

# 2020 Vision for the Future



7<sup>e</sup> sommet  
gipfel

Saarland, Lorraine, Luxembourg  
Rheinland-Pfalz, Région wallonne  
Communauté française de Belgique  
Deutschsprachige Gemeinschaft Belgiens





**7<sup>e</sup> sommet  
gipfel**

# **2020 Vision for the Future**

**for the interregional cooperation area  
Saarland, Lorraine, Luxembourg, Rhineland-Palatinate, Wallonia,  
French Community and German-speaking Community of Belgium**

**drawn up at the request of the Saarland presidency  
of the 7th Summit**

**by the Working Group "2020 Vision for the Future "  
under the chairmanship of Jacques Santer**

**presented on the occasion of the 7th Summit**

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## Message from the Chairman of the 7th Summit

It is now almost a year since, on the initiative of the Saar, the 7<sup>th</sup> Summit of the Great Region set up a working group with the task of developing a 2020 Vision for the Great Region. The former President of the European Commission and current member of the European Parliament, Monsieur Jacques Santer, did us the honour of chairing this commission. After less than a year of intensive preparation, we are now in a position to present this 2020 Vision.

All the participants acknowledged that the time was ripe for such a plan. The processes of rapid change seen throughout the world and the rapprochements at the heart of an enlarged Europe pose new challenges to our regions. Faced with the worldwide intensification of interregional competition, it is more than ever necessary to show a spirit of innovation and adaptability. It is, after all, of prime importance to foster cooperation and create synergies. New growth areas set the pace in respect of progress and anyone who is not up with the leaders today risks falling by the wayside tomorrow.

These challenges represent new opportunities for our Great Region. Because of its central situation at the heart of Europe, its cultural and national diversity, its experience of a history strewn with quarrels and reversals, its almost thirty-year-old tradition of cross-border cooperation and, above all, its open-minded and hardworking inhabitants, it is destined to become the perfect example of a European region. However, we can only achieve this by affirming our will, by finding the strength to perceive our Great Region as an area of common destiny and action and structuring it accordingly.

That is also the reason why all the parties involved had emphasised the fact that 2020 Vision would have to be an ambitious procedure. On the one hand, it was a question of conceiving a plan that was bold, but nevertheless realistically attainable by 2020. Bold inasmuch as our common action must go far beyond its current level in order for this plan to become reality. Realistic in the sense of taking existing conditions and potentials into account. On the other hand, it was necessary to set out strategies and define specific measures which, seen from today's point of view, would prepare the Great Region to start its march towards the future.





## “2020 Vision for the Future”

The Working Group chaired by Jacques Santer has succeeded admirably, and for this we are profoundly grateful to him and to all the others involved. 2020 Vision in its current form is a true masterstroke. It is a project on the grand scale, clearly thought out, revealing both experience and passion, and I am delighted that the choice of the Group has proved to be so judicious. That is why I believe that others as well as my colleagues from Lorraine, Luxembourg, Wallonia and the Rhineland-Palatinate will be convinced by the Vision. Now our task, at the forthcoming Summit and in the years that follow, is to put these proposals into action and to persevere with their long-term implementation between now and 2020. Nor am I in any doubt that the public in our regions will see in it the signal for a new departure. So I would like the debate to extend far beyond the small group of political decision-makers, because this debate is essential if the ideas that have been developed are to be implemented with determination, in conjunction with the inhabitants of the Great Region.

The Saar, which is the region responsible for chairing the Summit, has been very much involved in developing this vision of the future. As a member of the Summit, I will ensure that this involvement continues. The Saar is ready and willing to carry out this mission in concert with its other partners.

It is up to us all to create an economic area and living space whose influence will extend throughout the whole of Europe. The ground has been prepared in 2020 Vision. We must now take the plunge and set out on our journey.

Peter Müller  
Minister-President of Saarland

Saarbrücken,  
30 June 2003



**Foreword  
by the Chairman of the Working Group**

“At the heart of the old Europe there is a rift, the source of the new Europe. In the midst of the historic battlefields, from Brussels via Luxembourg to Strasbourg, the capitals of the European Union lie like clips on a wound that must never again be allowed to open up.” These are the words of an important Swiss writer of our time, writing in the *Neue Züricher Zeitung*. It is hard to find a better description of the historical starting point for this land at the centre of Europe between the Meuse, the Moselle, the Saar and the Rhine – our Great Region. But historical experience is only one part of our firm intention to give the heart of Europe a new face. Young people in particular learn “European” much more intensively, thanks to cross-border meetings in the workplace and the fascinating diversity of the cultural provisions and sporting scene in the Great Region. So there is a new enthusiasm for Europe born of everyday experience of what Europe has already become. In this “Lotharingian” Europe, people feel more and more that they are part of a community with a splendid future. On the eve of the enlargement of the European Union, the Union must also become deeper! And where could this deepening take pace, if not here where the European movement was born? That is why the third element motivating us is discovering that we have the strength of vision to open a new chapter here in the Great Region. That is why the “2020 Vision for the Future “ Working Group is submitting a document to the Summit, in which policy guidelines are conceived, political orientations marked and firm political ideas proposed for the development of the Great Region in the years up to 2020.



At the outset, all our thoughts were centred around the question of establishing in which areas the Great Region was unique and what were the discriminating factors, in order to produce an exemplary project for European excellence that would be capable of bringing areas near national borders together in a new regional community, giving birth to a new identity and laying down the necessary foundations to enable the Great Region to position itself effectively in future important spheres in the field of competition with other regions of Europe.

On the other hand, as a model European project, the Great Region also has a role to play as a forerunner for



the unification of other European border regions, especially in the candidate countries of Eastern Central Europe. In this context, the Working Group recommends making provision for an element to take particular account of the needs and expectations of candidate countries by creating an educational institute for training senior managers in the fields of politics, economics, administration and law, and by setting up a centre for research into regional science and cross-cultural studies.

Discriminating factors as points of departure! We might mention the common cultural heritage caught up in the unending interplay of tensions between national and regional traditions and those specific to the Länder, and also the unique linguistic richness of the Great Region, with its various francophone and germanophone elements. The common economic area has been underway for years and is ahead of political union. The scene in science and research is equal to the best in Europe. Towns and villages are turning towards one another. People are meeting.

With this in mind, the Working Group has made an intensive study of 8 major topics, for which it has worked out political prospects. But it has only been possible to do this selectively with culture, science and research, education, economics and employment, transport, regional development, the environment and social networks. The Group's mission was not to present an exhaustive technical document, nor to propose a complete list of projects. It was more a matter of formulating a kind of charter for the Great Region, which would set the political course for future developments and decisions.

The objectives of a new Great Region, as described above, cannot be implemented without a minimum of institutional tools. For this reason, the Working Group proposes an institutional framework that will guarantee the ability to act and the continuity of the Summit and make the implementation of important projects possible.

For the reasons stated, the Working Group has not been able to deal with important subjects such as the cross-border dimension of internal security, or administrative systems, or with pragmatic matters such as the rescue services, although they would undoubtedly have been worthy of consideration. Unfortunately, the Working Group had to restrict itself to a few key topics, if only because of the tight schedule imposed upon it.



In addition, the Group considers that in the medium term, a greater convergence between the financial, fiscal and social systems, as well as in regional policy, is imperative. In this context, the development of the Great Region must always be seen from the pan-European perspective and never in isolation.

The political nature of the open guidance framework formulated by the Working Group allows every opportunity for dealing with other subjects and inserting them into the general framework. In this sense, the Group sees the document presented as a foundation stone in building the Great Region into a European house, in which an ancient European family will live together in 21<sup>st</sup> century conditions, so that the land between the Meuse and the Rhine, the Ardennes and the Vosges will once again be what it always was deep down – a single entity.

Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues at the Summit, especially the current Chairman of the Summit, Mr Peter Müller, for his total support and his great confidence. My thanks also to the members of the Working Group, who have contributed to the success of this mission with their rich political experience and knowledge. And, of course, my thanks also to all those who have contributed to, prepared and finalised our work, without whom the Group would not have been able to function.

Let us hope that in the year 2020 the citizens of the Great Region may be able to say that, at the end of June 2003, a new era began for the land between the Meuse and the Rhine, the Ardennes and the Vosges.

Jacques Santer  
Former President of the European Commission  
Member of the European Parliament  
Honorary Minister of State

Luxembourg,  
30 June 2003





Index

	page
<b>Message</b> from the Chairman of the 7 <sup>th</sup> Summit, Minister-President Peter Müller	I
<b>Foreword</b> by the Chairman of the Working Party “2020 Vision for the Future”, Jacques Santer	III
<b>The Great Region in the year 2020</b> – The philosophy of success	1
<b>8 aspects of the Great Region in 2020</b>	9
Culture	9
Education, vocational training and continuing education	15
Higher education and research	21
Economy and Employment	27
Social networks	35
Transport and Mobility	39
Environment and Regional development	45
Institutions	51
<b>The Working Group</b>	58







## The Great Region in the year 2020

## The philosophy of success



### The Great Region in the year 2020

It is 2020. The Great Region constitutes a common area in the heart of Europe. Eleven million inhabitants live in this area. They have a feeling of belonging to the Great Region and have developed a sense of community, yet they are still people of Wallonia, Luxembourg, Lorraine, the Rhineland Palatinate and the Saar. This is what distinguishes them, a characteristic not hitherto observed anywhere else in Europe. So the whole of Europe now talks of it as a model European region.

The actors in the political life of the Great Region work in close collaboration. Although their legal status within their region and their respective national entities may be very different, this cooperation functions smoothly. The will of the community and its pride in the results achieved have made it possible to remove all the obstacles that still appeared insurmountable twenty years before.

Indeed, there is every reason to be proud of what has been achieved. The Great Region has a rich cultural diversity, which brings together regional characteristics in a range of creative activities, from which the inhabitants of the region draw a large part of their quality of life. Culture represents the link between their specific regional attributes and a new common identity. This cultural heritage is seen as a tourist attraction by the outside world, so the number of visitors is increasing year by year.

What is most admired is the multilingualism, especially among the younger generation who communicate with perfect ease in French, German and English. The cross-border school systems and the courses in education and continuing education allow those with degree

### 2020 Vision

- a model European region



- a model of cross-border political cooperation



- cultural diversity





## “2020 Vision for the Future”

qualifications to benefit from a unique level of quality, much sought-after throughout Europe. The higher education establishments, research institutes and scientific centres, all closely linked, coordinate their activities to complement each other and form a common network, with an intensive exchange of knowledge and personnel. The Great Region has the reputation of a European centre of competence, for both technologies of the future and European questions.

In the Great Region, the continuous transfer of knowledge between the scientific and economic sectors sustains an impulse to create new businesses that perfectly matches the need for innovation in a globalised economy. The high level of education, multilingualism, the single employment market, the cross-border exchange of know-how and personnel, and the mutual relationship of supply and demand create a real economic dynamism. However, the economy must now face up to a real shortage of manpower. Cross-border social security systems and networks of solidarity offer disadvantaged populations the opportunity to play an appropriate part in the social life of the Great Region.

This economic dynamism is reinforced by a highly developed interregional network of communication, routes, thanks to which the region occupies a key position on the central European axis. An efficient common public transport system will reinforce this centrality at the local level.

All of this is forcing the cities involved in the “MultiPole” cross-border urban network to cooperate as true partners and agree on all questions relating to land development. In this way both over-dominant urban agglomerations and imbalances in the relationships between town and country can be avoided. Lastly, the Great Region is responding to the increased demands in respect of the protection of the countryside and the environment through intermunicipal bodies responsible for managing waste and waste water. Moreover, a common system of ecological information constitutes the basis for the concerted and sustainable protection of our natural resources.

- **a common area dedicated to education and research**



- **a common economic and social area**



- **a key position on the central European axis**



- **integrated plan for the management of land and infrastructures**



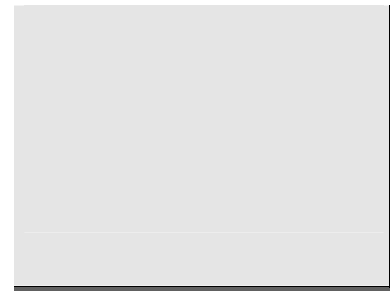
## “2020 Vision for the Future”

In conclusion, the Great Region in 2020 is neither a political entity nor a new territorial community with a legal status of its own. It is much more a matter of uniting diversity and community in a way that is unlike any other region of Europe. That is what makes it a model European region.

### Comprehensive strategies for 2020 Vision

It is 2003. We acknowledge that it is a bold but attainable vision, and that it is up to us alone to make it take shape.

However, in order to do this we must be ready to embark on an ambitious project, if such is our desire, we must choose the right strategies and follow the right path. And above all, it is essential for us to succeed in firing the populations of the Great Region with enthusiasm.



- **the Great Region : an ambitious project**





## “2020 Vision for the Future”

The Great Region can already congratulate itself on a long tradition of cooperation. In a constantly evolving Europe, the many and varied cross-border relationships, cooperations and organisations are seen as exemplary. For many people, living close to the border has already become life on both sides of this border. The opening up of borders and the common currency offer prospects that were still unimaginable just a few years ago. In many areas, such as culture, education and vocational training, higher education and research establishments, common planning for transport etc., we are on our way to meeting the objectives of the 2020 Vision project. However, what we have been able to achieve up to now is on the whole selective in character. For 2020 Vision to become reality, we need a comprehensive project, to be jointly conceived and followed through.

First of all, we must become aware of the strengths of the Great Region, its potential and its distinctive characteristics, which are all the more evident if we consider it as our common field of action. Geographically, our Great Region is situated precisely at the centre of Europe. We have a huge historical inheritance, rich in lessons for the future, and therefore precious. In the cultural, linguistic and political fields, we can pride ourselves on a diversity that, by some creative alchemy, puts us in us an excellent position in relation to future needs. To this can be added a similar experience of structural changes, which have seen our highly industrialised regions gradually transformed into “regions of expertise”. And finally, there is the size of our area of cooperation, which has eleven million inhabitants, far more, after all, than other comparable border areas.

Of course, each component considered individually only produces few results. It is much more the conjunction of all the distinctive characteristics that gives the Great Region its special status, endowed with a unique potential. So the Great Region and its future must be perceived as forming a whole, and planning and developing it accordingly.

- **a long tradition of cooperation**



- **a rich potential**



- **strength in union**







2020 Vision describes a Great Region playing a pioneering role in an evolving Europe. If it achieves its ambitions, Europe in 2020 will be conscious of its power and occupying a privileged position in the world. Its strengths will depend on a number of factors: its cultural diversity, the richness of its historical experience, its democratic rights, the principle of subsidiarity, but above all its desire to form a community. In a Europe of 25 or more Member States, none of this will be easy, far from it. That is why we need a seed, the nucleus of a cell in which this process will be thought through, in which it can be demonstrated. Our objective must be to make the Great Region such a seed.

At the same time, a mature and adult Europe will have to demonstrate that it appreciates and supports the pioneering work and the contribution these regions have made to a unified Europe. What has been emphasised by the Interreg programme must also be a clear message for the future. It is along these internal borders that the unification of Europe is taking place.

- **the Great Region, pioneering European integration**





## The three axes of 2020 Vision

2020 Vision revolves around three axes representing the intrinsic nature of the Great Region. These are:

- **European identity and European way of life**
- **European competence**
- **model European region**

These three axes not only constitute the future intellectual basis of the Great Region, they also represent the common points of reference we can use from now on.

### European Identity and European way of life

The way the inhabitants of the Great Region think and act has its origins in European values. This is not very different from other regions of Europe. However, it is a question of putting very special emphasis on these values in the Great Region, in order to create “the most European” of all European regions.

Culture and education play a leading role in this respect. They must become the brand image of the Great Region. Meeting high demands in respect of quality and efficiency, they are also seen as an exemplary way of transmitting the values and virtues that Europe considers as its specific rights, particularly openness to the world, tolerance, liberalism and humanity.

The transmission of these values through culture and education must, of course, correspond to everyday reality. Humanity cannot develop in a hostile environment. That is why it is essential for the environment and living conditions to come as close as possible to these objectives. We must arrive at this stage in a credible manner, particularly where young people are concerned, because only on this condition will we be able to create in the Great Region a society of citizenship and solidarity that is deeply attached to its European region.

### The three axes:

- **European identity and way of life**
- **European competence**
- **model European region**





## European Competence

The Great Region must prove itself as a European centre of competence. It is only in this way that, in line with its objectives, it will be able to keep its position as a pioneer. On this subject, European competence is dependent on having a share in the process of European integration, in all its political, legal and economic dimensions. So anyone who wishes, for example, to enjoy the best training in community law should of course study in a higher education establishment in the Great Region.

This technical competence must also be accompanied by cultural competence, which particularly concerns multilingualism, cross-cultural mobility and, above all, open-mindedness. This implies the ability to preserve diversity in the community, to learn lessons from it and put them to good use for the common benefit. In practice, this kind of European competence must be increased and professionalised in widely differing sectors, such as the economy, education and vocational training, the employment market, etc. In doing this, the integration processes in these fields must always precede the integration processes in the rest of Europe, in order to guarantee and consolidate the progress made by the Great Region in this area.

## A model European region

As specified in the Vision, the Great Region intends to be a model region in Europe. However, this objective can only be achieved if the action taken gives absolute priority to quality. This applies to all areas of cooperation and should be given priority over speed or quantity. Thus one smoothly-functioning cross-border school would be better suited to serve as a model than ten schools that are functioning badly. For this reason, it is important that the processes of cooperation and integration are always evaluated jointly, in order to make good the deficiencies as effectively as possible. So we must first learn our own lessons in order to become a model for others later on.

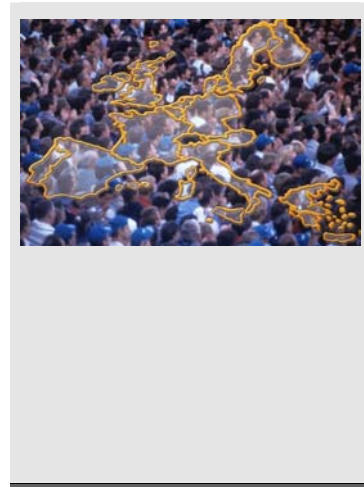






## “2020 Vision for the Future”

It will only be possible to bring the “Europe” project to a successful conclusion if we can succeed in linking our historic heritage to creativity and innovation in an intelligent way. In this field, the Great Region can and must be a forerunner, a model. The more successful it is, the more interest it will arouse in the process of European unification. It will attract the attention of European institutions and enable border regions to occupy a privileged position in the movement towards integration. So it will be not only a model within Europe, but also, more particularly, for other border regions, be they in Europe or elsewhere in the world.



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The Vision and the philosophy behind these three axes are indissociable. In fact these axes serve as a connecting link to the more detailed description of 2020 Vision in the following eight areas. Moreover, by strategic orientations and certain individual measures, they make it possible to indicate now the route to be followed.

Of course, these eight areas do not cover all fields of action. Where common approaches already exist, for instance the jointly-run police station in Luxembourg and emergency medical help, it will be important to draw on these experiences, in order to develop a common strategy in the field of internal security.





## 8 aspects of the Great Region in 2020

## Culture

1

### 2020: A culturally diverse community in the heart of Europe

It is now 2020. The Great Region has become a common cultural area. In all parts of its territory, French and German are now well-established as common languages and treated on an equal footing. Among the younger generation, and also among the middle-aged, the flow of communication circulates freely across the borders, the more so because the new interregional radio and television programme is very much appreciated by the entire population.

The Great Region’s cultural site enjoys a high reputation throughout Europe. Nowhere else, in fact, is there a denser network of interregional cultural activities, so that the artistic and musical diversity available all day and every day is appreciated as a crucial element in the quality of life. Cross-border cultural tourism, which continues to increase, contributes to forming the brand image of the Great Region, as does the new cross-cultural research centre, whose expertise is also of benefit to other border areas in Europe.

### 2003: Pathways and potentials

It is 2003. The Great Region has a vast cultural heritage, a long industrial tradition, a lively and diverse cultural life, with great potential in the form of people working in the field of the arts, and a large number of cultural institutions. Moreover, in the 1998 Charter for cultural cooperation of the SaarLorLux-Trier/Western Palatinate Regional Commission and the resolutions of the 5<sup>th</sup> Summit in 2001 relating to cultural and tourism policy, the Great Region has equipped itself with important tools for the promotion of culture. Among the major cultural initiatives, mention can be made of the SaarLorLux University Orchestra, the SaarLorLux Film and Video Festival, the Robert Schuman Choir of

#### Vision

- French and German, common languages on an equal footing
- Common media for an interregional audience



- High quality of life thanks to cultural diversity and the presence of art in everyday life
- Cross-cultural research, brand image of the Great Region

#### Strengths

- Rich heritage of industrial culture
- Very diverse cultural life





the European Institute of Choral Singing, the exhibition “The Summer of the Book“, Archaeologia Moselana and an attractive range of theatrical performances, not forgetting the many activities promoting industrial culture.

Despite these first encouraging successes, the Great Region is, of course, still very far from having a common identity of cultural diversity. A large part of the population lacks linguistic competence and has insufficient knowledge of neighbouring cultures, and at the same time there are a number of structural aspects working against the success of a cultural policy with long-lasting influence. Generally, the legal and fiscal regulations governing artists within the Great Region are not widely known in other parts of the region. In addition, the opportunities for obtaining community finance vary from area to area in the Great Region. Furthermore, it is particularly difficult to organise uniform, harmonised cultural promotion because there is no common calendar for cultural events in the Great Region, nor is there a budget specifically set aside for cross-border cooperation between the artistic and cultural spheres.

### Agenda

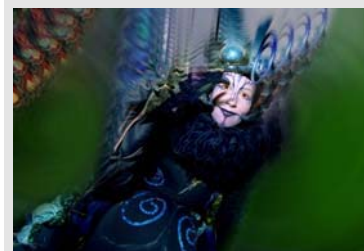
In order to manage an ambitious cultural policy, it is essential to develop jointly a concept that, in the long term, will integrate all the cultural potentials and all the responsible organisations. In this respect, it is a question of exploiting both the common historical and cultural characteristics of the Great Region and its diversity and its complementarity. We must show that we have the political will to make cultural cooperation an absolute priority among the objectives of the Great Region by making appropriate budgets available. The role of cultural policy is to reinforce the unity of the Great Region by creating an identity and improving the image it presents to the outside world. The following strategies are crucial in this respect:

- **Innovative cultural initiatives spanning borders**
- **Resolutions establishing a coordinated cultural and tourist policy**

#### Weaknesses

- **Insufficient knowledge of neighbouring cultures**
- **Lack of coordination of cultural activities**
- **No harmonisation of the general conditions applying to the artistic and cultural spheres**
- **Insufficient financing for cross-border cultural cooperation**

### Agenda





### Multilingualism in the Great Region

In future, French and German will be the languages of the Great Region; Luxemburgish will be asked to play a distinctive complementary role. It will be compulsory for all citizens to learn French and German as soon as they start nursery school, in order to master both languages by the age of 18 at the latest. Multilingualism is not only an essential condition for the individual's ability to participate in communication within the Great Region, it is also a medium for fostering meetings and deepening cross-cultural understanding, integrating knowledge of the political, social, economic and historical foundations of the various components of the Great Region. Multilingualism is the key to gaining awareness of our common cultural heritage, and also to economic and professional development.

The learning of French and German must not supplant the learning of other foreign languages such as English, Italian or Spanish. On the contrary, it should encourage children and young people to become competent in a number of languages.

### Capital of Culture 2007

The decision of the 5<sup>th</sup> Summit to extend the “European Capital of Culture 2007” project to the whole of the Great Region constitutes a second axis for raising individuals' awareness of the cultural diversity of the Great Region, in order to strengthen the bonding of the new common identity. The “2020 Vision” Working Party fully approves the principles underlying the direction of the 2007 initiative as well as the way its establishment is envisaged. For the first time in history since the Empire of Lothaire, an element of unity is being created within the Great Region that can be seen from outside, by Europe and the rest of the world. The “Capital of Culture 2007” project brilliantly anticipates the future structure of the Great Region, by establishing a viable model of open, decentralised cooperation between equal, autonomous partners. So it is a question of producing a creative synthesis of unity in diversity, on a new level of identity.

- **Compulsory learning of French and German**



- **Capital of Culture 2007**





In order to make everyday culture more attractive and make the maximum number of people more interested in art, sufficient financial resources must be made available. They should be based on fixed budgets, in order to prepare the ground for a cultural policy focussed on the long term. In order to achieve this, uniform Community financial support must be set up for the Great Region, which the various regional components and their respective national governments will have to seek from Brussels. The subsidy programmes and eligibility criteria must be conceived in such a way as to make it possible to subsidise projects covering the whole of the Great Region in line with identical eligibility criteria, applicable to all parts of the region.

The ambition of the Great Region, which prides itself on great cross-cultural diversity, to play a pioneering role for other European border areas necessitates scientific monitoring in addition to the efforts on the cultural level. The aim of this scientific research must be to attract world attention to the unique cross-cultural character of the Great Region. As well as contributing to the understanding between different cultures, the systematic study of this phenomenon is also an important element in the development of an internal identity.

The resolutions of the 5<sup>th</sup> Summit relating to industrial culture, the Route of the Cistercians, museum passes, the tourist information and communications network and battlefield tours will encourage the Great Region to develop in the direction of a cultural community that favours diversity. There is therefore good reason to give them concrete form by developing appropriate means of implementation. They could, incidentally, be partly financed from the regional cultural fund that is to be created.

- **Facilitating artistic cooperation**



- **Setting up an inter-regional cultural fund**

- **Setting up equal community financial support for the whole of the Great Region**



- **Implementation of the resolutions of the 5<sup>th</sup> Summit relating to culture and tourism**





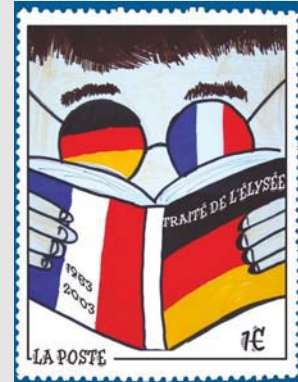
## Key projects

The first measure to be adopted in respect of a new common cultural policy must be the creation of an interregional agency for culture and multilingualism. The mission of this agency, which is a direct result of the Summit, is to work out a plan to introduce multilingualism to the entire area of the Great Region and all strata of society and then apply it progressively in close collaboration with the political authorities. At the same time, it will have the task of improving the coordination and effective commercialisation of the many cultural activities in the Great Region. The range of cross-border cultural activities must be improved and artistic cooperation facilitated in order to use events to better advantage and attract a greater number of visitors and spectators. The agency for culture and multilingualism could be set up in an interregional arts centre and, alongside its coordinating tasks, it could provide advisory, mediation and planning services, and could even take charge of harmonising the cultural calendar, organising events on common themes and possibly arranging advertising.

In this context, it will benefit from the support of a cross-cultural research centre located within the research institute for border areas (cf. “Higher education and research”). Its mission will be to raise awareness of the unique cross-cultural nature of this “hinge region” at the heart of Europe and contribute to mutual understanding between cultures. To the outside world, such a research centre will symbolise the open-mindedness of a region of culture. Nevertheless, through its work it would also have to drive forward the process that aims to give the Great Region a common identity.

## Key projects

- **Creation of an inter-regional agency for culture and multilingualism**



- **Interregional arts centres**
- **Harmonised inter-regional cultural calendar**
- **Cultural activities made part of a common network and marketing**



- **Centre for cross-cultural research**



## “2020 Vision for the Future”

But in order for cultural identity to exist, there must be a common public. That is why the Working Group is inviting the Summit to create the political conditions needed in order to create an autonomous media product for the Great Region, in the form of a predominantly cultural television channel and/or radio station.

Such a project is feasible thanks to an intelligent use of time slots in existing channels and could be successfully carried out in collaboration with public and private broadcasting companies. The channel will have to broadcast regularly, and in two languages, information on regional topics and events throughout the Great Region.

- **Interregional radio/TV channel**







## 8 aspects of the Great Region in 2020

### Education, vocational training and continuing education

2

#### 2020 : A location for European education

It is 2020. The Great Region is an attractive location for education, with supraregional influence. Arts and media are omnipresent and in many languages. There has been a big increase in professional mobility, making cultural diversity perceptible even in everyday life. The new cross-border schools, which took only a few years to win over the public, have an excellent reputation. Their young graduates are most likely to be recruited by the European institutions and they are also increasingly in demand from companies operating on a European scale. Thanks to their multilingualism, the Great Region has at its disposal flexible human resources, which are increasingly proving to be a crucial local advantage to the economy. The high standard of initial and continuing education has made it possible to reduce the unemployment figures over the years, while the educational formulas and methods developed in the Great Region are increasingly being exported.

#### Vision

- **Multilingualism considered as a common resource for the entire population**
- **Cross-border professional mobility generates cultural diversity**
- **Cross-border schools famed throughout Europe**
- **Falling unemployment and increased competitiveness for industry, thanks to excellent initial and continuing education**

#### 2003: Pathways and potentials

It is 2003. The Great Region is characterised by the coexistence of four national education systems, whose diversity is further accentuated by features specific to the partner regions and Länder. Here and there, cross-border programmes and similar initiatives already exist that make teachers and pupils aware of this diversity, while recalling their common cultural heritage and underlining their common membership of the Great Region (e.g. European bus dedicated to language courses, series of forums: Education in SaarLorLux – Trier/Western Palatinate), but the effects of these initiatives are still limited.

#### Strengths

- **Common cultural heritage**
- **Innovative educational approach to cross-border exchanges**
- **Traditional working-class culture forming the basis of sound vocational training**



Despite the many measures of encouragement taken by the European Commission, there is still little cross-border professional mobility in the Great Region. The disparities between the education systems remain a serious obstacle to mobility, while a satisfactory solution has not yet been found to the problem of mutual recognition of qualifications. Young people’s interest in skilled trades is declining, except in the German parts of the Great Region, as much for reasons of social status as quality of education. As a result, the traditional capital that historical working-class culture represented for sound vocational training is in danger of collapsing.

It is above all the linguistic potential of the Great Region which is still underexploited. In fact, its cross-border patchwork of French and German dialects, unique among European border regions, offers the best opportunities for a multilingual culture.

French is spoken in most of Wallonia, German in a smaller part, and Luxemburgish in a few districts in the province of Luxembourg. In Lorraine, German dialects are spoken in certain areas alongside the French language. In Luxembourg, as well as the Luxemburgish mother tongue, they speak German and French fluently. In the regions of Trier and the Western Palatinate and in Saarland, in addition to High German, broad strata of the population speak Moselle-Franconian and Saarland-Palatinate dialects which are more closely related to the German dialects of Lorraine and Luxembourg than to High German.

### Weaknesses

- **Priority given to national educational trends**
- **Problem of mutual recognition of certificates and diplomas**



- **Insufficient quality of the education systems in certain parts of the region**
- **Underexploitation of potential for the development of multilingualism**





## Agenda

In the next two decades, it will be of primary importance for education policy to strive towards the achievement of three strategic objectives:

- **Linguistic pre-eminence of the Great Region**

The linguistic heritage of the Great Region is the principal resource to be exploited in order to deploy a common strategy in the field of education. Multilingualism is both a condition of European competence and the basis for the assertion and development of a common identity. The strategic objective consists in making the Great Region into a border area with the broadest and deepest linguistic competence in Europe. All the inhabitants of the Great Region must be able to communicate orally and in writing in the language of their neighbouring country and in English. A large part of the population should master the language of the neighbouring country so well that they no longer translate word for word when they speak and use it.

It is self-evident that the achievement of this objective demands continuous commitment, not only of schools, from nursery through to secondary level, but also of establishments of higher and continuing education. Moreover, it would be advisable to bring in a series of supplementary measures in order to develop social recognition of the importance of linguistic competence.

At the school level, the quality of the teaching of foreign languages must be improved by a huge programme of exchanges and continuing professional development aimed at teachers. Those starting out as language teachers must have spent at least 10% of their period of education in the country of the language in question, and later it should be compulsory for them to participate at least every five years in a refresher course in the country of the language they teach. In all parts of the Great Region, at least 10% of all new language teachers recruited must have the

## Agenda



- **Huge programme of exchanges and continuing professional development for language teachers**



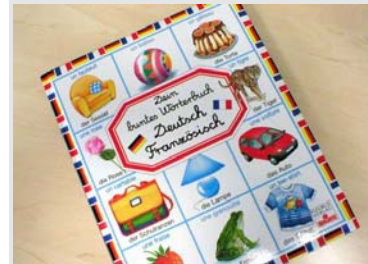


language they teach as their mother tongue. For that purpose, courses must be developed to train them to teach their mother tongue in the other linguistic zone. In terms of educational practice, a large amount of time must be devoted to creating situations in which pupils' linguistic knowledge can be applied. From the third year of primary school, sport, the arts or music must be taught in the language of the neighbouring country, and a bilingual strand must be introduced in all establishments from the start of secondary school. In principle, all pupils must have the opportunity to spend a substantial part of their period of compulsory education in an establishment in another linguistic zone, free of charge, supported by the families with whom they are staying or in boarding schools. As many pupils as possible must also do work experience in another language zone. At least 10% of all new teachers in general educational establishments must be able to teach a subject in another language, in return for appropriate arrangements for initial training and continuing professional development. Vocational schools should make use of teachers from other partner regions on short-term assignments for as many practical lessons as possible, in order to show the pupils the differences and the common points between the two regions in the practice of the job in question.

- **Pre-eminence thanks to a new kind of school appropriate to the Great Region**

At the same time as developing multilingualism, we should set up a new kind of cross-border school. This kind of school would not be bound by the educational criteria and objectives defined at the national level; it would bring together multinational bodies of teachers and pupils, apply teaching methods of its own devising and deliver its own diplomas, which would be recognised by all the partners in the Great Region and beyond. The first elements of a plan for such schools for the region of Sierck – Perl – Remich – Wincheringen (Moselle – “Land of Three Frontiers”) were presented by the Saarland Ministry of Education as part

- **Teaching subjects in the language of the neighbouring country from the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of schooling**



- **Bilingual strands from the start of secondary education**
- **Cross-border work experience for secondary school pupils**
- **Greater linguistic competence in the initial training and continuing professional development of teachers**



- **Temporary assignments for teachers from the neighbouring country in vocational schools**
- **Creating cross-border schools bringing together multinational teaching staff and pupils**



of the preparation for the 7<sup>th</sup> Summit. A longer-term objective consists in proposing that this kind of cross-border school be set up uniformly across all sectors of education in all the former border regions. This is the only way to achieve the ambition of the Great Region to attain pre-eminence in the field of education and give it the role of forerunner in Europe. At the same time, the development of this new kind of cross-border school would provide an opportunity to reduce certain excessive technical standards and the unnecessary proliferation of regulations.

▪ **Pre-eminence of initial and continuing education**

To increase the efficiency and competitiveness of the small and medium-sized businesses that are the economic backbone of the Great Region, it is also necessary to Europeanise initial and continuing vocational training in an interregional context. The creation of common cross-border training for master craftsmen, as advocated by the guild chambers, is as much a herald of the future as the cross-border vocational certificate. In this case, it is a question of drawing up a plan that will combine the four elements of a master craftsman’s training – practical, theory, economics and law, professional and vocational teaching methods. Other elements, such as the teaching of European content and sociocultural bases, further linguistic study and work placements in the partner country must allow the acquisition of a greater depth of specialist knowledge and offer the opportunity to apply it in everyday situations. The training of craftsmen and master craftsmen will remain the responsibility of the guild chambers. The partner regions and the national governments are asked to create the necessary political and legal conditions very shortly.

- **Devising European teaching methods and delivering common diplomas**
- **Spreading the new kinds of cross-border school throughout the Great Region**



- **Cross-border training of master craftsmen to be the responsibility of the guild chambers**







## Key projects

First of all, it is necessary to plan a long-term campaign covering the whole of the Great Region, to make the “Agency for Culture and Multilingualism” responsible for putting it into action, and to ensure finance is available through a new budget for the Great Region. This campaign should include posters, advertisements and television commercials drawing attention to the need for bilingual and multilingual staff, showing cinema films in the original version (instead of dubbed versions), organising joint concerts with singing stars from both language zones, and also scientific congresses. Drawing up a common education programme for the “language of the neighbouring country” will allow all users of information technology to avail themselves of the services of a virtual language laboratory, suited to the Great Region.

To reinforce the presence of the language of the neighbouring country in everyday life, telephone advertisements, forms, designations and descriptions issued by local, regional or national authorities should, in principle, be written in both languages. Also, official documents are to be given bilingual headings showing all the important information in both French and German.

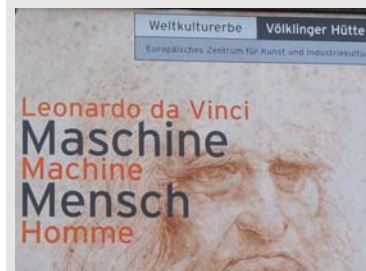
In the case of initial vocational education, the first stage consists of integrating exchange programmes to the maximum, as regards both the content and the work placement. In addition, we must strive towards the creation of a cross-border vocational training certificate. That is an essential condition for the introduction of unhindered professional and entrepreneurial mobility, and this can only become a reality if the different elements of the training are fully and mutually recognised in businesses and schools.

## Key projects

- **Campaign covering the entire Great Region for the main languages of the partner regions and for social recognition of linguistic competence**



- **Virtual language laboratory for the Great Region**
- **Bilingual descriptions and forms**



- **Integration of exchange programmes into vocational education**
- **Cross-border certificate of vocational training**



8 aspects of the Great Region in 2020

Higher education and research

3

**2020:  
The higher education scene, a model for Europe**

It is 2020. The Great Region constitutes a common area for higher education, research and innovation. Teachers, researchers and students from all over the world are proud to belong to this common area for research, within which they can move around as they please between the different university sites. Languages are no longer a barrier, multilingualism for all is a fact of life (German, French, English). Statements of marks, examinations and diplomas all bear the seal of the Great Region, whose exemplary quality has long been recognised outside the Great Region.

Each of the different sites has a specific profile; their activities are coordinated to complement one another and they cooperate closely within a network. A vertical network is added to this horizontal structure, made up of the businesses of the Great Region. This networking guarantees the continuing exchange of knowledge between all the component parts of the Great Region.

The higher education scene owes its Europe-wide reputation to the quality of its science, and above all to the cross-border factor. The special attributes of this multinational centre of competence and innovation creates synergies that produce incomparable performance in science and economics. This quality makes the Great Region an exemplary model for all those who think that these factors constitute opportunities for success.

**Vision**

- **Integrated area for higher education, research and innovation**
- **Multilingualism is a fact of life**
- **Networked sites with individual profiles that complement one another**
- **Integrated transfer of science**
- **Multinational synergies for optimum performance**







### 2003: Pathways and potentials

It is 2003. The higher education and research scene in the Great Region is very varied. The different establishments enjoy great prestige on the international scale and together constitute sufficient critical mass in the key disciplines and innovative sectors. The balanced spatial distribution of these establishments and their closeness to one another are ideal for promoting the exchange of knowledge and people.

The “Charter of Cooperation” is the first stone to be laid in building coordinated cooperation. By signing this Charter in 1984, eleven higher education establishments in the Great Region committed themselves to being involved in cooperation. In addition, there are many establishments from a wide variety of disciplines that maintain cooperative cross-border relations and offer binational courses leading to bi- or tri-national qualifications.

Nevertheless, the Great Region is far from pursuing a coordinated or even integrated policy in the field of higher education and research. Until now, each region has defined its own strategies, independently of the neighbouring cross-border regions, and has tended to develop in the direction of strategic framework conditions increasingly determined by national systems. Faced with this reality, it is impossible on the one hand to obtain a systematic evaluation of the true scientific potential of the Great Region and on the other hand to have a common statistical summary covering the whole of the region. So the Great Region does not combine all the conditions essential for systematic coordination and the sharing of skills. It is also difficult to envisage a way of promoting science that could be strategically directed towards the Great Region.

#### Strengths:

- **Diversity of the higher education scene**
- **Competences in key areas**
- **Closeness**
- **“Charter of Academic Cooperation”**
- **Multiplicity of co-operative activities**



#### Weaknesses:

- **Lack of a coordinated policy for higher education and research**
- **Pronounced national orientation**
- **Parallel activities instead of common activities**



## Agenda

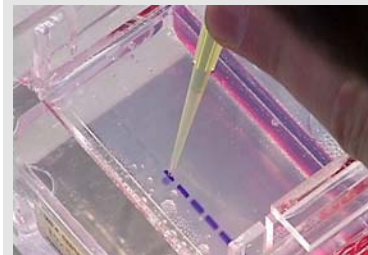
The agenda is based on the existing “Charter of Academic Cooperation”, which brings together the higher education establishments of the Great Region and which the regional executives should also join. The creation of a harmonised policy for both higher education and research within the Great Region must be based on an analysis of the area’s skills in these fields. It would be advisable to concentrate particularly on materials science/nanoscience, information and communications technology, biotechnology and environmental science, and also on the area of European competence, in order to create synergies that are usually only possible within the scientific structures of big cities. In this context, it is essential to coordinate programmes and organise them so that they will be complementary on a long-term basis.

This external coordination must be matched by a reinforcement of the internal network in the fields of research, teaching and studies. On the one hand this involves setting up networks of competence and scientific groupings to maintain continuous exchanges of information via high-performance data networks. On the other hand, the direct cooperation of the teaching and learning sector is also necessary in order to strengthen teacher and student exchanges within the Great Region.

Implementing these measures involves first of all coordinating an education policy based on perfect multilingualism. Secondly, modular courses based on the ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) standard must be jointly set up. Lastly, final diplomas must gradually be harmonised and mutually recognised. To this end, it might be possible in the first place to link a “Diploma Supplement” to the school leaving certificate. This will be a document common to the whole of the Great Region, which will facilitate the application of the recognition procedure already established in the E.U. In addition, it would be useful to standardise the degrees of Master and Bachelor (the introduction

## Agenda

- **Reorganisation of executive powers and all higher education establishments within the “Charter of Academic Cooperation”**
- **Analysis of the potential of the Great Region**
- **Harmonisation of policy on higher education and research**



- **Networking in the fields of research, teaching and learning**
- **Exchange of knowledge and people**



- **Modular structuring of courses**
- **“Diploma Supplement”**



## “2020 Vision for the Future”

of MBA is currently under discussion) in the cross-border area from the start, and to increase the number of double and even multiple degrees.

This process aimed at creating synergies in the field of science is to be synchronised with appropriate measures for common scientific transfer. To this end, it would also be advisable to create a network between the existing science parks and business incubators and link them to the research centres on the various sites. As with the higher education policy, these structures must be complementary and appropriate synergy effects must be generated by strategic harmonisation and progressive overall planning.

Finally, the entire area and all its competences must be presented jointly to the outside world, the attractions of this area for students and researchers must be vigorously promoted, and European promotion of science must be made to apply more directly to the Great Region. The final objective is to build a European park for research and innovation.

### Key projects

Various projects must be launched quickly in order to encourage the implementation of this process and make it effective.

All higher education establishments in the Great Region must coordinate their activities and form a new “University of the Great Region” offering standard courses and also intermediate examinations and diplomas in the areas that are most pertinent for the future. Only bilingual students (French – German) will be able to follow these programmes. This structure forms the nucleus of the future area of integrated education and research. In this context, it would also be advisable to create permanent networks in the key areas. This, of course, involves a harmonised science policy based on the common promotion of research projects alongside national promotion.

- **Common introduction of Master’s and Bachelor’s degrees**
- **Networking of science parks and business incubators**



- **Common presentation to the outside world**

### Key projects

- **University of the Great Region**





It is recommended that a higher education institute for European senior managers should be set up, with the aim of preparing candidates for posts of high responsibility in the fields of European politics, economics, administration and justice. More than in any other part of Europe, European infrastructures such as the European Court of Justice, the Administration of the European Parliament, the Academy of European Law, the European Court of Auditors and the European Investment Bank set the scene in the Great Region, as does the fact that it is so close to the cities of Brussels and Strasbourg. In addition, it must be noted that there is increased demand for such courses but insufficient provision. The European Institute of Saarland University and the other centres for European studies in the Great Region constitute a possible basis in this respect. It might also be possible to propose a specialisation directed towards central and eastern Europe, in order to facilitate the recruitment of staff required to fill posts of high responsibility in the accession countries.

The setting up of an interregional centre for scientific research and cross-cultural studies in the border regions would constitute a big step towards an appropriate way of dealing with the cross-border problems to which Europe will continue to be exposed. As the “frontier phenomenon” has not yet been the object of systematic scientific studies, this institute, attached to the higher education establishment of the Great Region, would provide an opportunity for the Region to capitalise on new scientific fields. The institute could study the area of the Great Region but also other border areas within the European Union. Based on horizontal research looking at the area and covering all the disciplines, and endeavouring to suggest appropriate solutions to each problem, the institute would constitute an essential component of the “European region of science” to be formed by the Great Region. In addition, the department of “cross-cultural studies” could concentrate on the cultural conflicts that exist in Europe and in the world, and contribute to remedying them.

- **Institute of higher education (post-graduate level) for European senior managers**



- **Centre for research on border areas**







## “2020 Vision for the Future”

In the context of strategic long-term planning, it is also important to establish a research institute that will fulfil an international role. This measure must of course take into consideration the territorial structures of the Great Region and it is assumed that, through its own institutes, the Great Region occupies a suitable position in international competition in respect of science and research.

It is envisaged that a site for the transfer of knowledge and international cluster management will shortly be created. It will have the task of presenting the entire potential of the Great Region in the field of research and providing cross-border transfer of knowledge between researchers and small and medium-sized businesses. Its mission would also include concentrating on specific topics in the research sector (Cluster) to be promoted on the basis of jointly agreed priorities.

It is important for the future of the Region that the structural changes already successfully begun should be maintained on a lasting basis. Adaptation to technological, scientific and social developments can only be effective if we are in a position to anticipate them and have a sound and permanent means of understanding them. In this context, it has proved necessary to set up an interregional futures observatory which will apply international, European and national recommendations in terms of prospection and research foresight within the Great Region, while taking account of the special features of the area. Rather like a seismograph, this observatory would regularly inform politicians about the developments observed and advise them accordingly. It could be set up as an institute with a fixed structure or as a “council for the future” made up of interregional experts.

- **Setting up a research institute of international standing in the Great Region**



- **Location for the transfer of knowledge and international cluster management**



- **Interregional futures observatory**





8 aspects of the Great Region in 2020

Economy & employment

4

**2020: Where the heart of Europe beats**

It is 2020. The Great Region forms a common economic area with a single employment market. At the same time, it is still anchored to national systems of reference. This combination does not exist anywhere else in Europe. So the Great Region is no longer a junction point, but a true interface in the heart of Europe.

The internal market has become a reality here. Whereas, in other border areas, many informal and practical obstacle still impede the free movement of people, goods, capital and services, here these barriers have been abolished. Structural change has been greatly accelerated, giving rise to in a wide variety of small and medium-sized businesses that would have been unimaginable just 20 years ago.

These new SMEs can take advantage of factors that do not exist in this form in other regions. Firstly, there is multidimensional access to the market which, starting with the traditional national market, opens other foreign outlets to businesses through the new integrated market of the Great Region. This multidimensional market access is accompanied by multinational workforce recruitment, which has become very frequent and has been made possible particularly by the younger generations' multilingualism and the harmonisation of salaries and taxation in the Great Region. And finally, the great potential for innovation, which has earned the Great Region a Europe-wide reputation today, is admirably served by the continuous transfer of knowledge, via the science and activity parks, between the universities and the integrated research institutes on the one hand and businesses on the other. Whereas we were previously confronted by a high unemployment rate, now it is the shortage of labour that poses a problem.

**Vision**

- **Common economic area, single employment market**
- **The single market is a reality**



- **New range of SMEs after successful structural changes**
- **High potential for innovation thanks to the continuous transfer of knowledge**



- **Problem of labour shortage**





## “2020 Vision for the Future”

This new dynamic is sustained by an effective inter-regional public transport network and so-far flawless linking to the major axes of European transport.

All this increases the aspirations of European businesses particularly those that wish to have a presence in several countries at the same time, hoping to gain advantage at an international trading level from the cross-cultural competence of their staff. To this may be added the specific location factors of the Great Region, such as the number and variety of cultural events on offer, the sound leisure infrastructure, a healthy environment, unspoilt natural landscapes, and not least, culinary excellence and quality of life in general. Whereas until recently the Great Region still had to communicate its advantages by means of detailed marketing strategies, in practice it can now do without any advertising. In fact, these attractions constitute its brand image, which is recognised everywhere and attracts not only workers, entrepreneurs and investors but also tourists from all over Europe.

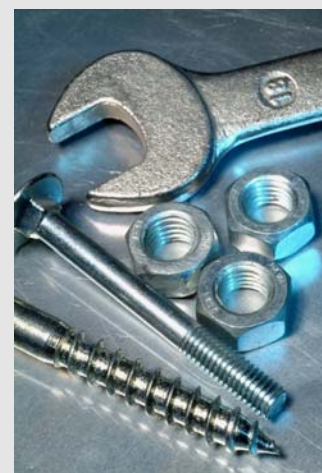
- **Economic region favoured by international investors**
- **Hard and soft location factors famous throughout Europe**



### **2003: Pathways and potentials**

It is 2003. The process of cross-border cooperation is underway and the first effects can be felt. This process is sustained by the progress made at community level, for instance with the single currency. However, the objectives of the Vision are far from being achieved. Unemployment is still hitting certain parts of the Great Region hard. Our central position has so far attracted more branches than head offices. So there is too little demand for resources in management and in the fields of research and development in the Great Region. We have not yet succeeded in systematically exploiting our potential or in effectively taking advantage of our crucial factors.

Yet the region's strengths are obvious. Progress towards political and economic integration necessarily goes hand in hand with the continuous development of the site of the Great Region. The previously peripheral zones that make up the Great Region are gradually be-



#### **Strengths:**

- **Development of the site thanks to the progress of the community process**



ing opened up as a result of the central position in Europe of the region as a whole, offering an opportunity to any business with activities extending into the whole of Europe. The highly qualified workforce is distinguished by its long experience of industry and especially by its great flexibility, and does not complain about shift work. In certain parts of the Great Region, linguistic competence is already above average. The economy is extremely diversified and very export-focussed. Important community institutions have their headquarters in the Great Region and the major centres of Strasbourg and Brussels are very close. Finally, close and successful cooperation at institutional level (for example, chambers of commerce and industry, guild chambers, workers' associations, etc.) has already enabled the foundations to be laid for greater integration within the Great Region.

However, certain obstacles still impede the development of the existing potential. In the first place, this concerns the exchange of goods and services and cooperation between companies exposed to non-harmonised fiscal and social systems. Moreover, the mobility of apprentices and salaried staff is restricted by the incompatibility of different systems of education and salary scales. However, even when such obstacles do not arise, the Great Region is not yet sufficiently perceived as a common field of action. The problem starts with the lack of transparency in the market, as compared with national markets. So common lists of statistics are very rare. The same is true of the possibilities for cross-border research on the Internet. Also, apart from the EU Interreg programme, with its very heavy administrative burden, there is no budget set aside for the promotion of cross-border projects in the Great Region.

In addition, there is as yet no question of common territorial or tourist marketing. And finally, the transport infrastructure, both within the region and in the linking to the European supraregional network, has gaps that are far too large for us to claim to satisfy the demands of a European region able to take up the challenges of the future.

- **Central situation in Europe**
- **Highly qualified workforce**
- **High degree of linguistic competence in certain parts of the Great Region**
- **Great diversity of sectors of activity and international orientation**
- **Headquarters of important community institutions**
- **Successful cooperation at the institutional level**



**Weaknesses:**

- **Obstacles due to the differences in the fiscal, social and education systems**
- **Lack of transparency in the market**
- **No budget for cross-border projects**
- **No common territorial or tourist marketing**
- **Inadequate transport infrastructure**



## Agenda

The creation of integrated information platforms constitutes the starting point for common action in the future. In this respect, a complete overview must be established, describing in detail the economic situation and the employment market, businesses and their performance, cultural and educational provisions, the opportunities for training etc. Such a platform would not only replace the tedious task of synthesising research undertaken in the various component parts of the region. It would also represent a basis for the creation of an integrated website, where information about the Great Region and its economy, research, employment market and social situation, education, tourism, culture and leisure activities would be available. This information must be presented in an easily comprehensible form by a functional research system.

Such an Internet portal will not only be very useful to the actors in the Great Region, who will be able to make use of a cooperation grant to forge commercial relationships and thus advance economic integration. It will also serve to promote the Great Region to the outside world by making all important information available in concise form to businesses wishing to move in, and by demonstrating the advantages of the Great Region.

However, besides information, it is a question of encouraging the economic powers to cooperate. Sectoral forums have actually been created with this in mind. They are in fact aimed across borders at businesses in a particular sector, spotlighting the opportunities for cooperation and, particularly, the advantages associated with them. In this way reciprocal networking and networking with research institutes in the Great Region is being encouraged. In this connection, the sectors of motor vehicle technology/ automation, medical technology, microsystems, information technology and biotechnology hold important trump cards. This initiative should be extended to create a “Network of economic mediators” and include the setting up of a cross-border business

## Agenda

- **Creation of integrated information platforms**



- **Common Internet site**



- **Sectoral forums for cross-border networking**



- **Network of economic mediators**
- **Cross-border business parks**



park, an interregional centre of innovation for small and medium-sized businesses, to which could be added an interregional and cross-disciplinary network of cooperation, bringing higher education establishments and businesses together.

These measures should be accompanied by the creation of a standardised interregional capital market, particularly in the area of venture capital, efforts to harmonise infrastructures and the promotion of individual enterprise, the introduction of identical criteria for spatial planning, and the exchange of information and harmonisation. They should be completed by the coordination of measures to combat the black economy and illegal employment. In the meantime, it would be advisable to harmonise prices in the post and telecommunications sector in particular. So it will be important for the principle of prices identical to those valid within each country for large size letters, parcels, giro transfers and telecommunications services to be extended to the interregional level.

Common marketing for tourism will also require more than just information. Once more, it will be a question of planning without neglecting strategy and of active structuring. Consequently, an overall plan is needed which, on the one hand, will present all the diversity of the attractions in the areas of culture, history of art, architecture and landscape in a coherent way, but will on the other hand also be representative of the strategic offensive to be mounted.

In this respect, the opportunities for the Great Region lie in specialised tourism rather than in mass tourism. That is why it is important to identify themes that will enable the Great Region to be competitive in the context of European tourism, and commercialise them by targeting them accordingly. It could for example be a question of themes entitled “Culture and taste”, “Borders within reach”, “Activities without restrictions or borders”, “World history within your grasp”, “Encounters with nature”, etc.

- **Interregional centre of innovation**



- **Network of cooperation “Higher education establishments and economy”**
- **Single capital market**
- **Harmonisation of structures in economic promotion and spatial planning**
- **Standardisation of prices for post, telecommunication and giro transfers**



- **Common tourist marketing**







These soft location factors should also be integrated into common location marketing. As with tourism, the aforementioned strengths of the Great Region must be presented in a concise, attractive, overall plan and commercialised in a targeted way.

The creation of free zones in the regions situated immediately next to the France-Luxembourg, Germany-Luxembourg and Luxembourg-Belgium borders would be a special set-up. Such free zones would be distinguished by unique economic promotional criteria and by the harmonisation of taxes and duties. In this way, imbalances in the economic development on either side of the borders could be avoided. In any case, the Summit should call for a feasibility study on this proposal.

### Key Projects

Several of the projects described in the other sections contribute to giving fresh impetus to this process of economic integration. This is particularly true in the case of the establishment of an “Institute for the transfer of knowledge and interregional management of the systems of production” (cf. Science and Research), the creation of a cross-border qualification on completion of an apprenticeship (cf. Training) and the introduction of cross-border training as a master craftsman (cf. Training).

In addition, starting now, an integrated supply of information on the Internet should be available on the themes of "sites and economy", "employment and social questions", "qualifications" and "tourism, culture and leisure activities", forming the nucleus of a broad platform of information. Moreover, we need to create a tourist marketing agency capable of drawing up and implementing in a professional way the overall concept required. The same goes for the creation of a territorial marketing agency, which would be the first point of contact for businesses wishing to set up in the region. Unlike the tourism agency, this organisation would direct interested parties to the appropriate company for eco-

- **Common location-marketing**

- **Cross-border free zones**

### Key Projects

- **Institute for the transfer of knowledge and interregional cluster management**
- **Cross-border qualification on completion of apprenticeship**
- **Cross-border training for master craftsmen**
- **Integrated provision of information on the Internet**







conomic promotion, which would take charge of them. The agency’s activities would thus complement those of the regional companies without competing with them.

Given that the implementation of all the proposals for strategic projects must be considered as common initiatives, a budget for the Great Region is needed in order to finance these projects. Interreg is not suitable as an instrument of basic regional financing. In fact, the criteria and the definition of the zones eligible for the Interreg programme do not match the requirements for a specific financial tool for the Great Region. It is really only suitable for guaranteeing complementary financing. This could actually be the case if we succeeded in reforming Interreg and defining uniform support criteria for the whole of the Great Region.

- **Tourist marketing agency**



- **Economic and social agency**
- **Budget for the Great Region**







## 8 aspects of the Great Region in 2020

### Social networks

5

#### 2020: A civil society with a European lifestyle

It is 2020. Despite the increasing age of the population, the Great Region has succeeded in guaranteeing its social welfare standards over the whole of its territory. Based on organised mutual aid and a dynamic voluntary sector, new kinds of social network have been set up, encompassing all members of society, which are proving effective at meeting the challenges of everyday life.

Thanks to the cross-border Academy for the Social Professions, the social institutions of the Great Region have first class staff available, who have a multilingual education and can work anywhere. The interpenetration of administrative structures and the successful cooperation with independent associations guarantee an integral cross-border coverage of needs that is unique in European border zones. Helped by the exchange of staff and by interregional cooperation, a climate of social innovation reigns throughout the Great Region, developing the idea of an adult civil society, linked to new key conceptions of a European lifestyle.

#### Vision

- **An adult civil society**
- **A guarantee of social standards despite the ageing population**
- **A flourishing voluntary sector**
- **Organised mutual aid and a new kind of social network**
- **First class staff in the social professions**
- **Integral coverage of the territory**
- **A climate of social innovation**

#### 2003: Pathways and potentials

It is 2003. The Great Region keeps alive its historic traditions of solidarity and cooperation, while being confronted with many social challenges that vary from one region to another. All the regions are affected by demographic changes and their consequences for policy on young people, families and the elderly, and also by other problems, for example the integration of the handicapped, the reduction of poverty, the integration of immigrants and the treatment of drug addicts. The current restrictions on the cross-border transfer of welfare benefits, especially in kind, seriously disadvantage the population in border areas and delay the implementation of common projects. Organised mutual aid and a greater sense of responsibility in the area of social welfare bring increasing vitality to modern civil societies, and this will contribute to maintaining the standards achieved so far.

#### Current problems:

- **Consequences of demographic change for policy on young people, families and the elderly**



- **Restrictions on cross-border transfer of welfare benefits**
- **Need for a greater sense of responsibility and more extensive organised mutual aid**



## Agenda

In all areas of social policy, we must seek out the problems for which the most rational solution, for technical or economic reasons, will be a collective one. This is the case, for example, with cross-border social assistance for small target categories, or the reciprocal exploitation of particular resources. The coordination of programmes in these areas should proceed alongside the setting up of cross-border structures for social assistance. As a large part of the necessary measures cannot be put in place on the sole authority of the partner regions, it is necessary to check with the higher authorities of national governments and parliaments on the possible effects of future social security legislation on the border regions.

The social services constitute one of the parts of the labour market which have seen the greatest expansion. That is why we must take particular care that the different partner regions have the same opportunities to access this sector of activity, and that the required qualification profiles are mutually adapted.

For the cross-border transfer of social benefits, intelligent solutions must be devised in the context of legal conditions that will enable the current obstacles to be removed. However, it may also be necessary to create a new legal framework that will make fair allowance for the needs of the border sector.

A cross-border plan for the management of hospital resources must be prepared, to permit the rational use of equipment, allow economies to be made and guarantee the population a balanced system of skilled, easily accessible services. It would be advisable as far as possible to stimulate and foster collaboration with independent associations. The partner regions must coordinate their activities in this area and regularly exchange the information necessary for this planning.

## Agenda

- **Organisation of cross-border structures for social assistance**
- **Organised professional exchanges and fine-tuning of solutions based on successful approaches**
- **Coordination of programmes in all areas of social policy**



- **Ascertaining the effects of social legislation in border regions**
- **Removal of obstacles to the cross-border transfer of social welfare benefits**
- **Cross-border planning of the management of hospital resources**
- **Encouraging cooperation with independent associations**



## Key Projects

A Centre for Social Information must be created, to inform the public fully about the provisions and institutions in the Great Region. As an element of the integrated information platforms (cf. Economy and employment), this Information Centre must be linked to other sectors and make a big contribution to working out solutions for developing successful approaches in a mutual learning process. Seminars, exchanges of staff and common pilot schemes should ensure the systematic promotion of cross-border learning and communication of the results obtained to all concerned.

Secondly, it would be advisable to create a Cross-border Academy for the Social Professions, as a bilingual/trilingual organisation for continuous education, with qualifications that would be recognised on both sides of the border, which would create the conditions for equality of access to the social institutions of the Great Region.

An annual Youth Summit should be organised, to familiarise young people early on with cross-border social relations in the Great Region.

### Key Projects:

- **Creation of a Centre for Social Information for the Great Region**



- **Creation of a Cross-border Academy for the Social Professions**

- **Setting up of an annual Youth Summit**









8 aspects of the Great Region in 2020

Transport & mobility

6

**2020: A communications node between the central European axes**

It is 2020. The Great Region is at the centre of the European network of routes of communication. In the North-South direction, it now constitutes a real alternative to the traditional corridors South of England - Brussels - Paris – Rhone Valley - Mediterranean and Netherlands – Rhine Valley - Italy, asserting its superiority over these over-saturated routes. In the East-West direction, it is benefiting from the large increase in the flow of travellers and goods resulting from the enlargement of the EU.

Effective supraregional links allow it to absorb this heavy traffic. In this context, the big interregional airport has an important role, well situated with regard to European competition with the major airports of Paris, Brussels and Frankfurt. The success of this big airport is due to its close cooperation with other airports in the Great Region and an optimised system of special links with the major airports of Paris, Brussels and Frankfurt. Moreover, the latter are extremely interested in relations of this kind, the more so because of the satisfactory frequency of shuttle services between the Great Region and the major airports. The same goes for the high-speed North-South and East-West rail lines, which benefit the whole of the Great Region, thanks to an effective system of rail connections. To this can be added the new waterway link between the Moselle and the Saône/Rhône. Linking the North Sea to the Mediterranean, it has greatly relieved the road and rail networks following the increase in goods transport. The excellent motorway link is therefore well-known for its moderate amount of traffic, so that free flow is guaranteed even at weekends.

**Vision**

- **At the centre of the European network of communications routes**
- **Coordination of air links with the major airports of Paris, Brussels and Frankfurt**



- **High-speed links North-South and East-West with an effective system of connections**



- **Moselle - Saône/Rhône waterway linking the North Sea and the Mediterranean**



This interregional communications network is especially remarkable for the balanced relationship between the air, waterway, rail and road links. This means that, although internal traffic and traffic coming into the Great Region are increasing year by year, there can be no question of reaching saturation point. Many travellers can enter and leave the region at the same time with no difficulty, and this is now a crucial factor for those setting up business here. Moreover, as a result, the communication routes of the Great Region do not only serve those passing through. Alongside the new economic dynamism, they make a big contribution to making the Great Region an ever more popular destination for travellers, investors and managers as well as entrepreneurs and students etc. Today, the Great Region is already considered as a “hinge region” between the East and West, and North and South of Europe.

However, credit for this is due not only to the supraregional links. The excellent common transport network in the Great Region is also crucial in this respect. The harmonisation of judicial and legal provisions allows a cross-border cooperation group to propose a common network of lines, with a uniform fares system. This is unique in the world, so that in this area, too, the Great Region is considered a model region, far beyond the bounds of the Old World.

### 2003: Pathways and potentials

At the outset, the geostrategic position for a key role in the European transport network is very favourable. The existing North-South axes are already chronically saturated with traffic. This phenomenon will increase with the constant increase in the movement of people and of goods in the wake of the Community process. The same goes for traffic between the East and West of Europe in the framework of the enlargement process. So transport passing through the Great Region is bound to increase in the years to come.

- **Free-flowing traffic thanks to the balance between the air, water, rail and road links**
- **The Great Region, a “hinge region” between the North and South, East and West of Europe**



- **Efficient common cross-border transport**



#### Strengths:

- **Good geostrategic position**
- **Great potential for absorbing increasing trans-European traffic**
- **New high-speed East-West link under construction**



The Great Region is only partially equipped to meet these challenges. The decision to create the East-West high-speed link has indeed been taken. However, the North-South high-speed train route between Brussels and Strasbourg planned years ago by the European Commission in the context of trans-European networks has still not materialised. For its part, the motorway network has certainly been developed, but that cannot hide the fact that for years large gaps have not been closed and busy sections have not been widened, resulting in numerous restrictions and bottlenecks impeding the flow of traffic. So there are still large deficiencies in the motorway network that will have to be made good. In terms of air transport, the lack of a concerted strategy is deplorable. Many small airports compete with one another without any of them being of sufficient size to be able to play a role in international competition. With regard to waterways, the region is linked only to the Rhine, not to the Rhone. The connections of the rail links to the European networks are still poor at the present time and common cross-border transport only exists in partial form.

However, even when these deficiencies have been made good, there will still be no plan for the Great Region to enable it to take advantage of the increase in trade in the form of added value. In fact, it is much less a question of transport planning than of setting up an integrated action plan for the Great Region as described in the model to be introduced. Transport planning is precisely the area that shows the importance of such an integrated approach. Without the improvement of the Great Region in all other sectors, the increase in transport will at first appear to be of a transitory nature, and this will generate more disadvantages than advantages for the Great Region.



**Weaknesses:**

- **Lack of harmonisation in the strategy for exploiting the airway potential of the Great Region**
- **Gaps in the motorway network impede the flow of traffic**
- **Waterway link incomplete**
- **Poor connections of the rail links to European networks**
- **Underdeveloped common cross-border transport**





## Agenda

First of all, we must set to work on the quick completion of the high-speed East-West link Paris – Metz/Nancy – Saarbrücken – Frankfurt, which aims to provide good access to Eastern and South-East Europe.

Secondly, we must succeed in creating a new North-South route through the Great Region (South of England - Brussels - Luxembourg - Strasbourg - Mediterranean). The central Metz - Luxembourg section of this fast link to the interior of the Great Region is currently at the planning stage. On the other hand, it is also important to insist on the creation of fast interregional links, for example from Luxembourg to Trier and Koblenz, with connections to the north of Germany. In this respect, it is particularly important that all the actors in the Great Region adopt a common attitude towards the decision-makers. Individual strategies could in fact cause conflicts of interest, which in turn would cause delays in the implementation of the project. This particularly applies to resolving the problem of the many gaps in the motorway network. Moreover, these linking routes must not be too narrowly defined. The routes of the European transport networks must be conceived as broad corridors of access, which will only be able to produce their full effects by means of good connections to the cities of the Great Region.

The situation is almost identical in the case of the enlargement of the waterway between the North Sea and the Mediterranean by the construction of the Moselle-Saône canal or the elimination of the gaps that still exist in the motorway network. A united front made up of French, Luxemburgers, Belgians and Germans could put much greater pressure on the decision-makers in favour of rapid implementation than uncoordinated, isolated actions. Only credible determination on the part of the Great Region as a whole can lead to success in this.

## Agenda

- **Quick completion of the high-speed East-West link**
- **New high-speed rail link crossing the Great Region from North to South**



- **Improvement of rail connections to the North of Germany**
- **Quick solution to the problem of gaps in the motorway network**



- **Construction of the Moselle-Saône canal**





However, in order to achieve the kind of determination that would be credible to the outside world, the necessary unity would have to be a reality inside the region. This applies on the one hand to coordinating the potential of the airports of Luxembourg-Findel, Liège, Bitburg, Frankfurt-Hahn, Zweibrücken, Saarbrücken-Ensheim and Metz-Nancy, which must be accompanied by a concerted positioning of this potential in respect of the major airports of Brussels, Paris and Frankfurt. This can only succeed if we manage to agree on the function of a major international airport on an appropriate site in the Great Region. On the one hand, this applies particularly to the setting-up of a common cross-border transport system that will be competitive, affordable and user-friendly. Apart from a few approaches, the various component parts of the Great Region appear manifestly incapable of doing any such thing. That is why the common cross-border transport system has to be one of the priorities of the Great Region to achieve. For this, it is particularly important to ensure that the national railway companies will cooperate across borders.

### Key Projects

Given that only the Great Region can initiate Key Projects, only the areas under the competence of the regional authorities are concerned. As a result, such projects will concern firstly the setting-up of a common cross-border transport system. In addition, other important projects that are not the competence of the actors in the Great Region will have to be taken into account,. These are mentioned in the Agenda and addressed in the first place to external decision-makers.

To be responsible for common cross-border transport, an organisation for cross-border cooperation should be created on the lines of the Karlsruhe or Mainz Agreements. This organisation would draw up proposals for harmonising legal and judicial provisions in respect of common transport and establish a local traffic plan for cross-border public transport. This plan would include definitions for the objectives of a transport transport policy, the line network, fares and financing.

- **Coordination of air-transport potential in a major airport and strategic positioning in respect of the major European airports**



- **Setting up an attractive common cross-border transport system**

### Key Projects

- **Organisation for cross-border cooperation on common transport**



- **Development company for common cross-border transport**



## “2020 Vision for the Future”

Modelled on this organisation for cooperation, the transport companies of the Great Region running or wishing to run public transport would create a development company responsible for the cross-border transport of travellers on the basis of the local traffic plan.

In order to accompany all the measures that could create added value from the Agenda at the start, it is recommended that a centre for integrated goods traffic be set up, with logistical services, including river traffic on the Moselle.

To make the Great Region an attractive location with regard to transport for new companies in the field of logistics, it will be necessary to create a European Academy of Transport and Logistics. The availability of specially qualified staff in the logistics sector, European solutions for the transport market and the results of applied research into new trends in the field of transport development are primary conditions for being able to share in the growing transport market.



- **Multimodal platform with logistical services**



- **European Academy for Transport Logistics**



## 8 aspects of the Great Region in 2020

### Environment & regional development

7

#### **2020: An area with an integrated population favouring ecology and a high quality of life**

It is 2020. The Great Region is an area with a homogeneous population possessing solid infrastructures and many networks and urban agglomerations extending beyond its borders. It is above all in the former border regions that living spaces of a new quality have appeared, where populations can choose, in the most natural way in the world, between various national options, whether for buying goods, medical consultations or even visits to the theatre. The urban centres of the Great Region, Luxembourg, Metz, Nancy, Arlon/Namur, Trier, Saarbrücken and Kaiserslautern work in synergy and the economic, educational and cultural facilities provided are so abundant and of such quality that only capital cities can offer anything similar. Thanks to the exemplary renaturalisation of heavy industry sites and the sustainable development of natural landscapes of touristic interest, the Great Region justly benefits from the image of an environment where you can eat well and life is good, but where you can also carry on your profession successfully, in healthy surroundings.

#### **2003: Pathways and potentials**

It is 2003. The Great Region has precious natural potential that have already seen partial cross-border development. This particularly refers to the Germano-Luxemburgish nature reserve and the international reserve of the Palatinate Forest/Northern Vosges biosphere. Many very promising projects have been started in the area of reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and developing renewable energy, working towards a policy of sustainability. However, they never go beyond the national framework and do not therefore concern the whole territory. The common regional development-policy, extended to cover the whole of the Great Re-

#### **Vision:**

- **Common infrastructures for the Great Region**
- **Efficient network of cooperation for urban centres**
- **Innovative living spaces in cross-border agglomerations**



- **Natural landscapes attractive to tourists**
- **Quality environment in which to live and work**

#### **Strengths:**

- **Precious natural potentials**
- **Innovative energy projects**





## “2020 Vision for the Future”

gion, is only in its early stages. In the border zones, the incompatibility of the various national spatial planning systems has so far prevented the emergence of areas of cross-border interpenetration and led to gaps in the structure of public services. It must be noted that the urban centres in the Great Region are very much oriented towards their respective national areas, so that a functioning cross-border cooperation is still largely the exception – even where it would seem natural because the cities are so close geographically.

### Agenda

Until the year 2020, it will be strategically vital for the regional development and environmental policy of the Great Region:

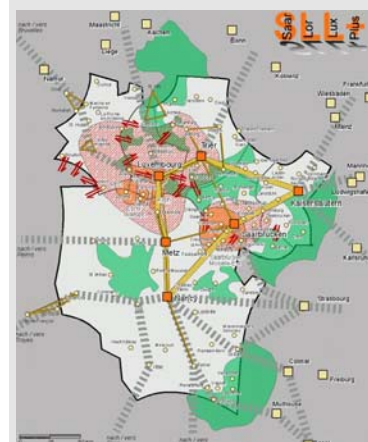
- **To abandon national spatial planning policies in order to develop networks of cross-border services**

Functional spatial planning in the sense of a structured system of urban nodes and the traffic routes linking them constitutes one of the very foundations of development adapted to future needs in the economic, cultural and social fields. All the urban centres in the Great Region must be associated in networks of intense activity for this purpose, as four of them have already been for years within the framework of the “QuattroPole” project. To do this, they must aim for a degree of affinity which cannot be restricted to cooperation between local authority administrations but must, on the contrary, include collaboration between all the highest level municipal functions, starting with the universities and specialist hospitals, right through to theatres, libraries and high quality sports facilities.

### Weaknesses:

- **Incompatibility of national spatial planning systems**
- **Incomplete structure of public services in the border zones**
- **Lack of structures for cooperation between urban centres**
- **Insufficient integration of environmental policies**

### Agenda



- **Extending cooperation between cities on the model of the “QuattroPole” city network**





## “2020 Vision for the Future”

In the area of cross-border agglomerations, the existing projects, the “Pôle Européen de développement” near Longwy, the agglomeration of Esch-sur-Alzette with Audun-le-Tiche and Villerupt, the agglomeration of Saarbrücken – Moselle-Est, must be developed and the integration achieved so far must be improved and extended by means of common management.

In order to give a lasting guarantee of the basic functions essential for the survival of small and medium-sized towns in the rural zones in the cross-border sector, all of these must also be integrated into a network. In fact, the difficulties suffered by villages as a result of their demography and financial shortfalls can only be overcome in future by joint efforts. Among these rural networks, we may note the areas:

- Pirmasens - Bitche - Zweibrücken - Blieskastel
- Wiltz - Bastogne
- Arzfeld - Saint Vith - Clervaux
- Bouillon - Nord Meuse.

Given that some of these towns also belong to national networks, they could play an interface role. In fact, smaller towns could be associated through them with the urban centre networks. In this context we could mention the model of the “Quadriga” network in the Trier region or the network set up by the towns in the Lorraine Valley. The profile of cooperation within the rural networks should include teacher exchanges and the organisation of cultural events, the sale of tourist products, themed tourist routes (Battle of the Ardennes route, wine routes, organ routes, etc.).

- **Intensification of communal cooperation**
- **Common management of the integration of cross-border agglomerations**
- **Development of structures of rural networks close to borders**







- **Establishing an overall plan for sustainable union, to include an integrated approach, environmental protection, the creation of added value in the area of agriculture, green tourism and spatial development (dismantling or conversion of steel-works and coalfields).**

Just at the time when state involvement is tending to be reduced, sustainable environmental protection can constitute a particularly fruitful political investment in terms of the quality of a social environment. That is why, without impeding the development of the necessary infrastructure, it would be advisable to preserve and develop the remarkable natural potentials of the Great Region. Notable contributors to cross-border coordination are the management plans for the Natura 2000 zones and the development of the international Reserve of the Palatinate Forest – Northern Vosges biosphere and the Germano-Luxemburgish Nature Reserve.

From the point of view of environmental policy, it would be advisable to have cross-border coordination of water policy and waste management. The Water Framework Directive requires management plans for hydrographical basins to be drawn up before 2009 and implemented by 2012. With regard to waste, the territories lying at the heart of Great Region are asked to organise cross-border management of their waste at local authority level by forming cooperative groupings in accordance with the Karlsruhe agreements.



- **Sustainable environmental protection**
- **Cross-border coordination of management plans for the Natura-2000 zones**
- **Development of the interregional reserves of the biosphere and nature reserves**



- **Coordination of water and waste management policies**
- **Creation of cross-border cooperative organisations for waste management**



## Key Projects

The tourist marketing Agency (*cf.* “Economy and Employment”) has been commissioned to draw up a plan associating the working out of a cross-border provision of tourist products (green tourism) with initiatives aimed at increasing the creation of added value in the production and distribution chains of agricultural products. This plan must be implemented through projects for concrete models which group together the environment, tourism and agriculture.

In order to make the progress of environmental policy transparent and credible, an authority guaranteeing and encouraging the provision of cross-border environmental information will be set up. This should be in the form of multilingual Internet portals under common management, as this environmental information, which is part of the integrated information platforms (*cf.* “Economy and Employment”), will have been networked with other areas.

An independent council of experts on “the environment and sustainable development” will be set up. Made up of scientists and high-powered experts from all the component parts of the Great Region, it will formulate recommendations, which it will regularly submit to the authorities in the form of reports on the interregional situation regarding the environment, social affairs and the economy.

### Key Projects:

- **Models of projects aimed at creating added value in cross-border agriculture and tourism**
- **Setting up of multilingual Internet portals for information on the environment**



- **Creation of a council of experts for “the environment and sustainable development”**





## 8 aspects of the Great Region in 2020

### Institutions

# 8

#### 2020: The institutions, the administrative tools of the Great Region

It is 2020. The Great Region has effective structures to ensure interregional cooperation. Having been assimilated by all the protagonists, the principle of subsidiarity plays an important part in this area by consistently preventing the appearance of complex, new administrative organisations. The Great Region clearly shows that “suprastructures” are not necessarily essential in order to act effectively, on the basis of a common identity.

Moreover, the collaboration set up within the contractual territory of the Great Region has been considerably increased in the border areas, which form a “zone of strengthened cooperation”. The EuRegios set up in the zones immediately along the border are proving to be particularly important in this matter. It is in fact they who defend grass-roots, local interests to Great Region representatives, and who thus apply the principle of subsidiarity at the base.

The central political organ at the head of the Great Region is the Interregional Council (CI), which has replaced the old Summit. This is where the top officials of the regional executives (including the Prefect of the Lorraine Region), regularly meet to take policy decisions concerning interregional cooperation and fix the modes of procedure, such as the period of rotation and whose turn it is to hold the presidency. In addition, the CI coordinates central missions at interregional level, and involves other levels, such as the parliamentary or local levels. An Interregional Economic and Social Committee serves the CI as an organ of consultation on all questions of an economic and social nature. Its composition is determined by the CI.

#### Vision:

- **Effective structures and a conception of subsidiarity**



- **Increased cooperation in border areas**



- **Executive organ de: the “Interregional Council” (CI)**
- **Organ of consultation: the “Interregional economic and social Committee”**



The CI relies on its permanent office, that is to say the Secretariat of the Interregional Council, to transpose its resolutions into legislation. This secretariat deals with the business in hand, is responsible for preparing meetings of the CI according to its mandate, and guarantees continuous communication concerning the Great Region, by working actively with the press and public relations.

The secretariat is assisted by five agencies (multilingualism and culture, science and research, tourist marketing, economy and employment, and transport), which are responsible on the operational level for the development and realisation of central projects. It is interesting to emphasise that even after several years of activity, these agencies have not generated any new administrative structures. On the contrary, close collaboration with the staff and administrative structures already in place has proved to be particularly effective.

This structure of cooperation would not be operational if the Interregional Parliamentary Council (CPI) did not constructively accompany the process of cross-border integration. The CPI is not a directly elected parliament: it is composed of representatives delegated by the regional parliaments. For this reason, it does not have jurisdictional competence as such, of course, but it nevertheless plays a crucial part in the transposition of the resolutions of the Interregional Council (CI) into law in the regional parliaments. A true “hinge element”, it has always managed to ensure that a consensus is finally reached, even in cases where the CI and the regional parliaments were divided by problematic issues. This can be explained by the fact that the CPI has from the outset exercised its right to monitor and participate in a very credible way (recommendations, taking a stand and questions to the CI), considering that by so doing it was acting as the driving force in the integration process, and through the fact that as a “complementary tandem”, the presidents of the CPI and the CI have always taken care to foster close personal collaboration.

- **Permanent Office: the “Secretariat of the Interregional Council”**

- **Agencies acting at the operational level**

- **“Hinge element” between the CI and the regional parliaments: the “Interregional Parliamentary Council” (CPI)**







## “2020 Vision for the Future”

So the structures of cooperation in the Great Region are compactly organised, as this system also allows it to defend its external interests. Thus, cooperation within the European organs is so close that the Great Region appears as a true entity and is therefore considered a protagonist to be taken seriously. The regions’ representatives in Brussels play a crucial role in this area. In fact, they act jointly and systematically, under the direction of the region holding the presidency of the CI at the time.

The community spirit shown by the Great Region is complemented by the existence of its own budget which enables it to finance common structures and projects.

The institutional structure of the Great Region is therefore distinguished by the fact that its fixed structures of cooperation only exist if they are necessary for the common interest. The processes of decision and transposition prove all the more effective because they are not impeded by the administrative weight of traditional systems. In the age of deregulation and reduction of administration, the Great Region is also the living example of subsidiarity in practice.

### **2003: Pathways and potentials**

It is 2003. The requisite institutional conditions for realising the vision are indisputably in place. At the time of the Summit of the Great Region, the representatives of the regional executives decide to act jointly from now on. The economic and social committee and many other organs have for years been advising these authorities on matters of cross-border cooperation. The Interregional Parliamentary Council has also made an impression as a common organ. In other words, the foundations of the future institutional structure are already in place, so it is possible to build on a firm foundation. An institutional revolution rejecting the existing framework that would have a deterrent effect can therefore be avoided.

#### ▪ **Homogeneous reactions to Brussels**



#### ▪ **Model of applied subsidiarity in action**

#### **Strengths:**

- **Institutional framework already in place at the start**
- **No “revolution” or rejection of the existing context**





The vision is nevertheless a real challenge. Putting it into practice requires greater effort than usual. This is most likely to be the case with the common budget, which will mean extra financial constraints for all participants. So it will be far from easy, especially at a time when public budgets are already very tight. One might think it would be difficult for interregional harmonisation procedures to make the political decision-making process in the regions any more complex than they already are. Avoiding this will remain a constant temptation, especially when it is possible to use more important constraints like national obligations as an excuse.

These are some of the many elements hiding potential sources of friction and considerable problems, which must be faced, because it is more important than ever to highlight the fact that the ultimate success of the “Great Region” project depends on the will to succeed in establishing community spirit.

### Agenda ...

More than in any other section, the Agenda in this case is both simple and complicated. It is simple inasmuch as institutions must be transformed or created in accordance with the vision. Presenting the measures in detail is therefore pointless.

But that is also precisely where the difficulty lies. In fact, this transformation requires a period of accelerated change and therefore demands intensive cooperation. However, what it most needs is a courageous and ambitious founding act, paving the way for institutional change. If this act is successful, the adapted institutions will themselves be able to stimulate and encourage the integration procedure. This will then become their most personal mission, in which they will find their true purpose.

### Weaknesses:

- **Tight public budgets**
- **Complication of already complex political decision procedures**



### ...& Prospects

#### Agenda

- **founding act concerning institutional change**





## “2020 Vision for the Future”

This founding act must take place as soon as possible. The debate and the search for a consensus at the time of the 7<sup>th</sup> Summit should be followed by the signal to start work given at the 8<sup>th</sup> Summit. In fact, the momentum of the start of the model procedure will be lost if it is not put into action immediately. That is why it appears important for the 8<sup>th</sup> Summit to be devoted not only to preparing the institutional ground, but also to drawing up a timetable for putting the vision into practice. This timetable, which must go well beyond the next Summit and stretch as far as 2020, must be just as ambitious as the model itself, and the pace must be sustained for it to be adhered to.

Continuous evaluation and self-critical analysis are the best guarantees of being able to attain this objective. But in order to set an intermediate mark, there should be a wide-ranging, in-depth interim assessment in 2010. What have we achieved? Where have we got to with the integration procedure? Where should we make corrections? What should these corrections be? What new objectives should we set ourselves? What old objectives should we continue to pursue? These are some of the many questions that must be put frankly and straightforwardly, which we must try to answer as best we can.

If the will to create a community spirit is to be the foundation of our success, this community spirit must also be expressed by means of appropriate symbols. A “House of the Great Region” bringing together all the organs of interregional cooperation would have this kind of symbolic impact. It would be advisable to seek out and find other forms of symbolic expression, so that the integration procedure can be effectively communicated to the public. To give a powerful signal of common will to our citizens and to Europe, the proposed projects should be made part of the next Interreg Programme for 2007 - 2013. It will be important for this programme to propose a single framework of support for the whole of the Great Region.

- **Preparing the ground and drawing up a timetable at the 8<sup>th</sup> Summit**



- **Interim assessment in 2010**



- **House of the Great Region**



- **Common Interreg Programme from 2007 to 2013**



## “2020 Vision for the Future”

This is absolutely essential. In fact, without support from the general public, without the encouragement of the inhabitants of the Great Region, any model procedure will remain a dead letter and will in any case not have been rendered legitimate. As “the most European of all the European regions”, we cannot and will not permit this.

An integration procedure that concentrates only on the technical aspects and counts only on the cooperation of political, economic or other institutions, will not enable us to succeed in involving much of society in the Great Region or in persuading people to identify with this Great Region. At any rate, that is what has become clear from the European integration procedure.

So we must seize the opportunity we are being offered to take this lesson into account and transpose it into the immediate empirical framework of the Great Region. That is why it is necessary to proceed in a way that will carry people along right from the start on the road leading to 2020.

This objective can be achieved through regional forums, as varied as possible, organised regularly by social groups at regional/local level. Social groups of all kinds can then choose topics concerning the Great Region and discuss them together. Procedures for raising awareness and agreeing a position must be encouraged and developed. It is in this kind of framework that opposition and approval can be brought to the fore and expressed. To initiate this kind of “forum culture”, it is recommended that a regular forum organised centrally at the highest level should first be set up, to encourage further developments on a wider and deeper scale.

This forum culture could also form the foundations on which to build modern, high-powered structures of “governance”, fostering the involvement of citizens, which would make it possible, in the long term, to create a citizen society that would actively participate in the planning and running of the Great Region.



- **Give people an idea of the situation in 2020**



- **Culture of public forums fostering awareness and attitudes**



- **Structures of governance**







## “2020 Vision for the Future”

The prior condition for this objective, but also a result of it, is that the Great Region must have an ever greater media presence. From Internet chatrooms to readers' letters in the daily papers, interregional topics must conquer the land of the Great Region. In order to do this, it would be advisable to launch and establish public events, and particularly to see that the culture of festivities open to all is increasingly imbued with trans-regional characteristics.

The idea of a common Great Region, formed from different regions sharing a common destiny and future, is of ever greater interest to the politicians responsible, as is impressively proved by the project in this vision. But there is still a long road to cover before this idea becomes reality. Finally, it is important to stress that the road will not be passable unless it leads through people's hearts.

- **The Great Region, a reflection of the will of the general public**



- **Win the hearts of the people**





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