Recommendation 693 (1973)[1]

European Symposium on Frontier Regions (Strasbourg, 29 June - 1 July 1972)

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having taken note of the report of its Committee on Regional Planning and Local Authorities on the first European Symposium on Frontier Regions (Doc. 3228) ;

2. Expressing its keen satisfaction at the success of the symposium, as illustrated both by the number and quality of the participants and by the press coverage ;

3. Endorsing the participants' wish that frontiers, once the scars of history, should become points of contact between nations ;

4. Observing that the intensity of trans-frontier cooperation is a measure of the rapprochement between nations in Europe and of governments' willingness to promote it ;

5. Stressing the need to devise and implement development plans at local and regional level especially in frontier regions so that their special situation may be taken into account,

6. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers :

Invite member States :

a. to encourage by all appropriate means the establishment of frontier region commissions composed of local and regional councillors from the frontier areas and of representatives of the central authorities of the States concerned, as proposed by the first European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning ;

b. to authorise such commissions to confer on frontier problems and to submit to the competent authorities proposals for instituting effective trans-frontier cooperation in all fields with a direct impact on the lives of the population in the regions concerned ;

c. to arrange for the representatives of economic, social and cultural interest groups to put their views to these commissions ;

d. to examine, together with the frontier region commissions, the following two particularly urgent problems :

the situation of frontier workers in their home countries and at their places of work, and the problem of frontier crossing which could be satisfactorily resolved by the means employed in the Benelux States ;

trans-frontier pollution control, and the conservation and rehabilitation of the countryside in frontier areas ;

1. Assembly debate on 24 January 1973 (23rd Sitting) (see Doc. 3228, report of the Committee on Regional Planning and Local Authorities). Text adopted by the Assembly on 24 January 1973 (23rd Sitting).

e. to place the problem of cooperation between frontier regions in Europe on the agenda for the forthcoming Conference on Security and Cooperation, with a view to creating real possibilities for the movement of people, information and ideas ;

Introduce the following measures to reinforce European cooperation in frontier regions :

a. set up within the Council of Europe an information bureau on frontier cooperation, to be responsible for :

assembling information on the present situation and methods of cooperation ;

forwarding this information to regional bodies such as the frontier region commissions mentioned above, and to the relevant national bodies ;

making the same material available to other Council of Europe bodies, particularly the Committee on Cooperation in Municipal and Regional Matters and the Committee of Senior Officials in charge of preparations for the second Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning;

stimulating the intensification and harmonisation of frontier cooperation by disseminating information about it ;

creating by these means a situation conducive to the elaboration of cooperation models which can be used by the responsible authorities for carrying into effect new trans-frontier cooperation schemes ;

b. instruct the Committee on Cooperation in Municipal and Regional Matters and the European Conference of Local Authorities to watch over the implementation of this recommendation and to make any necessary proposals for making it more effective ;

c. invite the Committee of Senior Officials in charge of preparations for the second European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning to encourage and promote trans-frontier cooperation in regional planning, and to involve existing or future frontier region commissions in the elaboration of a European regional planning policy.