



Regional development studies

Interregional and cross-border cooperation in Europe

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Directorate-General for Regional Policies

Interregional and cross-border cooperation in Europe

**Proceedings of the Conference on
Interregional Cooperation – Regions in Partnership
Brussels, 14 and 15 December 1992**

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Preface

Each year, the Directorate-General for Regional Policies of the Commission of the European Communities launches a number of studies in the field of regional policy and regional planning. These studies mainly aim at providing a basis for policy formulation internally, as well as the preparation of programmes and initiatives and a basis for analysing the impact of current or planned activities. The most interesting or innovative of these are now published in a series entitled *Regional development studies*. With this series the Directorate-General hopes to stimulate discussion and action in a wider sphere on the research results received. The publication of the studies is addressed to politicians and decision-makers at European, regional and local level, as well as to academics and experts in the broad fields of issues covered.

It is hoped that by publicizing research results the Commission will enrich and stimulate public debate and promote a further exchange of knowledge and opinions on the issues which are considered important for the economic and social cohesion of the Community and therefore for the future of Europe.

Readers should bear in mind that the study reports do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Commission but first and foremost express the opinion of those responsible for carrying out the study.

Contents

	Page
Foreword	7
Executive summary	9
Rapport de synthèse	11
Introduction	13
First plenary session	15
Welcome address by Mr E. Landaburu	17
Development of the European region	20
Opening speech by Mr B. Millan	21
Speech by the Rt Hon. T. Sainsbury	23
Speech by Mr G. Romeos	25
Speech by Mr J.-C. Van Cauwenberghe	27
Workshop A: Internal borders	29
Introduction and issues	30
Spain-Portugal	32
The European Development Pole	34
Netherlands-Germany: Euregio	36
Interreg Ireland-United Kingdom (Northern Ireland)	39
France-Spain: The Pyrenees, a common heritage	41
Forum discussions	43
Workshop B: External borders	47
Introduction and issues	48
Interreg Greece	50
Italy-Slovenia	52

East Germany/Euroregion	54
Denmark-Baltic States: Bornholm	56
Germany-France-Switzerland	58
Forum discussions	61
Workshop C: Interregional networks	65
Introduction and issues	66
Cooperation between the Atlantic regions (Arc Atlantique)	68
Ouverture and ECOS	70
The European Urban Observatory	72
Communications technologies (Ernact)	74
'Quartiers en crise'	76
Forum discussions	79
Second plenary session	83
Speech by Mr J. Pujol	85
Speech by Mr J.-P. Duport	87
Speech by Mr J. Cushnahan	89
Speech by Sir John Chatfield	91
Speech by Mr E. Landaburu	93
Speech by Mr J. Delors	95
List of publications 1989-93	103
Maps	
The reverse side of capitalism	18
The centre and the periphery (1)	19
The centre and the periphery (2)	19
Internal borders	29
External borders	47
Interregional networks	65



Foreword

Mr Bruce Millan, Commissioner for Regional Policies

The Commission is pleased to publish this report which contains a summary of the main presentations and conclusions of the Conference on Interregional Cooperation – Regions in Partnership in Brussels on 14 and 15 December 1992.

This was the first conference of its kind organized by the Commission. The objective was to provide an opportunity for a broad exchange of views about the initiatives taken by the Commission in recent years to promote cooperation across national borders.

In the event, interest in the Conference exceeded our expectations. Over 1 000 participants took part representing a wide cross-section of interests from all parts of the Community at national, regional and local level. Particularly important was the strong attendance of people involved in practical, day-to-day work of cross-border cooperation. The Commission was keen to encourage this by planning the Conference around 15 specific case studies of projects financed under the Interreg Community initiative and the Recite programme.

The Conference followed closely the meeting of the European Council in Edinburgh on 10 and 11 December. At this meeting, the Heads of State or Government decided on the framework for financing the Community's activities during the period 1993-99. Within this framework, a major increase in real terms was agreed for the Structural Funds for the period 1994-99. Also, interregional, cross-border and transnational cooperation was singled out for special mention as a priority for future Community initiatives. Thus the discussions at the Brussels Conference a few days later took place in an atmosphere of enthusiasm about the prospects for a major boost in Community support for interregional and cross-border cooperation from 1994.

The Conference gave the Commission very useful advice and suggestions as to how it might develop its proposals for future action in this area. Three main conclusions stand out. First, there was a strong consensus that interregional and cross-border cooperation is an area of activity in which the Community has a particularly valuable role to play. Second, there was a strong message that a 'bottom-up' approach involving the main actors at regional and local level was an essential element of success. Third, it was repeatedly emphasized that the cross-border and interregional cooperation process is complex and complicated. To succeed, it requires a long-term perspective combined with a flexible management approach at Community, national and regional level.

Since last December, there have been two important developments which have helped to clarify the likely shape of future Community action in this area. First, the negotiations on the new Structural Funds' regulations have been successfully completed. I am pleased that a number of modifications to the regulations have been agreed which will make it easier in future for the Community to support effectively and efficiently interregional and cross-border cooperation. Moreover, in the course of the negotiations, the Member States also decided that 9% of the total resources for the Structural Funds will be devoted to Community initiatives and emphasized again the importance of the cooperation dimension.

In parallel with these decisions, the Commission published in June a consultative Green Paper on the future of Community initiatives in order to stimulate a wide-ranging debate prior to finalizing its proposals before the end of the year. A number of important ideas in relation to cross-border and interregional cooperation put forward at the December conference have been incorporated in the Green Paper.

In publishing this report, the Commission hopes that it will provide useful background for the discussions on the Green Paper and for the decision-making process to follow. It may also prove useful to those who will have the responsibility for translating into practical action the broad strategies for interregional and cross-border cooperation to be adopted at Community level in the coming months.

Finally, I should like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who participated at the Conference and in particular those who were responsible for preparing and presenting the many excellent contributions.

Executive summary

This Conference for the first time enabled key representatives from the regions, the Member States and the European Communities to engage in practical discussions about past and ongoing experiences in interregional cooperation. It also enabled the regions to voice their needs and concerns in view of the anticipated extension of the Interreg programme.

The Conference was enriching in many respects. It demonstrated, for example, that the principle of subsidiarity, through interregional cooperation, was not a void concept but could translate into a daily reality. The Conference also provided evidence of the positive effects of the 'bottom-up' approach in devising transfrontier cooperation projects, particularly when such an approach is reinforced with partnerships between all administrative levels, including central governments.

Although it pre-existed the creation of the European Community, interregional cooperation is still in the making. The willingness of the regional actors to engage in cross-border cooperation is not in question, but there is still a need to establish appropriate mechanisms, including legal instruments, to lift the remaining barriers which still impede the full realization of transfrontier and interregional cooperation.

In particular, five major issues, which were raised in all three workshops, provided illustration of the key questions which will need to be addressed in the coming months.

How to arrive at a proper definition of frontier zones

The question of whether frontier zones should be delimited in quantitative terms (i.e. number of kilometres separating a region from the border area) or in qualitative terms (i.e. according to the actual functioning of the transfrontier 'natural' economy) was frequently raised. Definitional issues are clearly of

foremost importance for the future of interregional cooperation, particularly as regards the future support to be granted to such cooperation by the European Community.

Should maritime borders be taken into account?

Another major topic of discussion revolved around the question of whether interregional cooperation should only be supported when it involves regions across land borders. The Greek delegates, in particular, stressed the fact that Greece only had maritime borders with the European Community but was nevertheless actively cooperating with Community regions. The issue here is whether all border regions should be made eligible for Community support, or only those fulfilling certain criteria: for example, eligibility could be granted to those maritime borders which are instrumental in strengthening trade from or to the European Community.

How to institutionalize interregional cooperation

The legal status of transfrontier cooperation emerged as a major obstacle to full cooperation between regions. The need to devise, for example, a European legal status for cross-border cooperation was frequently stressed by the Conference delegates.

How to support cooperation with non-member regions

In the case of cross-border cooperation projects involving regions outside the Community, Interreg can only support activities deployed by the partners on the EC side of the border. This obligation generated a number of discussions aimed at identifying alternative

sources of financing. The possible involvement of PHARE or other Community budgets was often mentioned as a means of overcoming the lack of support for Central and East European regions engaged in cooperation projects with EC regions.

What are the areas of intervention which should be supported by the European Community?

Within Interreg I, significant emphasis has been put on infrastructural projects. Several delegates stressed the need for the new Interreg programme to extend its coverage to a number of other areas: for example, social integration, health, housing and culture.

These are the cornerstone questions raised during the two-day Conference. Although the Interreg programme was recognized by all participants as a valuable means of supporting interregional cooperation, the issues addressed in this Conference will certainly enable the Community and its partners to consider, with full knowledge of the facts, the necessary improvements for the continuation and development of interregional cooperation programmes. The success of this Conference, which enabled all participants to exchange their experiences, and to express constructive criticism and recommendations, augurs well for the capacity and willingness of all actors involved in interregional cooperation to develop a relationship on the basis of a twofold principle: concertation and partnership.

Rapport de synthèse

Cette conférence a permis pour la première fois à des représentants éminents des régions, des États membres et des Communautés européennes d'avoir des discussions concrètes sur les expériences passées et en cours en matière de coopération interrégionale. Elle a également permis aux régions d'exprimer leurs besoins et leurs préoccupations dans la perspective de l'extension du programme Interreg.

La conférence a été enrichissante à bien des égards. Par exemple, elle a apporté la démonstration de ce que le principe de subsidiarité, vu à travers la coopération interrégionale, loin d'être une notion creuse, pouvait trouver sa traduction dans la réalité quotidienne. La conférence a également apporté la preuve des effets positifs de l'approche «de bas en haut» dans la conception des projets de coopération transfrontalière, notamment lorsqu'une telle approche se trouve renforcée par des relations partenariales entre tous les niveaux administratifs, y compris les administrations centrales.

Bien qu'elle ait préexisté à la création de la Communauté européenne, la coopération interrégionale est encore en chantier. La volonté des acteurs régionaux de s'engager dans la coopération transfrontalière n'est pas en cause, mais les mécanismes appropriés, y compris les instruments juridiques, restent à mettre en place afin de lever les derniers obstacles qui empêchent encore le plein essor de la coopération transfrontalière et interrégionale.

En particulier, cinq grandes questions qui ont été soulevées dans les trois ateliers ont fourni l'illustration des problèmes clés qu'il faudra affronter dans les prochains mois.

Comment parvenir à une bonne définition des zones frontalières?

La question de savoir si les zones frontalières doivent être délimitées en termes quantitatifs (c'est-à-dire par le nombre de kilomètres séparant une région de la zo-

ne frontalière) ou qualitatifs (d'après le fonctionnement réel de l'économie transfrontalière «naturelle») a souvent été posée. Les problèmes de définition revêtent manifestement une grande importance pour l'avenir de la coopération interrégionale, notamment pour ce qui concerne le soutien que la Communauté européenne devra apporter à une telle coopération.

Faut-il tenir compte des frontières maritimes?

Un autre sujet de discussion important a porté sur la limitation de l'aide à la coopération interrégionale au seul cas des régions ayant une frontière terrestre commune. Les délégués grecs, en particulier, ont insisté sur le fait que la Grèce n'avait que des frontières maritimes avec la Communauté européenne, ce qui ne l'empêchait pas de coopérer activement avec des régions de la Communauté. La question est ici de savoir si toutes les régions frontalières doivent pouvoir être admises à bénéficier de l'aide communautaire ou si cette dernière doit être limitée aux régions répondant à certains critères: ainsi l'éligibilité pourrait-elle être reconnue pour les frontières maritimes, qui jouent un rôle dans le renforcement des flux commerciaux en provenance ou à destination de la Communauté européenne.

Comment institutionnaliser la coopération interrégionale?

Le statut juridique de la coopération transfrontalière est apparu comme étant un obstacle essentiel à une bonne coopération entre les régions. La nécessité de concevoir, par exemple, un statut juridique européen de la coopération transfrontalière a été soulignée à maintes reprises par les délégués.

Comment apporter une aide à la coopération avec les régions qui ne sont pas membres de la Communauté européenne?

Dans le cas de projets de coopération transfrontalière faisant intervenir des régions extérieures à la Communauté, Interreg ne peut soutenir que les activités déployées par les partenaires se trouvant à l'intérieur de la frontière de la Communauté. Cette obligation a suscité de nombreuses discussions visant à définir d'autres circuits de financement.

La participation éventuelle de PHARE ou d'autres budgets communautaires a souvent été citée comme un moyen de compenser le manque d'aide dont souffrent les régions d'Europe centrale et orientale engagées dans des projets de coopération avec des régions de la Communauté.

Quels sont les domaines où l'aide de la Communauté européenne devrait intervenir?

Dans le cadre d'Interreg I, l'accent a été mis sur les projets d'infrastructure. Plusieurs délégués ont souligné la nécessité d'étendre le champ d'application du

nouveau programme Interreg à d'autres domaines, tels que l'intégration sociale, la santé, le logement et la culture.

Telles sont les questions fondamentales soulevées au cours de ces deux journées. Même si, ainsi que l'ont reconnu tous les participants, le programme Interreg apporte une aide utile à la coopération interrégionale, les questions soulevées au cours de la conférence permettront certainement à la Communauté et à ses partenaires d'examiner en pleine connaissance de cause les améliorations nécessaires pour poursuivre et développer les programmes de coopération interrégionale. La réussite de cette conférence, qui a permis à tous les participants d'échanger leurs expériences et d'exprimer des critiques et des recommandations constructives, est de bon augure pour ce qui est de la capacité et de la volonté de tous les acteurs de la coopération interrégionale d'asseoir la relation sur le double principe de la concertation et du partenariat.

Introduction

The European Community's territory is composed of 10 000 km of internal borders; 15% of the areas of the Community are border areas, in which 10% of the EC population lives.

In December 1992, the Commission of the European Communities (DG XVI) organized a two-day Conference on Interregional Cooperation in Europe. The overall objectives of this Conference were to:

- enable representatives from national, regional and local authorities and bodies to learn from one another's experience in the field of transnational cooperation, particularly within the framework of the Interreg and Recite programmes;
- discuss the future directions for the Community's policies aimed at supporting interregional cooperation. The discussion, in particular, of the tenets and areas of intervention of Interreg II was a major focus of the Conference.

This Conference, which took place in the aftermath of the Edinburgh Summit and the agreement on the 'Delors II package', was the first of its kind to be hosted by the Commission. It was attended by close to 1 000 representatives from:

- central governments of Member States and non-member States;
 - regional and local authorities in Member and non-member States;
 - associations of regions and other regional representative bodies;
 - national parliaments in Member and non-member States;
 - the European Parliament;
 - the Council of the European Communities;
 - the Commission of the European Communities.
-

The Conference was organized into two plenary sessions and the following three thematic workshops:

- Workshop A: Internal borders;
- Workshop B: External borders;
- Workshop C: Interregional networks.

Within each workshop, five case studies were presented. The presentations were followed by forum discussions on the respective topic of each workshop.

During the plenary sessions, keynote addresses were delivered by distinguished representatives from:

The Commission of the European Communities:

- Mr Jacques Delors, President;
- Mr Bruce Millan, Commissioner;
- Mr Eneko Landaburu, Director-General, DG XVI.

The European Parliament:

- Mr Georgios Romeos, Vice-President;
- Mr John Cushnahan, Vice-President, Regional Policy Committee.

Member States:

- The Rt Hon. Tim Sainsbury, Minister for Trade and Industry, United Kingdom;
- Mr J.-P. Duport, Delegate, DATAR (Paris).

Regional local authorities or bodies:

- Mr Jordi Pujol, President, Assembly of European Regions;
- Sir John Chatfield, Chairman, Council of Regional and Local Authorities;
- Mr Jean-Claude Van Cauwenberghe, Mayor of Charleroi.

This document gives a detailed account of the presentations and discussions of the two-day Conference; it summarizes:

- the opening addresses delivered during the first plenary session;
 - the introductory addresses, the presentations of the five case studies, and the forum discussions in the three workshops;
 - the closing addresses during the second plenary session.
-

First plenary session



Welcome address

Opening plenary session

(Summary)

Mr Eneko Landaburu

After welcoming the Conference delegates, Mr Landaburu made the following declaration:

'It is not just a coincidence that this meeting takes place just a matter of hours after a very important decision has been reached in the Edinburgh Summit. The meaning of the Edinburgh Summit, especially the part concerning the budget compromise for the years to come, is very important because, as you know, it reaffirms the principle of economic and social cohesion and means that a large part of the budget growth, in the years to come, will be channelled to social and economic cohesion, which is aimed at redressing the regional imbalances that exist in the Community. As you know, this was the result of difficult negotiations and the work that has gone on for the last couple of years which has finally led to the Delors II package. This work has been done in partnership with the Member States, with the Community institutions, the Commission and Parliament, and also with the cooperation of the regions. Now you know that interregional cooperation has played a very important, if not fundamental role. Now what is this Conference all about, what's the objective, what's the aim of this Conference? If it were to be summarized in just one sentence, I would say that it is a matter of taking advantage of all the good experiences that all of you have had, especially within the Interreg framework, analysing all these experiences so as to come up with new rules of the game, new concepts for work, new factors for development, so that in the future, trans-border and interregional cooperation is stepped up even more.

This objective is a very simple one. We want to achieve it in the Conference using just one method. And the method boils down to us listening, the Commission listening to you, the Member States, the regions, the experts and the politicians, and, having listened to you, to try and summarize all this experience and see how we can improve our work. Two days is not an awful lot to get all this work done but I think that if we follow this method, whereby we would have political statements and yet more technical meetings, by doing that I think we will be able to be as efficient as possible. I hope that we'll all be very disciplined and I hope that we'll be able to stick to the timetable for the Conference so that we can get as much work out of this Conference as possible'.

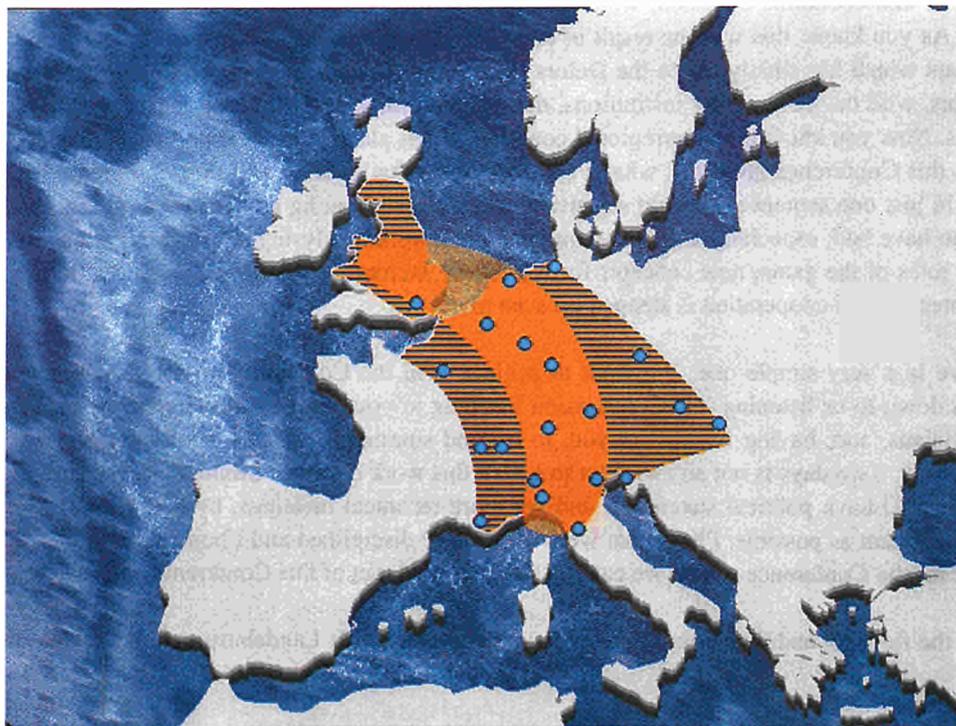
After giving the floor to, and thanking, the other keynote speakers, Mr Landaburu outlined the main issues of the Conference:

'In this European Community where we have 10 000 km of internal borders, where 15% of the area of the Community is in fact a border area, where 10% of the population lives, it is important to emphasize the unanimous support that was given to the Interreg initiative and that the local and regional authorities were behind this. Whether it is the European Parliament or the Commission or the local or regional authorities, they all felt that the Interreg initiative was an excellent idea.

In the future we will probably have something slightly different to what we have had to date; the economic objective of the Community will now be concentrated on three pillars: the internal market, economic and monetary union and economic and social cohesion. There is no doubt that in this economic aspect enshrined in Maastricht, the inter-

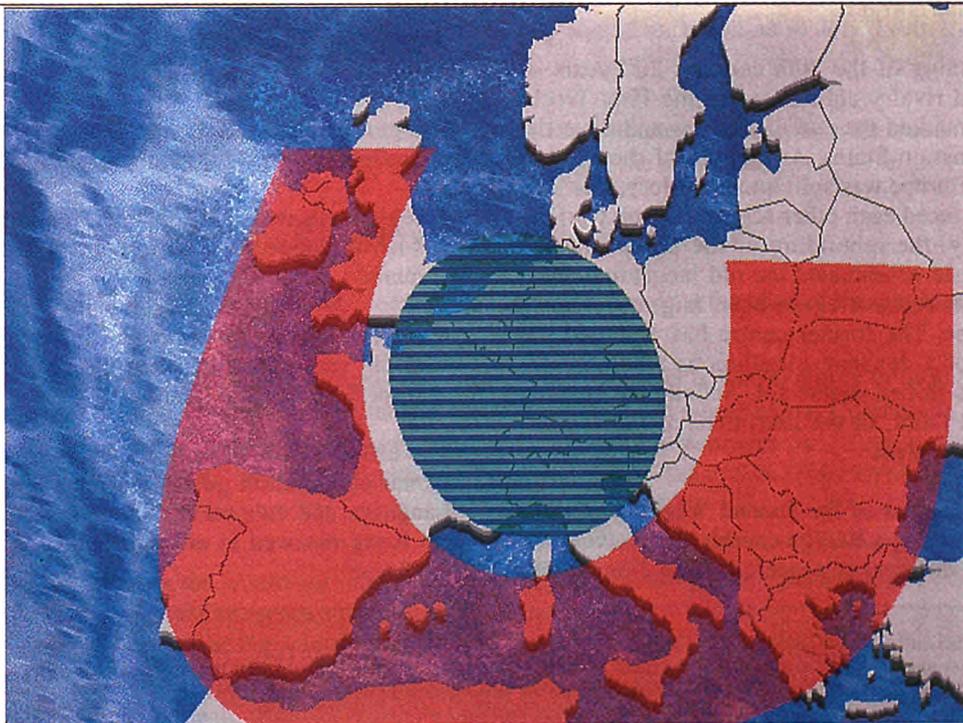
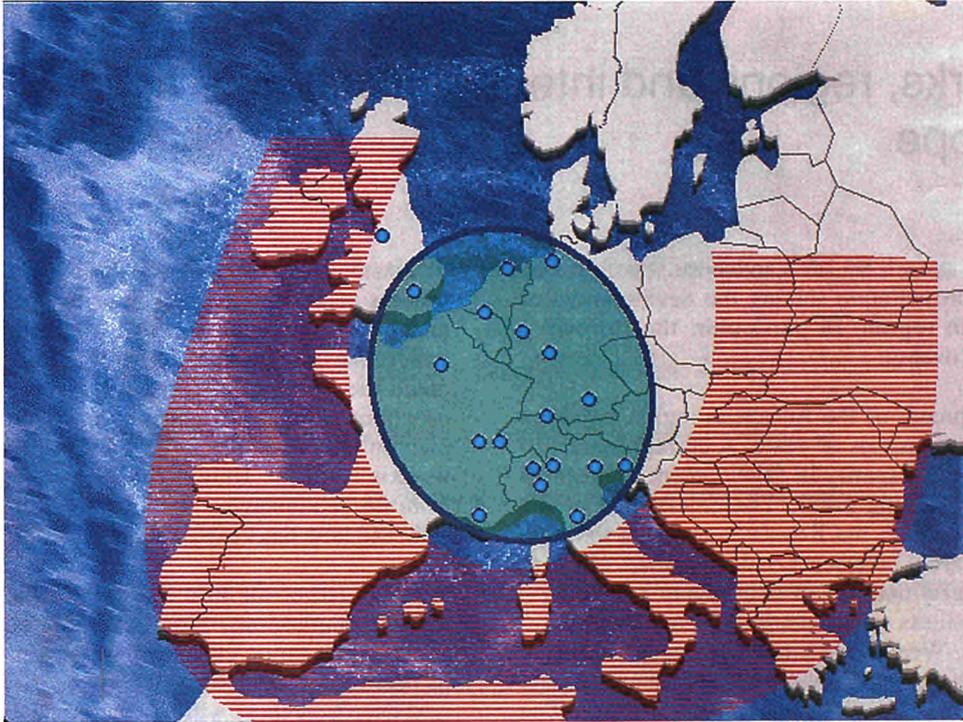
regional and transborder factors come into play because they will participate in economic union, economic and social cohesion and the interregional dialogue is absolutely vital if our Europe is to become more homogeneous. I think that the Delors II package, the decision that has been taken at the Edinburgh Summit, will give us the means to work better. The challenge of this Conference is to answer a simple question: how, with the funds that are at our disposal, can we give a qualitative push to our daily work in three directions: cooperation within borders, cooperation with those outside Europe and the trans-European networks? So that is what we have to look at here in the Conference'.

'This Conference is about taking advantage of all the good experiences that all of you have had, especially within the Interreg framework, analysing all these experiences so as to come up with new rules of the game, new concepts for work, new factors for development, so that in the future, transborder and interregional cooperation is stepped up even more' (Eneko Landaburu).



The reverse side of capitalism

The centre and the periphery (1)



The centre and the periphery (2)

Development of the European region

Networks, regions and interregional cooperation in Europe

The opening speech by Mr Landaburu was followed by a video presentation tracing the development of the European region. In particular, the following points were covered.

'The development of the European region has been going on for thousands of years. A current feature of the region is the disparity in development between its central and outlying areas. The emergence of the centre dates back to the Renaissance. From the 16th century onwards, between London and the cities of Italy, a powerful network of cities came into being – places of business on the trading routes leading beyond Europe. Wealth and knowledge accumulated in what was to become the cradle of capitalism. Activity and then industries were concentrated there. The region's spine, one of its main features, took shape along the Rhine corridor.

At the beginning of the 20th century, 200 years of upheaval and rivalry culminated in the First World War, which marked the end of empires and drew the frontiers of nation-States. At the end of the Second World War, Europe was split into two blocs, East and West, which faced each other across the Iron Curtain. Paradoxically, the rebuilding of the areas that had been laid waste accentuated the old inequalities and, since then, there have again been migratory flows across Europe. The former centre has assumed the proportions of a dynamic megalopolis whose centre of gravity has shifted southward. Activity has become concentrated there, to the detriment of the less-favoured outlying areas.

Out of the slaughter of the Second World War arose the idea of building a Europe capable of resolving the old and new differences peacefully. The Community

of Six, Nine and then Twelve was established. The process of European integration has been accompanied by a resumption of growth which has shaped the emergence of a number of high-technology towns and made the South more attractive. The expansion of economic activity has imposed a new continent-wide plan on the communications network: the megalopolis axis from the United Kingdom to Italy, an axis from the Scandinavian countries to the Iberian peninsula, and new links extending to the East.

With the fall of the Iron Curtain and the break-up of the last empire, new prospects have opened up for Europe. The future expansion of the Community and its opening-up to the East and South mean that, for the next decade, activity will be focused on these different regions. In view of these changes, the Community has launched an extensive programme of interregional cooperation. Projects are grouped into three categories:

- regions situated either side of an internal frontier and which wish to strengthen their ties;
- regions situated along external frontiers and which wish to cooperate with regions outside the Community;
- regions which wish to establish new links of solidarity and growth between the centre and the periphery of the Community.

The affinities which form the basis for this interregional cooperation go back a long way in history. Language and cultural communities and ancient ties are being renewed in order to build the networks of the future'.

'A stake in this interregional cooperation is Europe in the year 2000, which, territorially, will have to reconcile the presence of the world's largest market, the disparity in development between its central and outlying areas, and the strengthening of its historical ties with the South and East' (text from the video presentation on the development of the European region).

Conference on Interregional Cooperation

Opening speech (*Summary*)

Mr Bruce Millan

Mr Bruce Millan formally opened the Conference. After welcoming the Conference delegates, he described the role of the Community in regional policy and interregional cooperation.

'The Community's interest in interregional cooperation is based on three basic factors:

- firstly, interregional cooperation can help to achieve the Community's cohesion objective;
- secondly, the Community has a clear interest in ensuring that the regions pursue their economic development objectives as effectively and efficiently as possible;
- thirdly, the Community has a responsibility to support Member States and regions in implementing other Community policies with significant regional impacts.

During the past four years, since the reform of the Structural Funds in 1988, the Commission has introduced a series of measures to promote cooperation across national frontiers.

The largest in financial terms has been the Interreg Community initiative, launched in July 1990. Its three key objectives were:

- to help the internal border regions of the Community to tackle the problems of economic underdevelopment associated with their border status, and especially with the transition to the single market;
- to encourage cross-border cooperative actions between the internal border regions;
- to prepare the external border regions of the Community for their new role at the edge of the single market.

Parallel with Interreg, the Commission has supported a series of pilot projects whose aim is to promote cooperation for economic development between regions and cities throughout the whole of the Community's territory. The main programme of support for these projects is known as Recite, an acronym for "Regions and cities of Europe". Its pilot phase began in 1990, and 37 networks have been supported to date. They have attracted a total EC commitment of ECU 49 million.

Without wishing to anticipate the Conference debates, it would appear that there are three important areas where there is scope for improving the Community policy or its implementation:

- effective participation by regional and local authorities in the design and management of cross-border programmes has not always been evident;

-
- there has been a tendency, particularly in Objective 1 regions, to focus on national infrastructures at the expense of regional cross-border cooperative actions, which has affected the overall balance of the programmes;
 - differences in legal and administrative practices and competences between Member States constitute a major obstacle to effective and efficient interregional cooperation.

The central section of the Conference is organized around three main types of questions:

First, questions of eligibility, for example:

- Should all border regions be eligible for support, regardless of their level of economic development?
- Should some maritime coastal zones be eligible, and if so what criteria should determine which ones?
- Should the range of eligible measures be extended, for example to include educational and cultural actions?
- Should some measures be supported only in Objective 1 regions – specifically, large infrastructure projects?

Second, questions of partnership, for example:

- Should regional and local authorities have a greater say in the design and management of cooperation programmes?
- If so, how can this best be achieved?
- Should more emphasis be placed on the development of cross-border and interregional agencies with programme management responsibilities?

Third, questions of management and administration, for example:

- Should greater use be made of global grants?
- Should the Commission sponsor legislation to provide a Community-wide legal framework for cooperative actions?
- How can procedures best be improved to speed up and simplify the process of approving programme proposals?

Future policy must of course reflect the resources available and the regulations which govern it. Within those broad parameters, the conclusions of the Conference will make an important contribution to identifying the principal axes for Community policy on interregional cooperation over the coming years'.

'Our aim will be threefold: to build on success; to learn from difficulties; and to adjust to new priorities. These priorities necessarily include the difficult economic context in which all Member States now find themselves; in the current climate, it is essential that all the Community's policies and actions can be justified in strict value for money terms' (Bruce Millan).



Speech on behalf of the Presidency of the Council of the European Communities (*Summary*)

The Rt Hon. Tim Sainsbury

On behalf of the Presidency of the Council of the European Communities, the Rt Hon. Tim Sainsbury addressed the Conference on the overall subject of 'A stronger Community through cooperation'.

'The growth initiative agreed at Edinburgh will boost confidence and promote economic recovery right the way across the Community. The initiative includes a new European investment fund and a special loan facility to be provided by the European Investment Bank. In total these will be able to support new investment of up to ECU 30 billion.

One of the many important achievements of the Edinburgh Council is that the Community's finances have been put on a sound, fair and affordable basis for the rest of this century.

The European Council has decided that, as part of the Community's task of strengthening economic and social cohesion, increased financing for structural actions should be provided to complement the implementation of sound economic policies. The total resources available to be committed on structural actions should rise in real terms to ECU 30 billion in 1999, from ECU 21 277 million in 1993, and that compares with only ECU 9 600 million in 1988.

This expenditure should be concentrated on the least prosperous Member States; and amounts rising to ECU 2.6 billion in 1999 should be available to be committed to the new Cohesion Fund. The main elements to be included in the Cohesion Fund regulation to be adopted by 1 April 1993 have already been decided at Edinburgh.

The European Council has also decided that amounts rising to ECU 27.4 billion in 1999 should be available to be committed under the Structural Funds and other structural operations. This represents an increase, in percentage terms compared to 1993, of nearly twice that of the whole Community budget. It is worth noting that even before the Edinburgh increase, the Community has been spending more on its structural actions than was spent on the entire Marshall Aid Plan.

And an increasing proportion of this total is to be available for Objective 1. Taken with the Cohesion Fund, this will permit a doubling of commitments for the four Cohesion Fund Member States between 1992 and 1999. This follows the doubling for Objective 1 between 1988 and 1992.

But I should add that in current budgetary circumstances the European Council was obliged to conclude that commitments under the other objectives of the Structural Funds could not be significantly higher over the new period as a whole.

With regard to Interreg, I hope that this programme will prove to have been a worthwhile investment of Community money. A final judgment must await the results of evaluation of the present programmes. But the Commission is already considering proposals for a second Interreg initiative. I expect that this will be widely welcomed in the Council which believes that such a Community initiative is so important that it should be adopted by the Council and not the Commission alone.

I should like now to turn to that other area in which the Commission's interregional initiatives have been active, namely the so-called networks. I suggest that there are four questions which delegates should bear in mind as they consider some of the networks which have been established:

- What is their Community-level objective?
- What are the most efficient ways of networking?
- What are the respective roles of the national public sector, the private sector and the Community?
- Is Community subsidy necessary and justified?

The Community should not finance networks that merely act as lobbies of pressure groups attempting to influence Community policy. As to the most efficient ways of networking, I am surprised to see that most of the examples being discussed at this Conference seem to concentrate on local and regional authorities rather than on wealth creators. Linkages between firms, particularly amongst small businesses, can also make an important contribution to regional economies across the Community as can the input from development agencies and other institutions such as universities.

The role for the Community and the public sector within Member States must be to promote cooperation with a view to cities and regions helping themselves. Thus, briefly, I see small and medium-sized enterprises, businesses and voluntary organizations, local and regional authorities as the key participants. The Member States and the Commission are the catalysts who can help to encourage worthwhile developments. They must do so with great selectivity'.

'This Conference provides a valuable opportunity to take stock of progress made by Interreg so far and to discuss future priorities. Interreg is probably the best example of how the Community has encouraged useful cooperation between regions. Several of the Community's border areas will, on completion of the single market, be able to regard their geographical position not so much as being on the periphery of one State, but rather as being more central within the whole Community. The economies of all regions of the Community will of course benefit from the estimated 6% increase in Community GDP over the medium term as a result of the single market and the removal of the barriers to the free movement of goods and services' (Tim Sainsbury).



Interreg cooperation

(Summary)

Mr Georgios Romeos

On behalf of the European Parliament and especially the Regional Policy Committee, Mr Romeos addressed the opening plenary session in the following way:

'The European Parliament has endorsed the Community's initiatives. Back in 1988, we introduced in the Community budget a special budget line to carry out studies and pilot projects for transborder cooperation. In 1989, we proposed another budget line for the exchange of experience and cooperation between local and regional authorities in the Community. After the second conference between the European Parliament and the Community regions, the European Parliament adopted, in June 1992, a resolution that covers all three spheres that are being examined by this Conference: internal borders, external borders and cooperation between the regions and towns. Today we can already give a positive evaluation of the initial results of the Community Interreg initiative and we can draw some very useful conclusions for the review of the programme.

The European Parliament feels that we ought to support the creation of new transborder cooperation authorities to promote the economic, political, social and cultural cooperation within a new legal institutional climate. We feel that we ought to concentrate on the following spheres in transborder cooperation:

- the environment: there ought to be policies established to manage the environment in the transborder areas;
- as regards the establishment of high-risk industry with a lot of polluting activities, the local authorities and the people on either side of the border ought to be consulted before such industry is set up;
- a joint town and country planning as regards energy, waterworks, liquid and solid waste disposal, etc.;
- proper planning on the use of health services;
- transborder cooperation on job creation and initiatives aimed at the labour market.

As regards the content of the Interreg programme, the European Parliament supports:

- the inclusion of transborder measures within the framework of Community support;
- the repercussions on employment of the dismantling of the internal borders and the establishment of a special programme for the transborder regions with Eastern Europe.

With the abolition of the internal borders, the external borders of the Community take on a special significance. These will now be the borders of a united Europe. So, of course, we have to look to these external borders. Some regions will in fact now find themselves further from the centre of decision-making and we ought to see how some

regions of the Community can play a more important role. The borders of the Community with neighbouring third countries in fact will also be opening up a fair amount in the future. Now all of these countries will be adopting the same principles and values as have been established throughout Europe, the Balkans and the Mediterranean. The resolution of the European Parliament emphasizes the special importance that it attaches to a balanced development throughout Europe and the implementation of a more integrated Europe and the promotion of cooperation between regional and local authorities that belong to different Member States. For these reasons, we are very pleased that extra funds will be made available to set up cooperation networks to contribute more to the implementation of an economic climate where we can have transfer of know-how and technology towards the less-developed regions. Such cooperation should be developed by the towns and regions of the European Community with the towns and regions of Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans and the Mediterranean countries. The establishment of the Committee of the Regions arising from the Maastricht Treaty is an important step to the active participation of the regions in European integration. It in fact upgrades the relations and the partnerships between the regions. However, in this transitional period, given the concerns and sensitivities of the European citizens, this tripartite partnership ought to work in a balanced and careful fashion so as to avoid any distortion and doubts concerning the institutional powers of the Community and Member State bodies. Interregional and transfrontier cooperation within the Interreg programme has an important role to play in the participation of the regions and it will be able to contribute effectively to European integration. So I repeat once again that the Commission's initiative is very important and I am very pleased that the Commission has also taken the initiative of organizing the meeting today. Now we hope that with Interreg II in mind, your work will be successful'.

'It is very important to underline the fact that in the conclusions of the European Summit in Edinburgh, attention is paid to Community political and economic action for transborder and transregional cooperation. In fact, the European Parliament, drawing up a report last June, came up with evaluations and proposals for Interreg. The European Parliament resolution goes into the details of the weaknesses of the Interreg system and outlines the gaps that exist in transborder cooperation. A significant problem is, for example, the lack of a binding legal basis to promote cooperation between the local social groups and organizations and the administrative authorities. The border regions ought to have the opportunity to draw up agreements in matters of common interest with other bordering regions on the other side of the frontier without having to go through the bureaucracy of the central administrations' (Georgios Romeos).



Speech on behalf of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (*Summary*)

Mr Jean-Claude Van Cauwenberghe

Mr Jean-Claude Van Cauwenberghe, representing the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), described the CEMR's objectives and its contribution to interregional cooperation:

'As its name implies, the programme of exchanges of experience which we have launched is aimed at promoting – via pilot projects – cooperation and greater synergy between local and regional authorities in Europe. We are proud to say that, to date, 660 authorities have taken part in the programme, more than a third of them from Objective 1 areas. While authorities at all levels have been involved, it should nevertheless be noted that the majority of projects concern towns and cities.

Besides the programme of exchanges of experience, the CEMR has promoted the establishment of cooperation networks. Our organization is particularly proud to have initiated networks which are now very familiar to you, such as:

- the development agencies,
- Eurocities,
- motor industry towns and regions,
- the Towns Commission,
- strategies for medium-sized towns/IDEE.

The final component of the CEMR's activities to promote cooperation is the ECOS programme, which, in conjunction with Ouverture, enables local and regional authorities in the Community to work together with their counterparts in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe – cooperation which, as we can all see so clearly, is urgently needed at the present time.

Through the programmes and networks which I have briefly mentioned, more than ECU 24 million has been allocated by the Commission to various projects in pursuit of objectives which I should now like to describe more fully by means of a few examples.

Our main aim has been to promote economic and social cohesion in the Community, in particular by giving priority to authorities in Objective 1 areas. In so doing, we have given special encouragement to the transfer of know-how and technology between the outlying and central areas of the Community.

Though it may sound immodest, we believe that, as regards both the European cause and the future of local and regional authorities, the direct involvement of those authorities in such measures is an irreplaceable asset the strengths of which have already been demonstrated by experience, namely:

- the development of cooperation instruments and structures between the various levels of administration involved in a project;
- the cooperation dynamic which builds up among all the local partners, whether authorities, universities, businesses or welfare organizations;
- the greater perception of Europe by local and regional authorities and the resulting improvement in their knowledge of Community procedures;
- the improvement in local administration, since participation in projects is often a significant factor in motivating staff.

To summarize our aspirations, I should say that we need to:

- establish close links between authorities;
- work in partnership with organizations representing local and regional authorities;
- improve the methods for implementing programmes.

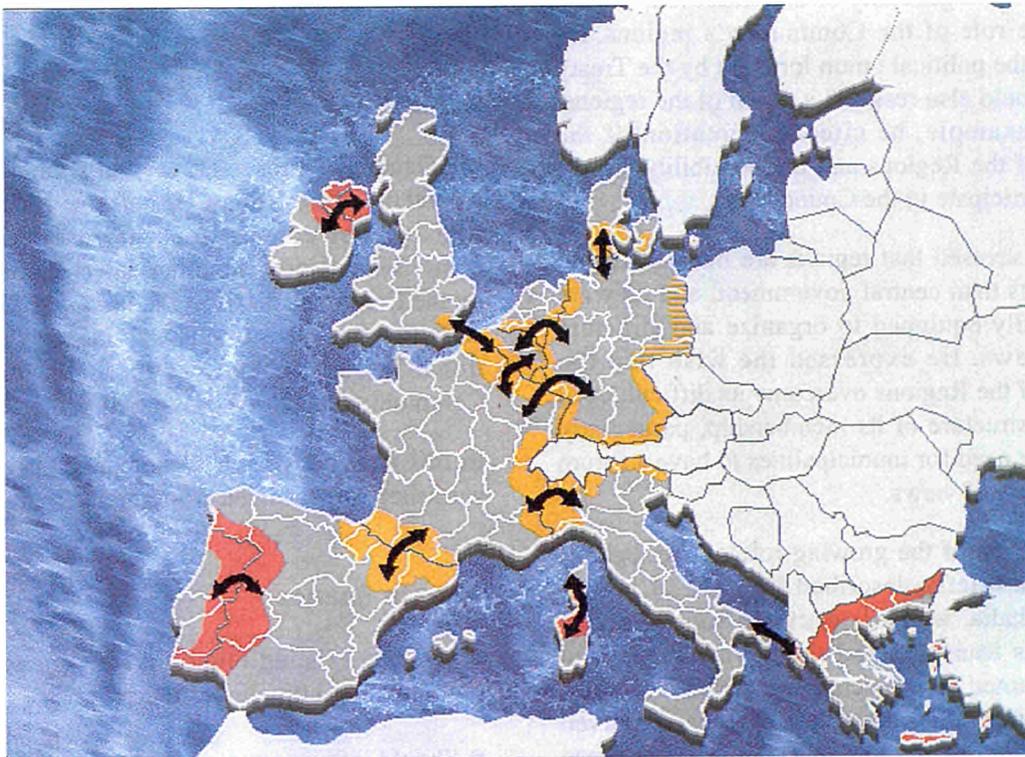
These, then, are the CEMR's main proposals, all of which have the same aim: to strengthen the position and role of local and regional authorities, which constitute the level of decision-making closest to the citizen.

Even if the division of responsibilities between central government, on the one hand, and local and regional government, on the other, is determined at national level in accordance with the traditions and constitutions of the Member States, the principle of subsidiarity requires genuine partnership between local and regional authorities, the Member States and the Community as a whole and the involvement of each of these levels, within their own sphere of responsibility, in the process of European integration. It is therefore essential to recognize that the principle of subsidiarity guarantees the safeguarding of the rights and responsibilities of local and regional authorities, and their participation, within their sphere of responsibility, in the process of building Europe'.

'A citizens' Europe is one in which the interests of municipalities, regions, and local and regional authorities at all levels are taken into account and in which these bodies work together to build Europe. In the same way that twinings, which the CEMR initiated, form the popular basis for bringing the peoples of Europe together, cooperation between regions and towns will need to become the essential link in a policy of development and solidarity for the European regions aimed at strengthening economic and social cohesion in the Community' (Jean-Claude Van Cauwenberghe).

Workshop A

Internal borders



Introduction and issues

Chairmen: **Wolfgang Clement**, Minister for European Affairs, North Rhine-Westphalia
Jacques Blanc, President, Conseil régional du Languedoc-Roussillon

Presenter: **Sandro Gaudenzi**, Commission of the European Communities, DG XVI/B

Rapporteur: **J.-P. Duport**, Delegate, DATAR, Paris

Introduction

Workshop A addressed the overall theme of trans-frontier cooperation within the Community's internal borders. A major objective of this workshop was to review the range of areas of interregional cooperation which could be supported by the Community within the next Interreg programme, and the modalities of such support.

In his opening address, Mr Clement, Chairman, started by discussing the effects of the recent Edinburgh Summit, and more generally of the Maastricht Treaty, on the future role of the Community's regions. He stressed that the political union foreseen by the Treaty should and could also result in a union of the regions. By way of example, he cited the creation of the Committee of the Regions and the possibility for the regions to participate in the Council.

Mr Clement stressed that regions are much closer to the grass roots than central government, and they are constitutionally equipped to organize and structure the local views. He expressed the wish that the Committee of the Regions overcome its difficulties in defining the structure of its membership, particularly in view of the need for municipalities to have a forum for an exchange of views.

As an illustration of the growing role of the regions, the Chairman briefly described the case of North-Rhine-Westphalia, which is active in various policy areas such as transport and the environment, and which has learned to appreciate the need for increasing transfrontier cooperation. Mr Clement observed that when defining interregional cooperation between countries, regions and independent communities, it was vital to identify as closely as possible the concepts of such cooperation.

'The various initiatives of the Commission, together with initiatives from Member States and the regions, often have a very effective pump priming effect with considerable impact for modest investment. Certainly for my own region in Germany, Interreg has worked in an exemplary fashion in terms of our relations with regions in Holland and Belgium. We have colleagues in other parts of Europe who will certainly be able to make similar reports and this will give us every opportunity for exchanges of views and experience, and hence open up the prospects for new forms and types of interregional cooperation' (Wolfgang Clement, Chairman).

Issues

Mr Gaudenzi, Presenter, set the framework for the workshop's discussions. He informed the forum that transfrontier cooperation within internal borders comprised the most important interventions supported by the Community. Given the number of projects and activities financed, it was important to draw operational lessons in view of the next generation of Community-supported programmes.

In this perspective, Mr Gaudenzi suggested that the workshop be organized around three major issues:

What to finance

- Are the existing eligibility criteria adequate and should eligibility be restricted?
- Should infrastructures acquire less weight?
- Should education and training be included in the future programme?

Where to finance

- Should maritime borders be taken into account?
- Should support continue to be given to regions falling under specific Objectives, or should it be extended to interregional cooperation involving regions not covered by any Objective?

How to finance

- Is there a need for a European institutional framework?
- Should partnerships be increased from the levels experienced in the first Interreg programme?

- Who will be the actors, within the Member States, who will define the strategic options of the next programme?

'Why insist on the operational character of this forum? Because you should give the Commission your opinion on the very important aspects related to Interreg II. I believe it is not very important that you try and define the levels of increase of resources in Interreg II relative to Interreg I. Certainly there will be a possibility for substantial financing. What is important is that you give us your opinion on what to finance next, where and how' (Sandro Gaudenzi, Presenter).

Spain-Portugal

Presenters: **Romeu Costa Reis**, Deputy Director, Portuguese Ministry of Planning
Laureano Lazaro Araujo, Deputy Director-General, Spanish Ministry of the Economy

'The proximity and similarity of the situation, with physical, social, economic and cultural similitudes and even a common history with many common points of interest, have not been enough to ensure that these frontier regions have been able to operate in an atmosphere of openness. So we have an urgent need to develop, particularly in the light of the challenges which will be arising in the future. This is possibly the last chance these regions will have to begin the changes which will make it possible for them to face the last decade of the 20th century with some confidence' (Romeu Costa Reis).

This programme covers more than half of Portugal's national territory and Extremadura, Galicia, Castile Leon and Andalusia in Spain. Overall, it concerns close to 6 million people (3.5 million in Spain and 2.2 million in Portugal). The regions involved are mainly rural and they are among the least-developed areas in the Community (their GDP per capita ranges from 44% to 72% of the Community average).

The objectives of this programme are fourfold:

- to improve the accessibility of these regions by creating an urban network, hence achieving a critical mass sufficient to ensure that social and economic actions will have a structural and lasting effect;
- to promote the longitudinal axes along the frontiers in order to stimulate an endogenous development process;
- to develop transfrontier economic systems to promote trade and improve the productivity of the area;
- to develop the surface water potential of the area.

Main aims of Interreg Spain-Portugal

To improve the accessibility of the regions

To stimulate an endogenous development process

To promote intraregional trade

To develop the surface water potential of the regions

In order to achieve the objective of Interreg Spain-Portugal, which had a total cost of ECU 592.83 million, activities were implemented in the following areas:

- development of the roads network;
- agriculture and rural development;
- industry, tourism and craftsmanship;
- promoting tourism and local heritage;
- water resources based on exporting hydroelectricity;
- promotion of experimental ideas concerning intangible actions to generate development.

What is the regional development impact of the programme?

Interreg Spain-Portugal is chiefly aimed at overcoming the major structural deficits in the two border strips. The development of basic infrastructure, particularly transport infrastructure, has been a major component of the programme.

'The idea is to create a permeable frontier by developing communications networks going from one side to the other and promoting the transit of goods and people on both sides of the border' (Laureano Lazaro Araujo).

'Generally speaking, around the frontier we have low population density, an ageing population, low levels of industrial activity, underdeveloped urban networks, dependency upon agriculture, traditional tertiary activities, isolation, no use of endogenous resources, low levels of education and training, and poor living conditions' (Romeu Costa Reis).

Interreg was also successful in stimulating the participation of, and partnership between, the autonomous communities, the Spanish regions and the local government. It undertook projects related to water management and treatment of used water which will improve the living conditions of people in these areas. The programme was also effective in promoting the regions' tourist attraction by protecting and promoting historic and artistic heritages and rehabilitating sites which had become dilapidated over the years.

'The rate of implementation is not just good, it is excellent. In Extremadura, all the basic agreements which had to be achieved before the end of the year have been achieved already. This means that the expectations created in phase I of Interreg have been realized' (Laureano Lazaro Araujo).

The future of Interreg Spain-Portugal

A number of rules and guidelines were prepared for the preparation and presentation of projects. There are four types of projects: studies, extension projects, endogenous development projects and transfrontier cooperation projects (in business, science, and institutional cooperation between associations). While transport investments have been the main objective of Interreg I, transfrontier cooperation can only be effectively developed over the long term, hence through Interreg II. In this context, for the less-developed countries of the Community such as Portugal and Spain, it is difficult to accept the idea that Interreg II may use resources to finance projects outside the Community (i.e. Central and Eastern Europe, and the non-member Mediterranean countries).

'We feel that the Structural Funds, as the Treaty indicates, should be spent within the borders of the Community in Objectives 1 or 2 or even outside the Objectives but inside the Community. This does not mean that we ignore the problems which exist outside the Community, but we do feel that there are other parts of the Community budget to deal with those issues' (Laureano Lazaro Araujo).

The European Development Pole (EDP)

Presenters: Jacques Houbart, Director, Mission Interministérielle
Jacques Planchard, Governor, Province of Luxembourg

'Setting up new factories and creating employment has constituted, and continues to constitute, the priority for reducing the demographic exodus and for reanimating this transfrontier area which has been destructured by the iron and steel crisis' (Jacques Houbart).

The European Development Pole was established in 1985 with a view to alleviating the effects of the declining iron and steel industry in the border regions of France, Belgium and Luxembourg. The decision to establish the EDP was based on the political will of these three Member States to confront the decline of this mono-industry and to secure the economic reconversion of the whole transfrontier region. When first established in 1985, the EDP encompassed 300 000 people within a radius of 20 km around the meeting point of the three borders.

The EDP, which has a total cost of ECU 50.87 million, was established around a threefold objective:

- the creation of an International Activity Park for new and expanding firms;
- the organization of joint vocational training programmes;
- the creation of a Common Services Centre for the enterprises established in the International Activity Park.

Main aims of the European Development Pole

Employment creation

Transfrontier training programmes

Technical assistance to border enterprises

The International Activity Park, with its integrated networks, will provide firms with a variety of facilities: premises will be made available and an expansion capital fund will be established. The Park covers about 500 hectares across the three countries. In this context, the creation of 10 000 jobs over a period of 10 years has also been targeted (by spring 1992, 3 900 new jobs had already been created).

Vocational training is provided through the European College of Technology, according to needs expressed by enterprises established in the Park.

The Common Services Centre aims to provide the enterprises established in the Park with the services they require.

Examples of activities implemented through the programme

Creation of a 'Euroguichet'

Launching of a project for transfrontier inter-urban planning involving the border communes of the three countries

Financial assistance for SMEs

Projects for common transfrontier services in the field of telecommunications

Regional development impact of the programme

Major international and local corporations established a base in the International Activity Park, creating thousands of new jobs. The EDP enabled the successful reconversion of the region through job creation,

training and tailored services for firms. It also demonstrated fruitful coordination between the various levels of common powers, i.e. local, provincial, regional, national and European. Finally, the EDP was conducive to an integrated approach towards the environment, regional planning, habitat, transport and culture at the level of a region embracing three countries. Cooperation was also effective in the fields of public security, health and postal services. However, the insufficient supply of housing and commercial services at the regional level, and more generally the insufficient urban development, was perceived as a factor the potential of which could restrict the results of efforts and investments in favour of transfrontier economic development.

'After seven years of functioning and concrete results in terms of job creation, the EDP has established the training infrastructure and the means necessary for the launching of significant economic development dynamics. However, this process is today slowed down by a deficit in urban supply in terms of urbanism, housing, services of all kinds (commercial, cultural, etc.), communications and environment. The medium-term risk is then that the insufficient urban development constitutes a bottleneck limiting the concretization of efforts and investments undertaken in favour of economic development' (Jacques Houbart).

Major constraints

Although the programme has been successful in gathering the efforts and investments of a variety of institutional and private actors at the regional level, two obstacles which have affected the programme consist of:

- the lack of compatibility between the original objectives of the programmes and the reform of the Structural Funds;

- the lack of harmonization between national regulations in areas such as postal services and telecommunications.

'At the local level, we are dependent upon national logistics; if the problems encountered with the postal service find a solution in January 1993 with the creation of a trans-frontier post office, nothing is yet solved in the field of telecommunications. In order to enable the emergence of actual transfrontier agglomerations and to reduce the weight of internal frontiers, it is therefore necessary to encourage the creation of intercommunal structures under European jurisdiction' (Jacques Houbart).

The future of the European Development Pole

To a large extent, the future of the EDP will have to build upon the lessons drawn from past experience: as already mentioned, transfrontier economic development cannot be sustained without taking account of the needs in the fields of housing, urban services and the improvement of the environment.

'With a view to achieving a more integrated vision of economic and social development, it would be wise to include, in the next generation of Interreg projects, fields of intervention relating to social affairs, health, housing and culture. Those who have worked on the European Development Pole will easily perceive that the next stages of economic development will be linked to actions in favour of urbanism and housing' (J.-P. Dupont, Delegate).

'It is essential that the public authorities support, particularly through a reform of the Structural Funds, global development projects rather than isolated economic actions' (Jacques Houbart).

Netherlands-Germany: Euregio

**Presenters: Hartmut Krebs, State Secretary
W. Van Geffen, Secretary, Euregio**

'Since the establishment of Euregio, great attention has been given to sociocultural activities. These are meant to promote transfrontier cooperation and through these activities one or two preconceived ideas can be dispelled. People can be made to feel they are really neighbours. As to the ombudsman function, it means that Euregio can offer a helping hand to citizens, companies and social organizations to solve transfrontier problems. Annually, about 25 000 people use Euregio's services. This seems to suggest that a lot of people still have problems with the fact that the border exists. I could give you a list of the kind of problems but that would keep us until 8 o'clock this evening! (W. Van Geffen).

The so-called Euregio area covers the Dutch-German border, between the Rhine, Ems and IJssel rivers. The Interreg programme covers the German counties of Bentheim (Lower Saxony), Borken, Coesfeld and Steinfurt (North Rhine-Westphalia), and the Dutch provinces of Twente, Achterhoek and Zuid-Oost-Drenthe. The area has a population of 2.2 million.

Euregio is one of five Dutch-German cooperation groups. The other four include:

- Ems/Dollard region;
- Euregio Rhine/Waal;
- Rhine/Meuse North;
- Meuse/Rhine.

All Dutch and German border communities are members of one of these five transfrontier associations.

Euregio was established in 1958 as a cross-border venture to prevent further degeneration of this largely rural area. Euregio presented its first cross-border

action programme to the Community in 1987 and currently 88 towns, counties and villages participate in the initiative.

Within Interreg-Euregio, which has a total cost of ECU 26.02 million, major actions have included:

- the transfer of technology;
- the trans-border industrial training initiatives for young people;
- the opening-up of historic footpaths which straddle the border;
- the creation of leisure areas;
- the establishment of an ombudsman to help solve transfrontier problems;
- the establishment of a consumer advisory service;
- the establishment of a business advisory service, targeted at SMEs, and providing information on the possibilities of setting up businesses in neighbouring countries, and on cross-border business cooperation.

Main aims of Euregio

To enhance cross-border cooperation and networking

To create alternative employment

To establish, together with the region Rhine/Waal and Rhine/Meuse North, a unified economic area

Although Interreg regulations define about 20 fields in which transfrontier projects can receive support, Euregio has limited its scope to the following seven broad fields:

- networks and communications;
- training and the labour market;
- environment and agriculture;
- transfer of technology;
- research and project management;
- recreation and tourism;
- transport.

Examples of activities undertaken within Euregio

Ombudsman

Business advisory services

Vocational training

Consumer advisory services

Waste processing

Projects in the tourist sector

Agricultural and landscape projects

Creation of recreation associations

Networks and communications

What is the regional development impact of Interreg Netherlands-Germany?

Although transfrontier cooperation between the Netherlands and Germany is longstanding, the Interreg programme gave additional stimulus. The partnership and subsidiarity embodied in the Interreg programme have been characteristic: the programme

has called for both the responsibility of the border regions and for the involvement of all agencies, associations and other public authorities.

'The purpose of the Interreg programme was fulfilled in particular by the interlinking of transfrontier cooperation at all levels – horizontal as well as vertical' (Hartmut Krebs).

It should also be mentioned that all of the abovementioned seven fields of intervention were represented in all border regions. Vocational training projects, which were financed by both Interreg and the European Social Fund, also benefited from financial contributions from the business sector, which showed a willingness to support these activities.

Major constraints

Euregio is faced with a number of unresolved issues which relate to the lack of harmonization of tax, employment and social security regulations in each border region. The problem of the recognition of diplomas across the borders is also a recurrent one.

Euregio was also faced with the diverging interpretations of Interreg's definitions of 'transfrontier projects'. To help resolve this issue, Euregio has developed its own criteria of eligibility.

'The relatively small sum of money which the German/Belgian/Dutch border area receives, and the conditions attached to the allocation, encouraged all participants to draft joint transfrontier projects and a joint procedure for appropriating and giving account of these funds. The associates' pressure to agree has given further stimulus to practical project-related cooperation across national frontiers, so that the programme can already be regarded as a great success' (Hartmut Krebs).

The future of Interreg Netherlands-Germany

In setting up the Interreg programme, the Commission and national authorities had expressed their concern over the fact that the regions had no le-

gal status and hence could not be held legally responsible for possible misuses of funds. This shortcoming has now been alleviated following signature by the Netherlands and Germany of the Anholt Treaty, which will create a legal basis and grant legal responsibility to regional transfrontier cooperation. This Treaty should come into force during the course of 1993.

With regard to Interreg II, the following proposals were made:

- A more flexible financing mechanism to reduce the difficulties in combining resources from Objective 2, Article 10 and the European Social Fund.
- Eligible recipients of resources from Interreg II should be those transborder associations which have proven that they are able to provide an effective contribution to transfrontier cooperation.
- The basis for assessment of transfrontier cooperation should not be at NUTS 3 level which, according to country, can cover areas from 3 to 80 km. A broader basis of assessment should be established.

Interreg Ireland-United Kingdom (Northern Ireland)

Presenters: John Dowdall, Under-Secretary, Department of Finance and Personnel, Northern Ireland
Bernard O'Reilly, Project Manager, ESB International Ltd, Ireland
Pierce Pigott, Director of Engineering Services, Office of Public Works, Ireland

'The border areas of Ireland and Northern Ireland lack a strong industrial tradition, and the dependence of agriculture and relatively small home markets have resulted in low levels of income and high unemployment. These problems have been compounded by over 20 years of violence, terrorism and increasingly divided communities' (John Dowdall).

The area covered by the Interreg Ireland programme includes all of Northern Ireland, except Belfast, and the border regions of Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan, Monaghan and Louth in Ireland. In public consciousness the area is strongly identified as a 'trouble spot', despite its beautiful, and peaceful, countryside. The general objectives of the programme are to assist border areas to overcome development problems and encourage cross-border cooperation to maximize growth potential. The wide-ranging programme covers tourism, agriculture and fisheries, forestry, human resources, environmental protection and regional development. This latter covers economic development, infrastructure and community or rural regeneration. The total EC grant allocated is ECU 80.3 million towards a total cost of ECU 141.4 million.

Its major aspects include:

- a tourism strategy aimed at completing the Shannon-Emne link uniting two large river systems, and promoting the area's image as a leisure and holiday destination;
- enhancing the value of resources in agriculture, fisheries and forestry;
- the preservation and enhancement of water quality;

- reducing the isolation of the border population through physical, social and economic links;
- projects for cooperation between SMEs, and the use of information networks.

Main aims of the programme

- The provision or development of physical linkages – roads, water, energy – to enhance cross-border links, reduce isolation and increase the potential for tourism.
- The renovation of the Ballinamore Ballyconnell canal linking two of the major waterways in the island of Ireland and contributing significantly to the tourism potential of the area.
- The funding of cross-border tourism, SME development and marketing initiatives to encourage economic regeneration and stimulate cross-border trade.
- The development of training projects sharing resources and facilities, for example in the field of forestry, contributing to the economic potential of the area.

Examples of major activities undertaken through the programme

- The building of an electricity interconnector to provide stand-by power to both sides of the border.
- The development of water-quality management plans to cover waterways spanning the border.

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- The funding of 12 vocational training courses, for example forging links between higher and further-education establishments.

The Shannon-Erne link

The presentation focused on the Shannon-Erne link.

The 62 km Ballinamore Ballyconnell canal links the Shannon and Erne waterways, opening up this area to tourism and creating a single navigable system of more than 750 km of varied cruising waters. Because of its significance in the key areas for economic regeneration in this region, the canal was chosen as the flagship project in the Irish Government's development plan. The canal itself forms the border for 10% of its length, which has necessitated the development of new organizational relationships out of which have grown permanent structures for the management and marketing of the canal. The canal had been abandoned since 1869. Reconstruction work employs over 200 people, and has had a significant effect on the local economy. It is expected to significantly increase the number of cruise-hire holidaymakers, to provide other tourism-related opportunities such as canoeing, scientific and archaeological interests, and to generate tourism benefits with a present value of IRL 46.5 million.

The success of the project to date is illustrated by the level of investment in the building of new houses, the construction of a major hotel, the improvement in guest houses and the provision of facilities such as golf-courses, swimming-pools and tennis-courts. This is in addition to the direct effects of increased investment by cruise line operators. Many communities

along the canal are forming committees and development companies to examine the possibilities for their areas.

Future developments

This fundamentally small-scale project has succeeded in generating local support and initiatives which means that extensive plans for the future are being devised.

These developments include the development of a canals and waterways strategy aimed at developing a waterways network which would reach into many parts of the country and would be sufficiently extensive, in terms of size and level of linkage, to offer an alternative means of touring Ireland. This would allow Ireland to compete more effectively with other European countries for many different types of tourists. This strategy would include:

- the reopening of the Ulster canal as a link to the east Ulster waterways, and an additional access to the sea. This would integrate the principal navigable waterways of the whole island;
- the extension of the Erne system into Ireland, strengthening the upper Erne zone which caters for a significant Northern Ireland clientele;
- the provision of extensions and improvements to the Shannon system, building on the Ballinamore Ballyconnell canal and opening up routes to new destinations.

'The benefit to social and political cohesion should be significant, and this would be in the best traditions of the European Community' (Pierce Pigott).

France-Spain: The Pyrenees, a common heritage

Presenters: **Laureano Lazaro Araujo**, Deputy Director-General, Ministry of the Economy, Spain
Roger Castagné, Mayor of Aragnouet, France
Koldo Hualde, Director-General for Planning, Basque Country
Jacques Blanc, President of the Languedoc - Roussillon region

'The frontier between France and Spain is a mountain, which has always been seen by both countries, although not by the people living at the foot of the mountains, as a line of protection. This situation has changed, and the proof of this change is that links and cooperation were already being built across the frontier before the Interreg programme was up and running' (Laureano Lazaro Araujo).

The Pyrenees form a distinctive and fragile natural environment whose development has been slow. This has had the positive effect of preserving a rich and diverse cultural, historical and natural heritage. It has also brought with it all the problems of isolated rural communities which are largely dependent on agriculture, and a declining population as young people leave to find work. Although absolute numbers involved in some cases are low, in percentage terms unemployment is high – 20% in the Basque Country.

The Interreg programme

The Interreg programme involves, on the French side, parts of the departments of Ariège, Haute-Garonne, Hautes-Pyrénées, Pyrénées, Pyrénées-Atlantiques and Pyrénées-Orientales. On the Spanish side the provinces involved are Gerona, Lerida, Huesca, Navarra and Guipuzcoa.

Cooperation between the two countries dates back to the remote past, with the conclusion of peace treaties to govern not only the joint use of grazing land, water and forests, but also trade relations, the organization of fairs and the drafting of legal documents. The accession of Spain to the European Community has accelerated the pace of this contact. Since 1983 the Communauté de travail des Pyrénées has served as

the joint consultation body, and an agreement of cooperation over land use was signed by DATAR (France) and MOPU (Spain) in 1985.

The major aspects of the programme cover:

- economic diversification and cross-border communications;
- the environment and tourism;
- agricultural and forestry diversification and rural development;
- training.

The total cost of the programme is ECU 62.44 million, of which ECU 31.22 million is contributed by the European Community.

Major activities undertaken through the programme

- Schemes to retrain people and convert areas involved in customs activities, the modernization of transport infrastructure, the construction of a heliport, joint management of two border urban areas, exchanges of technological skills.
- The joint development of two national parks, the installation of light infrastructure (huts, trails, embankments), the development of new tourism products.
- The genetic improvement of herds and flocks, coordination of production with a view to joint exploitation of timber resources, protection of

forest against natural threats, development of agrotourism, development and marketing of up-market food products.

- French and Spanish language instruction, technical training and exchanges of students and teachers.

Cooperation in action

Two examples of cross-border cooperation were presented:

The two small villages of Aragnouet in France and Bielsa in Spain were divided by the mountains, but united by common problems. In both cases, improvements in transport and infrastructure enabled the development of a flourishing tourist industry which breathed new life into the villages. Bielsa, which had been almost totally destroyed in the Spanish civil war, was rebuilt afterwards and became a centre for summer tourism in Spain. Thanks to the arrival of the railways and an associated hydroelectric power station, Aragnouet was set on the road to developing a base for winter sports — Piau-Engaly.

In 1976 the construction of a tunnel was started to link the two sides of the mountain. It was planned and financed by the local communes, and took 20 years to complete from its original inception. However, in 1992, Spanish visitors were the third most numerous to Piau-Engaly, and Aragnouet has doubled its population since the inauguration of the tunnel.

In the Basque region, dependence on customs and transport-related employment is high, and unemployment stands at 20%. The two towns of Hendaye (France) and Irun-Fontarabia (Spain) form the Bajo-Bidasoa — an urban area with a working population of 25 400 of whom more than 25% work in customs, transport and railways. Over half of the commerce between Spain and the rest of Europe passes this way. The completion of the single market, and the opening-up of new communication links will have a severe effect on employment in the area.

The Basque and French administrations thus came together to produce the 'Strategic Plan Bidasoa 1993' to help the area face the challenge before it. The plan contains actions to stimulate the economic activity of the area, for example through the launching of a transport centre, and environmental measures to improve the water quality of the river Pey so as to improve opportunities for tourism. In the medium term, the strategy is to integrate the two areas (France and Spain) which have previously lived back-to-back. Means of doing this include a bilateral cooperation fund (Basque Country/Aquitane) aimed at stimulating economic and sociocultural activities on both sides of the border, including the private and public sectors, and the Atlantic Society for Mutual Knowledge which also exists on both sides of the frontier. The Interreg programme has contributed ECU 2.3 million to actions in this area.

Lessons for the future

In the future development of Europe, the regions have a strong role to play. Today, thanks to this type of cooperation, 'producers of Mediterranean products can talk together about production schedules instead of burning lorries' (Jacques Blanc).

However, there is a need, particularly at the scale of this type of project, to recognize a type of 'inter-regional community' which has an identifiable role to play. Here, in drawing up the Interreg programme, much time and impetus was lost because of the lack of legal status of the Communauté de travail.

'Interregional cooperation initiatives between the autonomous communities north and south of the Pyrenees have created a Euroregion between Catalonia, Midi-Pyrénées and Languedoc-Roussillon, a Euroregion which lives, and which has concrete results' (Jacques Blanc).

Forum discussions

The forum discussions held on 14 and 15 December focused on four major issues:

- the eligibility criteria for future Interreg programmes;
- the inclusion or not of maritime borders;
- issues related to the management of the programmes and their legal framework;
- the contents of future programmes.

The eligibility criteria for future Community interventions constituted a major subject of discussion during the two-day forum. According to a German delegate, Mr Holmes, eligibility criteria should be softened, particularly as regards the criterion of distance from the border area. This intervention met with the approval of Mr Gaudenzi, who indicated that eligible zones should be defined according to socioeconomic criteria rather than distances in kilometers. He also invited the forum to reflect upon the need to extend eligibility to regions which are not classified under any Community Objective. Mr Bouvard, President of the Conseil régional de Savoie, indicated that, due to their non-eligibility, border areas such as the Vallée de la Maurienne in Savoie have had to call upon transfrontier cooperation institutions such as Cotrao in order to finance their participation in Interreg I. Mr Blanc suggested that, in addition to other criteria to select eligible zones, actions undertaken outside a given territory but generating important effects for this territory should be taken into account.

'It is necessary that Interreg II defines eligibility criteria clearly and that it responds to the situations resulting from the opening of borders in the most affected areas (for example the region of Irun). In this perspective, the notion of 'employment area' ('bassin d'emploi') would constitute a good criterion' (Mr Bouvard, President of the Conseil régional de Savoie).

Closely related to the issue of eligibility criteria, the question of whether or not to include maritime borders was often raised and discussed. In the view of a Welsh delegate, who cited the example of cross-maritime borders between Wales and Ireland, maritime borders should be fully taken into account. The delegate added that eligibility criteria in the case of maritime zones could be based upon the importance of trade flows and dependence between cross-maritime borders. Mr Gaudenzi informed the forum that this question was going to be examined by the Commission, while Mr Blanc suggested that maritime zones should be the object of a new classification of Community regions. Mr Polverini, from Corsica, indicated that the issue of maritime borders should generate three major reflections:

- in some cases, transfrontier cooperation needs to draw upon resources which are relatively remote from the maritime zone (for example, the University of Corte, which is the only university of Corsica);
- the notion of 'maritime transfrontier' should be extended to those instances involving cooperation between ports of different neighbouring countries;
- it would also be useful to establish a 'tool box' with a range of legal instruments to regulate transfrontier cooperation.

A Spanish delegate, Mr Lazaro, indicated that the Spanish authorities were not supporting the idea of an extension of Interreg II to maritime zones. He explained that the problems in these zones are of a different nature than those in the other regions.

'The notion of eligible zones should be flexible: problems do not have the same nature in the maritime zones, or along internal borders which are subject to desertification' (Mr Blanc, Chairman).

Another major topic of discussion revolved around the management of Interreg activities and their legal framework. Mr Polverini, from Corsica, indicated that problems encountered in the management of Interreg Corsica-Sardinia suggested that the Commission should propose new legal structures for managing projects under Interreg II. This was supported by Ms Chicoye (from DATAR in France), who added that the Commission should devise a range of legal schemes for the joint management of transfrontier projects and in order to avoid the daily problems encountered in the field. Mr Viale, an Italian delegate, cited the example of transfrontier cooperation between Menton and Ventimilia, which is considerably slowed down by the lack of a common legal framework. Mr Blanc stressed that a European legal status for such cooperation was needed to facilitate transfrontier cooperation and co-financing procedures. This was confirmed by Ms Canale, from the Liguria region in Italy, who indicated that the notion of employment area ('bassin d'emploi') to delimit interventions would be excellent. Mr Overbeek, from the province of North Brabant, explained that legal problems in the Dutch border regions will be eliminated following the German-Dutch Treaty which came into force in 1993. He suggested that the German-Dutch, German-Danish and Dutch-Belgian experiences be transposed to other border regions. This view was opposed, however, by Ms Anneleige, from Wallonia, who expressed the belief that such legal arrangements are not transposable and that there is a need for a common legal tool to manage transfrontier cooperation projects. Mr Blanc observed that some programmes have a common objective but do not

foresee common integrated actions. For this type of programme, a legal instrument is necessary. The forum was also informed by Mr Gabbe (Euregio) that an evaluation of Interreg had been undertaken in the framework of the LACE programme. The following conclusions were reported to the forum:

- any legal framework or regulation taken at Community level will need to be transferred to national legislation;
- treaties already exist which respond to problems encountered by Objective 2 regions; it is now important to develop similar instruments for Objective 1 regions;
- transfrontier cooperation should be developed within zones of an average extension of 30 to 60 km;
- subsidiarity should come from the top and be developed at regional level;
- it will be necessary to progress gradually from transfrontier cooperation to interregional cooperation.

'With regard to territorial eligibility, it is necessary to choose between a mathematical/kilometric reasoning and a reasoning related to territorial planning. In addition, it is not certain that the Commission will make any proposals in terms of legal instruments. But we can notice that certain border regions such as Euregio have already established institutional schemes for cross-border cooperation. The time is not ripe for the Commission to take such decisions' (Sandro Gaudenzi, Presenter).

The last major topic of discussion related to the contents of cross-border interventions. According to a Portuguese delegate, Mr Costa Reis, Interreg is the only programme which is able to prevent the migration of border populations and infrastructural policies should continue to be a priority. Interreg II, however, will need to favour a higher quality of projects, particularly in the field of economic regeneration. Selection and implementation procedures will also need to be improved. In the view of Mr Houbard, from the European Development Pole, the rationale

of transfrontier projects should take account of the history of the projects and the capacity to integrate common local interventions, rather than the contents *stricto sensu* of the projects. Mr Blanc stressed that the objective of Interreg was oriented towards local development rather than major infrastructural projects which require additional sources of funding. A Belgian delegate, Mr Romus, indicated that for zones covered by Objectives 1 and 2, there was a juxtaposition of objectives. Issues of regional development have been associated with issues of transfrontier cooperation. It is not by trying to alleviate lagging development or the crisis in the steel industry that transfrontier issues can best be approached.

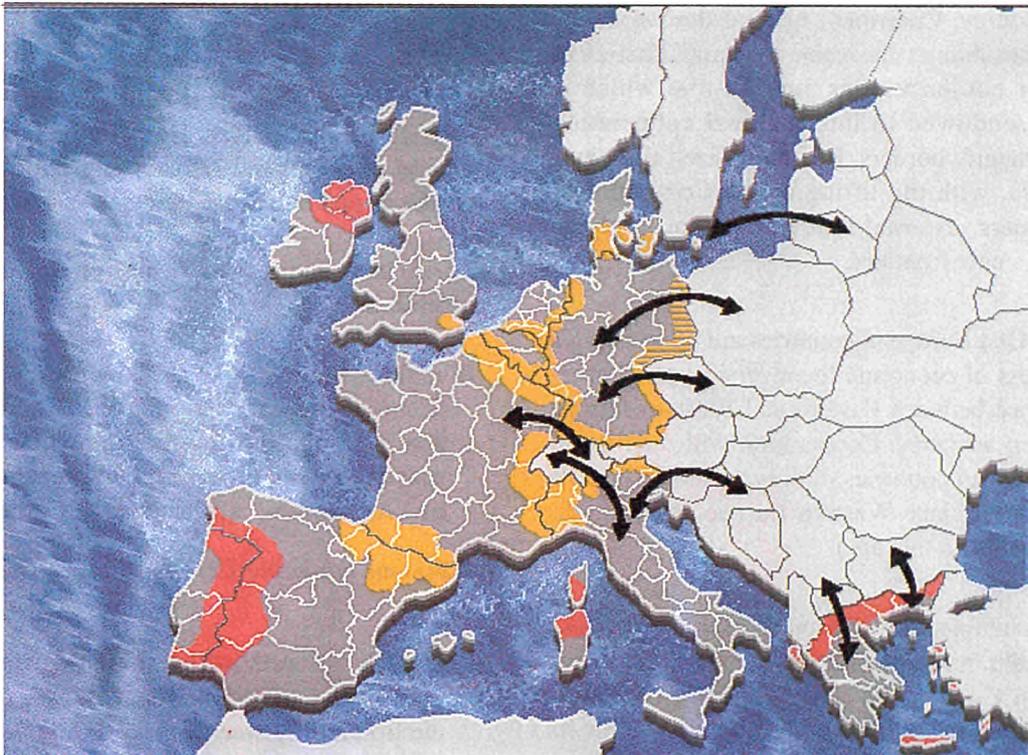
'The criteria for defining priorities will need to be related to objective development conditions (e.g. strengthening of enterprises) and to subjective conditions (e.g. endogenous development dynamic, and good organization and management of projects' (R. Costa Reis, Portuguese delegate).

By way of conclusion Mr Blanc summarized the following points:

- while Interreg I has been an indispensable programme, a 'qualitative jump forward' needs to be done by Interreg II;
- the establishment of a new legal structure would strengthen partnerships, in conformity with the principle of subsidiarity;
- Interreg II will need to be particularly flexible in terms of geographic eligibility criteria. However, while it is recognized that infrastructural measures are still fundamental to certain regions, all border regions will need to devise coherent development actions;
- certain maritime zones should be taken into account, but in a flexible and qualified manner.

Workshop B

External borders



Introduction and issues

Chairman: Constantinos Kosmopoulos, Mayor of Thessaloniki

Presenter: Graham Meadows, Commission of the European Communities, DG XVI/D

Rapporteur: John Cushnahan, Vice-President, Regional Policy Committee, European Parliament

Introduction

Workshop B addressed the overall subject of trans-frontier cooperation with non-member border regions. A major objective of this workshop was to review the variety of issues which such cooperation raises and to identify possible ways for the European Community to take account of the needs of the peripheral regions for Community-supported cooperation with non-member border regions.

Mr Kosmopoulos, Chairman, opened the workshop by briefly introducing the general characteristics of non-member border regions and the role which is likely to be endowed to interregional cooperation across Community borders. He emphasized that since January 1993, with the lifting of the Community's internal borders, external borders have become the Community's new frontiers.

Central and East European countries are undergoing a radical process of economic reconversion, and peaceful coexistence between Eastern and Western Europe has now been achieved. Cooperation with non-member Mediterranean countries, however, should also be explored further, since Western Europe enjoys traditional relations with this area.

By way of example, the Chairman described the case of Thessaloniki, a Mediterranean region which shares borders with Central and East European countries. After the removal of ideological barriers with its neighbours, and given its traditional position as a major commercial centre which attracts significant levels of investment, Thessaloniki can prepare to play an increasing role in the development of Europe.

'Border regions in non-member States are the most far-off from the centres of decision-making. In most of these regions, income per capita is particularly low, and these regions are also characterized by major structural deficiencies. Migratory flows from both Mediterranean and Central/East European regions are likely to grow. Each peripheral region will have a well-targeted role to play, which will take account of the peculiarities of its non-member neighbour regions' (Constantinos Kosmopoulos, Chairman).

Issues

Mr Meadows, Presenter, set the framework for the workshop's discussions. He described the three main groups of peripheral regions and outlined the main questions and issues of interest to this workshop.

Three main categories of peripheral regions were identified:

- regions bordering EFTA countries: some of these countries are likely to join the EC and consideration is being given by the Community to launch a special Interreg programme to prepare some of the EFTA countries' adherence to the Community;
- regions bordering Central and East European countries;
- regions situated in the southern frontiers of the Community, across northern Africa, in addition to the frontiers between Greece and Turkey.

With a view to ensuring that programmes within Interreg II involving external borders generate results which are proportional to the levels of resources

invested, Mr Meadows described four major issues in relation to which the assessment of future interventions should be conducted:

Eligibility criteria

- Should the same priority be given to all external borders?
- Should maritime borders be taken into account?

Resources

- How can we encourage co-financing from non-member regions?
- Should we envisage financial contributions from PHARE, the EIB or the EBRD?

Institutional framework

- Under which institutional framework should such cooperation be undertaken?

- Are the existing administrative structures sufficient for such cooperation?
- Do the regions have the necessary powers; should we envisage the creation of special structures for such cooperation?

Types of measure

- Which fields of intervention should be covered; should infrastructures acquire less weight?

'This is the series of questions which we should keep in mind. How can we obtain the best possible results relative to resources allocated, bearing in mind also that major infrastructure works will acquire less weight within Interreg II, unless they benefit both sides of the border. Naturally, the Commission would like that during the forthcoming negotiations, all Structural Funds' interventions be associated with qualitative objectives and criteria enabling an evaluation of Interreg II to be conducted the same way as for Objectives 1, 2 and 5b' (Graham Meadows, Presenter).

Interreg Greece

Presenters: **G. Vlachos**, Director-General, Ministry of National Economy, Greece
Miranda Costara, Ministry of National Economy, Greece
Maria Vergopolou, Ministry of National Economy, Greece

'Greece has an important role to play because it is at the centre of the Mediterranean and also at the crossroads between East and West. In fact, Greece is the only country in the Community which is situated in the Balkans and thus can be called upon to play an essential role in the development and the promotion of Community interests in the Balkans' (G. Vlachos).

The Greek border areas are among the poorest in the Community, with a per capita GDP ranging from 40 to 58% of the Community average. Communications, both internally and with adjoining States are poor, and the current instability in the neighbouring area has compounded the problems. As well as these difficulties, Greece is relatively isolated from the decision-making centre of the Community, being the only Member State to have no internal land border within the Community.

The Interreg programme

The programme area has a population of more than 3.2 million people, stretching from the Ionian island of Corfu in the west to Thrace in the east. It includes numerous Aegean islands as well as Crete. The area borders on Albania, Bulgaria, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. This proximity has generated pressures, including the problems of drug trafficking and illegal immigration, leading to strong tensions.

The Interreg programme has two main purposes:

- To help the regions involved to overcome the obstacles to their development which arise from their isolation while enabling them to adapt to their new role as external frontiers of the Community. This aspect has been given priority.

- To favour cross-border cooperation through the establishment of networks.

The cost of the programme is ECU 339.49 million of which ECU 242.25 million is contributed by the Community.

Examples of the activities undertaken in the framework of the programme include.

- the construction of sections of the Egnatia road which crosses Greece from east to west;
- the expansion of Hania airport and the development of port facilities at Thessaloniki, Igoumenitsa and Alexandroupolis;
- the modernization of border posts and the development of cross-border cooperation with the Balkan States;
- the establishment of a Balkans Institute, and a Greek-Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce.

Interreg in action

Details of two projects supported under the programme were presented.

The 650-km Egnatia road crosses Greece from the port of Igoumenitsa in the west – the nearest point to Italy – to Alexandroupolis and the Turkish border in the east. On its way it crosses four Interreg regions, and has permitted closer links between regions like Thrace and Macedonia and the rest of Europe. In planning how this communication could be improved

there were a number of options: by road through Austria and the former Yugoslavia, although this has now become too dangerous; via Hungary and Bulgaria – a longer and more expensive route; or by sea to Italy. This latter option was particularly important as it was the only route lying within the Community.

In addition to its other problems, Greece is bisected by a range of mountains running north-south. These posed an insurmountable barrier to the road for many of the winter months. Therefore a tunnel has been constructed which cuts the transit time for the section from one-and-a-half hours to 15 minutes, and guarantees year-round circulation. In addition the road has been widened in some places, such as Kavalla where a bypass has been constructed. Access roads from the frontier to the highway have been built – Igoumenitsa represents the natural outlet from the Balkans to the Mediterranean.

Economic and social networks are as important as transport. In this context the programme has considered several types of intervention and has launched a series of sectoral studies looking at market opportunities for transfrontier areas. It has also supported exchanges between universities and other institutions and the development of telecommunications and the media.

In this latter context a Balkan Press Centre has been set up in Thessaloniki following protracted negotiations with the journalists' associations in the area. Any journalist who wishes to work as a correspondent in northern Greece or the Balkans can use the centre. At a purely technical level, the centre provides journalists with courses, training, scientific studies and historical documents relating to the Balkans. The centre, in a converted house in the centre of Thessaloniki, has a modern communications network with radio, television, video and other equipment for the journalists to work with. As well as providing these facilities, the aim of the centre is to build relation

ships between the journalists themselves which will overcome ancient misunderstandings and build an atmosphere of conviviality, friendship and peace.

In future it may be possible to extend the coverage of the centre, and to create similar facilities in areas of the Balkans which do not yet possess them. The unique characteristic of this centre compared with other European centres is that it has the opportunity to plan and implement a series of activities which would cover the whole of the Balkans, including the politically sensitive regions which would thus be linked directly to the Community. The editors of the newspapers in Macedonia and Thrace who are already members of the International Association of Journalists in Brussels intend to create an association bringing together the journalists of the Balkans who can have their own links with the association in Brussels. The accent is firmly placed on the role of the press to permit the exchange of ideas supporting democracy and peace.

Lessons for the future

Particular importance needs to be given to the aspects of coordination and financing of interventions undertaken. The lack of economic integration and the lack of coordination risk holding back development. For example, the presenters stressed that better coordination is needed between the Structural Funds, Interreg II and the PHARE programme.

'The situation in the Balkan States did not permit us fully to promote transfrontier cooperation in the context of Interreg. On the other hand, there were other factors which stopped the promotion, for example, of areas like tourism, vocational training of expatriates returning to Greece and so on. In future we must develop these types of activities and intensify them through a new Community initiative such as Interreg II' (G. Vlachos).

Italy-Slovenia

Presenters: **Mario Francescato**, Director of Community Affairs, Region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia
Eduard Pesendorfer, Director-General, Arbeitsgemeinschaft Alpen Adria

'The region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia is undergoing a serious crisis which consists of war in former Yugoslavia, which has considerably reduced commercial activities in the border region; the decline of the Trieste harbour; and the decreasing rate of industrial employment. When one considers the situation in a dynamic, rather than a static, manner, the decrease in the region's potential for development is easily perceptible' (Mario Francescato).

Due to both geographical and historical reasons, the characteristics of Friuli-Venezia Giulia are unique. After World War II, about 350 000 Italians left Yugoslavia to return to Italy; there is still an important Slovenian minority in Friuli-Venezia Giulia and an Italian minority in Slovenia. Refugee migration directed to this region persists and initiatives are being taken to organize the reception and housing of former Yugoslav refugees.

This Interreg programme focuses on Friuli-Venezia Giulia's borders with both Austria and Slovenia. It has a threefold objective:

- the protection of the environment;
- transfrontier economic development;
- assistance in the transition towards a market economy in Slovenia.

The programme has a total cost of ECU 5.04 million and includes the following aspects:

- joint studies on air transport and border control;
- production of a four-language technical glossary on environmental protection;

- an in-depth feasibility study on the options for cleaning up the Timavo river;
- establishment of a service centre for wine-growers;
- joint research project on the options for the use of sawmill waste as an alternative energy source.

Main aims of the Interreg Italy-Slovenia programme

- To reconcile the two mainstays of the regional economy (tourism and industry) with environmental protection.
- To improve more generally the region's environment.
- To extend economic cooperation with Slovenia.
- To support Slovenia's transition towards a market economy.

Examples of major activities undertaken through Interreg Italy-Slovenia

Joint studies on air transport and border control

Production of a four-language technical glossary on environmental protection

In-depth feasibility study on the options for cleaning up the Timavo river

Establishment of a service centre for wine-growers

Joint research project on the options for the use of sawmill waste as an alternative energy source

What is the regional development impact of Interreg activities in this region?

The ongoing economic changes in Central European economies may give this region the opportunity to regain its historic role in East-West trade. Even before the 1989 revolutions, Friuli-Venezia Giulia had forged regular contacts with Hungary, Austria and the former Yugoslav States, particularly in the framework of the Alpe Adria cooperative agreement (this agreement focuses on the protection of the environment, transport, agriculture, cultural exchanges, etc.). Environmental protection is an important area of intervention of Interreg in this region. In particular, the feasibility study to identify options for cleaning up the Timavo river is of foremost importance to the region given that the river has been seriously affected by the discharge of urban and industrial waste. This study should lead to the implementation of a water-quality control system.

'Italy, Austria and Slovenia form an area that seeks to reassert its historic role in East-West trade and develop its tourism potential. Measures being taken to address the pollution problems of the Timavo river which flows from Italy into Slovenia and to promote Alpine tourism can bring economic benefits to the whole cross-border region' (John Cushnahan, Vice-President, Regional Policy Committee).

Beyond cross-border economic cooperation: Supporting the democratic process in Eastern Europe

Interreg activities were also influential in enabling closer links between Friuli-Venezia Giulia and new East European democracies to be established. East-West cross-border cooperation offers an original means for overcoming development gaps in Central and Eastern Europe. As a Slovenian speaker stressed during the forum discussions in the workshop on external borders: 'If we consider the problems which Western Europe is encountering in harmonizing its

own economic internal affairs, we can easily understand the difficulties inherent in the process of harmonization with Eastern Europe. In this perspective, Western Europe should support all kinds of regional development and cooperation activities with Central and Eastern Europe'.

Future developments

As a region which is both peripheral to the EC and enjoying longstanding relations with Central European countries, Friuli-Venezia Giulia's cross-border cooperation activities constitute a valuable experience for future Community interventions involving West and East European regions.

'The traditional cooperation between Friuli-Venezia Giulia and a number of Central and East European countries should be fully exploited by the European Community. We are ready to share our experience with the Community' (Eduard Pesendorfer).

The development of such experiences would require that Community resources be allocated for projects which are implemented outside Community borders but which involve at least one Community region. In this perspective, it was suggested that a programme such as PHARE be further utilized for East-West cross-border cooperation. It was also suggested that Friuli-Venezia Giulia, given its evolving economic and industrial situation, be included in Objectives 2 and 5b of the Community's Structural Funds.

'The region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia needs Europe strongly, but Europe too needs Friuli-Venezia Giulia. This region could constitute a laboratory for the European Community to identify major political choices in a number of areas: interregional cooperation; assistance to Central and East European countries; cooperation with Austria, which will soon become an EC Member State; the protection of minorities; the establishment of an international peace and cooperation area between Italy, Slovenia and Croatia, a zone which in the past few centuries has been faced more by tragic wars than with possibilities for cooperation' (Mario Francescato).

East Germany/Euroregion

Presenters: Gunter Ermisch, Minister for European Affairs, Saxony
H. J. Evers, Chairman, Euroregion Elbe-Labe

'We should be aware of one thing: our obligations which resulted from German unification, the collapse of the communist system, and the desire of Poles and Czechs to participate in the construction of a European free world constitute one of the most important challenges of our time. If our generation does not respond to these new hopes, we take the risk of assuming consequences which will not be very desirable. The new democratic systems in Poland and Czechoslovakia are dependent on the economic reforms. It will take 10 to 15 years to complete these reforms, with our help. If we fail, I repeat myself, we will have to bear the consequences' (Gunter Ermisch).

These two presentations aimed at outlining the general objectives of the four Euroregions which were established between Germany and Eastern Europe, and at describing one of these Euroregions: Elbe-Labe.

After the 1989 revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe, four Euroregions, financed by the *Land* of Saxony and the European Community, were created:

- the Neisse Euroregion;
- the Elbe-Labe Euroregion;
- the Ertzgebirge Euroregion;
- the Egrensis Euroregion.

The five new German *Länder*, having integrated into one of the Community's most prosperous Member States, are relatively privileged; Polish and Czechoslovakian neighbouring regions, by contrast, are in a much more precarious situation.

In 1991, a joint German-Polish body for transfrontier cooperation was created. A list of 25 projects was also drawn up which aimed at:

- the protection of the environment;
- cooperation in the field of training;
- improvement in the economic structure;
- cooperation in the cultural sphere.

Main aims of the East German programme

Protection of the environment

Cooperation in the field of training

Improvement of the economic structure

Cooperation in the cultural field

With regard to Elbe-Labe, this region involves part of Bohemia and the eastern side of Erzgebirge in an area of 5 000 km² and with a population of over 1.5 million. For more than six decades, this region has been subjected to dictatorship, with all the negative effects in terms of human relations and the environmental degradation.

Specific activities foreseen by the programme in Elbe-Labe included:

- the establishment of new ferries;
- the extension of the natural reserve of Ost-Erzgebirge;
- waste-water treatment;
- training schemes;
- the establishment of a bilingual (German/Polish) school.

Examples of major activities foreseen by the East German programme in the Elbe-Labe Euroregion

Establishment of ferry networks

Extension of the natural reserve of Ost-Erzgebirge

Waste-water treatment

Training schemes, particularly in the field of hotel business

Establishment of a bilingual (German/Polish) school

Major constraints

The major obstacle to the implementation of this programme is the lack of financing for the non-EC regions. Thus the bilingual school, which is based in Pienna (Poland) has not benefited from Community resources due to its location.

The future of the East German programme

The allocation of Community resources for non-EC regions will be critical to the future of this programme. With regard to PHARE, the remark was made that this programme benefits primarily the consultants of the Community's Member States rather than the people of Central and Eastern Europe. In addition, it appears that the Polish Government, for example, is more keen in allocating PHARE resources to Poland's eastern borders, than to its western borders.

'Within the framework of the Delors II package and the new generation of Structural Funds, a transfrontier development programme involving the border regions of Germany, Poland and Czechoslovakia should be set up (with the financial participation of Poles and Czechs). The aim would be to promote cooperation in the field of economic development, protection of the environment, training and cultural activities. It would be useful if the Structural Funds were to be opened to these transfrontier regions or that *ad hoc* funds be allocated' (Gunter Ermisch).

Denmark-Baltic States: Bornholm

Presenter: Knud Andersen, County Mayor

'About 0.5% of the population of Bornholm is leaving the island every year. If there is no end to such emigration, we will have problems maintaining hospitals, education, transport links, etc. The idea of the Interreg programme is to develop Bornholm as a viable economic entity based on trade with the whole of the Baltic region' (Knud Andersen).

Bornholm is a Danish island with a population of about 45 000. It has the lowest income per capita in Denmark and a rate of unemployment which is expected to reach 14 to 15 % in 1993. Its economy is strongly dependent upon fisheries.

The objective of the Interreg programme is to combat Bornholm's isolation through the forging of cooperation links with the Baltic States, Poland and northern Russia.

The programme has a total cost of ECU 7.41 million and covers the Baltic region of Sweden, Finland, the eastern part of Germany, Poland and the three Baltic States from the former Soviet Union. Its major aspects include:

- the establishment of the Baltic House to provide business advice and facilities;
- investment aids;
- the improvement of infrastructure relevant to trade and communication in the Baltic region;
- vocational training for the people of Bornholm.

Main aims of the programme

Setting up a Baltic House to serve as a consultancy unit for the trade and industry community of Bornholm (translation services, lecture and meeting rooms, computer and transmission facilities)

Productive investment in SMEs and tourism to boost cooperation with, and exports to, the Baltic region

Investment in infrastructure, in particular to develop the local tourist potential (e.g. bicycle lanes, marinas, services centres, etc.)

Vocational language and management courses, and exchanges of students with the Baltic countries and Poland

In particular, a number of economic and cultural activities were undertaken around the Baltic House. These include support for Bornholm's building industry to negotiate the construction of 350 housing units in Poland; education programmes on Bornholm for people from Poland and the three Baltic States; organization of a TV festival and the establishment of a Baltic Academy to allow for exchanges of ideas and experiences between teachers and artists of the region; and, finally, the establishment of two new summer routes to Poland.

Examples of major activities undertaken through the programme

Support for the building industry relative to the establishment of 350 housing units in Poland

Various educational activities in Bornholm for people from Poland, the three Baltic States and Russia

Organization of a TV festival in Bornholm

Development of the Baltic Media Centre to teach journalism to the newly democratic societies

Establishment of a Baltic Academy to allow teachers and artists from the Baltic area to exchange ideas and experience

Examples of major activities undertaken through the Baltic House

Advice on investment

Translation and interpretation services for SMEs

Measures to stimulate tourism

Education programmes on Bornholm

Assistance in the establishment of two new summer routes to Poland

What is the regional development impact of this Interreg programme?

This highly interactive programme succeeded in meeting a twofold objective:

- the reduction of Bornholm's economic isolation;
- the support for, and consolidation of, the democratic reforms undertaken in Eastern Europe.

The programme contributed to establishing new transport links with neighbouring islands, developing regional trade relations, training and advising both the population of Bornholm (allowing it to develop economic and cultural relations with its neighbours) and its East European partners (in order to develop the trade capacity and support the democratic process in the region). In sum, the programme was successful in establishing a coherent regional identity.

'The enduring impression of this programme is one of a small island keen to seize opportunities presented by European interregional cooperation and the weakening of barriers to the East' (John Cushnahan, Vice-President, Regional Policy Committee).

Major constraints

A major difficulty in implementing this programme has been the lack of financing for the non-EC regions. This is because Structural Funds can only be used within the European Community. It was suggested that in the future Interreg programmes, specific amounts should be earmarked for co-financing with third countries.

Future activities

One of the major functions of this programme has been to market Bornholm as a tourist island, mainly in eastern Germany and Poland. The Baltic House established contacts with, and received requests from, firms throughout the region. Bornholm is now considering developing a number of new activities; for example, establishing an office in Lithuania, setting up a Baltic Trading House and a Baltic Centre for Green Technology. The situation in Eastern Europe indicates that the need for support for interregional cooperation and trade will continue to increase. This need will be enhanced by the foreseen EC membership of Sweden by the end of the decade.

'Interreg has only been in operation for less than a year and already we can see the initial results in terms of increased trade, tourism and new ferry routes to Poland' (Knud Andersen).

Germany-France-Switzerland

Presenters: **Stefan Abrecht**, Secretary-General, Basler Volkswirtschaftsbund
André Fischer, Délégation régionale d'Alsace, ANPE
Philippe Forstmann, Director-General for Cultural Affairs, Alsace

'The further promotion of cooperation in this area where three countries meet is particularly important to cross-border workers. Although Switzerland is not a member of the EC and although the Swiss administration often prevents full freedom of movement with neighbouring countries, in the area of Basle we have had for the past decades a close interpenetration of our labour markets. In the city of Basle, 20% of all those employed are in fact cross-border workers' (Stefan Abrecht).

The tradition of cross-border cooperation between France, Germany and Switzerland dates back to the early 1960s. One of the major characteristics of these transfrontier regions is the existence of substantial frontier migration. In 1991, for instance, over 120 000 French people were working in Belgium, Luxembourg and, above all, Germany and Switzerland. Cross-border disparities in terms of wages and fiscal and social regulations largely explain these flows.

This Interreg programme covers the south of Alsace in France and Baden-Württemberg in Germany. Although Swiss regions are not eligible for Community financial assistance, the area of Basle is taking part in the programme by providing its own financial contribution.

This programme, which has a total cost of ECU 18.89 million, aims to:

- encourage cross-border migration for both work and training purposes;
- improve the use of land and the protection of the environment;

- promote joint research of mutual interest to the development of the three border regions.

Specific activities which have been foreseen by the programme include:

- setting up information centres on cross-border matters;
- a plan to protect air quality in Strasbourg/Ortenau;
- setting up cross-border pedestrian and bicycle routes in the Sasbach-Ville area;
- expanding the European Management Institute in Colmar;
- a preliminary study to set up a trinational training framework and interlink universities and post-secondary schools which are members of the Upper-Rhine Confederation of Universities.

Main aims of Interreg Germany-France-Switzerland

Cross-border frameworks and communications

Land use and the environment

Economic development, including the labour market and tourism

Transport studies (rail, river and air)

Research and training (particularly in telecommunications)

One of the major activities which was presented in more detail concerns transfrontier vocational training. The share of young people from neighbouring countries attending training courses in Switzerland increased from 1.4% in 1986 to 4.3% in 1992. Despite the fact that it is undergoing a recession, the Swiss economy has an urgent need for trainees in a number of sectors (for instance, in 1992, 400 apprenticeships remained unfilled) and it is encouraging cross-border migration for training purposes. With a view to alleviating the decreasing knowledge of German among French young people, a project was set up to organize a one-year training period offering both language and vocational courses.

'During the pilot phase, we shall only apply this project to apprenticeship in the area of the construction industry and the sales profession. This is only a modest beginning but we hope that this small project, which is funded exclusively by Switzerland, will contribute greatly to the increased cooperation in the area of cross-border training and apprenticeships' (Stefan Abrecht).

Other major activities include tailored training for job-seekers in Alsace to enable them to integrate into the German labour market and binational vocational training schemes for French and German trainees.

Regional development impact

One of the main aims of this programme is the development of a transfrontier labour market. To this end, transfrontier cooperation among relevant agencies has contributed to greater cross-border mobility. Cooperation has translated, for instance, into the production of microfiche on job offers in neighbouring countries for French job-seekers, and into the dissemination, by German employers, of job offers directly to the employment agency of Alsace. These two schemes contribute to approximately 400 job placements each year.

'In 1982 we decided, with our German colleagues, to develop the transfrontier labour market. Regular and fruitful relations were established between Germany, France and the Basle region in Switzerland. Biannual meetings enable us to exchange views and to share information. Possibilities for cooperation are explored during these meetings and the hope remains that Switzerland will integrate into the European Economic Area' (André Fischer).

Major obstacles

A major obstacle relates to the difficulties inherent in frontier migration for training purposes:

- most trainees do not have individual transport;
- the vocational training systems differ between border countries;
- the knowledge of the German language among young people from Alsace is deteriorating.

With regard to the Franco-German binational vocational training schemes, the problem of certification of training in both countries is also acute. For instance, in France, certification must be approved by five or six institutional bodies (in Germany, certification must be approved by two bodies only).

'This is an area of high population density with a long history of interaction between countries. In 1991, there were as many as 60 000 transfrontier workers. This is an inevitable consequence of varying rates of growth of localities in the area. However, it is complicated by policy differences between the three States. The question of harmonized approaches to vocational training, which is of importance throughout the Community, is especially acute in this area' (John Cushnahan, Vice-President, Regional Policy Committee, European Parliament; Rapporteur of Workshop B on external borders).

The future of the programme

With a view to alleviating obstacles to full transfrontier cooperation between the three countries, the following proposals were made:

- harmonization of regulations on income tax; it was suggested that income tax be paid in the country of residence, without any retrocession to the country of employment;
- obligation for frontier workers to adhere to the unemployment contribution system of the country of employment;

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- improvement of exchanges between employment services in each border region in order to increase information on qualitative and quantitative labour needs and to approach the labour market in an entirely transfrontier perspective;
 - creation of structures enabling common financing procedures for training provided on each side of the border.

The point was also made that the existing status of transfrontier cooperation, i.e. the European Economic Interest Grouping, was not necessarily appropriate for the participation of local and national authorities. A status of European Public Interest Grouping, which does not yet exist, would be more suitable.

'Enterprises and public authorities in the border regions can hardly accept that enterprises across the border recruit people expensively trained by the country of origin. Rather than erecting protectionist barriers to prevent migration of young graduates, it should be possible to:

- *organize concertation on qualitative and quantitative needs, on both sides of the border, for initial and continuing training;*
- *use the appropriate legal structures to organize bi- or tri-national co-financing of training, and facilitate the coordination of investments undertaken' (Philippe Forstmann).*

Forum discussions

To a very large extent, the forum discussions held on 14 and 15 December focused on two central issues:

- the nature and extent of cooperation across maritime borders;
- the nature and extent of cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe.

Within these two broad subject areas, issues which were raised with greatest frequency included:

- the way in which cross-border cooperation could prevent migratory pressures;
- the extent to which cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe should embrace the full territory of these countries or be confined to the border regions only;
- the extent to which transfrontier projects should aim at cooperation with, or the development of, less-developed cross-border regions.

The question of the nature and extent of cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe was an important element of the two-day discussions. Discussions focused on the sources of financing, the nature and objectives of transfrontier projects with Eastern Europe, and the geographic coverage of such cooperation (i.e. regional or national).

With regard to the sources of financing, different views were expressed. For some (e.g. a representative from East Germany), the foreign policy budget of the EC and, when appropriate, EFTA contributions, should support such cooperation. In the opinion of the Chairman, resources could come from such sources

as the EBRD, the G7 and the European Economic Area's own financial mechanisms. Mr Meadows indicated that PHARE resources were earmarked for Eastern Europe's own economic development, and he asked how PHARE resources could be matched with other sources of funding.

'The foreign policy budget of the EC should support East European cross-border projects. The Commission should also consider the EFTA countries for additional support for cooperation with Eastern Europe. For some projects, a joint EC-EFTA cooperation could be initiated' (a delegate from East Germany).

Sources of financing, clearly, are dependent upon the nature and objectives of cooperation with Eastern Europe. A discussion over whether transfrontier projects should aim at cooperating with, or at contributing to the development of, Eastern Europe was engaged. Mr Meadows emphasized the importance of supporting cross-border development and not only cross-border cooperation. He asked whether the Greek delegates were only interested in transport with non-member States or whether they also wanted to support the economic development of their East European partners. A Polish delegate, Mr Maresoka, also stressed that more direct development cooperation with East European regions should be promoted.

'If we consider the problems which Western Europe is encountering in harmonizing its own economic internal affairs, we can easily appreciate the difficulties inherent in the process of harmonization with Eastern Europe. In this perspective, Western Europe should support all kinds of regional development and cooperation activities with Eastern Europe' (a delegate from Slovenia).

The issue of whether transfrontier projects should contribute to the development of Eastern Europe is closely related to the geographic focus of such projects. Should transfrontier cooperation benefit the full territory of Eastern Europe or its border regions only? The question was asked by the Chairman who suggested that cooperation in favour of the full territory of East European countries could be an innovative way of implementing transfrontier projects. A German delegate, Mr Ehring, indicated that in Warsaw and Prague, PHARE resources had been allocated according to national interests. He stressed the importance of discussing with the national governments the particular interests of the border areas: the interests of border regions being under the responsibility of national sovereignty, it is important that close cooperation with national governments be established.

'We should avoid, on the frontier zones, too many disparities in terms of the standard of living. Integration of East European countries starts on the border regions. Perhaps East European governments have been asked too much by the European Community in terms of development criteria. Interreg should only deal with Central/East European border regions and not with the national problems of these countries' (a representative of the Association of European Border Regions).

With respect to the issue of refugees, the suggestion was made by Mr Komotini that special attention be given in Interreg II to the growing problems of such migration from Central and Eastern Europe. Migratory pressures from these countries generate significant consequences in EC border regions: for example, a representative of the municipality of Corfu indicated that 20% of the current labour force of Corfu was composed of Albanian refugees.

Mr Lambrias suggested that Interreg and PHARE could jointly contribute to make the Balkan region less unstable. A German representative further suggested that financial resources to prevent immigration pressures could originate from the 'joint external security fund'. In the eyes of this representative, the Commission should be made responsible for seeking the appropriate resources to support Central and Eastern Europe.

A representative from Hungary, Mr Monar, informed the audience that although Hungary does not share any borders with the EC, it is undertaking interregional cooperation projects through the pentagonal Central European initiative. The representative reminded the forum that Hungary was the junction for East-West routes and that it is also a connection between the Baltic States and the Adriatic region. He thus recommended that Hungary be fully considered within relevant transfrontier cooperation schemes.

The question of maritime borders is of intrinsic importance to Greek regions, which are the only ones not to share land borders with the European Community. In this context, representatives from Corfu stressed the importance of maritime transport for this island, particularly in the light of Corfu's well-developed contacts with Albania and the crisis in the former Yugoslavia, which considerably increased transport activity between Corfu and Brindisi. This was also supported by Mr Costara, who emphasized the importance for maritime transport with third countries to be supported by the Community.

'Regarding maritime borders, it is important to define the criteria of eligibility since, due to financial constraints, not all maritime borders can be taken into account. Should only those maritime borders which play a role in the EC internal market be selected? Externally, should only those borders which are important for EC trade be selected? Is Greece a special case, given that it shares land borders with four East European countries and maritime borders with the European Community?' (Graham Meadows, Presenter).

Reference was also made to cooperation with non-member Mediterranean regions. In particular, a Tunisian delegate, Mr Terris, expressed his concern over the fact that not much mention of Maghreb countries, with which the Community enjoys longstanding relations, had been made. He asked that Maghreb countries be marginalized. The Chairman recommended that increased cultural and tourism cooperation schemes with Maghreb countries be devised.

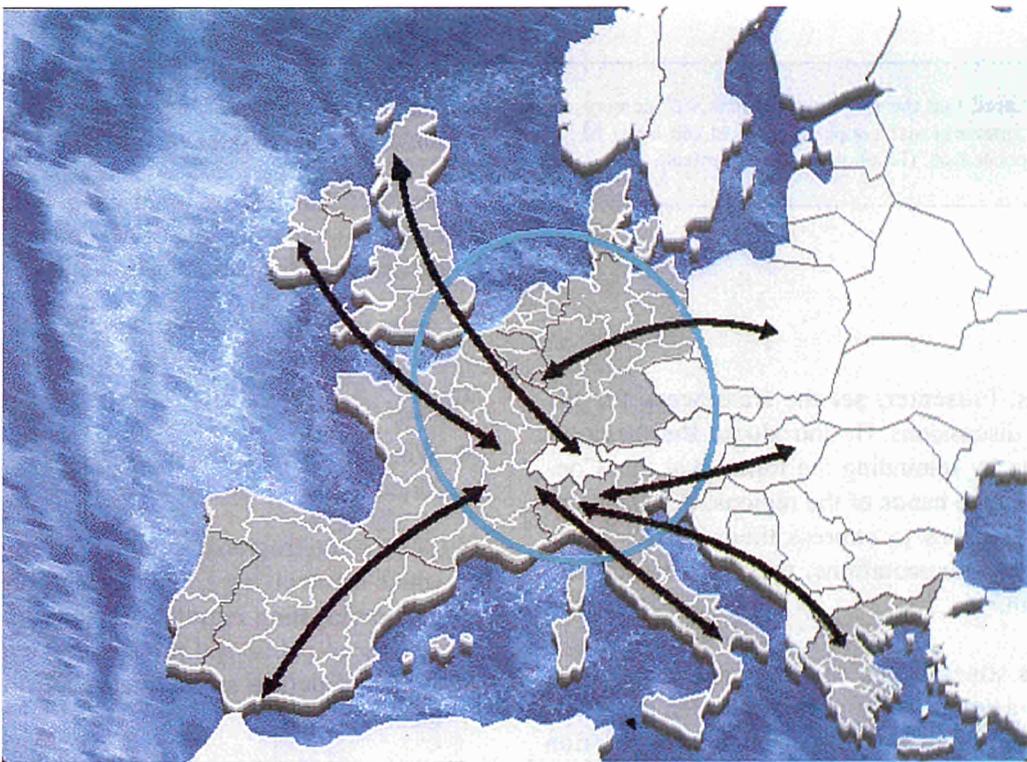
By way of conclusion, Mr Meadows outlined the following priorities for future cross-border cooperation:

- supporting cross-border development more than cross-border cooperation;

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- encouraging regions on the same side of the border to cooperate with one another;
 - acknowledging that the idea of supporting the economic development of the full territory of East European countries rather than border regions only would fall outside the mandate of Interreg and should form part of appropriate development policies;
 - acknowledging that Interreg cannot be extended to cover all maritime borders and that eligibility criteria will need to be established;
 - encouraging the regions, together with the Commission, to suggest new areas (e.g. cultural activities, support for SMEs) which Interreg could support.

Workshop C

Interregional networks



Introduction and issues

Chairman: **Reinhold Kopp**, Minister for Economic and European Affairs, Saarland

Presenter: **Jean-Charles Leygues**, Commission of the European Communities, DG XVI/A

Rapporteur: **John Chatfield**, Chairman, Council of Regional and Local Authorities

Introduction

Workshop C addressed the overall theme of interregional networks through the presentation of five case studies. The major objective of this workshop was to examine the range of aspects associated with the setting-up of thematic networks involving a number of regions and to identify both the assets and obstacles arising from such cooperation.

Mr Kopp, Chairman, opened the workshop by welcoming the delegates and presenting the five case studies.

'I am convinced that the five presentations will demonstrate that interregional cooperation is at the heart of European cooperation' (Reinhold Kopp, Chairman).

Issues

Mr Leygues, Presenter, set the framework for the workshop's discussions. He introduced the theme of the workshop by reminding the forum that this Conference was in the hands of the regions: it was organized for the regions to express their choices, their intentions, their expectations, their experience and their criticism.

Mr Leygues stressed that interregional cooperation had become a reality and a necessity which cannot be bypassed. He added that interregional cooperation belongs to a new context of economic, social and human development; regional cooperation and the constitution of networks show that such development

cannot be approached by considering solely the situation of the regions involved but also in relation to the whole European territory.

The Presenter identified four elements to describe the evolving context of interregional cooperation:

- the effects of the globalization of economies, which are increasingly integrated, on the regions;
- the fact that the rapid evolution of economic development relative to the criteria of competitiveness is leading interregional cooperation to take account of situations of discrimination and marginalization;
- the complexity of the existing system of decision-making, not only at Community and national level, but also at the regional level;
- the fact that interregional cooperation cannot ignore the increasing role of new means of communication and information technologies.

In order to orient the forum discussions, Mr Leygues raised seven major questions of interest to this workshop:

- What kind of development concept would be best suited to the regional realities?
 - Should interregional cooperation imply networks which are evolving around the specific problems of the participating regions, or should it be open to a number of public and private decision-making systems and pursue an integrated territorial development strategy?
 - What is the most pertinent level at which regional problems and interregional cooperation should be approached?
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- When interregional cooperation pursues a coherent and integrated regional development, can it ignore existing Community policy?
 - How can the Community best respond to the growing political, economic and human demand of the regions?
 - Does interregional cooperation need more flexibility than it enjoys today, in terms of eligibility of activities, regions and themes?

- What types of partnership are necessary to define an interregional development policy?

'In one word, we have the impression that interregional cooperation and networks will have to address the following question: What should the strategy for territorial development consist of?' (Jean-Charles Leygues, Presenter).

Cooperation between the Atlantic regions (Arc Atlantique)

Presenters: **Olivier Guichard**, President, Région des Pays de la Loire
Michel Duthilleul, Secretary, Commission Arc Atlantique

'Faced with the rapid mutation and the internationalization of the national economies, the development of the Lotharingian and Mediterranean axes, and their tradition of international exchanges and openness, Atlantic regions decided to come closer together; in so doing, their aim was to promote their development within a more balanced Europe, to stimulate initiatives and to obtain the support of States and the European Community' (Olivier Guichard).

The Arc Atlantique brings together 25 Atlantic regions from five Member States:

- France (five regions),
- Spain (five regions),
- United Kingdom (nine regions),
- Ireland (one region),
- Portugal (five regions).

These regions represent 15% of the European Community's population but only 11% of the Community's GDP.

The Arc Atlantique programme, which has a total cost of ECU 3.6 million, aims to:

- develop communications between Atlantic ports;
- enable Atlantic regions to finance investments necessary to the development of firms;
- establish, in those areas of common interest, networks of training centres;
- improve the exploitation of sea resources and the protection of the environment.

Major aims of Arc Atlantique

To combat the negative effects of the peripheral location of Atlantic regions

To establish cooperative projects aimed at communications, training and the development of enterprises in the participating regions

Within Arc Atlantique, three major projects, which were presented in more detail during the Conference, included:

- the Arcantel project, which brings together six Atlantic ports;
- the network of pharmaco-chemists;
- the interregional sailing competition.

Major areas covered by Arc Atlantique

Infrastructure and means of communication

Training in new technologies

Financial services for enterprises

Transfer of technology

Exploitation of ocean resources

Examples of projects implemented within Arc Atlantique

THE ARCANTEL PROJECT

This project, which brings together six Atlantic ports (Plymouth, Bordeaux, Santander, Vigo, Viana do Castelo and Lisbon), aims to computerize the ports' administrative and operational procedures. Through a local EDI network, the participating ports can also consult and feed a common database.

THE ATLANTIC NETWORK OF PHARMAÇO-CHEMISTS

This network, which brings together laboratories from universities in Cardiff, Caen, Rennes, Angers, Poitiers, Bordeaux, San Sebastian, Galicia and Salamanca, aims in particular to conceive and evaluate molecules with therapeutic potential; submit common bids for Community calls for tenders; and encourage the establishment in these regions of pharmaceutical industries.

THE INTERREGIONAL SAILING COMPETITION

Arc Atlantique not being an institutional concept only, a yearly sports event in an area common to all Atlantic regions, i.e. the ocean, is organized. The sailing competition has been organized every year since 1991. The first competition gathered crews from nine regions.

Regional development impact

This programme has been effective in stimulating close cooperation between Atlantic regions based on areas of common interest. The participating regions organized themselves into specialized groups and undertook to make an inventory of their most pressing needs and of the types of projects which should be set up. In so doing, the regions succeeded, for example, in drawing up a new plan for road and railway connections on the Atlantic façade; contributing to the definition of a new common fisheries policy; establishing venture capital agencies; and creating new transnational training schemes.

The network also stimulated private initiatives from such organizations as the Atlantic Conference of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Grouping of Regional Development Societies and, the Association of Technopoles.

With the help of the media, the Arc Atlantique concept was disseminated among a large public: for example, the *Arc Atlantique Chronicle*, a review of the regional press, was created, in addition to a regional television

'The fact that the participants became aware of the driving effects of transnational cooperation in a number of economic areas is, without any doubt, the most important result of this programme; it is important because it enables a convergence of the development efforts aimed at securing complementarity between regions' (Olivier Guichard).

The future of the programme

According to the results of a study on the prospects of the Atlantic regions, which was undertaken by the European Commission in the framework of the Europe 2000 report, these regions are likely to remain fragile. On the basis of the conclusions of this study, Arc Atlantique defined the major axes of its future activities in the following five priority areas:

- communications,
- water and the environment,
- tourism,
- training,
- research and exploitation of research findings.

The 25 Atlantic regions established specialized working groups to define the specific programmes within each priority area. Mr Guichard also called for the launching of a Community initiative programme on the Atlantic regions.

'It is essential that the stimulation which this programme generated continues and expands, given that the results are still too modest relative to the size of the problems to be solved, and given the need to avoid that the effects of the single market and of the liberalization of Central and Eastern Europe keep these regions in an economically unfavourable situation' (Olivier Guichard).

Ouverture and ECOS

Presenters; Gerald McGrath, Deputy Leader, Strathclyde Regional Council
Robert Brown, Director, Ouverture
Walther Wenzel, Director, Conseil des communes et régions de l'Europe

'The destruction of the many walls of hostility and misunderstanding which have divided East and West for decades creates an opportunity for cooperation between the peoples of Europe which must be seized' (Gerald McGrath).

Ouverture and ECOS (European Cities Cooperation System) are complementary programmes designed to establish cooperative links between regions and cities in the European Community, particularly those in disadvantaged areas, and their counterparts in Central and Eastern Europe. The programmes, which have been running for about one year, provide financial assistance for projects which encourage such links, support regional development and the transfer of expertise, promote business and trade and undertake activities geared to intensifying cooperation. The assistance takes the form of support of up to 50% of the budget up to a maximum of ECU 100 000.

The projects have to meet certain criteria:

- they must bring together at least two Western partners (with priority given to those from the less-favoured regions) and one from Central or Eastern Europe;
- they must be sponsored by a regional authority; and
- they must involve activities for which regional authorities are usually responsible.

About 250 applications for projects had been received of which 80 had been approved involving partners from over 300 cities and regions all over the European Community and Eastern Europe.

Ouverture in action

One example of the programme is the Cobacs project which involves the region of Bacs-Kiskun in Hungary, and the regions of Kent (UK), Nord-Pas-de-Calais (F) and Chieti (I). Projects may involve study visits, staff exchanges, company visits, work placements, trade missions and seminars. Many of these were used in this case: a seminar was held in Kent to coincide with a 'European Week', a member of staff was seconded from Bacs-Kiskun to Kent and worked with the project coordinator.

The main output of the project is an action plan for the economic development of the Bacs-Kiskun region with emphasis on self-help, the development of small companies and the promotion of tourism. A main recommendation of the action plan is the establishment of a local enterprise agency, which will provide self-help for the local economy, particularly in the field of small company development. It will also act as a channel for commercial links between the West and Bacs-Kiskun. There is also a plan to convert the former Soviet army barracks into an incubator unit for small firms. Finance for this will be sought under the PHARE programme. Outside the framework of Ouverture, Kent, Chieti and Bacs-Kiskun intend to continue to work together in the fields of tourism, trade links, transfer of technology and further development of the action plan.

The benefits

Individual projects have brought benefits to the partners involved.

'Whether it is in the East or in the West, a cooperation project must always be advantageous for all its partners. There cannot simply be one side which receives and another which gives without a return' (Walther Wenzel).

For example:

- the opening-up of new markets for local enterprises – already over 1 000 firms have been involved in exchanges resulting from the projects;
- the modernization and improvement of local administration – not only for the disadvantaged areas or the Eastern countries – although this is of particular significance for the Objective 1 regions and a necessary adjunct to the actions of the Structural Funds;
- the development of further projects together outside the scope of Ouverture/ECOS which extends the range of cooperation.

However, many of the benefits also result from the involvement in the wider network, and the advantages this can bring. For example:

- the opportunities for future collaboration are multiplied, with opportunities for collaboration along common themes;
- the coordination of the initiative is facilitated, maximizing the benefit from scarce resources;
- the lessons, positive and negative, of individual projects can be passed on allowing others to benefit from experience. This is assisted by the close monitoring of the projects within the network;
- the network teams have been able to build up a wealth of experience and contacts which can be shared by the members of the network in assisting with, for example, the formulation of projects, the identification of partners and the provision of information about other EC opportunities.

The problems

Three types of problems have been identified so far:

- Resources, both human and financial, are scarce, particularly in the poorer regions of the Community. The EC financial support has contributed to reducing these problems.
- Communication is a problem, in terms of the physical distance between partners, in terms of languages, especially in multilateral projects involving remote regions of Europe, and above all in terms of differences in ways of thinking. These latter can be the hardest to overcome.
- The success so far has led to very high expectations and demand for funding is far in excess of the available finance, although the Commission has recently announced additional funding for the programme.

Lessons for the future

Improvements to the programme are certainly possible and necessary, although it is important to keep the features which have led to the success so far achieved. The number of countries eligible to participate has tripled, presenting a new urgency and a new set of financial challenges.

The programme cannot finance infrastructure. It would be useful to develop relationships with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development or the PHARE programme to enable the Eastern countries to actually implement their plans, once the exchanges have been undertaken. It may also be necessary to look at larger and longer projects.

It is important to avoid the multiplication of too many projects of the same type. Thus the passing-on of lessons learned to the Eastern countries through publications or seminars, for example, will be of importance.

'Ouverture and ECOS projects achieve real results in a relatively short time-scale, build solid partnerships between regions and act as a springboard for further cooperation' (Robert Brown).

The European Urban Observatory

Presenters: **Albert Bore**, Chairman, Economic Development Committee, Birmingham
Manuel De Forn Foxa, Councillor, Ajuntament de Barcelona

'The issues facing us are familiar to you. They include the need to create new employment opportunities and offer training for new skills, in both urban and rural areas, to deal with housing shortages and homelessness, to alleviate the concentration of poverty and disadvantage in inner-city areas, to improve transportation and reduce traffic congestion and to improve the quality of the urban environment. There are also pressing social problems in many of our communities, such as increasing crime and drug abuse, prostitution, worsening race relations and cultural cohesion. All municipalities and regions currently have masses of data and information on these matters. However, what we lack is a common information base and more importantly, a shared system for exchanging information efficiently. This is where the European Observatory comes in' (Albert Bore).

The European Urban Observatory was set up in 1992 with the objective of creating a joint database and a management decision support system between 10 cities:

- Amsterdam,
- Barcelona,
- Genoa,
- Brussels,
- Lisbon,
- Athens,
- Berlin,
- Birmingham,
- Lille,
- Milan.

The Observatory project, which has a total cost of ECU 1.9 million, consists of a shared database exploiting the vast range of information available on each

city, together with a computer network to enable participants to share information on-line. The intention to set up a 'decision support system' aims to help local and regional policy-makers to base their strategic decisions concerning the future of their cities on experiences and lessons drawn in other cities.

By contrast with other existing databases, which are mainly designed for technical experts and urban researchers, the main aim of the Urban Observatory is to allow the actual decision-makers to find solutions and to draw upon foreign experiences.

Information disseminated concerns both factual data on each city and comparable policy information.

Main aims of the Urban Observatory

To organize the systematic exchange of information between participating cities

To enable local and regional policy-makers to draw lessons from experiences undertaken in other cities

'It is much more important to have a small amount of useful information than try to cover a whole range of subjects with information which leaves much to be desired. The structure of our system has three main elements: first, there is a group of basic indicators for each city (e.g. tax pressure, crime rates, unemployment, etc.); second, there is a survey which looks at the overall state of a city, opportunities for investment and quality of services; third, the system collects basic information relevant to strategic planning in each city' (Manuel De Forn Foxa).

Examples of information accessible through the Urban Observatory

Facts: for example, the levels of unemployment in Barcelona and Amsterdam, or the ethnic make-up of the population of Berlin

Policy information: for example, on traffic congestion and public transport, or on crime and drugs in a given city

Comparative policy information: for example, on the development of social cohesion in other multi-ethnic communities, or on different approaches to the devolution of power to communities within urban areas

Regional development impact

This network represents a significant proportion of the European territory. Contrary to other databases, the Observatory is effectively organized around a network of cities and provides a decision-making assistance system which is conceived on the basis of the expressed needs of its users. The interest of this system also lies in its coverage of complex issues such as the problems of intolerance and social exclusion. Information provided through this network, which touches upon unemployment, immigration, crime and social services, enables the analysis of the possible root causes of these problems. Offering a powerful telecommunications system, this network strengthens the connections between major European cities and the European Community and contributes to a territorial policy which builds upon shared experiences.

'This project is not simply a chance to exchange statistics about each city. It must also provide a means of learning from each other. In order to create a more genuine integration in our perception of an area's image, its vision and the experience of its citizens, we must exchange much deeper knowledge. I believe that the Urban Observatory will provide for this in a way which has not been possible in the past. The project will grow. Once it is properly established, more partners will join us so that other cities and regions can "plug-in" to important social, economic and environmental data that will guide the development of cities and regions and influence the support mechanisms of the European Commission' (Albert Bore).

'This network involves 10 of the Community's largest cities. Together they clearly have the potential to influence the development of products and measures for the improvement of urban management and social integration. Particularly notable characteristics of this network include the efforts to ensure that the "right" information is collected and that the access to, and use of, data would be straightforward' (John Chatfield, Chairman of the Council of Regional and Local Authorities; Rapporteur of Workshop C on interregional networks).

The future of the programme

The potential for development of the Urban Observatory is considerable. Due to its operational structure, which offers both a user-friendly information system and a system which is closely tailored around the policy information needs of local and regional governments, increased membership of the Observatory can be expected. In the future, this network should also allow for closer cooperation between its members and for decisions to be taken simultaneously in various cities. This could also enable the establishment of common rules, for example on the environment or for policies dealing with solid urban waste.

'This is an open system. In the same way that you can add to the information and can add to the number of users, you can also deal with the requests of a larger number of cities, and of a larger number of private investors. Before June 1993, the working plan calls for an operative product which can be extended to other cities which will then take over responsibility for obtaining their own information' (Manuel De Forna).

Communications technologies (Ernact)

Presenters: Colm Gallagher, Councillor, Donegal County Council
John Keanie, Chief Executive, Derry City Council

'For us, Ernact is ultimately concerned with how telecommunications networking can assist in improving an economy, in creating job opportunities. Ernact is also about alleviating peripherality. This can be geographical peripherality or it can be a much more insidious variety of peripherality. Insidious and perhaps more deadly, I call it peripherality of the mind' (John Keanie).

The European Regions Network for the Application of Communications Technology (Ernact) aims to spread the use of, and to encourage exchanges of ideas and information on, communications technology in Europe. The network involves the following six regions or cities:

- Aalborg (Denmark),
- County Donegal (Ireland)
- Kortrijk (Belgium),
- Derry (Northern Ireland),
- County Galway (Ireland),
- The province of Zeeland (the Netherlands).

With a total cost of ECU 3 million, the programme is divided into 11 sub-projects which fall under three major groups

- infrastructure,
- core development,
- joint analysis.

The programme offers opportunities for:

- the transfer of knowledge between regions;
- the sharing of information between local organizations and central government;

- the demonstration, by local and regional organizations, of their pragmatic commitment to European cooperation.

Main aims of Ernact

To improve generally the way in which local authorities apply communications technology

To explore how communications technology can best be exploited to facilitate cooperation between regions

'The philosophy of the Ernact project is to use modern telecommunications technology to improve the ways in which regional and local authorities perform their duties in order to enhance the development of their regions and, in the process, share ideas, efforts and experience in a teamwork fashion. A greater sharing of expertise is obtainable by the inclusion in the project of more advanced regions centrally located in the Community and authorities from Objective 1 regions' (Colm Gallagher).

Major types of sub-projects implemented through Ernact

Infrastructural sub-projects: provision of a communications network within and between regions

Core development sub-projects: creation of a public information system, an economic development database, and a database on tourism

Joint analysis sub-projects on distance working and environmental protection. These projects also include the establishment of a geographical information system

Regional development impact

'Achievements include:

- the transfer of knowledge between the regions;
- interregional economies of scale;
- a wider European perspective in thinking in the regions involved;
- an opportunity for local authorities to act as a focal point for regional development and interregional cooperation;
- helping regions achieve coordination in the delivery of services;
- central and peripheral regions have begun the process of linking their information technology systems to each other' (John Keanie).

Ernaact has been successful in enabling information technology to be applied to each region's development needs, whereas, previously, it tended to be more narrowly used by local authorities for the needs of the administration itself.

The programme allowed for harmonious relationships to be established between public representatives, technologists and administrators from the participating regions. It was effective in alleviating the effects of remoteness of certain regions and increasing the centre-periphery links. For example, Ernaact enables elected members situated remotely from the principal administrative offices of the council to access information easily both on council affairs and on matters of public interest generally.

Ernaact's strategy of involving all actors, connecting them electronically and replacing multiple information sources with a single regional source has thus contributed to enhancing both intra- and interregional cooperation between the participating regions.

'Already the Ernaact project has succeeded in creating very worthwhile collaboration between the councils of Donegal and Derry, two cross-border adjoining districts which have formed a special-purpose relationship to manage the project in the form of a European Economic Interest Grouping. A board of management has been established consisting of elected members and officials from each council area and has resulted in very much improved cooperation at both political and administrative levels between our councils. Efforts had been made in the past to harmonize relationships between our councils, but the Ernaact project is the first practical realization of these aspirations' (Colm Gallagher).

'Information is the lifeblood of local government; development agencies and private enterprise. Providing consistency of information and assisting the establishment of partnerships for its collection, collation, dissemination and use is Ernaact's vital contributions' (John Keanie).

The future of the programme

A consensus is emerging among Ernaact's partners that information technology should be used to support the development efforts of all regional, national and European initiatives. It was also recognized that information technology can often intervene to accelerate the development process itself.

Ernaact's partners have begun to formalize this belief by conceiving a model which outlines the features of an information technology (IT) system geared towards regional development. This system is based on geographical information system (GIS) technology.

The programme will also establish a database of firms, financial support, training and expert advice. Local businesses and other organizations will be able to use the database to search for customers, suppliers or partners in their own or another region.

'As our thinking becomes more advanced and our experience of networking grows, it will be necessary to develop a more holistic approach to regional development and the technology which provides an engine for it' (John Keanie).

'Quartiers en crise'

Presenters: A. D. Tripodakis, Deputy Mayor of Athens
Henk Cornelissen, Director of 'Quartiers en crise'.

'In most of our urban societies the phenomena of alienation, solitude, exclusion and apathy describe a social crisis present in most of the cities of the Community and beyond, which is in fact a crisis of democracy. These phenomena are common in the north and in the south; in wealthier and poorer nations' (A. D. Tripodakis).

'Quartiers en crise' is a network of 25 European towns and cities which share problems of serious urban decline such as high unemployment, poor housing conditions, crime and drug-related problems, and inadequate public services.

The network began as an exchange programme for professionals working in deprived areas in 10 towns in 5 Member States. A second phase began in 1991, which is based on an integrated approach to the problem. This can best be described as a local strategy to arrest urban decline based on an analysis of the local area, undertaken by participants from local authorities, the private and public sectors and residents themselves, in partnership. The main tools being used are the stimulation of economic development together with a wide range of social, educational, environmental and training activities.

The objectives of 'Quartiers en crise'

- To initiate further cooperation and exchange of information and experience within the network in order to improve the situation for residents in these areas.
- To promote an integrated approach both nationally and internationally as a long-term strategy to arrest urban decline.

Following the current round of exchanges, the network will focus on activities such as:

- the development of training facilities for individuals working both in professional and voluntary capacities in the relevant areas;
- the instigation and promotion of bilateral cooperation between towns in the network;
- further research and cooperation between experts involved in the network concerning monitoring and evaluation of the revitalization process;
- the transfer of knowledge and experience aimed specifically at links between towns in the northern Member States and the south.

The programme in action

Over the past two years 300 participants have spent one study-week in areas in crisis in the 25 towns in the network. The majority of these people were residents from the neighbourhoods themselves, such as members of residents' committees, job clubs and tenants' associations. The rest were professionals and local politicians. The groups varied from 5 to 30 people, who discussed the same issues in each town with those locally active in the regeneration of the area. It is this involvement of the professionals working in the neighbourhoods and the people who actually live there which makes the network unique.

The programme uses an integrated approach — unfortunately rather a fashionable term — giving a leading role to the people in the areas. Since there is an accumulation of problems in an area, these have to be dealt with systematically and more or less simultaneously.

Two examples of projects were presented:

Ferguslie Park, Paisley, United Kingdom

The Ferguslie Park Partnership was set up in 1988, based on the principles laid down in the government's policy document 'New life for urban Scotland'. Its objective is to secure the comprehensive economic, social and physical regeneration of the area.

The partnership extends to all relevant public-sector agencies, including central government, the private sector and the local community who are equal partners in the regeneration process. The involvement of the private sector has been vital for the success of the partnership. For example, almost 900 jobs and 1 000 training placements have been generated with the help of these companies. Having a job then often leads to access to better housing. This aspect of private-sector involvement is often underdeveloped in other countries. Two other members of the network – Bremen and Groningen – have started intense cross-border cooperation to develop this aspect and have been awarded urban pilot projects under the ERDF (Article 10) to support this work.

Sepolia, Athens (Greece)

Athens, and this area in particular, is faced with a crisis resulting from extreme traffic congestion and pollution, fast-rising unemployment and the lack of facilities such as parks, schools and nurseries. Following extensive consultation with the local community, institutions and other groups with an interest in the area, an action plan has been produced with the objective of revitalizing the neighbourhood through coordinated actions in four related fields:

- physical planning: 17 different areas of physical intervention have been established including, for example, the building of underground garages, roof-top gardens and children's playgrounds;
- rehabilitation of the social aspects of the area with schemes for unemployment, drug addiction, the elderly, etc.;

- development of economic activities in the area, which includes supporting existing, and stimulating new, economic activity;
- stimulating participation of the people living in the area, by helping them set up their own organizations, and promoting the active involvement of the local authorities.

The success of the approach

The success of the approach lies in its involvement of the local people and organizations, and in the way that it attacks the problem on all fronts. For example, simply providing jobs is not sufficient if the housing situation is bad as people will simply move away and be replaced by new unemployed people. Dealing with housing stress alone is not enough if the people living there have low levels of education and no jobs, and social problems will still exist.

'In the long term the integrated approach is cheaper because it is more effective to combine the efforts of many participants in one direction and in one area than solving parts of the problems in many areas' (Henk Cornelissen).

The problems

There is a gap of information and expertise between cities in the various countries involved. The integrated approach is new to many countries where there is no national integrated policy for the regeneration of areas in crisis. This means that there is little or no history of the transfer of information between towns. This gap needs to be bridged by stimulating national as well as international networks.

Resources are always a problem. Local authorities, especially in the southern regions, have less access to local and national funding sources and no direct access to European Community funding. In addition, the decision to concentrate funds in one area, rather than spread it across a number of areas, is politically difficult, especially when resources are limited.

The future

The aim is to develop the integrated approach as a concept and to go further than exchanges and conferences toward more intensive cooperation around training, expert advice and technical support. The mayors of the 25 towns in the network recently drew up a list of recommendations for the future which they have called the 'Barcelona Declaration'.

These recommendations include the following:

- a new objective should be included in the proposals for restructuring Community funds which supports the process of economic and urban change;
 - the development of exchanges of information and know-how regarding the revitalization of neighbourhoods in crisis under the responsibility of the local authorities should be supported.
- the neighbourhoods in crisis should be taken into account as priority action areas in the new framework of interventions for 1994-97;

'It is clear that if we are to build a truly unified Europe, the distances between the cities which are the main sources of the economic and social potential of their nations have to be bridged' (A. D. Tripodakis).

Forum discussions

The forum discussions during the first day mainly revolved around two major topics:

- cooperation with non-member regions;
- membership of Arc Atlantique.

With respect to cooperation with non-member regions, Mr Gusta Mante, representative of Murcia, enquired about the way in which the Commission intended to develop cooperation between European Mediterranean regions and northern Africa, bearing in mind the state of development of the latter and the danger of substantial migratory pressures. Mr Leygues replied that within Interreg II there will be an element on Mediterranean cooperation which will have immigration as one of its topics. Asked by a representative from the Peloponnese as to who should take the initiative of getting the Mediterranean regions together to support particular projects, Mr Leygues suggested that it would be up to the regions in this area to take the initiative themselves. With regard to Eastern Europe, Mr Matinique enquired about the financial contribution of East European countries to the ECOS/Ouverture programme. A representative of ECOS/Ouverture replied that, although some Eastern partners contribute financially, their contribution consists mostly of a provision of services to the project.

A number of questions were raised in relation to the Arc Atlantique scheme. Ms Bransma, a Dutch delegate from the Ministry of Economic Affairs, asked whether the Netherlands and Denmark would be eligible for participation in this scheme. Mr Guichard replied that the Dutch maritime regions were not considered by their own representatives as peripheral regions. Similarly, a French delegate asked whether Arc Atlantique could open further to include regions

of the eastern Atlantic and even the French Antilles. Mr Guichard replied that due to the existence of an Island Commission, Arc Atlantique did not want to create dual membership problems. Mr Brown, on the contrary, saw no objection to the inclusion of the OCTs. A representative of the regions of Brittany further commented on the fact that within Arc Atlantique, emphasis was being placed on facilitating the movement of goods and people. This delegate asked whether the Commission, together with the regions, was considering giving some support to specific transport projects. Mr Leygues replied that the Commission had been working on the report 'Europe 2000' on the basis of which it was defining support programmes for the various regions eligible under the structural policies.

During the second day, discussions were chaired by Mr Chatfield, who invited the delegates to reflect upon:

- the factors of success and the areas of potential difficulty;
- the extent to which network activities have contributed to social cohesion and economic enhancement;
- whether existing structures are adequate;
- the role of local and regional authorities;
- the extent to which Interreg II was to become wider and more structured and the extent to which the regions would retain their independence and local autonomy.

Discussions mainly focused on two major topics:

- the institutional aspects and the contents of interregional networks;
- Interreg II.

With respect to the institutional aspects, a Greek delegate mentioned the need to analyse the successes and failures of the various networks in relation to three elements: the administrative mechanisms; the issue of mobilization of local authorities and citizens; and financing. Mr Strataridakis, from the region of Crete, described the experience of the Rocnord network involving North Jutland (Denmark) and Crete (Greece). This delegate indicated that in order to resolve the problems encountered in terms of joint management of funds, a development organization has been set up as a limited liability company, which brings in the State and local authorities. This scheme has proven to be successful. An Italian delegate, Mr Poli, indicated that local and regional authorities had established new administrative structures and had learned to overcome a number of limitations and restrictions. Mr Bore, from the city of Birmingham, mentioned the 'interference' in the role that national governments play within the regions and cities in trying to sponsor or develop regional cooperation initiatives.

"Today we have excellent cooperation between the centre and the regions with the support of the State. It is the first example of decentralized administration. Recite is an activity complementary to Interreg, allowing peripheral regions, such as Crete, to develop" (Mr Strataridakis, region of Crete).

As regards the contents of interventions, Mr Van der Haven, from Rotterdam, took the view that too much emphasis had been given to economic goals. Describing his position as chairman of a sub-council of neighbourhoods with more than 50% unemployment and more than 50% foreigners, he reported on the increasing problems of racism and neo-Nazism. He stressed that the EC had to pay attention to the declaration of Barcelona and that in order to achieve 'a real Europe' it was necessary to resolve the social

problems in the cities. In the view of a Portuguese delegate, interregional cooperation in peripheral countries should not simply be about technology transfer but should also be a means of making use of the country's centres of excellence in its own universities and business centres. The Mayor of Corfu described the benefits of the Rebuild network, whose aim is to use renewable sources of energy in towns with historical centres. He indicated that this network had given the local authorities the possibility to carry out some kind of energy policy with an impact at both local and national levels. Mr Connelly, an Irish delegate, regretted that the Interreg programme in Ireland had not been applied to projects which had a genuine intercommunity involvement irrespective of whether they had an actual border with Northern Ireland.

"The network has given a small town like Corfu the opportunity to embark on innovative activities including high technology, using the support of other European towns which are more experienced along these lines" (the Mayor of Corfu).

The last major topic of discussion concerned the elaboration of Interreg II. Mr Martini, Secretary-General of the European Regional Council in Italy, stressed that the Commission should continue to manage Interreg II with the same authority and experience as before. Two major questions were asked by a representative of the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs. How will Interreg II be structured? Will the new interregional cooperation have to pass through the central governments? Mr Leygues replied that the Commission had not yet adopted the draft of Interreg II, but that a large number of Member States wished the decision-making power to pass to the Council. This would fundamentally change the nature of Community actions. Asked by Mr Houot, from Lyons, whether funds would be allocated directly to the beneficiaries, i.e. the local or regional authorities, Mr Leygues indicated that until now Member States had not allowed direct payments. The question of whether the problems of rural areas were going to be looked into favourably by Interreg II was raised by Ms Cooper, from Surrey County Council. The reply from Mr Leygues was that the Commission was going to

study whether certain aspects, such as rural development, were going to be treated separately or were going to be included in other initiatives. The question of maritime borders was raised by representatives from the region of Emilia and from the district of South-West Wales, while Mr Lukas (a Greek delegate) asked whether the Community was considering supporting the islands. Mr Leygues replied that the Commission was going to deal with the question of maritime borders; as far as the islands are concerned,

there is a specific mention of the need to take into account 'peripherality' and islands should qualify under this heading.

'The Commission is faced with the criticism that there have been too many initiatives on too many aspects. On the other hand, the Member States would like specific thematic actions at the local level. The Commission has clearly decided that there will be a limited number of initiatives' (Jean-Charles Leygues, Presenter).

Second plenary session



Conclusion: The role of the regions

(Summary)

Mr Jordi Pujol

In his closing speech, Mr Pujol addressed the Conference on the overall subject of the role of the regions and interregional cooperation. He highlighted, in particular, the following points:

'With greater or lesser intensity, all regions have a feeling of identity. Some have a rather weak sense of identity: they have perhaps been created artificially, they have not evolved naturally into a region, they have been created for technical or administrative reasons. And indeed one of the important problems facing European regionalism is the great diversity of the regions. There are certain regions that have very strong regional roots, linguistic, cultural, etc. Some do not have roots as strong as that, but they all have some kind of identity.

There is also the political aspect. People say that we ought to deepen our democracies, that there ought to be several decision-making centres and that the decision-making powers ought to be brought closer to the people and that we ought to promote a greater culture of responsibility, of own initiative, of participation. The whole world seems to agree that one of the main barriers to European construction is the growing feeling among the people of Europe recently that this is a process which is developing a long way away and it is developing in a way that people feel they have no hold over.

And then there is a third explanation as to why the regions have suddenly become more active in recent times. It is because people are seeing more and more clearly that strong regions with appropriate powers actually help contribute to general development, their own but also the general development of the State and consequently of Europe.

I would like to say a few words on the work to be done between associated regions. One of the important contributions of the regions to European construction is precisely interregional cooperation within Member States, but even more important, between regions of different Member States. There are an awful lot of regional associations and their experience is generally positive. Sometimes their experience is not as positive as it should be because their initial tasks have not been followed through and monitored with enough persistence. We in Catalonia for example have had links with Baden-Württemberg, Lombardy, Rhône-Alpes, and these contacts have been very positive in up-to-date spheres such as the environment, spheres that are not only up-to-date but absolutely vital such as vocational training and many more. There is another very brilliant example that I could give you even though it has only just got under way: high technology. It started off in the Côte d'Azur. The lead programme was there but there were seven or eight other programmes in the Mediterranean basin which yield excellent results: exchange of know-how, experience among university and business people. This should lead to greater cohesion. This archway spanning the whole of the Mediterranean is involved with great technical cooperation and, for example, they raise issues that are very much issues of the South of Europe, such as immigration from North Africa.

Then we have the Euregio programmes. We have got a whole series of actions carried out between neighbouring transfrontier regions. The most classical and indeed the oldest programme of several years back was the Euroregio Basiliensis, the Canton of Basle and the south of Baden-Württemberg. The Canton of Basle was in fact the only German-speaking canton but it voted yes in the recent Swiss referendum. And then between the Netherlands and

Germany we also have very positive examples of such cooperation. It is not only the working group of the Alps and the Pyrenees. In the Midi-Pyrénées, in Languedoc-Roussillon, in Catalonia, we have linked up these three regions to create a Euroregion that is giving very positive results from the point of view of the universities, health care, improving communications, cultural exchanges. But all these initiatives and many more that we could quote, are facing one problem: they do not have any kind of legal recognition. It is very important that the Community and the Member States should proceed with conferring some kind of legal recognition on them. The status of European Economic Interest Groupings, for example.

I would also like to refer to Interreg. Interreg is an excellent Community initiative but it is also necessary to change it so as to make it even more regionally-minded, more efficient, more flexible because at the moment the programmes have to be approved by the respective Member States and this gives rise to difficulties that are particularly large in those Member States where, whatever the reason might be, they are rather reluctant to recognize the regional nature of the frontier areas. In our case, for example, the Spanish State has always been a bit reticent. They are quite happy to deal with inter-State relations where it is the Spanish Government which is responsible, yet they have not been so keen on programmes such as the Interreg programme which is a region-to-region approach. The position of the Spanish Government could be overcome but I know that in France this situation is just as difficult, if not more so.

I would once again like to refer to the recent and very positive summit of Edinburgh. We hope that by November we will have a Committee of the Regions set up. It will be the first time that the Community will institutionalize the regional reality which to date has been ignored. It is an open secret that the various regions of Europe, the European regional movement, want the Committee of the Regions to be made up exclusively of regions and that local authorities, municipalities for example and perhaps the *départements* in France or the 'deputation' in Spain, ought to be represented as well.

Finally, there is one last point I would like to make, rather a negative touch if you like but I think it will oblige the regions to do something about it. The principle of subsidiarity. It was born into Community jargon and Community thinking only very recently. It was in fact pushed forward by the German Government; I think they were thinking in particular about the role that the regions will have to play. The principle of subsidiarity is not only valid for the regions, it is valid for a whole range of institutions, communities, States, regions, cities, etc. So we all ought to think about this carefully and think about this need that was raised by the Germans, perhaps because of the *Länder*.

Looking at what the governments of the Member States are doing, it seems that subsidiarity is a principle that is only to be taken into account between the Member States and the Commission and that it is in fact possible for the Member States to recover powers that had been eroded to the benefit of the Community over the last few years. This certainly does not fit in, either with our ideals or our European approach'.

'In the process that we have embarked upon — construction of a unified but also human Europe — we ought to keep in mind all the possibilities. This is not a process that can be achieved overnight nor is it something that we can impose on anyone else. This can only be achieved by a proper dialogue and cooperation and it is a rather lengthy procedure. But I am sure that this conference and the Edinburgh Summit results will have conclusive contributions towards this objective' (Jordi Pujol).



Conclusions: Internal borders

(Summary)

Mr J.-P. Duport

At the plenary session, Mr Duport, rapporteur of Working Group 1 on internal borders, reported on the main conclusions of the discussions held within the group:

'The five case studies which Working Group 1 ('Interreg internal borders') looked at have brought to light the diversity of the programmes launched under that Community measure. There were two programmes dealing with Objective 1 regions: one covering half of Portugal and a good many Spanish provinces, i.e. regions which, in the Community, are among those whose development is lagging behind most, with a gross domestic product (GDP) equivalent to between 44 and 72% of the Community average; and one cross-border cooperation programme which Ireland and Northern Ireland have begun to implement with a view to encouraging local development centred on key projects in agriculture, fisheries, water management and, above all, tourism, including a major scheme to develop the Shannon-Erle link.

Three other case studies were then looked at which concerned either Objective 2 and Objective 5b regions or Article 10 regions, two of which illustrated an Interreg programme model dealing with cross-border conurbations. The first concerned in particular the European Development Pole, often referred to by Mr Delors as a laboratory of Europe to the scale of 1:1 000 since it covers, at the borders between Belgium, Luxembourg and France, one thousandth of Europe's population, while the second concerned the Euroregion between Germany and the Netherlands, which, given that it dates back to 1958, is perhaps one of the longest-standing examples of cross-border cooperation and led to the signing of a treaty in 1991, 33 years after cooperation had first been embarked upon and seven years after the negotiations had begun.

The fifth and final case study to be examined was the cross-border programme between France and Spain, which covers the French and Spanish departments and regions on either side of the Pyrenees and is also strongly geared to local development.

This will have given you some idea of the diversity of the projects and situations which the Working Group dealt with and on which its conclusions are based.

The Working Group's conclusions emphasize nine specific points.

Firstly, and this is a source of satisfaction for the Commission and all the Member States and regional and local authorities concerned, Interreg I is unanimously regarded as a success.

Secondly, the prime objective of Interreg, as the various projects have shown, has been to mitigate the effects of physical frontiers between Member States by helping to clarify the problems of linkage, in particular between networks, and the infrastructure-related problems. Taken together, these programmes have also been aimed at encouraging cross-border cooperation and the development of economic, social and cultural relations, but always with an objective in mind, be it to link up networks, develop cooperation or foster economic growth. I referred to

that aspect when outlining the various case studies. The Working Group felt that greater emphasis should perhaps be placed on each of two extreme situations, namely that of large, thinly populated mountain areas, where the problem is clearly one of local development over a wide area, and that of the Euroregion or the European Development Pole, where it is a question of improving living conditions in a cross-border conurbation.

The third conclusion which the Working Group was keen to emphasize, in line with Mr Pujol's observations on the matter, is a reaffirmation of the importance of a bottom-up approach and, in the context of the participation of regional and local authorities generally, of involving not only the regions, but also every local authority concerned. I see this as a key aspect: to strengthen the partnership with all the regional and local authorities concerned, without negating the coordinating role which the regions and central government are sometimes called upon to play.

The Working Group's fourth conclusion, on which I shall not dwell since it will be taken up by Working Group 2, is the perception that, while Interreg has focused on internal borders, recognition will perhaps have to be given, in the context of Interreg II, to a specific instrument of cooperation covering external borders.

The fifth conclusion is that employment problems must be dealt with by way of closer interregional cooperation. That being said, a number of Working Group members also underscored the importance of pursuing a comprehensive, integrated approach to development that would not disregard any of the factors underpinning the economic and social development of any given area. Economic development cannot be tackled in isolation.

The sixth conclusion is that, as part of a more integrated approach to economic and social development, consideration should perhaps be given, in the case of the next generation of Interreg programmes, to extending activities to the social sphere and to the spheres of health, housing and culture.

As its seventh conclusion, the Working Group pointed to the need – and this is a very important aspect – for a precise definition of 'border area' although consideration might, in some cases, have to be given to broadening that concept.

Reference was made to two aspects, one of which concerned the maritime regions. Far be it from us – and on this point I wish to apologize to any elected representatives from Galicia who may be among us – to regard the frontier between Galicia and Canada as requiring special treatment, but we feel that for a number of maritime regions in Europe there are probably some links which come under the heading of cross-border cooperation. Similarly, there was a general feeling that a measure of flexibility was needed allowing consideration to be given, outside priority 3 areas, to any measure in support of a region's economic and social development even if that measure took place outside the area covered by the relevant objectives.

Finally, a delicate and tricky problem was examined (with the discussions reflecting slight differences of emphasis), namely the introduction of a European legal instrument satisfying the needs of interregional cooperation. The Working Group certainly does not wish to force anyone to adopt a new structure or model, but we wonder whether the 'toolbox' of the institutions (I referred earlier to the time it took to negotiate a treaty for the Euroregion) ought not to include, for the benefit of regional and local authorities, flexible instruments of cooperation at European level which, in the context of the next generation of Interreg II programmes, would doubtless help us to make further progress and to achieve a number of objectives'.

'You will therefore not be surprised to learn that, after making these comments and on the strength of the first conclusion referred to, namely that Interreg I has been a success, the unanimous conclusion of the Working Group is that the resources allocated to Interreg II should be increased' (J.-P. Dupont).



Conclusions: External borders

(Summary)

Mr John Cushnahan

Mr Cushnahan, rapporteur of Working Group 2 on external borders, reported on the main conclusions of this group:

'The external frontiers working group was posed major questions. How can the gap created by 40 years of stifled economies and tense relations between East and West be filled? What are the priorities for putting in place the infrastructure and institutional relations for cross-border cooperation necessary for an extension of the Community? Before providing some response to these daunting questions, perhaps I may say something about each of the case study presentations.

We began in Greece which is at the eastern-most border of the Community and which has no land borders with other Member States. The case study focused on two aspects of the present Interreg programme that have improved cooperation on Greece's border with Turkey, Bulgaria, Skopje and Albania. One part of the programme has focused on the provision of an east-west road that opens up the border regions and provides a link to Greece's west-coast ports — something given added importance by events in the former Yugoslavia which have cut Greece's easiest land route to the rest of the Community. Another part of the programme has concentrated on the provision of a Baltic press centre in Thessaloniki which can have a major role in the opening-up of these regions.

Our second case was Italy-Austria-Slovenia, an area that seeks to reassert its historic role in East-West trade and develop its tourism potential. Indeed the region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia had begun to develop links with East and Central European countries before the launch of the Interreg programme. The presentation focused on the measures being taken to address the pollution problems of the Timavo river which flows from Italy into Slovenia and on Alpine tourism which can bring economic benefits to the whole cross-border region.

The presentation of 'the new Euroregions' focused on the developing relations between the new German *Land* of Saxony and the countries of Eastern Europe, in particular Czechoslovakia. Although not formally established within the Interreg programme, the project illustrated many of the characteristic problems of external borders. The main priorities are improving transport links and tackling serious air and water pollution problems — problems which by their nature do not respect international frontiers.

The presentation by the island of Bornholm showed how it is seeking to benefit from the possibility of improved trade and cultural links with regions throughout the Baltic and beyond. The island's economy is heavily dependent upon fishing, which is in decline, and developing Baltic links and tourism will help achieve a necessary economic diversification. Interreg has contributed to the establishment of the Baltic House, developed to provide consultancy services and a focus for interregional cooperation.

Our final presentation concerned the French-German-Swiss border and the specific issue of cross-border workers. The question of harmonized approaches to vocational training, which is of importance throughout the Community, is especially acute in this area. The presenters put forward propositions to reduce the market distortions created by the various fiscal and social security regimes and gave impressive examples of transfrontier training initiatives.

We identified four key issues affecting the Community's external borders and the group's response:

- the priorities for an enlarged Interreg;
- the problem of matching funding on the other side of the Community's external border;
- the types of action to be covered;
- the organization of Interreg programmes.

Perhaps the first point to emphasize is the group's view that the first phase of Interreg has been a success and that the initiative should now be extended. The extension, however, has to take account of available funds. There was a clear consensus in the group to extend the border concept to include some maritime borders – although here the group argued in favour of caution. The first priority should be given to those maritime borders that are important for internal trade, for example Greece and Italy in the Adriatic. A further extension to maritime borders with third countries should be selective and should concentrate on those border links important for Community trade or for those where the sea distance is minimal.

The next problem addressed by the group concerned the extension of Interreg to attach priority to the economic development of regions along but on the other side of the Community border. But the difficulty lies in the lack of available funding on the other side of the Community frontier. One suggestion was to earmark a part of any growth in the PHARE programme for cross-border cooperation. But this would need to be complemented by supporting actions from the European Investment Bank and, perhaps, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The ideal, which should certainly be explored by the Commission or the European Parliament, would be the establishment of a new budget line to finance an 'Outerreg' programme, a programme devoted to investments and cooperation on the other side, the outer side, of the Community's external border.

Another problem related to the types of investment to be favoured in Interreg II is the following. The group would not wish to exclude infrastructure projects as such. It believes them to be of fundamental importance to cross-border cooperation although it accepts that their main motivation must be the improvement of cross-border cooperation and not the completion of national infrastructural networks.

In organizing Interreg II, the group attaches major importance to the involvement of regions in the conception and operation of Interreg programmes. There has to be a full partnership involving the regions themselves. Moreover, Interreg II should, where appropriate, encourage programmes linking several countries as opposed to only two. It should also encourage the development of Euroregions on the Dutch-German model as the delivery mechanism for cross-border cooperation and development'.

'Interreg II should provide continuity with Interreg I. Much good work has already been started on the Community's external borders and this must not be endangered simply because we have arrived at the end of the first phase. We should also try to highlight the difference between a national border and a Community border. Member States who provide the Community with its external borders have responsibilities which go beyond those attached to purely national frontiers. It is important that this be fully recognized in Interreg II' (John Cushnahan).



Conclusions: Interregional networks

(Summary)

Sir John Chatfield

Sir John Chatfield, rapporteur of the Working Group on interregional networks, reported on the main conclusions of the discussions held within this group:

'There were three aspects of change that were strongly represented in the project presentations and the debates: the globalization of the economy, the application of communications technology and the diversity and complexity of cooperation networks.

The presentation of Arc Atlantique illustrated well the common interests of the most westerly regions of the Community and the concern that these regions should lose out neither to the 'pull' of the core regions of the Community nor through the efforts to open the Community to the East, eventually expanding the Community to Eastern and Central Europe.

The second presentation was on ECOS/Ouverture, which has the objective of ensuring that regional and local authorities in the Community, particularly in priority regions, can themselves cooperate with their counterparts in Eastern and Central Europe.

The third presentation was on the Urban Observatory, a challenging project which aims to enhance the decision-making of city leaders and managers. The network involves 10 of the Community's largest cities.

The fourth case study was on Ernact, which is concerned with the application of telecommunications to improving the local economies of the network participants. The activities and vision of Ernact reminded the workshop of the power of telecommunications to help redress problems of physical remoteness and accelerate the development process in such areas.

The final project presentation was made on behalf of 'Quartiers en crise'. The key message of 'Quartiers en crise' is that the concentration of problems of lack of jobs, physical decay and social turmoil can be addressed in a concerted or integrated way. The project had been able to demonstrate this, to encourage the exchange of experience and to challenge the validity of traditional approaches.

Six major issues were raised during the forum discussions:

First, is the interregional activity just another form of tourism of little benefit except to those who take part? The evidence of five projects would clearly suggest not. Whilst diverse, each had a clear focus aimed at improving public-sector decision-taking and helping create the conditions and acting as a catalyst for local and regional development.

Secondly, is the activity relevant to the Community objective of social cohesion? Here the workshop presentations illustrated that this concept is relevant at all levels, from the neighbourhood to the Community as a whole. However, regions of the Objective 1 priority areas were well represented and clearly felt they had much to benefit from cooperation networks.

Thirdly, are the institutional structures adequate? It appeared that pragmatic solutions had been found to create working structures for interregional cooperation, such as the European Economic Interest Grouping utilized by Ernact and the company established by Rocnord which had received the support of the Greek Government as well as the local authorities concerned. However, existing arrangements may not be sufficient to take the strain of a significant expansion of this activity.

Fourthly, what should the future directions of projects be? Widening cooperation networks increases the body of experience upon which to draw. Deepening the activities enhances the potential for concrete and practical benefits. There was discussion over how interregional cooperation could involve North African countries and the French overseas territories, and of the links between interregional cooperation and transregional land use and transport planning. However, any extension of activity will have to be paralleled by an increase in the capacity to absorb the benefits in a practical way.

Fifthly, should interregional cooperation networks be part of Interreg II? The question was posed as to whether the Community should further formalize its support of interregional networks through moving from pilot support under Article 10 of the ERDF Regulation to the incorporation of this activity in the proposed Interreg II. The strong interest at this Conference in cooperation networks reflects the demand for commitment at the regional and local level to cooperation. Cooperation is a process that must build upon the motivations and commitments of the partners involved and is of little real value and not sustainable if it is supported entirely or in large part by a third party. There is a danger in formalizing a process to the extent that the innovation, creativity and drive evident in the case study presentations will be lost. It would certainly be a step backwards if regions and localities within and beyond the Community were overly constrained in their ability to forge partnerships directly. Furthermore, the Community's funding arrangements will need to retain the flexibility necessary to respond to the widely varying needs of projects. On balance and given these provisos, the views of the workshop participants would support the further commitment of the Community to this activity. But any increase in scale should not be associated with rigidities that undermine the process of cooperation and the involvement of regions and local authorities in trans-European cooperation should be integral and not subordinate to that of other partners.

Sixthly, what are the factors which influence successful projects? The case study presentations stressed several important factors: a sound and practical concept; strong political support (and a willingness to take responsibility); professional management; good communications; the astute and considered application of communications technologies; and the linking of networking to economic activity in pursuit of the Community's objectives.

To conclude, partnership was a strong and continuous theme of our workshop and we saw how the acts of partnership and cooperation were applied at many different levels, from the neighbourhoods in 'Quartiers en crise', through the small regions of Ernact and large cities of the Urban Observatory to the substantial tranche of the Community's space covered by Arc Atlantique. This surely is subsidiarity in action.

The diverse achievements of the projects reviewed and the challenges ahead demonstrate the contribution that democratic structures and organizations at the local and regional levels can make to the Community's aims. It is also my experience through the work of the Consultative Council of Regions and Local Authorities of the ERDF, that their voice is also the greatest value and effect when it is a collective voice. The subtitle for the Conference was 'Regions in partnership'. In fact, I believe we have been considering 'Peoples in partnership' and I am convinced that interregional cooperation networks have a crucial role to play in achieving this in the years to come'.

'At the introduction to the workshop we were reminded how interregional cooperation has extended from cross-border cooperation to multilateral and trans-European cooperation, and we were invited to consider the question of the Community's aims for this activity and how subsidiarity could be applied to its development. The need to consider networks over prolonged time-scales, the variety of types of partnership and the economies of cooperation were also stressed. It is important to note that this activity has developed rapidly and as many as 1 000 regional and local authorities are already involved' (John Chatfield).

Plenary session conclusions

(Summary)

Mr Eneko Landaburu

Before handing over to Mr Delors for the closing speech, Mr Landaburu summed up a number of general points that had emerged during the discussions:

'It must be said first of all that this Conference has followed what, in the last few months, has become something of a tradition in European institutions, whether at meetings of the European Parliament, of our Consultative Council or of the Council of Ministers dealing with regional policy and planning, namely the general affirmation of the need for interregional cooperation and of the soundness of the Commission's Interreg initiative.

Secondly, there is no doubt that interregional cooperation helps in various concrete ways to demonstrate that subsidiarity can and does work. Moreover, there is the awareness that, in border areas and regions, the measures concerned are closer to individuals and can be comprehended by them and that they project a more tangible image of the Community than that normally perceived. Lastly, decentralization based on local and regional initiatives is effective and brings positive results.

These are, to my mind, the main points which have emerged from the discussions which have taken place here.

Let me add that, if the interregional cooperation we have been experimenting with for several years has provided proof of its vitality, it is because it is not top-down but bottom-up, in that the initiative for cooperation projects originates at local level, with the necessary powers being delegated to regional and local authorities, allowing them to play a full part in the European integration process. I also heard it said here that a number of requirements had to be met to ensure the success of interregional and cross-border cooperation. Firstly, all those involved have to demonstrate the necessary political will. If they do not, then we fail. Some strengths in common and some dovetailing of characteristics are also needed. Moreover, joint projects must enable everyone to state where his or her interests lie. There must, as it were, be 'something in it for everyone'.

More generally, I should also like to stress that interregional, internal, external, cross-border and network cooperation cannot exist in a vacuum, but must form part of economic development and regional planning projects, irrespective of whether the Community is involved. Interregional cooperation is not an offshoot of regional policy generally: it is one of its primary instruments. It is one aspect of regional policy, perhaps, but an integral one. In recent years it has contributed to the achievement of one of the major objectives of our work: economic and social cohesion. Before suggesting a few guidelines, I should like to say that the work we have accomplished together has paved the way for a genuine movement of local development militancy and has, in a number of regions, helped to mobilize the potential for removing internal borders and thus contributed to the economic development of our regions.

On the basis of these personal conclusions, I should like to suggest a number of what, to my mind, are important guidelines for improving our work and its effectiveness.

Firstly, I would stress that, thanks to what the Member States achieved in Edinburgh, real resources are being made available to step up our efforts in this field and that, as soon as we have what Bruce Millan referred to yesterday afternoon as Interreg II, our work must, backed by additional resources, form part of a strategic and not a fragmented and limited approach. Why? Because, for several years now, we have been endeavouring to ensure that Community action forms part of a programme prospective, of an overall regional planning approach, and there is clearly a grave danger of reverting to the project-based approach which held sway for far too long in the Community.

Another important idea is that of a legal instrument, as referred to by Mr Pujol and which Mr Duport described as being better suited to cross-border interregional cooperation. I think that our responsibilities also lie in that direction and we are currently discussing whether European Economic Interest Groupings could act as instruments of cooperation. This work has to be carried out at Commission level, but I believe that we are dealing with a difficult problem to which there is no solution, and we must try out every form of cross-border cooperation if no agreement is forthcoming between Member States, between regions or between local authorities.

Territorial flexibility was dealt with by the Commission in document COM(92) 2000 'From the Single Act to Maastricht and beyond – The means to match our ambitions'. In this area, too, we must exercise caution since it would not be right for Community funds earmarked primarily for regions experiencing difficulties to be dispersed among interregional cooperation projects throughout the Community. It would, in my opinion, be advisable to lay down rules whereby regions not eligible for such assistance may, together with eligible regions, take part in Community programmes. This is something we must decide on together.

I should also like to say that we must continue to focus spending on a number of essential aspects of European regional planning in the context of cross-border and interregional cooperation: basic local and regional infrastructure, in particular maritime infrastructure (a topic which has frequently been mentioned over the last two days), and direct economic cooperation, which must allow some of the instruments of economic and social cohesion to tackle a problem that will increasingly be felt in certain areas and to which we will have to respond: internal migration.

Finally, let me say a few words about partnership. I believe that the Community's regional policy, in particular interregional cooperation, will succeed only if we operate in the context of a clearly understood partnership in which the three levels of decision-making (local and regional, central and Community) are as fully integrated as possible.

As far as the future is concerned, we must, on the basis of the results of this Conference – which, in my opinion, has been very fruitful in terms of ideas – make our work more effective while safeguarding the essential of what has been achieved so far: interregional and cross-border cooperation as practical expressions of subsidiarity; interregional and cross-border cooperation as the practical means of enabling individuals to witness for themselves the active presence of Community, national and regional bodies; and interregional and cross-border cooperation as a primary instrument for two of our key objectives, namely the completion of the single market by abolishing frontiers, and the achievement of economic and social cohesion, which, thanks to the Maastricht Treaty, has now gained greater legitimacy.'

'The subsidiarity principle means that those who, at national level, are responsible for regional planning are obliged to find *ad hoc* solutions. It would be unrealistic to expect Brussels to produce a perfect formula suitable for all situations at both internal and external borders. I believe we must adopt a flexible approach when implementing Interreg II, so that we are able to experiment with certain pilot schemes in cases where some Member States and regions wish to go further and have greater ambitions than the rest' (Eneko Landaburu).



Conclusion of plenary session Interregional cooperation

Full version

Mr Jacques Delors

'Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you very much for having taken part in this Conference and for having contributed so much to our deliberations. If we take an overview of the European integration process, what is striking is that numerous initiatives have been taken spontaneously by regional and local authorities with the aim of extensively transforming the geographical, economic and social landscape of the European Community.

We can confidently say that these forms of cooperation have been one of the rare instances of enthusiasm and practical commitment in recent years. Many informal initiatives have been taken in addition to those taken by the Commission – which you have been debating for the last two days – including the setting-up of the Advisory Committee of Regional and Local Authorities in Europe.

I would like, if you will permit, to place this effort in the overall context of the European integration process. In the 35 years of its existence, the European Community has known more years of stagnation and crisis than years of dynamism. This must never be forgotten, just as it must also not be forgotten that the Community is not being built purely through the decisions of the European Council, however important they may be. Admittedly, for some 10 years now the European Council has played an increasingly important role in the European integration process but it is not these half-yearly meetings alone that are likely to give substance and, I hope, soul to the European Community.

It is true that we have experienced a particularly favourable period since 1985, so much so that 1992 should have been the year in which we would be congratulating ourselves that the Community had implemented virtually all the decisions it had taken between 1985 and 1987, whether those decisions concerned:

- the gradual completion of the frontier-free market – 95% complete with the one major exception of free movement of individuals; or
- the application of the provisions of the Single European Act: we had proposed, in what has been called the Delors I package, that projects should be replaced by more cohesive development policies initiated by political authorities and supported at technical, human-resource and financial levels by the Commission; or
- finally, the Delors I package itself, which has been implemented satisfactorily.

But now difficult economic circumstances, to which I will return, have suddenly plunged the Community into a mood of excessive pessimism. I must make it clear immediately that the uncertainty which has assailed us should not be succeeded by a period of euphoria. That would be just as dangerous as excessive pessimism.

For that reason, it may be beneficial, in order to gain a better understanding of the position we are in and the direction in which we are going, to analyse the crisis we are experiencing, which I will term a 'crisis of growth' and which we hope to overcome in the months ahead.

It seems to me that this crisis can be explained in terms of three main parameters:

- the economic and monetary situation,
- a European integration process which has become too remote from the average citizen, and
- finally, within the Community itself, different concepts of Europe's future.

On the basis of these three elements, I believe it is possible to explain what occurred at the last European Council meeting and in the weeks preceding that meeting and to outline the prospects for the future.

First of all, the economic and monetary situation: the present economic slowdown – and indeed recession in some countries – is undoubtedly more difficult to explain than any experienced for a long time.

What a pity it is that the benefits the Community economy has derived from the 1985 revival of the European integration process are being obscured. Between 1985 and 1990, the Community economy grew at a rate in excess of 3%, compared with a rate of less than 1.5% in the preceding years; investment grew each year by an average of 6% in volume terms after remaining static during the preceding five years; and, finally, the Community created nine million new jobs, compared with a loss of 2.5 million jobs between 1980 and 1985.

In the current difficult circumstances, it is therefore essential to react cautiously since – I must again emphasize – I can give you no simple explanation for this economic slowdown. But it is vital to break out of this highly dangerous climate of uncertainty and despondency:

- firstly, because uncertainty paralyzes economic agents and all decision-makers, and
- secondly, because such despondency causes nations to distance themselves from projects of general interest and joint ventures and to look inwards.

The European Council meeting in Edinburgh can be regarded in this context as having enabled us to reverse this trend somewhat, and in particular to restore a modicum of credibility to the plan for economic and monetary union following the upheavals which occurred from early September on European currency markets and were caused to a large extent by international monetary disorder but also by the fundamental characteristics of certain European economies.

In so far as the economy is a matter of psychology – but it surely cannot be anything other than a matter of psychology – economic and monetary union can be said to have regained some degree of credibility. This must be reinforced. It is essential for the economic aspect of the European integration process to culminate, on the one hand, in a single currency and, on the other, in close and effective coordination of Member States' macroeconomic policies. The task now is to consolidate this reversal of trend.

Two other factors will also help change the situation, namely adoption for the Delors II package and the Community growth initiative. I mention these because they will be of interest to you not only as individuals but also in the context of your local responsibilities.

It was not easy to discuss this financial package at a time when – with the rate of growth sharply down and indeed non-existent or negative in some countries – the resources of public institutions and governments were diminishing, budget deficits were rising and everyone was having to make a rigorous effort to establish the foundations of a sound economic and monetary union.

Despite that, it proved possible to secure agreement on 85% of the Commission's initial proposals. These were spread, it is true, over seven years but what alternative was there to that approach?

At any rate, for those who take over from us, the approach adopted provides the assurance of a stable financial framework for seven years. It also gives farmers a guarantee that the new common agricultural policy can be financed. And it provides the opportunity – though less so than I would have hoped – of helping Community companies to enhance their competitiveness. It provides spectacular confirmation of the fact that the Community is not withdrawing within itself and that it is prepared to meet its external commitments. It is notable for the emphasis placed on economic and social cohesion. These are all elements capable of quickly dispelling the mood of despondency.

And then, although it was very difficult to convince those responsible for economic and financial matters in the 12 Member States, the European Council approved – albeit with some delay, my arguments having been rejected for a long time – a European growth initiative which is not expected by anyone – not least myself – to produce miracles but which is essential and will be of interest to you in two main respects:

- a total of ECU 5 billion is to be borrowed to finance infrastructure programmes throughout the Community (high-speed trains, inland waterways, roads and motorways);
- in addition, a new instrument is to be created: a European Investment Fund which, by guaranteeing loans, will facilitate access to credit, particularly for small and medium-sized firms wishing to invest.

This initiative is therefore an attempt to respond to the prevailing climate; at the same time, with these two aspects it contains elements which, I believe, can be of direct interest to you.

The second parameter of our difficulties is the fact that the European integration process is too remote from ordinary people. While this form of words may perhaps be going a little too far, I consider it to be entirely valid following the Danish 'no' vote and the outcome of the French referendum.

Action to remedy this situation can be based first of all on those provisions of the new Treaty designed to reinforce the powers of the European Parliament and to involve national parliaments more closely. This represents a democratization of the Community decision-making and consultation process.

There are also the decisions taken in Edinburgh on subsidiarity and transparency. Of course, this concept of subsidiarity is not an easy one to handle. You will be quite familiar with it since, as representatives of regional and local authorities, you are fighting to exercise your powers and to bring about a more active democracy. There is no problem in associating subsidiarity with the role of the regional and local authorities. As soon as attention turns to the practicalities, however, the matter becomes extremely complex.

It is made all the more complex – and some governments are reluctant to accept this – by the fact that the Treaty which is designed to unite us is not a federal Treaty. In a federal structure, it is easy to make distinctions according to areas of competence; there are the responsibilities to be exercised at the centre, the responsibilities to be exercised at the periphery and shared responsibilities. There is generally a constitutional court which gives rulings on disputes involving the exercise of these powers.

But the Treaty on European Union, like the Treaty of Rome, is not based on this principle of federalism or on the federal principle. It sets out responsibilities and objectives. As regards the objectives, there is an obligation to produce results. Consequently, if we wish to talk of subsidiarity, it is not sufficient, as the Treaty indicates, to distinguish between exclusive competence and shared competence. Moreover, the Twelve have not agreed on the definition put to them concerning the division of competence.

Nevertheless, this principle of subsidiarity, if correctly applied, should enable the Community to act only where such action is truly necessary and to refer to national governments – and indeed to decentralized authorities – action which can be better taken at that level. In other words – even if this may be putting it somewhat too concisely – less action may produce better results.

Finally, the third component of the response to the criticism that the Community is too remote from ordinary people is the institutionalization of the involvement of the regions in the form of a committee consisting of representatives of regional and local bodies. You will be well aware – I need not dwell on this point – of the ups and downs that marked the setting-up of this committee; those Member States with a federal structure wanted simply a committee of the regions, whereas the others called for a committee of the regions and of local authorities.

While all of this is probably a provisional or transitional arrangement, full use should be made of it. I must make it quite clear that if, in five years, this committee representing the regions and local authorities has failed to assert itself and is operating on the margins of the Community through its own fault and not through that of others, this will have been a missed opportunity.

I will not be so cruel as to cite precedent in this field but you know what happens: members come, become bored and send their deputies; absenteeism then increases; opinions are not examined; the committee tries to dabble in everything and, as a result of issuing too many opinions, is not listened to.

Those of you who are elected and will be appointed to this committee will therefore be faced with a difficult task, and I would urge you to remember what I have said today: it is not self-evident that this committee will assert itself; it is not self-evident that, in a few years, it will be one of the institutional structures on which a true Europe of the regions will be founded.

Finally, the third element in this crisis: different concepts of the future of Europe. This is not a new issue. It arose as long ago as the first conference of European States held in The Hague in 1948 under the chairmanship of Winston Churchill. All the political figures of note at that time were present. The spirit underlying that conference was that there should never again be war between European countries. Even so, when it came to drafting the final communiqué, there was a division, just like today, between those placing greater emphasis on cooperation between governments and those arguing more for integration and the sharing of sovereignty.

The Treaty drawn up at Maastricht can be said to represent a new form of compromise between these two approaches. Clearly, that compromise was still not sufficiently flexible to satisfy everyone since it was found necessary, at Edinburgh, to concede special arrangements to Denmark which should enable the Danes – at least, so we fervently hope – to say ‘yes’ to a Europe of Twelve pending a wider Europe.

Let us return to our overall plan, which is already highly complex, with its three main pillars – the integrationist pillar (the economy), the monetary pillar and the intergovernmental cooperation pillar (external policy) – without speaking of the rest.

A Europe of variable geometry is therefore not too far distant, but there comes a point when a Europe of variable geometry is so variable that the balance of rights and duties no longer exists. Europe is clearly running this risk, but it is better to continue in the direction in which we have been going for a number of years rather than to stand by in expectation of a crisis, as we have done in the past.

What are the prospects for the future? The aim, in the social and economic field, is to create a common area with rules which everyone accepts and with common policies wherever they prove to be necessary.

It is therefore this common area that we must create. If we lose sight of this objective, we will lose, if only at an economic level, many of the benefits of a large unified entity with common rules. For this common area to be created, it must be based on three indissociable elements: competition, competitiveness and solidarity. If one of these key elements were to be missing, we would become divorced from our plan and, given that the Community is to be enlarged to include other countries, the prime risk would be one of dilution. Competition must provide the stimulus for action: since 1985, with the dismantling of rules and obstacles to trade, it has been clear what can be gained on that front; as to competitiveness, I have just explained that there is still scope for the Community to leave its mark on the world economy; for its part, solidarity brings us back to the question of structural policies.

In this context, what was decided at the last European Council meeting needs to be closely scrutinized. While the outcome can be summarized in figures, what is more important to me than figures is the spirit in which we are going to develop these common policies.

The figures are none the less interesting: in the Delors I package, which covered a five-year period, structural policies were allocated ECU 67 billion, i.e. ECU 13 billion a year; under Delors II, which is to cover a seven-year period, a total of ECU 176 billion has been allocated, i.e. ECU 25 billion a year. This shows the scale of the effort made, and I am not including in these sums the new Cohesion Fund, which is designed to promote solidarity between Member States and not simply between the regions.

I believe these figures speak for themselves. Since 1987 the resources allocated to structural measures will have increased 3.2 times over a period of 12 years: those earmarked for internal measures 2.7 times and those set aside for external measures 4.5 times. This shows the scale of the effort being made by the Community: ECU 25 billion a year on average for these structural policies.

Let us turn now to what remains to be done to create this common economic and social area. First of all, we must develop the internal market further. As I have already pointed out, the legislative framework is in place, except for the free movement of individuals.

Steps must now be taken to ensure that the operation of the internal market is improved, that the rules governing it are applied by everyone, that there are no countries dragging their feet in transposing directives into national law, that public procurement is truly opened up, and that we can also implement those large-scale infrastructure programmes which are now covered by a provision of the Treaty. That provision is designed with one thing in mind, namely to ensure that goods, services, capital and people can move around within the Community more quickly and at less cost. The overall gain in productivity and competitiveness that can result simply from developing the Community's communication networks is enormous.

The second priority for the years ahead is to promote cooperation between firms. The economy is global, and the degree of globalization is increasing all the time. But for European firms, including those already operating worldwide, the internal market is the vital foundation, the launching pad for the development of a global strategy. When we consider what it is that separates us from Japan, perhaps the key difference is that Japanese firms, before competing with each other, cooperate.

It is this cooperation which we wish to encourage and which, moreover, will be reflected in the composition of the new Commission. It is necessary for industry and research to come closer together and, through measures that can be taken in the research field, for us to encourage firms to cooperate with each other. Training measures should also help our firms to adapt their human capital to the requirements of competition and the organization of labour.

In my view, such cooperation between firms is an issue of fundamental importance. Moreover, it is one on which, in terms of finance, we failed somewhat at Edinburgh since the competitiveness argument seemed to the Twelve less important than the need for solidarity.

This is a very important issue for small and medium-sized firms too. The measures the Commission has been taking for five years must be continued. You know better than anyone – you who are architects of development – what a key role these firms play, not only in promoting the economic prosperity of your local or regional communities but also as the very lifeblood of rural and urban environments.

Finally, the third element, which I have already referred to, is structural policies. I have given you the aggregate figures but you may perhaps be interested to know how they break down. In the case of the Structural Funds alone – i.e. those which finance the policies pursued under Objectives 1 to 5 (please forgive the obscure vocabulary) – the increase between 1992 and 1999 will be 61%: 75% of which for Objective 1 regions and 50% for regions covered by Objectives 2 to 5. These are substantial sums, and we had to put up a fight to obtain them.

These then are the sums involved, and a special effort is to be made for what was formerly East Germany and East Berlin so as to ensure that they are treated in the same way as the other less-favoured regions as from 1 January 1994.

In this structural policy context, cooperation between regions will clearly be very important. Thanks to Mr Bruce Millan, the Member of the Commission responsible, and Mr Landaburu, there has been a promising rise in such cooperation in recent years based on the programmes which were initiated by the Community and for which the Commission is currently responsible. It would seem that the Council of Ministers is contesting this right of initiative with us. I certainly hope this is not the case because, if these Community initiatives were to be decided by the Council, they would then come to resemble an exercise in haggling more than initiatives rapidly and effectively taken by the Community.

These Community programmes have cost ECU 4 billion over the last five years, ECU 1 billion of which went to the Interreg programme, which is a point of reference for our work. Compared with these ECU 4 billion, over the next seven years the Commission could finance new Community initiatives of this kind costing between ECU 8 and 17 billion. This shows the importance which these programmes will assume, particularly for the three forms of cooperation in question: cross-frontier cooperation, cooperation with regions outside the Community, and inter-regional cooperation.

In short, it is not money that will be lacking but perhaps ideas. This Conference has been organized specifically to enable you to tell us how a partnership can be established – an essential step in my view – between the three parties involved, namely the regions, central governments and the Commission.

Thanks to you and also to our socioeconomic partners, we should be better able to understand your needs and to adjust our resources, having due regard for the role of national governments. That is the basis of the Community's current political arrangement. Perhaps one day things will change but, for the moment, we are committed to observing that arrangement.

Under the Delors II package, the resources allocated to the Community's external commitments will also increase 4.7 times between 1987 and 1999. The agreement on the Community's financial perspectives and the removal of obstacles to a solution to the Danish problem permit official negotiations on enlargement to begin soon with Austria, Sweden and Finland and – probably shortly after that – with Norway. But there can be no generosity without strength. Those sums which have been earmarked for internal solidarity purposes and those resources available for promoting external solidarity are justified by a strong economy. If we do not succeed on the competitiveness front, we will fail as regards solidarity and, consequently, as regards our ability to influence world affairs.

I have spoken about strength and generosity, but generosity does not mean naivety. We can display naivety in several ways – for example, in multilateral negotiations such as those currently being conducted within GATT – by forgetting that we too have our interests to defend and that, frequently, others attempt to make us feel guilty when we account for 24% of world trade, as opposed to about 15% for the United States and a little more than 10% for Japan. This demonstrates clearly that all the other countries have one idea only, namely to gain access to our market – a market which, with the greatest purchasing power, offers the best rewards. We certainly want to open up our markets – we have done so *vis-à-vis* the Central and East European countries – but there must be reciprocation. This entails reaching a balanced agreement, with multilateral rules being observed by everyone and not with a Japan which is seeking to shelter itself from whatever the negotiations achieve.

Furthermore, our generosity towards the outside world should not hold us back from voicing our demands regarding the effort which each of these countries has to make. Our role is not to assume the burden of that effort ourselves or to encourage them to take the easy way out. There was clearly a great temptation for the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe, oppressed by ruthless dictatorships and stifling communism, to identify, at a given moment and in the light of their perception of the consumer society of Western Europe, freedom and a better standard of living as their goals. Unfortunately, a better standard of living has to be earned. After the Second World War, we too certainly had to earn it.

Finally, it should not be forgotten that, for three years now, concern has been voiced in the rest of the world. It is being voiced in Asia – the most dynamic part of the world – about 'fortress Europe'; it is being voiced in Africa, at the prospect of its becoming the forgotten continent as regards development; it is being voiced in Latin and Central America, at the sight of us concentrating simply on Europe; it is also being voiced in the Mediterranean basin, even though that region is just as much our neighbour as Eastern Europe.

In short, we have a difficult task before us, to succeed in reconciling three factors: the increase in our strength, a well-calculated generosity towards all and, at the same time, a special effort to assist Europe at large and closer attention to its interests.

Regional cooperation has a great deal to offer because it can generate spontaneous action, such as towns entering into partnership with each other. We are thus seeing, from a geographical and historical perspective, a Europe which is on the move and in which old affinities are resurfacing. This Europe must be allowed to awaken and must be given our support.

Finally, we must regard the enlargement which we have to carry out as a dynamic factor. Institutional and other problems can be settled later. But this enlargement will not be easy because the international division of labour is highly complex in the economic sphere. It is difficult for new countries to find their place in the international division of labour. That is why we must help them.

I believe that the regional and local authorities in Europe can play a useful part in the enlargement process. The efforts you have made spontaneously to unite with each other and to coordinate your action can perhaps be extended to relations with the regional and local authorities in these other European countries. They need your help in the legal sphere, in training and education, in privatizing enterprises, in the area of management, and in re-establishing the spirit necessary for an open economy based on competition and partnership. The efforts which will have to be made should not simply mirror those made under the PHARE programme, with experts being sent to

those countries. I also have in mind other forms of action, such as the twinings which could take place between your communities and theirs and which would have a great multiplier effect. For these countries, it is not simply a matter of seeing clearly or having grand ideas. They also lack experience – experience in administering communities democratically, in managing efficient public services, in organizing a local or regional economy and in thinking in terms of development.

While we must continue to emphasize cross-frontier cooperation within the Community – and I welcome the development of such cooperation – we must also think of these other regions and local communities in Europe which need everything, and in particular your experience, talents and dynamism.

If Europe manages to find a way out of this *malaise* I mentioned previously without yielding to euphoria, for there are many obstacles in our way, we may perhaps find ourselves in two years' time with a programme which would define the spheres of interregional cooperation throughout Europe. This would demonstrate that, while reinforcing the Community and proceeding towards the goal of European union, we were able to take up this formidable historic challenge of uniting, in one way or another, all the peoples of Europe.

Thank you'.

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Directorate-General
for Regional Policies**



LIST OF PUBLICATIONS 1989-93

Since 1989 the Commission of the European Communities has produced a number of publications intended to keep potential beneficiaries of the Community's regional policy better informed.

Now that the programming period 1989-93 has been completed, this list shows existing publications before those for the next period (1994-99) appear.

INFO TECHNIQUE files are specially designed for potential users of Community programmes and measures in the regional policy field. Generally four pages long, they provide essential information on how to make an application to the Commission.		
SUBJECT	File No	Languages available
<i>Community Initiatives</i>		
Interreg	T-501.90	8 languages
Envireg	T-502.90	Fr, En, It, Gr, Es
Stride	T-503.90	Fr, En, De, Es
Rechar	T-504.90	Fr, En, De, Es
Prisma	T-505.91	Fr, En
Telematique	T-506.91	Fr, En
Retex	T-521.92	8 languages
Konver	T-539.93	9 languages
<i>Other</i>		
Exchanges of experience	T-508.90	9 languages
Global grants	T-512.91	9 languages
New German Länder	T-515.91	Fr, En, De
Recite	T-518.91	9 languages
Studies and Technical Assistance	T-522.92	Fr, En
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The INFO TECHNIQUE lists are annual compilations of all the regional development programmes adopted by the Commission.	
1990 Programmes	Fr, En
1991 Programmes	Fr, En
Regional Development Programmes 1992	Fr, En
Regional Development Programmes 1992 (by country: Benelux, E, F, UK, P, I, D, Dk, Gr, Irl)	in the language of the country
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LIST OF PUBLICATIONS 1989-93



INFO BACKGROUND files, normally four pages long, set out for the general public the background to the Community's various regional policy measures, their aims and what has been achieved.		
THEME	File No	Languages available
<i>Community Initiatives</i>		
Interreg	B-501.90	Fr, En
Envireg	B-502.90	Fr, En
Stride	B-503.90	Fr, En
Rechar	B-504.90	Fr, En
Prisma	B-505.91	Fr, En
Telematique	B-506.91	Fr, En
Retex	B-521.92	8 languages
Interreg (Initial Assessment)	B-532.92	9 languages
Community Initiatives	B-542.93	9 languages
<i>Local Development</i>		
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Portugal	B-516.92	Fr, En, Pt
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<i>Other</i>		
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Eurobarometer	B-526.92	9 languages
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Designs for Solidarity		9 languages

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS 1989-93



Since 1990 DG XVI has commissioned a number of **STUDIES** on matters of direct relevance to regional development in the Community. So far eight documents have been published in their final form.

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