integration of the Neighbourhood Programme concept. Some 'n+2' decommitments

and results of the updates of the mid-term evaluations contributed to further programme modifications in the following years.

By the end of 2009, the payment absorption rate was about 92%. Due to the more specific and challenging nature of cooperation programmes, project decommitments due to the 'n+2' rule could not be avoided for some programmes. In total EUR 135.0 million was decommitted during the programming period due to the automatic decommitment rule.

In 2009, the implementation of 81 INTERREG III/Neighbourhood programmes continued to progress well. The Commission services continued active follow-up in close cooperation with the authorities responsible for programme implementation. Programmes were closely monitored in order to ensure efficient implementation, in particular as regards financial management. There were regular contacts with the implementing authorities, including dissemination of good practice. In addition to this, the INTERACT support programme continued to contribute to efficient and effective implementation of INTERREG III programmes by organising a large number of best practice events and producing effective cooperation management manuals for the benefit of bodies implementing cooperation programmes.

In order to ensure more efficient spending of funds, and given the particular economic and financial context, the final date of eligibility of expenditure was extended to 30 June 2009 for 49 of the 2000-2006 programmes affected by the financial crisis, and for 18 of these the eligibility for the Technical assistance priority was further extended to 31 December 2009.

For 2009, the final report on the ex-post evaluation of INTERREG III was published in July 2010[4].

Due to their international nature, financial control and audit are challenging for INTERREG programmes. Audit findings have called for some programmes to develop action plans on how to improve their financial control and audit systems. The implementation of these action plans has been closely monitored.

2.2.5.2. EQUAL

The EQUAL Community Initiative programmes were administratively closed in 2008 in most Member States. Only a few asked for an extension of the final date of eligibility into 2009 in order to achieve a higher absorption rate and to continue mainstreaming actions.

2.2.5.3. URBAN

Work continued in 2009 on the management of the 71 operational programmes implementing the URBAN Community Initiative by way of annual reports, monitoring committees and annual meetings. Programme management meant not only following up the financial implementation but also ensuring the continuity of the 'URBAN' methodology and approach.

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4 see http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/evaluation/expost_reaction_en.htm.

In 2009, work on the management of the URBACT I programme continued by way of monitoring committees and reporting procedures in its final phase of closure.

Since 2002, the programme has promoted dialogue and knowledge-sharing between cities and towns benefiting from the URBAN programmes. In total, 274 partners — cities, Member States, regional authorities and universities — have been involved in 38 URBACT projects. These projects have brought together 217 cities from 29 countries and 57 other partners from universities, regions, member states and private and voluntary organisations.

The URBACT programme has become the framework for exchange and reflection on urban issues and problems not only for decision-makers in cities, but also for regional authorities, Member States, universities and research bodies. It has done this on a very small budget, with the average cost of a network being EUR 0.6 million.

The URBACT II programme, the Urban Development Network Programme under the European Territorial Cooperation Objective, is an exchange and learning programme for cities based on the good experiences with the URBACT I programme. In 2009, work on the management of the URBACT II programme continued by way of monitoring committees and reporting procedures.

After having launched the first call for proposals in 2007, the URBACT II programme had a successful start in 2008 and 2009. In total, 19 thematic networks and 6 working groups were launched. In 2009, they consolidated their work in the implementation phase by drawing up and starting to implement Local Action Plans in close cooperation with Local Support Groups. In 2009, a second call for proposals was launched and another thirteen thematic networks and three working groups were started. In total, the URBACT II programme will support 46 Thematic Networks and 14 Working Groups in 2007-2013.

Together with the two Pilot Fast Track Networks, the projects have gathered 333 partners (cities, Member States, regional authorities, universities, NGOs).

The URBACT II programme is also one of the main instruments of the Regions for Economic Change initiative, aiming at faster implementation of best practice and innovative concepts. In this framework, the Commission actively supports seven Fast Track Networks. Several Commission services, led by the Directorate-General for Regional Policy (and one network led by the Directorate-General for Health and Consumers), are involved in the Fast Track Network activities and support the project partners in implementing their Local Action Plans through regional or national Operational Programmes. New Fast Track Networks will be labelled in 2010 on the basis of the second call for proposals.

The creation of strong links between cities and their managing authorities is the guiding principle of the entire URBACT II programme. In the first call for proposals, 162 participating cities involved their managing authorities as partners.

2.2.5.4. LEADER+

The Community Initiative Leader+ consisted of three activities: implementation of local development strategies by public private partnerships, cooperation between

rural territories and networking. 73 Leader+ programmes for the EU 15 were approved for the period 2000-2006. (Recently acceded EU Member States had the option of integrating Leader+ type measures into their EAGGF Objective 1 programmes.)

Extending the eligibility period until 30 June 2009 was possible for Leader+ programmes if requested by the Member State before 31 December 2008. An extension was requested for 41 Leader + programmes (out of 73).

In 2009, the Commission also received final reports of those programmes closed by the end of 2008. Two examples are the final closure reports for Leader+ Scotland and for Leader+ Ireland. The final closure report for Leader+ Scotland described its main achievements as follows: 1318 projects completed across rural Scotland, the development of structural, cultural and environmental assets, greater capacity and sustainability within community organisations that engaged with the programme and an impact on small communities given the opportunity to address local priorities and needs. The final closure report for Leader+ Ireland described positive effects in terms of micro-enterprise creation and development, training activities and jobs created and sustained. Achievements in all these areas exceeded the targets set prior to commencement of the programme.

2.2.6. Innovative Actions

2.2.6.1. ERDF

The Directorate-General for Regional Policy also managed 181 Regional Programmes of Innovative Actions (on 31 December 2009, 150 had been closed, 28 of them during 2009). These programmes helped to promote strategic innovation in the regions, by experimenting with innovative methods and practices designed to improve the level of innovation and the quality of EU assistance under three themes: knowledge and technological innovation, information society and sustainable development.

A contract was signed on 23 December 2009 with the European Policy Evaluation Consortium (EPEC), on Policy lessons from experience with the Regional Programme for Innovative Actions in the fields of innovation, sustainable development and information society. The inception report was presented to the Commission on 24 February 2010.

Another contract was signed on 31 October 2008 with Deloitte to reliably assess the error rate for all Regional Programme for Innovative Actions projects for which the final claim and declaration from the independent audit body had already been received by the Commission (131 at that time). The final report was submitted on 30 April 2009, presenting a total error rate of 4.2%, based on a sample of 38 programmes.

2.2.6.2. ESF

In 2009, the remaining Innovative Actions for 2005 and 2006 projects were closed. Project closures were completed as planned. Only one project was not finalised due

to the late submission of clarifications by the Promoter. This closure was finally done in the first half of 2010.

3. CONSISTENCY AND COORDINATION

3.1. Consistency with other Community policies

Previous reports have given details of developments to maintain consistency between cohesion policy and other EU policy priorities such as competition policy, internal market, environment, transport and gender equality objectives. There were no specific changes in requirements or expectations on managing authorities as the 2000-2006 programmes entered the final months of implementation.

3.2. Coordination of instruments

3.2.1. The Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund

Aid granted by the Cohesion Fund provides financing for transport infrastructure projects in the fields of trans-European networks and the environment. The Cohesion Fund enables the beneficiary Member States to channel significant public investment into these two fields of common interest, while meeting the objectives of reducing the budget deficits set out in the convergence and stability programmes drawn up as part of Economic and Monetary Union.

Following the enlargement of the European Union in May 2004, the ten new Member States are covered by the Cohesion Fund. In the period 2000-2006, before the latest enlargement on 1 January 2007 to include Romania and Bulgaria, there were 13 beneficiary Member States. As a result of its economic growth, Ireland has not been eligible for the Fund since 1 January 2004.

The principal instrument for coordinating funding under the Cohesion Fund and the Structural Funds is the national strategic reference framework (SRF), which covers the whole of the 2000-2006 period. Council Regulation (EC) No 1265/1999 amending Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 1164/94 provides that 'Member States shall also provide the results of the environmental impact assessment in conformity with Community legislation, and their consistency with a general environmental or transport strategy at administrative unit or sector level'.

The four 'old' Member States benefiting from the Cohesion Fund presented their SRFs for the environment and transport sectors at the end of 2000. The ten new Member States submitted theirs during the first half of 2004. Since then, decisions to finance projects by the Cohesion Fund have been subject to a verification process to avoid duplication with programmes adopted under the Structural Funds. In addition, SRFs improve the complementarity between the two instruments.

Thus, in certain cases, these SRFs form an integral part of the programmes approved under the Structural Funds for the period 2000-2006; this improves coordination between funding under the Cohesion Fund and the Structural Funds.

3.2.2. *The Structural Funds and the EIB/EIF*

JESSICA

JESSICA — Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas — is the joint initiative of the Commission with the EIB (European Investment Bank) and the CEB (Council of Europe Development Bank) that was designed to make greater use of financial engineering instruments as part of Cohesion Policy to support investment in sustainable urban development and regeneration.

During 2009, JESSICA activities expanded considerably in Member States and regions. During this period, 22 JESSICA Evaluation Studies were launched (compared to 14 in 2008) and such studies are increasingly acknowledged as a key element to assist Member States and regions in implementing the initiative.

Conceived as a tool to foster the development and implementation of the initiative, the JESSICA Networking Platform was launched and two plenary meetings took place in Brussels on 4 March and 17 June 2009.

Positive feedback received from participants confirms that the platform is considered extremely useful in exchanging know-how and experience among those already implementing JESSICA or planning to do so in the future.

To further promote financial engineering initiatives as part of Cohesion Policy, a conference focused on both JESSICA and JEREMIE was jointly organised with the EIB in Brussels on 22 and 23 October 2009 with more than 300 interested participants.

As a result of the activities carried out, ten JESSICA funds were established in eight Member States (Poland, Spain, Lithuania, Portugal, the UK, Italy, Germany, Estonia) at either national or regional level. Nine of them are Holding Funds and one is an Urban Development Fund (Brandenburg). Eight of the JESSICA funds are managed by the EIB and the two by national or regional financial institutions (Estonia, Brandenburg).

By the end of 2009, legal commitments under JESSICA fund agreements exceeded EUR 1 000 million, thus helping to build up a lasting funding legacy of EU and national public money to be reinvested in the long term in urban development and regeneration.

JASPERS

JASPERS — Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions — is a technical assistance facility for the twelve countries which joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 to help them prepare major projects which will be assisted by EU funds.

JASPERS is a joint instrument that pools contributions from the European Commission in the form of funds to recruit expert staff and staff contributions from the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and from KfW, the German publicly owned development bank.

JASPERS began operations with a small team from the partner institutions in late 2006 but recruited new expert and support staff throughout 2007 and 2008. In November 2008, the Commission, as part of the Economic Recovery Package, decided to increase the resources provided to JASPERS by 25.0% compared to 2008, from 2009 onward. The process of recruiting 15 additional experts funded by the increased resources took place during 2009 and the first of the new staff, most of whom work in the JASPERS regional offices in Warsaw, Vienna and Bucharest, began to arrive in October. Taking the additional 15 experts into account, at end 2009 JASPERS had a target staff of 73 experts and 14 support staff.

The increased staff levels were reflected in a sizeable increase in the number of assignments completed for the beneficiary Member States. In 2009, 133 assignments were completed compared to 82 in 2008. These assignments in turn provided input to a growing number of applications for assistance for major projects; by year-end, 99 applications for grant support to major projects which had received assistance from JASPERS had been received by the Directorate-General for Regional Policy and, of these, 44 were approved by the Commission. There is clear evidence that the projects assisted by JASPERS were approved more rapidly by the Commission than those which did not receive assistance.

The EIB decided in 2009 that the increase in the resources from the Commission would be matched by a similar increase in input from the EIB (an extra four experts), beginning in 2010. In December 2009, the partners in JASPERS agreed that an additional ten experts financed by the Commission would be recruited and would arrive during 2010.

JEREMIE

JEREMIE — Joint European Resources for Micro-to-medium Enterprises — is the joint initiative of the Commission with the EIF (European Investment Fund) that was designed to increase the use of financial engineering instruments as part of cohesion policy to improve access to finance for SMEs' expansion and investment in innovation, as well as for financing new business creation.

Under JEREMIE the money contributed by operational programmes of the Structural Funds to a holding fund selected by the managing authority is channelled to financial intermediaries selected by the holding fund. Financial intermediaries invest these resources in SMEs, along with their own match funding, by means of equity, loans or guarantees.

The JEREMIE initiative was launched in 2006 by the Commission in close cooperation with the EIF. A memorandum of understanding was signed between these two institutions to enter into force on 30 May 2006.

The Commission, in cooperation with the EIF, decided in 2006 to offer to Member States or regions interested in JEREMIE, the possibility of having a JEREMIE evaluation study free of charge, identifying gaps between supply and demand for financial products, ensuring appropriate SME access to finance and proposing possible solutions to fill the gaps. The evaluation studies were co-financed at a rate of 85.0% by the Commission, while the balance of 15.0% was financed by the EIF.

The evaluations were carried out in the period 2006-2009 and a total number of 55 evaluation studies were carried out by the EIF in 21 Member States. Of these evaluation studies, 19 have a national scope while the other 36 have a regional scope.

By the end of 2009, JEREMIE was implemented on the basis of signed funding agreements in thirteen Member States (Greece, France, Spain, Italy, the United Kingdom, Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovakia, Latvia, Lithuania, Cyprus), at either national or regional level. At the end of 2009, the total amount of resources from ERDF operational programmes already paid in or contractually committed to JEREMIE holding funds under signed funding agreements was about EUR 3 000 million.

Two thirds of the total amount committed so far under JEREMIE was managed at the end of 2009 by national or regional financial institutions acting as holding funds. The remaining EUR 1 000 million was managed by the EIF. By the end of 2009 the EIF had signed a total of ten JEREMIE holding fund agreements in ten Member States, at either national or regional level.

Conceived a tool for Managing Authorities and other institutions implementing JEREMIE to promote exchange of information, experience and good practice about the initiative and about financial engineering for SMEs in general, and to facilitate the implementation of JEREMIE on the ground, the JEREMIE Networking Platform was launched and two plenary meetings took place in Brussels on 12 March and 30 June 2009. A JEREMIE Technical Working Group, which held two meetings in 2009, was established as part of the JEREMIE Networking Platform, to examine technical and regulatory issues on the implementation of JEREMIE.

Positive feedback received from managing authorities and other participants confirms that the platform is considered extremely useful in exchanging know-how and experience among those already implementing JEREMIE or planning to do so in the future.

JASMINE

JASMINE — Joint Action to Support Micro-finance Institutions in Europe — is a three-year pilot project launched jointly by the Commission and the European Investment Bank group to support the development of non-bank micro-credit providers and to develop their capacity in terms of both funding and technical assistance. This project started in the last quarter of 2009 and involves selected private partners such as specialised European micro-credit rating agencies and networks of micro-credit practitioners.

The first investment under JASMINE (the funding part, financed by the EIB) was finalised by the European Investment Fund in 2009 and other investment projects are in the pipeline for 2010. Regarding the technical assistance part of JASMINE (co-financed 95.0% by the Commission contribution), a call for expressions of interest was launched to identify potential micro-credit providers interested in receiving technical assistance from the JASMINE facility. This resulted in the selection of a first group of 15 successful candidates.

In the course of 2009, efforts were made to communicate consistently on JASMINE. In particular, the seminar on micro-credit organised during the Open Days in October 2009 proved to be very useful.

By the end of the year, the operational frame was in place to provide technical assistance to non-bank micro-credit providers through JASMINE.

After the European Parliament decision to allocate funds (EUR 4 million) to a Preparatory Action to promote a more favourable environment for micro-credit in the EU ('EPPA'), the Commission and the EIF agreed on the terms and the scope of action to build up the equity base of non-bank micro-credit-providers and allow them to become self-financing in the medium term. The funding under EPPA will complement the financing provided by the EIB under JASMINE. The action will be implemented by the EIF starting in 2010.

4. EVALUATIONS

In 2009, the Commission continued to carry out evaluations to support decision-making under the Cohesion Policy.

ERDF

In 2009, the Commission continued to carry out the ex post evaluation of Objectives 1 and 2 for the 2000-2006 period, using a total of 14 interlinked 'work packages' to explore the effectiveness and efficiency of Cohesion Policy. The results of the studies are used in the next programming period and for drafting the Cohesion Report, and are summarised in the synthesis report of the ex post evaluation published in April 2010.

The specific work packages below were completed, arriving at the following conclusions:

- on Transport, the evaluation confirmed that ERDF co-financed investment has made a major contribution to the transport system throughout the European Union, helping to transport goods and people between and within Member States and promoting economic and social development in the regions;

- on Environment and Climate change, the ERDF has significantly contributed to the improvement of the European environment, focusing on environment infrastructure and rehabilitation measures;

- on Structural Change and Globalisation, the evaluation highlighted the importance of ensuring that these issues are integrated into regional strategic planning, putting into place active acknowledgement and strategic anticipation of structural change;

- on unit costs of major projects, the study is a first step in the development of a comprehensive benchmarking tool for future evaluations of projects and investments, to be complemented with the ex-post evaluation of the Cohesion Fund;

- on Gender equality and Demographic change, although there is little awareness of the potential of the ERDF to address these issues, it can support regions in adapting to demographic change and fostering gender equality;

- on Rural development, the evaluation concluded that, to focus support effectively, the policy should continue to target 'weak' areas regardless of their rural or urban character;

- on Management and Implementation systems, the study showed that the EU-10 had successfully put in place the systems to access the EU resources available and to comply with regulatory requirements. At the same time, the EU-15 witnessed improvements in the strategic management of cohesion policy, particularly in terms of better-quality planning, partnership and evaluation. Throughout the EU, cohesion policy had spill-over effects on the domestic management and implementation systems.

Other evaluations completed in 2009:

- the interpretation of Article 16 of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 on the promotion of gender equality, non-discrimination and accessibility for disabled persons, highlighting a good overall awareness of the requirements as well as a partial mainstreaming approach towards the integration of the three themes in the majority of the programmes;

- a study on governance methods for regional innovation strategies, suggesting various approaches towards the governance of innovation and complementarities between the ERDF and the national/regional funds for innovation.

The ex post evaluations of the Community Initiatives URBAN and INTERREG continue into 2010. On URBAN, the evaluation analyses its impact on economic and social cohesion and draws lessons for future mainstream programmes, while on INTERREG it measures the contribution and specificity of the Community Initiative according to its cross-border / transnational / interregional dimension.

Furthermore, the Commission launched the following evaluations in 2009:

- The ex post evaluation of the Cohesion Fund including former ISPA, consisting of a set of three interlinked 'work packages'. It will assess the contribution of the Cohesion Fund and ISPA to the development of the EU transport system, to achieving the EU *acquis* in the field of environment and the effect of ISPA as a preparation for Structural and Cohesion Fund programmes, while also carrying out ex post cost-benefit analyses for selected transport and environment projects.

- As part of the ex post evaluation of Objectives 1 and 2 for 2000-2006, two further evaluations were launched in 2009: an evaluation based on the 30 programmes spending the most in enterprise support will use the evidence available to explore the effectiveness of different forms of enterprise support according to the type of instrument used and the sectors and activities targeted; a case study of direct grants to enterprise under the six Operational Programmes co-financed by the ERDF in Eastern Germany will use econometric analysis to estimate the impact of ERDF enterprise assistance.

Providing methodological guidance to the Member States is an important task for the Commission. The online and interactive resource for evaluating socio-economic development (EVALSED) was updated, with new sections added on counterfactual impact evaluation and macroeconomic modelling. To discuss the methods used for evaluation, in 2009 the Commission organised an Evaluation Conference in Poland on 'New methods for Cohesion Policy evaluation: promoting accountability and learning'.

ESF

The Commission continued the work on the ex post evaluation of the ESF in the programming period 2000-2006. The main ex post evaluation and two ex post thematic evaluations were launched at the end of 2008. The provisional results of the main ESF ex post evaluation were available at end 2009/early 2010. The ex post evaluation of the EQUAL Community Initiative was launched in early 2009, and its preliminary results presented in early 2010.

Besides the main ex post evaluation of 2000-2006, a thematic evaluation was conducted on ESF support to the Open Method of Coordination in Social Protection and Social Inclusion, and an evaluation of the ESF's impact on the functioning of the labour market and investment in human capital infrastructure through support for systems and structures.

In addition, in 2009 DG EMPL launched several other studies:

- evaluation of the capacity of the ESF delivery system to attract and support operational programme target groups (in the new programming period 2007-2013);

- evaluation of ESF support for enhancing access to the labour market and the social inclusion of migrants and ethnic minorities (2000-2006 and 2007-2013);

- evaluation of ESF support to Gender Equality (2000-2006 and 2007-2013);

- evaluation of contribution of the ESF to the European Employment Strategy (focus on 2007-2013 programming period);

- ESF implementation in the 2007-2013 period — template for EC reporting and 2008 outline report.

In 2009, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities continued to hold ESF Evaluation Partnership meetings to which it invited all Member States' evaluation bodies. The main objective of these meetings is to steer the evaluation work of activities supported by the ESF and capitalise on it with a view to assessing their contribution to objectives also pursued by other EU instruments. In 2009, the Evaluation Partnership met three times.

EAGGF

Ex-post evaluation of LEADER+

In 2009, the Commission launched the ex post evaluation of Leader+. This evaluation covers the Leader+ programmes, as specified by Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/99, and the Leader+-type measures included in transitional rural development programmes for the period 2004-2006 (EU-10).

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and sustainability of Leader+ programmes and Leader+-type measures as implemented in the EU-15 and EU-10 respectively.

As regards specifically Leader+ programmes, the evaluation will also assess the overall impacts of the programmes, with a particular focus on quantitative impacts[5], and their coherence with other EU action in rural areas. Concerning Leader+-type measures, the analysis will focus on their effectiveness in helping new Member States to create rural development strategies, and their relevance to the needs of these countries. It will also assess the extent to which the Leader method creates added value compared to traditional (top-down) implementation methods of rural development programmes. It will examine the preconditions for successful application of the Leader method in rural development activities. The evaluation will be completed by the end of 2010.

5. CONTROLS

5.1. ERDF

Results of closure audit enquiry of ERDF programming period 1994-1999

As part of its strategy for obtaining assurance on the regularity of expenditure paid at the closure of ERDF programmes for the 1994-1999 programming period, a closure audit enquiry was conducted between 2003 and 2009.

The main objective was to obtain assurance that the closure process in the Member States had been carried out correctly so that the Directorate-General for Regional Policy could be satisfied that final expenditure claims were free of material error. The scope of the enquiry was limited to ERDF expenditure excluding Objective 2 for the 1994-1996 period and innovative actions. In order to achieve the stated objective, the methodology followed was to audit a random sample of projects selected from the most risky programmes in each of the Member States.

144 on-the-spot audit missions were carried out between 2003 and 2006 on a sample of 54 programmes covering all EU-15 Member States. The programmes audited account for 20-60% of the ERDF contribution in all Member States, with one exception, and an overall coverage of 31.5% of ERDF contribution for mainstream programmes.

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5 In particular concerning the two priorities of the Leader+ programme of enhancing job opportunities and activities for women and young people.

For seven programmes out of the 54 audited, it was concluded that no corrections were needed. In 25 programmes Member States accepted the financial corrections proposed by the Commission. In 22 programmes, the financial corrections were applied by a Commission decision.

The total amount of the corrections is EUR 777.6 million and represents 2.9% of the total ERDF amount of the programmes audited.

Extrapolated corrections were applied for the programmes where it was concluded that there were systemic deficiencies. Extrapolations are concentrated in three Member States — Germany, Spain and UK. Sixteen out of the 19 programmes for which extrapolated (or flat rate) corrections were applied are in those Member States. The remaining three programmes are in France, the Netherlands and Italy.

The irregularities detected concern mainly cases of non-compliance with public procurement rules, absence of supporting documents, incomplete audit trail, and expenditure incurred out of the eligibility period or non-compliance with other eligibility rules.

After applying all the corrections resulting from the closure audit enquiry, the residual risk for reimbursements made for the 1994-1999 programmes may be estimated as follows:

- For the non-audited programmes in Germany, Spain and UK (EUR 25 800 million) the residual risk of error can be considered high;

- The residual risk of error in the non-audited part of the programmes in the other twelve Member States for which extrapolated corrections were not applied can be considered low;

- For the non-audited programmes in the other twelve Member States (EUR 32 800 million) the residual risk of error can be considered generally low.

Given that the programmes were selected for the audit enquiry on the basis of a clear risk assessment, so that higher-risk programmes were audited, it can be concluded that at closure, after all financial corrections, the overall risk of error was substantially reduced.

Programming period 2000-2006

For the ERDF, an audit enquiry was started in mid-2004 to examine the effective functioning of key elements of the management and control systems in Member States for mainstream programmes. The audits comprise two phases, a systems review and an audit of a sample of projects selected on a representative basis. The on-the-spot audit work initially planned was concluded by end 2006 for EU-15 and end 2007 for EU-10. Additional audits on EU-15 programmes were carried out in 2007-2008 to extend coverage or address specific risks or to follow up implementation of action plans. The overwhelming majority of audit missions in 2009 were a follow-up to previously audited programmes.

At the end of 2009, in total 220 audit missions (excluding INTERREG) had been carried out examining the functioning of key elements of management and control

systems in the Member States. The programmes audited represent 43.0% of the number of the mainstream programmes and 76.0% of the planned ERDF contribution.

In 2009, four additional missions were performed in relation to the ERDF, to review winding-up bodies and verify that Member States had prepared for closure. The 39 audits carried out under this enquiry, together with work done on the winding-up body as part of systems audits, meant that at end 2009 we had covered the winding-up bodies for approximately 85% of the amount allocated to the 2000-2006 programmes.

For INTERREG, a separate audit enquiry launched in 2006 and further implemented in 2007 and 2008 was concluded in 2009 for most of the 23 programmes examined, representing 54.0% of the amount committed. The particular challenge was that for most of the 81 INTERREG III programmes there are separate management and control systems. The audit approach was to select on a risk basis which programmes to audit on-the-spot, following a methodology similar to that adopted for mainstream programme audits. This was supplemented by a detailed assessment of the annual control reports in order to form an opinion on non-audited programmes. In 2009, following the reservations expressed in Annual Activity Report 2008 on 21 INTERREG III programmes, appropriate action was taken to address the remaining risks.

Other audit work for the programming period 2000-2006 included examining the 145 annual control reports received under Article 13 of Regulation (EC) No 438/2001 (and Article 12 of Regulation (EC) No 1386/2002). Assessment letters are sent to all the Member States with observations and, where necessary, requests for additional information, to obtain as much assurance as possible from national audit work. Furthermore, 216 national system audit reports were received in 2009.

In conclusion, there has been intensive audit work over the last six years achieving high audit coverage, as well as follow-up of action plans and application of corrections. Most action plans have been satisfactorily implemented and financial corrections applied to reduce the residual risk to the EU budget.

In 2009 the Directorates-General for Agriculture and Rural Development, Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, and Regional Policy cooperated in preparing for the closure strategy for 2000-2006 programmes. A common methodology was agreed, including an enquiry planning memorandum, standard checklists and a strategy for the closure audits.

Impact of controls

In exercising its supervisory role, the Directorate-General for Regional Policy had established a policy in 2008[6] to ensure more rapid adoption of decisions to suspend payment and make financial corrections when serious systems weaknesses are detected which endanger the reimbursements of Funds made to Member States. The more rigorous approach continued in 2009 and was demonstrated through the adoption of six Commission decisions in relation to three INTERREG programmes, two German programmes and one Italian programme (compared to five ERDF decisions adopted in 2008 and one in 2007) and through the increase in the overall financial corrections figure of approximately EUR 2000 million in 2009, compared to approximately EUR 900 million in 2008. This raises the total ERDF financial corrections in 2008-2009 to EUR 2900 million and the cumulative corrections in the period 2000-2009 to EUR 5400 million for the financial corrections made by the Commission and by the Member States, as a result of Commission or Court of Auditors audit activity or OLAF investigations.

At the end of 2009, suspension and correction procedures were in progress for a total number of approximately 117 ERDF programmes, with an estimated amount of approximately EUR 460 million.

Annual summaries

Annual summaries were received for the third consecutive year in February 2010 as per Article 53b(3) of the amended Financial Regulation. These are assessed by the Directorates-General responsible – 'Regional Policy', 'Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities', 'Agriculture and Rural Development' and 'Fisheries and Maritime Affairs'. The formal submission by the Member States of the requested information reinforces the Member States' accountability for the use of the Funds and provides assurance for the Commission.

The Commission revised the guidance for the 2009 annual summaries and discussed it with the Member States. In its revised note, the Commission reiterates its encouragement to the Member States to add value to the summaries by providing additional information which is not communicated in other reports. This can be done by analysing the functioning of systems, diagnosing problems and their solutions, describing good practices and providing a declaration as to the degree of assurance the Member States derive from their systems. The revised guidance note takes on board some of the recommendations formulated in the study on the annual summaries presented to the Budgetary Control Committee of the European Parliament on 3 November 2009. Information on withdrawals and recoveries was no longer requested in the annual summaries, aiming at simplifying the exercise and avoiding duplication of work.

As at end March 2010, 23 Member States complied with the minimum requirements of the Financial Regulation regarding information to be provided. Where necessary, Member States which had not completely followed the recommendations in the

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6 Under the Action Plan to strengthen the Commission's supervisory role — COM(2008) 97 of 19 February 2009.

Commission's guidance note were asked to provide the additional information. For four Member States, there were non-compliance issues and the Member States were asked to send a revised annual summary. Fifteen Member States provided an overall analysis and nine Member States provided a statement of overall level of assurance, following the Commission recommendations to maximise the value of the annual summaries.

In conclusion, for the cases where Member States provided an overall analysis or statement of assurance, the DG Regional Policy used this to corroborate its own assessment of the national management and control systems. The annual summaries are also of value where they provide additional information to the Commission which was not available from other sources.

Communication of follow-up to the action plan to strengthen the Commission's supervisory role

Cohesion policy is implemented through shared management, where Member States are primarily responsible for preventing, detecting and correcting errors and the Commission supervises this work by performing controls of its own. The Commission had adopted in February 2008 and had put in place a comprehensive Action Plan to strengthen its supervisory role. The Action Plan was the main tool to address the weaknesses identified in the Court's 2006 Annual Report. The overall aim is to reduce the level of error in expenditure claims certified to the Commission for co-financing under structural actions. The actions should also prevent loss to the Community budget through the application of financial corrections.

In February 2010 the Commission published an impact report[7] to assess the impact of the Action Plan. Due to the nature of the actions and the fact that reducing the error rate is a steady but lengthy process, this impact assessment can only be preliminary.

The implementation of the actions had an overall positive impact. The Commission is now in a stronger position to supervise the management of the Structural and Cohesion Funds. There are three areas which provide evidence of a tangible impact of the actions implemented:

- Reduced level of error in expenditure claims certified to the Commission: the results of a Commission audit enquiry performed in 2009 on the 2007-2013 programmes provide an indication that the enhanced control provisions for the 2007-2013 regulatory framework and the preventive measures taken by the Commission have started to produce results on the error rate.

- The improved supervisory role of the Commission increases the effectiveness of the multi-annual control systems and reduces the residual risk of error after closure of the programmes. The audit closure enquiry on 1994-1999 programmes, as explained above, showed that for those programmes the residual risk at closure was substantially reduced. For the 2000-2006 period, the results for the closure

[7] Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council and the Court of Auditors — Impact of the action plan to strengthen the Commission's supervisory role under shared management of structural actions. COM (2010) 52 of 18 February 2010.

audit enquiry will be available after programme closure in 2011 and equally positive results are expected.

- Reduced risk of loss to the EU budget by financial corrections: The value of financial corrections for the 1994-1999 and 2000-2006 periods substantially increased in the years 2008 and 2009, compared to the total for the years 2000-2007. The level of financial corrections shows the rigorous Commission response to the detection of significant systems deficiencies in the Member States. This has a deterrent effect on mismanagement of EU funds.

The Joint Audit Strategy of the Commission's services responsible for cohesion will continue to build on the achievements of the Action Plan and provides a solid basis for streamlining the overall audit approach to strengthen the Commission's supervisory role in shared management of structural actions.

The Commission will maintain the momentum generated by the Action Plan by continuing rigorous actions and, in a system of shared management, expects that the Member States will continue to demonstrate their accountability and take responsibility for their use of EU funds. The Commission considers it essential that Member States add value to the current arrangements to maximise the assurance available, in the absence of a mandatory statement of management assurance.

5.2. ESF

Results of the audit activities concerning the programming period 2000-2006

Audit coverage 2000-2006 period

During the 2000-2006 programming period, the work carried out by the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities included the assessment of management and control system descriptions, analysis of national system audit reports and annual control reports in annual bilateral coordination meetings, and in three main audit enquiries:

- An enquiry on the verification of effective functioning of the management and control systems in the Member States, where the objective was to obtain reasonable assurance that the systems are functioning effectively, to prevent and detect errors and irregularities and ensure the legality and regularity of the underlying operations and the accuracy of the expenditure declared to the Commission.

- An enquiry on project expenditure, to obtain reasonable assurance on compliance with the legislative framework, i.e. conformity with EC law on legality and regularity of the expenditure incurred in the Member States.

- An enquiry to review the work of the winding-up bodies in the Member States in preparation for the closure of 2000-2006 programmes, where the objective was to obtain reasonable assurance that the work carried out by the winding-up bodies, and the systems and procedures put in place for the provision of the winding-up declaration were compliant with the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 438/2001 and the Closure Guidelines, in order to be able to conclude whether

the systems and procedures set up, and the work carried out, provide a reliable source of assurance for the remainder of the programming period and programme closure.

As a result of the above audit enquiries, at the end of 2009, the audit units had carried out on-the-spot missions in Member States covering 94.9% of the operational. programmes.

The audit coverage is considered adequate to be able to conclude that existing systemic deficiencies presenting a material risk had been identified at the end of 2009. Accordingly, through follow-up work and action plans with certain Member States, including the application of financial corrections when required, the Commission should be able to obtain assurance prior to programme closure that the risks have been adequately addressed.

At the cut-off date of 31 December 2009, the situation observed is that the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities auditors have audited 143 programmes, of which some were only audited in part[8], for the 2000-2006 programming period. These programmes were all selected for audit following a (bi-) annual risk analysis.

The audit programme 2009 has allowed for the audit and coverage of the three remaining programmes which can be added to the (parts of) 140 programmes already audited in previous years.

The combined coverage by Commission + Member States now allows us to conclude that audit information is available for all operational programmes. The results of these audits were included in the audit opinions (per operational program) which in turn were transmitted to the geographical desks concerned.

Audit work in 2009

Considering the stage of implementation of the 2000-2006 programming period's operational programmes, no further audits of management and control systems were organised.

Instead, the audit work focused on the preparation for closure of the winding-up bodies. In total, twenty audit missions to winding-up bodies were carried out in 2009. These winding-up bodies are responsible for the closure of 62 operational programmes. The results of these audits can be added to those obtained from the other Structural Fund Directorates-General on their audit work on common winding-up bodies. Given the uniform methodology applied by all Structural Fund auditors, assurance can be drawn from their work. As a result, in total, audit results are available on 29 winding-up bodies and these bodies are in turn responsible for the closure of 86 operational programmes[9].

[8] E.g. in the German Objective 3 Operational Programme, not all Länder were audited.
[9] There are in total 236 Operational Programmes.

Secondly, the audit units allocated a considerable amount of resources to following up irregularities and reservations expressed in the Annual Activity Report 2008. For this purpose, eight audit missions were carried out.

Impact of the controls and follow-up of the action plan to strengthen the Commission's supervisory role

To strengthen its supervisory role in implementing the ESF in the Member States, as part of the Commission Action Plan in 2008, the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities continued to take a precautionary approach in 2009 in order to safeguard Community funds. This precautionary approach means that when an audit detects deficiencies there is a rapid move to a formal suspension procedure. Suspensions of ESF payments only terminate when the implementation of an action plan has been confirmed through an audit, and by decision of the Directorate-General's management. This helps to ensure consistency, transparency for the Directorate-General's stakeholders and equal treatment between Member States.

The more rigorous approach of the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities was demonstrated in 2009 by the launch of 19 procedures for formal suspension of payments for 2000-2006 programmes (new formal pre-suspension letters notified during the year to Spain (seven), France (seven), Italy (two), the Netherlands (one), the United Kingdom (one), Hungary (one), including one procedure for a 2007-2013 programme) and the adoption of a formal Commission suspension decision for one Spanish programme. The close monitoring of all procedures since 2008 also allowed us to close 29 procedures opened in previous years (Belgium (six), Spain (eighteen), France (two), Italy (two), the United Kingdom (one)). Another seven procedures were ready to be closed at year end (Italy (five), Luxembourg (two)).

In addition, the Commission adopted seven financial correction decisions for 1994-1999 ESF programmes for Luxembourg, Spain, Belgium and Finland.

In financial terms the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities reported in 2009 additional financial corrections for the ESF on an accrual basis amounting to EUR 172.5 million: EUR 18.8 million for the 1994-1999 period and EUR 153.7 million for the 2000-2006 period (including corrections accepted in 2008 but not reported yet). For 2000-2006, the reported 35 instances of correction relate to 33 programmes and result mainly from Commission audit activity (29 cases) or from the European Court of Auditors audits (six cases). 91.0% of ESF corrections reported in 2009 were implemented during the year of decision. Finally, at year end, financial corrections in progress (based on pre-suspension letters sent to Member States) concerned an additional seventeen procedures for the period 1994-1999, thirteen procedures for 2000-2006 and one procedure for a 2007-2013 programme, as a result of Commission or Court of Auditors audit activity or OLAF investigations. Cumulative financial corrections for the ESF for the 2000-2006 programming period up to the end of 2009 amount to EUR 1 125 million (detailed figures provided in Part 6: Information on financial corrections and recoveries in the Structural Funds).

5.3. EAGGF

The Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development followed the same basic approach as the Directorate-General for Regional Policy and shared the same general objectives.

As regards the 1994-1999 period, the planned ex-post audit programme for this period was already completed in 2006. The last financial correction procedures were completed in 2009 (the last one in February 2010).

26 programmes were audited in 2009 for the period 2000-2006 (EU-25). In total, at the end of 2009, 103 programmes out of 152 had been subject to audit (67.8%), covering EUR 21 700 million (96.4%) of total programmed expenditure. Typical problems identified were: inadequate management checks, failure to verify eligibility criteria in accordance with agricultural legislation and a low level of independent controls. These findings are being followed up with the Member States concerned in financial correction proceedings. A number of financial correction procedures are under way. Three financial correction decisions covering three programmes were adopted by the Commission during the year.

5.4. FIFG

Closure of programming period 1994-1999

In 2009, no payments were made for the programmes for the period 1994-1999. By the end of 2009, 50 out of 52 programmes were closed (96.0%). The procedure for the two remaining programmes will be finalised in the first semester of 2010.

The outstanding amount of commitments for the programmes and projects under legal proceedings not yet closed amounts to EUR 11.2 million. Compared to 2008 the amount was reduced by EUR 20.4 million. This outstanding amount represents 0.4% of the total amount allocated to FIFG programmes for the period.

The total amount of financial corrections effected by the end of 2009 was EUR 96 million. This represents 3.4% of the total amount allocated to FIFG programmes. The corrections resulted in either reduced payments, recovery orders or decommitments.

The amount which is still under discussion is EUR 1.4 million, representing 0.05% of the total amount allocated to FIFG programmes.

Programming period 2000-2006

The nine FIFG audits carried out in 2009 covered ten operational programmes. For Spain, France and part of the Italian programme, the audits were focused on the Management and Control Systems of specific intermediary bodies or specific measures and consequently the results are not extrapolated to the whole programme. For the other programmes the audits were focused on the verification and follow-up of the effective functioning of Management and Control Systems for the period 2000-06 and the preparation for the closure. The audits tested key controls in place in the Management and Control Systems, combined with sample checks of projects by desk review at the level of the managing authorities and on-the-spot visits to projects

and beneficiaries. These audits indicate that out of the programmes/systems audited by the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries in 2009, eight function but need improvement, one works but needs significant improvement and one system and certain measures/bodies do not work.

In total, 102 projects were checked by desk reviews and/or on the spot for a total eligible amount checked of EUR 120.9 million with FIFG participation of EUR 76.8 million. From the project audits an amount of EUR 20.8 million was identified as potentially ineligible. With the exception of EUR 0.03 million this entire amount is attributable to the findings in relation to Germany and UK (Objective 1 Wales and Valleys) described above. From the systemic weaknesses identified and the potential flat rate financial corrections to be applied, an amount of EUR 26 million was identified as potentially ineligible.

This potentially ineligible amount (EUR 46.8 million) represents 2.0% of the total Community contribution paid out to the audited programmes and 41.0% of the total amount paid out by the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries in 2009 for the co-financing of FIFG programmes. However, it should be noted that the amount actually paid out in 2009 by the Commission for the programmes and measures generating this potentially ineligible amount was EUR 2.9 million. Indeed, no payments were made by the Commission in 2009 in respect of the German programme, which has been placed in Category 3. Neither was any payment made by the Commission in respect of Measures 13 and 46 in Spain, and a minimal amount of EUR 0.2 million was paid for Measure 46. No payments were made for the Technical Assistance measures in Italy or Measures 43, 44 and 45 for Outside Objective 1 in France.

All the above findings are provisional since the contradictory procedures have not yet been finalised.

Since the beginning of the 2000-2006 programming period, the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries has carried out a total of 53 audit missions covering all its mono-fund programmes (eighteen programmes representing an initial budget contribution of EUR 3608 million — 87.0% of the total 2000-2006 budget) as well as 18 multi-fund programmes representing a contribution of EUR 374.6 million — 9.5% of total 2000-2006 initial budget. In total, the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries systems audits have covered programmes representing 96.5% of total FIFG initial contribution for 2000-2006. For the other programmes, assurance is provided by other Structural Funds Directorates-General's audit work and/or national audits.

As for effective functioning of key controls, the overall result shows that for the FIFG programmes, the Management and Control Systems for 38 programmes (representing 88.2% of FIFG 2000-2006 allocation) are considered as working well or working with some improvements needed, while for 17 programmes (representing 8.4% of FIFG 2000-2006 allocation) the Management and Control Systems work but need significant improvement. Of the five remaining programmes three do not work (representing 3.3% of FIFG 2000-2006 contribution), and for two (representing 0.1% of FIFG 2000-2006 contribution) no opinion can be issued as there is not sufficient audit evidence.

5.5. OLAF

In 2009 OLAF undertook 38 missions in the Member States relating to measures co-financed by the Structural Funds. Some 28 of these missions involved on-the-spot checks[10] (during which 49 on-the-spot controls were carried out on economic operators) and 10 other types of missions were carried out to gather information or to assist either national administrations or judicial authorities. Typical problems identified by OLAF in the course of 2009 included false declarations, false invoicing and failure to abide by public procurement rules.

In 2009, Members States communicated to the Commission, in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1681/94[11] as amended[12] and Regulation (EC) No 1828/2006[13] as amended[14], some 4839[15] notifications of irregularities involving EUR 1200 million affecting co-financed measures of the 1994-1999, 2000-2006 and 2007-2013 programming periods. 21 notifications concern the 1994-1999 programming period with a financial impact of approximately EUR 1 million. Member States have informed the Commission that administrative and/or judicial procedures have been concluded at national level for a number of cases and an amount of EUR 480.2 million has been recovered.

For the new programming period 2007-2013, 186 irregularities were reported, involving a total amount of EUR 44.5 million.

In 2009, both the number of notifications and the amounts involved increased by around 23.0% and 109.0% respectively, as compared to the year before. The main explanation for this situation seems to be the preparation of the closure of the programmes for the programming period 2000-2006.

The most frequent types of irregularities reported are 'non-eligible expenditure', 'infringement of rules concerned with public procurement' and 'missing or incomplete supporting documents'.

6. COMMITTEES ASSISTING THE COMMISSION

6.1. COCOF

The activities of the COCOF Committee in 2009 can be classified according to its main roles, namely:

A) Conventional comitology activities where the COCOF acted giving opinions on draft decisions of the Commission or where the opinion of the Committee was required in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006.

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10 Regulation (EC) No 2185/1996, OJ L 292, 15.10.1996, p. 2.
11 OJ L 178, 12.07.1994, p.43.
12 By Regulation (EC) No 2035/2005, OJ L 328, 15.12.2005, p, 8.
13 OJ L 371, 27.12.2006, p,1.
14 By Regulation (EC) No 846/2009, OJ L 250, 23.09.2009, p.1.
15 2008: number of communicated cases 3869; overall amount related to the communications EUR 528647682.

In 2009 the following document, among others, was submitted to and approved unanimously by the COCOF committee:

- Commission Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 1828/2006 setting out rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Regional Development Fund.

B) Other roles besides comitology

As in previous years, the COCOF Committee has continued to be active as the forum of discussion for issues of more general nature than those strictly required by Regulation. With the aim of sharing the views with the Member States and seeking their opinions on the interpretations of Regulations, the COCOF committee presented and discussed several interpretative documents covering the following issues in 2009, for instance:

- concept of reliance on the work of other auditors;
- fraud indicators for ERDF, ESF and CF;
- tolerable risks (presentation of a Commission communication);
- Annual Control Reports and Opinions;
- Annual Control Report and Opinion to be submitted by 31 December 2009;
- Audit Reference Manual;
- financing by 2007-2013 technical assistance allocation of the technical assistance tasks of the 2000-2006 programmes incurred after the final date of eligibility;
- Audit reference manual for the Structural Funds;
- state of play of compliance assessment, of IPA programmes and of SFC 2007;
- regional governance in the context of globalisation: reviewing governance mechanisms and administrative costs (study);
- control costs (study).

6.2. ESF Committee

The Committee pursuant to Article 147 of the Treaty (ESF Committee) met three times in Plenary Sessions and its Technical Working Group met on six occasions.

In 2009, the Committee was consulted on a number of issues, including on ESF support for social partners, and a toolkit for using EU structural and cohesion funds to ensure accessibility and non-discrimination of people with disabilities. The ESF Committee also discussed the implementation of the European Economic Recovery

Plan, the future Europe 2020 Strategy and the 6th Progress report on Economic and Social Cohesion. It was regularly informed on the state of play of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF), the implementation of the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) and the procedures for irregularities and recovery of sums wrongly paid. The ESF Committee set up an ad hoc group of national experts to reflect on the future of the ESF for the next programming period (2014-2020).

The ESF Committee Technical Working Group (TWG) discussed, among other issues, the simplification of the General Regulation and the ESF Regulation and the implementation of the simplified cost options (flat rates, standard scales of unit costs, lump sums). The Commission also presented the new PROGRESS microfinance facility aiming at providing for microcredit to small businesses and to people who have lost their jobs and want to start their own small businesses. The ESF TWG pursued its programme of mutual learning concerning flat rate schemes, the use of the ESF in crisis response measures and the use of ESF for entrepreneurship support and microfinance/loan instruments.

6.3. Committee on Agricultural Structures and Rural Development (STAR)

The STAR Committee met three times in 2009 and gave a favourable opinion on one amendment of the SAPARD Rural Development programme for Bulgaria under Council Regulation (EC) No 1268/1999.

6.4. Committee on Structures for Fisheries and Aquaculture (CSFA)

The Committee on Structures for Fisheries and Aquaculture (CSFA) met twice in 2009. Main points discussed at the meetings include ex-post evaluation and the closure of the FIFG. There was also a presentation on Public Procurement rules where Member States were reminded of their obligations.

Part 2: Analysis by Member State

1. BELGIUM

2000-2006 programming period

1.1. Objective 1

For the single Belgian programme (Hainaut) under Objective 1, an extension of the eligibility period by six months until June 2009 was granted by the Commission.

Payments amounted to 94.6% (EUR 404.6 million) of the ERDF appropriation at the end of 2009. Global execution for EAGGF-Guidance amounted to 87.7% (EUR 36.6 million) of EAGGF appropriations at the end of 2009. For the ESF, the payment claims transmitted to the Commission amounted to 95.0% (EUR 190.2 million) of the total ESF appropriation at the end of 2009.

The managing authority plans to submit the annual report on 2008 and 2009 as a chapter in the closing report of the programme. For that reason a separate report on 2009 was not submitted. There were no meetings of monitoring committees and no payment claims were submitted in 2009. For ESF, two payment claims for a total amount of EUR 8.7 million were paid in 2009, and a final state of play was briefly discussed at the annual meeting held at Convergence OP 2007-2013.

There was no annual meeting between the Commission and the Belgian managing authorities.

1.2. Objective 2

All Belgian Objective 2 programmes asked for a six-month extension of the eligibility period until June 2009, which was granted by the Commission.

The managing authorities of the seven programmes under the Belgian Objective 2 are planning to include the 2008 and 2009 annual reports as a chapter in the closing report, so no annual reports were produced for 2008 and 2009. Because of the high implementation rate of the Objective 2 programmes, no monitoring committees were organised. There was no annual meeting between the Commission and the Belgian managing authorities.

The total of ERDF appropriations in the seven operational programmes (two for Wallonia, 4 for Flanders, one for Bruxelles Capitale) — out of which five are multi-fund — amount to EUR 416.3 million. Taken together, all programmes received EUR 371.7 million, representing an absorption rate of 89.3%.

Total ESF appropriations, covering five programmes (three for Flanders and two for Wallonia), amount to EUR 48.5 million. Taken together, all programmes received EUR 44.2 million, representing an absorption rate of 91.2%.

For the four Objective 2 programmes for Flanders, total ERDF and ESF payments per programme were respectively:

- Limburg: EUR 81.7 million (ERDF) and EUR 9.5 million (ESF) which correspond to 95.0% and 89.9% of the appropriations.

- Antwerpen: EUR 41.6 million (ERDF) and EUR 4.8 million (ESF) corresponding to 95.0% and 95.0% of the appropriations.

- Westhoek: EUR 31.3 million (ERDF) and EUR 1.4 million (ESF) corresponding to 95.0% and 95.0% of the appropriations.

- Oost-Vlaanderen: EUR 13.4 million (ERDF only, no ESF) corresponding to 95.0% of the appropriations.

As for the two Walloon Objective 2 programmes, the absorption rate is as follows:

- Meuse-Vesdre: EUR 115.3 million (ERDF) and EUR 23.6 million (ESF) representing an absorption rate of 83.1% and 91.8% respectively

- Aubange: EUR 46.9 million (ERDF) and EUR 4.9 million (ESF), representing an absorption rate of 85.5% and 86.5%.

- Bruxelles Capitale (ERDF only) spent EUR 41.5 million, or an absorption rate of 90.5%.

- Out of the seven Objective 2 programmes, six submitted payment claims for either zero payment but clearance of pre-financing, or actual payment combined with clearance of pre-financing. The Aubange Objective 2 programme did not submit a payment claim.

1.3. Objective 3

There are five ESF-only operational programmes covering respectively Flanders, Belgium fédérale, French-speaking Wallonia, German-speaking Wallonia and Bruxelles Capitale) totalling appropriations of EUR 796.4 million. An absorption rate of 94.8% was achieved, representing EUR 755.3 million.

For the Federal Single Programming Document (SPD), the total ESF budget amounts to EUR 70.1 million. Payments at the end of 2009 amount to EUR 65.3 million (93.1% of the total ESF appropriation). The Flemish programme has a total ESF budget of EUR 392.5 million. The entire budget was allocated to projects. Payments at the end of 2009 amounted to EUR 372.9 million. The Wallonia-French Community programme has a total ESF budget of EUR 297.9 million. Total payments at the end of 2009 amounted to EUR 283 million (95.0% of the total budget). The ESF budget for the Brussels region amounts to EUR 24.7 million, 95.0% of which was paid at the end of 2009.

The German-speaking Community has a separate Objective 3 programme, with a total ESF budget of EUR 11.2 million. At the end of 2009, payments amounted to EUR 10.6 million or 95.0% of the total budget. The implementation of this programme was finalised at the end of 2006.

1.4. Fisheries outside Objective 1

The total FIFG allocation to the fisheries programme is EUR 21.3 million. A last payment claim of EUR 3.6 million was sent to the Commission. Over the whole programming period the Commission paid EUR 19.6 million, with the total reimbursement rate reaching 91.9%.

1.5. Community Initiatives

1.1.1. Equal

The ESF appropriation for the two EQUAL programmes in Belgium — one for the French and German-speaking community, and one for the Dutch-speaking Community — amounts to EUR 68.2 million. The programme covering the French-German speaking community proceeded without any major difficulty in 2009. In financial terms, the rate of execution of the ESF part of the programme at the end of 2009 was 87.1%. The rate of execution of the Dutch-speaking EQUAL programme was 83.4% at the end of 2009. The two EQUAL programmes supported around 125 projects, mainly in fields such as employability, adaptability, life-long learning and social economy.

1.1.2. Leader

Belgium has two Leader+ programmes: one for Flanders, involving total public expenditure of EUR 7.9 million and one for Wallonia, involving total public expenditure of EUR 20.7 million. For both programmes, the allocated funds have been fully committed.

At the end of 2009, total financial execution came to EUR 12.1 million, i.e. 84.5% of total EAGGF-Guidance expenditure earmarked for the period 2000-2006 (unchanged compared to the end of 2008).

1.1.3. Urban

The three URBAN II programmes in Belgium totalling an appropriation of EUR 21.4 million relate to the cities of Antwerp, Sambreville and Brussels. Each programme originally received EUR 7.2 million from ERDF, but due to the 'n+2' rule the contribution was reduced to EUR 7.1 million for Antwerp and to EUR 7.1 million for Brussels. Total expenditure for all URBAN programmes was EUR 20.3 million, or 95.0% absorption rate. Over the year 2009, Urban Antwerpen and Urban Sambreville submitted and were paid one payment claim.

The managing authorities of the two Belgian Urban programmes plan to include the 2009 annual reports as a chapter in the closing report, so no annual reports were produced for 2009. Because of the high implementation rate of the Urban programmes, no monitoring committees were organised. There was no annual meeting between the Commission and the Management authorities of the Urban programmes.

2. CYPRUS

2000-2006 programming period

2.1. Objective 2

The payments made by the Commission (including the advance payment) amount to approximately EUR 26.6 million (absorption rate of 95.0%). In 2009 there were two payment requests, one concerning a payment amounting to EUR 0.7 million and a clearing of pre-financing, while the second was exclusively for clearing of pre-financing. The pre-financing amount was cleared at 48.0%.

Following the application by the Cypriot authorities for a six-month extension of the final eligibility date of expenditure (up to 30 June 2009) due to the financial crisis, the decision C(2009)1132 was adopted on 18 February 2009. Therefore it is expected that no loss of credits will occur for Cyprus for the programming period 2004-2006.

To support efficient and effective implementation of ERDF interventions, the Commission actively participated in a technical meeting in June 2009. There the progress up to mid-June was presented, with detailed information on the real expenditure on each measure. Some 35 projects were approved with a total budget totalling an amount of EUR 69 million which exceeds the allocated budget in the programme in order to avoid any problems of absorption.

2.2. Objective 3

Payments made by the Commission (including the advance payments) amount to EUR 20.8 million (absorption rate of 95.0%). Two intermediate payment claims totalling EUR 4.9 million were submitted by the Cypriot authorities in June 2009.

In response to the economic and financial crisis the Cypriot authorities requested an extension of the final eligibility date of expenditure until 30 June 2009; this was adopted by EC decision (2009)1132 of 18 February 2009. This extension of the eligibility period should allow full absorption of the ESF allocation while easing the closure process. The Programme has supported eighteen projects with a total budget of EUR 44.4 million, exceeding the financial envelope allocated to the programme in order to avoid any loss of funds.

A Monitoring Committee meeting for the Objective 3 SPD took place in June 2009 and the Commission took an active part. In addition, two technical meetings with the Cypriot authorities were held in March and in June, and an Annual Review meeting took place in December in Nicosia addressing closure-related issues and an assessment of the results of the ESF 2004-2006 operations in Cyprus.

2.3. Fisheries outside Objective 1

The Fisheries Operational Programme for Cyprus, adopted by the Commission in 2004, entered its sixth year of implementation. At the end of 2009, all the programme's resources had been allocated by the managing authority.

The monitoring committee met in 2009, covering mainly monitoring and evaluation of progress.

Payments from the Commission to the Member State reached the level of 95.0% of the FIFG contribution planned for this Operational Programme.

2.4. Community Initiatives

2.4.1. Equal

Payments made by the Commission (including the advance payments) amounted to EUR 1.7 million (absorption rate of 95.0%). In 2009, EUR 0.5 million of ESF payments were made for the CI EQUAL. An extension of the eligibility period was requested and adopted by EC decision (2009)1132 of 18 February 2009. It is expected that no credits will be lost under this programme.

3. CZECH REPUBLIC

2000-2006 programming period

In 2009 the implementation of all operational programmes improved substantially and the absorption accelerated compared to previous years. For most operational programmes, the budget spend on the ground exceeded 100.0% (due to overbooking). The payment rate (paid out/decided by the Commission) by the end of 2009 corresponds to 95.0% of the total 2004-2006 budget.

The 2008 annual implementation reports for each operational programme were submitted in time. All of them were deemed admissible and thus accepted by the Commission without significant objections.

As a reaction to the global economic crisis, all Czech operational programmes, apart from the Agriculture and Rural Development Operational Programme, asked to extend the eligibility period until 30 June 2009. The Commission adopted the relevant decision on 18 February 2009. The Czech Republic clearly demonstrated the effect of the unprecedented financial crisis on the socio-economic situation and the labour market and its effect of slowing down the implementation of the interventions covered by its request.

3.1. Objective 1

The *Community Support Framework for the period 2004-2006* covers a total budget of EUR 1954 million, of which EUR 1454 million came from the Structural Funds (63% ERDF, 25% ESF, 11.7% EAGGF and 0.3% FIFG). Five operational programmes were implemented under the CSF.

The CSF Managing Authority, at the Ministry for Regional Development, is responsible for the effectiveness, correct management and delivery of the support provided by the Structural Funds in the Czech Republic.

There was no monitoring committee meeting in 2009. Major activities of the managing authority focused on assistance to individual operational programmes for the closure exercise. The need for efficient management and coordination of this task at the CSF level was also stressed.

The *Joint Regional Operational Programme (JROP)*, the largest Czech programme with a share of 31.2% (EUR 454 million) of the total Objective 1 allocation (28% ERDF and 3.2% ESF), held two monitoring committee meetings in 2009: one on 4 June 2009 and one on 26 November 2008. Implementation of the JROP measures has been finalised — 95.0% of the allocation was paid out by the Commission. The final report and the whole closure are being prepared. The issue of irregularities is now a main task to be resolved.

The *Human Resource Development Operational Programme* accounts for a share of 21.2% (EUR 318.8 million ESF contribution) of the total Objective 1 allocation. Two monitoring committee meetings took place on 6 June 2009 and on 10 December 2009. The annual meeting was organised on 14 October 2009. Implementation has

come to its final phase, with more than 104% of the total budget of the operational programme being declared to the Commission so far. The best performing measures are 1.1 (Strengthening the active employment policy for job seekers and job applicants and 4.1 (Increasing adaptability of employers and employees to changes). Currently the closure documents are being prepared by Czech authorities and they should be sent to the Commission by the end of September 2010.

The *Operational Programme Industry and Enterprise* is the third largest programme with 17.9% (only ERDF) of the total Objective 1 allocation. Two Monitoring Committee meetings were organised for this programme in 2009: one on 27 May 2009 and one on 20 November 2009. Both of them were held in Prague. The latter one focused mainly on discussion and approval of the draft final report. This operational programme recorded important progress, allowing for full absorption of the allocation. By the end of the eligibility period, the absorption rate on the ground reached 104.0% (due to overbooking) and nearly the whole allocation was certified. Over the whole programming period, the most popular measures were schemes supporting small and medium-sized enterprises, innovation schemes and two loan schemes for start-ups of entrepreneurs and firms in the initial development stage. On the other hand, schemes on energy saving and renewable sources of energy lagged behind slightly at the beginning. Finally, it seems that the measures with the slowest absorption are those for technical assistance.

The *Operational Programme Infrastructure (OPI)* is the fourth largest OP, with almost 16.9% (only ERDF) of the Objective 1 budget allocation. No monitoring committee meetings were held for this programme in 2009. The preparation for closure took place in 2009. The approval of the closure documents by the monitoring committee is planned for the beginning of 2010. The submission of the closure documents is then expected by mid-2010. This programme fully absorbed the allocated funds. By the end of the eligibility period, the absorption rate on the ground reached 115.0%. The most successful interventions in terms of absorption and the most popular were transport axes 1 and 2. Axis 1 was for transport infrastructure projects, whereas axis 2 focused on reducing the negative impact of transport on the environment.

The *Agriculture and Rural Development Operational Programme* accounts for a share of 11.5% of the total Objective 1 allocation, with a contribution from the EAGGF Guidance section of EUR 170 million. The final date for eligibility of expenditure under this programme was 31 December 2008. In August 2009, the monitoring committee approved, by written procedure, the final report, which includes a specific chapter on implementation in 2008. The deadline for submission of the closure documents, including the final report, is 31 March 2010. In June 2009, an interim payment claim totalling EUR 5.6 million was submitted to the Commission. However, no amount was paid out by the Commission as 95.0% of the total programmed amount had already been paid in July 2008.

Fisheries

The implementation of the FIFG in the Czech Republic finished in 2007 using up the allocations committed up to almost 92.0%, with the 2006 allocation reallocated in favour of the EAGGF measures under the two-fund OP. The last interim payment in 2008 reached the 95.0% payment limit during the implementation period. Closure

can proceed as this programme was not extended, with the closure documents for FIFG received in April 2010.

3.2. Objective 2

The Single Programming Document Prague Objective 2 receives support of EUR 71.3 million from the Structural Funds. Two monitoring committee meetings were organised for this programme in 2009 (on 9 June 2009 and on 24 November 2009). Implementation of the JROP measures was finalised — 95.0% of the allocation was paid by the Commission. The final report and the whole closure are being prepared.

3.3. Objective 3

The *Single Programming Document Prague Objective 3* receives support of EUR 58.8 million from the Structural Funds. Two monitoring committee meetings were organised for this programme in 2009 (on 7 June 2009 and on 7 December 2009). Implementation of the measures was finalised — 95.0% of the allocation was paid by the Commission (the Czech Republic declared an absorption rate of 100.5% so far). The best performing measure is 3.1 (Development of initial education as a basis for lifelong learning). Currently the closure documents are being prepared by the Czech authorities and they should be sent to the Commission by the end of September 2010.

3.4. Community Initiatives

3.4.1. Equal

The Community initiative EQUAL has an ESF allocation of EUR 32.1 million from the Structural Funds (ESF only). Two monitoring committee meetings were organised for this programme in 2009 (on 2 June 2009 and on 4 December 2009). The implementation of all measures was finalised in 2009 and the Managing Authority focused on mainstreaming the results into 2007-2013 programmes and on preparing the Final Report (all closure documents should be sent to the Commission by the end of September 2010).

4. GERMANY

2000-2006 programming period

For a total of 14 out of 22 programmes, and for three URBAN programmes, the final date for eligibility of expenditure of Structural Funds interventions, normally set at 31 December 2008, was extended at Germany's request to 30 June 2009 by way of a Commission decision of February 2009. In addition, for the three Federal ESF programmes the final date for the eligibility of expenditure was extended to 30 April 2009. This extension gave the regions concerned the possibility of funding projects for an additional six months, which was intended to mitigate possible impacts of the unprecedented economic and financial crisis on programme execution. The regions appreciated this option offered by the Commission as part of the 'Recovery Package' of December 2008, and they either funded additional projects during the period or replaced certain projects by others, to optimise programme expenditure with a view to closure in 2010.

As a result of the exercise, the Commission expects a positive effect on the overall quality of programme execution, in physical and financial terms, as measured by key indicators such as jobs created and investment volume co-financed. Apart from issues concerning programme execution, the monitoring committee meetings in 2009 often concerned audits and questions about the programme closure due in 2010. As for financial execution, the overall majority of German programmes are 'on schedule'. This means that 95% of their total ERDF contributions, that is the maximum amount of payment which can be claimed prior to closure, have been paid by the Commission, whereas three programmes have so far failed to generate sufficient expenditure. For these programmes, however, the expenditure required for receiving the full ERDF contribution can still be declared at closure. So several regions plan to make use of the so-called 'flexibility' offered for each priority. This means that now up to 10.0% (previously 2.0%) additional expenditure can be declared for a priority without increasing the total ERDF contribution at programme level. This option was also part of the 'Recovery Package' mentioned above. For the ESF contributions, 94.9% have already been paid out.

In December 2009, the Commission and the German authorities organised a seminar to discuss outstanding questions related to closure. In July 2009, Berlin was the first German programme to send the Commission the closure documents for its ERDF part of the Objective 1 programme.

4.1. Objective 1

Overall, financial absorption in German Objective 1 regions was very satisfactory. For all but one programme, total payments attained the 95.0% payment limit for total ERDF and ESF commitments for the 2000-2006 programming period according to Article 32(4) of Regulation No 1260/1999. For various reasons the ERDF Objective 1 programme for Berlin did not fully meet the 95.0% payment limit for the ERDF, though the money is not necessarily lost since the 'n+2' rule does not apply for this last year of implementation and remaining expenditure can still be declared with closure. The Commission approved the last four major projects under the Objective 1

programme for Sachsen-Anhalt with an ERDF contribution totalling EUR 27.8 million.

A number of programmes made use of the last possibility to adapt the programme complement. These adaptations were generally made in order to optimise financial absorption, by shifting funds between or within measures, to avoid financial losses at programme closure.

The overall physical and financial implementation in the German Objective 1 regions was good and, in general, the core targets as set in the programmes can be expected to have been globally attained.

The payments of the ESF share of the Objective 1 programmes reached the 95.0% payment limit (including advance payments). A final absorption rate of about 98.0% is to be expected.

Since the beginning of the period, more than 2.7 million people have participated in ESF measures in Objective 1 regions. More than 40.0% were young people (17-24 years) and around 10.0% were start-ups. Within the different priorities around 40.0% were spent for 'Active and preventive Labour Market Policy', 21.0% for 'Society without Exclusion', 8.0% for 'Vocational Training, Systems and Infrastructure', 20.0% for 'Adaptability and Entrepreneurship', 10.0% for 'Equal Opportunities' and around 1.0% for 'Local Social Capital'.

Six German regions received funding from EAGGF-Guidance through Objective 1 programmes. All regional operational programmes reached the payment limit of 95.0% of the total Community contribution for the period 2000-2006, amounting to total payments of EUR 3 246 million. Therefore no payments were made in 2009.

The FIFG Programme for Germany under Objective 1 did not require any decommitment. By the end of 2009, commitments amounted to EUR 91.5 million and payments had reached EUR 86.9 million, representing a payment rate of 95.0%.

4.2. Objective 2

At the end of 2009, financial absorption of ERDF assistance in German Objective 2 regions was satisfactory overall and totalled more than 94.0%, marginally less than in Objective 1 regions. Almost all regions met the target of 95.0%, but three programmes (Baden-Württemberg, Hamburg and Saarland) had not been able to absorb 95.0% of total commitments by the end of 2009. These are among the smallest programmes in Germany, so their impact on the overall financial performance in Objective 2 is however low.

For most of the programmes a few adaptations of the programme complements were made, mostly in order to optimise financial execution with a view to closure, or to update certain information contained in the documents. In the monitoring committee meetings, the main focus was therefore on questions regarding audits and closure. By the way, Baden-Württemberg is the only Objective 2 region which did not apply for an extension of the final date for eligibility of expenditure.

Overall, the outlook for programme implementation is positive since no fundamental problems have been noticed in 2009 and the regions will generally meet the targets set in the programmes.

For the ESF both financial absorption and programme implementation were satisfactory as well, with the exception of one Objective 2 programme.

4.3. Objective 3

The Objective 3 programme is the largest in Germany, covering ESF support for the West German Länder and Berlin. It is partly managed at Federal level (Bund) and partly by the Länder. With the implementation of Labour Market reforms in Germany, an increasing share of the programme was shifted to the Länder.

Unlike most German programmes, the Federal Objective 3 programme did not apply for eligibility of expenditure to be extended until 30 June 2009, as an extension until 30 April 2009 was already agreed upon in 2008. A modification of the programme complement was also made so that the programme could be fine-tuned before closure. All projects were closed by the end of 2008. No payments were made for this programme because the 95.0% payment limit was already reached.

One meeting of the monitoring committee dealing with the preparation of closure was organised. The deadline to submit the closure documents is 31 July 2010.

4.4. Fisheries outside Objective 1

The FIFG Programme for Germany outside Objective 1 did not require any decommitment. By the end of 2009, commitments amounted to EUR 62.9 million and payments had reached EUR 48.9 million, representing a payment rate of 77.6%.

4.5. Community Initiatives

4.5.1. Equal

The development partnerships' activities already came to an end in 2008. In 2009, the focus was on verifying expenditure declarations and preparing for closure. The final closure documents must be submitted by 31 July 2010. The total consumption rate is expected to be around 94.1% at project level, excluding technical assistance, and 90.8% including technical assistance.

4.5.2. Leader

The overall consumption in all 14 German Leader+ programmes (13 regional programmes and one national network programme) reached the maximum level of 95.0%. Two interim payments amounting to EUR 1.3 million were made for Rhineland-Palatinate and North-Rhine Westphalia at the beginning of 2009. By the end of 2009, the Commission had paid EUR 242.1 million in relation to Leader+ (an absorption rate of approximately 95.0% of the total allocation of EUR 255.9 million).

The first closure documents were received in the fourth quarter of 2009. Final payments will be made for each programme as part of the closure scheduled in 2010.

4.5.3. Urban

There are twelve URBAN II programmes in Germany with a total ERDF contribution of EUR 149.6 million (Berlin, Bremerhaven, Dessau, Dortmund, Gera, Kassel, Kiel, Leipzig, Luckenwalde, Mannheim/Ludwigshafen, Neubrandenburg and Saarbrücken). The six programmes in the new Länder receive about EUR 15 million each. The six programmes in the Western part of Germany each receive an ERDF contribution of about EUR 10 million. The total eligible cost of the twelve programmes is EUR 276.8 million. For nine programmes, the managing authority is at the level of the 'Bundesland' in which they are located. In the case of three cities, the managing authority has been transferred from the Land to the city during the programming period.

All German and Austrian URBAN II cities met regularly as part of the German/Austrian URBAN II Network. In 2009, two Network meetings took place in Leipzig and in Duisburg. The local and regional authorities, the coordinating Federal Ministry of Economy and the Commission used these occasions to meet and discuss programme management issues.

The implementation of the German URBAN II programmes was very satisfactory, both in terms of implementation and of management. The main focus was on improving the economic performance of distressed urban areas. Taking an applied integrated approach towards sustainable urban development, the economic measures taken were successfully combined with social, environmental and cultural activities. In addition, new forms of governance and the active involvement of citizens in the implementation of the programmes helped to meet the sometimes ambitious objectives of the programmes. For eleven out of twelve programmes sufficient expenditure was declared, allowing them to receive 95.0% of the full ERDF contribution by the end of 2009, the only exception being Kassel, which just missed this target. The closure documents will be assessed by the Commission in 2010.

4.6. Closure of the 1994-1999 programming period

ERDF

For the programming period 1994-1999, the Commission closed the remaining nine German programmes which were still open at the end of 2008. The financial follow-up for these closure procedures, either a recovery or a payment, was issued in all these cases. With closure the Commission recovered all outstanding amounts identified as unduly paid expenditure. The Commission's Article 24 decision concerning the three Saxony Objective 1 programmes was contested by the German authorities before the Court of First Instance. The outcome of this appeal procedure is pending.

ESF

Five more mainstream operational programmes and two more Community Initiative programmes were closed in 2009. Out of the original 48 mainstream operational programmes for the 1994-1999 period, 33 are fully closed now. Thirteen community initiative programmes are not yet fully closed. The commitments were reduced by EUR 19.9 million (EUR 3.3 million by payments, EUR 13.6 million by

decommitments) and the remaining RAL for the mainstream programmes is now EUR 28.7 million and EUR 1.7 million for the Community Initiative programmes. Six Article 24 procedures were initiated in the framework of the closure of the period 1994-1999 and all of the proposals were accepted by the authorities. Therefore no Commission decision was necessary. For one programme the authorities accepted the closure after a further payment. The Commission has not yet received an answer from the authorities for the closure proposals of four programmes. Furthermore, several programmes have a high number of 'irregularities' (open cases) declared. This considerably increases the RAL as the total amount for these cases added up to EUR 17.9 million at the end of 2009. For many cases, the German authorities declared the amounts unrecoverable and requested the participation of the EAGGF.

EAGGF

The last German programmes for the programming period 1994-1999 were closed in 2006.

5. DENMARK

2000-2006 programming period

5.1. Objective 2

For the programming period 2000-2006, there was one Objective 2 Programme for Denmark.

The funding for the programme initially totalled EUR 617 million, of which EUR 192.9 million was from the Structural Funds (EUR 29 million was for phasing-out regions), EUR 217 million from the national public sector (an increase of EUR 9 million compared to the initial allocation) and EUR 194 million from the private sector (a decrease of EUR 30 million).

The programme aimed to create the conditions for self-sustained growth in the regions of Denmark facing structural problems. It combined actions under the ERDF (71 %) and the ESF (29 %).

The eligible areas consisted of five geographical sub-regions: Bornholm (Objective 2), Lolland, Falster and Møn (Objective 2), Nordjylland (Objective 2 and phasing-out), parts of the counties of Viborg, Århus, Ringkøbing and Sønderjylland (Objective 2 and phasing-out) and Sydfyn and islands not covered by the above regions (Objective 2).

There were no meetings in the Programme (PMC) in 2009.

Work in 2009 was dominated by the closure of the 2000-2006 programme.

The financial table was corrected with regard to the 'n+2' automatic decommitment for the ESF 2007 and to reflect changes in the programme complement.

ERDF

By the end of 2009, the Commission had paid out EUR 133.5 million, equalling an absorption rate of approximately 94.2 % for the ERDF.

ESF

The final spending for the programming period 2000-2006 was EUR 108.4 million in total cost, financed by EUR 42.8 million in ESF (total paid in 2009 included). The ESF spending equalled an absorption rate of approximately 83.4 %. In the programming period, in total, the ESF supported 828 projects under which 22738 persons (46.4 % of them women) participated in competence development.

The ESF part of the programme helped to create new education and training courses and bolstered cooperation between education institutions in the regions.

Furthermore, the ESF projects helped to make company training planning more systematic and to develop new courses and new ways of cooperation between education institutions and enterprises.

5.2. Objective 3

For the programming period 2000-2006, there is one Objective 3 programme for Denmark. Funding initially totalled EUR 757.9 million, with EUR 378.9 million from the ESF. After allocation of the performance reserve, the Structural Fund contribution amounted to EUR 394.8 million, plus EUR 294.3 million from the national public sector (an increase of EUR 9.5 million compared to the initial allocation) and EUR 100.9 million from the private sector (an increase of EUR 6.7 million). EUR 14.9 million was decommitted in 2007, thereby decreasing the Structural Fund contribution to EUR 379.9 million.

The programme supports active labour market measures, the labour market integration of vulnerable unemployed persons, the development of employee competencies and entrepreneurship.

The reporting for 2008 was included in the final implementation report for the programme. The final spending for the programming period 2000-2006 (with continuation to 2008) amounted to EUR 826.2 million in total cost, financed by EUR 351.7 million from ESF, EUR 321 million in public and EUR 153.4 million in private contributions. The ESF spending equalled an absorption rate of approximately 92.6%.

The ESF Objective 3 programme supported 4111 projects with 154889 participants, 48.2% of them women. The priorities absorbing the largest shares of funding were support for competence development and support for entrepreneurship.

5.3. Fisheries outside Objective 1

The total initial FIFG allocation, including the reserve, to the country-wide Danish fisheries programme was EUR 213.3 million. The programme had a rather low level of implementation. There were decommitments in 2004, 2005 and 2007 in application of the 'n+2' rule. In total, the programme has so far been reduced by EUR 30.7 million. Out of EUR 182.6 million remaining, the financial execution has reached 90.4% (EUR 165.1). The main measures in the programme were scrapping of vessels, processing and marketing, collective investments and innovative measures.

5.4. Community Initiatives

5.4.1. Equal

The Danish EQUAL programme supported 89 projects in total, with 11 088 participants (61.8% of them women). The final spending for the programming period 2000-2006 (with continuation to 2008) amounted to EUR 59.7 million in total cost, financed by EUR 28.7 million in public, EUR 5.4 million in private contribution and EUR 24.6 million from ESF, which means an absorption rate of 80.9%.

The two most active networks were Integration of Immigrants and Refugees and Adaptability.

5.4.2. *Leader*

Denmark implements the Leader+ initiative through a single national programme, with a planned budget for the period 2000-2006 of EUR 34.6 million (EU contribution of EUR 17.3 million).

Cumulative payments in 2009 amounted to EUR 15.3 million, accounting for 88.2% of the total budget of the programme.

5.4.3. *Urban*

The Århus URBAN II programme is the only one in Denmark. The ERDF will contribute a total of EUR 5.4 million to this programme, for which the total eligible costs amount to EUR 12.1 million.

The managing authority for the programme is the Danish Enterprise and Construction Authority. There were no meetings of the monitoring committee in 2009.

The URBAN programme successfully contributes to all three dimensions of the Lisbon Strategy. On the economic side, it has helped to initiate and stimulate entrepreneurial culture, education and IT development. For the social dimension, the programme contributes to employment efforts, equality, social protection through citizen involvement, empowerment and crime prevention. Its environmental contribution is exemplified by the project — Hasle Bakkelandskab'.

One payment was made in 2009 and in total the Commission has paid EUR 5.1 million of the EUR 5.4 million committed. A final payment will be made as part of the closure scheduled to take place in 2010.

5.5. Closure of the period 1994-1999

All programmes were closed before the end of 2004.

6. GREECE

2000-2006 programming period

6.1. Objective 1

In the 2000–2006 period, the thirteen regions of Greece were all under Objective 1.

Four of Greece's thirteen regional operational programmes as well as six ERDF co-funded sectoral national programmes and three ESF co-funded sectoral operational programmes continued to be implemented throughout 2009, as Commission decision C (2008) 3102 of 10 June 2008 had granted them a year-long extension of the final date of eligibility due to the disastrous wildfires in the summer of 2007. Programming complements for some of these programmes were updated in the course of 2009.

The rest of Greece's operational programmes continued to be implemented until 30 June 2009, as they had requested and received this six months' extension of the final date of eligibility. The extension, granted by Commission decision C (2009) 1131 of 18 February 2009 to all Member States in order to mitigate the adverse effects of the economic crisis on cohesion policy, proved useful to Greek managing authorities and final beneficiaries in completing the implementation of available structural aid allocations.

In terms of financial management of the programmes, payment requests were processed on time and according to regulatory deadlines for Greece in 2009. In total, 59 payment claims were processed in 2009, of which 28 claims concerned payments amounting to EUR 698.4 million. The remaining claims related to clearing of pre-financing and/or withdrawal of projects without any financial transaction.

As far as the ESF is concerned, the amount paid in 2009 was EUR 86.2 million.

In addition, in 2009, financial corrections totalling EUR 15.6 million were applied to the Greek operational programmes, in conformity with the Commission Decision C(2005)1731 by which part of the Community assistance (ERDF) for Greece was cancelled.

All monitoring committees for Greece's 20 ERDF and three ESF programmes took place in March and April 2009. Owing to the extensive riots in Athens in December 2008, the annual review meetings for the 'Promotion of Employment and Vocational training' OP and the 'Health and Welfare' OP, initially planned for December 2008, were held in March 2009. The annual review meetings for the three ESF operational programmes planned for end November 2009 were re-scheduled for February 2010 as a result of the Greek parliamentary elections of 4 October 2009.

Annual implementation reports for the ten ERDF-co-funded operational programmes whose eligibility was extended to 31 December 2009 were also assessed by the Commission in 2009.

EAGGF

The national mono-fund EAGGF Guidance Section programme for Greece was approved by the Commission on 6 April 2001. The Community contribution to this programme was EUR 1233 million for a total cost of EUR 3010 million. On 24 November 2004, the Commission approved the decision for the mid-term revision of this programme, which included an additional amount of EUR 0.25 million coming from the programming and performance reserves. An additional modification of the programme took place on 7 December 2006, without however having any impact on total EU co-funding.

The 13 regional multi-fund programmes approved during the first half of 2001 and last amended on 7 December 2006 represent a total EAGGF contribution of EUR 1069 million. All programming complements were adopted by the monitoring committees by written procedure.

Due to the extensive fires that took place in Greece in the summer of 2007 which affected — amongst other things — rural infrastructures, forestry and private investments in rural areas, Greece submitted to the Commission in autumn 2007 a request to extend to 31 December 2009 the date of eligibility of the national mono-fund EAGGF Guidance programme, as well as of the four multi-fund regional operational programmes for the affected areas of Attica, Continental Greece, Peloponnese and Western Greece mentioned above. The extension of the final date of eligibility of expenditure until 30 June 2009 was requested in December 2008 for the remaining nine regional multi-fund operational programmes, due to the impact of the 2008 financial crisis.

In 2009 payments reached EUR 77 million. Cumulative payments from the EAGGF Guidance Section since the start of the 2000-2006 programming period (EUR 2422 million) account for 95.0% of the planned budget.

Fisheries

Implementation of the FIFG Objective 1 'Fisheries' Operational Programme for Greece continued in 2009. Payments have been regularly submitted.

Generally speaking, the pace of implementation, as in previous years, remained slow. According to the monitoring data as at the end of 2009 provided by the Greek authorities, the financial implementation of the operational programme had reached at national level 100.0% in terms of commitments on total eligible expenditure and 99.0% in terms of payments on total eligible expenditure of the operational programme. Payments from the Commission to the Member State reached 95.0% of the FIFG contribution planned for this operational programme.

6.2. Community Initiatives

6.2.1. Equal

The Greek EQUAL programme went ahead without difficulties.

104 Development Partnerships were funded under the EQUAL Community Initiative, of which 40 were implemented in the first round and 64 in the second

round. The EQUAL closure conference and the last Annual Review Meeting were held in Athens in December 2008.

At the end of 2009 the rate of financial execution of the ESF was 95.0% of the total budget (EUR 100.6 million). The extension of the eligibility period to 30 June 2009 allowed full absorption of the ESF allocation while easing the closure process.

6.2.2. Leader

There is only one Leader+ programme for Greece, approved on 19 November 2001 with a total cost, following the 2004 indexation exercise, of EUR 368.7 million. Of this, EUR 186.1 million comes from the EAGGF Guidance Section. The programme was last amended in November 2006. There was also a request to extend the final date of eligibility for Leader+ after the extensive fires affecting Greece in the summer of 2007. For 2009, the payments amount to EUR 4.3 million. Cumulative EAGGF payments from the start of the 2000-2006 programming period account for 95.0% of the total EAGGF contribution to the programme.

6.2.3. Urban

As for the URBAN initiative, the programming complements of two (Perama, Iraklio) out of Greece's three URBAN programmes were updated in 2009 to reflect the decommitment of a certain amount by Commission decisions C(2008)8174 and C(2008)6928. All three programmes obtained an extension of six months and continued to be implemented until 30 June 2009.

6.3. Closure of the period 1994-1999

All programmes were closed before the end of 2008.

7. SPAIN

2000-2006 programming period

7.1. Objective 1

The average financial execution for Objective 1 remained positive. The current absorption rate, compared with the amount programmed for 2000-2006, is 93.8% for ERDF, including the advance payments. The ERDF amount executed has already reached EUR 23769 million out of the EUR 25351 million committed for this Objective in Spain for the period.

The ESF amount executed (including advance payments) reached EUR 8453 million of the EUR 9080 million (93.1%) committed by the ESF for this objective in Spain for the period 2000-2006.

As far as major projects are concerned, a total of 100 decisions confirming the Community participation rate had already been approved by the end 2006.

Concerning decommitment rules, no 'n+2' rule was in place at the end of 2009 as any decommitment will take place at closure. One automatic decommitment of funds took place in 2009 because certified expenditure did not meet the target before 31 December 2008. The operational programme concerned was the Operational Programme Research, Development and Innovation (EUR 7.4 million). As for the ESF, there was automatic decommitment under the 'n+2' rule for the 2005 annual commitment of the OP I+D, for a total amount of EUR 15.1 million.

Following the findings of Commission audits, a vast control operation has been launched for many intermediary bodies (IB),. As a result there was decertification of large amounts from several IB, and a 'hold' imposed by the certifying authority, to avoid certifying expenses from IB which did not comply 100.0% with the regulatory requirements. Generally, this was also the reason why the overall target of making payments for EUR 2618 million was impossible to meet: it was limited to EUR 1908 million (including Objective 1, Objective 2 and Urban for the period 2000-2006), or 72.6% of the revised target.

The situation regarding suspended payments for the ESF OP improved considerably in 2008. At the beginning of the year, EUR 280 million was blocked (fourteen operational programmes), whereas at the end of the year, payments for twelve operational programmes remained blocked, amounting to EUR 172 million.

In 2009 there were no monitoring committees or annual meetings concerning 2008.

EAGGF

At the end of 2009, all twelve programmes reached the 95.0% payment limit (according to Article 32(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999, payments on account and interim payments by the Commission are limited to 95.0% of the programmed amount). The closure documents (final report, statement of expenditure and final

payment application, winding-up declaration) are to be sent by the Member State on 30 September 2010 at the latest.

No automatic decommitment procedures were initiated as the 'n+2' threshold will be calculated at programme closure.

Several programmes are affected by irregularities reported by the Member State to OLAF (in application of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1681/94). In the run-up to closure of the programmes, it was agreed after a first arbitration to propose to OLAF the closure of 88 cases (Objective 1 and LEADER+).

In December, a financial correction of EUR 6.9 million was decided for the Castilla y León programme (2000ES161PO007), as a result of a Commission audit mission. The recovery procedure was initiated in 2010.

Fisheries inside Objective 1 regions

The total FIFG allocation to the fisheries programme is EUR 1571 million. After extension to 30 June 2009 of the deadline for eligibility of expenditure, the amount executed on the ground by this date reached EUR 1580 million (absorption rate of 100.6%). The programme had already reached the maximum reimbursement level of 95.0% in 2008, so no payments have been executed since then.

In view of the large number of operations that need to be cross-checked for closure (around 25872 individual operations), closure preparations intensified in early 2009. Closure work during this year mainly focused on those measures where reporting obligations and eligibility are at stake (joint ventures, artificial reefs, pilot projects). An audit was conducted in Spain in 2009 which revealed a serious deficiency in absence of an audit trail for one measure (approximately EUR 86 million).

7.2. Objective 2

The average financial execution for Objective 2 is positive as well. For the ERDF, the current absorption rate, compared with the amount programmed for 2000-2006, is 88.4% (including the advance payment) and the amount executed has already reached EUR 2256 million out of the EUR 2554 million committed for this Objective in Spain for the period. For the ESF, the financial absorption rate is 86.4% corresponding to EUR 267.9 million out of a total amount of EUR 310.3 million committed for the ESF in Spain under this objective for the period 2000-2006.

7.3. Objective 3

The financial absorption rate for the ESF reached 94.5%, which amounts to EUR 2182 million out of a total amount programmed for 2000-2006 for this objective in Spain of EUR 2308 million.

7.4. Fisheries outside Objective 1

The total FIFG allocation to the fisheries programme is EUR 216.6 million. After extension to 30 June 2009 of the deadline for eligibility of expenditure, the amount executed by this date reached EUR 203.1 million (absorption rate of 93.7%). With

the payment processed in 2009 amounting to EUR 2.24 million, the programme reached the maximum reimbursement level of 95.0%.

The preparations for closure of this programme were already under way in 2009. Closure work during this year focused mainly on those measures where reporting obligations and eligibility are at stake (joint ventures, artificial reefs, pilot projects).

Morocco Specific Action (fisheries)

For the Morocco specific action — the EU aid package to compensate vessel owners and crews whose activities were dependant until 1999 on the fishing agreement with Morocco (R[EC] 2561/2001) — the Community granted EUR 186.3 million to Spain. The total Community aid spent amounted to EUR 163.7 million (achievement rate of 87.8%). Although the specific Morocco action ended in 2004, closure was still in progress in 2009 and work during this year focused on compiling some final clarifications from the Spanish authorities so that the Commission could finalise the closure proposal.

7.5. Community Initiatives

7.5.1. Equal

The EQUAL amount executed reached EUR 468 million of the EUR 511 million (91.5%) committed under this initiative in Spain for the period 2000-2006.

7.5.2. Leader

At the end of 2009, the absorption rate amounted to 92.5% of the total amount programmed for 2000-2006. Ten out of eighteen programmes reached the 95.0% payment limit, while the average absorption rate of the eight others was 90.0%. As of spring 2010, closure documents have been received for twelve programmes that had 31 December 2008 as their final date of eligibility of expenses. The documents for the other programmes (with 30 June 2009 as final date of eligibility) are to be sent by the Member State on 30 September 2010 at the latest.

No automatic decommitment procedures were initiated, as the 'n+2' threshold will be calculated at programme closure.

Several programmes are affected by irregularities reported by the Member State to OLAF (in application of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1681/94). In the run-up to closure of the programmes, it was agreed after a first arbitration to propose to OLAF the closure of 88 cases (Objective 1 and LEADER+).

In December 2009, a financial correction of EUR 0.6 million was decided for the Aragón programme (2000ES060PC003), as a result of a Commission audit mission. The recovery procedure will be initiated in 2010.

7.5.3. Urban

There are 10 Community Initiative Programmes in Spain with an EU contribution of EUR 114.2 million, which represents 15% of the total URBAN II budget for the period 2000-2006.

The Spanish URBAN II CI programmes are being implemented steadily according to the original programming — the absorption rate at the end of 2009 was 87.9%.

The managing authority for the programmes is the Ministry of Finance. Management and implementation has been delegated to the local authorities.

No 'n+2' rule was in place at the end of 2009, as any decommitment will take place at closure. One automatic decommitment of funds took place in 2009 because certified expenditure did not meet the target before 31 December 2008. The operational programme concerned was the Urban Programme for Orense (EUR 0.1 million).

Overall comments for the 2000-2006 period

The focus on a single area has produced a very targeted approach. The strong local partnership and presence of several agencies in the decision-making procedure has ensured the smooth running and sustainability of URBAN projects.

Project monitoring is being carried out effectively.

7.6. Closure of the 1994-1999 programming period

At the end of 2009, the RAL was reduced to zero as the SPD 5b País Vasco (RAL: EUR 0.1 million) was closed.

As for the ESF, the remaining outstanding commitments of EUR 5.1 million were awaiting a ruling by the Spanish courts. This concerns the three programmes of INEM Objective 3, Catalonia Objective 2 and Catalonia Objective 3, which were suspended by decisions under Article 24 of Regulation (EC) No 4253/88.

The last final payments or recoveries executed for closure of the programmes under the EAGGF-Guidance Fund were made in 2007. Nine programmes were awaiting a Commission decision on financial corrections before executing the final decommitment. In 2009 a decision was taken on five of these programmes. The corresponding decommitments have been executed. A decision dealing with the four remaining programmes was taken in February 2010.

Following the arbitration exercise on cases reported by the Member State to OLAF (in application of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1681/94), it was possible to propose to OLAF the closure of the majority of the cases. Only a small number of cases are still awaiting supplementary information to be delivered by the Member State.

8. ESTONIA

2000-2006 programming period

8.1. Objective 1

Estonia is implementing a Single Programming Document with an ERDF participation of EUR 232.8 million and ESF participation of EUR 69.3 million out of EUR 371.4 million in total. Payments from the Commission already reached the 95.0% payment limit in 2008. The eligibility end date of the programme was extended to 30 June 2009 in response to the crisis.

The SPD aimed for 'fast socially and regionally balanced sustainable economic development' mainly by shifting into higher value-added production. The SPD strategy is based on four priorities (excluding technical assistance): (i) Human Resource Development, (ii) Enterprise Competitiveness, (iii) Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development and (iv) Infrastructure and Local Development.

By the end of eligibility period, 99.2% of SPD funds had been allocated to projects and paid out to the beneficiaries. For ERDF, payments to beneficiaries were reported at 99.7%, for ESF 99.5%, EAGGF 89.8% and FIFG 88.9%.

The total FIFG allocation for Estonia amounts to EUR 12.5 million. The 95.0% payment limit for Commission reimbursement was reached in April 2008. As it is not possible to continue any further reimbursement before the programme is closed, there were no payments by the Commission in 2009. The most important measures in the programme include scrapping of fishing vessels, investments in aquaculture and fishing ports, and socio-economic measures for fishermen.

The last EAGGF interim payment of up to 95.0% was made in March 2008.

According to the monitoring data, the progress made so far in implementing the SPD has been good. The target levels for the main indicators have largely been attained, including the impact indicators at the priority level.

Although the 2004-2006 Objective 1 programme contributed to the high growth rate and declining unemployment rate in Estonia, the economic situation deteriorated in 2009 due to the previous overheating of the national economy and the global financial crisis. GDP declined by 14.1% in 2009 and unemployment reached 15.5% in the fourth quarter.

Nevertheless, the cohesion policy has facilitated the transfer to a more knowledge-intensive economy and has provided the necessary infrastructure for the economy. With the support of the funds, 8500 new jobs have been created, 21500 unemployed persons have received training, 20500 workers have received on-the-job training and 650 new enterprises have been created. In addition, 9000 modern student places have been created in vocational training centres. It is estimated that up to 240000 persons benefit from improved local government services in their neighbourhood.

In addition, the programmes have had an effect on softer issues such as: introduction of evaluation culture, audit quality (evidenced also through the signing of the contract of confidence between the Commission and the Estonian authorities), increased management and project planning capacity, increased levels of administrative capacity at sub-national level.

No monitoring committee meetings were held in 2009. The Estonian authorities are well advanced in the closure preparations. A pilot exercise was carried out to test the procedures and the results have been discussed with the Commission.

No major problems of implementation have been detected, with the exception of one OLAF case regarding breach of procurement rules in two projects.

8.2. Community Initiatives

8.2.1. Equal

The ESF contribution to the EQUAL programme amounted to EUR 4.1 million. The final date of eligibility for this programme was 31 December 2008. By the end of the eligibility period, 91.0% of the programme funds were allocated to projects and paid out to beneficiaries. An annual review meeting was organised in 2009. It was concluded that the projects met the objectives set for mainstreaming. EQUAL principles (e.g. partnership, gender mainstreaming, transnational cooperation and innovation) will continue to be implemented in the new programming period 2007-2013 in the framework of the Operational Programme for Human Resource Development. A monitoring committee meeting for the EQUAL programme was held in 2009 to approve the final report. The programme met its objective, which was to develop innovative ideas for lowering unequal treatment in the labour market.

8.2.2. Leader

Estonia implemented the Leader approach through the measure 'Local initiative based development projects — LEADER' within the framework of the Estonian National Development Plan 2004–2006 (Single Programming Document 2004-2006). The measure was implemented by two options: acquisition of skills (local development strategies were prepared) and integrated rural area development strategy (the strategies were implemented).

Local Action Groups (LAGs) applied for support under the Leader measure at the end of 2006. By the beginning of 2007, 24 LAGs were chosen. Most of the LAGs received support for preparing local development strategies, three LAGs started to implement their existing strategies. In 2007 LAGs covered 181 out of 194 local government units in rural areas, which is approximately 93.0% of the total rural area. In addition, around 1000 villages of over 4000 in total elected 'village elders'. About 700 local societies were involved in village development.

As a support structure for the LAGs a Leader Information Centre was established in June 2005 and run by a private consultancy, Rural Development Institute, together with a NGO. The main tasks of the centre involved: disseminating information about Leader, consultation and expertise for potential applicants, managing the Leader website for Estonia, organising training courses and seminars, and being responsible

for national and cross-border networking. The Leader information centre finished its operations in May 2007. Since then the Estonian National Rural Network Unit within the Rural Economy Research Centre in Jäneda has been representing existing Estonian LAGs. Its activities include: organising meetings and training courses; being responsible for networking; managing websites and databases; disseminating information and experience related to rural development. The implementation of Leader under the Single Programming Document ended in summer 2008 and continues under the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013.

9. FRANCE

2000-2006 programming period

9.1. Objective 1 and 2

The 2000-2006 Objective 1 in France covers the four French outermost regions[16] and, under transitory support, Corsica and three districts of the North/Pas de Calais region.

Objective 2 concerns 21 of the 22 regions of metropolitan France. There are four national programmes on technical assistance and IT management in addition to the 27 regional programmes.

Due to the sixth-month extension of the eligibility period, 2009 was an important year in terms of final reprogramming to optimise the allocation of funds and thus avoid losses at the end of the period, and also to prepare the operational programmes for closure. Several changes to the programme complements were made as a result. All regions worked with the objective of zero losses at closure, and the Commission organised technical meetings in several regions during 2009 with the objective of explaining closure rules.

The average programming (ERDF) was 102.0% for Objective 1 regions and increased up to 99.4% for Objective 2 regions at the end of December 2009.

The executed payments rate under Objective 1 was 94.6% from the ERDF and 95.0% from the EAGGF. The rate of 94.9% was paid from the ERDF under Objective 2.

At the end of 2009, 91.4% (EUR 866.5 million) of the ESF programming amounts had been paid out under Objective 1 and 93.6% (EUR 748.9 million) under Objective 2.

Within the five multi-funds programmes, the global execution of FIFG was already advanced at the end of 2008, with La Réunion, Guyane and Martinique having reached the reimbursement ceiling of 95%. With the extension to 30 June 2009 of the eligibility deadline for the five multi-funds programmes, execution continued at a satisfactory pace, Corsica reaching 93.6%. Yet there was no change on Guadeloupe, remaining at 88.2%.

The 2009 annual meeting between the Commission and the French managing authorities took place on 20 October 2009.

9.2. Objective 3

The 2000-2006 ESF Objective 3 programme covers metropolitan France and benefitted from a six-month extension of the eligibility period over the first half of

[16] Guadeloupe, Guyane, Martinique, Réunion.

2009. The extension was used to maximise expenditure under the 2000-2006 programme and to prepare the operational programme for closure.

At the end of 2009, 93.7% (EUR 4.6 million) of the programming amounts had been paid out by the Commission under Objective 3.

The 2009 annual meeting between the Commission and the French managing authority (Délégation Générale à l'Emploi et à la Formation Professionnelle) took place on 10 November 2009.

9.3. Fisheries outside Objective 1

The total FIFG allocation to the fisheries programme is EUR 243.8 million. The most important measures are operations by members of the trade, scrapping, fishing port facilities, processing and marketing. Implementation continued at a satisfactory pace, thanks to the extension of the deadline for eligibility of expenditure to 30 June 2009. At the end of 2009, budget execution had already reached the payment limit of 95.0% and EUR 215.2 million had been reimbursed.

9.4. Community Initiatives

9.4.1. Urban

The URBAN II programme in France consists of nine programmes being carried out in the following cities/group of cities: Bastia, Bordeaux/Cenon/Floirac, Clichy-sous-Bois/Montfermeuil, Grenoble, Grigny/Viry-Chatillon, Le Havre, Le Mantois, Les Mureaux/Val-de-Seine, Strasbourg. Four of the nine programmes (Clichy, Le Mantois, Grigny and Val-de-Seine) are located in the Ile de France region, with an ERDF contribution of EUR 51 million. In total, nine programmes received an amount of EUR 294.6 million, of which EUR 102.5 million was from the ERDF.

In the majority of cases, the mayor or the president of the inter-commune (four programmes) cooperation structure fulfils the role of the managing authority, while the regional prefect plays this role for three programmes. In two cases there is both a public corporation and a public interest grouping chaired either by the mayor or by the prefect. In each case, the paying authority is the 'Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations'.

At the end of 2009, the average URBAN initiatives programming (ERDF) was 99.8% and the average payment rate was 93.9%.

9.4.2. Equal

Following several decommitments since 2001, the total appropriation for EQUAL is now EUR 287.4 million. 94.9% of this budget had been paid out by the Commission at the end of 2009. The programming of the ESF part of the programme was 115.2% in June 2009.

9.4.3. Leader

The French National Programme on Community Initiative Leader+ was adopted on 7 August 2001 (C(2001)2094), taking the form of a global grant. The National Centre for Setting-up of Farming Structures (CNASEA) was designated as the managing authority.

The total Community contribution initially amounting to EUR 272.8 million was finally fixed at EUR 259.9 million by Commission Decision C(2007) 3542 of 17 July 2007.

The implementation of this programme is carried out by 140 Local Action Groups (LAGs), selected in 2002. Their action plans were set up in 2003, after signing bilateral conventions with CNASEA.

Global execution at the end of 2009 amounted to EUR 246.9 million, which represents 95.0% of the EAGGF Community contribution to the programme.

9.5. Closure of the 1994-1999 programming period

The only remaining French programme (Martinique) with ERDF assistance could not yet be closed because of an ongoing OLAF procedure. The amount of the RAL is EUR 0.03 million.

The only remaining French programme with EAGGF (Guidance) assistance could not yet be closed because of an ongoing judicial procedure.

10. ITALY

2000-2006 programming period

10.1. Objective 1

Full commitment of Structural Funds has been achieved. According to financial data, as at 31 December 2009, the average payment rate against the total allocation amounted to 88.1 % (all Structural Funds together).

The average ERDF payment rate totalled 89% Most ERDF programmes attained the 95% threshold, the only exceptions being the regional programmes for Campania (86.9%), Sicilia (82.1%) and Puglia (71.9%).

With respect to the 'n+2' rule, in 2009 the pending problem for Sardegna (2005) was clarified, making decommitment unnecessary.

Three Objective 1 Programmes were modified in the course of 2009 (Puglia, Basilicata and Calabria). In the case of Calabria and Puglia, the modifications arose from the need to alter the programme and the financial plan following a Commission decommitment decision. In the case of Basilicata, the major changes concerned the ESF. In addition to these programme amendments, most operational programmes took advantage of the opportunity provided by the extension of the eligibility date up to 30 June 2009 to submit several modifications of the Programming Complements primarily designed to maximise fund absorption before the end of the programming.

In 2009, a single annual meeting was held in Reggio Calabria in October for Objectives 1 and 2 and for both 2000-2006 and for ERDF operational programmes 2007-2013 programming periods. With respect to the 2000-2006 programming period, the agenda focused primarily on a preliminary overview and assessment of the results of the programming period, closure procedures (Final Implementation Reports, practical arrangements for the financial follow-up and the treatment of irregularities) and major audit findings.

In accordance with the normal schedule, monitoring committee meetings for all programmes took place once or twice during the year. In addition to the usual implementation issues, the meetings in 2009 focused on end-of-programming adjustments necessary to maximise absorption.

As regards the EAGGF Guidance Section, the payment rate reached 90.2%; for ESF the payment rate is 83.1 % while for FIFG payments the absorption rate was 86.4%.

In the EAGGF Guidance section, only one programme reached the 95.0% payment limit (Calabria). According to the payment data at the end of 2009, the best performing EAGGF programmes are the regional programmes of Calabria (95.0%), Molise (94.1%) and Campania (93.5%); in contrast, the poorest performing programme is Puglia (79.1%).

As far as the FIFG is concerned, at the end of 2009, financial implementation of the national fisheries programme reached 92.7% in terms of payments on total eligible

expenditure. At the regional level, the best performing programmes in terms of payments are Molise and Calabria (which reached the 95.0% payment limit) as well as Campania (92.9%). The programmes performing least well in financial terms were the regional programmes Sicilia (78.7%), Puglia (73.7%) and Sardegna (68.0%).

As for ESF, according to national data, the payment rate on 31 December 2009 was above 100% (100.5%) in Objective 1, with a similar average performance between national and regional programmes.

In terms of payments by the Commission, four national operational programmes (PON ATAS, PON Scuola, PON Sviluppo imprenditoriale locale, PON Ricerca) and the operational programme Basilicata attained the 95% threshold.

Problems of some relevance arose in some regional operational programmes, in particular Sicily, Puglia and Calabria, mainly linked to the high error rates detected during audits.

As regards the 'n+2' rule, during 2009 the following decommitments took place: EUR 2.4 million for POR Puglia (Decision C(2009) 2190 of 30.3.2009), EUR 4.1 million for POR Sardegna (Decision C(2009) 5232 of 1.7.2009), and EUR 0.7 million for POR Calabria (Decision C(2009) 415 of 23.1.2009). The FIFG decommitment for the PORs Puglia and Sardegna was due to insufficient expenditure by the end of the year. For POR Calabria, the decommitment was due to the late transmission (i.e. beyond the 31 December deadline) of the payment request.

10.2. Objective 2

According to the official data, as per 31 December 2009, the average payment rate on total eligible expenditure equalled 94.7%.

Financial execution was satisfactory and reached the 95.0% payment limit for all SPDs except one. The only exception was Abruzzo which, due to the earthquake which hit the Region on 6 April 2009, only reached 91.2% of total payments. Following the earthquake, by decision of 11 May 2009, Abruzzo obtained an extension of the final eligibility date up to 30 June 2010, beyond the extension to 30 June 2009 already requested by all Italian programmes (except the SPD for Valle d'Aosta) and adopted by the Commission on 18 February 2009.

In the course of 2009, four proposed amendments to the Single Programming Documents were submitted by Italian Objective 2 Regions (Lazio, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Abruzzo and Toscana). As indicated above, in the case of Abruzzo the modification concerned the extension of the eligibility date following the earthquake. In the other cases, the amendments were suggested for sound management reasons. In addition to these modifications, in the course of 2009, several Objective 2 Regions requested modifications of the programming complements, in many cases with the objective of maximising absorption before the closure of the programming period.

As indicated for Objective 1 above, in 2009, a single annual meeting was held in Reggio Calabria for Objectives 1 and 2 and for both 2000-2006 and 2007-2013

programming periods. For the 2000-2006 programming periods, the agenda focused on the same items for both objectives.

Monitoring committee meetings for all programmes took place once or twice during the year: while they all examined the usual issues linked to implementation, the main issue was the amendment of programmes (financial reprogramming) for sound management reasons (complete absorption of funds at the end of programming period). More emphasis was placed on the results of Structural Funds assistance.

10.3. Objective 3

According to the official monitoring data provided by the Italian Authorities, as at 31 December 2009 the average payment rate on total eligible expenditure was 99.2%.

Six OPs (Trento, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Liguria, Bolzano, Toscana and Umbria) showed rates of payments to beneficiaries of more than 100%.

In terms of payments by the Commission, only six operational programmes (Azioni di sistema, Valle d'Aosta, Abruzzo, Veneto, Piemonte and Lazio) have not yet reached the 95.0% payment limit.

All the operational programmes were granted an extension of the eligibility date of expenditure up to 30 June 2009, with the exception of the operational programme 'Trento', which did not ask for it, and the operational programme Abruzzo, which, following the earthquake which hit the Region, was granted an extension up to 30 June 2010

No other proposal for the amendment of the operational programme was submitted.

Some operational programmes requested modifications of the programming complements, in particular with the objective of maximising absorption before the closure of the programming period.

A single annual meeting was held in Rome in December 2009 for both 2000-2006 and 2007-2013 programming periods. For the 2000-2006 programming period, the meeting focused on the preparation for the closure.

Monitoring committee meetings for all programmes took place once or twice during the year, for most of the operational programmes jointly with the monitoring committees for the 2007-2013 programming period, focusing on the standard issues and the final period of implementation.

10.4. Fisheries outside Objective 1

According to the monitoring data provided by the Italian authorities on 31 December 2009, the financial implementation of the FIFG mono-fund Single Programming Document (SPD) had in practice reached 100% in terms of commitments of total eligible expenditure and 95.0% in terms of payments on total eligible expenditure, which is 100.0% of the amount that the Commission can reimburse before closure.

10.5. Community Initiatives

10.5.1. Equal

Payments in year 2009 equalled about EUR 13 million, bringing total payments to a total of about EUR 375.4 million (93.5% of the overall ESF contribution).

The initiative was granted an extension of the eligibility period.

10.5.2. Leader

There are 22 Leader+ programmes in Italy: 21 regional programmes and one national programme for the LEADER network, amounting to a Community contribution of EUR 289.1 million for the period 2000-2006.

According to financial execution on 31 December 2009, the payment rate amounted to 93.15% of the total eligible expenditure. Nine Leader+ programmes attained the 95% threshold (Bolzano, Campania, Emilia Romagna, Lombardia, Sardegna, Trento, Umbria, Veneto and Network). In contrast, the poorest performing programmes were Puglia (66.6%), Abruzzo (78.9%) and Liguria (79.9%).

For all programmes the final eligibility date was extended to 30 June 2009, with the exception of the programmes of Abruzzo (extended up to 31 December 2009 because of the earthquake in 2009) and Piemonte, Trento and Valle d'Aosta, which did not ask for any extension.

In 2009, seven programme complements were modified to maximise the implementation of the programmes before the end of the programming period. These are the Leader+ programmes of Basilicata, Campania, Lombardia, Piemonte, Sardegna, Umbria and Veneto.

10.5.3. Urban

There are ten Community Initiative Programmes in Italy (Carrara, Caserta, Crotone, Genova, Milano, Misterbianco, Mola di Bari, Pescara, Taranto, Torino) for an overall ERDF contribution of EUR 114.0 million.

As of 31 December 2009, the overall average financial execution equalled 93.1%. All but two programmes reached the 95.0% payment limit. The exceptions are Taranto Programme which only reached 81.8%, primarily due to administrative problems (the municipality of Taranto was declared insolvent in 2006), affecting the implementation of the programme, and Mola di Bari-Italy (90.2%).

All URBAN II Programmes requested an extension of the final eligibility date, except for the URBAN II Programme in Torino.

10.6. Closure of the 1994-1999 programming period

Out of the 106 programmes relating to the 1994-1999 programming periods, three are still not fully closed (Leader II Lazio, Leader II Puglia and GG FICEI) down from the seven still pending at the end of 2008. .The SDPs Lazio and Liguria were fully closed in 2009, the latter one with decommitment.

In 2009, new closure proposals were, on the other hand, sent for CIP Leader Puglia and CIP SMEs. For the latter, the letter was received by the national authorities in early 2010 and decommitment executed.

In the case of GG FICEI, a new closure letter proposal was sent to the national authorities in order to recover an unduly paid amount of EUR 0.1 million and decommit the unspent commitment amount.

As to CIP Energy Objective I, following Commission decision C(2009)10336 of 15 December 2009, a final decommitment decision for approximately EUR 0.5 million was taken in early 2010

As at 31 December 2009, the original RAL before closure, still approximately EUR 4 million at the end of 2008, was reduced to approximately EUR 2.1 million for three 1994-1999 programmes and one 1989-1993 programme (Leader I Italy), for which a certain amount was kept committed as it is linked to projects subject to judiciary proceedings.

All 59 ESF files were processed. Currently, the RAL (outstanding commitments) amounts to approximately EUR 40 million and is entirely due to legal and/or administrative disputes at national level, which also considerably delayed the winding-up process. It will be possible to reduce this RAL gradually as soon as the legal action is resolved.

As regards EAGGF programmes, all 1994-1999 programmes have been closed.

11. IRELAND

2000-2006 programming period

11.1. Objective 1

The ERDF provided a total of EUR 1 946 million to Objective 1 programmes in Ireland during the programming period. Implementation of the ERDF took place in the five Irish Objective 1 programmes: Economic & Social Infrastructure, Productive Sector (PSOP), Technical Assistance (TAOP), Border, Midland & Western (BMW) Region and Southern & Eastern (S&E) Region. There were also ESF-funded programmes: the ESF-funded childcare measures in the two regional programmes.

During the 2000-2006 programming period the ESF funded the Human Resources Development Operational Programme (EHRD) OP, The Border, Midland and Western Region (BMW) OP, the Southern and Eastern Region (S&E) OP, the PEACE programme and the EQUAL programme for a total of EUR 1 092 million.

The Structural Funds for 2000-2006 played an important role in fostering research, development and innovation and boosting the information society. In the period 2000-2006, the ERDF will have spent an estimated EUR 260 million on research, technical development and innovation and the information society. During the 2000-2006 period, Irish research and innovation capacity increased significantly, in particular in the S&E region, setting the basis for technology-based economy developments in the years to come.

Similarly strong impacts can be observed in the field of human resources, which has been a vital area of ESF assistance since 1989. In the years preceding 2000, investment helped to boost education and skills levels, with a strong focus on young people while at the same time enhancing the employment prospects of the unemployed. Funding in 2000-2006 put more emphasis on responding to shortages through targeted supply-side initiatives in education and training. A good example of this development is the emphasis on in-company training and support for a number of lifelong learning schemes.

A backdrop for these programme achievements has nevertheless been a serious contraction in the Irish economy precipitated by the collapse in the real estate market and the crisis in the banking sector. The economic downturn (which commenced in 2008) deepened during the course of 2009 and has necessitated a series of incremental budgetary steps seeking to improve the state of public finance. As part of the emergency recovery package, Ireland requested a six-month extension in eligibility date for all of the above programmes (except for the EHRD OP and the EQUAL programme) allowing the mopping-up of remaining funds to proceed and for Ireland to maximise its draw-down of Structural Funds.

As already reported in 2008, ERDF payments had already reached the payment limit of 95.0% for four of the programmes, i.e. PSOP, TA, BMW and S&E. Payments thus far represent 93.9% of commitments for ESIOP — no payments were recorded during 2009.

As already reported in 2008, ESF payments had already reached the payment limit of 95.0% for the Employment and Human Resources Development programme and for the ESF-funded childcare measure in the Border, Midland & Western (BMW) Region. ESF payments represent 90.7% of commitments for the Southern & Eastern (S&E) Region programme.

In terms of the individual programmes, the following comments can be made:

Border, Midlands and Western programme

The extension in eligibility has allowed fuller spend of FIFG commitment in the area of aquaculture. Other measures are fully invested including the tourism measure and child care infrastructure and institution-building combining ESF and ERDF. Electronic commerce targets have been met. As public building costs were higher than anticipated there is expected to be a lower out-turn for the 'public buildings improved' indicator. The Metropolitian Area Networks (MANs) funded under the programme have been completed, although the subsequent RCE 2007-2013 will fund a number of new MANs and network to peripheral areas.

Southern and Eastern programme

The programme has largely met its spending commitments although some risk of under-spend attaches to Tourism and Childcare measures and FIFG and EAGGF investment activity.

ESIOP programme

No payment claim was introduced during the year. The major underspend risk attaches to the renewable energy measure.

The PSOP programme

95% of payment have already been drawn down. Permission was granted in late 2006 to draw down on additional measures — these (i.e. Marine and Agricultural Research) have performed well. The education measure has been extended with positive results in terms of expenditure and performance (number of graduates recruited). Nevertheless the Irish authorities suggest that neither the FIFG nor BMW components will attain full draw-down.

PEACE II

The 'PEACE II' programme covers Northern Ireland and the border regions of Ireland. It builds on the experience of the special support programme 'PEACE I' (1995–1999) and exemplifies the practical support given by the EU to the peace process after the Belfast Agreement. Initially PEACE II covered the period 2000-2004 but in 2004 it was decided to provide additional funding and extend the programme to 2006, bringing it in line with the other Structural Funds programmes in the rest of the European Union.

For the PEACE II programme, the ERDF provided EUR 368 million, the ESF allocation is EUR 193 million. The total ERDF amount paid in 2008 was EUR 42 million. Payments under all Funds have reached their 95.0% payment limit.

EAGGF

The revised EAGGF-Guidance section amounts to EUR 153.6 million. Cumulative EAGGF (Guidance) payments to the end of 2009 amount to EUR 148.9 million or 95.0% of the amount planned for the programming period 2000-2006. (No payments were carried out during 2009 as the 95.0% payment limit was already reached in 2008).

EAGGF Guidance will not contribute to the two-year extension of the PEACE II operational programme, jointly managed with Northern Ireland. Therefore the EUR 12.6 million EU contribution to the programme was not increased. Up to the end of 2009, total expenditure for the PEACE II programme was EUR 12.3 million.

FIFG

Objective 1

The three Objective 1 programmes contain a total FIFG assistance of EUR 67.8 million. The Productive Sector OP with a total FIFG allocation of EUR 39.8 million reached the payment limit of 95.0% at the end of 2008. The same is the case for the Southern & Eastern OP with a FIFG allocation of EUR 10.1 million. Border, Midlands, Western OP availing of a FIFG allocation of EUR 17.8 million reached an execution level of 95.0% at the end of 2009.

PEACE II -Ireland

The total FIFG allocation to the Irish part of the programmes is EUR 2.7 million. No execution took place in 2009 as the 95.0% payment limit had already been reached before.

11.2. Community Initiatives

11.2.1. Equal

The Irish EQUAL programme proceeded without any major difficulties in 2009. There are 43 Development Partnerships funded under the EQUAL Community Initiative in Ireland, of which 21 Development Partnerships are Round 1 and 22 Development Partnerships are Round 2. In financial terms, at the end of 2009, the absorption rate of the ESF represented 95.0% of the total.

11.2.2. Leader

The Ireland Leader+ programme was implemented with 22 Local Action Groups involved. The total expenditure of the Ireland Leader+ programme was EUR 74 million. The EAGGF contribution for 2000-2006 was EUR 46 million.

At the end of 2009, expenditure amounted to EUR 43.5 million, 94.5% of the initial programme budget.

11.2.3. Urban

The Dublin-Ballyfermot URBAN II programme is the only URBAN II Programme in Ireland. It was approved in December 2001, and amended in 2004 as a result of indexation. The ERDF will contribute a total of EUR 5.4 million to this programme, whose total cost amounts to EUR 11.6 million. The final eligibility date of this programme was 31 December 2008. The absorption rate in terms of payments made by the Commission against the decided amount is 84.0%.

11.3. Closure of the 1994-1999 programming period

The RAL is zero for ERDF 94-99, ESF 94-99 and EAGGF 94-99 programmes. The C.I. PESCA programme was closed at the end of 2008.

12. LATVIA

2000-2006 programming period

12.1. Objective 1

Latvia is implementing a Single Programming Document (SPD) with an ERDF participation of EUR 382 million and an ESF allocation of EUR 127.3 million out of EUR 626 million in total. The Programme Complement was last modified by the Monitoring Committee in December 2008 and accepted by the Commission in 2009. Payments for the ERDF and ESF reached the 95.0% payment limit in 2008 so no further payments before closure were possible.

In 2009 the Commission adopted an amending decision to the SPD to extend the final eligibility date to 30 June 2009, although effective implementation for most of the SPD was concluded in 2008. The Latvian Authorities have been working on the preparation of closure documentation for the SPD to be submitted to the Commission before 30 September 2010.

The SPD is aiming for 'fast and regionally balanced sustainable economic development' mainly by shifting into higher value-added production. According to the monitoring data, the progress made so far in implementing the SPD has been good. The target levels for the main indicators have been attained to a great extent, including the impact indicators at the priority level.

The managing authority for the SPD is located in the Ministry of Finance. The paying authority is the treasury of Latvia and the audit body is a department in the Ministry of Finance. There is one monitoring committee. It includes participants from all state institutions involved and representatives of social and economic partners, planning regions and civil society.

The Latvian 2004-2006 Objective 1 programme partly contributed to the high growth rate and employment in Latvia until the end of 2007. On the negative side, the growth was accompanied by supply-side constraints leading to high price and wage growth and overheating. In the last quarter of 2008 the economy started to shrink drastically. In 2009, GDP declined by 18.0% while unemployment reached 17.1%.

The monitoring committees include participants from all state institutions involved and representatives of social and economic partners, planning regions and civil society. No major problems in the implementation of the SPD have been detected to date.

The total FIFG allocation for Latvia amounts to EUR 24.3 million. The 95.0% payment limit of Commission reimbursement was reached at the end of 2008. As no further reimbursement is possible before the programme is closed, there were no payments by the Commission in 2009.

The main measures in the programme were scrapping of fishing vessels, investment in aquaculture and processing, investment in fishing ports and socio-economic measures for fishermen.

12.2. Community Initiatives

12.2.1. Equal

EQUAL Latvia was a successful programme in terms of reaching the set targets and financial performance.

The actual implementation of the programme was concluded in 2007, except for the technical assistance which continued into 2008. No payments were executed in 2009 as 95% of the programme expenditure was paid in 2007.

The EQUAL Latvia closure package was submitted to the Commission on 11 June 2009. The Final Report and the Winding-up Certificate were deemed acceptable. The programme is expected to be closed shortly.

12.2.2. Leader

Leader+ type measures were included in the Objective 1 programme under Priority 4: Promotion of Development of Rural Areas and Fisheries. The EU contribution for 2004-2006 amounted to EUR 2.3 million. The start of Leader+ type measures was delayed due to administrative and legal difficulties.

In December 2006, seventeen Local Action Groups were selected and selection of projects finished in October 2007 with contracts covering 100% of the finances available. In total 433 contracts were concluded during two rounds of selection. Implementation of the projects commenced in May 2008 and continued until September 2008. The implementation of Leader under the Single Programming Document ended in summer 2008 and continues under the EU Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 (separate from cohesion policy).

13. LITHUANIA

2000-2006 programming period

13.1. Objective 1

General

The Lithuanian Objective 1 Programme (Single Programming Document of Lithuania for 2004-2006) covers the whole of Lithuania as an eligible area. The programme was adopted by Commission Decision C(2004)2120 of 18 June 2004 and is co-financed by the ERDF (EUR 583.9 million), the ESF (EUR 176.2 million), the EAGGF (EUR 122.9 million), and the FIFG (EUR 12.1 million). The national counterpart consists of EUR 309.5 million of public funding and EUR 2.3 million of private financing. Thus, the Structural Funds provide EUR 895 million out of a total budget of EUR 1 207 million. The managing authority of the programme is the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Lithuania.

The global objective of the programme is to strengthen the basis for long-term national economic competitiveness and to facilitate the transition to a knowledge-based economy. The programme consists of five priorities: socio-economic Infrastructure (EUR 347.1 million, ERDF), human resources development (EUR 163.8 million, ESF), productive sector and services (EUR 222.4 million, ERDF), rural and fisheries development (EUR 122.9 million, EAGGF and EUR 12.1 million, FIFG), and technical assistance (EUR 14.5 million, ERDF and EUR 12.4 million, ESF).

Monitoring and annual review

No programme monitoring committee meetings were held during 2009. The programme complement was adjusted through a written procedure finalised in June.

In 2009 no specific annual review meeting between the Commission and the Managing Authority was arranged for the Single Programming Document of Lithuania for 2004-2006. The work related to the closure of 2004-2006 Structural Funds assistance advanced during the year.

Information and publicity

Lithuania has continued to implement a variety of Structural Funds publicity and information activities. The public internet portal www.esparama.lt, maintained by the Lithuanian Ministry of Finance, has developed into a central tool for providing the stakeholders with timely information on programme implementation.

Payments and programme results

By the end of 2009, 95.0% (EUR 554.7 million) of the total ERDF allocation (EUR 583.9 million) and 95.0% (EUR 167.4 million) of the total ESF allocation (EUR 176.2 million) had been paid out to Lithuania by the Commission.

With regard to the FIFG measures, already by mid-2008 the Commission had paid 95.0% of the total FIFG allocations (EUR 12.1 million).

The absorption rate of 95.0% of the total EAGGF-Guidance allocation (including the advance) was already reached in 2008, and as a result there were no payments in 2009.

The SPD covers five priorities: development of social and economic infrastructure, human resource development, development of productive sector, rural and fisheries development, and technical assistance. The total amount of funding for projects implemented stands at EUR 1 700 million of which EUR 932 million is from the EU. Development of social and economic infrastructure accounted for almost 40.0% of the funding. Among EU-10 Member States Lithuania has one of the highest levels of spending on energy efficiency. The support has had positive impacts on sustainable development, education and health and has helped in reducing poverty levels.

13.2. Community Initiatives

13.2.1. Equal

The Lithuanian EQUAL programme proceeded without any difficulties. The main focus was on preparing for the closure of the programme. At the end of 2009, the rate of financial execution of the community funding for the programme was 95.0%. The managing authority presented the closure documents to the Commission on 30 March 2010.

13.2.2. Leader

Leader+ type measures are mainstreamed in the Objective 1 programme under Priority 4: Rural and Fisheries Development. In 2009, the implementation of all selected projects under Leader (106 in total) was completed.

14. LUXEMBOURG

2000-2006 programming period

At the end of 2008, all managing authorities, except those of the Leader+ programme, accepted the Commission proposal to extend the eligibility period by six months until June 2009.

14.1. Objective 2

2009 concentrated on optimising consumption of appropriations in an effort to avoid any decommitment at closure and used the six-month extension of the eligibility period.

Overall, 100 % of the programme budget was allocated through grant agreements.

The programme monitoring committee met once in 2009, at the initiative of the Ministry of Economy, the managing authority of the programme. The Commission played an active part in the work of the committee.

At this meeting of the monitoring committee, the Commission encouraged the managing authority to present claims for expenditure to maximise the programme balance.

The level of expenditure submitted for payment from the ERDF amounted to EUR 41.8 million, i.e. 95.0 % of the ERDF allocation at the end of 2009.

14.2. Objective 3

The Objective 3 programme involves a total ESF contribution of EUR 31.7 million. The absorption rate is 74 %.

Further to the decision to suspend interim payments following the audit mission in June-July 2007, the Luxembourg authorities committed themselves in the course of 2009 to applying 100 % Article 4 (Regulation (EC) No 438/2001) verifications to all expenses. The results of these verifications were analysed by the Commission and it was concluded that they comply with Article 4; all financial corrective measures related to Article 4 were taken into account. On 16 December 2010, a meeting took place between the Luxembourg Minister for Employment and the Director General of the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, who announced that the Commission was now in a position to withdraw the suspension and to re-launch the interim payments. An official letter to this effect was prepared in December 2009 and sent to the Luxembourg authorities in January 2010.

The annual meeting of the monitoring committee took place on 17 December 2009. The 2008 annual report approved by the monitoring committee was analysed. There were a number of reservations regarding the indicators but it was finally approved by the Commission.

14.3. Community Initiatives

14.3.1. Equal

At the end of 2009, the rate of execution amounted to 73.1 % (EUR 2.9 million).

As for Objective 3, further to the decision to suspend the interim payments following the audit mission in June-July 2007, the Luxembourg authorities committed themselves in the course of 2009 to applying 100% Article 4 (Regulation (EC) No 438/2001) verifications to all expenses. The results of these verifications were analysed by the Commission and it was concluded that they comply with Article 4; all financial corrective measures related to the Article 4 were taken into account. On 16 December 2010, a meeting took place between the Luxembourg Minister for Employment and the Director General of the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, who announced that the Commission was now in a position to withdraw the suspension and to re-launch the interim payments. An official letter to this effect was prepared in December 2009 and sent to the Luxembourg authorities in January 2010.

The monitoring committee met on 17 December 2009. The 2008 annual report approved by the monitoring committee was analysed and approved by the Commission.

14.3.2. Leader

The programme involves total public expenditure of EUR 8.4 million, of which EUR 2.1 million is from the EAGGF.

In Luxembourg, four LAGs were selected, covering 90000 inhabitants, with a fifth LAG financed by national funds.

Global execution at the end of 2008 amounted to EUR 1.9 million or 93.2% of the EAGGF allocation.

Implementation of the programme is finished. The final declaration of expenditure (including a final payment claim) was sent to the Commission in December 2008.

15. HUNGARY

2000-2006 programming period

15.1. Objective 1

The Hungarian Community Support Framework for 2004-2006 consists of five operational programmes covering the whole country, since all the seven Hungarian NUTS II level regions correspond to Objective 1 in the 2004-2006 period. The Structural Funds contribution to the CSF is EUR 1 996 million at current prices. Assistance from the Structural Funds breaks down as follows: ERDF 62.1%, ESF 22.0%; EAGGF Guidance Section 15.7%; FIFG 0.2%.

In terms of ERDF expenditure, the 2004-2006 Hungarian Community Support Framework achieved good results. The payment rate already reached 95% of the Community funding for all programmes (including 16.0% of advance payments) at the end of 2008. In terms of ESF expenditure, the payment rate amounted to 91.0% of the Community funding (including 16.0% of advance payments).

Preliminary results suggest that GDP growth was almost 1% point higher (or even more, depending on the evaluation method used) than without EU intervention. 19236 project applications were supported, more than 70000 jobs were created, and the CSF supported training for 107000 persons.

Data show that the EU Funds helped to promote territorial cohesion in Hungary. The average per capita support in the less developed regions of North-Hungary, North Great Plain, South Great Plain and South Transdanubia was significantly higher than in the other, more developed regions of Hungary with the exception of Central Hungary. (75.0% of finances from the Operational Programme for Regional Development were allocated to the less developed 4 regions.)

The Hungarian authorities requested an extension of the final date of eligibility for all operational programmes except for the Operational Programme for Regional Development. The time was used to minimise potential losses due to irregular expenditure and prepare for the closure process.

In 2009, various measures were taken to prepare for the closure of the programmes. For instance, the managing authorities, the coordination managing authority, the Intermediate Body, the Government Audit Authority and representatives of the Ministry of Finance gathered in workgroups regularly to review progress regarding closure and find solutions for the bottlenecks in the procedures.

Economic Competitiveness OP (ECOP)

The final date for eligibility of expenditure for ECOP projects was initially 31 December 2008. The managing authority chose the option provided by the EU Regulation to extend this deadline to 30 June 2009 in order to reach the highest possible absorption.

Based on the statement of expenditure available at the end of 2009, although close, 100% absorption was not reached in Priorities 1 (Investment promotion), 2 (Development of SMEs) and 5 (Technical assistance); while in Priorities 3 (R&D and innovation) and 4 (Information society/e-economy), 100% absorption was exceeded. Thanks to the new 10% redistribution option, overspending in these Priorities can compensate for the lag of Priorities 1, 2 and 5. Therefore, overall ECOP absorption will exceed 100%, even if minor corrections to eligible expenditure are made at closure. By the end of 2009, 99% of the projects were closed.

In 2009 final claims were settled, and statistics on claims affected by irregularities prepared. A list was compiled of ECOP-related external audits and recommended measures. Moreover, a first draft of the ECOP Final Implementation Report was ready in December 2009.

Human Resources Development Operational Programmes (HRD OP)

The Operational Programme is a multi-fund programme. The ESF co-finances most of the priorities of the HRD OP ('Supporting active labour market policies'; 'Fighting social exclusion by promoting access to the labour market' and 'Promoting life-long learning policies'), while Priority 4 (aimed at the 'Development of education, social and health infrastructure') is co-financed by the ERDF.

Due to the relatively low absorption rate reported by the managing authority for the priorities co-financed by the ESF at the beginning of 2008, the Commission reinforced its ongoing monitoring of the operational programme implementation, through bi-monthly Action Plans (with built-in 'milestones' to achieve 90-95% absorption) supported by follow-up visits to the relevant line ministries and intermediary bodies. As a consequence, important steps were undertaken to raise the staffing level in the intermediary bodies, launch new calls for proposals and accelerate payments to the final beneficiaries. As in the previously mentioned programmes, the managing authority chose the option provided by the EU Regulation to extend the eligibility deadline of the operational programme to 30 June 2009, in order to reach the highest possible absorption rate. As the figures show (the overall absorption rate — based on the payments to beneficiaries — reached over 95%), the launch of new calls and the extension of the eligibility period of the projects were instrumental in achieving this outcome.

As concerns the ERDF, based on the payments to beneficiaries, 100% absorption was reached and exceeded in three of the measures implemented in the framework of Priority 4, and the absorption was just below a 100% in the remaining one measure. On the whole 100% absorption was exceeded in ERDF, furthermore the exchange rate favoured a higher absorption rate than originally planned.

Environmental Protection and Infrastructure Operational Programme (EIOP)

Although the Operational Programme for the Environment and Infrastructure progressed well in 2008, the final date for eligibility of expenditure for EIOP had to be extended to 30 June 2009 in order to reach the highest possible absorption.

Satisfactory progress was noted in both the environmental protection and the transport infrastructure axes.

Based on the latest available information, absorption in Priority 1 (Environment protection) is 99.1%. Absorption in Priority 2 (Transport Infrastructure) is 100.4%. Absorption in Priority 3 (Technical Assistance) is 71.5%. The overall EIOP absorption reached 98.5%.

Challenges with regard to the programme closure include: minimising possible losses of resources following controls; achieving full absorption; ensuring indicator consistency and appropriate measuring. Programme closure documents are in preparation.

Operational Programme for Regional Development (OPRD)

The Operational Programme is a multi-fund programme. The ERDF co-finances the majority of the priorities of the OPRD (1 - 'Developing the tourism potential of the region', 2 - 'Developing regional infrastructure and the communal environment' and 4 - 'Technical assistance'), while Priority 3 ('Strengthening the regional dimension of human resource development'), is co-financed by the ESF.

The overall payment rate by the Member State for the OPRD reached 98.6% of the total public cost at the end of 2008. An additional 10.0-12.0% overbooking of projects was in place in order to cover any potential loss of resources during the closure process and to handle exchange rate variations. At the end of 2009 the absorption at the operational programme level was at 104.3% (by overbooking) the respective data being 104.7% for the ERDF and 102.3% for the ESF.) Given the good progress of implementation at project level, the managing authority did not ask for an extension of the final date of eligibility. The Hungarian authorities duly submitted the closure documents on 30 March 2010. Some cases of irregularities have to be closely monitored for the ERDF.

Operational Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ARDOP)

As at 31 December 2009, total payments made under measures co-financed by the EAGGF-Guidance Section (including the advance) amounted to EUR 297 million or 95.0% of the total Fund allocation for the period 2004-2006.

In 2009, the implementation of FIFG measures under the Agriculture and Rural Development Operational Programme continued. The final date of eligibility was extended until 30 June 2009. Commitments to the projects exceeded 105.0% (by overbooking) of the total FIFG allocation. The total payment rate from the Commission reached 90.9% of the total FIFG allocation. The closure documents are to be submitted by 30 September 2010.

15.2. Community Initiatives

15.2.1. Equal

The Hungarian EQUAL Community Initiative Programme (CIP) supported innovative projects in the field of employability, life-long learning, equality between

women and men, and support for asylum seekers. The ESF contribution amounted to EUR 30.3 million. The flow of declared expenditure was constant in the course of 2009, there was no 'n+2' decommitment, and the payment rate reached 95.0 % by the end of 2009 (representing a particularly positive outcome for innovative programmes).

15.2.2. Leader

Hungary included a Leader+ type measure in the ARDOP under Priority 3 'Development of rural areas'. The objective of the measure was to strengthen the LEADER approach to local development by means of integrated regional development strategies organised and realised at local level in the form of partnerships. Overall, 70 local action groups were selected. The total Community contribution for this measure amounted to EUR 14.3 million. Given the resources committed, the measure has been outstandingly successful, as the amount contracted for the applications submitted (EUR 23.2 million) exceeded the initial amount planned for the programming period 2004-2006.

16. MALTA

2000-2006 programming period

16.1. Objective 1

Malta had one Single Programming Document (SPD) for the period 2004-2006, jointly co-financed by ERDF (6 measures), ESF (5 measures), EAGGF (2 measures) and FIFG (1 measure). The total Structural Funds allocation amounts to EUR 63.2 million (EUR 46.7 million from ERDF, EUR 9.5 million from ESF, EUR 4.2 million from EAGGF and EUR 2.8 million from FIFG), supplemented by EUR 23.3 million of national contribution.

All ERDF and ESF co-financed measures reached full absorption of the allocated amounts by the end of the eligibility of the expenditure, which was extended by an additional six months until 30 June 2009 by Commission decision C(2009)1077 of 18/02/2009.

As regards implementation of the EAGGF, on 31 December 2009 total payments made under measures co-financed by the EAGGF-Guidance Section amounted to EUR 4.4 million (interim payments of EUR 3.7 million and advance payments of EUR 0.7 million, including national co-financing), thus attaining the payment limit of 95.0% for total eligible expenditure for the period 2004-2006 .

The total FIFG allocation committed to the sub-measures 'Fleet' and 'Structures' within the SPD for structural assistance in Malta under Objective 1 (2004-2006) amounted to EUR 2.8 million. The payment limit of 95.0% was reached in 2008.

A routine monitoring committee meeting was held in May 2009 reviewing final stages of the programme implementation. In addition, an analysis was presented of the implementation of thirteen projects co-financed by the ERDF, focusing on their effectiveness and impact, as well as the data collection needed for verifying the project indicators. The outcomes of this study were used to steer data collection in the 2007-2013 period.

16.2. Community Initiatives

16.2.1. Equal

All EQUAL projects finalised their training activities by the end of December 2007. The monitoring committee met in May 2009.

The EQUAL Programme reached the ceiling of 95.0%.

17. NETHERLANDS

2000-2006 programming period

The final date for the eligibility of expenditure, normally set at 31 December 2008, was — at the request of the Dutch authorities — extended for the single Objective 1, four Objective 2 and three URBAN programmes until 30 June 2009. For this extension, the Commission adopted a decision on 23 February 2009. This gave the regions and cities concerned an additional six months to implement the available Structural Funds allocations. This opportunity had been offered by the Commission as part of the 'Recovery Package' to help overcome possible negative impacts of the economic and financial crises. It is too early for concrete reports on the effects, but messages from the authorities concerned have been positive, referring to probable higher absorption rates. These should become visible when the closure documents are submitted by autumn 2010, possibly with similar effects on the achievement of the general and specific targets of the programmes.

Following audits in 2005 and 2006, the Dutch authorities had agreed with the European Commission to adopt a national action plan for ERDF programmes. In December 2009, the Ministry of Economic Affairs sent the European Commission the final elements which had been requested for this purpose. Until then, the main topic of discussions at the monitoring committee meetings in 2009 was the impact and implementation of the proposed financial corrections for the ERDF operational programmes.

The financial execution of the Dutch programmes at Commission level hardly changed during 2009 in relation to the situation in 2008. Apart from Flevoland Objective 1 and Zuid Objective 2, only the Urban Community Initiative Rotterdam claimed and received the temporary maximum of 95.0% of their total ERDF contributions. The managing authorities have other eligible expenditure which they could use for claiming the ERDF contributions, but they intend to postpone requesting these reimbursements until the final declarations are submitted to the European Commission, planned for September 2010. For the Leader programmes, however, larger payment claims were submitted, raising the absorption rate from 83.6% to 94.1% of the total EAGGF contribution.

At the annual review meeting jointly organised by the Commission and the Dutch authorities in mid-November 2009 in The Hague, we discussed the general and individual progress on implementation of the Dutch ERDF co-financed programmes, the overall working of their management structures and topics of common interest, including the control and auditing. On the occasion of this yearly event, the Ministry of Economic Affairs issued a publication displaying the general and specific results of European Structural Funds opportunities seized in the Netherlands during the 2000-2006 period.

17.1. Objective 1

The Flevoland province received phasing-out support under Objective 1 amounting to EUR 131.9 million of which EUR 81.7 million is from ERDF and EUR 33.6 million is from the European Social Fund. As for the other Dutch programmes, the

final date for eligibility was extended until 30 June 2009. The Flevoland managing authority used this extra half-year to optimise the expenditure within the programme.

At the beginning of 2009, a minor adjustment to the financial plan of the Programming Complement was adopted by the European Commission, after which no further adjustments were deemed necessary. This and other elements of the implementation and finalisation of the programme were discussed at the June 2009 Monitoring Committee meeting. The expected final implementation of the programme was estimated to arrive at full absorption for the ERDF and close to full absorption for EAGGF and FIFG, possibly 95.0% for ESF.

Global execution of the EAGGF-Guidance section at the end of 2009 amounted to EUR 8.2 million or 78.5% of the EAGGF allocation (unchanged compared to the end of 2008).

Global execution of the FIFG Section at the end of 2008 reached 94.2% of the FIFG allocation. A last payment claim of EUR 0.06 million was suspended because of limited assurance.

17.2. Objective 2

Although 2009 was the year in which the financial crisis was expected to have the worst impact on the implementation of the programmes, financial absorption of ERDF allocations in two of the Dutch Objective 2 regions (*Zuid* and *Oost*) was satisfactory at the end of 2009. It reached the payment limit of 95.0% and a close 92.7% respectively.

In view of current discussions about the national action plan, the authorities responsible for the Single Programming Documents for *Stedelijke Gebieden* and *Noord* did not declare further eligible expenditure to the Commission in 2009 and will probably defer doing so until the final declaration. Due to this, they remained at 87.2% and 81.5% financial absorption respectively. All of the Objective 2 programmes reported in their monitoring committee meetings that the implementation on the ground was fully satisfactory. Still the managing authority of *Zuid* warned, at the end of 2009, that an estimated loss of 5.0% of the allocated ERDF resources remains possible. For the three other programmes, it is not envisaged that there will be major shortfalls on 100.0% absorption at the closure of the programmes.

17.3. Objective 3

The total available ESF allocation for the SPD amounted to EUR 1532 million, which had been committed by the end of October 2005. As all projects were terminated by the end of 2007, activities focused on preparing closure of the programme. No request was received to extend the final date of eligibility. The final implementation of the programme is estimated to arrive at full absorption (the 95.0% payment limit has already been reached).

17.4. Fisheries outside Objective 1

The 95.0% payment limit was not reached at the end of 2009 (initial total FIFG allocation was EUR 32.8 million), and amounted to 80.3%. No payments were made in 2009. Major weaknesses were found in the management and control system. To solve the problems, the Netherlands made an action plan to verify and correct most of the projects.

17.5. Community Initiatives

17.5.1. Urban

Three URBAN II programmes are being implemented in the Netherlands in Amsterdam, Heerlen and Rotterdam. As for the other Dutch programmes their eligibility was extended until 30 June 2009. The ERDF contribution for the programmes in *Amsterdam* and *Rotterdam* is some EUR 9 million each and in *Heerlen* some EUR 12 million. The total eligible cost of the three programmes is some EUR 84 million. The cities themselves are both managing authority and paying authority. Although they are only due by September 2010, towards the end of 2009 the authorities were already actively preparing the documents required for the closure of the programmes. The absorption rate at the end of 2009 was 88.9%.

17.5.2. Equal

The total available ESF allocation amounted to EUR 158.2 million. As all projects had ended by the end of 2007, activities focused on preparing closure of the programme. No request was received to extend the final eligibility date. The final implementation of the programme is estimated to show 87% absorption (at end of 2009 the rate was 76.4%).

17.5.3. Leader

Four Leader+ programmes were implemented in the Netherlands in the 2000-2006 programming period (Randstad, Noord, Zuid and Oost). At the end of 2009, global execution amounted to EUR 77 million or 94.2% of the EAGGF allocation.

17.6. Closure of the 1994-1999 programming period

ERDF

In mid-December 2009, the Commission informed the Dutch Authorities of its agreement with the final revised payment claim for the Programme *Groningen-Drenthe* Objective 2 for 1997-1999. This closed the last remaining Dutch programme of the 1994-1999 period which was still open at the end of 2008.

ESF

Three ESF programmes remain open due to ongoing judicial proceedings.

As regards the Community Initiative Programmes (CIP), two programmes are still to be closed due to ongoing judicial proceedings. The *Resider* CIP was closed in 2009.

EAGGF

Closure of the EAGGF programmes of the 1994-1999 programming period was already completed at the end of 2008.

18. AUSTRIA

2000-2006 programming period

Austria received a total Structural Fund contribution of EUR 1 782 million between 2000 and 2006 from the ERDF, ESF, EAGGF and FIFG.

18.1. Objective 1

For the only Objective 1 region in Austria, Burgenland, the entire amount of EUR 181.5 million from the ERDF was committed from 2000 to 2006. In 2008, the Commission reimbursed certified expenditures of EUR 21.8 million to the paying authority, which represented 12% of the total ERDF contribution of the entire programming period. The total payments by the Commission between 2000 and 2009 amounted to EUR 172.4 million representing 95.0% of the total ERDF contribution. The Programme complement was modified once, but the Single Programming Document was not modified further.

Following the last monitoring committee meeting in June 2006, the necessary exchanges usually discussed at meetings were carried out by written procedures.

The 2008 annual implementation report for the programme was formally submitted to the Commission in June 2009 and approved in August 2009.

The closure documents for the Objective 1 programme Burgenland were submitted to the Commission in January 2010.

As regards the EAGGF-Guidance Section, the Austrian Objective 1 programme had already reached the payment limit of 95.0% of the total Community contribution for the period 2000-2006, amounting to total payments of EUR 41.5 million. Therefore no payments were made in 2009.

As for the ESF, no payments were made in 2009 and no commitments of ESF funds were made in 2009, as the total ESF amount was already committed up to 2006. In the period 2000-2006, a total of EUR 57.4 million was committed and EUR 54.5 million was paid by the Commission (i.e. 95.0% of the total ESF contribution).

For the FIFG, for Burgenland as an Objective 1 region no payments were made in 2009, as the remaining programme commitment was transferred to other funds in 2003.

18.2. Objective 2

The eight Austrian Objective 2 regions (Upper Austria, Lower Austria, Styria, Carinthia, Salzburg, Tyrol, Vorarlberg and Vienna), already committed the entire amount of EUR 703.7 million ERDF contributions in the years 2001 to 2006. After an amount of EUR 1.2 million had to be decommitted in 2008, there were no further decommitments in 2009.

The Commission reimbursed in 2009 certified expenditure of EUR 18.2 million to the Paying Authority, which represents 2.7% of the total ERDF contribution of the entire programming period. The total payments made by the Commission between 2000 and 2009 amounted to EUR 685 million or to 97.4% of the total ERDF contribution. (the absorption rate exceeds the payment limit of 95.0% due to closure of four programmes)

No monitoring committee meeting was called in 2009 and all necessary decisions were carried out by written procedures.

At the annual meeting in Graz on 17 November 2009, the state of play of the closure of the Structural Funds programmes (Objective 2 and Objective 1 programmes) was presented and discussed.

The programmes for Lower Austria, Carinthia (ERDF part), Salzburg, and Tyrol were the first programmes submitted to the Commission in 2009 and could be closed by end of the year. The closure documents for the other programmes were sent subsequently, so that now all programmes are in the closure procedure.

As far as the three programmes containing an ESF component (Carinthia, Styria and Vienna) are concerned, no commitments were made in 2009, as the total ESF amount of EUR 27.5 million was already committed up to 2006. EUR 0.07 million was paid in 2009 (Carinthia). In the period 2000-2006, a total of EUR 27.5 million was committed and EUR 26 million was paid (i.e. 95.0% of the total ESF contribution).

18.3. Objective 3

In 2009, no commitment for the ESF programme was made, as the total ESF amount of EUR 571.9 million was already committed up to 2006. As 95.0% (i.e. EUR 543.4 million) was already paid, no further payment was executed in 2009.

18.4. Fisheries outside Objective 1

Within the Fisheries Operational Programme for Austria outside Objective 1, two priority axes were co-financed by the FIFG, 'Aquatic resources, aquaculture, fishing ports, processing and marketing, inland fisheries' and 'Other measures'. Their respective shares of the programme are EUR 4.5 million and EUR 0.01 million. The financial execution has reached 93.9% of the total (EUR 4.2 million out of EUR 4.5 million). There have been no decommitments.

18.5. Community Initiatives

18.5.1. Urban

There are two URBAN II programmes for Austria. The Vienna programme received EUR 4.2 million and the Graz programme EUR 4.3 million from the ERDF. The total budget for Vienna was EUR 13.9 million and for Graz EUR 20.7 million. For both programmes, annual reports were received each year which were satisfactory and which have been adopted.

The managing authority for both programmes was the city. The cities coordinated their monitoring committees and both were represented in the monitoring committee

of the other programme. Since 2007 no physical monitoring committee meetings have been organised; however all necessary business was carried out by written procedures.

The last annual meeting with both managing authorities was organised in Graz in November 2008.

The closure documents of both programmes were submitted to the Commission by the end of 2009.

Overall comments concerning the 2000-2006 period

The programmes have contributed to the economic regeneration of inner-city areas, where old industrial sites have been provided with new infrastructure, facilities and access links, thus creating the basic conditions for a new cycle of post-industrial economic activity, particularly in the area of technological innovation.

18.5.2. Equal

Austria has decided to close down EQUAL a year earlier than the other Member States. There were no monitoring committee meetings or annual meeting in 2009. No amendments were made to the programme in 2009. No commitments or payments were made in 2009.

18.5.3. Leader

The overall consumption of the Austrian Leader+ programmes has reached the maximum level of 95%. The closure documents are expected to be sent to the Commission before September 2010, as the Austrian authorities have asked for an extension, which was accepted by Commission Decision C(2009)1212 of 23 February 2009.

18.6. Closure of the 1994-1999 programming period

Concerning the ERDF contribution to the Austrian 1995-1999 programmes, all the Objective 2, Objective 5b and Community initiatives (except one INTERREG programme) were closed before 2006. For the INTERREG programme CADSES, the final decision based on Article 24 was adopted by the Commission on 20 January 2009.

As for the ESF programmes, two decisions on the ESF contribution to unrecoverable amounts were made in 2009. Two other procedures were pending at the end of 2009.

19. POLAND

2000-2006 programming period

19.1. Objective 1

In 2004-2006, Poland received EUR 12800 million (EUR 8400 million from the Structural Funds, including the Community initiatives EQUAL and INTERREG III, and EUR 4200 million from the Cohesion Fund). Implementation of Structural Funds in Poland was on track and operational programmes were heading towards closure. Specific meetings in Poland were organised to familiarise all institutions with the challenge of closure. Polish authorities also attended a seminar on preparing for closure, which was organised in Brussels. At the end of 2009, payments for ERDF, ESF, FIFG and EAGGF taken together accounted for an absorption rate of 94.8% for 2004-2006 or EUR 7970 million.

For ERDF, 95.0% (EUR 4720 million) has been paid. All four ERDF-financed operational programmes reached the level of payments of 95% of the allocation — ERDF priorities of Integrated Regional Operational Programme, Transport-Maritime Economy and Technical Assistance already in 2008 and Improvement of Competitiveness in 2009 (payment in 2009 of EUR 51 million). The final date of eligibility was extended to 30 June 2009 for all operational programmes except for the Technical Assistance Operational Programme. The extension of the eligibility date for the majority of programmes helped overcome the liquidity problems of Member States linked to the economic crisis. The ERDF programmes await the closure process in 2010.

For ESF the final date of eligibility of the Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development and Integrated Regional Operational Programme (IROP) was extended to 30 June 2009. As far as financial execution of the ESF is concerned, the overall rate of execution in terms of payments reached the level of 95% at the end of 2009. The Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development and the Community Initiative Programme (CIP) EQUAL demonstrated very good financial progress, without any risk of underspending.

The Integrated Regional Operational Programme (the ESF priority) continued to raise some concerns due to a slower pace of implementation in some regions. Therefore, towards the end of the eligibility period there was still a risk of underspending.

As far as other funds are concerned, payments for the EAGGF programme also reached 95.0%. 97.6% of the FIFG allocation was paid out to final beneficiaries. The payments for the FIFG executed by the Commission accounted for 88.1% of the total FIFG allocation.

Structural Funds became one of the main pro-development sources of financing (in 2007, 35% of overall public spending). The main impact of the cohesion policy is expected after 2012, as a result of higher allocations of funds in the period 2007-2013 and expected accumulation of outputs after 2012.

Evaluations showed the positive impact of the funds on the Polish economy. In the period 2004-2008, the positive impact of the inflow of European funds for Polish socio-economic development increased. According to research, in the period 2004-2006, the incremental GDP growth amounted to 0.3 percentage points as a result of the EU funds, while in the period 2007-2008 they contributed to over 0.5 percentage points of GDP growth. In per capita terms, the impact was even more profound and, in some regions, was up to 0.9 percentage points. The effect increased during the programming period. In 2004-2008 EU funds helped to bridge about 15.0% of the development gap (measured in GDP per capita terms) between Poland and the EU-27. The positive impact of cohesion policy on investment activities and on the labour market was also observed, although the funds had only a limited impact on the sectoral structure of the economy. However, more in-depth labour market research indicates that the EU funds helped to increase the share of the services sector and to reduce that of agriculture in employment. It is estimated that in the period 2005-2008 the EU funds helped to boost employment by about 260 thousand, and it should also be noted that the average annual growth rate is rising.

Interventions from the funds supported investments across various sectors of the economy. The funds supported the business environment: support was given to 63 industrial parks, science and technology parks and technology incubators (affecting approx. 900 enterprises) and 192 projects to strengthen business environment institutions. They also contributed capital to micro-loan, guarantee and seed capital funds (22 500 enterprises were supported by micro-loan or guarantee funds and 47 enterprises by seed capital funds). More than 27 200 ha (650 ha) of investment zones were created. Business activity was strengthened (under ESF and ERDF operations) by both direct investment (about 5 700 SMEs and microenterprises supported and 8 500 new businesses created under the ESF priority of the IROP) and ESF advisory services (e.g. 401 supported enterprises implemented new technologies; 2 181 enterprises made use of research and specialised laboratories; 7 400 participated in fairs and exhibitions and 1 200 in trade missions, resulting in 1 363 enterprises signing trade contracts). The road network was developed and modernised: 355 km of national roads were modernised to serve 115 kN road capacity and a further 4 109 km of regional and local roads were created or modernised. These investments increased road safety, helping to cut the number of road accidents per year from 51 000 to 49 054 and the death toll in road accidents per year — from 5 600 to 5 437. The funds also supported the development of 'green' railway transport: 71 km of rebuilt railway lines together with modernised rolling stock shortened the journey times on modernised railway lines by 28.0%. The Warsaw underground may serve as a good example of investment in public transport: 4 km of new-built line and 4 new stations increased the number of passengers served by 90.0%. Interventions in the environment sector resulted in sustainable development and better quality of life, illustrated by 3 907 km of water supply systems (with 139 purification plants) and 5 198 km of sewage systems (with 147 treatment plants) providing services for 2.1 million persons (water supply) and 558 thousand persons (sewage collection). In addition there were 54 waste management projects.

The effects of ESF intervention on human resources create a promising outlook for the future. The added value of ESF action has been clearly demonstrated. The results of ESF programme evaluations are quite impressive. The ESF showed positive returns, making a remarkable contribution to improving the situation on the labour

market through support addressed directly to over 2 million individuals, and significantly improving labour market and education and training systems.

Over 702 000 unemployed persons were offered support and almost 60.0 % of project participants re-entered the labour market. New ways of tackling discrimination have been tested and new models developed for assisting high-risk groups. The idea of investing in employees has spread among entrepreneurs and training courses for management and staff have became widely accessible. Over 203 000 enterprises received support and over 527 thousand employees participated in training. Over 90 000 micro-enterprises have been created. The ESF made an important contribution to the education system: 150 000 teachers received training, 213 000 persons took part in life long learning programmes, 250 000 new computers were purchased for schools, 13 000 education entities were supported. It is noted that the number of pupils per computer with internet access decreased from 18 (in 2004) to 11.76 and the number of children aged 3-5 participating in pre-school education increased from 17.5% (in 2004) to 28.5%. Moreover, the ESF Priority under the IROP provided a wide spectrum of measures to develop human resources in the regions, targeting: working adults, pupils and students from disadvantaged areas (scholarships); post-graduate students of innovation studies; employees of the R&D sector; potential entrepreneurs, start-ups. The Priority fostered innovative measures not previously implemented by employment services, especially life-long learning (LLL) for employed persons, and vocational reorientation activities for workers in agriculture and in sectors at risk due to restructuring. The ESF Priority also supported the setting up of Labour Market and Education Observatories, used as a tool to identify gaps in skills and professions at local level. Finally, ESF intervention under the IROP promoted entrepreneurship through a system of integrated support to potential start-ups, including: training, advisory services, start-up grants and financial support for the very first stage of functioning of new enterprises. It also promoted transfer of knowledge, cooperation between science and enterprises and regional innovation strategies.

19.2. Community Initiatives

19.2.1. Equal

The eligibility period for EQUAL, until 30 April 2009, was not extended. In 2009 the managing authority's activities focused on the preparations for closure, and it closed 165 projects. There are 14 still open due to ongoing administrative investigations and legal proceedings. In financial terms the level of expenditure declared to the Commission represented 102 % of the total ESF allocation by the end of 2009.

CIP EQUAL principles, e.g. partnership, gender mainstreaming, transnational cooperation and innovation have been transferred to the new programming period 2007-2013.

19.2.2. Leader

As with other recently acceded Member States, a Leader+ type measure is mainstreamed in the EAGGF Objective 1 programme 'Restructuring and modernisation of the agri-food sector and rural development'.

20. PORTUGAL

2000-2006 programming period

20.1. Objective 1

The Portuguese Community Support Framework III (2000-2006) received financial support under Objective 1 (with Lisbon and the Tejo valley region as a phasing-out region) and consisted of twenty operational programmes. Out of the 20 operational programmes, seven covered each of the Portuguese regions individually and thirteen were cross-regional.

For operations included in the CSF III, as part of the response to the financial crisis an extension of the expenditure eligibility date to 30 June 2009 was agreed for all operational programmes.

Throughout 2009 monitoring committee meetings were mainly devoted to adopting modifications of the programme complements or operational programmes, in order to optimise the use of financing within the priorities and measures agreed. Most of these monitoring committee meetings were replaced by written procedures due partly to the relatively minor importance of discussing the issues and partly to the workload related to the new programming period 2007-2013.

No annual reports were submitted during 2009 as the closure guidelines allow Member States to include a separate chapter on the implementation of the 2008 programme in the final report.

The final monitoring committee meetings for adoption of the final reports were scheduled for all but one operational programme (Administração Pública) for the first months of 2010.

A final cross-regional CSF III monitoring committee meeting is also planned for 2010 to close the 2000-2006 activities including the three Urban II Programmes.

All the Portuguese CSF III 2000-2006 operational programmes, and the three URBAN Community Initiative Programmes in Portugal, completed their implementation period. In 2009, in nominal terms, for all Funds together, EUR 441 million was paid out by the Commission. This means that for the period 2000-2009, 95.0% of the total commitments were already paid.

In 2009 four new major project decisions were adopted by the Commission: three concerned highway sections as part of the OP Accessibility and Transport and one decision was on the Amper Solar Centre as part of the OP Economia.

In 2009 EUR 1.5 million was paid out for ESF activities. All the seventeen operational programmes co-financed by the ESF reached the 95.0% payment limit. The extension of the expenditure eligibility period was used to optimise the level of execution, which is close to 100.0% for the ESF component of all operational programmes.

As far as the FIFG is concerned, at the end of 2009 reimbursements amounted to EUR 221 million out of EUR 237 million, corresponding to 93.5% of the total FIFG appropriations to the eight operational programmes.

As for the EAGGF Guidance Section, at the end of 2009 seven out of nine programmes reached the 95% payment limit (according to Article 32(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999). The Norte programme (1999PT161PO017) reached 94% execution, while the Technical Assistance programme (2000PT161PO001) reached only 42.1%.

The closure documents (final report, statement of expenditure and final payment application, winding-up declaration) for all programmes will be sent by the Member State on 30 September 2010 at the latest.

No automatic decommitment procedures were initiated, as the 'n+2' threshold will be calculated at programme closure.

Several programmes are affected by irregularities reported by the Member State to OLAF (in application of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1681/94). In the run-up to closure of the programmes, initial arbitration made it possible to propose the closure of a number of cases to OLAF.

20.2. Community Initiatives

20.2.1. Equal

The Portuguese EQUAL programme proceeded efficiently during 2009. Total interim payments in 2009 amounted to EUR 0.4 million. The 95.0% payment limit of the programme budget was reached.

No monitoring committee meetings were organised in 2009.

The managing authority continued its efforts to mainstream EQUAL best practice and took advantage of the extended eligibility period to make full use of the allocations available.

Efforts were also made to transfer knowledge, mainly by promoting the use of EQUAL innovation solutions by training operators (especially in the field of social development contracts and difficult areas).

20.2.2. Leader

By the end of 2008, the LEADER+ programme had already reached the 95.0% payment limit.

The closure documents for the programme will be sent on 30 September 2010 at the latest.

No automatic decommitment procedure was initiated, as the 'n+2' threshold will be calculated at programme closure.

The programme is affected by a small number of irregularities reported by the Member State to OLAF (in application of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1681/94). In the run-up to closure of the programmes, initial arbitration made it possible to propose the closure of four cases to OLAF.

20.2.3. Urban

There are three URBAN II Programmes in Portugal: Amadora, Lisboa and Porto-Gondomar. Overall, these programmes tackle serious socio-economic and environment problems in inner-city areas. The managing authorities for the programmes are at regional level, whereas the beneficiaries are various bodies in the municipalities and local public enterprises. As in the case of Objective 1, at the end of 2009 the monitoring committees for the three Programmes approved a request to extend the payment end date, which was approved by a global Commission Decision in March 2010 for all the Portuguese interventions. The monitoring committees did not meet in 2009; they met in January 2010 and approved the relevant final implementation reports. In 2009, there were only intermediate payments in favour of URBAN II Porto-Gondomar, amounting to EUR 0.9 million. In fact, Porto-Gondomar is the most advanced Portuguese URBAN II intervention in financial terms: at the end of 2009 the ERDF payments amounted to 94.4% of total commitments, whereas Lisboa stood at 87.7% and Amadora at only 61.7%.

20.3. Closure of 1994-1999 programming period

The closure is now complete for the 1994-1999 programming period for CSF II.

The settlement of cases reported by the Member State to OLAF (in application of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1681/94) made it possible to propose the closure of the majority of cases to OLAF. Only a small number of cases are still awaiting supplementary information to be delivered by the Member State.

21. SLOVAKIA

2000-2006 programming period

Slovakia received a total EU contribution of over EUR 1 137 million for the programming period 2004-2006 under the CSF (i.e. funding from the ERDF, ESF, EAGGF and FIFG). This is split into three mono-fund operational programmes (two ERDF and one ESF) and one operational programme funded from the EAGGF and the FIFG, as described below. There are also Objective 2 and Objective 3 single programming documents for the Bratislava Region.

Twelve meetings of the CSF Working Commission for the Development of Roma communities were held in total (one meeting in 2009) to monitor the implementation of three ERDF and four ESF measures with the increased co-financing by the EC (80.0% instead of the standard 75.0%) intended for the projects with a direct or indirect impact on Roma communities.

21.1. Objective 1

OP Basic Infrastructure

The programme benefitted from the extension of the eligibility period until 30 June 2009. One monitoring committee meeting took place in 2009. The 2008 annual implementation report was formally submitted to the Commission in June 2009 and was approved. In total, EUR 401.2 million had already been paid out up to the end of 2008, representing 95.0% of overall commitments. Therefore, in 2009, only clearing of pre-financing took place. No 'n+2' decommitments were carried out during the period of implementation. In 2009, several audits by the Directorate-General for Regional Policy were closed. There is an agreed 5.0% flat-rate financial correction for this programme. 1 279 projects were financed under the operational programme, including large environmental, road and railway projects, schools, hospitals, social care facilities, cultural facilities, information technologies and village renewals.

OP Industry & Services

The programme benefitted from the extension of the eligibility period until 30 June 2009. One monitoring committee meeting was held in 2009. The 2008 annual implementation report was formally submitted to the Commission in May 2009 and was approved. By the end of 2008, EUR 140.7 million had already been paid, representing 93.1% of the overall commitment. A number of audits by the Directorate-General for Regional Policy were closed during 2009. There is an agreed 10% flat-rate financial correction for this programme. 722 projects were financed under the operational programme, including investments in private companies and public infrastructure to support innovation, business incubators, industrial parks, research and development, energy efficiency and tourism.

The *Agriculture and Rural Development OP* entered its final phase, with implementation continuing in the first half of 2009 as the eligibility date for the programme was extended until 30 June 2009. The 2008 annual implementation

report will be an integral part of the final closure report, due to be submitted by 30 September 2010. No programme modification proposal was submitted in 2009. One statement of expenditure was sent to the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development in July 2009. The amount requested was EUR 0 as the 95.0% payment limit had been reached by the end of June 2008.

The level of contracting was 96% from the FIFG contribution to the operational programme and the Commission made the last interim payment in 2008, reaching the 95.0% payment limit. All projects were completed by the end of 2008. Slovakia requested an extension until 30 June 2009 of the final date for eligibility of expenditure under the Agriculture and Rural Development Operational Programme. The closure documents are expected by 30 September 2010.

The *ESF Human Resources OP* benefitted from the extension of the eligibility period until 30 June 2009. There was no monitoring committee meeting in 2009; the last one attended by the Commission took place in 2010. The managing authority decided not to deliver a separate Annual implementation report for 2008, but instead to include a chapter on 2008 implementation in the final report. The Commission paid EUR 8.0 million following the submission of one payment request in 2009. In total (advance and interim payments) EUR 270.2 million was paid to the payment authority, representing 95.0% of the total 2004-2006 allocation. Decommitments under the 'n+2' rule did not take place for this programme. The projects financed included active labour market policy development, improving the qualifications and adaptability of employees and job seekers, and increasing social inclusion and equal opportunities in the labour market.

21.2. Objective 2

SPD 2 programme Bratislava

The programme benefitted from the extension of the eligibility period until 30 June 2009. The monitoring committee for the programme held one meeting. The 2008 annual implementation report was submitted to the Commission in June 2009 and was approved. In total, EUR 35.2 million had already been paid out up to the end of 2008, of which EUR 14.1 million was paid in 2008. This amounts to 95.0% of overall commitments. Therefore, in 2009 only clearing of pre-financing took place under. Decommitment under the 'n+2' rule took place in relation to the 2004 annual commitment. There is an agreed 5.0% flat-rate financial correction for this OP. In 2009, DG REGIO audits were closed. 308 projects were financed under the SPD, including investments in SMEs, public infrastructure in support of entrepreneurs, tourism and municipality renewals.

21.3. Objective 3

SPD 3 programme Bratislava

The programme benefitted from the extension of the eligibility period until 30 June 2009. SPD held no monitoring committee meetings in 2009; the last one attended by the Commission took place in 2010. The managing authority decided not to deliver a separate Annual implementation report for 2008, but instead to include a chapter on 2008 implementation in the final report. The Commission paid EUR 7.8

million following the submission of one payment request in 2009. In total (advance and interim payments) EUR 35.3 million was paid to the payment authority, representing 95.0% of the total 2004-2006 allocation. Decommitment under the 'n+2' rule took place in relation to the 2004 and 2005 annual commitment. Projects financed include demand-driven and national projects for active labour market policy development, life-long learning development and support to R&D.

21.4. Community Initiatives

21.4.1. Equal

The eligibility period was extended until 30 June 2009. There were no monitoring committee meetings in 2009; the last one attended by the Commission took place in 2010. The managing authority decided not to deliver a separate Annual implementation report for 2008, but instead to include a chapter for 2008 implementation to the final report. The Commission paid EUR 2 million following the submission of one payment request in 2009. In total (advance and interim payments) EUR 21.1 million was paid to the payment authority, representing 95.0% of the total 2004-2006 allocation. Decommitment under the 'n+2' rule did not take place in relation to EQUAL.

22. SLOVENIA

2000-2006 programming period

22.1. Objective 1

The overall implementation of the Structural Funds through the Single Programming Document (SPD) 2004-2006 continued at a satisfactory pace until the end of the eligibility period on 30 June 2009.

Allowing for the international economic and financial crisis, the ERDF interventions remained Lisbon-oriented and focused on key areas such as improving the business environment for entrepreneurship, enhancing public economic infrastructure and related public services necessary for investment, transfer of knowledge, promotion of entrepreneurship and fostering innovation & research. A preliminary analysis of ERDF interventions shows that over 7000 jobs were created and almost 500 development investment projects for SMEs were supported. The final qualitative results will be known in the last quarter of 2010.

During the second half of 2009 the national authorities actively began the closure procedure for the funds. As the ERDF payments amounted to 95.0% by the end of 2008, the prospects for full absorption of the ERDF allocation are good. No ERDF payments were authorised in 2009.

The cumulative amount of payments paid out by the end of 2009 (incl. advance payments) for all four funds amounted to around EUR 225.6 million, which corresponds to 95.0% of the total Structural Funds contribution to the SPD. No cases of automatic decommitment under the 'n+2' rule arose during the implementation of the programme.

The payments for the ESF share of the programme reached the 95.0% payment limit (including advance payments) before the beginning of 2009. The level of reimbursement is expected to reach 98.5% at closure. The management and control system for the ESF has been steadily improved in response to audits executed by the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and the European Court of Auditors.

As regards financial execution of the EAGGF-Guidance section, the Slovenian Objective 1 programme already reached the 95.0% payment limit for the 2004-2006 period in 2008, amounting to total payments of EUR 22.4 million. Therefore no payments were made in 2009.

Monitoring committee meetings

Since the eligibility of the SPD was due to end on 31 December 2008, no meetings of the Monitoring Committee had been scheduled for 2009.

As part of the Recovery Package, the Commission allowed Member States to request an extension to 30 June 2009 of the final expenditure eligibility date for 2000-2006 interventions. The SPD Monitoring Committee duly considered and approved the

national request for extension at the end of 2008. No meetings took place in the course of 2009.

Annual reports and annual meeting

In line with the rules for programme closure, the annual reports for 2008 and 2009 will form an integral part of the final report which is to be submitted by 30 September 2010. All previous annual implementation reports can be consulted on http://www.euskladi.si/publikacije/letna_porocila

A technical meeting regarding the ERDF interventions was held in Brdo in December 2009. The national authorities confirmed that the closure process was ongoing and that some outstanding issues with regard to audits were still being tackled.

Amendments

At the request of the national authorities and following approval by the monitoring committee, the SPD Programme Complement was amended once during 2009, including some financial reallocations in the financial plan.

In its request dated 23 December 2008, Slovenia demonstrated the effect of the unprecedented financial crisis on the socio-economic situation and the labour market as well as its negative impact on the implementation of the SPD 2004-2006. In line with the provisions of the Recovery Package, the eligibility period of the SPD was extended until 30 June 2009. The Commission approved the request in order to facilitate the smoothest possible closure of the Structural Funds' assistance and to ensure the optimal use of the available funds. The modification had no impact on the total financial allocation of the programme.

The use of technical assistance

The Slovene SPD contains a specific priority for technical assistance which was designed to provide the conditions for effective implementation of the development strategy. This included activities to facilitate the management, follow-up, control, monitoring and evaluation of the programme. The priority is co-financed both by the ERDF and the ESF. Concrete results of the use of technical assistance will be known at the submission of the final report.

Fisheries

The total FIFG allocation within the SPD for structural assistance in Slovenia under Objective 1 (2004-2006) amounts to EUR 1.8 million, of which an amount of EUR 1.5 million was certified before the end of 2008. Legally binding commitments were reported to have covered the whole FIFG allocation. The payment limit of 95.0% was reached; payments to the Member State amounted to EUR 1.7 million. The latest statement of expenditure showed EUR 1.9 million spent for the Community share, which is an 'overbooking' in case some of the expenditure is found not to be eligible at closure.

In fact EUR 0.4 million, or possibly more, risks having to be recovered and decommitted at closure due to the sale of the company to which the aid was granted, the largest beneficiary of FIFG aid under the Slovene SPD.

22.2. Community Initiatives

22.2.1. Equal

The declaration of incurred ESF expenditure reached 81.1% at the end of 2009 (including advance payments). As the development partnerships had all finished their work, Slovenia did not ask for an extension of the final eligibility date for EQUAL, despite low financial execution. The estimated absorption rate at closure is 70.0%. A technical meeting was held in December 2009 at which all aspects of closure were discussed.

23. FINLAND

2000-2006 programming period

For the 2000-2006 period, Finland was allocated EUR 2124 million from the Structural Funds, of which approximately 60.0% ERDF, 26.0% ESF, 13.5% EAGGF and 0.5% FIFG. The funds were allocated to two Objective 1 programmes, three Objective 2 programmes, two Objective 3 programmes, one FIFG programme, nine IINTERREG programmes, one URBAN programme, one LEADER programme and one EQUAL Community Initiative programme.

23.1. Objective 1

In 2009, the Northern and Eastern Finland Objective 1 programmes progressed as planned. At the national level, EU funds were fully committed to projects and approximately 100.0% of EU funding was paid to final beneficiaries. At the Commission level, 100.0% of the programme funds were committed by the end of 2007 and 95.0% of programme funds had been paid to Finland, including advance payments. No 'n+2' decommitments were made for any of the programmes.

No monitoring committee meetings were organised for the two programmes in 2009. The annual review meeting between the Commission and the Finnish managing authority was organised in March 2009 and dealt mainly with the closure preparations and management and audit issues.

The quantitative and horizontal objectives set for the programmes were achieved. The programmes helped to create nearly 40000 jobs and 8300 enterprises. Over 250000 people participated in ESF measures. In addition, the programmes strengthened the role of regions, fostered regional identity and responsibility for local development, improved multi-annual strategic planning, and promoted partnership and cooperation between the different levels of public administration and other stakeholders. New methods and models were created in the field of employment and education and training policies.

Fisheries

The implementation of the FIFG in Objective 1 programmes progressed well. For the Northern programme, the commitment rate at the end of the year was 100.0%, while the 95.0% payment limit was reached. The Objective 1 Eastern programme had a 100.0% commitment rate and 95.0% payment rate.

23.2. Objective 2

In 2009, the three Finnish Objective 2 programmes for Southern Finland, Western Finland and the Åland Islands progressed as planned. At national level, over 100.0% of EU funds were committed to projects and 100.0% of EU funding was paid to final beneficiaries in Southern and Western Finland, and, for the Åland Islands, the funds are virtually fully committed and payment levels about 93.0%. At Commission level, 100.0% of the programme funds had been committed

by the end of 2008 and 95.0% of programme funds paid to the national authorities, including advance payments. The programmes had no 'n+2' decommitments.

The Southern and Western Finland programmes helped to create nearly 40000 jobs and over 7500 enterprises. Over 180000 people participated in ESF measures. The horizontal targets for equality, environmental sustainability and information society were reached, apart from gender equality projects in Southern Finland, where only 50.0% of the target was met. Due to very ambitious target setting, the target for creating new enterprises will only be partly met: 50.0% for Western Finland and 57.0% for Southern Finland. The Åland Islands Objective 2 programme helped to create around 200 new jobs and 30 new enterprises.

No monitoring committee meetings were organised for the Finnish Objective 2 programmes in 2009.

The annual review meeting for Mainland Finland programmes was organised in Brussels in March 2009 and dealt mainly with the progress of programme implementation, closure preparations and management and control issues.

Extension of 2000-2006 programming period

Because of the global financial crisis, the Commission decided to give the Member States more time to finalise the programming period 2000-2006. Finland applied to extend the programming period until 30 June 2009. The remaining resources (approximately EUR 38.5 million) were budgeted again and there were about 160 new projects.

23.3. Objective 3

Budgeted ESF funding for Finland's Objective 3 programmes, including the Åland Islands, totalled EUR 436.6 million. Finland applied for the eligibility period for the Mainland programme to be extended until 30 June 2009. By the end of 2009, the payment limit of 95.0% was reached for the mainland programme. No extension was requested for the Åland programme, which reached 88.8% level of payments. About 540000 people in total participated in the activities funded by Objective 3 programmes. The Mainland programme helped to create 9114 new enterprises and 21040 new jobs.

The monitoring committee did not meet in 2009. The annual review meeting was held in Helsinki on 11 March 2010. The issue relevant to the Objective 3 programme was the progress of the closure process and expected delivery of the final report.

23.4. Fisheries outside Objective 1

The programme progressed better than in the previous year, although in the Åland Islands progress was still slightly slower than in the rest of the country. The overall commitment rate at the end of the year was 100%, while 91.9% of the FIFG financing was paid out.

23.5. Community Initiatives

23.5.1. Equal

Finland had decided to run down the EQUAL programme according to the original schedule, and no prolongation of the eligibility period was requested. Thus there were no operations running in 2009. The final payment level was estimated to be 94.0%.

23.5.2. Leader

In 2001, the Commission approved a Leader+ programme for Finland. Twenty-five Local Action Groups (LAGs) were selected and are supported by a national network.

According to preliminary information on the final closure of the programme, an amount of EUR 51.6 million (including EUR 47.9 million paid by the Commission at end 2009) or 91.0% was paid out of the EUR 56.4 million committed for 2001-2006. Over 95.0% of the total budget was committed to projects. No decommitments had to be executed during implementation. In early 2009 the final date for the eligibility of expenditure was extended to 30 June 2009, meaning that the closure of the programme will be in autumn 2010.

Overall, the Leader+ programme has reached or exceeded its targets. Only the overall employment target has not been achieved, but employment of women and young people has exceeded the expected level. All in all 4612 projects were financed. The majority of the projects were non-farm-related investment in enterprises. The Leader+ programme provided a good complement to the other EU-financed programmes on rural areas.

23.5.3. Urban

The Helsinki-Vantaa URBAN II programme is the only one in Finland. The ERDF will contribute a total of EUR 5.4 million to this programme, for which the total eligible cost amounts to EUR 20.4 million. The managing authority for the programme is the City of Helsinki and the functional day-to-day management is delegated to URBAN Helsinki-Vantaa.

The URBAN programme in Helsinki/Vantaa did not have any ongoing activity in 2009.

Overall comments concerning the 2000-2006 period

The programme increased the social capital in the area and citizens' participation became more evident. New networks were established between authorities, citizens, homes and schools, making for a new approach, especially on social issues.

23.6. Closure of the 1994-1999 programming period

All Finnish Structural Fund programmes from the 1994-1999 programming period were closed before 2006.

24. SWEDEN

2000-2006 programming period

General Objectives 1 and 2

The two Objective 1 programmes for Sweden, Norra Norrlandsregionen and Södra Skogslänsregionen, cover 65.0% of Sweden's land area but less than one million people (11% of total population). The funding of the programmes totals EUR 780 million from the Structural Funds (EUR 490 million or 63% from the ERDF, EUR 164 million from the ESF, EUR 116 million from the EAGGF and EUR 8 million from the FIFG). Including national public and private participation, the Structural Funds generated assistance of EUR 2 100 million.

The four Objective 2 programmes, the North, West, South and the Islands programmes, cover approximately 16% of the Swedish population. The funding for the programmes totals EUR 440 million from the Structural Funds (EUR 385 million or 88.0% from the ERDF, EUR 54 million or 12.0% from the ESF). Including national public and private participation, the Structural Funds generated assistance of EUR 1 500 million.

The Swedish programmes (all funds) created more than 110 000 new or preserved jobs and more than 26 000 new companies.

There were no monitoring committee meetings in 2009. Annual implementation reports for 2008 for three programmes were approved in written procedure by the Monitoring Committees and accepted by the Commission at the end of 2009. Annual implementation reports for 2008 for the remaining programmes will be included in the final reports, due end of March 2010. Work in 2009 was dominated by the preparations for the closure of the 2000-2006 programmes.

24.1. Objective 1

ERDF, ESF and EAGGF-Guidance Section

By the end of 2009, the Commission had paid out 95% of the total ERDF budget, 94.0% of the total ESF budget, 95.0% of the total EAGGF budget, and no decommitments following the 'n+2' rule were necessary.

The ERDF contributed to improving the competitiveness of SMEs and increasing cooperation between them. The support for R&D activities in SMEs and research centres contributed to raising the expenditure on R&D in the regions. It also strengthened local partnerships.

24.2. Objective 2

All four programmes stand at the 95% ceiling for payments.

The ERDF helped to adapt development to the requirements of global competition. It contributed to a substantial increase in expenditure on R&D, the development of

advanced services and scientific and cultural exchanges, improving the business environment and stimulating knowledge-driven development.

24.3. Objective 3

The available ESF allocation for the SPD amounts to EUR 780 million for the period 2000-2006. By the end of 2009, 94.0% of the total ESF budget had been paid out by the Commission. Activities during the year focused on preparing closure of the programme.

Almost 48 000 projects were implemented in the programming period and most of the targets set were reached. The number of participants exceeded the targets for all priorities, amounting to a total of about 1.7 million persons. The targets for the number of persons who started a company and the number of people at work six months after participating in a project were not fully reached. Nonetheless, the programme shows good overall results.

The 2008 annual implementation report was duly submitted by Sweden and accepted by the Commission. Three monitoring committee meetings and an annual review meeting were held in 2009. The closure of the programme is progressing according to the plans.

24.4. Fisheries outside Objective 1

The total FIFG allocation to the Swedish fisheries programme outside Objective 1, including the reserve, is EUR 65 million. The programme had a rather low level of implementation. There were decommitments for four consecutive years in application of the 'n+2' rule. In total, the programme has so far been reduced by EUR 11 million. The financial execution reached 86.5% (EUR 46.7 million out of EUR 54 million). The main measures in the programme were scrapping of vessels, processing and marketing, innovative measures/pilot projects, fishing port equipment, protection of aquatic resources, collective investments, and renewal and modernisation of the fleet.

24.5. Community Initiatives

24.5.1. Equal

In 2009 the Swedish EQUAL programme proceeded without difficulties in its activities to prepare closure of the programme. The rate of financial execution of the ESF part of the programme already reached the 95.0% payment limit in 2008. The annual implementation report for 2008 was duly delivered to and accepted by the Commission. Three monitoring committee meetings and an annual review meeting were held in 2009.

Many of the experiences from the EQUAL programme, especially when it comes to partnership, innovation, transnationality and ways to influence system and policies, have been mainstreamed in the 2007-2013 ESF operational programme.

24.5.2. Leader

In 2001, the Commission approved one Swedish Leader+ programme. Total support from the EAGGF-Guidance Section amounted to EUR 41.2 million. In total, twelve Local Action Groups were selected. The implementation of the programme reached its end in 2008. By the end of 2008 approximately 116.0% of the total EAGGF budget for 2000–2006 had been allocated to projects. By the end of 2009 the Commission had in total paid out EUR 39.2 million (of which EUR 2.8 million as advances), an amount equivalent to 95.0% of the total EAGGF budget. No automatic decommitment needed to be executed. Payment claims presented to the Commission up to the end of 2009 amounted to EUR 38.2 million. The presentation of the final report was expected for 31 March 2010.

24.5.3. Urban

The Göteborg URBAN II programme is the only one in Sweden. The ERDF contributes a total of EUR 5.4 million to the overall funding of EUR 16.1 million. The programme reached 94.7% of payments in 2009 and the 'n+2' rule was met. The annual implementation report for 2008 will be included in the final report, due end of March 2010. The programme strategy has a coherent approach combining entrepreneurship, infrastructure improvement and equal opportunities.

24.6. Closure of the 1994-1999 programming period

The last programmes from the budget period 1994-1999 were already closed in 2004.

25. UNITED KINGDOM

2000-2006 programming period

25.1. Objective 1

The ERDF provided a total of EUR 3 970 million (excluding Peace II programme) to Objective 1 programmes in the United Kingdom during the programming period. FIFG support is available in five Objective 1 programmes, for a total of EUR 94.3 million. The ESF provided a total of EUR 1 886 million to Objective 1 programmes in the United Kingdom during the programming period (including the Northern Ireland BSP programme).

The total ERDF amount paid out in 2009 was EUR 108.4 million.

The total ESF amount paid out in 2009 (excluding PEACE II) was EUR 40.2 million.

For the EAGGF, the total amount (excluding PEACE II) paid by the end of 2009 was EUR 344 million (95% of the scheduled budget for the 2000-2006 programming period).

Assistance was provided through five Single Programming Documents and two Operational Programmes. Three of the Single Programming Documents concern the English regions of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Merseyside and South Yorkshire; the other two Single Programming Documents concern Wales (West Wales and The Valleys) and Scotland (transitional programme for Highlands and Islands). Each programme covers four to six priority areas, grouped around five main themes: support for small and medium-sized business, support for business modernisation, community economic regeneration, human resource development and development of strategic infrastructure.

The two Operational Programmes under the Northern Ireland Community Support Framework are funded by all four Structural Funds. They are: 'Building Sustainable Prosperity' (BSP), a transitional Objective 1 programme, and the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland ('PEACE II' programme 2000–2006).

Extension of the final date of eligibility of expenditure until 30 June 2009 was given for West Wales and the Valleys, Highlands and Islands of Scotland and the BSP Operational Programme of Northern Ireland, due to the impact of the 2008 financial crisis.

PEACE II

The 'PEACE II' programme covers Northern Ireland and the border regions of Ireland. It builds on the experience of the special support programme 'PEACE I' (1995–1999) and exemplifies the practical support given by the EU to the peace process after the Belfast Agreement. Initially PEACE II covered the period 2000-2004 but in 2004 it was decided to provide additional funding and extend the

programme to 2006, bringing it into line with the other Structural Funds programmes in the rest of the European Union.

No payment claims were received for the PEACE II programme for the ERDF in 2009. An extension of the final date of eligibility until 30 June 2009 was given for the PEACE II programme.

In the case of ESF, overall payments for the whole period have reached 95.0% of the total ESF allocation. The total FIFG allocation for Northern Ireland is EUR 0.8 million. Also for that part of the programme, there was no execution in 2009 with the 95.0% payment limit having already been reached.

25.2. Objective 2

The ERDF provides a total of EUR 4526 million and the ESF a total of EUR 526.8 million for Objective 2 programmes in the United Kingdom. The funds are implemented through fourteen Single Programming Documents. Nine programmes cover the English regions of West Midlands, Yorkshire and the Humber, East Midlands, North East of England, North West of England, East England, South East England, South West England and London; three cover the regions of South of Scotland, East of Scotland and Western Scotland; one concerns East Wales; and one concerns Gibraltar. Each programme covers an average of three priority areas, grouped around three main themes: developing diverse, dynamic and competitive business bases, strategic spatial development, and community regeneration and economic and social development. The UK Objective 2 programmes were adopted in 2001, meaning that increasing levels of activity and progress were not registered until 2003. The total amount of ERDF paid in 2009 was EUR 202.0 million.

The total ESF amount paid out in 2009 is EUR 25.7 million.

Extensions of the final date of eligibility of expenditure until 30 June 2009, due to the impact of the 2008 financial crisis, were given for East Wales, Gibraltar, and Eastern, Western and South Scotland.

Overall summary of the 2000-2006 period

Programme implementation was in line with the relevant strategies at local level across the UK, placing the emphasis on economic restructuring and regeneration, the development of key sectors and community economic development. Monitoring indicators reveal that all Operational Programmes met their targets and achieved their objectives. In addition, evaluations confirm that Structural Funds assistance has had a positive impact on the areas of intervention in promoting economic convergence and cohesion between the regions, as well as employment and social inclusion.

The final eligibility dates for PEACE II, BSP Northern Ireland Objective 1, the Welsh and Scottish Operational Programmes were extended to 30 June 2010. All English ESF and the two GB EQUAL programmes retained the original final eligibility date of 31 December 2008 and closure packages were received by end of March 2010.

25.3. Objective 3

The ESF provides a total of EUR 4948 million for Objective 3 programmes in Great Britain, implemented through one Community Support Framework and three Operational Programmes: England (EUR 4290 million), Scotland (EUR 520 million) and East Wales (EUR 138.0 million).

All three Annual Implementation Reports were received and deemed admissible and satisfactory. The final meeting of the GB monitoring committee was held in September 2009. Three meetings of the monitoring committee for the English OP and one for the Scottish OP were also held in 2009.

The programmes were implemented through five policy fields: active labour markets, equal opportunities and social inclusion, lifelong learning, adaptability and entrepreneurship and gender equality. The English OP alone supported about 6630 projects and helped more than 5.26 million people through a range of employability, training, advice and guidance activities. Almost half a million unemployed or inactive participants gained jobs and 1.4 million participants gained qualifications.

After a formal suspension of the Objective 3 Scotland Programme in 2008 and after the action plan had been implemented by the Scottish Authorities, the audit problems were solved end 2009. In financial terms at the end of 2009 the ESF absorption rate was 73. 9% and payments amounted to EUR 491.0 million for the whole period.

The total amount paid out for the East Wales Operational Programme in 2009 was EUR 3.2 million. For England the 95.0% payment limit was already reached in 2008.

25.4. Fisheries outside Objective 1

The UK FIFG outside Objective 1 programme was closed in 2008; the end date of eligibility was 30 April 2009. The total FIFG allocation to the programme was EUR 88.9 million following the last decommitment in 2008 of EUR 4.3 million of the 2005 commitment.

The most important measures were processing and marketing (35.3% of FIFG committed), scrapping (19.8% of FIFG committed), operations by members of trade (15.1% of FIFG committed) and fishing port facilities (16.4% of FIFG committed).

As the programme has not submitted any interim payment claims and statements of expenditure, according to the latest available data at the end of 2009, the reimbursement level was 65%.

25.5. Community Initiatives

25.5.1. Equal

The UK has two EQUAL programmes: Great Britain (GB) and Northern Ireland (NI).

In October 2008 EQUAL was formally closed. In financial terms, at the end of 2009, the rate of execution of the EQUAL GB represented 93.7% of the total commitment and EUR 369.7 million was paid. For EQUAL NI, the absorption rate represented

83.2% and payments for the whole period amounted to EUR 9.9 million. For none of the EQUAL programmes were payments made in 2009.

25.5.2. Leader

The UK has four Leader+ programmes: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales with fifty-five Local Action Groups. The total cost of the four programmes amounts to EUR 266.0 million, of which the EAGGF-Guidance Section contributes EUR 115.0 million.

By the end of 2009, a total amount of EUR 109.4 million was paid (95% of the total budget for the 2000-2006 programming period).

All the programmes reached their 'n+2' targets.

The extension of the final date of eligibility of expenditure until 30 June 2009 was requested in December 2008 for Leader+ Northern Ireland, due to the impact of the 2008 financial crisis.

25.5.3. Urban

In the UK, the ERDF supports 11 programmes under the URBAN II initiative, eight of them in England, one in Wales, one in Scotland and one in Northern Ireland. These programmes propose innovative development models for the economic and social regeneration of the areas concerned, and finance projects to this end. Partnership in design, selection and implementation of projects is a key feature of the URBAN II programmes.

The total ERDF support allocated to all 11 programmes was EUR 126.2 million. In 2009, total payments to URBAN II programmes reached EUR 7.4 million (the total absorption rate for all programmes is 89.6%).

All annual implementation reports for 2008 were submitted and considered admissible.

25.6. Closure of the 1994-1999 programming period

One ERDF programme was still open at the end of 2009 due to unresolved issues regarding irregularities.

All ESF programmes were already closed at the end of 2008.

All EAGGF programmes were closed.

Part 3: List of Major Projects

A list of major projects for the 2000-2006 programming period was included in Part 3 of the 18th Annual Report on the Implementation of the Structural Funds (COM(2007) 676), as amended in Part 3 of the 20th Annual Report on the Implementation of the Structural Funds (COM(2009) 617).That list remains valid and can be consulted for further details. In addition to the major projects listed there, this table shows those decided on in the course of 2009.

Member State	Reference	Title	Date of decision	Decision No	Total costs (in EUR million)	Total eligible costs (in EUR million)	ERDF Amount (in EUR million)	Total National Amount (in EUR million)	Private Eligible Amount (in EUR million)	Rate of Community assistance
France	2006FR161PR005	Irrigation du Littoral Ouest	13.03.2009 (amended on 26.06.2009)	C(2009) 1884 (amended by Decision C(2009) 5199)	855.0	179.6	98.8	80.8	0	55.0%
Italia	CCI2006IT161PR002	SS 114 Orientale Sicula	30.06.2009	C(2009)5299	561.7	339.4	158.4	181.0	0	46.7%
Portugal	2006PT161PR010	Amper Central Solar, SA	24.02.2009	C(2009)1238	238.0	162.4	12.8	149.5	0	7.9%
Portugal	2006PT161PR013	SCUT Beira Interior e Beira Litoral e Alta	30.11.2009	C(2009)9711	1291.1	12.2	7.3	4.9	0	60.0%
Portugal	2006PT161PR014	Expropriações para a SCUT Interior Norte	30.11.2009	C(2009)9709	457.6	20.0	7.8	12.2	0	39.0%
Portugal	2006PT161PR015	Expropriações para a SCUT Grande Porto	30.11.2009	C(2009)9751 11	512.5	25.0	12.5	12.5	0	50.0%

Part 4: Financial Figures

Financial implementation 2009: Objectives 1-3

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Belgique-België	1. Decided	843 903 942.00	1 045 114 317.00	41 805 665.00	1 556 226.00	1 932 380 150.00					
	2. Committed	843 903 942.00	1 045 114 317.51	41 805 665.00	1 556 225.78	1 932 380 150.29					
	3. Paid	776 275 230.30	989 689 850.82	36 663 486.00	528 413.78	1 803 156 980.90	14 289 600.77	37 544 444.14			51 834 044.91
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	91.99 %	94.70 %	87.70 %	33.95 %	93.31 %					
Ceska Republika	1. Decided	985 562 948.00	424 890 166.00	169 790 354.00	4 111 073.00	1 584 354 541.00					
	2. Committed	985 562 948.00	424 890 166.00	169 790 354.00	4 111 073.00	1 584 354 541.00					
	3. Paid	936 284 800.60	402 352 895.36	161 300 836.00	3 905 519.35	1 503 844 051.31	20 232 627.77	47 598 133.67			67 830 761.44
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	94.70 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	94.92 %					
Danmark	1. Decided	141 648 773.00	431 174 689.00			572 823 462.00					
	2. Committed	141 648 773.00	431 174 689.10			572 823 462.10		-18 819 709.41			-18 819 709.41
	3. Paid	133 363 289.34	362 762 350.49			496 125 639.83	8 937 996.97				8 937 996.97
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	96.65 %			97.46 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.15 %	81.31 %			84.41 %					
Deutschland	1. Decided	15 424 973 509.00	11 289 253 220.00	3 417 719 969.00	91 495 213.00	30 223 441 911.00					
	2. Committed	15 424 968 135.68	11 289 253 220.85	3 417 719 968.00	91 495 212.58	30 223 436 537.11					
	3. Paid	14 638 133 946.65	10 723 033 324.13	3 246 833 969.00	86 920 452.35	28 694 921 692.13	109 762 310.68	20 517 035.36			130 279 346.04
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.90 %	94.98 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	94.94 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Eesti	1. Decided	232 820 142.00	69 275 610.00	56 798 282.00	12 469 418.00	371 363 452.00					
	2. Committed	232 820 142.00	69 275 610.00	56 798 282.00	12 469 418.00	371 363 452.00					
	3. Paid	221 179 134.88	65 640 753.54	53 958 367.00	11 845 947.10	352 624 202.52					
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	94.75 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	94.95 %					
Ellada	1. Decided	15 152 463 366.00	4 771 653 980.00	2 550 311 562.00	213 893 365.00	22 688 322 273.00					
	2. Committed	15 152 463 366.20	4 771 653 979.60	2 550 311 562.00	213 893 365.00	22 688 322 272.80					
	3. Paid	14 378 951 275.18	4 530 020 153.28	2 421 699 454.00	203 198 696.75	21 533 869 579.21	698 435 045.78	86 196 474.87	76 578 027.00	24 728 041.65	885 937 589.30
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.90 %	94.94 %	94.96 %	95.00 %	94.91 %					
España	1. Decided	27 904 766 267.00	11 699 051 196.00	5 232 503 468.00	1 570 925 014.00	46 407 245 945.00					
	2. Committed	27 904 766 267.00	11 699 051 196.85	5 232 503 468.28	1 570 925 014.00	46 407 245 946.13	-7 360 234.00	-15 121 832.29			-22 482 066.29
	3. Paid	26 025 507 537.46	10 902 122 821.62	4 970 878 288.52	1.492 378 763.30	43 390 887 410.90	1 261 380 836.52	174 892 920.58	420 877.00		1 436 694 634.10
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	93.27 %	93.19 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	93.50 %					
France	1. Decided	8 167 416 971.00	6 666 386 443.00	670 263 108.00	33 842 296.00	15 537 908 818.00					
	2. Committed	8 166 658 241.02	6 666 386 441.60	670 263 108.00	33 842 296.00	15 537 150 086.62	-1 487 175.69	-919 798.81			-2 406 974.50
	3. Paid	7 745 898 631.80	6 225 104 937.92	636 749 950.00	31 819 224.43	14 639 572 744.15	257 598 095.69	341 644 345.59	16 270 172.00	1 147 508.78	616 660 122.06
	% (2)/(1)	99.99 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.84 %	93.38 %	95.00 %	94.02 %	94.22 %					
Ireland	1. Decided	1 946 313 000.00	1 016 487 000.00	153 636 289.00	67 800 000.00	3 184 236 289.00					
	2. Committed	1 946 313 000.00	1 016 487 000.00	153 636 289.00	67 800 000.00	3 184 236 289.00					
	3. Paid	1 837 448 414.77	961 937 618.00	145 954 474.00	64 410 000.00	3 009 750 506.77				2 526 473.71	2 526 473.71
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.41 %	94.63 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	94.52 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Italia	1. Decided	18 639 088 813.00	8 457 731 299.00	3 258 998 890.00	288 055 284.00	30 643 874.286 00					
	2. Committed	18 639 088 813.00	8 457 731 299.42	3 258 998 890.00	288 055 283.61	30 643 874 286.03				-17 826 734.00	-17 826 734.00
	3. Paid	16 753 065 913.55	7 409 045 772.27	2 939 399 793.00	248 725 887.75	27 350 237 366.57	619 013 731.70	371 090 101.09	223 959 692.00	20 196 692.78	1 234 260 217.57
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	89.88 %	87.60 %	90.19 %	86.35 %	89.25 %					
Kypros	1. Decided	28 022 807.00	21 945 197.00			49 968 004.00					
	2. Committed	28 022 807.00	21 945 197.00			49 968 004.00					
	3. Paid	26 621 666.65	20 847 937.15			47 469 603.80	774 895.31	4 854 569.24			5 629 464.55
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	95.00 %			95.00 %					
Latvija	1. Decided	382 043 677.00	127 341 960.00	91 848 189.00	24 335 000.00	625 568 826.00					
	2. Committed	382 043 677.00	127 341 960.00	91 848 189.00	24 335 000.00	625 568 826.00					
	3. Paid	362 941 493.15	120 974 862.00	87 255 779.00	23 118 250.00	594 290 384.15					
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %					
Lietuva	1. Decided	583 939 739.00	176 217 551.00	122 898 628.00	12 116 766.00	895 172 684.00					
	2. Committed	583 939 739.00	176 217 551.00	122 898 628.00	12 116 766.00	895 172 684.00					
	3. Paid	554 742 752.05	167 406 673.45	116 753 696.00	11 510 927.70	850 414 049.20					
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %					
Luxembourg (Grand-Duche)	1. Decided	44 000 000.00	31 682 966.00			75 682 966.00					
	2. Committed	44 000 000.00	31 682 966.63			75 682 966.63					
	3. Paid	41 800 000.00	23 440 915.50			65 240 915.50	2 442 913.55				2 442 913.55
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	73.99 %			86.20 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Magyarország	1. Decided	1 239 381 188.00	439 117 222.00	312 828 868.00	4 389 882.00	1 995 717 160.00					
	2. Committed	1 239 381 188.00	439 117 222.00	312 828 868.00	4 389 882.00	1 995 717 160.00					
	3. Paid	1 177 412 128.60	399 694 031.48	297 187 419.00	3 990 044.92	1 878 283 624.00				206 288.75	206 288.75
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	99.99 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	91.02 %	95.00 %	90.89 %	94.12 %					
Malta	1. Decided	46 697 639.00	9 457 500.00	4 200 000.00	2 837 500.00	63 192 639.00					
	2. Committed	46 697 639.00	9 457 500.00	4 200 000.00	2 837 500.00	63 192 639.00					
	3. Paid	44 362 757.05	8 984 625.00	3 990 000.00	2 695 625.00	60 033 007.05					
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %					
Nederland	1. Decided	940 660 000.00	1 565 741 433.00	10 398 242.00	6 280 000.00	2 523 079 675.00					
	2. Committed	940 659 000.00	1 565 741 433.00	10 398 242.00	6 280 000.00	2 523 078 675.00					
	3. Paid	825 842 907.88	1 480 135 935.02	8 158 534.00	5 906 146.00	2 320 043 522.90	16 598 886.12	161 526 624.14			178 125 510.26
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	87.79 %	94.53 %	78.46 %	94.05 %	91.95 %					
Österreich	1. Decided	885 173 694.00	656 938 420.00	43 684 352.00	257 784.00	1 586 054 250.00					
	2. Committed	885 173 694.04	656 938 420.00	43 684 352.00	257 784.09	1 586 054 250.13					
	3. Paid	857 672 259.30	624 091 499.00	41 500 134.00	195 451.73	1 523 459 344.03	18 264 451.14	72 189.62			18 336 640.76
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	99.96 %					
	% (3)/(1)	96.89 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	75.82 %	96.05 %					
Polska	1. Decided	4 972 788 583.00	1 908 502 751.00	1 192 689 238.00	201 832 064.00	8 275 812 636.00					
	2. Committed	4 972 788 583.00	1 908 502 751.00	1 192 689 238.00	201 832 064.00	8 275 812 636.00					
	3. Paid	4 724 149 153.85	1 813 077 613.45	1 133 054 776.00	177 788 079.98	7 848 069 623.28	51 482 934.25	69 784 137.34		26 040 199.32	147 307 270.91
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	88.09 %	94.83 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Portugal	1. Decided	13 229 822 910.00	4 784 220 439.00	2 185 038 433.00	236 816 863.00	20 435 898 645.00					
	2. Committed	13 229 822 910.00	4 784 220 439.05	2 185 038 432.57	236 816 863.00	20 435 898 644.62	-919 096.00				-919 096.00
	3. Paid	12 568 231 567.68	4 545 009 417.05	2 057 944 015.00	221 485 700.19	19 392 670 699.92	306 427 236.69	1 090 417.31	109 343 305.00	24 465 582.32	441 326 541.32
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	95.00 %	94.18 %	93.53 %	94.90 %					
Slovenija	1. Decided	136 523 478.00	75 635 986.00	23 569 093.00	1 781 040.00	237 509 597.00					
	2. Committed	136 523 478.00	75 635 986.00	23 569 093.00	1 781 040.00	237 509 597.00					
	3. Paid	129 697 304.10	71 854 186.70	22 390 638.00	1 691 988.00	225 634 116.80		7 516 301.14		38 319.82	7 554 620.96
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %					
Slovenska Republica	1. Decided	610 606 848.00	321 599 056.00	181 158 922.00	1 829 065.00	1 115 193 891.00					
	2. Committed	610 606 847.30	321 599 057.12	181 158 922.00	1 829 065.00	1 115 193 891.42					
	3.Paid	577 121 220.55	305 519 103.20	172 100 975.00	1 737 611.75	1 056 478 910.50		15 875 422.57			15 875 422.57
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.52 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	94.73 %					
Suomi/Finland	1.Decided	910 807 000.00	834 231 400.00	201 640 000.00	8 884 000.00	1 955 562 400.00					
	2.Committed	910 807 000.00	834 231 400.00	201 640 000.00	8 884 000.00	1 955 562 400.00					
	3. Paid	865 164 572.29	792 351 783.30	191 558 000.00	8 439 800.00	1 857 514 155.59		76 259.64			76 259.64
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	99.98 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.99 %	94.98 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	94.99 %					
Sverige	1. Decided	875 439 631.00	998 005 293.00	116 044 514.00	8 425 923.00	1 997 915 361.00					
	2. Committed	875 439 631.00	998 005 292.60	116 044 514.00	8 425 923.82	1 997 915 361.42					
	3. Paid	831 667 649.45	938 977 026.75	110 242 287.00	7 280 756.24	1 888 167 719.44	1 603 354.32	9 959 870.47		384 092.73	11 947 317.52
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	97.17 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	94.09 %	95.00 %	86.41 %	94.51 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
United Kingdom	1. Decided	8 864 321 357.00	7 535 301 392.00	400 196 902.00	97 763 651.00	16 897 583 302.00					
	2. Committed	8 864 321 357.28	7 535 301 391.58	400 196 902.00	97 763 650.42	16 897 583 301.28					
	3. Paid	8 284 225 320.75	6 953 668 280.84	374 884 721.00	85 137 027.77	15 697 915 350.36	310 532 881.20	69 117 687.21	11 919 559.00	3 315 051.74	394 885 179.15
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	97.78 %					
	% (3)/(1)	93.46 %	92.28 %	93.68 %	87.08 %	92.90 %					
Total	1. Decided	123 189 186 282.00	65 356 956 486.00	20 438 022 968.00	2 891 697 427.00	211 875 863 163.00					
	2. Committed	123 188 421 178.52	65 356 956 487.91	20 438 022 966.85	2 891 697 426.30	211 875 098 059.58	-9 766 505.69	-34 861 340.51		-17 826 734.00	-62 454 580.20
	3. Paid	115 317 760 927.88	60 837 744 367.32	19 230 459 591.52	2 694 710 314.09	198 080 675 200.81	3 697 777 798.46	1 419 356 933.98	438 491 632.00	103 048 251.60	5 658 674 616.04
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00%	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00%					
	% (3)/(1)	93.61 %	93.09%	94.09 %	93.19 %	93.49%					

Source: Commission database SFC / ABAC / SINCOM

Financial implementation 2009: Objective 1

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Belgique-België	1. Decided	427 589 200.00	200 203 797.00	41 805 665.00	1 556 226.00	671 154 888.00					
	2. Committed	427 589 200.00	200 203 797.00	41 805 665.00	1 556 225.78	671 154 887.78					
	3. Paid	404 575 930.95	190 193 607.15	36 663 486.00	528 413.78	631 961 437.88		8 714 022.00			8 714 022.00
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.62 %	95.00 %	87.70 %	33.95 %	94.16 %					
Ceska Republika	1. Decided	914 267 548.00	366 096 803.00	169 790 354.00	4 111 073.00	1 454 265 778.00					
	2. Committed	914 267 548.00	366 096 803.00	169 790 354.00	4 111 073.00	1 454 265 778.00					
	3. Paid	868 554 170.60	346 499 200.51	161 300 836.00	3 905 519.35	1 380 259 726.46	17 873 017.41	46 729 407.90			64 602 425.31
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	94.65 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	94.91 %					
Deutschland	1. Decided	12 177 017 415.00	5 816 988 103.00	3 417 719 969.00	91 495 213.00	21 503 220 700.00					
	2. Committed	12 177 013 088.21	5 816 988 102.59	3 417 719 968.00	91 495 212.58	21 503 216 371.38					
	3. Paid	11 564 878 536.51	5 526 138 697.85	3 246 833 969.00	86 920 452.35	20 424 771 655.71	21 534 665.78				21 534 665.78
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.97 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	94.98 %					
Eesti	1. Decided	232 820 142.00	69 275 610.00	56 798 282.00	12 469 418.00	371 363 452.00					
	2. Committed	232 820 142.00	69 275 610.00	56 798 282.00	12 469 418.00	371 363 452.00					
	3. Paid	221 179 134.88	65 640 753.54	53 958 367.00	11 845 947.10	352 624 202.52					
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	94.75 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	94.95 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Ellada	1. Decided	15 152 463 366.00	4 771 653 980.00	2 550 311 562.00	213 893 365.00	22 688 322 273.00					
	2. Committed	15 152 463 366.20	4 771 653 979.60	2 550 311 562.00	213 893 365.00	22 688 322 272.80					
	3. Paid	14 378 951 275.18	4 530 020 153.28	2 421 699 454.00	203 198 696.75	21 533 869 579.21	698 435 045.78	86 196 474.87	76 578 027.00	24 728 041.65	885 937 589.30
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.90 %	94.94 %	94.96 %	95.00 %	94.91 %					
España	1. Decided	25 351 187 210.00	9 080 273 167.00	5 232 503 468.00	1 570 925 014.00	41 234 888 859.00					
	2. Committed	25 351 187 210.00	9 080 273 166.64	5 232 503 468.28	1 570 925 014.00	41 234 888 858.92	-7 360 234.00	-15 121 832.29			-22 482 066.29
	3. Paid	23 769 293 978.13	8 452 555 425.24	4 970 878 288.52	1 492 378 763.30	38 685 106 455.19	1 224 726 714.68	70 279 681.11	420 877.00		1 295 427 272.79
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	93.76 %	93.09 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	93.82 %					
France	1. Decided	2 466 235 644.00	947 715 419.00	670 263 108.00	33 842 296.00	4 118 056 467.00					
	2. Committed	2 465 476 913.93	947 715 419.00	670 263 108.00	33 842 296.00	4 117 297 736.93					
	3. Paid	2 332 574 931.08	866 552 506.02	636 749 950.00	31 819 224.43	3 867 696 611.53	149 650 137.74	25 205 723.16	16 270 172.00	1 147 508.78	192 273 541.68
	% (2)/(1)	99.97 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	99.98 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.58 %	91.44 %	95.00 %	94.02 %	93.92 %					
Ireland	1. Decided	1 946 313 000.00	1 016 487 000.00	153 636 289.00	67 800 000.00	3 184 236 289.00					
	2. Committed	1 946 313 000.00	1 016 487 000.00	153 636 289.00	67 800 000.00	3 184 236 289.00					
	3. Paid	1 837 448 414.77	961 937 618.00	145 954 474.00	64 410 000.00	3 009 750 506.77				2 526 473.71	2 526 473.71
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.41 %	94.63 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	94.52 %					
Italia	1. Decided	15 918 088 813.00	4 401 926 099.00	3 258 998 890.00	288 055 284.00	23 867 069 086.00					
	2. Committed	15 918 088 813.00	4 401 926 099.42	3 258 998 890.00	288 055 283.61	23 867 069 086.03				-17 826 734.00	-17 826 734.00
	3. Paid	14 175 500 890.28	3 656 277 763.26	2 939 399 793.00	248 725 887.75	21 019 904 334.29	541 779 102.28	280 626 855.75	223 959 692.00	20 196 692.78	1 066 562 342.81
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	89.05 %	83.06 %	90.19 %	86.35 %	88.07 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Latvija	1. Decided	382 043 677.00	127 341 960.00	91 848 189.00	24 335 000.00	625 568 826.00					
	2. Committed	382 043 677.00	127 341 960.00	91 848 189.00	24 335 000.00	625 568 826.00					
	3. Paid	362 941 493.15	120 974 862.00	87 255 779.00	23 118 250.00	594 290 384.15					
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %					
Lietuva	1. Decided	583 939 739.00	176 217 551.00	122 898 628.00	12 116 766.00	895 172 684.00					
	2. Committed	583 939 739.00	176 217 551.00	122 898 628.00	12 116 766.00	895 172 684.00					
	3. Paid	554 742 752.05	167 406 673.45	116 753 696.00	11 510 927.70	850 414 049.20					
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %					
Magyarország	1. Decided	1 239 381 188.00	439 117 222.00	312 828 868.00	4 389 882.00	1 995 717 160.00					
	2. Committed	1 239 381 188.00	439 117 222.00	312 828 868.00	4 389 882.00	1 995 717 160.00					
	3. Paid	1 177 412 128.60	399 694 031.48	297 187 419.00	3 990 044.92	1 878 283 624.00				206 288.75	206 288.75
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	91.02 %	95.00 %	90.89 %	94.12 %					
Malta	1. Decided	46 697 639.00	9 457 500.00	4 200 000.00	2 837 500.00	63 192 639.00					
	2. Committed	46 697 639.00	9 457 500.00	4 200 000.00	2 837 500.00	63 192 639.00					
	3. Paid	44 362 757.05	8 984 625.00	3 990 000.00	2 695 625.00	60 033 007.05					
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %					
Nederland	1. Decided	81 660 000.00	33 590 000.00	10 398 242.00	6 280 000.00	131 928 242.00					
	2. Committed	81 660 000.00	33 590 000.00	10 398 242.00	6 280 000.00	131 928 242.00					
	3. Paid	77 577 000.00	24 592 073.67	8 158 534.00	5 906 146.00	116 233 753.67					
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	73.21 %	78.46 %	94.05 %	88.10 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Österreich	1. Decided	181 519 085.00	57 440 139.00	43 684 352.00	257 784.00	282 901 360.00					
	2. Committed	181 519 085.00	57 440 139.00	43 684 352.00	257 784.09	282 901 360.09					
	3. Paid	172 443 130.75	54 568 132.05	41 500 134.00	195 451.73	268 706 848.53					
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	75.82 %	94.98 %					
Polska	1. Decided	4 972 788 583.00	1 908 502 751.00	1 192 689 238.00	201 832 064.00	8 275 812 636.00					
	2. Committed	4 972 788 583.00	1 908 502 751.00	1 192 689 238.00	201 832 064.00	8 275 812 636.00					
	3. Paid	4 724 149 153.85	1 813 077 613.45	1 133 054 776.00	177 788 079.98	7 848 069 623.28	51 482 934.25	69 784 137.34		26 040 199.32	147 307 270.91
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	88.09 %	94.83 %					
Portugal	1. Decided	13 229 822 910.00	4 784 220 439.00	2 185 038 433.00	236 816 863.00	20 435 898 645.00					
	2. Committed	13 229 822 910.00	4 784 220 439.05	2 185 038 432.57	236 816 863.00	20 435 898 644.62	-919 096.00				-919 096.00
	3. Paid	12 568 231 567.68	4 545 009 417.05	2 057 944 015.00	221 485 700.19	19 392 670 699.92	306 427 236.69	1 090 417.31	109 343 305.00	24 465 582.32	441 326 541.32
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	95.00 %	94.18 %	93.53 %	94.90 %					
Slovenija	1. Decided	136 523 478.00	75 635 986.00	23 569 093.00	1 781 040.00	237 509 597.00					
	2. Committed	136 523 478.00	75 635 986.00	23 569 093.00	1 781 040.00	237 509 597.00					
	3. Paid	129 697 304.10	71 854 186.70	22 390 638.00	1 691 988.00	225 634 116.80		7 516 301.14		38 319.82	7 554 620.96
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %					
Slovenska Republica	1. Decided	573 574 135.00	284 480 923.00	181 158 922.00	1 829 065.00	1 041 043 045.00					
	2. Committed	573 574 135.00	284 480 923.00	181 158 922.00	1 829 065.00	1 041 043 045.00					
	3. Paid	541 940 143.20	270 256 876.85	172 100 975.00	1 737 611.75	986 035 606.80		8 044 712.61			8 044 712.61
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.48 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	94.72 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Suomi/Finland	1. Decided	498 641 000.00	279 835 000.00	201 640 000.00	8 884 000.00	989 000 000.00					
	2. Committed	498 641 000.00	279 835 000.00	201 640 000.00	8 884 000.00	989 000 000.00					
	3. Paid	473 708 950.00	265 843 250.00	191 558 000.00	8 439 800.00	939 550 000.00					
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %	95.00 %					
Sverige	1. Decided	489 460 422.00	164 021 802.00	116 044 514.00	8 425 923.00	777 952 661.00					
	2. Committed	489 460 422.00	164 021 801.60	116 044 514.00	8 425 923.82	777 952 661.42					
	3. Paid	464 987 400.90	154 091 910.85	110 242 287.00	7 280 756.24	736 602 354.99	1 603 354.32	6 997 320.63		384 092.73	8 984 767.68
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	93.95 %	95.00 %	86.41 %	94.68 %					
United Kingdom	1. Decided	4 338 242 143.00	2 060 065 687.00	400 196 902.00	97 763 651.00	6 896 268 383.00					
	2. Committed	4 338 242 144.06	2 060 065 687.66	400 196 902.00	97 763 650.42	6 896 268 384.14					
	3. Paid	4 048 603 415.30	1 923 864 371.26	374 884 721.00	85 137 027.77	6 432 489 535.33	108 398 174.66	40 213 433.99	11 919 559.00	3 315 051.74	163 846 219.39
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	93.32 %	93.39 %	93.68 %	87.08 %	93.27 %					
Total	1. Decided	101 340 276 337.00	37 070 546 938.00	20 438 022 968.00	2 891 697 427.00	161 740 543 670.00					
	2. Committed	101 339 513 281.40	37 070 546 937.56	20 438 022 966.85	2 891 697 426.30	161 739 780 612.11	-8 279 330.00	-15 121 832.29		-17 826 734.00	-41 227 896.29
	3. Paid	94 893 754 459.01	34 416 033 748.66	19 230 459 591.52	2 694 710 314.09	151 234 958 113.28	3 121 910 383.59	651 398 487.81	438 491 632.00	103 048 251.60	4 314 848 755.00
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	93.64 %	92.84 %	94.09 %	93.19 %	93.50 %					

Source: Commission database SFC / ABAC / SINCOM

Financial implementation 2009: Objective 2

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Belgique-België	1. Decided	416 314 742.00	48 499 226.00			464 813 968.00					
	2. Committed	416 314 742.00	48 499 226.00			464 813 968.00					
	3. Paid	371 699 299.35	44 226 596.69			415 925 896.04	14 289 600.77	2 814 930.22			17 104 530.99
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	89.28 %	91.19 %			89.48 %					
Ceska Republika	1. Decided	71 295 400.00				71 295 400.00					
	2. Committed	71 295 400.00				71 295 400.00					
	3. Paid	67 730 630.00				67 730 630.00	2 359 610.36				2 359 610.36
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %				100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %				95.00 %					
Danmark	1. Decided	141 648 773.00	51 322 702.00			192 971 475.00					
	2. Committed	141 648 773.00	51 322 702.51			192 971 475.51		-3 872 447.00			-3 872 447.00
	3. Paid	133 363 289.34	42 806 163.90			176 169 453.24	8 937 996.97				8 937 996.97
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.15 %	83.41 %			91.29 %					
Deutschland	1. Decided	3 247 956 094.00	509 753 617.00			3 757 709 711.00					
	2. Committed	3 247 955 047.47	509 753 618.26			3 757 708 665.73					
	3. Paid	3 073 255 410.14	482 508 701.28			3 555 764 111.42	88 227 644.90	20 517 035.36			108 744 680.26
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.62 %	94.66 %			94.63 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
España	1. Decided	2 553 579 057.00	310 304 761.00			2 863 883 818.00					
	2. Committed	2 553 579 057.00	310 304 761.81			2 863 883 818.81					
	3. Paid	2 256 213 559.33	267 944 072.99			2 524 157 632.32	36 654 121.84	32 637 601.33			69 291 723.17
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	88.35 %	86.35 %			88.14 %					
France	1. Decided	5 701 181 327.00	800 573 924.00			6 501 755 251.00					
	2. Committed	5 701 181 327.09	800 573 922.60			6 501 755 249.69	-1 487 175.69	-919 798.81			-2 406 974.50
	3. Paid	5 413 323 700.72	748 903 096.22			6 162 226 796.94	107 947 957.95	31 615 818.88			139 563 776.83
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.01 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.95 %	93.55 %			94.78 %					
Italia	1. Decided	2 721 000 000.00				2 721 000 000.00					
	2. Committed	2 721 000 000.00				2 721 000 000.00					
	3. Paid	2 577 565 023.27				2 577 565 023.27	77 234 629.42				77 234 629.42
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %				100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.73 %				94.73 %					
Kypros	1. Decided	28 022 807.00				28 022 807.00					
	2. Committed	28 022 807.00				28 022 807.00					
	3. Paid	26 621 666.65				26 621 666.65	774 895.31				774 895.31
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %				100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %				95.00 %					
Luxembourg (Grand-Duche)	1. Decided	44 000 000.00				44 000 000.00					
	2. Committed	44 000 000.00				44 000 000.00					
	3. Paid	41 800 000.00				41 800 000.00	2 442 913.55				2 442 913.55
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %				100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %				95.00 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Nederland	1. Decided	859.000.000.00				859.000.000.00					
	2. Committed	858 999 000.00				858 999 000.00					
	3. Paid	748.265.907.88				748.265.907.88	16.598.886.12				16.598.886.12
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %				100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	87.11 %				87.11 %					
Österreich	1. Decided	703.654.609.00	27.525.881.00			731.180.490.00					
	2. Committed	703.654.609.04	27.525.881.00			731.180.490.04					
	3. Paid	685.229.128.55	26.149.586.95			711.378.715.50	18.264.451.14	72.189.62			18.336.640.76
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	97.38 %	95.00 %			97.29 %					
Slovenska Republica	1. Decided	37.032.713.00				37.032.713.00					
	2. Committed	37.032.712.30				37.032.712.30					
	3. Paid	35.181.077.35				35.181.077.35					
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %				100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %				95.00 %					
Suomi/Finland	1. Decided	412.166.000.00	117.834.000.00			530.000.000.00					
	2. Committed	412.166.000.00	117.834.000.00			530.000.000.00					
	3. Paid	391.455.622.29	111.942.300.00			503.397.922.29					
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.98 %	95.00 %			94.98 %					
Sverige	1. Decided	385.979.209.00	54.020.791.00			440.000.000.00					
	2. Committed	385.979.209.00	54.020.791.00			440.000.000.00					
	3. Paid	366.680.248.55	51.319.751.45			418.000.000.00					
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	95.00 %			95.00 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
United Kingdom	1. Decided	4 526 079 214.00	526 806 805.00			5 052 886 019.00					
	2. Committed	4 526 079 213.22	526 806 804.92			5 052 886 018.14					
	3. Paid	4 235 621 905.45	443 076 473.86			4 678 698 379.31	202 134 706.54	25 668 460.85			227 803 167.39
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	93.58 %	84.11 %			92.59 %					
Total	1. Decided	21 848 909 945.00	2 446 641 707.00			24 295 551 652.00					
	2. Committed	21 848 907 897.12	2 446 641 708.10			24 295 549 605.22	-1 487 175.69	-4 792 245.81			-6 279 421.50
	3. Paid	20 424 006 468.87	2 218 876 743.34			22 642 883 212.21	575 867 414.87	113 326 036.26			689 193 451.13
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	93.48 %	90.69 %			93.20 %					

Source: Commission database SFC / ABAC / SINCOM

Financial implementation 2009: Objective 3

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Belgique-België	1. Decided		796 411 294.00			796 411 294.00					
	2. Committed		796 411 294.51			796 411 294.51					
	3. Paid		755 269 646.98			755 269 646.98		26 015 491.92			26 015 491.92
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		94.83 %			94.83 %					
Ceska Republika	1. Decided		58 793 363.00			58 793 363.00					
	2. Committed		58 793 363.00			58 793 363.00					
	3. Paid		55 853 694.85			55 853 694.85		868 725.77			868 725.77
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		95.00 %			95.00 %					
Danmark	1. Decided		379 851 987.00			379 851 987.00					
	2. Committed		379 851 986.59			379 851 986.59		-14 947 262.41			-14 947 262.41
	3. Paid		319 956 186.59			319 956 186.59					
	% (2)/(1)		96.21 %			96.21 %					
	% (3)/(1)		81.04 %			81.04 %					
Deutschland	1. Decided		4 962 511 500.00			4 962 511 500.00					
	2. Committed		4 962 511 500.00			4 962 511 500.00					
	3. Paid		4 714 385 925.00			4 714 385 925.00					
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		95.00 %			95.00 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
España	1. Decided		2 308 473 268.00			2 308 473 268.00					
	2. Committed		2 308 473 268.40			2 308 473 268.40					
	3. Paid		2 181 623 323.39			2 181 623 323.39		71 975 638.14			71 975 638.14
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		94.51 %			94.51 %					
France	1. Decided		4 918 097 100.00			4 918 097 100.00					
	2. Committed		4 918 097 100.00			4 918 097 100.00					
	3. Paid		4 609 649 335.68			4 609 649 335.68		284 822 803.55			284 822 803.55
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		93.73 %			93.73 %					
Italia	1. Decided		4 055 805 200.00			4 055 805 200.00					
	2. Committed		4 055 805 200.00			4 055 805 200.00					
	3. Paid		3 752 768 009.01			3 752 768 009.01		90 463 245.34			90 463 245.34
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		92.53 %			92.53 %					
Kypros	1. Decided		21 945 197.00			21 945 197.00					
	2. Committed		21 945 197.00			21 945 197.00					
	3. Paid		20 847 937.15			20 847 937.15		4 854 569.24			4 854 569.24
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		95.00 %			95.00 %					
Luxembourg (Grand-Duche)	1. Decided		31 682 966.00			31 682 966.00					
	2. Committed		31 682 966.63			31 682 966.63					
	3. Paid		23 440 915.50			23 440 915.50					
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		73.99 %			73.99 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Nederland	1. Decided		1 532 151 433.00			1 532 151 433.00					
	2. Committed		1 532 151 433.00			1 532 151 433.00					
	3. Paid		1 455 543 861.35			1 455 543 861.35		161 526 624.14			161 526 624.14
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		95.00 %			95.00 %					
Österreich	1. Decided		571 972 400.00			571 972 400.00					
	2. Committed		571 972 400.00			571 972 400.00					
	3. Paid		543 373 780.00			543 373 780.00					
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		95.00 %			95.00 %					
Slovenska Republica	1. Decided		37 118 133.00			37 118 133.00					
	2. Committed		37 118 134.12			37 118 134.12					
	3. Paid		35 262 226.35			35 262 226.35		7 830 709.96			7 830 709.96
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		95.00 %			95.00 %					
Suomi/Finland	1. Decided		436 562 400.00			436 562 400.00					
	2. Committed		436 562 400.00			436 562 400.00					
	3. Paid		414 566 233.30			414 566 233.30		76 259.64			76 259.64
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		94.96 %			94.96 %					
Sverige	1. Decided		779 962 700.00			779 962 700.00					
	2. Committed		779 962 700.00			779 962 700.00					
	3. Paid		733 565 364.45			733 565 364.45		2 962 549.84			2 962 549.84
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		94.05 %			94.05 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
United Kingdom	1. Decided		4 948 428 900.00			4 948 428 900.00					
	2. Committed		4 948 428 899.00			4 948 428 899.00					
	3. Paid		4 586 727 435.72			4 586 727 435.72		3 235 792.37			3 235 792.37
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		92.69 %			92.69 %					
Total	1. Decided		25 839 767 841.00			25 839 767 841.00					
	2. Committed		25 839 767 842.25			25 839 767 842.25		-14 947 262.41			-14 947 262.41
	3. Paid		24 202 833 875.32			24 202 833 875.32		654 632 409.91			654 632 409.91
	% (2)/(1)		100.00%			100.00%					
	% (3)/(1)		93.67%			93.67%					

Source: Commission database SFC / ABAC / SINCOM

Financial implementation 2009: Community Initiatives

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Belgique-België	1. Decided	21 387 345.00	68 237 842.00	14 326 747.00		103 951 934.00					
	2. Committed	21 387 345.62	68 237 838.65	14 627 257.00		104 252 441.27					
	3. Paid	20 317 977.75	58 497 193.62	12 115 841.02		90 931 012.39	2 658 466.01	3 717 239.96			6 375 705.97
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	102.10 %		100.29 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	85.73 %	84.57 %		87.47 %					
Ceska Republika	1. Decided		32 100 930.00			32 100 930.00					
	2. Committed		32 100 929.00			32 100 929.00					
	3. Paid		30 495 883.34			30 495 883.34					
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		95.00 %			95.00 %					
Danmark	1. Decided	5 380 115.00	30 428 011.00	17 300 208.00		53 108 334.00					
	2. Committed	5 380 115.00	30 013 947.45	17 300 208.00		52 694 270.45					
	3. Paid	5 111 109.25	24 627 778.43	15 261 415.00		45 000 302.68	560 505.01				560 505.01
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	98.64 %	100.00 %		99.22 %					
	% (3)/(1)	95.00 %	80.94 %	88.22 %		84.73 %					
Deutschland	1. Decided	149 639 795.00	523 585 685.00	255 874 055.00		929 099 535.00					
	2. Committed	149 639 794.34	523 585 685.00	255 874 054.25		929 099 533.59					
	3. Paid	141 156 561.28	477 370 553.76	242 128 987.00		860 656 102.04	1 758 707.49		1 373 932.00		3 132 639.49
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %		100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.33 %	91.17 %	94.63 %		92.63 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Eesti	1. Decided		4 068 097.00			4 068 097.00					
	2. Committed		4 068 097.00			4 068 097.00					
	3. Paid		3 864 692.15			3 864 692.15					
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		95.00 %			95.00 %					
Ellada	1. Decided	24 130 374.00	105 938 327.00	186 129 877.00		316 198 578.00					
	2. Committed	24 130 375.81	105 938 102.00	186 129 877.00		316 198 354.81					
	3. Paid	19 528 289.77	100 641 410.65	176 823 383.00		296 993 083.42		3 577 076.69	4 344 991.00		7 922 067.69
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %		100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	80.93 %	95.00 %	95.00 %		93.93 %					
España	1. Decided	114 199 845.00	511 222 482.00	497 080 370.00		1 122 502 697.00					
	2. Committed	114 199 845.00	511 222 481.01	497 080 370.00		1 122 502 696.01	-102 231.00				-102 231.00
	3. Paid	100 387 754.09	467 941 719.75	459 595 074.00		1 027 924 547.84		45 081 159.12	7 198 011.00		52 279 170.12
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %		100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	87.91 %	91.53 %	92.46 %		91.57 %					
EU cross-border cooperation	1. Decided	2 209 680 635.00				2 209 680 635.00					
	2. Committed	2 209 680 635.39				2 209 680 635.39	-11 947 796.99				-11 947 796.99
	3. Paid	2 065 984 056.93				2 065 984 056.93	121 100 652.12				121 100 652.12
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %				100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	93.50 %				93.50 %					
EU internal needs.	1. Decided	18 031 417.00				18 031 417.00					
	2. Committed	18 031 417.00				18 031 417.00					
	3. Paid	16 276 024.00				16 276 024.00	2 026 427.44				2 026 427.44
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %				100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	90.26 %				90.26 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
EU Interregional cooperation.	1. Decided	3 435 467 890.00				3 435 467 890.00					
	2. Committed	3 435 467 887.91				3 435 467 887.91	-8 477 693.41				-8 477 693.41
	3. Paid	3 105 002 591.35				3 105 002 591.35	212 998 467.70				212 998 467.70
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %				100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	90.38 %				90.38 %					
France	1. Decided	102 548 897.00	287 438 101.00	259 909 081.00		649 896 079.00					
	2. Committed	102 548 897.00	287 438 100.33	259 909 081.00		649 896 078.33					
	3. Paid	96 284 108.85	273 016 214.61	246 913 626.00		616 213 949.46	8 899 179.12	48 680 670.32			57 579 849.44
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %		100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	93.89 %	94.98 %	95.00 %		94.82 %					
Ireland	1. Decided	5 380 115.00	34 498 648.00	45 927 997.00		85 806 760.00					
	2. Committed	5 380 115.00	34 498 648.00	45 927 997.00		85 806 760.00					
	3. Paid	4 521 094.57	32 772 223.93	43 631 597.00		80 924 915.50			743 949.00		743 949.00
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %		100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	84.03 %	95.00 %	95.00 %		94.31 %					
Italia	1. Decided	114 065 379.00	401 364 808.00	281 553 068.00		796 983 255.00					
	2. Committed	114 065 379.16	401 364 808.00	281 553 068.00		796 983 255.16	-2 469 951.84				-2 469 951.84
	3. Paid	106 240 615.65	365 566 885.00	248 389 760.00		720 197 260.65	5 624 393.56	13 164 084.51	5 857 646.00		24 646 124.07
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %		100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	93.14 %	91.08 %	88.22 %		90.37 %					
Kypros	1. Decided		1 808 793.00			1 808 793.00					
	2. Committed		1 808 793.00			1 808 793.00					
	3. Paid		1 718 353.35			1 718 353.35		587 215.15			587 215.15
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		95.00 %			95.00 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Latvija	1. Decided		8 025 784.00			8 025 784.00					
	2. Committed		8 025 784.00			8 025 784.00					
	3. Paid		7 624 494.80			7 624 494.80					
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		95.00 %			95.00 %					
Lietuva	1. Decided		11 866 395.00			11 866 395.00					
	2. Committed		11 866 395.00			11 866 395.00					
	3. Paid		11 273 075.25			11 273 075.25					
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		95.00 %			95.00 %					
Luxembourg (Grand-Duche)	1. Decided		4 048 041.00	2 137 084.00		6 185 125.00					
	2. Committed		4 048 241.09	2 137 084.00		6 185 325.09					
	3. Paid		2 959 294.62	1 991 135.00		4 950 429.62					
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %	100.00 %		100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		73.10 %	93.17 %		80.04 %					
Magyarország	1. Decided		30 292 135.00			30 292 135.00					
	2. Committed		30 292 135.00			30 292 135.00					
	3. Paid		28 777 527.28			28 777 527.28		1 897 394.96			1 897 394.96
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		95.00 %			95.00 %					
Malta	1. Decided		1 241 163.00			1 241 163.00					
	2. Committed		1 241 163.00			1 241 163.00					
	3. Paid		1 179 104.85			1 179 104.85					
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		95.00 %			95.00 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Nederland	1. Decided	30.250.460.00	158.221.240.00	81.787.596.00		270.259.296.00					
	2. Committed	30.250.460.00	158.181.344.18	81.787.596.00		270.219.400.18					
	3. Paid	26.895.440.71	120.808.590.54	77.037.758.00		224.741.789.25			8.695.351.00		8.695.351.00
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	99.97 %	100.00 %		99.99 %					
	% (3)/(1)	88.91 %	76.35 %	94.19 %		83.16 %					
Österreich	1. Decided	8.526.975.00	103.801.243.00	76.833.274.00		189.161.492.00					
	2. Committed	8.526.975.00	103.801.243.00	76.833.274.00		189.161.492.00					
	3. Paid	7.699.937.42	94.280.831.68	72.991.610.00		174.972.379.10					
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %		100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	90.30 %	90.83 %	95.00 %		92.50 %					
Polska	1. Decided		133.938.206.00			133.938.206.00					
	2. Committed		133.938.206.00			133.938.206.00					
	3. Paid		127.241.295.70			127.241.295.70					
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		95.00 %			95.00 %					
Portugal	1. Decided	19.456.845.00	115.809.622.00	164.453.735.00		299.720.202.00					
	2. Committed	19.456.845.00	115.809.622.00	164.453.735.00		299.720.202.00					
	3. Paid	16.782.859.71	110.019.140.90	156.231.048.00		283.033.048.61	859.757.67	390.203.47			1.249.961.14
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %		100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	86.26 %	95.00 %	95.00 %		94.43 %					
Slovenija	1. Decided		6.165.847.00			6.165.847.00					
	2. Committed		6.165.847.16			6.165.847.16					
	3. Paid		4.996.773.51			4.996.773.51		1.546.384.89			1.546.384.89
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		81.04 %			81.04 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Slovenska Republica	1. Decided		22 266 351.00			22 266 351.00					
	2. Committed		22 266 351.00			22 266 351.00					
	3. Paid		21 153 033.45			21 153 033.45		2 051 372.86			2 051 372.86
	% (2)/(1)		100.00 %			100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)		95.00 %			95.00 %					
Suomi/Finland	1. Decided	5 380 115.00	73 576 763.00	56 378 322.00		135 335 200.00					
	2. Committed	5 380 115.00	73 576 763.00	56 378 322.00		135 335 200.00					
	3. Paid	4 911 492.23	69 897 924.85	47 898 886.00		122 708 303.08					
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %		100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	91.29 %	95.00 %	84.96 %		90.67 %					
Sverige	1. Decided	5 380 115.00	87 722 227.00	41 215 200.00		134 317 542.00					
	2. Committed	5 380 115.00	87 722 227.00	41 215 200.00		134 317 542.00					
	3. Paid	5 096 390.40	83 336 115.65	39 154 439.00		127 586 945.05	560 062.79		926 037.00		1 486 099.79
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %		100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	94.73 %	95.00 %	95.00 %		94.99 %					
United Kingdom	1. Decided	126 178 934.00	406 656 637.00	114 690 197.00		647 525 768.00					
	2. Committed	126 178 934.00	406 656 637.00	114 690 197.00		647 525 768.00					
	3. Paid	113 078 086.53	379 651 789.32	108 734 748.00		601 464 623.85	7 414 488.79		558 776.00		7 973 264.79
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %		100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	89.62 %	93.36 %	94.81 %		92.89 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Total	1. Decided	6 395 085 251.00	3 164 323 378.00	2 095 596 811.00		11 655 005 440.00					
	2. Committed	6 395 085 251.23	3 163 869 387.87	2 095 897 320.25		11 654 851 959.35	-22 997 673.24				-22 997 673.24
	3. Paid	5 855 274 390.49	2 899 711 900.99	1 948 899 307.02		10 703 885 598.50	364 461 107.70	120 692 801.93	29 698 693.00		514 852 602.63
	% (2)/(1)	100.00 %	99.99 %	100.01 %		100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)	91.56 %	91.64 %	93.00 %		91.84 %					

Source: Commission database SFC / ABAC / SINCOM

Financial implementation 2009: Objective F

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Belgique-België	1. Decided				21 309 355.00	21 309 355.00					
	2. Committed				21 309 355.23	21 309 355.23				-2 265 151.00	-2 265 151.00
	3. Paid				19 600 054.39	19 600 054.39				3 648 473.13	3 648 473.13
	% (2)/(1)				100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)				91.98 %	91.98 %					
Danmark	1. Decided				182 587 747.00	182 587 747.00					
	2. Committed				182 587 746.81	182 587 746.81					
	3. Paid				165 065 915.10	165 065 915.10					
	% (2)/(1)				100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)				90.40 %	90.40 %					
Deutschland	1. Decided				62 992 329.00	62 992 329.00					
	2. Committed				62 992 329.22	62 992 329.22					
	3. Paid				48 850 567.16	48 850 567.16				1 424 168.63	1 424 168.63
	% (2)/(1)				100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)				77.55 %	77.55 %					
España	1. Decided				216 600 000.00	216 600 000.00					
	2. Committed				216 600 000.00	216 600 000.00					
	3. Paid				205 770 000.00	205 770 000.00				2 241 121.05	2 241 121.05
	% (2)/(1)				100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)				95.00 %	95.00 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
France	1. Decided				243 800 000.00	243 800 000.00					
	2. Committed				243 800 000.00	243 800 000.00					
	3. Paid				231 610 000.00	231 610 000.00				267 806.30	267 806.30
	% (2)/(1)				100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)				95.00 %	95.00 %					
Italia	1. Decided				99 734 031.00	99 734 031.00					
	2. Committed				99 734 031.00	99 734 031.00				-4 265 969.00	-4 265 969.00
	3. Paid				94 747 329.45	94 747 329.45				1 628 853.76	1 628 853.76
	% (2)/(1)				100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)				95.00 %	95.00 %					
Kypros	1. Decided				3 419 073.00	3 419 073.00					
	2. Committed				3 419 073.00	3 419 073.00					
	3. Paid				3 248 119.35	3 248 119.35					
	% (2)/(1)				100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)				95.00 %	95.00 %					
Nederland	1. Decided				32 754 732.00	32 754 732.00					
	2. Committed				32 754 732.00	32 754 732.00					
	3. Paid				26 310 085.24	26 310 085.24					
	% (2)/(1)				100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)				80.32 %	80.32 %					
Österreich	1. Decided				4 500 000.00	4 500 000.00					
	2. Committed				4 500 000.00	4 500 000.00					
	3. Paid				4 229 726.52	4 229 726.52					
	% (2)/(1)				100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)				93.99 %	93.99 %					

		Sum of all transactions, up to 2009, since the beginning of the programming period 2000-2006					Financial year: 2009				
Country		ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF	ERDF	ESF	EAGGF	FIFG	Total SF
Suomi/Finland	1. Decided				33 500 000.00	33 500 000.00					
	2. Committed				33 500 000.00	33 500 000.00					
	3. Paid				30 781 875.81	30 781 875.81					
	% (2)/(1)				100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)				91.89 %	91.89 %					
Sverige	1. Decided				54 014 745.00	54 014 745.00					
	2. Committed				54 014 745.08	54 014 745.08					
	3. Paid				46 721 761.87	46 721 761.87				1 911 954.34	1 911 954.34
	% (2)/(1)				100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)				86.50 %	86.50 %					
United Kingdom	1. Decided				88 913 742.00	88 913 742.00					
	2. Committed				88 913 742.00	88 913 742.00				-4 303 468.00	-4 303 468.00
	3. Paid				57 770 640.53	57 770 640.53					
	% (2)/(1)				100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)				64.97 %	64.97 %					
Total	1. Decided				1 044 125.754 00	1 044 125 754.00					
	2. Committed				1 044 125 754.34	1 044 125 754.34				-10 834 588.00	-10 834 588.00
	3. Paid				934 706 075.42	934 706 075.42				11 122 377.21	11 122 377.21
	% (2)/(1)				100.00 %	100.00 %					
	% (3)/(1)				89.52 %	89.52 %					

Source: Commission database SFC / ABAC / SINCOM