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INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION PROJECTS:

AN INTERIM REPORT ON THE

PROGRESS OF INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION PROJECTS

FUNDED BY THE

EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

December 1993

INTERIM REPORT ON

THE PROGRESS OF INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION

NETWORK PROJECTS

FUNDED UNDER ARTICLE 10 OF THE

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PREFACE

In August 1992, the Directorate General for Regional Policy, Division A.1 created the RECITE office to monitor, evaluate and provide technical assistance to 31 network projects funded under Article 10 of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) regulations. The report is based upon the monitoring work undertaken during the first year of operation of the RECITE office and has been informed by discussions held with individual projects and a review of documentation prepared by the projects under the terms of the contracts between the Commission and the projects. The RECITE office has, in addition to its monitoring and evaluation work, organised a seminar of RECITE network managers hosted by the Commission in March 1993, prepared and published a project management guide and a newsletter and provided, on behalf of the Commission, advice to projects to further regional policy objectives. The RECITE office is managed by ECOTEC Research and Consulting Limited.

Following the introduction, Section 2.0 of this report provides an assessment of the extent to which, so far, the objectives of the interregional cooperation projects have been realised and considers what further impacts can be anticipated. Section 3.0 discusses some of the key factors which have and are influencing the progress of the projects and Section 4.0 provides conclusions and considers the main policy implications of the findings of the monitoring and evaluation work to date. Annex 1 provides brief description of each of the Interregional Cooperation projects funded by Article 10 of the ERDF regulations.

1.0 INTRODUCTION - BACKGROUND

Article 10 of the ERDF regulations established in 1988 enables the Commission to explore innovative means of achieving its regional policy objectives. Thirty six interregional cooperation network projects are amongst the actions funded under this article. Following consultation with the Consultative Council for Regional Policy the first such network projects began in 1990 and 1991. They were established after a process of negotiation between the Commission and organisations of local and regional authorities. In parallel, and following a decision of the European Parliament a programme of exchange of experience projects involving local and regional authorities was initiated with the first projects being funded in 1989. Actions involving cooperation between authorities in eastern and central europe and in the Community have also been supported by DGXVI within the framework of the OUVERTURE and ECOS programmes. In 1991 a call for proposals for interregional cooperation projects was launched and over 200 proposals were received. After an independent appraisal process 21 projects were selected for support. Several of the selected network projects had their origins in exchange of experience projects.

Amongst the 31 projects that have been subject to monitoring and evaluation, 20 (64%) are led by regional and local authorities (10 of these are from Objective 1 priority regions) and in 11 cases the contracts have been made with umbrella organisations. There are 345 partners amongst the projects. 142 (41%) of the partners are regional and local authorities from the Objective 1 priority regions. Exhibit 1 lists the projects and their key thematic and sectoral characteristics. It should be stressed that these projects are only a small part of the rapidly growing range of interregional cooperation activity much of which does not benefit from Community funding.

1.1 The Objectives of the Interregional Cooperation Projects

The documentation accompanying the call for proposals articulated the Commission's objectives and expectations for the projects it could support. These were :

●   To encourage the rapid transfer of know-how particularly from more advanced to less advanced regions.

●   To create economies of scale through the implementation of common programmes and in response to shared problems and challenges.

●   To promote the efficiency of administrations, particularly concerning the regional development process in less favoured regions.

●   To help the development of the Community policies particularly where they have an impact on regional development.

These objectives provide the main assessment criteria against which the progress of the projects have been judged in this report.

EXHIBIT 1: THEMATIC AND SECTORAL ASPECTS OF NETWORK PILOT PROJECTS

	THEMATIC ASPECTS									SECTORAL FOCUS			
	TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER	TRANSPORT	TRAINING	ENVIRONMENT	ASSISTANCE TO SMES	ENERGY	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	PLANNING	LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	GROWTH SECTORS	VULNERABLE SECTORS	AGRICULTURE	TOURISM
ARTICLE 10 PRE 1990													
Eurocities*	•				•				•		•		
Car*		•									•		
Polis*	•	•					•						
Commission des villes*				•				•					•
Public Transport Interchanges*	•	•						•					
ARTICLE 10 NETWORKS 1990													
Development of less favoured regions					•					•	•	•	
Development Agencies			•		•				•				
Chambers of Commerce			•		•		•		•				
Eurogateway					•				•				
Tourism in the Mediterranean							•			•	•		•
Transport in the Mediterranean		•					•						
Atlantic Regions		•	•						•	•			
Emact	•						•		•				
Universities and Regions							•		•				
Quartiers en Crise			•	•			•	•	•				
RECITE NETWORK PROJECTS													
Euroceram	•								•		•		

EXHIBIT 1 CONTINUED

Project											
Hydre	●								●	●	
Eurisles	●					●				●	● ●
Rocnord	●			●					●		●
Dyonisos		●									● ● ●
Ecowat	●			●							
Scientific Centres		●		●					●		
Finattantic			●							● ●	
Coast			● ●						●	●	●
Environet		● ●							●		
Sealink		●					●				
Demilitarised		●				●			●		
Technology Transfer	●						●		●		
Rebuild		●		●					●		
Resigmur		● ●				●			●		
Idee		● ●				●					
Compostela Foret		●							●	●	●
Eurosynet			●				●				●
Urban Observatory	●					●			●		●
Economic Co-operation	●	●						●	●		
Strategy Planning		●	●			●					

Notes: The identified thematic aspects are indicative only. The projects marked * have not been the subject of monitoring and evaluation.

EXHIBIT 2

THE TIMESCALE OF EXISTING COMMITMENTS TO INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION PROJECTS SUPPORTED UNDER ARTICLE 10 OF THE ERDF REGULATIONS

Interregional Networks *	1990	1991	1992	1993.	1994	1995	1996
Transport in the Mediterranean							
Polis							
Transport Interchanges							
Automobile city CAR							
Commission des villes							
Eurocities							
Less favoured Regions							
Development Agencies							
Chambers of Commerce							
Eurogateway							
Mediterranean Tourism							
Atlantic regions							
Emact							
Universities							
Quartiers en Crise							
Euroceram							
Hydre							
Eurisles							
Rocnord							
Dyonisos							
Ecowat							
Scientific centres							
Finatlantic							
Coast							
Environet							
Sealink							
Demilitarised							
Technology transfer							
Rebuild							
Resigmur							
Idee							
Compostela foret							
Eurosynet							
Urban Observatory							
Cooperacion economica							
Strategic planning							

KEY:

▬▬▬ Funding Period

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Period for submission of Final Report

* The projects have up to 18 months to submit final reports following the funding period. The chart indicates the anticipated end date of the current projects.

1.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

This report has been prepared at a time when most of the interregional cooperation projects are in progress and within the funding period agreed with the Commission. This is illustrated in Exhibit 2. Hence only partial and interim conclusions can be drawn at this stage. The total costs and Community's contribution to each project are given in Exhibit 3.

EXHIBIT 3

NAME	TOTAL COST	ERDF CONTRIBUTION	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL COST
1990			
Transport in Mediterranean	2.172.000	1.088.000	50%
Polis	2.200.000	1.100.000	50%
Transport interchanges	550.000	330.000	60%
Automobile City CAR	801.750	400.875	50%
Commission des villes	1.108.000	554.000	50%
Eurocities	1.000.000	500.000	50%
Less favoured regions	1.500.000	900.000	60%
Development Agencies	600.000	420.000	70%
Chambers of Commerce	1.000.000	725.000	72%
Eurogateway	1.000.000	500.000	50%
Mediterranean Tourism	1.330.000	995.000	76%
Atlantic Regions	3.574.970	2.017.500	56%
Emact	2.961.000	1.925.000	65%
Regions and Universities	1.500.000	900.000	60%
Quartiers en Crise	1.167.000	700.200	60%
1991			
Euroceram	1.200.000	780.000	65%
Hydre	2.500.000	1.750.000	70%
Eurisles	2.500.000	1.800.000	72%
Rocnord	4.200.000	2.500.000	59%
Dyonisos	2.333.333	1.400.000	60%
Ecowat	1.800.000	1.100.000	61%
Scientific Centres	3.500.000	2.100.000	60%
Finatlantic	1.833.333	1.100.000	60%
Coast	3.000.000	1.800.000	60%
Environet	5.200.000	3.000.000	57%
Sealink	1.070.000	642.000	60%
Demilitarised	1.500.000	1.125.000	75%
Technology Transfer	3.166.666	1.900.000	60%
Rebuild	2.780.000	1.807.000	65%
Resigmur	3.500.000	2.100.000	60%
Idee	1.911.600	1.242.540	65%
Compostela Foret	3.017.520	1.927.850	63%
Eurosynet	2.470.000	1.605.000	65%
Urban Observatory	1.800.000	900.000	50%
Cooperation Economica	3.500.000	2.450.000	70%
Strategic planning	2.705.000	1.758.000	65%
TOTAL	**77.952.172**	**47.842.965**	

2.0 THE ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE OF THE INTERREGIONAL CO-OPERATION NETWORK PROJECTS

All of the 36 interregional cooperation pilot projects have progressed within the framework of the contractual arrangements made with the Commission. In all cases the regional and local authorities and other public agencies involved in the projects are co-financing the projects' activity by a minimum of 25%. Despite frequent changes of political control amongst the 345 regional and local authority partners involved in the project, very few have been unable or unwilling to participate in the project as envisaged at the proposal stage. In total 6 projects have to date completed their funding period. Several of those that have done so have continued their activities and/or led to new types of interregional cooperation (for example, POLIS and DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES). Those projects which are still within the funding period are in general terms progressing well although the completion of the projects may take more time than originally anticipated. In a number of cases modifications have been made regarding the emphasis on different actions and sub projects and in several projects the original partners have changed, usually because of changes in political leadership amongst the partner authorities rather than because of disagreements amongst participating partners.

The projects have taken place during a period in which there has been a general increase in interregional cooperation activities and a variety of networks now exist amongst regional and local authorities many of which operate without direct financial support from the Community or other third parties. However, there is little evidence that the volume of specific and focussed interregional cooperation activity such as that characterised in particular by the 21 most recent projects funded under Article 10 would have occurred without the Community support and initiative in this area.

It is too early to draw final conclusions on the impact of the interregional co-operation network projects on the economic performance of the less favoured regions. However, the lead authorities which are mainly drawn from the priority regions had little or no experience of leading transnational activities prior to their involvement with these pilot projects. In general terms, their leadership and involvement in the network projects has helped develop capacity and empower these authorities in so doing helping to reduce feelings of isolation and peripherality. More specific impacts of the projects relating to each of the four objectives cited above are discussed below. In addition, observations are made on: the ways in which interregional cooperation has added value to the projects' activities; the ways in which the early network projects have subsequently developed and the types of future impacts that can be anticipated.

2.1 The Acceleration of Transfer of Know-how

All the network projects are to some extent involved with the transfer of know-how. The predominant direction of transfer is from the more developed to the less favoured regions. However, there is also a great deal of transfer of know-how between regions and local authorities facing similar and specific problems not necessarily linked closely to their economic context. Also several projects are concerned as much with the development of know-how as with its transfer and a number of projects are creating new means of transferring know-how that can underpin (and reduce the future costs of) interregional co-operation.

2.1.1 The transfer of know-how from developed to less favoured regions

Transfer of know-how from developed to less favoured regions is the central objective of projects such as ROCNORD where the experience of Jutland (DK) in the fields of resource utilisation, tourism, environmental monitoring and fishery technologies is being brought to bear on the regional development programmes in Crete (GR) and SEALINK where the symbiotic relations between port and hinterland existing in Lubeck (G) contrast with those affecting Patras (GR) and Brendisi (I). Other projects have encouraged transfer of know-how through initiatives such as exchange of personnel, training for local authority personnel (IDEE), mechanisms for exchanging information and through the wider application of "models" which have proved successful in one national context, such as ENVIRONET. Exhibit 4 describes further the processes involved in this transfer of know-how. It is important to recognise that motivations exist for both the receipt and sending of know-how. Less favoured regions are keen to learn from the successful experiences of the more developed regions. The developed regions are keen to benefit from the exportation of their know-how so as to help develop trade links and the markets for economic activities in their localities.

2.1.2 Transfer of know-how amongst regional and local authorities and agencies sharing problems

Many of the projects have been concerned to transfer know-how concerning shared problems. The authorities involved in projects such as EUROCERAM, CAR, DYONISOS, COAST, EUROCITIES and DEMILITARISED are characterised by facing similar problems and challenges and much of their activities involve the identification and exchange of good practice in policy implementation. Such projects do however, face a potential dilemma in that many other authorities and localities may share the same problems and thus there exists a pressure to extend the network although this may reduce the effectiveness of the transfer of know-how. Also there is a tendency for the projects to use the combined weight of their memberships and trans national links to try to influence policy at the national and community levels.

In practice, the potential for the transfer of know-how appears greatest amongst localities which share problems in either of the following two circumstances :

●   Where the authorities are of similar character in terms of scale and competence (for example EUROSYNET)
●   Where there are a small number of participants and a strong technical and practical orientation (for example with the ECOWAT, REBUILD and CENTRES SCIENTIFIQUES projects).

Exchanges of personnel, the publishing of hand books, conferences, development of data bases, resource centres and bespoke training programmes have each been used to enhance the transfer of know-how in these projects. Projects such as ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION utilise most of these methods.

EXHIBIT 4

THE TRANSFER OF SUCCESSFUL MODELS OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION - THE EXAMPLE OF ENVIRONET

ENVIRONET is an abbreviation for the "Environment and Health oriented, cost sharing Network between cities on the periphery of the European Community". It is a new venture whereby know-how concerning health promotion, urban planning, environmental protection and public administration is being transferred from two cities where it is particularly advanced (Horsens and Würzburg) to three less favoured cities (Greifswald, Patras and Suhl). The cornerstone of the transfer is the establishment of "EnviroCentres" in the cities to act as mediators between public agencies, environmental interest groups and the public. At the end of the first year of the project an EnviroCentre had been established in each of the five cities.

All of the centres share some common functions but in addition there are a large number of more focussed bilateral or trilateral actions tailored to the specific needs of two or three cities. The transfer is being achieved through: exchanges and meetings to benefit from existing experience; the identification of specific needs of each city; bespoke training courses; the development of common approaches; and the production of manuals and promotion and material. Key innovations include the involvement of residents in environmental issues, and the preparation of health and environment plans at the district and city scales.

The interregional cooperation also provides weight to local efforts to change organisational and administrative arrangements that otherwise constrain effective interventions to improve the environment and hence enhance the economic and social welfare of the cities.

In the longer term the network wishes to expand, gradually introducing new cities at a pace to enable the continuation of intensive joint working. The work programme of the network project will also enable wider dissemination of the lessons learnt through conferences and other activities.

2.1.3 The development of know-how

POLIS, one of the early network projects was concerned to develop approaches to the use of telematics to improve traffic arrangements in cities. It has been continued with income from services to members and funding for research and development work from the Commission under the DRIVE programme. HYDRE is developing approaches to the long term water resource management issues and other projects such as DYONISOS and COMPOSTELA FORET are exploring innovative approaches with a view to drawing new lessons applicable to many regional contexts. The REBUILD project is concerned to develop and pool knowledge amongst the partners concerning the application of solar energy in the renewal of historic centres. Exhibit 5 further illustrates the ways in which POLIS, HYDRE and COMPOSTELA FORET are contributing to the development of know-how.

2.1.4 Improving the mechanisms for the transfer of know-how

The URBAN OBSERVATORY has at its core the development of a system of communication and analysis of data relevant to improved urban management. Similarly, EURISLES is creating an information centre which will facilitate the exchange of information between island regions in the network. One sub project of the IDEE network is specifically concerned with improving telecommunications between project partners. This is also an important aspect of the DIONYSOS project. Exhibit 6 illustrates in more detail how interregional cooperation is improving the mechanisms for the communications and transfer of know-how in the URBAN OBSERVATORY and EURISLES projects. The collection and processing of data in order to improve its usefulness to project partners as well as the development of the means of communication are important in each project. The underlying motivation for involvement in these projects should, ultimately, be reflected in the willingness of partners to pay the full costs of the services provided.

2.2 Creating Economies of Scale and Economic Linkages

There are several ways in which the projects are realising economies of scale.

Firstly, several projects involve local authorities sharing the costs of research and feasibility studies addressing common problems and issues. Examples of this include HYDRE, REBUILD and ECOWAT.

Secondly, economies of scale are being realised through the provision of shared services. One early project, DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES identified the scope for such economies and has subsequently developed into an association of development agencies called EURADA. Members of the association benefit from the provision of services that would be uneconomic for agencies acting independently.

Thirdly, cooperation between authorities sharing common problems can enable them to involve internationally renowned experts in their search for good practice approaches and to generate synergies and "added value" that would otherwise be inaccessible.

EXHIBIT 5

**INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF KNOW-HOW
THE EXAMPLES OF POLIS, HYDRE AND COMPOSTELA FORET**

The **POLIS** network (the Promotion of Operational links with Integrated Services of Advanced Transport Telematics) was established with the objective of creating a framework to exchange experience between european cities, to analyse the opportunities for new technologies in transport and to promote political support for demand management policies. These objectives were achieved through a coordinated programme of meetings, surveys, in depth studies and a series of six conferences. During the process five areas were identified (these include automated debiting, advanced traveller information systems, integration mechanisms and urban and regional traffic control) where know-how could be further developed through experiments in road telematics technologies and agreement was reached between 20 cities on a programme of experiments. The immediate added value of interregional cooperation stems from the coordinated testing of different approaches in different contexts. In the longer term there is evidently scope for improvements in the cost effectiveness of systems through the cooperation between the cities and the manufacturers of advanced telematic systems in product development and testing.

The objective of the **HYDRE** network, which involves regions from Spain, Italy and France is to create a common, integrated system for monitoring water resources. The system will have both short term application to anticipate risks of droughts, forest fires and erosion etc., and longer term structural applications to help optimise land use planning and development policies. Know-how is being developed by the network through the establishment of a technical directorate which systematically gathers data from the participating regions in order to develop and test a system of remote sensing that can fulfil those applications.

COMPOSTELA FORET involves cooperation between 11 regions where forestry is economically important in Spain, France and Portugal. The cooperation is concerned with research and the development of know-how as well as the improvement of communications, training and the exchange of personnel and know-how. One sub-network of the project is concerned with undertaking a series of experiments. The network has created a common framework within which the individual regions will undertake controlled trials, varying factors such as the use of fertilisers, planting densities and the use of genetic variations and it will monitor the impacts on rates of growth and survival rates of trees etc. Climatic and soil factors will also be systematically monitored and the adoption of a common framework will enable the maximum added value to the network participants when the results are analysed.

EXHIBIT 6

NEW COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES TO ENHANCE INTERREGIONAL
COOPERATION THE EXAMPLES OF EURISLES AND URBAN OBSERVATORY

The **EURISLES** network has been established to help reduce the problems of remoteness, isolation and consequent lack of development experienced by island regions in the Community. The means adopted are the development of a shared database and information resource centres in each of the eight partner regions which are linked telematically. The enhanced availability of data on the characteristic problems of island regions and their solutions will be an aid to decision making. The programme of work involves: close collaboration between partners to achieve harmonisation of information processing; training and the acquisition of new information technology skills; and the gradual introduction of more sophisticated communication technologies.

The aim of the **URBAN OBSERVATORY** is to create a shared database and management decision support system for use by each of the 10 partner cities. The key tasks are to assemble data that are sufficiently detailed, comparable and accessible through a "user friendly" interactive database so that the enhanced information can help inform decision makers involved in urban management. A particular innovation of the system is the capacity to handle a range of numerical, graphical, cartographical and textual information. Interestingly, with a view to possible future market opportunities involving telecommunication links and information transfers between networks of cities, the project was able to negotiate favourable terms for the development of software and provision of hardware from a major european IT company.

In addition some projects have benefitted from the economies already created by the international associations which are exceptionally well placed to foster links between their members and to identify potential cooperation activities and partners.

Finally, "economies" of interregional cooperation are also being exploited through the development of communication links between ports (TRANSPORT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN and ARC ATLANTIQUE) and close trans-national linkages between authorities and development agencies that can help foster the market expansion of indigenous companies (EUROGATEWAY).

2.3 Improving the Efficiency of Administrations in Less Favoured Regions

Conclusions cannot yet be drawn on the extent to which the Community's support to inter-regional co-operation projects has improved the efficiency of the administrative processes in less favoured regions. There are however, three mechanisms through which this is being achieved :

●   Where authorities from priority regions have assumed the leadership role in the projects and therefore been required to enhance their capacity in respect of both providing a political framework for co-operation across national boundaries and co-ordinating the often demanding administrative functions.

This has accelerated the adoption of modern project management and financial accounting methods and helps enhance the skills and competencies of the officers involved. Projects such as SEALINK and REBUILD provide examples of this "capacity building" benefit of interregional cooperation. Exhibit 7 gives further details from the REBUILD and EUROSYNET examples. In some cases consultants with wider experience of transnational co-operation have contributed to this activity during the early stages of the projects.

- Where the projects have been directly concerned with mechanisms to improve administrative efficiency, as for example in the ERNACT project, which is concerned with the application of information technology to local government functions. There are also several projects where improvements in the quality of and access to information are important objectives (for example the EURISLES and URBAN OBSERVATORY projects, see Exhibit 6). Other projects are specifically concerned with functions of local and regional authorities, for example, STRATEGIE DES VILLES is concerned with strategic planning and RESIGMUR with the application of Geographic Information Systems to planning.

- Where the projects are concerned with the identification and communication of good practice in regional development. Here the activities of all the projects concerned with the transfer of know-how are relevant (see Section 2.1).

2.4 The Development of Community Policies

There are in broad terms five mechanisms through which the inter-regional co-operation networks have and are continuing to have an influence on Community policies in the field of regional development.

EXHIBIT 7

CAPACITY BUILDING THROUGH INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION
THE EXAMPLES OF REBUILD AND EUROSYNET

REBUILD is a network concerned with Renewable Energies for Buildings in European cities with historical centres. It includes eight partners from six different member states including major cities with historic centres of international renown such as Florence and Amsterdam. The network is led by Corfu in Greece and the establishment of the project structure, the creation of a semi-autonomous project office and their lead role in project management has helped introduce to the authority new information technology skills and the capacity to play a direct and important role in other international cooperation activities.

EUROSYNET is a project involving five partners, each relatively small regions, sharing common concerns. Approaches to improving the provision of economic, social and environmental services are being enhanced through the exchange of know-how and the implementation of specific projects. Cork, in Ireland, is the lead partner. The city has enhanced its capacity for playing a lead role in interregional cooperation through the appointment of a full time project manager.

Firstly, transnational exchange of experience through the network projects is improving the quality and innovatory character of proposals put forward for funding under the Structural Funds at the national level. For example, the proposals to develop the ports of Patras and Rostock have been informed by the SEALINK project and the ECOWAT project is exploring holistic approaches to the question of water resource management that could lead to the specification of innovative "pilot projects" which could increase the effectiveness of Structural Fund interventions in this domain. In addition, the work of several network projects is relevant to the improved integration of the Structural Funds. The assessment of the "integrated" approach to urban renewal undertaken by QUARTIERS EN CRISE is relevant to both the ERDF and European Social Fund interventions in urban areas. The activities of COMPOSTELA FORET are relevant to the objectives of FEOGA as well as the ERDF.

Secondly, several of the projects are involved in identifying the scale and characteristics of sectoral economic change affecting their areas and in developing appropriate responses. For example, those projects whose partners are linked by the economic importance of sectoral economic activities in their areas : CAR (automobile manufacture); DEMILITARISED (military establishments and defence industries); DYONISOS (wine growing); EUROCERAM (ceramics); COAST (tourism in coastal towns) and COMPOSTELLA FORET (forestry) are each concerned to generate effective measures to mitigate economic decline and encourage effective responses including diversification of the regional economies. The activities of these projects are relevant to the development of policies at the Community, national and regional levels. For example, the work of the DEMILITARISED network helped inform the development of the KONVER Community initiative, see Exhibit 8.

Thirdly, the network projects are helping forge links between regional policy and other aspects of Community policy. For example, the REBUILD and ECOWAT projects have built upon work stimulated by Community energy policy. SEALINK and TRANSPORT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN are relevant to Community transport policy, ENVIRONET is concerned with the improvement of the urban environment and thus contributes to both environmental and regional development objectives and several projects have either emerged in part from research and development activities sponsored by the Community (for example, URBAN OBSERVATORY which has its origins in part in the work of the Future Assessment of Science and Technology (FAST) programme) or are providing a platform for research and development work (for example, POLIS).

Fourthly, a number of projects are generating information and analyses that can provide new insights for policy formulation at the Community level. For example, QUARTIERS EN CRISE, has undertaken case studies of the need for and application of the "integrated" approach to neighbourhood renewal in deprived areas of cities throughout the Community. Similarly, the EURISLES project could be helpful in providing new insights on the needs and potential of islands in peripheral parts of the Community and the ARC ATLANTIQUE project which involves contiguous regions bordering the Atlantic is developing proposals for interregional cooperation concerned with environment, tourism, communications and aspects of the "aménagement du territoire" over a broad tranche of the Community's territory, see Exhibit 8.

EXHIBIT 8

INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION AS A MEANS OF INFLUENCING COMMUNITY POLICY THE EXAMPLES OF DEMILITARISED AND ARC ATLANTIC

DEMILITARISED is an acronym for "Decrease in Europe of Military Investment, Logistics and Infrastructure and the Tracing of Alternative Regional Initiatives to Sustain Economic Development". The 16 network participants which were drawn together after an initiative begun by CCRE are developing strategies to counteract the negative effects of force reductions and falling orders for the armaments industry. Amongst the objectives of the network is the creation of a promotion programme at the Community level on behalf of the regions and municipalities most affected by these changes. The impacts are characteristically local and the network is helping to ensure that measures are more effectively mobilised at this level to address the particular needs for retraining, diversification and physical regeneration. These practical considerations were relevant to the development of the Community Initiative KONVER.

The network project for regions of the Atlantic (ARC ATLANTIQUE) has its origins in the work of the Atlantic Commission of CRPM. The projects involves the coordination of a variety of sub projects in the fields of interport communications, training for shipping, finance and aquaculture involving sub groups of the total of 15 partners. The notion of cooperation between contiguous regions across national boundaries is at the heart of the Community's activities on the "aménagement du territoire" and those involved with ARC ATLANTIQUE have prepared proposals for more extensive pilot projects that will further develop these aspects of interregional cooperation.

Finally, several of the projects have helped enhance the understanding and effective implementation of Community policy in the regional policy and related areas. For example, EURADA, the organisation which emerged from the DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES project now provides "advance warning" to its members on Commission activities concerned with regional policies and ensures that its members are informed on the issues underlying policy developments through workshops and seminars. Also the existence of links and working relationships between individuals and organisations involved in the network projects (and one or other of the many interregional co-operation networks not directly funded by the Community) tends to enhance the quality of proposals made for funding transnational activities funded by the Community.

2.5 The Added Value of Interregional Cooperation

Exhibit 9 illustrates some of the different ways in which interregional cooperation are adding value to the wider processes of regional development. These processes include the joint commissioning of research and feasibility studies, synergy and the development and processing of information. The involvement of individual authorities in interregional cooperation can also add weight to policy debates held at the member state level. For example, trans-national cooperation amongst authorities experiencing particular economic and social changes due to international factors (for example demilitarisation and reductions in the levels of production

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of car manufacturing) may enable authorities to both prepare better response strategies and to marshal arguments for resources at the national level more effectively.

2.6 The Continuing Activities of Early Network Projects

Exhibit 10 describes the ways in which certain of the early projects have continued (POLIS, CAR and DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES). Other projects that have completed their funding periods are linked to continuing activities. For example, the work of the EUROCITIES project looking at good practice in aspects of regional development has provided a resource for the organisation Eurocites which acts on behalf of major cities in the Community and is itself involved in the management of other interregional cooperation activities. Also, within the framework of Article 10 one of the early network projects, COMMISSION DES VILLES is a specific antecedent of the current project STATEGIES DES VILLES.

EXHIBIT 9

EXAMPLES OF THE "ADDED VALUE" OF INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION

Added value has been created through regional authorities involved in interregional cooperation jointly commissioning research and feasibility studies. Examples of projects involving research and experimentation where the results will be of greater value because common methodological approaches have been adopted and because there will be wider access to the results and practical benefits include POLIS, HYDRE and COMPOSTELA FORET. There are also examples of the co-financing of exploratory and feasibility studies where the project partners involved are benefitting from sharing costs and from the opportunities to assess the contextual influences on different project proposals (for example ECOWAT and SEALINK).

Key benefits of the interregional cooperation projects stem from the opportunities they offer for synergy. Several mechanisms are evident. The involvement in an interregional cooperation project can help create cooperation between different agencies and groups at the local level. The systematic involvement of residents, local agencies as well as political leaders and officials in the Quartiers en Crise project provides one example. Synergy has also arisen where partners have built upon the network activities within the projects and developed new proposals to extend their work which would not have arisen without the benefit of established working relations and trust.

The added value of interregional cooperation is also strongly present in those projects where the development and processing of information is a component of the project. In effect, the cooperation process reduces barriers to communication and enables data to be generated in such a way that it is more relevant to local decision making, more accessible and better disseminated.

EXHIBIT 10

NEW FORMS QF INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION STEMMING FROM PILOT PROJECTS THE EXAMPLES OF EURADA, POLIS AND CAR

The European network of Development Agencies has continued in an independent capacity, following the completion of Article 10 funding in January 1993. The network originally established under the aegis of CCRE and now known as the European Association of Development Agencies (EURADA) continues, as a self financing association, to follow the objectives instituted at its inception in 1989 and is now established as a non-profit making organisation under Belgian law. EURADA which has over 100 development agency members facilitates the exchange of information and experience on new methods of managing regional economic development and the development of cooperation projects.

POLIS (The Promotion of Operational Links with Integrated Services of Advanced Transport Telematics) was one of the networks approval for Article 10 Community funding in 1990. POLIS has developed five major cooperation projects as mechanisms for initiating pilot projects to test mutually compatible advanced telematics measures and infrastructure to aid traffic management in cities. Members of POLIS are now served by an administration and information unit based in Lyon and known as Centre for the European Diffusion of Information and for the Liaison of the POLIS cities network (CEDIL).

The CAR project has continued to function after the completion of Community funding at the end of 1992. The network has facilitated a number of cross national collaborations and on-going exchanges. A network of Spanish authorities is also being formed based on the successful experience of the UK CAR partner MILAN (Motor Industry Local Authority Network). An information centre for the project has been developed in Valladolid and a major conference is planned for 1994 to bring together all major european motor industry area partners and explore ways of managing the automobile restructuring process.

2.7 Anticipated Future Impacts

The specific projects reviewed here coupled with the variety of other interregional cooperation activities stimulated by the Community financial support (the Exchange of Experience programme, OUVERTURE/ECOS, Interreg, technical assistance for Community Initiatives etc.) and those that have developed independently in response to the recognition by regional and local authorities of common interests and concerns, are contributing to a substantial growth in joint actions, improved communications between regional and local authorities and heightened consciousness of the role and potential of cooperation. A momentum has been created which is associated with the search on behalf of many of the projects specifically reviewed here for means by which interregional cooperation can be continued and strengthened. Political support is widespread at the regional and local level and the economic and regional development rationales are strengthening with the increasing internationalisation of economic activities and the need to remove the remaining barriers to integration at the Community scale. Inevitably, in the context of a programme of pilot projects it can be anticipated that not all of the projects will realise their initial expectation. However, the current activity provides a foundation upon which new activities could build. In particular, there remains considerable scope for more involvement of economic actors, in the private as well as public sector, in interregional cooperation so that the economic and regional development benefits can be fully realised.

3.0 FACTORS AFFECTING THE DYNAMICS OF INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION NETWORKS

Whilst there does not appear to be a single model for a successful interregional cooperation network four parameters appear particularly important to their success:

- their rationales and motivation;
- the project structure;
- the project management.
- previous experience of interregional links and cooperation.

3.1 Rationales and Motivations

Each of the projects have an underlying rationale linked to the Community's social cohesion objective and the priorities of the partners. All of the project leaders and project partners have also demonstrated commitment to the project aims through their co-financing and resource inputs. Several rationales underpinning the projects are evident:

- Regions and cities are benefitting from the accelerated transfer of know-how. This is particularly valuable from the Community's perspective when the transfer benefits regions and cities in priority areas (for example, ROCNORD) and when it encourages "europeanisation" and decreases feelings of peripherality within these areas. The motivations for this activity are strongest when the know-how specifically addresses the specific problems of project partners. Successful projects have often taken considerable care in identifying such problems (for example, ECOWAT and DEMILITARISED) in order that know-how can be tailored to specific regional requirements. A good deal of activity in this vein involves the development of products and services with wider market potential which could help sustain the cooperation beyond the Community funding period.

- Regions and cities with similar problems and characteristics are benefitting from the economies of scale of developing and implementing common approaches to problems. This activity is of most relevance to the Community objectives of social cohesion when it encourages development in priority areas through for example, improving the efficiency of information flows and decision-taking (for example, the URBAN OBSERVATORY), or through ensuring that the application of new technologies is appropriate to the needs of these areas (ERNACT, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER and POLIS). Areas or authorities with similar problems also cooperate in lobbying activity to influence national or Community policy but this activity is not financially supported by the Commission.

- Regions and cities are enhancing regional economic development by undertaking joint actions (including those involving the private sector) to stimulate economic activities in their areas. These actions for local development add value to the local resources available through different forms of partnerships (public/private; enterprise/trade union; local/regional; voluntary sector/private sector), through supporting innovation, and through providing advice, facilities and incentives. Examples of this include cooperation projects to improve access to finance amongst SME's (FINATLANTIC), initiatives to improve communications between ports and hence the competitiveness of short distance sea cargo movements [TRANSPORT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN and one of the sub projects of

ARC ATLANTIQUE (ARCANTEL)], and the encouragement of the market expansion of SME's indigenous within one partner region in another through the provision of premises and business advice (EUROGATEWAY).

● Interregional Cooperation occurs when areas tackle trans-border issues and when areas wish to coordinate strategies towards development axes of the Community's space that cross regional boundaries, or towards the better functioning of trans european networks. Such cooperation is relevant to the Community's social cohesion objective but tends to involve contiguous regions rather than the trans european interregional cooperation networks reviewed in this report. One exception is SEALINK which as its name suggests is concerned to improve sea links within the Community.

Regarding the motivation of local authorities and partners it must be stressed that the cities and regions are public authorities accountable in the first instance to the electorate of their regions and thus benefits need to be tangible and sustainable. However, the authorities, their political leaders and officials, have through their involvement in and commitment to the projects reviewed in this report, demonstrated a belief in the view that their localities and the economic actors within them need to extend their international linkages and build upon the complementarities between regions in different members states. In so doing they have benefitted from the comparatively straightforward and flexible arrangements for access to Community resources through Article 10 of the ERDF regulations. Indeed, this direct access has helped both small and large regional and local authorities create new links and accelerate the development of international linkages that are likely to become increasingly important to their areas in the context of future technological, economic and political changes.

3.2 The Project Structure

Each network project has adopted a structure geared to the realisation of its work programme and the roles of its partners. Few general rules are evident as to the effectiveness of different structures but benefits are evident where structures enable both flexibility and the clear assignment of functions and responsibilities.

The projects have been organised in the following ways:

● <u>Lead partner arrangements</u>: where one public authority has the contract with the Commission and through a process of negotiation engages and involves partners. The lead partner is thus responsible for managing and implementing the project during the period of the contract with the Commission. This is the most common arrangement for the projects launched in 1992, examples of projects utilising such arrangements include: COAST, SEALINK, DEMILITARISED and RESIGMUR. In some instances, aspects of the management and coordination of the projects have been subcontracted to existing international associations, as in the case of DYONISOS and consultancies as in the case of ECOWAT and COAST. The lead partner arrangements have the advantage of simplicity but they may limit the extent to which partners are involved in strategic decision making. The parameters of cooperation are often expressed in the form of a constitution. Agreements are also made between individual authorities and the lead partner to ensure that services are provided to the project as a whole. However, if difficulties arise the liability for the project rests solely with the lead partner. Furthermore, constraints have been experienced on the activities of authorities in different member states which limit the flexibility with which the partners can contribute to the work of the projects.

- One variation of the lead authority arrangements occurs <u>when responsibilities are conferred on a new, separate legal entity</u> such as an eeig or company to which the contracting authority devolves responsibility for the management and implementation of the project. Projects which operate in this way include ERNACT which has established an eeig and FINATLANTIC. One completed project, DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES which began under the aegis of an umbrella organisation is continuing operation as an association of development agencies and has formed a non-profit making company registered in Belgium. None of the existing forms of legal entity (either eeig or companies formed in a particular member state) are tailor made to facilitate joint working between several public authorities in different member states in interregional cooperation projects. Arrangements involving the establishment of a legal entity offer benefits in terms of shared responsibilities between partners, managerial efficiency and flexibility. However, given that the initial contracts have been made between the Commission and individual authorities or particular umbrella organisations, complete responsibility for the project cannot be devolved to a newly formed separate legal entity without the agreement of the Commission.

- Through <u>management by an umbrella organisation</u> such as CCRE or CRPM which retains legal responsibility for the discharging of the work but "sub contracts" it to individual or groups of authorities or an implementing agency. The majority of the early network projects were organised in this way. For example, the contracts for COMMISSION DES VILLES, DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES and EUROCITIES were held by CCRE and TOURISM IN THE MEDITERRANEAN and ARC ATLANTIQUE are held by CRPM. Several of the projects which began in 1992, are also organised in this way (for example, HYDRE, EURISLES, STRATEGY DES VILLES and IDEE). In addition the projects coordinated by CEDRE have a similar structure. These umbrella organisations have considerable experience of interregional cooperation through for example, the management of the exchange of experience programmes. This body of experience is helpful in initiating projects, identifying project partners and advising on the management of projects particularly where the experience of partners is limited. The influence of these organisations over the choice of individuals to lead and manage the projects so as to maximise the added value of the networking activity has been important. The weaknesses of such arrangements are that the extent to which individual authorities from priority regions can play a leadership role is limited and, if these umbrella organisations (which are to varying degrees accountable to the partner authorities) only coordinate the activities and manage the liaison with the Commission, they are not well placed to take responsibility for the overall quality of the project.

Given the need for contracts to be held with single agency, the absence of a legal entity ideally suitable for interregional cooperation and the variety of projects in terms of size, activities and areas of interest, a pragmatic approach to the establishment of appropriate structures has proved necessary.

3.3 Project Management

The arrangements for and the capacities of individuals involved in project management are the key factors for success once the precise aims of the project have been established and the structure and processes for cooperation put in place. A number of "good practice" principles have emerged:

- <u>The organisational arrangements for cooperation:</u> Arrangements whereby day to day management takes place with a measure of independence from the lead authority appears to be preferable, improving

communications and enabling other partners to influence decision taking. Some projects (for example, SEALINK and REBUILD) have established distinct offices within or close to the premises of the lead authority. Normally separate accounts are established to manage the financial resources. This physical and organisational separation may enhance the perception of independence. At the same time such arrangements can enhance the capacity of the lead authority to engage in new interregional cooperation initiatives.

● <u>The profile and political commitment to the project:</u> Projects require a strong level of support at the political level. All the projects are co-financed and thus at the project formulation stage, commitment for financial support must be given. Commitment is also important at this level during the establishment phase and to ensure that all partners meet their responsibilities. Projects have successfully maintained support by involving political representatives in key decisions and discussions over strategy and through combining essentially technical meetings with the opportunities for politicians to meet. The management of public relations has also enhanced the profile of many projects.

● <u>The number of partners:</u> A higher intensity of cooperation is possible where the number of project partners is small. Those projects involved in testing new approaches (for example, ENVIRONET), and identifying innovative solutions to regional development problems (for example, ECOWAT) require intensive cooperation. The number of partners for projects concerned with the transfer of know-how very much depends upon the precise objectives that exist. There are instances where large numbers of partners have been involved successfully but the cooperation in such cases could be better characterised as diffusion of information rather than transfer of know-how.

● <u>The day to day management of the project:</u> In general terms this appears most effective where it is the first priority of a senior official of the lead authority. This is often an appointee from outside the authority. However, a variety of arrangements appear to be working successfully. Several projects are effectively led at a technical level by consultants engaged by the lead authorities (for example, ECOWAT, ENVIRONET). This can be very helpful where wide international experience is required in order to ensure that the "added value" of interregional cooperation is fully exploited to the benefit of the partners. Consultants and international organisations have also been involved in the managerial and administrative functions of the projects (for example, COAST). Whilst these latter arrangements may be convenient from the perspective of the lead authority they may limit the extent to which the capacity of the authority to undertake future work of this type is enhanced.

● <u>Communication with partners:</u> The arrangements for communication reflect the specific requirements of projects. Projects have benefitted considerably from written agreements identifying the responsibilities of partners made at the outset of the work. There are considerable advantages in ensuring that budgetary information is clear, up to date and detailed. There have been examples where communication appears to have been weak where for example, the technical and coordinating functions have been undertaken by different organisations. Where communication is poor this can weaken the commitment of partners. In many cases however, communication has been of a high standard (through newsletters, bulletins etc.) and considerable effort has gone into the preparation of meetings that successfully combine the organisational and steering functions with the more technical aspects of the projects' work. A further important aspect of communication concerns that between the projects and the Commission. In some respects the

combination of the project proposals and contracts made with the Commission have not provided a sufficiently clear basis for defining and monitoring the work programmes and progress of the projects. At the same time some projects have, for good reasons, needed to change aspects of their activities and the scope for some flexibility in this respect has been advantageous.

3.4 Previous Experience of Interregional Links and Cooperation

It is evident that both the existence of pre-established trans-national links between regional and local authorities and a body of experience amongst the key actors involved in a network project are helpful in defining the focus of cooperation, creating rapidly appropriate organisational structures and management processes and realising the project objectives. This progress tends to be best amongst projects which benefit from the institutional and personal links that have eroded cultural, language and other constraints. Conversely, where previous experience has been limited amongst the project leaders and partners, some projects have required considerable periods within which to become established.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

It is too early to draw firm conclusions on the performance of the interregional cooperation projects funded under Article 10 of the ERDF regulations. However, the following interim conclusions can be made:

● All of the interregional cooperation projects reviewed here have progressed well within the framework of the contractual relations with the Commission. The 300 plus regional and local authority partners have committed financial and other resources to the projects. Several of those projects that have completed the funding period under Article 10 have continued their activities (for example, POLIS, DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES and QUARTIERS EN CRISE). The projects that are still within the funding period are in general terms progressing well and appear likely to meet their objectives. In many cases plans are being prepared for the continuation of the interregional cooperation activity after the funding period has been completed.

● There is strong demand by regional and local authorities for involvement in activity of this type. This is evidenced in a number of ways: the large number of proposals received in response to the 1991 call; only 4-5 partners put forward in the approved proposals have subsequently withdrawn; and, project partners are required to co-finance project costs by at least 25%. It is reasonable to expect that the involvement in existing activities and the rapid build up in experience that has taken place will lead to the identification of new initiatives and demands for involvement.

● The levels of interregional cooperation activity funded under Article 10 have increased rapidly. The expectations in the contracts with the Commission are that the projects can realise their objectives in relatively short periods of time (normally 2-3 years). There are however, several important constraints on realising this. Some of the partners have had little previous experience of this activity and there is inevitably a period of establishment after the signature of the contract with the Commission during which organisational arrangements are made, the work programmes detailed, and infrastructures put in place. It is common for this process to take between 6 and 12 months from the date of approval by the Commission.

● A range of types of activity and of project are of value in furthering regional policy objectives. Generalisations are difficult but it appears that projects with a smaller number of partners are able to cooperate more intensively in the process of developing and transferring know-how. Larger projects with more partners and a variety of activities are less likely to be innovative but have the strong potential to enhance trans national cooperation at a political level and to generate new initiatives.

● For the early projects the detailed procedures and contracts established between the Commission and the projects were the source of some misunderstandings. In particular, there are issues over which costs incurred by projects are eligible for reimbursement by the Commission, what information is required to enable payment from the Commission and the extent to which modifications can be made to work programmes, timescales and partnership arrangements without recourse to the Commission. At the heart of these difficulties is a tension between the wish (on behalf of both the Commission and the project partners) to maintain some flexibility over the activities of the projects and the need for full accountability in the use of the Community resources. Overall these difficulties have become less acute since the

publication of the project management guide and could be eliminated in the future by supplementing the call for tenders with detailed guidance on these matters and by modifying the contracts.

● The structures and management practices adopted by the projects have a strong influence on their success and overall the projects have established arrangements which work well. There remain however, difficulties over genuinely sharing responsibility for the implementation of projects between the partners. Three factors contribute to this. Firstly, in some member states ultimate responsibility for use of Community structural fund resources rests with the member states. Secondly, the lead authorities and partners all contribute co-financing and inputs of resources over which they normally wish to maintain some control. Thirdly, once the contract is established the Commission, which is not actively involved in the implementation of the projects, has little opportunity apart from through technical assistance and the payment procedures to influence the conduct of the project. Whether or not the Community funds further activity in this area there is a case for the establishment of a legal entity for cooperation between regional and municipal authorities and there would be benefit in the establishment of such partnerships prior to the receipt of substantial levels of funding from the Community.

The Consideration of Future Policy

The European Council meeting in Edinburgh in December 1992, indicated support for interregional cooperation activity and this is strongly endorsed by the European Parliament. The Commission's Green Paper on Community Initiatives posed the question as to whether interregional cooperation networks were appropriate for funding under the proposed new INTERREG Community Initiative and emphasised the trans-national aspects of each of the five themes put forward. Also, the provisions for Article 10 funding have not changed and there are strong reasons to build on the existing experience to further develop this activity. The Commission is also assessing the feasibility of a public sector economic interest grouping.

If the Community is to give further financial support to interregional cooperation projects through the mechanism of a new call for tenders or other means, then consideration should be given to the following proposals:

1. A framework should be provided which closely defines the priorities for Community support.
2. Funding should be made available for up to five years.
3. Small scale "seed corn" funding should be available to meet preparatory costs and explore in depth the feasibility of interregional cooperation projects.
4. Consideration should be given to the direct involvement of the private and voluntary sectors in the interregional cooperation activity.
5. A Vademecum should be prepared giving detailed guidance on procedures, eligible costs etc.

Each of these proposals is discussed in turn briefly.

A Framework for Community Priorities for Interregional Cooperation: There would be merit in more closely defining the Community's priorities for trans national interregional cooperation so as to encourage activities that directly address regional development issues including the effective implementation of the Structural Funds. At the same time of course, scope should be allowed for innovative proposals building directly upon

the priorities of the sponsoring regions. Furthermore care must be taken to ensure that actions are complementary to networks already supported by the Community.

Such a framework might for example, identify priorities relevant to the main types of structural funds interventions:-

- basic infrastructure,
- support for business,
- human resource development and,
- research and development etc.

Possibilities where a priori there appears to be a strong rationale for interregional cooperation include:

- The development of regional airports (perhaps focused on particular technological or institutional issues)

- Cities with currently low levels of car ownership exploring sustainable approaches to urban transport and traffic management

- The development of complementary 'clusters' of economic activities building upon 'centres of excellence' and research and development activity

- Aspects of the problem of intermodal freight and passenger transfers

- Extending interregional cooperation between ports regions both within and outside the Community (SEALINK provides a starting point)

- Aspects of water resource management (for example, the work of ECOWAT is applicable to many more regions than those currently involved)

- Aspects of domestic and industrial waste management applicable to less favoured regions (for example, networks could share the result of technological assessments and trials of technologies applicable to their regions)

- The development of new forms of 'sustainable' tourism in priority regions.

- Networks of business support agencies that can assist companies to expand their markets within the Community (the experience of EUROGATEWAY is helpful in this respect).

Such a framework would need to embrace both the Community's interests and priorities and the rationales and motivations of the principal actors who would be involved, that is the regional and local authorities.

The extension of the funding period to five years: Whilst a great deal has been achieved during the period since the first interregional cooperation projects began, it is evident that many projects were in fact slow to start and that several may require extensions to their existing contract periods. There are significant barriers

to cooperation which have to be overcome (language, cultural differences, institutional constraints, finance etc.) and it takes time to achieve the understanding and focus needed for meaningful cooperation. A more gradual funding regime, which might include distinct periods for review by the Commission and other partners, would be more appropriate for the more complex projects. In so far as the subsequent continuation of an interregional cooperation project after the Commission funding period provides one measure of success, then there is a case for tapering the funding from the Commission so that the level of support reduces over time and the project can explore the potential for financial self sufficiency. (Of course in some cases the rationale for cooperation may have changed or may no longer exist, tapered funded would be less relevant in these cases).

Provision of small scale "seed corn" funding: Inevitably in a competitive tendering situation account will be taken off the quality and presentation of the written proposal and organisations familiar with the rigors of such funding regimes have a distinct advantage. It appears that a large number of the successful proposals were written by consultants on behalf of the lead authorities. Also, considerable effort is needed to identify prospective partners and secure cooperation agreements in order to make credible bids. Organisations already heavily involved in interregional cooperation are at a distinct advantage. Given the importance of leadership and active participation by authorities in less favoured regions these procedures may be disadvantageous. It would therefore be helpful to provide funding on a full cost basis to agencies to undertake preparatory and feasibility work, this could include the establishment of legal bodies, and would provide a better basis for informing funding choices. Consultancies and institutions as well as regional and local authorities could be involved in this work.

Involvement of the private and voluntary sectors: Many of the rationales and motivations for interregional cooperation are relevant to private and voluntary sector actors as well as regional and local authorities. For example, one of the factors often underpinning trans-national cooperation is the development of new standards associated with technological developments. Knowledge that new "standards" are to be adopted and involvement in the process of developing them is of critical interest to both the users and producers of new technologies. Ensuring that SME's are involved in such processes is a key consideration in the priority regions. Regional and local authorities are major consumers of products and services many of which are directly relevant to regional development. There may therefore be circumstances in which it is advantageous to involve private sector actors in the interregional cooperation projects. (The URBAN OBSERVATORY provides an example where the suppliers of the communication hardware and software provided equipment at a price apparently well below normal commercial rates. Their involvement in the project has subsequently been used in advertisements in the international press. The company evidently perceives that the development of the communication system has wider market potential).

Provision of a Vademecum: There would be great merit in accompanying any further call for proposals with fuller guidance on procedures and eligible costs. The draft project management guide has helped clarify issues concerning the existing contracts. The experience to date would enable a more comprehensive set of guidelines to be prepared. At the same time there would be merit in reviewing the standard contract that has been used by the Commission's services.

ANNEX 1

Brief summaries of Interregional Cooperation Pilot Projects

NETWORKS INITIATED IN 1990

Name: Transport in the Mediterranean

Coordination: ▲ CEDRE
End of contract: 31/12/93 - extension until 31/3/94

Description:

Eight Mediterranean ports have established a network exchanging information using computerised data transmission in order to facilitate the transport of goods and thus to promote sea transport.

The main aims are:

- to analyse the information technology resources and computerised data communication capability of each of the ports;

- to aid the computerisation of the least well-equipped ports

- to link the eight ports together in a computerised communication network (in accordance with the standards defined by the Edifact Board)

- to ensure that the full potential of computerised communications is exploited by all those involved in coastal shipping, so as to increase its efficiency and its impact on the economy of the regions concerned.

This project complements a parallel project for ports on the Atlantic seaboard.

Name: Polis

Coordination: CEMR
End of contract: 30/6/91

Description:

The POLIS network is a cooperative venture to introduce new technology in urban areas, mainly in order to solve mobility problems. The network is intended to link up all agencies with responsibility for transport so that they can review and discuss policies together.

The network's objectives are:

- To enhance mutual understanding, promotion and technical cooperation between European member cities. The project is targeted in particular at non-governmental agencies, institutions and other bodies concerned with the mobility of passengers and goods in urban areas.

- To enhance organisational and technical capabilities for effective regulation and management of traffic, and to promote the use of advanced data communication services in solving transport and transport-related problems.

Five sub-projects, GAUDI, LLAMD, POLIS 3, SCOPE, and CITIES, have been set up and there have been three major initiatives: plenary conferences, technical coordination of the network, and the exchange of information.

The Centre Européen de Documentation, d'Information et de Liaison, CEDIL, performs the role of secretariat for the network's member cities following the completion of the ERDF funding period.

Name: Public Transport Coordination

Coordination: International Union of Public Transport
End of Contract: 31/12/91

Description:

The aim of the network is to enable public transport to compete with the private car for journeys between suburbs and city centres, and to develop fast, pivotal links with suburban interchange and park-and-ride facilities. These measures are aimed at reducing congestion and pollution.

The network is responding to this challenge by:

- providing real-time information for passengers at interchanges, at the workplace, at home, in vehicles and other public transport locations;

- synchronising public transport to guarantee connecting services to all destinations;

- providing easier and closer access;

- integrating fares, and thus saving passengers' time and consolidating the concept of integration.

Three groups are concentrating on three aspects of coordination:

- siting of interchanges and preliminary model for connections;

- gathering information on existing infrastructure and information exchange in order to develop a functional design of public transport coordination;

- management of operations and human resources.

Name: Cooperation between Automobile Regions (CAR)

Coordination: CEMR
End of contract: 31/12/92

Description:

This network is intended to assist regions affected by the socio-economic impact of the restructuring of the automotive industry.

The network's aims are as follows:

- to promote cooperation instead of competition between local and regional authorities at European level, so as to further internal cooperation and the sharing of experience;
- to evolve and implement common approaches to restructuring issues;
- to evolve joint training and retraining schemes to meet the needs of a fast-changing industry;
- to create new instruments to promote technology transfer for the benefit of SMEs;
- to set up joint assistance schemes for SMEs in the sector and to promote diversification schemes;
- to form a close working relationship between the industry - SMEs in particular - and local and regional authorities.

The network aims to expand, to organise seminars on the transfer of experience and to initiate demonstration projects. Its work has continued after the ERDF funding period.

Name: Medium-Sized Cities Commission

Coordination: CEMR
End of contract: 31/12/91

Description:

The Medium-Sized Cities Commission brings together some one hundred cities and supports the development of transnational cooperation in four areas of common interest:

-   Social integration in urban areas. Based on experience gained in a number of cities, this is promoted through programmes of training and integration in audio-visual techniques, creation of a pilot centre for social tourism and an institute for social reintegration.

-   Urban engineering, to improve the knowledge of cities in the field of the use of computer services applied to urban services.

-   Technological development in the service of the city, by analysing the socio-economic impact of a science and technology park in different cities and by creating a framework for technical and strategic assistance for cities in this field.

-   Urban renewal, through the creation of a pilot scheme centred around development of non-polluting activities and the use of new technology by traditional artisan businesses.

Name: Eurocities

Coordination: CEMR
End of contract: 31/12/91

Description:

This is a network of over 40 major European cities. By exchanging information and developing pilot projects these aim to cooperate in spheres of common interest.

Three sub-projects have been set up:

-   SIMI-STIIC (Integrated Technology Information System) which is intended to set up an audiotext system to enable tourists and businessmen to obtain practical information in all participating cities.

-   EMCON (Eurocities Management Consultancy Network) exists to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services provided by public institutions. Exchanges of experts are planned, as is the development of common pilot projects.

-   BEST PRACTICE IN BUSINESS SUPPORT promotes the exchange of experience in the field of economic development, chiefly by holding seminars on economic development and business promotion, as well as meetings for representatives of banks, chambers of commerce, estate agents, research establishments and private firms.

Name: Development of Less-Favoured Regions

Coordination: CEDRE
End of contract: 31/12/93 - extended until 30/6/94

Description:

This support network for remote regions creates opportunities for development agencies in the economically more favoured regions to share their know-how with development agencies and similar bodies in remote regions.

The scheme has two aspects:

-    A skill-sharing network of development agencies to find out where the experience of certain of the agencies will be of benefit to other partners in the project, it looks for experience in the following fields: training and support for business start-ups, industrial retraining and resettlement, rural development, technology transfer and the setting up of development agencies, and will collate this experience in a guide to development.

-    A network of advisors to assist SMEs seeking cooperation. Advisors receive firms' requests for cooperation and provide expertise to enable the firms to conclude cooperation agreements. Research into SMEs' needs for cooperation has been conducted with four regions.

Initiatives include information conferences for businesses, surveys of the needs of SMEs for cooperation, and surveys to identify ways in which local and regional authorities can support SMEs seeking cooperation.

Name: Development Agencies

Coordination: CEMR
End of contract: 31/12/92

Description:

The aims of the network centred around three types of initiative:

-    Stimulating the network effect, by publishing an information bulletin, organising seminars and conferences and creating a data base on development agencies.

-    Developing joint initiatives, by setting up exchange schemes and developing a common approach to training in enterprise culture.

-    Organising other cooperation initiatives, with emphasis on analysis of the financing techniques of SMEs and SMIs, the diffusion of technology to less-favoured areas and research into the impact of major urban centres.

The project finished at the end of 1992 and has submitted a final report, reviewing actions that have reached conclusion. The project has resulted in the creation of Eurada, a non-profit-making association of development agencies in Europe. There is now substantial cooperation among the partners. Eurada will remain active and expand its membership. Starting as a club of some 20 development agencies, the network now links up over 100 in a self-funding association. New activities are now underway including: monitoring of Community programmes, interregional cooperation and information seminars, and use of instruments of business cooperation. The RECITE office published in 1993 a bulletin on the activities of the network.

Name: Chambers of Commerce

Coordination: Assemblée des Chambres Françaises de Commerce et d'Industrie
End of Contract: 31/12/93

Description:

The contracting party coordinates three projects to enable chambers of commerce and industry (CCIs) in less developed regions to benefit from the expertise of CCIs that have considerable experience in a particular field:

- Processing of raw data: the ARIST project aims to set up an ARIST operational cell that can meet the scientific and technical information needs of SMEs and SMIs.

- Training for workers: the aim is to study the needs of businesses in certain regions and to organise courses tailored to these needs, to encourage contacts between schools and companies and to develop retraining sessions for managers.

- One of the partners takes on the task of setting up an economic observatory in several other regions in order to improve awareness of local socio-economic opportunities.

The chambers of commerce know-how transfer network has completed its activities. An information seminar on the network was held on the occasion of a major conference of chambers of commerce from all over Europe in Nice in December 1992. In the course of the programme, work was shared, some chambers of commerce undertaking the task of supporting the development of others. A number of these initiatives will be extended beyond the ERDF funding period. Several other chambers of commerce have requested extension of the ARIST project.

Name: Eurogateway

Coordination: Glasgow
End of contract: 31/12/93 - extended until 31/12/94

Description:

This partnership of development agencies aims to foster opportunities for SMEs to expand their activities within the internal market. The network is intended to encourage SMEs with limited expertise in exporting to penetrate new markets in Europe. Expert advice is made available to firms, helping them to target these new markets, to define commercial strategies and identify opportunities to set up local bases in these markets. Advice is also given on sources of finance and on accounting, marketing, recruitment, training and the location of business premises.

A brochure describing the project has been produced and issued to partners as a means of introducing the project to firms with which they come into contact. Partners set up joint initiatives to collaborate further.

Due to economic difficulties, fewer firms have set up in new locations than the organisers expected. For this reason, the network intends to launch two additional initiatives: an architecture competition to enable the building industry in different regions to discover partnership and work in other countries; and, the creation of a register of companies specialising in the environment, enabling them to share their expertise in order to find business partners in this field.

Name: Tourism in the Mediterranean

Coordination: CRPM
End of Contract: 31/13/93 - extended until 30/6/94

Description:

This is an inter-regional network for cooperation in the sphere of nautical, cultural and rural tourism. It aims to enhance the channels of inter-regional communication on such subjects as marinas and inland tour routes. The cultural and rural aspect of the project enables little-known historical and cultural sites, and those in the hinterland to be better exploited and already offers tour routes in different Mediterranean countries; an information brochure on these is now available in several languages (Catalogue Via Méditerranea).

As regards sea tourism, the project aims to computerise one harbour, to develop small and medium-sized marinas by creating inter-regional tour routes, which can be presented to tourists as complete packages and by developing interregional groupings, using modern computer and data interchange technology to enhance the management and the promotional of this type of tourism.

A catalogue on sea tourism, based on a survey of the potential of Mediterranean regions, will be a useful information and promotional tool for ports outside the computerised network.

Name: Atlantic Regions

Coordination: CRPM (Commission Arc Atlantique)
End of contract: 31/12/93 - extended until 30/6/94

Description:

The project has four main areas of work:

-   Setting up an information system to link up ports on the Atlantic in order to develop communication between the ports and promote growth in sea transport. This project, ARCANTEL, plans to give access to the Lloyds data base, to install an electronic data interchange network linking ships and ports, and to develop a project for marker buoys.
-   Developing a common training programme in the field of marine transport and commerce; this will involve technical and educational exchanges between regions, the development of common training modules and creation of a training course for careers in shipping.
-   Enabling Atlantic regions to finance the investment of businesses in order to promote their growth by establishing a common capital fund and undertaking research in financial engineering.
-   Improving conditions for exploitation of marine resources, giving due consideration to environmental protection, by setting up a network of marine biology skill-sharing and identifying what needs to be done to bring shellfish farms on the Atlantic coast up to European standards.

This project is now completed. Its structure has been managed by the coordinating body, which monitored the progress of the sub-projects (over 20 in all). These deal with different issues and do not involve the same partners. The results of this project have been presented. The programme is very varied and comprises a number of ambitious projects such as ARCANTEL.

Name: Emact

Coordination: Derry/Donegal
End of Contract: 31/12/93 - extended until 31/3/94

Description:

This network seeks to improve the ways in which regional and local authorities apply communications technology and to explore how this technology can be used to facilitate communication between regional and local authorities at Community level. To implement this experiment, several sub-projects have been set up: economic databases, multimedia and videotext systems for tourism, teleworking, publicity, socio-economic databases, environmental protection, information for elected representatives, networking of public buildings, and an interregional network.

The six participating regions work together in a European economic interest grouping. Several of the databases have been set up: the economic database; the database for the public information; the multimedia tourism database; and an electronic mail system. The partners are now considering practical ways in which to continue cooperating.

An information brochure has been published, reviewing the network's activities and the way in which the different partners allocate the work of managing the sub-projects.

Name: Universities-Regions

Coordination: Junta de Castilla y Leon
End of contract: 31/12/93 - extended until 28/2/94

Description:

Universities and research institutes do important work in the field of regional and urban development. This project is aimed at improving communication between these institutions and regional administrations.

This network has been implemented in stages:

-      A survey to identify the main areas of interest of the different authorities.

-      A catalogue of research centres in the member states of the European Union working in the field of regional and urban development.

-      A catalogue of recent work in this field.

-      Selection of work relevant to the priority concerns of regional and local government.

-      Requests for abstracts of this work.

-      Translation and dissemination of these abstracts.

The CEDRE is responsible for technical management of the project. The final task is to produce five separate volumes reviewing research on subjects chosen by the regions themselves and a comprehensive directory of research on these subjects.

Name: *Quartiers en Crise*

Coordination: The Hague (LSA)
End of contract: 31/12/92 - extension until 30/6/93

Description:

This network linked together 25 European towns and cities sharing problems such as unemployment, poor housing, crime, drug abuse and inadequate public services. To tackle this crisis the network undertook an integrated urban economic development initiative combining social, educational, and environmental measures with action on training and employment.

The networks primary aims were:

- to stimulate cooperation and information and experience sharing to improve the situation of inhabitants.

- to promote an integrated initiative at national and international level within the framework of a long-term strategy to halt urban decline.

The network created training facilities, developed bilateral cooperation between member cities, launched new research initiatives and encouraged the transfer of expertise to foster links between northern and southern cities.

Much has been achieved in terms of job creation, and training for deprived areas, thanks to cooperation within the network. A paper has been produced reviewing the characteristics and experiences of each member city. The RECITE office has published a bulletin describing the activities of the project. The network is continuing as an association.

NETWORKS STARTED IN 1991

Name: Euroceram

Coordination:	Wallonia
End of contract:	31/12/94 - extended until 31/12/95

Description:

This network is intended to stimulate cooperation between regions specialising in advanced ceramics to make the most advantageous use of each region's potential and over the long term to improve their overall economic performance.

Cooperation takes the form of:

-   skill sharing through exchanges or meetings of experts;
-   organising of visits to companies at the forefront of ceramics technology so as to identify complementary and overlapping areas of activity;
-   producing and distributing a newsletter with features on companies, describing the latest research findings and providing information on forthcoming events in the advanced ceramics sector.
-   establishing a technical database on raw materials, finished products, suppliers of ceramic equipment and addresses of specialists in the field.

The setting up of sub-projects posed no problem: the database was set up by experts in each of the regions (research institutes or universities) and is freely available to partners and to firms in the regions concerned throughout the programme. The partners plan to introduce a right of access to make the network self-sufficient. The newsletter is also distributed, freely for the time being, in the regions (1,000 to 2,000 copies half-yearly) to inform companies in the sector. This information may be charged for after funding of the programme ceases. Visits to companies are undertaken by experts from each region, who go to firms in another member region. These visits provide a chance to find out about new techniques.

Name: Hydre

Coordination:	CRPM
End of contract:	31/12/94

Description:

The network aims to create an integrated economic and structural system of water resources so as to establish a system to warn against meteorological risks of drought, flooding, etc. In structural terms, this system will advise on the best planning solutions and on any necessary adjustment of agricultural, industrial and environmental activity.

The technical management of the project is undertaken by the CCR in Ispra. Monthly and quarterly bulletins are circulated among the partners to report on activity and establish programmes of work. The director of the programme makes regular visits to the regions to monitor progress of the project and to identify specific needs of the regions.

Once the integrated system is in place, monitoring units will be set up in the member regions and this experience disseminated in order to gain new members for the network and enable them to benefit from the system.

Name: Eurisles

Coordination: CRPM - Islands Commission
End of contract: 31/12/94 - extended until 31/12/95

Description:

The aim of Eurisles is to provide public and private sector users in the member regions with a decision-making tool adapted to the special needs of islands.

The project is to set up a shared database on transport problems, separate databases for each island and regional documentation centres linked together by computerised data transmission and staffed by information processing specialists.

Eurisles is to provide information pertaining to islands which is not currently available, such as summaries of legal and economic information on each island, directories of regional institutions and authorities, and compendiums of research and statistics.

All this information will be regularly updated. There is constant collaboration between the partners and tasks were allocated at the very beginning, thanks to a clear agreement between the partners and the CRPM.

The creation of a database on general issues will help to tackle problems in acquiring and managing documentary, cartographic and statistical data.

All islands in the network now have computer equipment and are linked together in the EUROKOM electronic mail system.

Members of the network are already considering how to continue working together and how to draft agreements so as to avoid copyright problems arising from use of data gathered by the network.

Name: Rocnord

Coordination: Crete
End of contract: 31/12/93 - extension until 31/12/94

Description:

This project is aimed at strengthening ties between Crete and North Jutland, two of the most isolated regions of Europe, and more particularly at improving the efficiency of local and regional authorities in Crete. Several areas of cooperation have been selected in which Denmark can bring to bear its experience.

These areas of cooperation are: tourism, special programmes, the environment, the energy supply and alternative energy, social issues, the fishing industry and the water supply.

The following pilot projects have been set up:

-   Master plan for the utilisation of resources in Crete, aimed at optimising the utilisation of resources, chiefly water and waste water, solid waste, waste from energy production and energy from renewable sources such as wind, solar and biomass.
-   Development of strategies and products for tourism, with a view to extending the tourist season and creating jobs and wealth.
-   Monitoring of the environment in Crete in order to complement decision-making on environmental matters.
-   Technology transfer in the fields of aquafarming and fishery management, the aim being to combine fish farming and tourism.

Name: Dyonisos

Coordination: Elentejo
End of contract: 31/12/94

Description:

This network aims to enable wine-growing regions to cooperate on training, commerce and tourism in order to transfer expertise in new information technology in the above fields to disadvantaged regions.

-       As regards training and research, the aim is to create a multimedia network of educational resources at present scattered throughout Europe: courses, visual aids, video conferencing, educational software, etc.

-       In the commercial field, the network is developing an electronic data interchange (EDI) system by setting up a Europe-wide organisation to standardise messages and data.

-       In tourism, the aim is to exploit the heritage of wine-growing regions by making multimedia (video, audio, and text) terminals accessible to the public. These will provide tourist information on the subject of wine and a commercial advertising and reservation service for restaurants, hotels and wine producers.

The network plans to continue its activities beyond the period of funding as part of the RECITE programme. Legal structures are planned for each of the sub-projects. Technical monitoring of the programme is conducted by the European Conference of Wine-Growing Regions.

Name: Ecowat

Coordination: Tenerife
End of contract: 31/12/94

Description:

A network to promote and protect water resources and to exploit renewable energy sources in water supply. The ultimate aim is to improve water management at local and regional level.

The main objectives are:

-       To resolve water management problems by analysing shared problems and by identifying needs and evaluating the available data.

-       To analyse ways of achieving the most efficient use of the energy needed for the supply of water.

-       To promote the exchange of technical experience in water management in Europe.

These objectives are being achieved by: evaluating existing ways of managing water and protecting water resources that use renewable energy; developing an integrated approach to water management protection and the use of renewable energy; cost-benefit analysis; application and trial of new techniques at selected sites; evaluation of results, and the presentation and dissemination of the experience gained.

Name: Scientific Centres

Coordination: Midi-Pyrénées
End of contract: 31/12/93 - extended until 31/12/94

Description:

This project aims to establish a cooperative network of scientific centres to provide advanced training in information technology as a means of boosting industrial development.

Each scientific centre is:

- providing a two-week course on existing computer architecture and useful numerical methods.
- providing training through research (defining projects that require effective use of high performance computers).
- creating a computer network to link it with other partners.
- developing collaborative projects with an emphasis on industrial applications.

Several committees have been set up to ensure the smooth running of the project. A scientific committee is overseeing the creation of the computer network, a legal committee is handling the technicalities of linking the partners together to form a European economic interest grouping. This EEIG was planned from the start as a means of ensuring permanent cooperation. There is also an evaluation and monitoring committee made up of experts from each member region.

Name: Finatlantic

Coordination: CRPM, lead region: Aquitaine
End of contract: 31/12/94

Description:

The object of this network is to support and fund some sixty transregional investment projects on the Atlantic coast.

Finatlantic will support feasibility studies, negotiations with public or private partners and the preparation of a financial plan.

The partners are banks and other financial institutions, venture capital companies and regional development agencies. Finatlantic has five agencies in the field, co-financed by their host municipal or regional authorities.

Communication and coordination is maintained between the partners. The five agencies have circulated information widely and numerous investment projects have been examined by the partners.

To maintain the momentum of the projects, other commercial banks are to be invited to finance them. For example, the project is examining a package to rescue a small Portuguese aviation company and offer several countries a stake in it; a total of 30m FFr. is needed.

Name: Coast

Coordination: Down District
End of contract: 31/12/93 - extended until 31/3/94

Description:

A network of coastal regions to resolve similar economic and environmental problems. The network has undertaken sharing of experience through programmes of practical action. A series of pilot projects will serve as demonstrations in the following fields:

-      to realise the competitive potential of SMEs, encouraging innovation and job creation

-      to improve the potential of human resources and to combat problems caused by seasonal employment through joint projects for training and training exchanges

-      to develop a joint approach to strategies designed to attract new inward investment and infrastructure

-      to involve other seaside areas in COAST to ensure the widest possible dissemination of information and experience.

The project is of specific interest to coastal regions and it demonstrates their need for interregional cooperation. Responsibility for three sub-programmes is shared by the nine partners: enterprise and vocational training, development of new tourist markets, and expansion of local economic bases.

Each region is responsible for one demonstration project: tourism centre, employment centre, SME support agency, a conference on coastal heritage, a tourism development strategy, a rural development strategy and seminars on endogenous development.

Name: Environet

Coordination: Horsens
End of contract: 31/12/94

Description:

The object of this scheme is to transfer know-how in urban planning, public administration and environmental management. Two partner cities place their experience at the service of three other cities.

To do this, five local coordination centres undertake the task of circulating information. These centres are the catalysts for key projects, intersectoral activity and promotion/publicity initiatives. They act as mediators for interaction between citizens, the public sector and other cities of the Community. The centres also serve to enhance social welfare, economic performance and administrative efficiency.

A further goal is to launch three key projects to be coordinated by the centres:

-      Master plan for the environment: waste treatment, sewage systems, etc.

-      Training in public administration: management of environmental and health services, strategic information, management training, etc.

-      Health plan: self-help groups, neighbourhood networks, reduction of medecine usage.

Name: Sealink

Coordination: Patras
End of contract: 31/12/93 - extension until 31/3/94

Description:

This is a project leading to coordination and cooperation between ports. The main object is to improve the Patras-Brindisi link by exchanging experience with more advanced ports: Lübeck and Rostock.

The pilot phase comprises five stages:

-       Database of traffic flows between Patras and Brindisi.
-       Use of information from the database to develop a forecasting model.
-       Draft master plan of the port facilities in both towns, with emphasis on new combined transport technology; this is to serve as a basis for discussion of port and urban planning.
-       Development of a management system for coordinating the work of all authorities involved in port and urban planning.
-       Development of an integrated waste management system.

The purpose of the network is to gain experience that can be applied to other ports, thus enabling the enlargement of the network.

Name: Demilitarised

Coordination: Kaiserslautern
End of contract: 31/12/94

Description:

This network is aimed at minimising the effects of demilitarisation by developing models for structural adjustment at locations of military establishments and defence-related industries. Its main areas of concern are: urban and regional development, economic aspects, environmental protection, housing, infrastructure, and social and cultural affairs.

The project aims to create:

-       a concept for managing structural crises resulting from arms reductions and the closure of military bases.
-       a publicity campaign directed at the European Community, politicians and the public at large to raise awareness of the problem and to press for measures to support these areas.
-       a special EC programme for regions and cities worst affected by the reduced military presence.

Tasks are allocated to three working groups as follows:

Group 1: diversification of armaments industries
Group 2: research into commercial potential of military sites
Group 3: research into the environmental and social impact of disarmament.

A workshop on diversification of defence-related industries has been held; a guide to the commercial classification of military sites has been produced; an action plan for civil use of former military sites is in progress and a database has been set up to make available all the information gathered by the network to date.

Name: Technology transfer

Coordination: Lower Saxony
End of contract: 31/12/94 - extended until 30/6/95

Description:

The purpose of this network is to enable SMEs in each region to cope with competition and the globalisation of the advanced technology market, to adjust more rapidly to the market, to achieve flexibility in production, to increase profitability and to develop innovative technological products.

The project's four lines of development are:

- to set up a computerised communication system to exchange data.

- to facilitate the targeted search for partner firms for the production and marketing of high-technology products.

- to promote interregional and vertical technology transfer by creating an information system supported by a database (results of scientific research and development, advanced technology available at universities, research laboratories and firms).

- to facilitate targeted search for firms with experience of utilisation or application of advanced technology and to support exchanges.

The project aims ultimately to exchange information through the use of a shared model. A common inventory of applied research and technology available in the regions will be prepared.

Name: Rebuild

Coordination: Corfu
End of contract: 31/12/94

Description:

The object of this network is to improve medium-term energy planning in its member cities. These are jointly investigating ways of using advanced solar energy technology in buildings in their historic centres. The programme involves planning of these experiments for specific cases. One of the aims of the network is to reduce the cost of installing solar equipment.

At the end of the programme each of the cities should have

- a medium-term energy plan for the building sector.

- a technical study on installation of solar equipment in one or two buildings.

- a detailed economic and technical plan for implementing these studies.

In addition to exchanges of experience between the network partners, contacts have been made with other RECITE networks to exchange relevant information. Some expansion of activities is planned; this emerged for example at a symposium held at Rhodes entitled "General policies and specific strategies for the integration of renewable energies in historical city centres".

Name: Resigmur

Coordination: Zamora
End of Contract: 31/12/94

Description:

Resigmur aims to stimulate cooperation between regions and make administration more efficient by providing local authorities with geographical information systems.

The project is in four stages:

-   identifiying priorities for modernising administration.

-   setting up a geographical information system designed to meet users' needs - it will take six months to train staff to use the system and to update and correct the data.

-   evaluating improvements in administrative efficiency.

-   deciding on measures necessary in order to extend the project to other local authorities. A guide to procedures will be prepared for new members.

Most of the partners are equipped to install the geographical information system. To meet the project coordinator's target, cities' performance will have to improve by some 25%. The network is intended to facilitate the sharing of experience, to offer psychological support to partners and to expand to take in other cities. Additional cities have already applied for membership.

Name: Idee

Coordination: CEMR - lead municipality, Kalamaria
End of contract: 31/12/94

Description:

This network is the result of experience gained in different cities in helping young people, the long-term unemployed, and others in difficulty get back into the job market.

The network is active in three main areas:

-   development of reintegration structures, notably the creation of a European institute to train directors of municipal and paramunicipal integration enterprises at Kalamaria and the establishment of a European fund to support municipal enterprises.

-   organisation of training courses in the tourist business and the media.

-   circulation of information and evaluation of work in progress. An electronic bulletin board will be set up to disseminate information.

Each initiative in this project is the responsibility of one of the partner cities. The project was initiated by the CEMR and has been led by Kalamaria.

Name: Compostela Forêt

Coordination: Aquitaine
End of contract: 31/12/94 - extended until 31/12/95

Description:

This is a programme of cooperation between forest regions in preserving and modernising the forestry resources to turn them into an instrument for overall economic development.

The main initiatives are:

-   an experimental network to help regions adopt new, common experimental methods and to facilitate the development of know-how,

-   economic and legal harmonisation of production, based on study of the economic and legal situation of production in the ten partner regions,

-   interregional action to train trainers so as to raise forestry training standards to a common level,

-   risk prevention, through modernisation of management systems and fire prevention; further research will investigate what impact the intensification of forestry has on the forest environment.

In all, twenty-four pilot initiatives will be implemented in the ten regions in five fields of activity.

Name: Eurosynet

Coordination: Cork
End of contract: 31/12/94

Description:

This network aims to encourage local authorities to improve their socio-economic services. Know-how is exchanged through joint action on the promotion of tourism, commercial assignments, reclamation of derelict sites, renewal of neighbourhoods and public market sites. The longer term aim is to create employment, new activity and services better adapted to the economic situation.

Cooperation is organised into five interdependent schemes:

-   town and country planning, geared to protection of the environment, reclamation of derelict land and renewal of residential neighbourhoods.

-   education and training aimed specifically at encouraging SMEs to open up to foreign markets.

-   local development initiatives to ensure the survival of businesses, and to provide training in the creation of local economic development units.

-   development of tourism in the partner regions and promotion of urban tourism.

-   in the case of public markets, the aim is to improve understanding of new Community regulations on markets among government departments and industrial and commercial suppliers.

The project coordinators are looking into the possibility of forming an EEIG to provide the network with a structure enabling cooperation to continue after co-funding by ERDF ceases.

Name: Urban Observatory

Coordination: Barcelona
End of contract: 31/12/94

Description:

The object of this network is to create a database and a system to aid decision-making, to be shared by the ten member cities and which will help them make decisions and reinforce the role of urban centres in their respective regions.

The system will process numerical data, graphics, maps and text necessary for urban development work, for the planning or evaluation of urban policy and for the sharing of experience. The installation of the system raises a number of issues relating to database management geographical information systems, decision-making aids and a communication network to enable all the member cities to access the system.

Name: Economic Cooperation

Coordination: Andalucia
End of contract: 31/12/94

Description:

A collaboration between regions targeting SMEs, institutes of technology and local and regional authorities and agencies, this network is intended to create partnerships and joint projects:

- To promote economic cooperation between SMEs, it will promote: commercial collaboration and the establishment of sales networks, foreign investment - encouraging both direct investment and joint ventures, development of education and training in new technology.
- For cooperation between research institutes, the aim is to encourage exchanges of staff and the transfer of technology.
- Cooperation between public authorities and agencies will take place through the exchange of know-how on regional planning, updating of information on financial incentives, and seminars on commerce and investment.

Each participating region is responsible for organising a conference on a chosen subject (environment, energy) at which the different partners put forward proposals and forge links with businesses, research centres and public authorities to expedite their chosen project.

Name: Strategy for Cities

Coordination: CEMR - lead city, Evora
End of Contract: 31/12/94

Description:

This network aims to develop the specific attractions of medium-sized cities in terms of development plans and local government/SME partnerships.

The programme has three aspects:

- The first is to enhance the techniques and expertise needed by medium-sized cities to prepare genuine strategic development plans.

- The second comprises four sectoral reinforcements: partnership between local authorities and private firms, improvement of the urban environment, processing of solid and inert waste, and the situation of ageing populations in the 1990s.

- The third comprises three concrete measures to circulate information: creation of a European centre for the development of urban strategy based at existing educational establishments; design and publication of a folder and a regular bulletin; organisation of a conference for the presentation of the work to towns and cities outside the network.

Evora leads the project. A study has been conducted on ways of matching the interests of cities with those of businesses. Research has also been done on the processing of solid and inert waste. A training seminar for the cities to introduce their leaders to urban planning issues will take place.