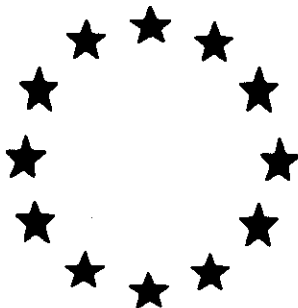


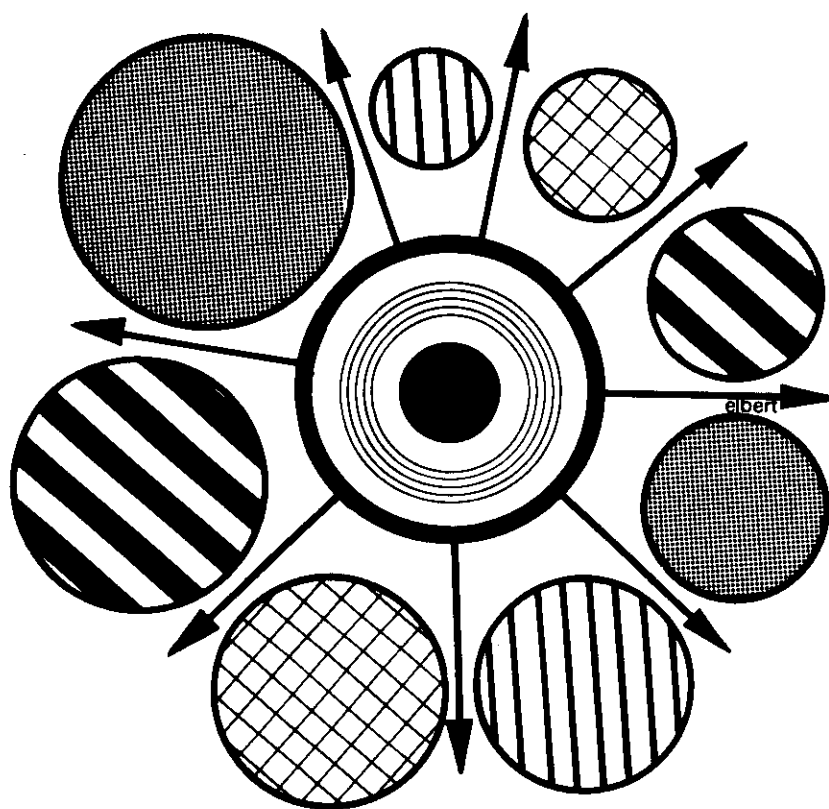
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EUROPEAN REGIONAL PLANNING  
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2nd ROUND TABLE : EUROPEAN REGIONAL  
PLANNING CONCEPT

Report of the 2nd Round Table

Strasbourg, 2-3 December 1981

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REPORT ON THE 2nd ROUND TABLE

Strasbourg 2-3 December 1981

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Strasbourg  
1982

FOREWORD

A 1st Round Table was held in Strasbourg on 17-18 December 1979 to consider the problems of preparing a "draft European concept for regional planning" (cf the report on the 1st Round Table, no. 32 in the same study series, the pilot study by Prof. K Kunzmann, published as study no 3, as well as studies no. 7 and 33, prepared by Eriplan and the "Association Internationale Futuribles").

This Second Round Table had been planned as part of the 1981 Work Programme of the Council of Europe on regional planning (Sector 16, Activity No. 16.3.1).

It was organised by the Council of Europe Secretariat and attended by 22 experts from European countries and several international organisations (see list of participants in the appendices). Many proposals were put forward regarding the Council of Europe's future work in this field. Participants examined the various aspects of preparing an overall strategy for future planning in Europe on the basis of a study prepared in 1981 by MM Kunzmann and Rojahn of Dortmund University (published as Study No. 38 in the "European Regional Planning" series).

This report, prepared by Mr G Rojahn (University of Dortmund), constitutes a summary of the discussions held at the 2nd Round Table.

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors; they do not necessarily reflect the views of the Council of Europe.

Further information about this activity and related matters may be obtained from the following address:

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CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Summary .....	1
Introduction .....	2
I. The ideas guiding regional planning policies	
A. Presentation of the report .....	3
B. Main points of the discussion .....	10
II. Rural regions in a European regional planning concept .....	12
A. Statement by Mr G Moss .....	12
B. Main points of the discussion .....	14
III. The European network of trunk communications .....	15
A. Presentation by Mr Bonnet of the report on "The European network of trunk communications (rapporteur Mr A. Chenard)" .....	15
B. Main points of the discussion .....	18
IV. Conclusions .....	19
Appendix : List of participants .....	23

Summary

The second Council of Europe Round Table "Preparation of a European Regional Planning Concept":

- noted the findings of and report on the first Round Table (Strasbourg 17-18 December 1979) (1);
- examined and discussed the basic study undertaken by Professor Kunzmann (Dortmund) "Towards a European regional planning concept - analysis and description of guidelines" (No. 38 in the European Regional Planning Study Series);
- discussed the papers, on:
  - . rural areas in a regional planning concept, presented by Mr Moss (London), consultant;
  - . the European network of trunk communications presented by Mr P Bonnet on behalf of Mr Chenard, CLRAE (2), Rapporteur on this subject;
- investigated the methodological problems raised by the formulation of this concept and stressed the political nature of this activity;
- agreed on the need to continue the study of this subject by the Council of Europe and to keep the Committee of Senior Officials of CEMAT informed of the outcome of this Round Table;
- proposed that a working party be set up (under the auspices of CDAT) to monitor intergovernmental work;
- discussed the advisability of launching a European regional planning campaign in order to create a broad public awareness of the problems involved;
- recognised the desirability of co-operation between research institutes specialised in regional planning, in order to study this subject in greater depth and develop different approaches;
- noted with satisfaction the Parliamentary Assembly's support for the preparation of a European regional planning concept.

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(1) No. 32 in the European Regional Planning Study Series.

(2) CLRAE - Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe.

## Introduction

At the opening of the second Round Table Mr Günter Mudrich (Secretariat) outlined the aims of the European regional planning concept and the work carried out on it.

In 1979, the Council of Europe had organised the first Round Table in order to begin consideration of the problems inherent in formulating such a concept. It was, as yet, too early to speak of a European regional planning concept. It was more a question of discussing ideas about ground-work and methods, ultimately leading to a framework which might turn into a European regional planning concept.

Consequently, a long-term view had to be taken of all activities in this respect, for there were substantial obstacles to progress in this sphere. Nevertheless, a decision had been taken to begin work on the project and the relevant Council of Europe committee (CDAT) had made it one of its priorities.

This meeting was therefore one of the activities on the Council of Europe's programme of intergovernmental activities for 1981.

At the first Round Table, held in December 1979 in Strasbourg, Mr Kunzmann had presented a preliminary pilot study outlining a European regional planning concept (No. 3 in the European Regional Planning Study Series, Strasbourg 1977).

On that occasion, other papers had been submitted and debated (eg the Swiss experiment) as a theoretical basis for a European regional planning concept.

At the end of the 1979 meeting, conclusions had been drawn firstly with regard to the concept's subject matter, and secondly with regard to the methods to be employed to formulate it.

These conclusions, which were recorded in the report on the first Round Table (No. 32 of the European Regional Planning Study Series, Strasbourg 1980) might serve as guidelines for future work.

The second Round Table, which met on 2-3 December 1981 at the headquarters of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, like the first Round Table, dealt with the methodological and strategic problems raised by working out a European regional planning concept.

The discussions were organised around three statements:

1. Introductory statement by Professor Klaus R Kunzmann and Mr Gerd Rojahn on the study "Towards a European regional planning concept - analysis and description of guidelines" (No. 38 in the European Regional Planning Study Series, Strasbourg 1981);
2. Statement by Mr Graham Moss on rural regions (No. 29 in the European Regional Planning Study Series, Strasbourg 1980);

3. Statement by Mr Patrick Bonnet regarding Mr Alain Chenard's report on the European network of trunk communications (document CPL (16) 4 - Part II).

After each of these statements a wide-ranging discussion enabled participants to express their points of view on the experts' proposals and ideas.

The conclusions of two days of work were presented by Mr Günter Mudrich (Secretary of the Committee of Senior Officials of the CEMAT).

- I. The ideas guiding regional planning policies

- A. Presentation of the report

By way of introduction, Mr Kunzmann explained that his statement was mainly based on the findings of study No. 38 in the European Regional Planning Study Series. As this study had been written over a year ago, new developments had taken place since then but the guidelines had remained the same.

On the other hand, it should be realised that the study was not the result of a large research programme, as neither the Council of Europe nor the University of Dortmund had the necessary funds; the results had therefore to be measured against this background.

Mr Kunzmann observed that after five years' work on the problem, much naivety and over-impulsiveness had evaporated. Over this period an increasing number of problems had been revealed, as was proper for scientific work.

As things stood at present, if the Council of Europe were again to ask the Regional Planning Institute of Dortmund University to contribute to a European regional planning concept, with funds similar to those which had been made available so far, the request would certainly be rejected on cogent scientific grounds.

Despite these objections, Mr Kunzmann said that he was pleased to have made a start on this work as it could be carried out in small stages; the concept would take several years or even a decade to complete.

The statement was divided into four parts; three of them (purpose of and need for the concept, methodological aspects, contents of a European regional planning concept) were presented by Mr Kunzmann. Some vital aspects were described by Mr Rojahn.

## 1. The need for a concept

According to Mr Kunzmann, a European regional planning concept was meaningful and necessary for the following reasons. A concept was:

- a desirable, nay absolutely essential tool for a supranational development policy aimed at the harmonious development of Europe;
- irreplaceable when it came to determining areas to be protected on a European scale and safeguarding the living conditions and environment of Europeans;
- indirectly a tool for eliminating regional disparities and harmonising living conditions in Europe;
- a basis for delimiting the fields of action for European regional planning policy and for counteracting a European regional policy centred exclusively on economic development;
- a framework for national and regional development programmes and plans;
- a means of co-ordinating and implementing relevant international policy and the basis for harmonising international sectoral plans;
- a tool for co-ordinating plans which extend beyond national and regional boundaries;
- a tool for gathering information about the population, economy and policy of various regions and
- a tool which might advance political integration and the transcending of frontiers in Europe.

Moreover, the long process of political harmonisation and working out a concept meant that constant attention would be paid to the problems of European regional development, which was in turn the precondition for achieving the aims set out in the European Regional Planning Charter.

## 2. Methodological aspects

Mr Kunzmann proposed two different approaches to the working out of a European regional planning concept:

### 2.1 The compilation and harmonisation of existing plans

An overall European concept could be made up of existing national regional development plans and programmes which had been collected and gradually harmonised on the basis of uniform criteria worked out and fixed by common agreement. This approach, which could produce a European regional planning concept by starting from the bottom and working up was impractical, as very few regional planning schemes had been adopted by national governments



or had force of law in Europe. Moreover, the requisite harmonisation and standardisation of national plans would very probably entail their amendment. As these plans were already the result of compromises hammered out after lengthy political negotiations, each adjustment dictated by trans-national considerations would give rise to political discussions on basic issues and it was impossible to forecast the outcome of them.

This approach would probably be easier if regional rather than national plans were compiled, as there were many local plans within Europe. It would lead to a European political concept of "regionalism" which played only a subordinate role at national level. Quite apart from the absence of any political basis in Europe at present, this concept would probably be impeded by the plethora of regional development plans and relevant institutions, resources, aims and ideas about the basic issues, which would have to be co-ordinated. Over a longish period, an approach based on compilation could prove appropriate and realistic if it brought to light convincing conceptual schemes which prompted the drafting of integrated national physical planning concepts.

## 2.2 Formulation of an overall concept

The second approach would consist in formulating an overall European concept for the attention of a European institution (the Council of Europe or a regional planning office or research institute working under its auspices). By using inquiries, analyses and forecasts made at European level, conceptual projects could be worked out taking regional and national development schemes as an example. This project would then be submitted to various political decision-making bodies at national and European level. The prerequisites for this approach were all lacking at present. None of the essential empirical, theoretical or basic data, nor the general institutional or political conditions intrinsic to an approach of this sort existed at the moment.

These two possibilities were ruled out for the time being. It would be illusory to continue along such lines.

## 2.3 The concept based on "regions of European importance"

A preliminary step which did not claim to develop an overall concept for Europe straightaway but which was restricted to "regions of European importance" would be far more realistic. This approach rested on a European concept of regional planning which limited the action of European institutions to regional planning and development measures which could be adopted at national or regional level. The balanced development of regions, meeting basic needs or carrying out vital functions still remained the exclusive preserve of national or regional authorities.

In this context, the European regional planning concept would be limited to European regions whose problems called for international action. The latter might take the form of assisting development with a view to improving the living and working conditions of the local population. It might also consist of measures to protect the status quo of the natural

environment when regions were of international importance, ie when they could have a beneficial or an adverse effect on the development of the whole of Europe.

This approach was suited to our purposes because it resulted in the establishment of a European physical planning programme which did not try to make up for national deficiencies, but explicitly took into account the existence of national policies aimed at balanced development and the elimination of regional disparities within national borders.

The purpose of considering methodology before formulating a European regional planning concept was also to determine the means for delimiting European problem regions and the criteria for defining and identifying these regions and their importance for Europe.

It was nonetheless a fact that a European regional planning concept had to be worked out little by little, which meant that the basic elements of the concept could be defined gradually.

Once the concept had been formulated, it would have to be defined in more detail, improved, developed and also adjusted to the new general conditions arising from the web of dependence and interdependence which linked Europe and the rest of the world.

Given that the formulation of a European regional planning concept was political to a degree and had repercussions on sectoral policies, care had also to be taken to ensure that the purpose of particular measures and of decisions affecting national territory was fully understood. Nothing was more detrimental to a planning concept than abstruse scientific and technical methods whose value was disputed by the specialists themselves.

A dilemma nevertheless existed: there was still some incompatibility between the concern to supplement the European Regional Planning Charter as soon as possible with a European regional planning concept (the sole purpose being to direct existing sectoral policies towards a spatial concept and to speed up the removal of regional disparities in Europe) and the need to supply the necessary theoretical bases first.

Experience had shown that financial resources were made available for basic research only once the discussion had gathered momentum in the political world.

#### The content of a concept

Mr Kunzmann made some proposals regarding content. He thought that consideration of the basic components of the concept had to take its aims into account.

The Charter's objectives were therefore central to the debate on the content of the concept.

According to the Charter, regional planning had four main objectives:

- to conserve natural resources and protect the environment;
- to ensure balanced socio-economic development;
- to improve the quality of life; and
- to guarantee freedom to choose one's occupation and place of residence.

These aims could be achieved only if the structural prerequisites for balanced social and economic development in Europe had been created in the sphere of housing and the environment.

Before formulating a concept, a host of basic problems had to be solved. These were:

- the tremendous interdependence of territorial development and the processes of overall development;
- the lack of theories on territorial development at international level;
- the difficulty of proposing a definition for the concept of "region of European importance";
- the traditional antithesis between economic policy and regional planning policy;
- the general problems of distributing functions to areas at European level;
- the justification and practical shaping of European urbanisation policies;
- the merits of and possibilities for associating various social groups in the formulation of such a concept;
- the general character of the concept, especially its avowed aims and guidelines for the future.

These basic problems and questions had been tackled in a wide variety of ways in the national and regional physical planning of the different European countries. In this sphere it would not, therefore, be easy to define a single unifying concept which would be acceptable to the relevant bodies of the states concerned and which could be implemented at regional and national level. If the idea of a concept centred on "European fields of action" were adopted, it would first be necessary to establish the criteria for selecting regions which should be covered by specific schemes owing to their European importance. These criteria might be:

- a region's role in the present European division of labour, (determined especially on the basis of trade patterns in export goods);
- the uniqueness of local amenities in Europe, irrespective of whether they were intangible (eg natural resources) or artificial creations (eg ports);
- the exploitation of a region's potential by the population and economy of several European countries (eg the "Regio Basiliensis");
- the geographical situation of a region on the fringes of nation-states, where functions overlapped;
- the seriousness of problems resulting from social or economic factors or from the historical processes of development (eg Northern Ireland).

The respective significance of the different criteria had to be measured by the influence that the circumstances in a given region had had in the past on the development of another region or by the costs entailed by a change in this state of affairs, otherwise present regional disparities might be consolidated.

When looked at realistically, the European field of action would, in the final analysis, depend on political criteria, ie on criteria hammered out during political negotiations.

#### The elements of a concept

Once the regions covered by the European regional planning concept had been chosen, the factors which might possibly be included in a spatial definition of the concept would have to be determined.

Mr Rojahn proposed three categories of factors:

- urban structures;
- spatial structures; and
- factors which complemented spatial structures.

At national level, it was apparent that urban development was directly or indirectly controlled in all countries. However, this phenomenon was linked to various kinds of urban structure (for example metropolitan centres, growth areas, concentration or deconcentration).

Among the numerous types of urbanisation which should be considered with a view to solving urban problems in a European context, only one group pertained to the concept. The map of metropolitan areas and main development axes presented at the last European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning, at Vienna, might be regarded as a vital step towards the selection of urban factors of European interest. The rapporteurs thought, however, that a distinction should be drawn between the functions of the metropolitan areas and main development axes on this map.

In the Rapporteurs' proposals, the territorial reference system for delimiting types of areas and their structural function was the administrative unit in each state, which meant that regions of different sizes had of necessity to be taken into consideration. The different functions of these regions could be defined from existing or intended land use.

Structures could be described in detail according to the following functions:

- agriculture and forestry (including fishing);
- agro-industries;
- recreation and leisure;
- ecological functions;
- industrial functions,
- management functions.

This system of classification meant that appropriate indicators had to be defined for these functions, on the one hand for the type of function and on the other for its European dimension. Not nearly enough research had been carried out in this field. This problem had to be solved when formulating a European regional planning concept.

This functional classification of types of area already included a number of factors deriving from the impact of various sectoral policies. The purpose of additional sectoral plans was to define other spatial elements of European importance, especially:

- transport planning (including communications);
- environmental planning;
- planning of recreation and leisure activities;
- economic planning;
- other sectoral policies (eg large-scale water and energy supplies, or the siting of major research and education facilities - European university, Community research departments).

The extent to which these factors could form part of a general regional planning concept or of additional sectoral plans would doubtless be clarified during subsequent decision-making and planning phases.

As time was short, Mr Rojahn was unable to deal in detail with the questions of content and methodology raised by the definition of "problem regions" (the first results of this work had been submitted in the form of maps).

Mr Kunzmann pointed out in this connection that, from a national point of view, these maps probably contained many mistakes. As this work could not be carried out satisfactorily by a single national institution, he thought that co-operation and an exchange of information at international level were necessary.

With regard to the working method to be used, Mr Kunzmann said that it would first be necessary to arouse greater interest for regional planning policy in political circles. No interest was shown in this sphere in any European country at present. He thought that the summary of the Round Table ought to be circulated widely among politicians. In this respect he referred to the brochure published in 1968 by the Council of Europe "Regional planning: a European problem" as an example of what could be done.

The European Regional Planning Charter could also play an important role by strengthening the will to work out a regional planning concept.

In order to solve the organisational problems raised by this work, Mr Kunzmann proposed the setting up of a working party which would consist of institutions which were already studying some aspects of a European regional planning concept. This working party ought to draw up a work programme and ascertain what methods it should employ. The work plan ought to be agreed with the relevant departments of the Council of Europe and the European Community.

Another function of such a work programme would be to provide a basis for financing activities.

This could be done in two ways:

- a joint fund could be established by all the European states with a view to financing work on the formulation of the European regional planning concept;
- a fund could be set up from the resources of European institutions financing research.

The work carried out so far by the Regional Planning Institute of Dortmund University had shown that it would be impossible to complete the concept unless a research programme were established and the requisite staff and funds were supplied.

The findings of the research programme could be discussed regularly and critically with representatives from the political world. This could be carried out in a framework which had yet to be defined, for example by institutionalising relations between research and politics.

#### B. Main points of the discussion

Mr Lambert emphasised that if the concept were to be implemented, research would have to be politically realistic. Furthermore, he thought that it was essential to define the aims of the concept. With regard to the methods to be used, he referred to the Dutch example where "advisory memoranda" played an important part in regional planning.

Mr Ahrens agreed with Mr Kunzmann that regional planning currently played a negligible role in politics and that the Ministers responsible were unable to enforce it at either national or European level. As work on border regions had shown, it was almost impossible to co-ordinate regional development plans drawn up by different countries. Moreover, there were no relevant institutions to work out a regional development policy from the top working down. He thought that the Parliamentary Assembly's approach might be feasible. It consisted in comparing regions with similar problems eg border, maritime, coastal or peripheral regions. All this work would not produce any political results unless regional planning were given more political clout. This aim might be achieved, perhaps, through a "Regional Planning Year" backed up by a vast information campaign on regional planning problems.

Mr Tofte recalled that the first draft of the Charter had not been adopted by CEMAT in London. Several delegations had expressed their reservations about the draft. These reservations could even call into question the draft concept.

Mr van Havere stressed methodology. He thought that it was necessary to investigate the present situation by cataloguing the structures of regions in Europe.

Mr Momper explained that there were few national examples of regional planning concepts. In cases where such a concept had been formulated (even when it was extremely detailed and offered several alternatives) it had not been adopted politically, viz Switzerland.

Mr Lleo de la Vina added in this respect that although Spanish legislation provided for a national physical development plan, the latter was non-existent.

Mr Loukidis asked in this connection which states found it easier to accept the idea of a European regional planning concept. States which already had the national concept or those which had none? He also thought that it was vital for plans to be fairly flexible. Furthermore, they could be out of date when the time came to apply them as circumstances had changed since they had been drafted.

Mr Kunzmann asserted that work on the concept depended on suggestions made by politicians and their co-operation. In addition, it was necessary for the Council of Europe to agree to the continuation of work and to find the necessary financial resources.

## II. Rural regions in a European regional planning concept

### A. Statement by Mr Graham Moss

Mr Moss first explained that his point of view was a personal one and did not necessarily reflect the opinion of the British Government. Secondly, he made it clear that, although the subject of his statement exclusively concerned rural regions, he preferred to situate it in a wider context.

It was possible to develop a planning concept which was practicable. This required not only imagination but also an awareness of the possibilities of implementing it. Any policy could be drafted but it was essential to ensure that all aspects of a regional strategy could be carried out, otherwise one drew up plans for the sake of making plans, or else it would seem that theory was more important than the final results,

Mr Moss decried the approach to be used when working out a concept for regions of European importance. This concept had to be approached starting from the bottom rather than the top.

Owing to the complexity of regional planning, Mr Moss proposed that three factors be taken into consideration when establishing a framework for European planning. This concept should be:

- socially desirable;
- economically viable; and
- beneficial to the environment.

Mr Moss proposed that all aspects of the concept be measured against these criteria. If the latter were met, the main question would be whether the concept was politically realistic and whether it met with a real response. If the reply was "No", the concept should be revised.

Mr Moss further suggested that the aim of this concept (in its widest sense) should be to ensure the development of a policy on the siting of industry which secured the judicious recycling of natural resources and space, the best possible use of existing resources a high level of economic and social well-being and salubrious living conditions.

The achievement of these aims depended mainly on political agreement; it was therefore impossible to do everything at once. A gradual approach was necessary.

One could start with Mr Kunzmann's conclusions regarding territorial, cultural or economic regions of European importance, which might be defined as sensitive areas, potential development areas or areas to be preserved.



In order to stimulate, maintain or restrict the development of areas to be preserved, the latter might form the subject of or be included in a joint European project. For example, it might be important:

- to revive regions affected by substantial economic decline;
- to limit the loss of agricultural land through urbanisation;
- to limit the physical and economic growth of certain areas.

There would probably be some national misgivings about a European strategy which affected national policies.

The countries concerned would therefore have to have some understanding of the "interests of Europe".

It followed that any joint regional policy should take as its starting point the needs of the population and natural conditions and that this policy should be worked out on the basis of local and regional interests and not imposed from above. This concept could be broached in two ways:

- as a guiding framework for work,
- as a strategic operation.

If it was agreed that a joint European policy should concentrate on research into selected objectives, European regional policy could then rest on:

- a large fund of statistical data which was able to illustrate changes and draw the attention of states to problem regions and the risks they represented;
- the encouragement of an exchange of ideas and the understanding of national problems;
- the identification of social, economic and ecological conclusions which were of European importance.

The spatial units proposed in Mr Kunzmann's report were indubitably artificial (for space was a continuum ranging from wild mountain areas to densely populated urban areas), but the subject was easier to understand if space was divided into several categories. Mr Moss proposed two different classes:

- predominantly urban areas;
- predominantly non-urban areas.

The spatial units of Mr Kunzmann's report could be grouped around these two categories.

Mr Moss raised the question of the type and size of regions, a problem which had to be studied in greater depth for it was closely connected with the definition of areas in a planning concept.

Mr Moss drew attention to the disadvantages of an excessively scientific procedure for drawing up a European concept. Although it was important to establish methodology, an over-scientific approach might be rejected by politicians, as it would curb their freedom to dream up schemes.

Another major question which had to be solved concerned the specific role of urban and rural areas. Urbanised areas covered approximately 15% of Europe and accommodated a substantial proportion of the population and economic and social activities. The aim to be pursued in these regions might be to restrict or to stimulate growth. Rural areas were less populated, but supplied a store of land for agriculture, mining, recreation, etc. In these areas regional planning ought to encourage the development of these activities.

Rural areas had so far been greatly underrated in spatial planning. Lastly, Mr Moss supported Mr Kunzmann's view that a regional programme would be weakened by inadequate long-term programming and a lack of trade and resources.

He thought that it would therefore be vital to set up a standing working party on the concept. It should have an appropriate budget and should pursue and co-ordinate other programmes which depended on the concept, like the rural programme.

Crucial subjects to be dealt with during the first stage would be:

- what size and structure should regions in the European concept have?
- the role of urban and rural areas.
- methods for defining the concept of "region of European importance".

B. Main points of the discussion

Mr Lleo de la Vina stressed that in Spain regional planning legislation focussed on urban problems and the difficulties of rural areas played a secondary role.

Mr Tofte supported Mr Moss's view that rural regions were very important, even at European level. He recalled that rural regions had been discussed at the 4th CEMAT in Vienna and that the conclusions drawn were very similar to those of Mr Moss. With regard to classifying land as urban or rural he mentioned Danish legislation which divided the country into urban and rural areas. The construction of buildings for agriculture, forestry and fishing was possible only in rural areas. He also pointed out that under-developed regions might be used as reserves of land or as tourist areas.

Mr Hofstad mentioned the "First periodic report of the Commission of the European Community on the economic and social situation of the regions in the Community" and the OECD's activities concerning rural regions.

Mr Loukidis regretted that there was no European map of rural regions. He said that it would be problematical to make such a map, as it was difficult to define criteria for identifying these regions. Population density and the absence of urbanised areas, for example, seemed to be inadequate.

### III. The European network of trunk communications

#### A. Presentation by Mr Bonnet of the report on "The European network of trunk communications (Rapporteur Mr A Chenard)" (1)

Mr Bonnett said that Mr A Chenard, Deputy Mayor of Nantes, regretted that he was unable in person to present his report on the European network of trunk communications. He then recalled the conclusions of this report and Resolution 124 (1981) adopted by the Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe on 28 October 1981.

He pointed out that in response to a request from the Parliamentary Assembly in June 1978, the Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe had decided to devote another report to the European network of trunk communications. It had been drafted according to three guidelines:

- working method: consultation and co-operation;
- definition of a theory and the relevant political measures;
- description of infrastructure projects (which was too long to discuss at the present meeting).

#### i. The working method

It had soon become obvious that it was necessary not to produce a purely theoretical report but to draw up a study paper which was firmly rooted in reality and drafted with the collaboration of the parties involved.

This concern was entirely consonant with the wish for democracy constantly expressed by the Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe,

Mr Chenard had therefore chosen the most logical method: he had first collected the maximum amount of information, made a preliminary summary of theory and practice, written a report and made maps which were as detailed as possible. The text had first been submitted to and approved by the Committee on Regional Problems and Regional Planning of the CLRAE. It was then submitted for an opinion to all the regional authorities and associations concerned.

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(1) Report presented at the 16th session of the Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE) (27-29 October 1981) doc. CPL (16) 4 Part II.

Sending a document of this size (some 200 pages) to each regional body was risky, as reading it and checking facts involved an enormous amount of work. The Rapporteur had, however, stressed his profound satisfaction in this respect, as he had received many valuable replies.

But above all, his theses had been completely confirmed; this corroboration was accompanied by interesting suggestions which had all been incorporated in the texts (report, resolution). This willingness to consult people was also reflected in the hearing (with the Strasbourg authorities) of border regions and the Commission of the European Communities.

This hearing had introduced some new ideas, as it had made it possible to study in greater depth the concept of "border effect" (also within the Europe of 10). Mr Chenard welcomed an approach which was characterised by the marriage of theory and pragmatism. He emphasised that factual replies had helped to improve theoretical analyses. It was therefore time to put ideas into practice.

#### ii. Guidelines and action

Over the last few years, there had certainly been some re-thinking, but the basic ideas had remained the same, ie economic, social and cultural development. This is what had to be achieved in practice. The Rapporteur had developed the interrelated concepts of:

- economic development,
- regional planning,
- communication axis.

It had emerged that communication axis could not be dissociated from regional planning and that only balanced regional planning could produce balanced economic development. The key word was "balanced". But what did one see? One look at the maps appended to the report showed that at present European development was extremely imbalanced:

- conurbations contrasted with areas where the urban network was much more sparse or even non-existent,
- examination of the communication networks demonstrated that they had really tended to concentrate too much on links between densely populated areas.

The routes taken by the communication axis had therefore increased the gulf between central areas and the periphery. The widening of this technological, industrial and agricultural gap had already been condemned elsewhere.

The conditions had therefore to be created for restoring the balance. At a time of increasing European interdependence between national networks, and of extreme sensitivity about the use of land and environmental questions, this aim could be achieved only through a voluntary policy of European regional planning.

It was therefore necessary to halt and reverse these trends, so as to assist peripheral and other areas. This had to be done by implementing the following proposals which were contained in the resolution:

- Democratic formulation of a European regional planning concept and adoption of a binding European Charter.

- Closer co-ordination of national communications policies in the immediate future.

- Planning of transport infrastructures to be improved so that they fulfilled the function of a public service

This meant:

- ensuring balanced development through trunk communications linking peripheral areas with one another and with central areas,

- laying the foundations for more complementary modes of transport (as the free play of competition had merely resulted in a congested jumble).

Moreover, the following principles had to be reinstated in an overall policy:

- territorial continuity and an extensive distribution of links,

- democracy, which entailed the democratic formulation of a plan, the definitive determination by national and regional authorities of regional planning policies and, as a corollary, the development of local responsibilities and measures,

- co-operation which might make it possible to set up European inter-regional associations,

- costs - a redistribution of transport costs to assist areas with poorer services would represent a start on a transport policy which was not purely commercial or profit-orientated.

As had been noted earlier, all these proposals meant that priority had to be given to links with enclaves, peripheral, border and island regions.

This would involve both a tariff policy and a more equitable distribution of the costs of concentration:

- the development of all forms of communication, especially rail; consultations had shown that more interest was being shown in it again everywhere,

- assistance to less developed regions; specific economic measures would have to be taken to offset any untoward effects of a development in communications,

- political decentralisation measures and steps to reduce congestion in large conurbations.

All these remarks showed that the problems of central areas and the advantages of linking peripheral and central areas should not be ignored under any circumstances.

Mr Chenard had therefore proposed to the Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe, which had agreed with him, that this work should serve as a basis for a regional planning concept and that the conference should be responsible for this work which should be carried out by studying the subject in greater depth and by regularly consulting regions and associations. Moreover the Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe had recommended that the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning should do everything in its power to secure the adoption of a European Regional Planning Charter at the Madrid Conference in 1982.

B. Main points of the discussion

Mr Moss noted that a European transport policy went hand in hand with regional policy, as transport policy had a very substantial impact on urban structures and living conditions. For example, links between conurbations increased the economic importance and population density of large towns. On the other hand, peripheral and poorer regions could not always be developed sufficiently by merely improving their communications with conurbations.

If economic and social conditions were to be ameliorated, transport policy would have to be accompanied by regional policy and public investment.

Mr Loukidis pointed out that transport policy raised another series of problems. In the Mediterranean area, for example, a transport network which had been built in order to improve goods traffic, was being used increasingly by tourists and this gave rise to serious difficulties. The movement of goods and tourists had to be balanced. Tourism was a seasonal phenomenon which often harmed the regions concerned. In addition, links are expanding not only within Europe but between southern Europe and northern Africa.

Mr Esteban announced that the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) was very interested in the catalogue of communication axis proposed in Mr Chenard's report. Rising energy costs were a big problem, as most transport systems consumed a great deal of petroleum. Maintenance costs also played an important role in the transport sector.

Mr Esteban also mentioned three major difficulties raised by the drafting of the concept:

- the first concerned peripheral regions and their transport problems. This had already been discussed at several conferences (Tenerife and Galway, for example);

- the second involved European regions which were difficult to reach owing to relief or the lack of roads. He explained that the Ministers of Transport had set up a committee to define lines of communication and priorities in Alpine regions;
- the third problem related to the tariff policy applied by countries of transit. Transit traffic raised many problems for these countries. For a number of years they had therefore collected tolls or, like Austria, implemented a policy of road tax.

Mr Lowy observed that for decades a sector-by-sector approach had failed to take overall regional planning needs into account.

It was not enough to improve existing communications networks; a new concept had to be evolved which took account of technical developments in transport systems. Another problem was raised by the greater number of border crossing points. When establishing a European concept it would be preferable to concentrate on the most important routes.

Among the other problems mentioned, reference was made to the Canary Islands, which were not shown on the map accompanying Mr Chenard's report, (Mr Lleo de la Vina), and the absence of maritime links on the maps (Mr Momper). The importance of maritime routes was confirmed by Mr Loukidis who explained that in several countries, transport was effected by ship. Mr Lambert stressed the advantages of the consultative method used by Mr Chenard when preparing his report. He thought that it constituted a good example of the working method to be used when preparing the European regional planning concept.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

This second Round Table on the European regional planning concept ended with a round-up of participants' views. Mr Mudrich then summarised the main points of the final discussion.

The ideas expressed by the participants were the following:

Mr Lambert thought that before going into details and starting to compile documentation on the concept, its aims and objectives ought to be defined. It would, for example, be possible to ask each of the Council of Europe countries to specify the points they considered important when drawing up the concept. The method used for Mr Chenard's report could serve as a guideline for the organisation of this consultation.

Mr van Havere thought that analysis of the concept would be advanced by such consultation. Initially, it would be necessary to draw up an advisory memorandum based on the documents of conferences which had dealt with matters covered by the concept.

Mr Momper considered that first and foremost the groups concerned should participate fully in drawing up the concept. The most crucial subjects would also have to be broken down into major problems and sectors. A practical means of putting everything down in writing had to be found. This work might be placed in the hands of an expert responsible for the project (on a permanent basis), who would be supervised by a political committee comprising members of the Committee of Senior Officials who would provide political impetus. This working report ought to be prepared and discussed as soon as possible.

Mr. Lleo de la Vina recalled that the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT) had already adopted a resolution on the concept (London 1980). It could be expected that the ministers would explicitly express their political will to prepare a European regional planning concept at the Madrid conference. It was therefore necessary to draft a document outlining the concept and its objectives. If, as Mr Kunzmann and other participants had proposed, a working party on the concept were set up, the Spanish representatives were ready to join it.

Mr Savy thought that the idea of a working party should be adopted. Moreover, contacts already existed between research teams in various countries. He also thought that it was necessary to gain a deeper knowledge of present balances and their dynamics and of the way these balances influenced relations between European regions. Strategies to overcome any imbalances ought to be worked out and analysed as a second step.

Mr Maier supported the proposals of the Spanish delegation and of MM van Havere and Momper.

Mrs Biarez proposed that a study should be made of impending imbalances and developments which might influence regional development.

Mr Rojahn emphasised the importance of various participants' contributions to the reports which had been presented and stressed that closer co-operation between research teams and the delegations of the various countries represented on the Steering Committee for Regional Planning (CDAT) was needed in order to achieve more accurate results.

Mr Moss noted that the concept was taking shape, but that it would be some time before the working methods for drafting the concept were established. It was therefore necessary to have a working document which set out aims and objectives, a working framework and priorities (for example the sectors to be studied).

By way of a summary, Mr Loukidis stressed the value of discussion and thought that work should be continued. The idea of the Charter and the debates at the Madrid conference would be a good starting point for the concept. He supported the idea of setting up a working party.



At the end of the "tour de table", Mr Mudrich drew the following conclusions: the terms of reference covering work on the European regional planning concept derived from Resolution No. 1 addressed by the Ministers responsible for Regional Planning to the Committee of Senior Officials. It had the backing of the Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe and of the Parliamentary Assembly, as was shown by the communiqué issued during the joint colloquy of 1 July 1981.

1. The subject of the discussion was of great political and technical interest. Work ought to be continued.
2. In the future, studies should not be academic but should result in political action.
3. Work on the European regional planning concept ought to form part of political measures aimed at consolidating physical planning at national, regional and local level.
4. The European regional planning concept ought to tally with the European Regional Planning Charter; it should even be regarded as the physical and spatial expression of the latter. It should reflect the Charter's application to European regional development.
5. The European regional planning concept had to arouse the interest of the general public and not just of experts; it had to have substantial political impact.
6. It had to be based on the main objectives of regional planning and take account of regions' potential.
7. It had to be characterised by a dynamic approach and not merely describe a state of affairs.
8. The analysis of national physical planning problems and major national objectives had to constitute the basis of the European regional planning concept.
9. The latter had to include a list of the structural features of physical space and the factors which influenced their development.
10. With regard to working methods, several approaches were possible and they had to be studied in greater detail.
11. The Council of Europe and the Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning constituted the best forum for drafting the European concept.
12. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe was very interested in the project and would give it its support. In this context, the idea of a European Regional Planning Year had been mooted.

13. Some people had proposed setting up a working party (possibly under the auspices of the CDAT) to continue this work. At academic level, co-operation would have to be organised between the research institutes concerned. This project had to be given the necessary financial resources.

14. The Committee of Senior Officials and the Ministers responsible for Regional Planning, who would be kept informed of results, were invited to issue guidelines for future action.

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