

2000



COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

CEMAT (2000) 7

**European Conference of Ministers responsible for
Regional Planning (CEMAT)**

Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent



**adopted at the 12th Session of the European Conference of
Ministers responsible for Regional Planning
on 7-8 September 2000 in Hanover**

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A 10-point programme for greater cohesion among the regions of Europe*

We, the ministers of the states of the Council of Europe attending the 12th Session of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning in Hanover on 7 and 8 September 2000, have discussed, the contribution that spatial development policy can make towards achieving the goal of social cohesion in Europe.

We wish to thank the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe for their participation and for their contribution, in particular for the work carried out concerning the mountain regions.

- **We believe** that social cohesion in Europe, which was defined as one of the main objectives of the Council of Europe by the heads of state and government of our Member States at their second summit on 10/11 October 1997, has to be accompanied by sustainable spatial development policies that bring the social as well as the economic requirements to be met by the territory into line with its ecological and cultural functions;
- **We consider that one of the aims of the Council of Europe** is to strengthen local and regional democracy in Europe by means of a territorially more balanced development of our continent;
- **We consider** the Council of Europe as the European organization in which all the states of Europe can cooperate on the basis of equal rights and consider the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning and its Committee to be a suitable political body to contribute to the coordination of common, Europe-wide territorial development goals and strategies;
- **We are convinced** that the trans-European, interregional and transfrontier cooperation between states, regional authorities and local authorities in the sphere of spatial development has to be strengthened, especially between the countries of West Europe and Central and East Europe in order to ensure the social and territorial cohesion of the European continent as a whole.

* adopted at the 12th Session of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning on 7-8 September 2000 in Hanover

The results of our conference are as follows:

1. We consider the adopted document entitled "Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent" to be:

- a major contribution for implementation of the strategy of social cohesion adopted at the second summit of heads of state and government in 1997;
- a policy framework document which takes into account relevant activities of the Council of Europe and its bodies, and in particular the work of its Parliamentary Assembly and its Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe, in the field of continental spatial development policy; and which could contribute to strengthen the European integration process by means of transfrontier, inter-regional and transnational cooperation;
- a coherent strategy for the integrated and regionally balanced development of our continent, while based on the principles of subsidiarity and reciprocity, strengthens competitiveness, cooperation and solidarity among local and regional authorities across borders, thereby making a contribution to the democratic stability of Europe;
- common guidelines that will help to strengthen the process of European integration through transfrontier, inter-regional and transnational cooperation.

2. We recommend to our national and regional authorities that

- the "Guiding Principles" be used as a basis for national regional planning and spatial development measures;
- the Guiding Principles be implemented in national and international spatial development projects as appropriate;
- the cooperation with the Central, Eastern and South-eastern European states undergoing reforms to help them establish regional governmental and administrative bodies be continued and intensified in order to facilitate better spatial integration of the various regions of Europe.

3. We welcome

- the progress made in coordinating common spatial development goals and strategies in the European Union (ESDP) as well as regional cooperation mechanisms, the Baltic Sea region (VASAB 2010), the North Sea region (NorVision) and in Central and South-eastern Europe (VISION PLANET) and the Mediterranean region (MED-OCC and ARCHIMED) as well as the regional cooperation mechanisms (e.g. Central European Initiative, Black Sea Economic Cooperation Council, Baltic States Council).

4. We agree

- to cooperate in concrete spatial development projects in the INTERREG III B cooperation areas and call for all member states of the Council of Europe, regardless of whether they wish to accede to the European Union or not, to be included in the spatial development cooperation among EU Member States. This also applies to cooperation in the sphere of spatial research;
- to continue the project forum launched by Germany within the framework of the INTERREG activities.

5. We call on

- the European Union to revise the current regulations governing project cooperation between the INTERREG initiatives and the PHARE and TACIS programmes in order to facilitate cooperation that is better coordinated,
- the non Member States of the EU explore, at the same time, their own possibilities of achieving better cooperation between the programme concerned.

6. We suggest

- that the states on the Black Sea and in the Euro-Mediterranean region should cooperate on appropriate future-oriented spatial development visions, based on the Guiding Principles document.

7. We stress

- that the speedy development and implementation of the pan-European transport network (especially the 10 Pan-European Transport Corridors), as an indispensable prerequisite for good accessibility of large areas across the entire continent, has to be expedited, and point out that the agreements reached on the shape of the networks should, if necessary, be reviewed and augmented taking sustainable spatial development and environmental aspects into account,
- that the dialogue between the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT) and European institutions, especially the European Commission, and international organizations such as the OECD and the UN institutions (ECE/CSD) on spatial development issues should be intensified, both within Europe and beyond its borders, and that the division of responsibilities among these institutions should be defined more clearly in order to avoid a duplication of activities.

8. We request

- the European funding institutions to apply the Guiding Principles document as a wider basis of information when taking decisions on the provision of assistance to spatial development projects.

9. We invite the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe

- to contribute to the implementation of the Guiding Principles, in particular through the Council of Europe instruments,
- to take into account the Guiding Principles document and its integrated approach for decision-making in discussions and votes in the Committee of Ministers on projects with a spatial impact,
- to maintain in the inter-governmental programme of the Organisation the activities of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT),
- to start immediately a training programme in order to help regional and local planning authorities in the new member states of the Council of Europe, perform as well as possible the tasks under their competence,
- to convert the Committee of Senior Officials into a steering committee.

10. We call on the local and regional authorities of Europe

- to support the efforts being made by the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning to achieve regionally balanced sustainable development in Europe, applying the principles of partnership and subsidiarity.

We will forward the results of our conference to our governments and parliaments and make them available to the public.

Organisation of the 13th session of the European Conference of Ministers Responsible for Regional Planning*

The Ministers taking part in the 12th session of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning

express their heartfelt thanks to the German Government for having organised the 12th session and for its kind hospitality;

consider that it is desirable, from an operational and rational point of view, for the same plenary Committee to be responsible both for preparing the ministerial sessions and for implementing any intergovernmental programme of activities relating to sustainable regional development across Europe;

consider that no spatial development regional planning and country side cohesion can be promoted and implemented without the active involvement of national, regional and local representations;

are pleased to accept the offer from the Slovenian Government to host the 13th session of their Conference in Ljubljana in 2003;

decide that the theme of their 13th session will be:

Implementation of strategies and visions for sustainable spatial development of the European continent

instruct the Committee of Senior Officials:

1. to make the necessary arrangements to prepare the 13th session and to ensure implementation of the resolutions adopted at the 12th session;
2. to organise before the next ministerial Conference a Forum with the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe in order to have the views of elected national, regional and local representatives on the implementation of the decisions taken at the 12th session of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning and on the main topics of the theme to be discussed at the next session;
3. to continue to formulate on the basis of the “Guiding principles” concrete and sustainable solutions and policies aimed at a better balanced development and territorial cohesion of the European continent.

* Resolution No 2 adopted at the 12th Session of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning on 7-8 September 2000 in Hanover

4. to foster transnational and interregional cooperation by carrying out development projects supported by EU instruments and international financial institutes and to pay special attention to rural regions, mountain areas and river catchment areas and Mediterranean regions. We ask the Committee of Senior Officials to present concrete results or evaluations at the next CEMAT Conference.

ask the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to continue providing the Conference secretariat with the resources needed in order to organise the next session and do the work required between session.

Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent

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Foreword

(1) The past decade has witnessed decisive and historic steps for European integration; new tasks and priorities for the Council of Europe result from this. In presenting the “**Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent**”, the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT) is making its contribution to a strategy of social cohesion. The “**Guiding Principles**” stress the territorial dimension of human rights and democracy. Their objective is to define measures of spatial development policy by which people in all the member states of the Council of Europe can achieve an acceptable standard of living. This is an essential precondition for the stabilisation of democratic structures in Europe’s regions and municipalities.

(2) The “**Guiding Principles**” are based on the European Charter for Regional/Spatial Planning (Torremolinos Charter, 1983).¹ This Charter sets out principles for national and European policies designed to improve the spatial organisation of the then 22 member states of the Council of Europe and to resolve problems extending beyond national frontiers.

(3) The Council of Europe now includes 41 member states and covers – with a few exceptions – the European continent as well as northern parts of the continent of Asia. For the first time, almost all European states are united in supporting human rights and democracy; the Council of Europe

has gained a continental significance. The “**Guiding Principles**” aim to ensure that all regions and municipalities can actively participate in this process of European integration and democratisation. In this respect, the gap between the “two Europes”, i.e. between the old and the new members including their regions and municipalities, should be rapidly bridged.

(4) The European continent is characterised by diversity. The implementation of sustainable development principles valid at Europe-wide level, must be organised equally at the national, regional and local levels. The “**Guiding Principles**” advocate the subsidiarity and reciprocity principles as a prerequisite for democracy and also as a means of preserving the “unity in diversity” bequeathed to Europe by its history and geography.

(5) The “**Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent**” offer to the member states of the Council of Europe – including their regions and municipalities – a flexible and forward-looking framework for co-operation. They represent a vision or concept for sustainable development aimed at the various political and societal bodies working at the various levels inside and outside governments and administrations, preparing our future through their activities. Acceptance of these policy guidelines is based on voluntary co-operation. They are not legally binding.

I. Contribution of the Guiding Principles to the implementation of the social cohesion policy of the Council of Europe

(6) In 1989 Europe emerged from several decades of political division, in which not only economic systems but the whole way society was organised totally diverged. Since then, democratic Europe has grown from 22 to 41 countries (see Map 1), so that the area of the Council of Europe now has 770 million inhabitants representing nearly 14% of world population (see Appendix, Table 1). With the accession of new states, economic disparities between the member states of the Council of Europe have increased. The GDP/head (measured in purchasing power parity) is above 20,000 US \$ in 14 old member states while it is below 5,000 US \$ in 11 new member states (see Appendix, Table 2). Considered in absolute and worldwide terms, Europe's GDP which amounts to 9.9 trillion US \$ (1995) is higher than that of the states belonging to the North American Free Trade Agreement NAFTA (7.9 trillion US \$). However, when expressed in relation to population, it amounts to 12,000 US \$ which is clearly below the level of NAFTA (20,000). It is however higher than that of MERCOSUR (5,000), the Latin American free trade zone.

(7) In response to these differences in social conditions, the Heads of State and Government declared at the second Summit of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg in October 1997 that "social cohesion is one of the foremost needs of the wider Europe"². They instructed the Committee of Ministers "to define a social cohesion strategy to respond to the challenges in society"³. The European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT) should also make its contribution to the attainment of this objective, promoting sustainable and regionally balanced development of all European regions. This should contribute to the reinforcement of democratic structures in the Council of Europe's regions and municipalities and to the improvement of Europe's international competitiveness.

(8) The "Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent" take account, in accordance with the concept of sustainability, of the needs of all inhabitants of Europe's regions, without

compromising the fundamental rights and development prospects of future generations. They aim in particular at bringing the economic and social requirements to be met by the territory into harmony with its ecological and cultural functions and at contributing in this way to long-term, large-scale and balanced spatial development. The implementation of the "Guiding Principles" therefore requires close co-operation between spatial planning and sectoral policies, which influence through their measures the spatial structures in Europe (spatial development policy). The Guiding Principles also take account of international co-operation at global level, as for instance in the context of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development.

(9) The Guiding Principles draw conclusions from a variety of documents of the Council of Europe. These are in particular the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between local communities or authorities⁴, the Torremolinos Charter, the analytical work for a European Regional Planning Strategy⁵, the European Charter of Local Self-Government⁶ and the Draft Charter of Regional Self-Government⁷. The document also takes account of the European Union's European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP)⁸, the Baltic Agenda 21⁹ and existing regional development strategies for individual areas of Europe, such as the Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea (VASAB¹⁰ – 11 co-operating countries), the Structure Scheme for Benelux¹¹ (three co-operating countries) and the Strategy for Integrated Spatial Development in Central, Adriatic and Danubian Europe (VISION PLANET¹² – twelve co-operating countries at present).

Map 1
Member states of the Council of Europe



Islands and overseas regions of the Member States are not completely illustrated or are not illustrated at all.

II. Spatial development policies in Europe: new continent-wide challenges and prospects

(10) Recognising the continental dimension of the Council of Europe opens up new prospects for spatial planning policy, and at the same time exposes it to new challenges. In a world subject to growing globalisation, the European continent must maintain its economic position. Specific potentialities of the

European continent, which should be more fully exploited, may be seen in the range of landscapes and cultures that have shaped Europe, the development of mutual support and co-operation in the different areas of the continent and in the growing integration of western, eastern, southern and northern Europe.

1 Intercontinental relationships as strategic elements for European spatial development policy

(11) Particular development opportunities of the European continent result from its geographical situation. This is characterised by an increasingly permeable link with Asia and by nearly 100,000 km of coastline.

(12) Since Asia is the most densely populated continent in the world and its economic growth rate is generally high, the opportunity arises to promote the potential offered by the land bridge between the Council of Europe's eastern member countries (particularly the Russian Federation, those bordering the Black Sea and Greece) and the Middle and Far East, especially through the development of new trading corridors. The eastern fringe of Europe could then become a focus for trade and co-operation between Europe and Asia. The development and organisation of energy and transport networks are particularly significant in this context.

(13) Trade flows between Europe and the emerging new economic blocs on other continents such as MERCOSUR, NAFTA and ASEAN, are steadily growing in the context of economic globalisation. The oceans are considered as an important resource for the future and sea transport is increasingly competitive. Many coastal regions and islands should benefit from the development of a modern maritime economy, which goes well beyond shipping activities to include, for example, specific new technologies, the exploitation of marine resources and sustainable international tourism. A prerequisite is the presence in the coastal areas of the continent of dynamic ports with efficient hinterland connections.

(14) Europe's proximity to North Africa which is increasing thanks to new means of communication and transport and the rapid population growth on the southern shore of the Mediterranean make closer co-operation between all European and African countries bordering the Mediterranean necessary. This concerns in particular a more intensive co-operation in the economic and tourism field as well as a greater use of the natural and cultural heritage in urban and regional development. In order to enable a more

balanced, sustainable and integrated development of the Euro-Mediterranean region to take place, economic and social development in the European part of the Mediterranean region should be accompanied by a corresponding spatial development policy. In the field of co-operation programmes, efficient synergies and co-ordination between appropriate EU assistance programmes (INTERREG and MEDA) should be made possible (cf Para72).

(15) Moreover, with 290 million visitors from outside Europe in 1992, Europe is the world's leading international tourist destination and available forecasts indicate a doubling of the number up to 2020. With its opportunities and its risks, the international tourism economy is therefore an important strategic element in Europe's spatial development. Tourism development focuses on the most attractive, but also the most environmentally and culturally sensitive areas in Europe. This applies particularly to coastal areas, above all the Mediterranean, islands, certain valleys, the Alps and other mountain ranges, many natural areas and various historic towns and other valuable sites from the standpoint of the history of civilization.

2 The multiplicity of cultures

(16) Europe is characterised by a multiplicity of cultures, with a regional, national and transnational impact, of which the roughly 60 languages spoken are simply one indication. The diversity of cultures has influenced the ways of expression (languages, music, painting, architecture, etc.) as well as the specificity of economic activities, housing, leisure and mobility. These cultures have shaped to a considerable extent the diversity of landscapes, towns and settlement patterns as well as the architectural heritage of Europe. This cultural diversity, which has been in the past a source of tensions and conflicts, represents nowadays an inestimable potential for sustainable spatial development. Modern forms of socio-economic and technological development should not level down cultural identities. The Granada Convention on the conservation of Europe's architectural heritage (Council of Europe, 1985), the La Valette Convention

on the protection of the archaeological heritage (Council of Europe, 1992) as well as the Florence Charter on the protection of historic parks and gardens (ICOMOS-IFLA, 1981) contain important principles for the conservation and enhancement of the cultural heritage in the context of sustainable spatial development.

3 Large European regions as a basis for mutual support and co-operation

(17) Europe's social cohesion is strengthened by transnational co-operation within large European regions. One of them, among others, is the European Union, for which the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) defines spatial development principles and co-operation objectives. Within the European Union there are, in turn, several areas of international co-operation such as the Alps and the North Sea region. For several years, these regions have been the focus of numerous co-operation projects aimed at strengthening balanced regional development. Outside the Union or overlapping with it, transnational co-operation is taking place at present in the Baltic Sea Region, in south-east Europe and in the Danubian region as well as in the Barents Sea region and the region of the Northern Dimension Initiative (cf. Para 71).

(18) In the context of economic integration and globalisation, in addition to the desired economic growth impetus, negative impacts for instance on environmental conditions and social cohesion are also found. There is a risk, in particular in the new member states, that only isolated growth areas around metropolitan regions are being developed and that other areas within the Council of Europe with towns and cities of varying size and rural areas are being disconnected from the growth process. However, Europe has the potential for achieving a polycentric development pattern, with a number of significant growth areas, including ones on the periphery, organised as urban networks, which will create a dynamism and the necessary external economies of scale to attract further investment. Polycentric development also contributes to the lowering of environmental pressures and social tension and helps to stabilize democratic structures. Simply reproducing a centre-periphery model across Europe

would be equally damaging for the centre and for the periphery and would not correspond to the historical development of the continent's settlement pattern. Greater integration of settlement areas within and between Europe's large regions is essential for the establishment of new growth processes in the outlying parts of Europe, which can lead to the long-term strengthening of its urban structure and make it more competitive.

(19) In addition to the metropolitan areas, the gateway cities through which communications and trade with other continents flow (for instance cities with ports, airports, trade fairs, cultural centres) represent a step towards a polycentric continent-wide growth model. While gateway-cities developed in the past in Europe's western and southern coastal regions, opportunities for the development of gateway-cities in Europe's eastern periphery result nowadays from the emergence of new transport and energy corridors towards Asia.

(20) The European Union's Trans-European Transport Network, the Pan-European Corridors and Areas and the TINA network in the associate countries (the spine of which is provided by the pan-European corridors) together provide a framework for Europe's transport infrastructure. Their priority is to link up the metropolitan areas. Map 2 "Pan-European transport network" illustrates Europe's transport policy priorities, as it represents the decisions of the EU, the results of the three Pan-European Conferences of Transport Ministers and of the working group in charge of determining the infrastructure needs in the associate countries - Transport Infrastructure Needs Assessment (TINA). The representation of the pan-European transport network constitutes, however, only the starting point of a true pan-European transport policy which is all the more urgent as traffic congestion reaches unacceptable levels, the railway networks need urgent modernisation in many European regions, waterways, short-sea shipping and maritime routes are under-utilised and pressure on the environment does not seem to decrease.

(21) In this respect, the growth in trade between areas that are geographically remote from each other makes a review of



The Trans-European Transport Network, Pan-European Transport Corridors and Areas

- Member States of the Council of Europe and States which have applied for full membership
- Other countries

Trans-European Transport Network

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------|
| Existing | Planned | |
| — | ⋯ | Road |
| — | ⋯ | Rail |

Pan-European Transport Corridors

- **I** Helsinki-Tallinn-Riga-Kaunas-Warszawa
Branch A: Riga-Kaliningrad-Gdansk
- **II** Berlin-Warszawa-Minsk-Moskva-Nizhnij Novgorod
- **III** Berlin/Dresden-Wroclaw-Katowice-Krakow-Lviv-Kyjiv
- **IV** Dresden/Nürnberg-Praha-Wien/Bratislava-Győr
-Budapest-Bucuresti-Arad-Craiova/Constanta
-Sofija-Thessaloniki/Plovdiv-Istanbul
- **V** Venezia-Trieste/Koper-Ljubljana-Maribor
-Slovenian/Hungarian border-Budapest
-Hungarian/Ukrainian border-Uzgorod-Lviv(Kyjiv)
Branch A: Bratislava-Zilina-Kosice-Uzgorod
Branch B: Rijeka-Zagreb-Croatian/Hungarian border
-Budapest
Branch C: Ploce-Sarajevo-Osijek-Budapest

- **VI** Gdansk-Katowice-Zilina
Branch A: Grudziadz-Poznan
Branch B: Katowice-Ostrova - Corridor IV
- **VII** Danube
- **VIII** Durres-Tiranë-Skopje-Sofija-Plovdiv-Burgas-Varna
- **IX** Helsinki-St.Petersburg-Moskva/Pskov-Kyjiv
-Ljubasevka-Chisinau-Bucuresti-Dimitrovgrad
-Alexandroupoli
Branch A: Ljubasevka-Odessa
Branch B: Kyjiv-Minsk-Vilnius-Kaunas
-Klaipeda/Kaliningrad
- **X** Salzburg-Villach-Ljubljana-Zagreb-Beograd-Nis-Skopje
-Thessaloniki
Branch A: Graz-Maribor-Zagreb
Branch B: Beograd- Novi Sad-Budapest
Branch C: Nis-Sofija - Corridor IV
Branch D: Bitola-Florina-Via Egnatia-Igoumenitsa

Pan-European Transport Areas

- Barents Euro-Arctic
- Black Sea Basin
- Mediterranean Basin
- Adriatic/Ionian Seas

Sources: Decisions of the Pan-European Conferences of Ministers responsible for Transport; European Union; Working Group "Transport Infrastructure Needs Assessment (TINA)" in the associate countries.

Islands and overseas regions of the Member States are not completely illustrated or are not illustrated at all.

Map 2 Pan-European Transport Network

the organisation of transport systems necessary. When all the options are considered from a continental point of view, alternative routes, particularly in conjunction with currently less-used modes of transport, could turn out to be competitive over long distances.

4. Integration of the old and the new member states

(22) The economic integration of the old and the new member states of the Council of Europe is progressing rapidly. In spite of significant progress already achieved in moving closer together, significant challenges still remain on the way towards social cohesion in Europe, resulting mainly from East-West differences in living

standards (see Map 3). Most effort has to be devoted to improving the infrastructure, developing border, rural and backward regions and strengthening small and medium-sized towns. Policy must be directed towards growth, based on closer integration with regional and transport policy and on more co-operation with the private sector and should take into account the requirements of environmental protection through appropriate environmental impact assessments. The development of new communications technologies is also likely to contribute significantly to the integration of old and new member states of the Council of Europe through increasing exchange of information and know-how.

III. Specific role of the private sector in spatial development

(23) Private investments are among the driving forces of social and therefore of spatial development. One of the most significant tasks of spatial planning policy consists in providing private investors, in accordance with the objectives of planning policy, with forward-looking development perspectives and planning security. Together with the relevant sectoral policies, spatial development policy should also contribute to increasing the attractiveness of municipalities and regions for private investments at regional and local level in a manner compatible with public interests.

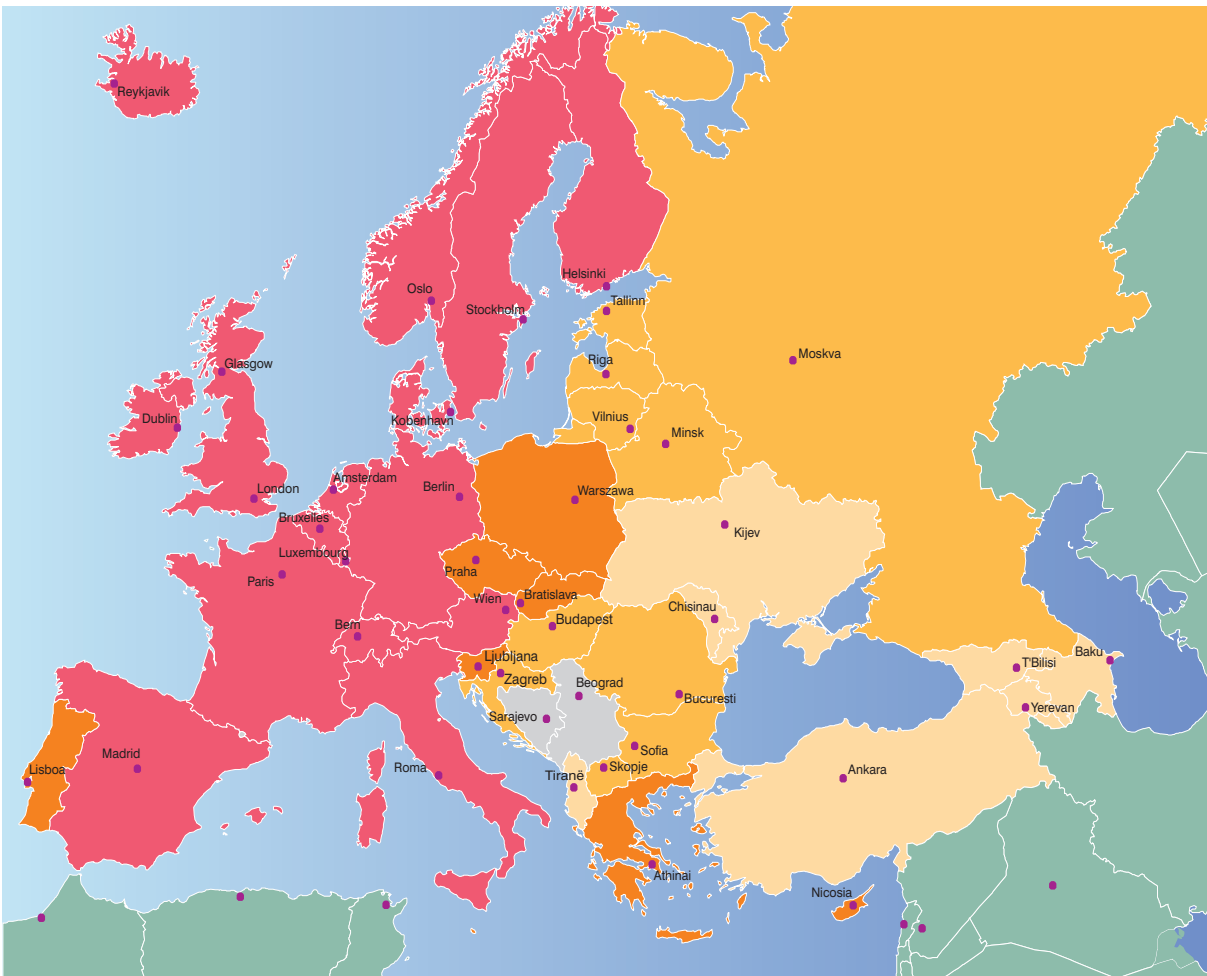
(24) Privately financed large-scale projects should be harmonized with the development perspectives of "their" region at an early stage. In this way, large projects such as high-speed railways together with their nodal points, freight centres, airports, congress and conference centres, etc., when based on appropriate long-term spatial planning, can produce significant dynamism in the field of economic development in the surrounding areas and contribute to spatially balanced

development. The respective administrative authorities have to ensure that the multiplier effects of large development projects benefit the cities and municipalities in the surrounding areas. Spatial development policy can also contribute in this way to reducing damaging competition between local authorities, which in turn has positive effects on the investment climate.

(25) The attractiveness of many European regions for foreign direct investments should be increased. The trends of the past decade show that foreign direct investments were unequally distributed over the European continent. Their total in the 1994-96 period was seven times higher in the old than in the new member states, which are facing significant investment requirements for the modernisation of their spatial and settlement structure (see Table 2).

(26) Because there is insufficient public finance available to cover society's needs, particularly for technical and social infrastructure, and their associated

Map 3
Social Cohesion in Europe



Social cohesion in Europe is represented here by the “Human Development Index” drawn up for all Member states of the United Nations in the context of the UN Development Programme. This index is composed of the following three indicators, each having an equal weight:

- Life expectancy
- Participation in education
- Income

Its value ranges between 0 and 1.

Areas with a low indicator are generally those with low life expectancy, weak participation in education and low income per capita. As opposed to other world regions, the differences in development in Europe result mainly from different income levels and partly from lower life expectancy.

- below 0.73
- from 0.73 up to 0.80
- from 0.80 up to 0.87
- higher than 0.87
- No data available for the member states of the Council of Europe or for applicant countries

Source: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP): Human Development Report 1999

Islands and overseas regions of the Member States are not completely illustrated or are not illustrated at all.

services, private investment will be required to make a greater contribution in the coming years to achieving the objectives of regional development. Support must be given to public-private partnerships that are developing in areas formerly confined to the public sector. This applies in particular to various infrastructure and service fields (transport, telecommunications, water supply, health, education, etc.) – and the field of local development. Together with private capital, the experience of the market economy in the field of project management, should also be more intensively used. Public-private partnerships should be considered in all European regions as complementing public services, which will continue to have important functions to fulfil.

(27) One key to the success of public-private partnerships is an effective administrative structure not only at national, but also at regional and local level. It must be capable of establishing a framework for private investors and efficiently monitoring the implementation of projects. The contractual rules must therefore be clearly laid down.

(28) In the context of regionally balanced and sustainable development, the housing sector has a particular part to play because of its societal function, its quantitative significance and its multiplier effects on the economy and employment. Economic growth and demographic changes result together in changing housing demand in quantitative, qualitative and locational terms.

(29) Housing construction is – together with the renewal and modernisation of the existing housing stock – one of the most important investment sectors in the economy and is largely financed by the private sector. The promotion of rented housing and home ownership result in a mobilisation of private capital several times higher than the amount of subsidies. Promoting housing is important not only in terms of housing and regional policy, but also in terms of ownership policy. This last aspect is increasingly important in relation to the necessity, resulting from demographic changes for people to meet their financial needs in older age to a greater extent themselves.

IV. Principles of a planning policy for sustainable development in Europe

(30) The development of a sustainable spatial development policy for the territory of the Council of Europe should be based on the following principles of a regionally more balanced development:

1 Promoting territorial cohesion through a more balanced social and economic development of regions and improved competitiveness

(31) Spatially relevant decisions and investments should be based on a polycentric development model both at European and at national and regional level. This means that the attractiveness of

Europe's metropolitan areas and gateway cities should be further developed and that the attractiveness of structurally weak regions for economic investment should be strengthened. This is particularly important in the case of old industrial regions and rural areas. To achieve this, regional and local authorities should be in a position to actively implement spatial development policy. This requires the existence of democratically legitimized territorial authorities, a high standard of administrative practice and applied policy, as well as increased involvement of citizen and societal groups in spatial development planning.

2 Encouraging development generated by urban functions and improving the relationship between town and countryside

(32) Urban systems and functions, including those of small and medium-sized regional centres, should be developed so as to facilitate country dwellers' access to them. The establishment and strengthening of networks of towns increases the complementarity of these towns and creates synergy and economies of scale, encourages specialisation and creates benefits for economic competition while avoiding the associated pitfalls.

(33) Urban-rural partnerships have an increasingly important part to play, in particular in the development of public transport networks, the revitalisation and diversification of rural economies, the increase in the productivity of infrastructures, the development of recreation areas for urban dwellers and the protection and enhancement of the natural and cultural heritage. A condition for efficient urban-rural partnerships is good co-operation on a basis of equity between local authorities.

3 Promoting more balanced accessibility

(34) The Pan-European Transport Network has to be rapidly completed, as a prerequisite for ensuring good accessibility anywhere in Europe (cf Para20). Agreements already concluded on the shaping of networks may have to be scrutinized and complemented from the point of view of spatial development.

(35) In the interests of achieving a regionally more balanced development, links between small and medium-sized towns as well as rural and island areas and the trans-European networks and transport centres (railways, motorways, navigable waterways and ports, airports or intermodal centres) should be improved. Regional accessibility must also be increased through the elimination of missing intra-regional links. Considering the on-going growth of traffic flows, integrated strategies taking into account the various transport modes and – on an equal basis – spatial planning policy requirements, are necessary. The lower environmental impact of railways, waterways and maritime transportation should be taken into account in doing this.

4 Developing access to information and knowledge

(36) The emergence of the information society is currently one of the most significant phenomena reshaping society and its territorial structure. Particular attention should be paid to all regions to make sure that access to information is not restricted by physical and other constraints. Telecommunications networks should be improved and extended to cover the whole area. Tariffs should not be prohibitive. Encouragement should be given to national and regional interfaces between information suppliers and potential users, such as technology parks, technology transfer institutes and research and training centres, and to the establishment of on-line data banks, covering areas such as products, skills and tourism, to enable all regions to market themselves and increase their links with the global economy.

5 Reducing environmental damage

(37) Environmental problems that may result from inadequate co-ordination of sectoral policies or local decisions have to be prevented. Spatial planning policy must give support to preventing or mitigating different kinds of environmental harm, e.g. by promoting less damaging agricultural or forestry practices, encouraging more environmentally friendly forms of transport and energy systems, regenerating derelict urban areas and rehabilitating their environment, preventing industrial accidents, regenerating areas damaged by industrial pollution and former military activities as well as by containing suburbanisation.

6 Enhancing and protecting natural resources and the natural heritage

(38) Natural resources contribute not only to properly balanced ecosystems but also to the attractiveness of regions, recreational value and general quality of life. They must be protected. The Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979)¹³ and the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy¹⁴ must also be taken into account in a sustainable spatial planning policy.

(39) Integrated strategies for managing water resources¹⁵ should include, among

other things, the protection of surface and ground water, monitoring farmers' use of fertilisers and irrigation, sewage treatment and so on. Inter-regional transfers of water should only be considered when the local resources are insufficient or cannot be used at an economically reasonable price. In order to protect the quality of drinking water from underground sources, it is essential to ensure that any expansion in water supply networks is matched by an equivalent increase in drainage and sewage treatment and disposal facilities.

(40) Spatial planning policy is concerned with re-establishing and conserving ecosystems including ecological networks as well as wetlands, which form part of such networks. In order to achieve this objective, various ecological elements, such as semi-natural areas, water resources, healthy climates and derelict industrial sites needing restoration, or buffer zones must be identified. The establishment of a coherent network of special protection areas within the European Union and the applicant countries, called Natura 2000¹⁶, is one of the measures contributing to this goal. Appropriate measures are needed to deal with them. In conjunction with the European Conference of Ministers of the Environment ("An Environment for Europe"), the development of these networks should be developed on a Europe-wide scale.

7 Enhancing the cultural heritage as a factor for development

(41) Increasing the appeal of localities and regions for investors, tourists and the general public by enhancing the cultural heritage makes an important contribution to economic development and to strengthening regional identity. Spatial development policy should contribute to integrated management of the cultural heritage conceived as an evolutionary process protecting and conserving the heritage and taking into account the needs of modern society. Many countries contain monuments to and bear traces of various artistic schools and trends, reflected, for example, in the Renaissance Route, the Routes of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, the Venetian, Byzantine and Ottoman routes, Hanseatic and Viking routes, "Art Nouveau" and modern art routes. Their identification and the

development of common approaches to conservation, restoration and use should be the subject of a great cultural routes programme. In the same way, valuable heritage forming part of European industrial and social history could be included in the cultural routes and so be preserved for the benefit of future generations. Not only conservation of the past is at stake, but also harmony and creativity in the spatial relationship between modern architecture and urban design and the traditional heritage.

(42) In many member states, there are aspects of the cultural and historical heritage which, on account of historical changes, events and changing frontiers, belong not just to one but to several nations, language communities and religious groups, some of whom no longer even live in the regions concerned. Spatial development policy has to preserve and respect the memory of every nationality, language community and religious group which has created a specific aspect of cultural heritage.

8 Developing energy resources while maintaining safety

(43) Spatial development policy encourages the promotion of renewable energy sources as coherent, environmentally friendly systems and the completion of energy networks at pan-European level. Particular attention should be paid to developing the transport of oil and gas from the North Sea, the Caspian Sea region and the Russian Federation.

(44) In view of the high level of energy consumption in some economies priority must be given to more efficient use of the energy and facilities already available. The energy efficiency of conventional power stations should be improved and air pollution reduced. This also contributes to reducing global warming.

(45) The security of older nuclear power plants should be increased. In addition, there are on the European continent numerous nuclear power plants whose service life will come to an end in the coming decades. The sites where they are located will have to be rehabilitated. This will result in new tasks for spatial development policy.

9 Encouraging high quality, sustainable tourism

(46) Spatial development policy aims at using the development opportunities provided by tourism, in particular in the case of disadvantaged regions. Priority should be given to developing forms of high quality and sustainable tourism. Generally, what is needed is a thorough understanding of ecosystems and of the number of visitors an area can support, as well as new control instruments (regional impact assessments). Forms of soft tourism that are carefully adapted to local and regional circumstances such as ecotourism can offer many regions a vital opportunity for development which should be exploited in the future.

10 Limitation of the impacts of natural disasters

(47) Natural disasters such as earthquakes, hurricanes, flooding, avalanches, forest fires and mudslides are causing considerable damage in Europe every year with serious consequences for people's lives and health, for the economy, for the settlement structure and for landscapes. Preventive measures should be taken in the context of spatial development policies aimed at limiting the extent of damage and at making the settlement structure less vulnerable. This should include for example measures in the field of land use and building.

V. Spatial development measures for different types of European regions

(48) In addition to the principles related to a sustainable spatial development policy, more detailed spatial development measures for European cultural landscapes as well as specific measures aimed at achieving a more regionally balanced and sustainable development in the individual regions of Europe are proposed. These areas are characterised by their very nature by a high degree of diversity and partly overlap. The actors concerned have to decide which of the proposed measures should be taken with which level of priority in spatial development policy.

1 Cultural landscapes

(49) Europe is composed of a plurality of cultural landscapes. They are a significant part of European heritage and a witness of the past and present relationships between man and his natural and built environments. Developments in the production techniques in agriculture, forestry and industry and changes in town planning, transport, other types of infrastructure, tourism and leisure-time behaviour are accelerating the transformation of European cultural landscapes and can also have a negative impact on their quality and use. This not only concerns valuable semi-natural landscapes but applies generally to all types

of cultural landscape, especially those that are an essential component of the urban environment.

(50) Spatial development policy can contribute to protecting, managing and enhancing landscapes by adopting appropriate measures, in particular by organising better interactions between various sectoral policies with regard to their territorial impacts. Appropriate measures in the field of landscape protection include:

- the integration of landscape development into spatial planning as well as into sectoral policies such as those related to the economy, agriculture, infrastructure and urban development, culture, environment, social development, which all have direct or indirect effects on the development of landscapes;
- the examination and general assessment of landscapes, the analysis of their characteristics, of their ecosystems and of the forces and pressures transforming them; the definition and use of landscape quality objectives;
- the implementation of integrated policies aimed at simultaneously protecting, managing and planning landscapes;
- the consideration of landscape development in international programmes;

- stronger cross-border, transnational and interregional co-operation in the fields of landscape development, exchange of experience and research projects involving in particular local and regional authorities;
- the strengthening of the awareness of people, private organisations and territorial authorities of the value of landscapes, their economic significance, their evolution and the possibilities of conserving and improving them;
- stronger integration of landscape development into training programmes in various disciplines; interdisciplinary training programmes.¹⁷

2 Urban areas

(51) In order to achieve the objective of polycentric development of the European settlement structure, further measures, in addition to strengthening economic potential, are proposed for achieving sustainable development in towns and cities. These include:

- developing strategies adapted to the local context and aimed at overcoming the effects of economic restructuring;
- controlling the expansion of urban areas (urban sprawl): limiting trends towards suburbanisation by increasing the supply of building land in towns and cities, activation of gap sites and use of space-saving building methods, developing building land near traffic nodes and railway stations, promoting inner urban development, raising the quality of living and housing conditions in urban areas, which includes the conservation of existing ecosystems and the creation of new green areas and biotopes;
- regenerating deprived neighbourhoods and producing a mix of activities and social groups within the urban structure, particularly in cities where areas of social exclusion are developing;
- carefully managing the urban ecosystem, particularly with regard to open and green spaces, water, energy, waste and noise;
- developing effective but at the same time environmentally-friendly public transport designed to contribute to sustainable mobility.
- establishing planning bodies across local authority boundaries between

individual towns and communes to co-ordinate the planning and implementation of measures;

- conservation and enhancement of the cultural heritage;
- development of networks of towns.

(52) The towns and cities in the new member states face special challenges, such as how to finance the construction of dwellings and how to maintain and improve the housing stock, especially the reconstruction and the adjustment to new needs (increased car ownership, demand for architectural quality and increasing energy efficiency). New trends towards suburbanisation and segregation resulting from the backlog demand for home ownership can be countered by increasing the supply of building land in the agglomerations.

3 Rural areas

(53) In order to achieve the independent development of the countryside as areas for living, carrying on economic and recreational activities and as physical regions, the following measures are proposed in addition to respecting the relevant principles:

- strengthening the spatial planning policy aimed at preserving a balance in the diversity of developments affecting rural areas (diversification of employment opportunities, changes in agricultural production, afforestation, tourism, nature protection);
- conserving and improving endogenous resources in rural areas with a view to diversifying the economic base and mobilising the local population and those involved in the economy;
- encouraging small and medium-sized towns as well as large villages to act as service suppliers for their rural hinterlands and as suitable locations for establishing small and medium-sized enterprises;
- increasing rural areas' accessibility, in particular of small and medium-sized towns and large villages;
- improving the living conditions of the inhabitants of rural areas and increasing their attractiveness for all population groups, as for instance young persons and retired people. This requires agricultural, forestry and mining enterprises to play an active role;

conserving and further developing the natural and cultural heritage; repairing damage to the environment and establishing an adequate infrastructure and new services, in particular in the field of tourism;

- improving the supply and marketing of high quality regional agricultural, forestry and craft products from the countryside;
- encouraging farmers and foresters to adapt their land-use practices to local circumstances and contribute to preserving and restoring biological diversity and traditional landscapes; compensation may be paid where the needs of agriculture or forestry differ from those of nature protection and the conservation of the landscape;
- encouraging the creation of highly qualified job opportunities as part of the economic diversification process, in particular in developing employment opportunities outside agriculture through the use of new information and communications technologies.

(54) In quite a number of member states of the Council of Europe a high proportion of the population still lives in the countryside. Effective rural development policies are required to prevent undesirable large-scale outward migration from these areas. The aim should be to diversify rural employment and establish new urban-rural partnerships. To this end, processing industries and other employment generators, for example tourism, should be developed in the private sector. Lake districts and archipelago regions are confronted with similar problems and also require co-operation and the exchange of experience.¹⁸

4 Mountains

(55) Mountain regions represent an exceptional potential for Europe and fulfil numerous ecological, economic, social, cultural and agricultural functions. Spatial development policy should give special and suitable consideration to the preservation and development of mountain regions. The Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe pay great attention to mountain regions¹⁹ in the context of the social cohesion strategy.

(56) Various spatial development policy measures for urban and rural areas are also

valid for mountain regions. An integrated policy for mountain regions should, however, be an autonomous part of a Europe-wide spatial development policy which should include measures of economic and social development, the protection and management of natural resources and the respecting of local traditions and cultures. It should take account of the fact that mountain regions, in spite of their diversity, which should be preserved and promoted, experience common economic, social and environmental problems because of their altitude, topography and climate. It should also consider the fact that the environmental conditions of the mountain regions represent not only a constraint, but also an opportunity for the populations living there and that it is necessary to find the right balance between their economic and social development and the protection of the environment. Spatial development policy for mountain regions should take into account the transfrontier character of some mountain regions and the need to implement a coherent policy on both sides of the border. The Salzburg Convention of 1991 on the Protection of the Alps and the European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy contain important principles for spatial development policies in mountain regions.

(57) Spatial development policy as a co-ordinating activity should draw the attention of various sectoral policies to the special conditions of mountain regions. These include:

- economic policies, which should promote diversification and multiple job-holding, crafts and SMEs as well as co-operation between small enterprises;
- agriculture and forestry where marketing activities should be strengthened and development policy based on quality products. Agricultural and forestry initiatives contributing to the protection and management of the environment should be supported. The protection, development and sustainable use of forests should be encouraged;
- initiatives contributing to the development of quality tourism, respectful of the natural, economic, social and cultural environments of mountain regions, should be fostered and supported;
- the provision of public services, with no

discrimination against mountain regions as compared with the rest of the territory;

- the promotion of rail transport, in particular for international and interregional traffic;
- the protection, sustainable management and rehabilitation of land, water, air, and landscapes, the conservation of fauna and flora and their habitats;
- the maintenance and promotion of the identity of mountain populations and the diversity and richness of their cultural heritage.

5 Coastal and island regions

(58) Europe's coastal regions are not only sensitive natural heritage areas but also important focuses of economic and commercial activities, locations for industry and energy conversion, a starting point for the exploitation of maritime and under-water resources and particularly attractive areas for tourism.

(59) Since such a range of activities in coastal strips can generate numerous conflicts, an integrated and sustainable spatial development policy, covering not only the coastal strip but also the hinterland, is essential for such regions. The concept of the integrated management of coastal areas is intended to take into account the interaction between economic activities and social and environmental requirements when making use of natural resources in coastal areas and hence facilitate the decision-making process in assessing investments. Integrated coastal management should be a systematic component of regional planning at the various levels concerned. Cross-border and transnational co-operation beyond the sea are of particular importance in this respect.

(60) Most island regions in Europe, although very different in terms of geographical situation and development level, will experience additional development pressure on account of their limited resources and accessibility. There is a close relationship between the sustainable development of island regions and strategies to integrate them into international and European markets while at the same time protecting local identities and maintaining a balance between economic efficiency, social justice and environmental protection. The following policy aspects are of particular significance:

- diversification of employment opportunities through the enhancement of endogenous resources and the development of services, in particular in islands too dependent on tourism. Particular attention should be paid to permanent jobs in this context.
- improvement of the environmental quality as a strategic element of local identity and of regional and international competitiveness. In this context, attention has to be paid to industrial activities in coastal states, whose cross-border impacts may affect the environmental quality of islands, in particular in the Mediterranean;
- development of innovative systems in the field of water, energy and waste management, taking into account the scarcity of local resources as well as the sensitivity of the environment;
- improvement of transport connections to the mainland as well as between the islands.

6 Eurocorridors

(61) The impetus given to local and regional economies by transport investment in the Eurocorridors is of great importance ("regional incentives"). From a spatial development policy standpoint, the latter must not be viewed solely as elements of the overall provision of transport infrastructure. Their interaction with the settlement structure, regional economy, regional transport networks and the needs of environmental and landscape protection must also be taken into account. Major transport projects should not therefore be undertaken without assessing their direct and indirect territorial impact. Structural planning measures must be taken to reduce any negative effects and highlight their positive impact at local and regional level. Such measures should include spatial and environmental impact assessments for plans, programmes and projects, the co-ordination of regional and inter-regional infrastructure, large-scale landscape planning, securing protected areas or the concentration of roads, railway lines and navigable waterways in a single corridor.

(62) Major transport nodal points, such as motorway intersections, important stations, freight distribution centres, airports or inland ports can have a particular significance for spatial development. Their impact extends beyond

their immediate environment to include their entire region. The Eurocorridors should be considered as more than simply transport corridors. In future, consideration must be given to the interaction between transport facilities and settlement development with a view to integrating spatial development and transport policies. If comprehensive plans take account of the impact of Eurocorridors on spatial development, i.e. on urbanization, population and economic trends, this could generate substantial added value in the social, environmental and economic spheres.

7 Flood plains and water meadows

(63) Flood plains and water meadows present a particular challenge to spatial planning, as they are concentrated on relatively narrow strips of land. They are characterised by significant and highly valuable natural elements (water courses, wetlands with rich and sensitive ecosystems and high quality landscapes, etc.) and by intensive and diverse human activities such as industrial production and urban settlement, transport infrastructure and traffic flows, energy production, including hydroelectric and nuclear power stations, sand and gravel quarries, regulated water courses, drainage, leisure-time activities and recreational facilities. They are quite often cultural landscapes shaped in the course of centuries and possessing a high economic and ecological potential. The contribution of spatial planning to the reduction of periodic flooding affecting many European rivers systems, is not yet adequately recognized. The whole catchment area of the river should be taken into account in this context. Economic damage could be reduced in this way.

(64) Conflicts between the different functions of flood plains are assessed and reduced in integrated spatial development policy. The following elements are of particular importance:

- protecting particularly vulnerable ecosystems;
- more sustainable management of the water system in the whole catchment area, paying particular attention to water quantity, which should be related to retention, infiltration and the resistance of the river bed, of the main river and of its tributaries;
- integration of the water system

management for the whole catchment area into spatial planning at the various levels;

- preventing flooding and water pollution by encouraging co-operation on the integrated and sustainable management of trans-frontier and transnational river basins;
- limiting the expansion of towns in environmentally valuable areas and those with a potential flood risk;
- drawing up programmes to preserve the small number of natural or semi-natural river courses, which still exist in Europe, particularly in the new member states.

8 Redundant industrial and military sites

(65) The globalisation of the economy is leading to the rapid obsolescence of many industrial plants in Europe and to the dereliction of the areas concerned. The development of a security strategy and the reduction of military forces are resulting in the abandonment of military areas all over Europe which need to be put to new use. The task of spatial development policy is to rehabilitate the former industrial and military sites and their surroundings and to make them available for other uses, in order to limit the development of new land which is less acceptable from an environmental point of view. Spatial development policy measures for urban areas should also be applied here to create an attractive environment for investors. Economic diversification should be promoted particularly by:

- regenerating the environment of areas damaged by industrially polluting activities;
- regenerating towns and cities in industrial regions, particularly by providing services, cleaning up contaminated industrial sites and improving the urban environment;
- retraining and further education of unemployed workers;
- developing technopoles and technology centres concerned with technology transfer and the creation of new businesses using advanced technologies;
- improving accessibility and developing information and telecommunications technology;
- organising interregional and transnational co-operation to reduce isolation and generate new initiatives and a new impetus for growth.

9 Border regions

(66) Transfrontier co-operation in the field of spatial development has developed considerably between the old member states of the Council of Europe in recent decades thanks to the action of the states, regions and local authorities. Transfrontier co-operation now represents a particular challenge to the new member states, given that their frontiers were closed for several decades, new borders were created and the border regions were generally very marginalised. The development of transfrontier co-operation is an essential precondition for the economic development of border regions and their political and social cohesion, especially since numerous minorities live on either side of their respective frontiers. About 140 Euroregions have been set up in the meantime throughout the continent which are doing pioneering work in transfrontier co-operation.

(67) Spatial development policy in border regions and transfrontier co-operation involve the adoption of a joint approach to development in the form of transfrontier structure schemes and joint plans. Particular attention should be paid to:

- developing transfrontier transport and telecommunications infrastructure and services ;
- the transfrontier conservation and sustainable use of natural resources (particularly in the case of mountain and coastal regions, forests and wetlands, etc.) and of water resources;
- taking the cross-border dimension of supplying public and private services into account;
- the coherent planning of transfrontier conurbations, cities, and settlement areas of ethnic communities;
- the organisation of transfrontier employment catchment areas;
- combating the cross-border impact of pollution.

VI. Strengthening of co-operation between the member states of the Council of Europe and participation of regions, municipalities and citizens

1 Possibilities created by a development orientated spatial planning

(68) Spatial development is a political task of co-operation and participation. The “Guiding Principles” are a basis for the assessment of projects and measures which are important from a spatial development policy point of view and which affect several states. The great diversity of structural and spatial measures in the context of spatial development policy requires inter-disciplinary integration and co-operation between the relevant political bodies and authorities. Their function consists of creating a framework for transnational, interregional and intercommunal decisions. Contradictions should be avoided and synergies increased. Long-term and large-scale planning concepts transcending national borders should offer a comprehensive and forward-looking development perspective for the region that can serve as a frame of reference for individual projects and measures. This is particularly important in the case of the new member states, where development is currently often based on projects promoted at local level by international and national bodies, although such projects have not yet been integrated into a larger development framework and are not accompanied by sufficient consultation of citizens and local authorities.

2 Developing Europe-wide co-operation activities on the basis of the Guiding Principles

(69) Some European areas have already gained initial experience of co-operation in the field of spatial development. The adoption of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) was an important step taken by the EU Member States for their future co-operation. In the Baltic region, the Conference of Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning has proposed a series of measures aimed at implementing the spatial vision for the Baltic Sea region (VASAB 2010). In carrying out the VASAB 2010 Plus project, the spatial vision is being updated on the basis of experience and of new information and transformed into a revised action programme for the spatial development of

the region. In this way, priorities are being defined for the INTERREG IIIB Community Initiative programme for the period 2000-2006 and key projects are being prepared. Close co-operation in the field of spatial planning is also starting in the Central, Adriatic, Danubian and South-Eastern European Space (CADSES). The reference document in this context is the report “Strategies for an integrated spatial development” (VISION PLANET) presented by a group of experts. In the medium-term, all member states of the Council of Europe, such as the states bordering the Black Sea and the states of the Caucasus regions well as other regions of the Russian Federation, should be involved in this co-operation.

(70) Co-operation in the spatial development field between international organisations, particularly the institutions of the Council of Europe and the European Union, must now be intensified. At the Meeting of the EU Ministers responsible for spatial development in Tampere (Finland, October 1999), the EU Member States and the European Commission proposed to strengthen political and technical co-operation with the applicant countries and with neighbouring non-Member States. Positive reaction should be given to this proposal.

(71) In accordance with the existing bodies of spatial development co-operation, it is advisable to proceed step by step in developing future co-operation activities and to rely on existing co-operation structures and experience and to exploit their specific potential. Transnational co-operation areas have developed in the context of the EU INTERREG programme (see maps in Appendix)²⁰; they include most member states of the Council of Europe. The selected projects are intended to facilitate the implementation not only of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) but also of the Guiding Principles.

(72) The European Union also provides specific support to spatial development in third countries through the PHARE, TACIS, MEDA, SAPARD, and ISPA programmes. The EU should present appropriate proposals for co-ordinating the INTERREG programme with the support programmes,

in order to facilitate transnational, interregional and cross-border co-operation between regions of the EU and areas in third countries.

(73) The preparation of regionalised comparable spatial information, in particular in the new member states of the Council of Europe, is particularly important as a first step in transnational and cross-border co-operation. This could form the basis for comparative analyses of trends in spatial development (spatial monitoring) in all the Council of Europe's member states. The spatial monitoring should be concerned not just with quantitative indicators but also with qualitative information, particularly relating to the endogenous resources and potential of regions. The approach should be as pragmatic as possible, with a technical organisation or a small group of experts from each member country. Trend analyses should be carried out every year on a limited number of topics, accompanied by a comparative synthesis of the findings. The ECE and OECD have already produced important contributions which should be further developed.

(74) In addition, projects relevant to spatial development policy can be supported by international financial institutions: the World Bank, the Council of Europe Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the European Investment Bank should be more closely involved in European co-operation activities in the field of spatial development.

3 Horizontal co-operation

(75) In preparing spatial development projects, horizontal co-operation with sectoral policies having significant geographical impacts (for example: transport, agricultural and environmental policies), is particularly important. In order to be able to assess large-scale impacts of sectoral decisions better at an early stage, procedures such as the "regional impact assessment" of large infrastructure projects will be applied in various member states. A particularly important task of horizontal co-operation is the cross-border co-ordination of development projects among the member states of the Council of Europe including their regional and local authorities.

(76) Horizontal co-operation is, however, not confined to sectoral policies related to the infrastructure sector. It also concerns economic, financial and social policies as a whole. The various spatial conditions and the territorial impacts to be expected from their programmes and measures should be taken into account from the outset when decisions in these sectors are being prepared.

4 Vertical co-operation

(77) Co-operation between the various administrative levels is of particular importance for European spatial development policy. It should be organised in such a way as to enable local and regional authorities to adapt their spatial development objectives to measures decided on at a higher level, while the national authorities in turn take the objectives, plans and projects proposed at regional and local level into consideration in their decisions (reciprocity principle).

(78) While national authorities focus mainly on general issues of transnational, national and inter-regional significance, the regional tier is responsible, in conjunction with local authorities and the public, for ensuring the sustainability and coherence of spatial development. All levels are required to work together in order to ensure sustainable spatial development.

(79) The subsidiarity and reciprocity principles in spatial development policy can only function if appropriate powers are devolved to the regional level. Regional and local authorities have, in accordance with the European Charter of Local Self-government and the draft European Charter of Regional Self-government, a particular responsibility for spatial development policies.

(80) The correct application of the subsidiarity and reciprocity principles is therefore particularly important for all member states of the Council of Europe. Although regionalisation has made significant advances in recent decades in the majority of the older Council of Europe member states, the new member countries are only starting to establish regional bodies. In view of the geographical polarisation of economic development and the growing regional disparities in many new member states, a strengthening of the regional tier of the political and

administrative system is essential if a more sustainable and regionally balanced form of regional development is to be achieved.

(81) Increased co-operation, particularly between regions and cities of the old and new member states of the Council of Europe, for instance in the form of regional twinning arrangements, is extremely useful. The new member states have considerable experience of spatial planning and development. However, their experience is still limited in relation to the way market forces influence spatial development processes, the challenges posed by transnational spatial planning and associated procedures for co-ordinating activities. Providing know-how and technical assistance to spatial planning authorities should be a systematic and integral part of co-operation between old and new member states. A training programme in this field should be established without delay.

5 Broadly-based participation of society in the spatial planning process

(82) As early as 1983, the European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter drew attention to the need for active public participation in the spatial planning process. The intervening years have confirmed this need. Apart from such participation in local, regional and supra-regional projects, the involvement of European society and socio-economic actors, for example through non-governmental organizations has become necessary. Their involvement at an early stage of the process makes a significant contribution not only to increasing the planning process's chances of success but also to avoiding unproductive investments. Societal consensus is very important not only for the success of local and regional initiatives; it also creates a dynamic environment for outside investors and economic actors. The involvement of the younger generation in the planning process increases the chances of interesting the public in the long-term planning of their home region and in efficient and innovative participation. This is essential in gaining wider acceptance of the "European idea".

Outlook

(83) Europe's spatial integration is the result of an on-going process of small steps, in which co-operation transcending national boundaries among the member states of the Council of Europe, and especially among European regions and municipalities, plays an essential part. As a vision of an integrated Europe, the **Guiding Principles** represent the policy reference document for numerous spatial development measures and initiatives taken on the European continent and in particular for transnational and international co-operation. The spatial development activities of the European Conference of

Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT) within the Council of Europe establish an important basis for Europe's harmonious integration by drawing attention to the territorial dimension of democracy and social cohesion. Adopting the **Guiding Principles for the sustainable spatial development of the European continent** and taking them into consideration in spatial development policy decisions will significantly facilitate Europe-wide co-operation aimed at creating a regionally balanced and sustainable Europe.

Observations

- (1) Council of Europe, European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT): "European Charter for Regional/Spatial Planning" adopted on May 20th 1983 in Torremolinos, Spain.
- (2) Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe's member states, Strasbourg, 10–11 October 1997, Final Declaration
- (3) Idem: Action plan
- (4) European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities and Authorities. 21 May 1980.
- (5) European Regional Planning Strategy, adopted at the sixth CEMAT Conference in 1988 in Lausanne. Strasbourg 1992.
- (6) European Charter of Local Self-Government. Strasbourg, 15 October 1985
- (7) See Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe: Recommendation 34 (1997) on the draft European Charter of Regional Self-Government of 5 June 1997.
- (8) "European Spatial Development Perspective" adopted at the informal Council of Ministers responsible for spatial development in Postdam, Germany, May 1999.
- (9) "Baltic Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region" adopted at the 7th Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Baltic Sea Council in Nyborg, Denmark, June 1998.
- (10) "Vision and strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010" Towards a framework for spatial development in the Baltic sea region". Third Conference of Ministers responsible for spatial development of the Baltic Sea States, Tallin, December 1994.
"From Concept to Action", Fourth Conference of Ministers responsible for spatial development of the Baltic Sea States, Stockholm, October 1996.
- (11) Deuxième Esquisse de Structure du Benelux; Bruxelles 1998.
- (12) "Strategies for integrated Spatial Development of the Central European, Adriatic and Danubian Area" adopted at the 4th Seminar of the Project Panel, Vienna, January 2000.
- (13) "Convention on the conservation of European wildlife and natural habitats", Bern Convention, 1979.
- (14) "The Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy" adopted by the Conference of Ministers "Environment for Europe". Sofia, October 1995
- (15) Implementation of Resolution N°2 of 11th CEMAT in Cyprus, 1997.
- (16) "Flora, fauna, habitats" directive. Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on conservation of natural habitats and wildlife species. O.B. L206/7 of 22 July 1992
- (17) Cf. European Landscape Convention, CM (2000) 98 revised 2, adopted by the Committee of Ministers' Deputies at its 718th meeting on 19 July 2000
- (18) The decision on further procedure related to the Recommendation 1296(1996) of the Parliamentary Assembly on a "European Charter for Rural Areas" will be taken after the 12th CEMAT 7/8 September 2000) in accordance with the decision of the Committee of ministerial representatives taken on 1–2 July 1999.
- (19) See Recommendations 14 (1995) and 75 (2000) of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe as well as Recommendation 1274 (1995) of the Parliamentary Assembly. The decision on further action relating to these recommendations will be taken in accordance with the decision of the Committee of ministerial representatives of 1–2 July 1999 following the 12th CEMAT (7/8 September 2000)
- (20) Communication from the Commission to the member states of 28 April 2000 laying down guidelines for a Community Initiative concerning trans-European co-operation intended to encourage harmonious and balanced development of the European territory INTERREG III (OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES, 2000/C 143/08 of 23 May 2000, pp. 6–29)

Appendix

Table 1
Europe compared with other world regions

	Population in thousands 1995	Share of world population 1995	GDP at 1995 market prices in 1000 billions dollars at current prices	Share of world production 1995	GDP at market prices/head 1995 in dollars at current prices	Direct foreign investments 1994–1996 (in million US-dollars)	Share of the total investment volume	Direct foreign investments 1994–1996 in US-Dollars per head
Europe	807.246	14,2	9.852,4	35,2	12.205	340.994	39,7	422,4
<i>of which: Accession to the Council of Europe before 1990</i>	445.711	7,9	9.052,7	32,3	20.311	306.249	35,6	687,1
<i>Accession to the Council of Europe since 1990</i>	325.532	5,7	756,5	2,7	2.324	33.754	3,9	103,7
<i>Applicant countries</i>	36.003	0,6	43,2	0,2	1.199	991	0,1	27,5
Japan and Republic of Korea	169.434	3,0	5.590,7	20,0	32.996	6.061	0,7	35,8
<i>of which: Japan</i>	124.439	2,2	5.134,3	18,3	41.260	1.151	0,1	9,2
ASEAN	470.686	8,3	749,6	2,7	1.593	67.854	7,9	144,2
MERCOSUR	202.002	3,6	995,6	3,6	4.929	30.419	3,5	150,6
NAFTA	384.111	6,8	7.875,9	28,1	20.504	243.975	28,4	635,2
<i>of which: Canada and Mexico</i>	121.221	2,1	846,3	3,0	6.982	53.815	6,3	443,9
<i>United States</i>	262.890	4,6	7.029,6	25,1	26.740	190.160	22,1	723,3
World	5.674.432	100,0	28.012,3	100,0	4.937	859.912		

Source: Worldbank: World Development Indicators 1998; United Nations: Statistical Yearbook 42nd. Issue 1995

Table 2
Real GDP/head in PPP terms (\$ 1997)

	Real GDP per head (PPP\$) 1997		Real GDP per head (PPP\$) 1997
Albania	2 120	Moldova	1 500
Belgium	22 750	Netherlands	21 110
Bulgaria	4 010	Norway	24 450
Denmark	23 690	Austria	22 070
Germany	21 260	Poland	6 520
Estonia	5 240	Portugal	14 270
Finland	20 150	Romania	4 310
France	22 030	Russian Federation	4 370
Georgia	1 960	Sweden	19 790
Greece	12 769	Switzerland	25 240
Ireland	20 710	Slovak Republic	7 910
Iceland	22 497	Slovenia	11 800
Italy	20 290	Spain	15 930
Croatia	4 895	Czech Republic	10 510
Latvia	3 940	Turkey	6 350
Lithuania	4 220	Ukraine	2 190
Luxembourg	30 863	Hungary	7 200
Malta	13 180	United Kingdom	20 730
"Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"	3 210	Cyprus	14 201

No data available for Andorra, Monaco, San Marino

Source: UNDP World Development Report 1999