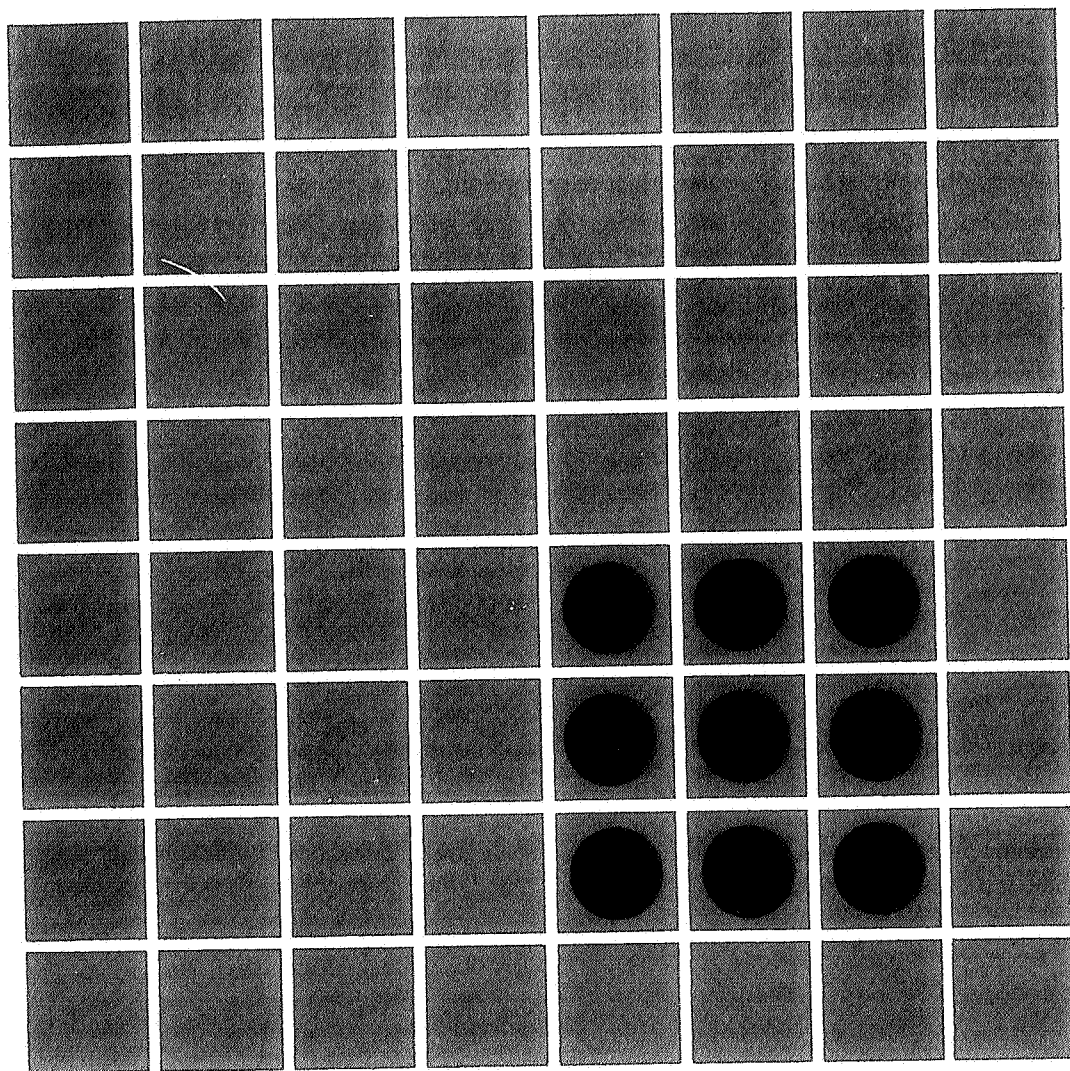


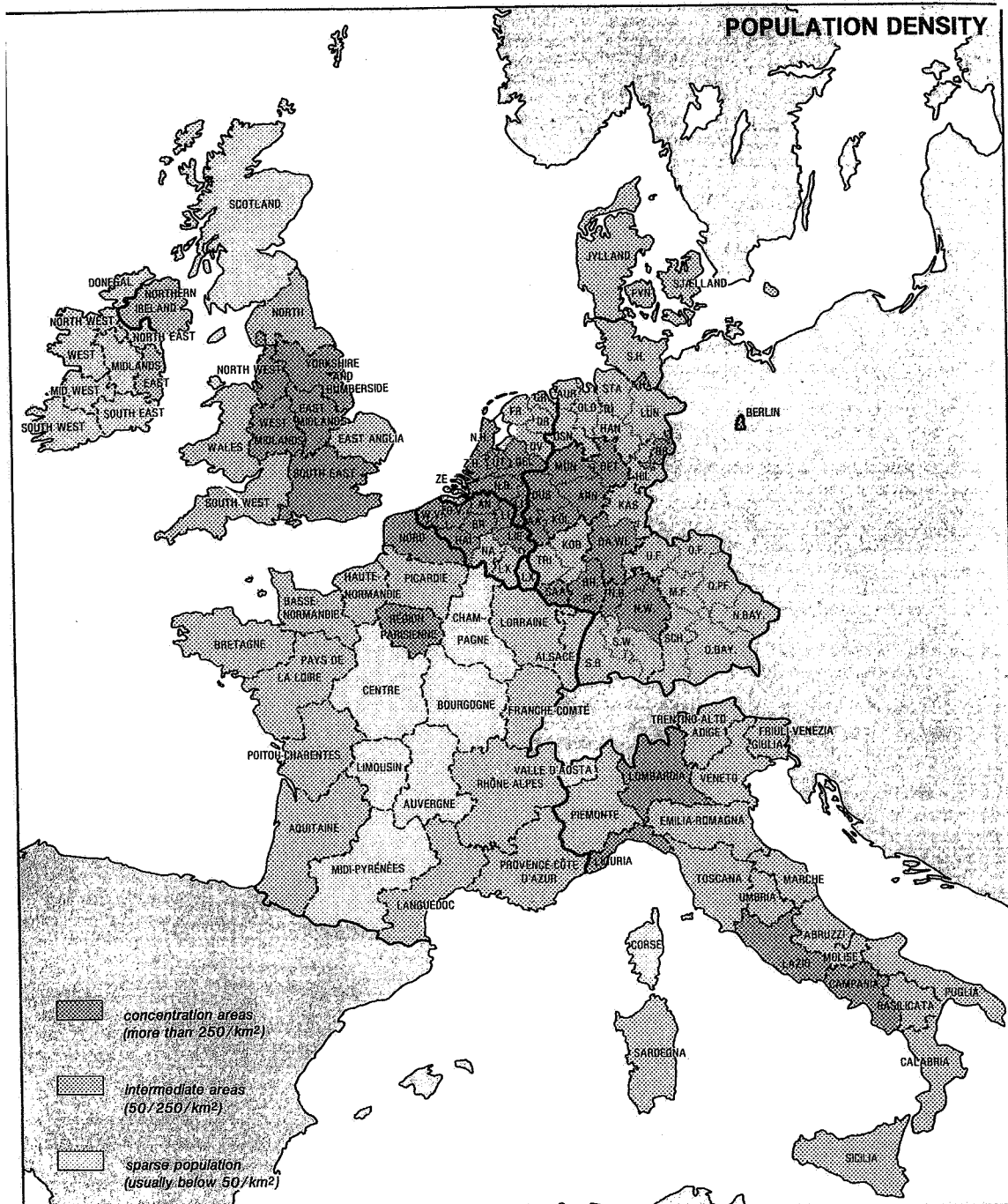
# A new regional policy for Europe



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# **A new regional policy for Europe**

## **The Regional Development Fund**

### **I. Europe's regions**

There are nine countries of Western Europe in the European Community: Belgium, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

With a surface area of 618 000 square miles (not including Greenland) the Community is one-sixth of the size of the United States and one-twelfth the size of the Soviet Union. However its population of 250 million is larger than that of the United States or the Soviet Union. Population density is seven times greater than that of the United States and fifteen times greater than that of the Soviet Union.

#### **1. Europe is rich in regional diversity**

On a world scale, the European Community lives within comparatively narrow frontiers; yet it has a wide variety of climate, of landscape, of peoples and of activities. To appreciate these contrasts, the Community should not just be considered in terms of its nine Member States. Its full diversity shows up only at the regional level.

From Scotland to Sicily, from Aquitaine to the islands of Denmark, the Community includes a remarkably varied range of landscapes and ways of life. The broad farming plains of the Beauce or the Po Valley; industrial concentration in the Ruhr, the English Midlands or Lombardy; the coal mines of Lorraine, the Saar or Wales; the steel industry of Liguria, the Ruhr, Wallonia or Yorkshire; the textile areas of Lancashire, Munsterland, Twente, Flanders or the Rhone; the docklands of London, Hamburg, Rotterdam, Antwerp or Marseilles; the fishing regions of Jutland, Ireland, Brittany and Scotland, the tourist regions of the Atlantic and Mediterranean shores and of the Alps; the vast conurbations with twelve thousand inhabitants per square mile; the Alpine regions with 45 inhabitants per square mile; Greenland

and its frozen wastes. All these regions show a face of the Community which is diverse and changing, and give just as varied an image of European culture.

## **2. Europe has a wide variety of regional problems**

Economic progress in the Community will clearly depend on dealing successfully with a very wide variety of regional problems.

There are regions still greatly dependent on agriculture for employment; in these regions, which are situated mainly in France, Ireland and Italy, jobs in agriculture are between 20 per cent and 40 per cent of the total. Yet in the last two decades employment in agriculture inside the Community has fallen by 50 per cent—some 10 million workers—thus creating new problems for these same agricultural regions.

Other regions are characterised by the decline of traditional regional industrial activities, requiring widespread industrial change and re-equipment. In many cases the decline of traditional industries is due to the exhaustion of certain resources or to competition from rival products. The most notable example has been that of the coal industry; in the last two decades its production fell by nearly one half and its level of employment by 60 per cent—more than one million—in the Community as a whole. But this decline also affects many other branches of industry, especially in present circumstances. The regions which have suffered particularly badly in this respect are mainly in the United Kingdom, but there are others in Belgium, Holland, Germany and France.

The symptoms of all these problems are similar: a high level of emigration, a high rate of unemployment or under-employment, a low level of, or rate of growth in, income. They are often accompanied by serious deficiencies in regional infrastructure.

But regional problems are not only those of under-development. At the other end of the scale are the major conurbations. Sometimes these involve very large proportions indeed of the population of Member States. For example, the Greater London area comprises 18 per cent of the population of Britain; Paris comprises 20 per cent of the French population, and Copenhagen 35 per cent of the Danish population. While these concentrations of people often reflect the most sophisticated and the most rewarding activities, the congestion which they create also leads to a continuous decline in their environment and quality of life. Thus the restoration of a better regional balance within the Community is necessary to help not only the under-developed regions but also those regions in process of expansion.

The problems of frontier regions lying between two or more Member States of the Community should also be noted. Some neighbouring

