

Strategic Studies Library

Seven Ideas for Seven
Crucial Years

Strategic Agenda of the Atlantic Axis



ATLANTIC AXIS
of the Peninsular North-West

2007

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SEVEN IDEAS FOR SEVEN CRUCIAL YEARS

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PROLOGUE

The Atlantic Axis of the Peninsular North-West has always boasted of being the only cross-border urban system which carried out the elaboration of two strategic studies in the last ten years.

The strategic planning consists of opting for taking decisions in a coordinated and rigorous way in favour of territorial cohesion.

However, to the difficulty in every strategic planning joins, in this case, the inherent to the typology of the Atlantic Axis, which makes it difficult its application when referring to towns which belong to two countries and, therefore, to two different administrative realities, although they still have common problems.

Furthermore, the main concern of the politicians responsible for the strategic planning is knowing how to articulate, in perfect tune, the theoretical component of experts with the obstinately pragmatic reality of towns.

Because of that, we try out a innovative formula whose result you have in your hands:

The translation of more than 2.000 pages on strategic studies, which have a great theoretical and methodological value, into seven operative ideas, which at the same time contain measures and procedures.

And everything is coordinated with the orientation of the European Commission.

Some of our most prestigious experts, who add to their condition a political experience in important government duties, accept to think about the whole territory by giving birth to a document which without any doubts represents a very valuable tool for the management of the territory and its social and economic development.

Xosé Sánchez Bugallo
President of the Atlantic Axis

INTRODUCTION

The current conjuncture provides a chance so that certain European regions define clearly a territorial strategy which comes up to international challenges and so that they promote a series of aims which allow regional and local authorities to take their own initiatives, to raise the value of their own geographical and territorial areas, to help to develop socioeconomic activities, and to preserve natural and cultural heritage.

The strategy which is proposed here is placed within the debate which has been thrown and opened by the European Union in the documents “The regions for the economic change” and “The cohesion policy and the towns: contribution of towns to the growth and employment in the regions” and it considers those territorial and sectorial strategies which allow to ensure the articulation of programmes and the coherence of measures. That is, coming up to the increasing appeal of regions and municipalities by improving the accessibility, by guaranteeing quality services, by preserving the environment; by promoting innovation; by creating more and better jobs, by guaranteeing the adaptability of workers and enterprises; by increasing the investment in human resources; and by getting a high potential of global growth and an integrated development.

The strategy presented is **clear**, with capacity of coming up in a fast and efficient way to new circumstances and challenges, not only national but also international. It assumes a **practical and adaptive character**, which strengthens the progresses which have been reached so far and which **raises the value of the continuous learning process** which has been carried out until now; it is **inclusive**, and therefore it is necessary to make the public and private organisations party of it, by stressing holding; **it reinforces the will of responsible participation and cooperation** in the active resolution of problems. It provides the conditions and mechanisms which allow the different actors and agents the option of developing, in a balanced and articulated way, the multiple functions linked to the productive activities and to the services required by the citizens, by encouraging the economic growth and the creation of new jobs and opportunities. It demands an **ambitious and realistic vision** which, at the same time, is believable and attractive.

SEVEN IDEAS FOR SEVEN CRUCIAL YEARS is, therefore, a distinguishing and reference factor and, at the same time, it highlights the great opportunity the area of the Euroregion Galicia-North of Portugal has in order to place itself in the centre of a political and economic network, creator of value, which is associated to new generic and specific resources, on the one hand, and to historical, social and economic factors which the geographical area determines, on the other hand.

The Atlantic Axis, the only cross-border Euroregional urban system in Europe, is extraordinarily well-positioned in order to take advantage of the opportunities which the new community scenario provides for the 2007-2013 period. It is a factor recognised by the European organisms. Our towns form part of an Atlantic Space which is more and more organised and which is called to play a decisive role in the process of European construction, through transnational and interregional cooperation.

SEVEN YEARS FOR SEVEN CRUCIAL YEARS is a document with five great perspectives interconnected between them, which provide it with a singular personality, by adapting the realities and concrete necessities of this Euroregion.

A POLITICAL DOCUMENT

Actually, once its addressees are the local, autonomous, national and, even, Community authorities and it is related to future elections in order to guarantee a better future for our territories.

The decision of the Council 2006/702/EC (OJEU of 21st October) gathers the conclusion of the Spring Council of 2005 about the need to count on the participation of local and regional agents and social speakers in order to reach the aims of the new Agenda of Lisbon. The new legislative framework, called Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006 of 11th July 2006, offers the members the possibility of delegating the local authorities the management of the funds designed to urban issues within the new programmes. But in order to make this delegation effective, it is necessary that towns take part during the whole process in the responsibility of conceiving and putting into practice the part of the programme which is delegated to them. Towns have been playing a changing role in the process of European construction and in the general development of their countries. We are living a boost of that role because towns are designed to be the motor of growth and employment within their respective regions. Towns are in the centre of a deep change with regards to the organisation of their territory, not only from an administrative point of view but also from the democratic participation of citizens.

For the North Region, the Resolution 25/2006, of 10th March, passed by the Cabinet, guarantees the participation of municipalities and economic and social agents in the accompaniment committee of every thematic OP and of every regional OP. It also guarantees the presence of a representative of every Association of Municipalities organised by NUTS III in the strategic advice organ of every regional OP and it grants the whole of municipalities of a NUT II two of the five members of the Directive Commission of the management organ of each one of those OP. The different territorial organisation of the Spanish State allows the administrative regions to be the main actors in the elaboration of the OP. The document which will be presented has to be useful to provide our towns with the leading role they deserve and they need. The Axis has to make a determined appeal to the responsible national and autonomous authorities so that the management of the NSRF programmes, which fund local or supralocal investments are put out to contract with the municipalities or with the associations of municipalities. In any case, we can conclude that:

- Towns are the main motor of growth and creation of employment in their respective regions.

- Local authorities have to collaborate with regional and national authorities and with economic and social agents in the elaboration, management and monitoring of strategic programmes of sustainable development.

- Towns are called to head their respective NUTS III in collaboration with the other local authorities and with economic and social agents. Collaboration means full applicability of community subsidiarity and holding principles.

- The towns in the Atlantic Axis have to play the role of main lobby of the euroregional interests in Lisbon, Madrid and Brussels in perfect tune, as far as possible, with regional authorities, with economic and social agents and with universities.

A POSITIONING DOCUMENT

Community guidelines as regards cohesion are about to opt, basically, for four challenges:

- Investments in areas which own a high growth potential.
- Search for synergies and complementarities with other community policies.
- Improvement of government.
- Promotion of territorial cohesion.

Therefore, the resources of the Structural Funds are going to have three prior aims:

- Making European regions and towns attractive places to invest and work.
- Increasing knowledge and innovation in favour of growth.
- Creating more and better jobs.

Our towns, joined in an Intermunicipal Local Agreement which is perfectly integrated in the orientations which come from the community councils, have the strength which allows us to deal with the new scene with great possibilities. First of all, it's time to make good use of the huge potential which involves the existence of university and superior research centres, by promoting from public institutions holdings of more and more intense collaboration between research centres and the productive web. Secondly, it's time to make the most of the huge natural and cultural richness which the Euroregion owns, by preserving our ecosystems and by raising their value, that is, turning nature and culture into a source of creation of employment and sustainable development. Thirdly, it's time to promote the range and the consolidation of small and medium-sized enterprises and the social economy, by building business culture and by opting for innovative sectors which own a high increased value. Fourthly, it's time to take into account the sea if we want to make the best use of the situation which allows us to turn in our favour the character which the periphery where we live in has imposed on us until the present days. Fifthly, it's time to know and overcome our weaknesses; education and formation are, in this context, the most important elements; we have to give up the old-fashioned positions we have taken up between European regions through public policies which influence on: essential linking between education, formation, and employment; dignifying and adaptive flexibility in professional training; education and formation along the whole life. Sixthly, it is also important to put into practice urban restoration policies in order to revitalise the historical centres of towns from an economic, social, cultural, energy, and environmental point of view, so that people would like to live in those urban spaces which are full of history and heritage. Seventhly, it is compulsory to act on the rural

areas which are less accessible if we want to avoid the irreversible loss of a great architectural and cultural heritage in small villages which are deserted. Finally, it's time to look for policies and precautionary measures which favour social integration in order to face up to potential threats which, once they have been identified, become opportunities: population ageing and immigration.

Therefore, our positioning has to be a positive one, which makes the proposed operational measures feasible.

- The towns of the Atlantic Axis are ready to overcome the challenges which community authorities present around 2007-2013.

- We have international university and superior research centres in several fields. It is necessary to encourage the creation of technological towns which join the efforts of the public authorities, universities, entrepreneurial associations, financial groups in order to create employment and allow a sustainable development.

- We count on enough endogenous resources in order to grow up. It is compulsory to look after and explore them.

- Our business world is able to deal with future opportunities. Our trade-union organisations are also able to do it. Public authorities must opt for keeping a good social atmosphere and making the creation of steady employment easy in a viability context.

- It is necessary to overcome the shortage of our educational and training system and to foresee the possible focuses of social exclusion which influence, in a negative way, on the appeal of towns in order to live and invest in them.

A DOCUMENT OF COMMON AIMS

We are the only organised cross-border urban system. The Atlantic Axis is a cross-border cooperation structure of reference in Europe. This is our strength. Galicia and the North Region have a great amount of complementarities. We own two very similar languages which allow us to communicate easily. A culture shared by our historical past, by the same practices of material culture (agricultural economy, craftsmanship, popular arts) and immaterial one (legends and religious and mythical beliefs). A common ecosystem formed by *rías*, estuaries and littoral banks, shared mountain ranges and faults, linked by basins and rivers such as the Minho, the Lima or the Tâmega. The contemporary conquest of democracy and adherence to Communities have extremely promoted the exchange of people, ideas, capital and services. Since 1993, there are no physical border between us but a lot of bridges.

We have very similar future challenges which we can deal with jointly, in perfect tune and collaboration with regional and national authorities for mutual profit. We, all together, are a market formed by six million consumers. We, all together, are a European region of six million citizens. In the global world, it is necessary to join in order to be visible. The operational measures in the present document require universal

cooperation. They demand coordination between the eighteen cities, public authorities, social agents, universities, and financial groups, among others.

If we reach the predicted goals, everybody will win. In the Atlantic Axis, we have an excellent instrument which must be introduced, in the same way as the other cooperation structures, in a new phase: the phase of maturity.

- We are a network of European towns.
- We are a market of six million consumers.
- We are a European region of six million citizens.

A STRATEGIC DOCUMENT

The collection of studies passed in the II Atlantic Axis Conference, in March 2005, needs an operative agenda. A programme which identifies the great challenges for the following years in the peninsular, European and global context. This perspective is basic because it places our towns on the historical responsibility of leading the sustainable development of the Euroregion, in tune with its rural *hinterlands* and in coordination with autonomous and national authorities. Galicia and the North are convergence regions in the community context. The following seven years have to be crucial in order to make progress together, we know that by making progress together each one will make progress faster. The main boost must come from the identification of shared strategic ideas which guide the efforts of the towns of the Axis and of the whole Euroregion, in the correct direction.

Seven ideas for seven years

- I.- A balanced territorial model.
- II.- A sustainable urban system.
- III.- More centralised towns.
- IV.- Promotion of government and holding.
- V.- Commitment to the society of knowledge and innovation.
- VI.- An enduring development for job creation.
- VII.- A common cultural space.

The first strategic idea refers to the aim of building, in the Euroregion, a balanced territorial model, by following the established criteria in the European Territorial Strategy.

This must be a basic aim on the part of institutions, if we take into account that the economic and social cohesion must be placed in the territory as a whole and that, at this moment, there is some imbalance in the growth of towns because most of capital and investments are centred on one of the littoral axes. Therefore, the measures directed to the creation of an interior North-South axis, with suitable infrastructures and enterprises associated in a network, will be useful in order to promote polycentrism and make it easier a reasonable balance between littoral and interior towns and between urban and rural worlds, even by adopting public positive discrimination policies.

The measures which must be implemented in order to reach this aim are:

- 1.- Reinforcement of policies and instruments of territorial planning and urbanism.
- 2.- Structuring of an interior axis of north-south development.
- 3.- Integration of the rural world into the development of the Atlantic Space.
- 4.- Design of a littoral arranging.

A second strategic idea, related to the former, looks for strengthening the sustainable urban system.

We start from the empirical confirmation that towns are, in general, and of course in the Euroregion, the motor of development and where the creation of employment is concentrated. This motor can work all-out only if towns are attractive places to live and to invest in. According to the sustainable philosophy, it is compulsory to carry out a policy of sustainable use of human resources and, above all, of human resources. Therefore, the measures proposed for those aims are directed to the management of water resources and the improvement of quality of life in towns, not only with respect to social aspects but also with respect to labour ones, by promoting the integration of disadvantaged groups.

The measures which must be implemented in order to reach this aim are:

- 5.- Study and promotion of water resources for a sustainable development from urban areas.
- 6.- Drawing up a programme of quality of life in the towns of the Atlantic Axis.
- 7.- Promotion of social inclusion policies.

The third idea studies thoroughly the philosophy of the former and directs its aim to consolidate some more centralised towns.

Our towns need to have higher centrality and higher visibility in the global world where we live. Centrality and visibility are brought about higher accessibility and connectivity not only within the Euroregional space but also in the national, European and worldwide space. Accessibility and connectivity which must enclose the infrastructures, knowledge and information technologies (ICT) and services. It is true that the Euroregion is geographically placed in the occidental periphery of Europe, but, on the positive side, we must make good use of the situation, by reshaping the structure of internal and external accesses, which provide our enterprises with greater

competitiveness in travelling expenses or, additionally, by increasing the use of ICT as an instrument which makes us competitive in the information society.

The measures which must be implemented to reach this aim are:

8.- Development of an intermodal public transport system for the Atlantic Space.

9.- Map of communications and maritime transport.

10.- Pioneering use of the ICT as a factor of minimisation of peripheral conditions in the Euroregion and in the urban system of the Atlantic Axis.

The fourth idea affects more the social values and practices and it is centred in the promotion of government and holding.

The governing, understood as a series of procedures which makes it easy citizen participation in the process of decision-taking and interaction between the local, regional, national, and community levels, is a very useful instrument of social inclusion, civic implication and, consequently, reduction of social unrest. Cross-border cooperation between our towns must make it easy the emergence of new procedures of government with respect to the European Associations of Territorial Cooperation, for example, and, specially, going on with the institutional consolidation of the Axis, provided that agreements are the essence of the European government, because they make it easy the connection between public institutions and other groups (trade unions, managers, or non-governmental associations, among others). At the same time, the practice of holding must be developed by creating holdings with other actors which allow us to move from the cross-border phase to the transnational one, after having passed the interregional.

The measures which must be implemented in order to reach this aim are:

11.- Interaction between the institutional and the associative networks for the innovation in the Euroregion.

12.- Reinforcement and institutionalisation of the interregional holdings of cooperation.

13.- Integration of the Atlantic Axis into the new European framework-programme for the exchange of experiences and good practices.

The fifth idea makes reference to the factors which affect territorial competitiveness, by proposing a commitment in the society of knowledge and innovation.

Education is an instrument essential for the future of the Euroregion. The whole educational system, but particularly the university and the professional training ones, must have an unavoidable aim: employment and formation through the whole life, paying peculiar attention to integrated centres of Professional Training. Most of our future depends on cooperation, competitiveness, and complementarity which we are able to establish in universities, research centres and Euroregion enterprises in order to value our endogenous resources. To do that, there is a prolific field for creative

industries which must be preserved by public institutions and civil societies. This commitment must be directed to the assessment of vulnerability in our Euroregion with respect to disasters and ecological risks in order to implement the necessary emergency measures.

The measures which must be implemented to reach this aim are:

14.- Interaction between education, training and employment for the development of the Euroregion.

15.- Valuing the complementarities and the excellence of the scientific, technological and innovative systems of the Euroregion.

16.- Intensification of the role of the economic basis, knowledge, and the R&D in the mobilization of endogenous resources in low-intensity areas.

The sixth idea is an obvious complement of the former, directing the strategy to the economic field in order to get in the medium term an enduring development which reaches a high level of employment.

Taking into account that most of the creation of employment in Europe is joined to the dynamic of small and medium-sized enterprises, in accordance with the paths marked in the Lisbon and Gottemborg agendas, it is necessary to opt in the Euroregion for the creation and consolidation of public and private entities in order to render advanced services to SME, and to direct its productive strategy to valuable activities, by using endogenous resources: the sea, the flora, the tourism, renewable energies, quality and competitive agriculture, which is compatible with the preservation of nature and, of course, far from the threats of relocation.

The measures which must be implemented in order to reach this aim are:

17.- Creation of a pool of competences in the field of services advanced to SME.

18.- Drawing up cooperation projects directed to valuing and structuring new clusters of economic activities.

Finally, the seventh idea completes the strategy for the Euroregion, by focusing on the social identification of immaterial values which, in fact, nowadays, form the cultural community in our territory, in order to create a common cultural space.

Probably, one of the greater strengths of cooperation between Galicia and the North Region lies in the existence of strong shared culture values which make our mutual knowledge and the starting of common projects easy. In spite of that, there are important works to do and there are also notable asymmetries in the preservation and social value of the joint heritage and, therefore, a greater connection in the actions is necessary in order to go in more deeply in the consolidation of a common cultural space which make it possible an identification between citizens and their culture and values, by guaranteeing this heritage to future generations.

The measures which must be implemented in order to reach this aim are:

- 19.- Joint use of tourist resources, by paying special attention to the basin of the Minho River as a tourist and environmental preservation product.
- 20.- Creation of the tourist product 'cross-border places of memory'.
- 21.- Configuration of a euroregional cultural space.
- 22.- Euroregional social awareness plan and campaign.

A DYNAMIC DOCUMENT

The viability and success of this strategic agenda takes place if there is no inaction in any of the fields or in any of the involved acting sectors. To do that, it is crucial its submission to a tracking and constant evaluation process. The evaluation must be founded on the indicator analysis which allow us to follow the evolution of the situation, to lay down the efficiency of plans and applied programmes. Therefore, the creation of the Accompaniment Commission turns out to be essential. Its composition must answer the criteria of government which direct the acting of community authorities, by allowing authorities, economic and social agents, experts and the civic associative movement to participate.

SEVEN IDEAS FOR SEVEN CRUCIAL YEARS is a document open to changes so that the evolution of determining factors and the evaluation of its carrying out can be submitted to new settlements and recommendations. This commitment demands that the same process of evaluation is public and completely transparent.

- The creation of an Accompaniment Commission turns out to be essential.
- The Strategic Agenda is considered a document open to adaptations and modifications through the whole process.

STRATEGIC IDEA NUMBER I – A BALANCED TERRITORIAL MODEL

Competences: planning guidelines on the part of the Territorial Policy Council of the *Xunta de Galicia* and the National Programme of Town and Country Planning Policy in Portugal, and the respective departments which are in charge of the environment and town and country planning. Elaboration of the concrete planning on the part of each town council or group of town councils. Land reserves on the part of town councils. Boost to the equipments on the part of the *Xunta de Galicia* and the respective ministries in Portugal and Spain, and through public-private holdings.

Prior coordination: town councils-local chambers, responsible county council departments and ministries, universities and economic and social agents.

Financing: social policies (education, health, social services) through the European Social Fund. Economic policies (entrepreneurial parks, professional training) through cohesion programmes and ERDF. Equipments, state-subsidised housing, through JESSICA, creation of enterprises through JEREMIE. Procedures in rural areas are also brought about through EAFRD.

MEASURE 1

REINFORCEMENT OF TERRITORIAL PLANNING AND URBANISM POLICIES AND INSTRUMENTS

In order to deal with this measure, it is necessary to ask some previous questions. What do we understand by “balanced territorial model” for the fifty thousand square kilometres which form the Euroregion? What is the role towns placed in the town councils of the local agreement play in the Atlantic Axis? What is the influence local authorities can exert in the process of territorial and socioeconomic articulation of the whole peninsular North-West? They are ambitious but rightful questions in a democratic process and under the spirit of the European government.

The term ‘model’ leads us to an ideal target, an aim to get, for which it is essential to establish a temporary horizon which seems obvious: 2007-2013. But always through a dynamic planning, that is, the plan for the seven years must be the mainstay of an articulated territory. The concept territory must not be mixed up with space; the territory is the expression of power over the natural environment and the space is the human dimension, the organisation of daily life and social relations over that medium. Consequently, the territory which we want to model (model) represents a conception of political power and, therefore, it is in tune with the process led by a ‘Intermunicipal Local Agreement’. ‘Balanced’ means that there are no inequalities within the concept of citizenship and in the precision of ideas which every person has and which they can aim to in a rightful way. This does not mean that differences disappear, precisely because the biodiversity is an essential element of the sustainable model.

In order to carry out a territorial planning with scientific precision is necessary to have documented data and to extract the information necessary for the design of an efficient arrangement. The balanced development of the Euroregion requires the establishment of population centres in the sufficiently gifted functional areas.

Operational procedures

1.1. Consolidation and better use of the Cross-Border Urban Information System in the Atlantic Axis (SIUTEA)

Within the INTERREG III initiative, the County Council Department of Territorial Policy of the *Xunta de Galicia* and the Atlantic Axis presented the project Cross-Border Urban Information System in the Atlantic Axis (SIUTEA). It was created to coordinate the efforts of the 18 towns and to exchange, compare and optimise geotagged statistic data about basic cartography in different scales and property and economic ones. So, we will create a theoretical model of analysis which any population centre in Galicia will be able to use. It is compulsory to extend that use to any population centre in the Euroregion, for the raising of endogenous resources which are important for the definition of local or regional economic development programmes.

SIUTEA is going to be developed throughout 2007 and, in the first phase, they are compiling the different data the towns are working with. The following step is going

to consist of the creation of a 'geosite' which will make requests easy. Moreover, the project is predicted to be concluded by carrying out working days directed to local technicians.

1.2. Elaboration of town and country planning guidelines in the Euroregion by writing some technical rules of common planning

Taking into account the territorial structuring of the Euroregion and the existence of territorial development typologies common to both territories, it is compulsory to pay attention to the hypothesis of creating common territorial rules, above all, for cross-border territories, where different orientations about town and country planning policies may appal adverse effects of territorial destructuring.

The establishment of these guidelines and rules is outside the competence of the town councils, but the Atlantic Axis, as a cross-border euroregional urban system, must encourage the concerned authorities to work by following this direction. It consists of following paths which other Euroregional associations of municipalities have already travelled around and of designing the joint planning of future topics such as the AVE, the secondary interior railway network, roads, the river and maritime basins, the line, logistic platforms, the intermodality of the means of transport, entrepreneurial parks, or technological towns in tune with universities, among others.

The coincidence in the development of the tasks of the Plan of Town and Country Planning in the North Region and the guidelines which correspond to Galicia, through 2007 will constitute a unique chance of reflection on this matter, above all directed to sensitive areas in terms of planning.

In spite of that, all these guidelines should promote the policentre system, by avoiding the monofunctional nature of settlements. In addition, the only way of fulfilling a quality planning with certain technical uniformity is through the redaction of common rules which would allow us a good relationship and the improvement of technicians' work.

1.3. Structuring a network of plurifunctional centres accessible to urban centres

The structuring of this network is conditioned, both by the investments which the appropriate ministries and county council departments (education, health, territorial management, justice) have planned to carry out and by the ones which the private agents are willing to carry out. In order to create new centralities in these nuclei, we would advise to opt for the desconcentration of public services, to provide them with the best-qualified human resources, to generate revitalising social sectors and a good planning of collective housing with green spaces and services. The connectivity of means of transport and the accesses to information society, in the context of great metropolitan areas, turns out to be basic in order to structure the network.

1.4. Assigning equipments to the central population nuclei in functional areas

In order to arrange a system of plurifunctional centres, it will be necessary to establish, firstly, a model of endowment with minimal equipments which make their development possible. This measure means a sequence of tasks:

a) Analysis of periurban centres which can mitigate the spontaneous process of residential space, through the spreading of the habitat. This study consists not only of the definition of demographic parameters and minimal equipments, but also of the collective transport network which links these centres with the metropolitan capitals.

b) Analysis of the interior centres which allow to concentrate population and to favour its development. A study similar to the former but with other demographic parameters.

c) Study of the equipments and infrastructures indispensable for favouring the industrial settlement and, in this way, for creating new employment opportunities, by providing the centres with indispensable services.

This measure is particularly appropriate in Portugal, because they are moving from the first to the second generation of local guiding plans, generation which, obviously, will have to be much more demanding and strengthened.

1.5. Adaptation and coordination of the measures in the Agenda 21

Although in the project of the Agenda 21, favoured by the Atlantic Axis, most of the towns have already received a group of proposals related to the environmental improvement of municipalities, the complete design of the abovementioned measures, in order to generate a development dynamic in this area, must consider specific actions, consistent with the specific necessities of those actions.

It is obvious that the territorial planning must be directed by the guidelines of the Agenda 21, which establishes action preferences according to environmental viability and defines in parallel not only preservation areas but also orientation lines of citizen participation. Then, it would be a question of carrying out a programme of action directed to specify the Agendas 21 in the period 2007-2013.

The recent initiative of setting up the “Viability Centres in Galicia”, together with the promotion of a wide social participation, is a great chance to evaluate the necessary complementarity between economic progress, respect for the natural environment and urban harmony, which must be dominated by a sustainable development.

MEASURE 2

STRUCTURING AN INTERIOR AXIS OF NORTH-SOUTH DEVELOPMENT

In order to reduce the imbalance between the littoral axis, where we find the main towns of the Euroregion with the greatest economic and cultural dynamism, the middle towns and the interior rural space, it is essential a prior action on communication infrastructures and public equipment. Likewise, the creation of incentives both for private investments and for the ones which promote enterprenurial networks and the cooperation with superior education institutions, would reduce the existing asymmetries in the interior of the Euroregion itself and would allow to identify territorial specific assets capable of being valued in terms of territorial competitiveness. On the basis of these criteria, we propose the following

Operational procedures

2.1. Improvement of secondary infrastructures in the interior axis of the Euroregion

The strategy of the Axis requires the defense of highly innovative positions, in terms of planning infrastructures, for the competitiveness of the interior areas. Consequently, the valuing of joint logic of means of transport in low-density areas must be the banner of the Axis, because it corresponds to an idea which does not have other promoters in the Euroregion.

The secondary infrastructures, not only the ones regarding means of transport but also ICT, energy and entrepreneurial parks are a necessary element in that strategy. In any case, the accessibility through road to the interior centres must be reinforced through the strategic axes:

a) Ferrol-Lugo-Monforte, through the main road Ferrol-As Pontes-Vilalba, and then with the distance Lugo-Monforte. An axis which must be extended from Monforte to O Barco de Valdeorras. A strategic axis which, if it is completed by the improvement of the railway from Ferrol to Monforte-O Barco, will allow a greater value to the dry harbour in Monforte.

b) Porto-Guimarães-Chaves (connected with Vila Real)-Verín. A strategic axis which, once the building of the new cross-border bridge over the Tâmega has been passed, makes the accessibility to the Douro easy, through the connection with the main road of Lamego-Peso de Régua-Vila Real. Moreover, it is necessary to improve the connection from Ourense, through Val do Lima (Lindoso, Arcos de Valdevez) with Porto. These axes favour the connection of the interior of the littoral and the north with the south, which increases the strategic value of the territory of the “dry line”.

c) Connection Sanabria-Bragança through Calabor or Río Onor. Nowadays, the Portuguese location is unaccessible from the southeast of Galicia and from the North-West of Zamora. This connection will increase the possibilities of rural tourism (with the following point of reference: Montesinho and Sanabria).

To this, we would have to add a commitment to improve the interior railway network, both to strengthen the existing one and to study the possibility of extending it,

preventing the TGV from increasing the current imbalance between the littoral and the interior of the Euroregion.

2.2. Encouraging the localisation of economic activities in the interior

One of the main problems of the interior areas is the low density of economic activities, associated to an improperly balanced productive structure, which is based mainly on agriculture, on the extraction of resources from the subsoil or on the transformation of agricultural or forest raw materials. With the improvement of accessibility to these areas, the impact of the establishment of superior educational centres in a lot of them, the formation of qualified human resources and the increasing availability and use of the new ICT, it will be possible to overcome some of the old barriers to the localisation of enterprises, fundamentally transforming ones. This is the reason why it must take place a positive discrimination in the location of entrepreneurial facilities, always placed in these interior areas.

The littoral advantages are bigger than the ones in other areas. There is an idea of greater risk and, therefore, there is also a unenterprising culture. For this reason, it is necessary to create a series of special measures in order to reinforce the investment.

In the past, there were some programmes of financial incentives, above all, in the field of application of the operational programmes of the European Union. But because of the lacking incentives, frequent political discontinuities, or a weak investment expression, they did not generate the expected effects. Now, it is proposed an effort in the sense of designing more strong and selective programmes in their spatial application and also in the sense of structuring in the interior regions some points of competitiveness, around specific assets which can be valued internationally.

Besides, it seems to be essential to think on a policy of positive financial discrimination for these areas, in order to complement the impact of the policy of financial incentives.

2.3. Promoting horizontal cooperation between enterprises, by committing their organisations to function in a network

The theories of endogenous development and the observation of the economic reality in Europe confirm the importance of entrepreneurial networks for the development of the territories where there are no important industrial conglomerations. In addition, we have a lot of scientific documentation about the role developed by entrepreneurial cooperation in a network in the middle towns.

One of the defining features of the interior areas of the Euroregion is the poor structuring of its productive basis, and therefore it is always necessary a generic entrepreneurial initiative but also the existence of enterprising managers which upgrade their strategies according to their interest but, at the same time, within a functionality for the whole local productive system. This can be achieved in a more efficient way in tune with the public administration and the universities and, consequently, the encouraging activity of the institutions on the concrete interior axis should carry out a series of different tasks:

- Creating a census of undertaking managers in the rural municipalities.

- Encouraging directly the horizontal cooperation between them, not only directed to improve the economic efficiency and cut costs, but also to the creation of sectorial clusters and to achieve synergies with a higher territorial scope.
- Channelling the occupational and continuous formation programmes through clusters and integrated professional training programmes (which are currently being set up in Galicia).
- Encouraging the entrepreneurial partnership, by supporting the respective associations and their nets.
- Make technological innovation easier so that the enterprises placed in the interior axis can be connected to a common server.
- Creation of centres of entrepreneurial capacities which can provide the enterprises, in a efficient and fast way, with the services they require more frequently.
- This administration initiatives, taken together with the entrepreneurial associations, should bring about the integration of universities in the advise for RDI. It is about a measure which can be dealt directly with the chancellorship teams or with the CEER.

2.4. Integration of universities and RDI as a territorial balance instrument

In order to produce and value knowledge, capable of helping to value the specific assets, based on endogenous resources, the public administrations should establish agreements with the universities in the Euroregion and, specially, with the future research excellency centres to integrate them as a territorial balance instrument which promotes entrepreneurial training not only by encouraging new investments in RDI but also by spreading out and strengthen cultural advance. In this same orientation, public administrations must encourage the celebration of cooperation conventions between the universities in their regions and other foreign ones which are prestigious in interesting fields for the Euroregion.

2.5. Improvement of social and cultural equipments in rural areas

The need for equipments in rural areas and, specifically, in the Euroregion interior axis, must be consistent with those passed in the general guidelines about town and country planning. But in this case and taking into account that the aim of the action consists of structuring an axis of development which is parallel to the littoral — which has an outstanding power of population attraction over the rest of the territory —, the design of equipments must take care of not only the type of benefits but also its geographical distribution and, therefore, it would be one of the satisfaction factors for rural population and, at the same time, a comparative measure of its level of development.

The use of methodological instruments of study and evaluation which the Geographical Information System (GIS) offers can be a way of considering the actions of the administration in order to establish the network of needs according to two essential criteria: firstly, the places where the highest densities of rural population with limited equipments are found (preference decision) and, secondly, the places where important lacks with low population densities appear.

Once we know these areas, it is possible to draw up a programme of concentric actions through phases to cut progressively the distance area of access to the equipments for the whole population.

2.6. Drawing up a culture-nature route in the interior axis Lugo-Peso da Régua

As a specific domain of the incentives to the location of enterprises in the interior axis, it is important to involve the institutions and the private sector in the efficient use of tourist resources in the whole area to strengthen an emerging interesting destination in the issuing markets which are currently demanded.

In this moment, there are several relevant offers in the field of tourist models of nature and culture, enotourism included, but they are promoted in an individual way and they hardly ever get synergies to create employment in other activities and economic sectors. The structuring and promotion of a joint itinerary, which would not require more than an agreement between towns and bordering municipalities along the interior axis would manage to value more resources and, above all, it means a more powerful appeal for the issuing markets, to which it will be offered a complete tourist project for a more enduring stay and which will expect more synergies with other cross activities.

Besides, it would be interesting that the involved economic actors establish joint packs between interior towns or areas and the most powerful tourist areas in order to make good use of that pull, for example, with tourist packs related to World Heritage.

In this measure, it is also possible to apply the operational procedure 1.5.

MEASURE 3

INTEGRATION OF THE RURAL WORLD IN THE DYNAMIC OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE ATLANTIC AXIS

The preservation of ecosystems and biodiversity is impossible without strengthening the humanisation of the rural world. In addition, establishing population in these spaces helps to create a sustainable urban system. One of the highest potentialities of our region lies in its natural landscape. Every action must start with defining and defending some scenic guidelines which, apart from preserving our cultural heritage, become basic development instruments. The quality of life of the rural inhabitants has to reach similar levels to town inhabitants. This means providing endowments, infrastructures and measures specially devised for these spaces, which allow a rhythm of development convergent with the richest parts in the territory, by preserving the established landscape and other natural and environmental determinants.

The rural areas are deeply heterogeneous. In the periurban one, the main public interventions must be focused on planning policies, protection of agricultural soil, basic sewerage, environmental improvement and, generally, on the quality of the citizens' life. In the low-density rural areas, of limited connectivity to the exterior, the policies must stress programmes about microenterprises and small initiatives which value local endogenous resources, because, in this case, the greatest threat is the stressed depopulation, which currently means the death of a lot of villages. In the intermediate areas, which also have some problems of depopulation, public interventions will have to favour the diversification of the productive basis for transforming activities and services, apart from reinforcing the vertical and horizontal integration of more common productive sectors in those areas. In accordance with these criteria, we suggest the following

Operational procedures

3.1. Turning the natural environment and the landscape into employment and wealth

The rural areas, and above all those which have less accessibility, hold a very wealthy landscape and environmental heritage, exemplified by parks, natural reserves, and, in general, by the sites of the Rede Natura 2000. Contrary to what it is happening in other parts of the world, these rural environments in Europe are deeply humanised and usually modelised by the presence of human beings. This measure does not consider those policies which have a simple conservationist character because they do not seem real and efficient, since they do not consider the relationship of survival between the local population and those ecosystems.

Therefore, it is important to make the different authorities conscious of the need of drawing up and applying in these areas programmes that encourage their mobilization, transformed into the production of traditional goods of quality or into the rendering of services to the tourists.

These programmes should be based on local spheres of influence (which LEADER exemplifies) and they should support not only the constitution and operation

of these structures -by themselves or together with other similar ones-, but also individual or collective investment processes which help to make good use of these resources.

We should generalise ideas such as the creation of park-ways, usual in the United States, by dealing with certain axes of the road network, axes which are interesting as if they were parks, through the appropriate plantations and localisation of small supporting equipments for walkers.

Because of that, in order to make this action operative, it is very convenient to draw up a catalogue of landscape patterns in the Euroregion, a catalogue which is directed in a double orientation; preserving our natural heritage and valuing its potentialities as a basic endogenous resource which creates employment and wealth.

3.2. Restoring the heritage for local development

The heritage in the rural areas of the Atlantic Axis, due to its classification and historical character, is our main wealth. As nowadays it is evident the huge search for this heritage by an increasing group of tourists who look for leisure time through culture and through looking for evidence of people's memory. It is important to value such heritage in an economic way as a creating source of employment and local wealth. As, however, most of this heritage is spoilt, it is important that public entities bring about policies directed to that aim. The policies will be translated both into financial support to the restoration of spoilt buildings and into specific financial policies, for example, through patronage laws which have enough incentives in order to encourage big enterprises to invest some of their profits in this kind of actions.

This intervention will affect not only noble, religious or defence buildings but also traditional houses and, as a whole, typical villages and historical ones.

3.3. Encouraging the new orientations of hydrotherapy

In coherence with what has been exposed in the conclusions of the *Second Strategic Studies for the towns in the Axis*, with respect to the specific resource of thermal water, which is especially abundant in the interior of the Euroregion, it would be necessary to reorientate some of the entrepreneurial activities which currently have their concession, taking into account the experiences which a great number of thermal centres in Europe have gone through and in accordance with the new value which their market offers at the moment.

The tendencies in the demand related to the hydrotherapy are developing in the last two decades towards an important change in the motivations of customers, which are more and more interested in leisure and relaxing activities, as a complement to health, which must also change the public policies promoting hydrotherapy in order to achieve, as soon as possible, the modernisation of current rural health resorts and restructure them into multi-purpose centres (health-leisure), by making better use of every resource and by bringing about new employment opportunities, which will help to eradicate temporariness.

The first action to carry out must be an audit about the inventory of springs in the Euroregion, in order to establish, at least, three categories: those which can be renewed with public assistance in the short term (innovative managers), those which

would require intermediate steps (entrepreneurial training) and those which would not allow changes. With this previous study, it would be possible to design an efficient plan of action.

Thermal tourism must establish links with other tourist subjects such as golf, natural environment, wine, or gastronomy. The interrelation between hydrotherapy and these other sectors will allow the Euroregion to be more valuable than other rival territories.

3.4. Implementation of new activities of rural and urban integration

Rural environment must be defined in a positive way, just as it is recommended by European authorities. Because of the same reason, by making good use of the funding of EAFRD and the future programmes which will develop the community policy for the rural world, a group of actions for the development of the rural environment near towns must be planned. This will allow to preserve traditional landscape from a sustainable perspective. The possible sequence of actions must begin, at the same time, with municipalities which are placed in the littoral or in the interior, which as a whole have such an area that can be considered rural. This would allow the preservation of landscape and the reassessment of rural activities (agricultural, craft, forest) which would be able to bring about employment for young people in school farms and similar educational institutions, in the same way as it happens in wide areas in the Mediterranean or in 'open-air museums', wide extensions of land which are taken up by ethnological exhibitions, as it is possible to check in towns such as Stockholm and Tallin.

Another action in the same direction can be the creation of metropolitan agrarian parks (such as the one in Llobregat, in Barcelona). These parks allow city dwellers to hire a small orchard with a shed in order to grow their products, keeping thus the rural use of the ground at the same time that this ground is incorporated into the urban soil.

This would lead, without any doubt, to defending humanisation and rural inhabitation, which more than an operational measure is a goal to get through this programme of actions, and at the same time a head element of the argumentation of candidates to the financing of community programmes.

Taking into account that in some cases there are animal productions (above all dairy and porcine ones) in these areas, which are in dispute with the inhabitants of new urbanisations approved by the municipalities, it is necessary to opt for environmental solutions or temporary delocalisation in order to solve these tensions. Finally, it is important to highlight that the quality of life in this kind of spaces will depend, to a great extent, on the application of an existing policy of territorial arrangement.

3.5. Improvement of communication infrastructures

Apart from transport infrastructures, it is especially important to apply in the rural areas, above all, in those low-density and intermediate ones, a programme consisting of the number of ICT, as a strategy in order to overcome the isolation barrier they have, by providing the economic agents with a new easiness of communication with the market.

In this measure it is also possible to apply the operational procedures 2.1. and 2.5.

MEASURE 4

DESIGN OF A LITTORAL ARRANGEMENT

Probably, one of the features which better defines the Euroregion through its geographical morphology is the extension of its littoral, which did not always count on the necessary attention of the authorities, with respect to its preservation as central heritage of the territory and as a relevant economic resource. Because of that, a plan of uses must be a preference action of the administration, which would be followed by sewerage and regulation of the urban advance. We suggest the following

Operational procedures

4.1. Plan of multi-purpose uses of the littoral

The first thing we need to do is a study of the littoral from an integral perspective to delimit possible future uses. In order to do that, it is compulsory to make a difference at least between:

- a) The dynamic of tides and littoral water currents along the coast. Considering the evolution within the model of climatic change.
- b) The quality of coast water and its influence on the life of littoral villages (productive, leisure or transport activities, among others).
- c) The demographic density in the coast border, together with the need to preserve, as far as possible and in the necessary landscape areas, among 200 and 500 metres of non-residential use, through a detailed study proposed by the littoral plan.

Subsequently, it is necessary to take decisions on:

- * The tensions and disputes about the use of the littoral, above all, with respect to building harbours: residential, storing, fishing, tourist, sport or transport, among others.
- * The cooperation projects with respect to the problems in the estuaries and their specific problems with respect to its functioning and viability.
- * The most operative kinds of management for the areas which have protected landscape in the littoral, which are able to turn these resources into development assets.

This study can start out in the littoral municipalities of the Atlantic Axis, but always coordinated with the policies of territorial management from the *Xunta de Galicia* and the Portuguese ministries.

4.2. Invigorating cooperation projects directed to the development of methodologies related to the management, valuation and monitoring structure of estuaries

In the main rivers of the Euroregion, the estuaries, which some towns in the Atlantis Axis have been related to for a long time, are one of the most sensitive

environmental resources and, at the same time, one of most visible tourist resources. Moreover, they are introduced in strongly diffused population models, which have a strong demographic pressure and, therefore, they require special attention from the point of view of creating alert systems for an efficient monitoring.

The cooperation projects must be directed to the mobilization of common scientific knowledge, which is liable to turn into the improvement of conditions of management, valuation and monitoring of those spaces.

4.3. Plan of complete sewerage of the littoral

The natural wealth of our coasts is one of their main assets. The protection of natural environment is basic to preserve this heritage which generates wealth. The guideline 91/271/EEC established as specified period December 2005 in order to reach the aim of harmonising the measures of treating urban residual water in the community; one of the main pollution sources. It is necessary, therefore, to fulfil what has been planned by completing the appropriate network of collectors and waste and water treatment plants to remove the non-refined urban waste. The remains generated by industrial activities which pour into the sea must be object of the same precautionary measures. The coordination between town councils, autonomous and national authorities, and social and economic agents is essential for the success of any complete sewerage programme, without discarding the reclamation of the littoral spaces which are currently taken up by buildings.

In addition, specially in the North Region there is an important concentration of livestock farms which produce a high volume of effluents which it is necessary to treat correctly so that they do not affect the environment and do not repel quality residential investments. The public-private holding is an option to explore.

4.4. Plan of sustainable suitability for building of the littoral

Some strict urban planning and design rules are necessary in order to control building in the littoral space. A recent initiative from the *Xunta de Galicia* aims at this direction by spreading drastically the littoral strip, where it is not allowed to build (500 from the tide).

It would be important that the Axis shows its opinion about that, since the consideration that an intermunicipal rule would make it easy urban management on the part of local administrations. A plan of suitability for building for the littoral would involve the previous study of the possible usage which can be developed in this area, from the clear philosophy of viability of public heritage, and, in the same way, it must be parallel to a geographical mobility and occupation programme, to the study of the need for infrastructures. It must be also carried out a programme to restore the spoilt stretches in the littoral and to preserve those who need some protection. The whole process must be carried out only by full agreement between the different administrative levels, without forgetting the economic and social agents.

4.5. Balanced territorial planning of the functional nature of harbours

It is necessary a balance between the private usage (industrial, commercial, or sports) of the littoral space and public enjoyment, taking into account that the former creates wealth and employment and it can be reasonably limited without obstructing the latter.

First, it must be foreseen, in accordance with technical studies and representative institutions, the dynamic of every maritime usage of the littoral; usage for economic fishing (marine cultivation) and sports one, storage and leisure in general. In the same way, it must be calculated the impact on the usage of closer earth spaces, for example, the incidence on mobility.

Secondly, and taking into account all the former information, it is necessary to define, in accordance with the European guidelines, a territorial planning by social rationality criteria, in order to provide the harbours with that functional nature which is balanced between economic criteria and public control of the littoral. This implies a programme of citizen participation and education for citizenship. However, in order to secure the functional nature of the harbours, it is advisable to consider them intermodal platforms with suitable terrestrial transport. This has obvious repercussions on the territorial planning. A planning must take into account the opinion of harbour authorities, representatives of autonomous and national administrations and, above all, economic and social agents, together with citizen associations in connection with the usage of the *rias* and littoral estuaries through the whole coast of the Euroregion.

STRATEGIC IDEA NUMBER II.- A SUSTAINABLE URBAN SYSTEM

Competences: Spanish and Portuguese hydrographic confederations, *Xunta de Galicia* and CCDR-N. Social services of the different administrations. Town councils-local chambers (infrastructures, sewerage, urbanism). Administrations and territorial institutions of urbanism, territorial planning, transport, water resources, regional and tourist development in Galicia and Portugal.

Prior coordination: territorial administrations of urbanism, hydrographic administrations and administrations of social services (from Galicia and Portugal) between themselves and with town councils-local chambers for the environmental, labour, urban and justice regulations, among others.

Financing: environmental policies are well-funded by the Structural Funds and programmes of cross-border cooperation in the case of the Minho River. Territorial policies by the Structural Funds and social policies by the SF and the Cohesion Funds. It is also possible to get financing from the initiatives JEREMIE and JESSICA.

MEASURE 5

STUDY AND PROMOTION OF WATER RESOURCES FOR A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FROM URBAN AREAS

Our Euroregion has another chance in water. But this chance can turn into a threat for the development, if we are not able to manage our water resources in a sustainable way. It must not be carried out any urban plan or any town and country planning which does not take into account the required water supply and which does not draw up policies of reasonable use of a good, which is more limited than we think, by including sewerage, treatment and even reuse of sewage.

Water has a lot of potentialities which is necessary to research and exploit in order to value. The Minho River is a symbol of regional unity and, as such, it deserves specific actions. We suggest the following

Operational procedures

5.1. Specific study about the basin of the Minho River

There are several planning studies in progress, studies which refer to the basins and lagoons in the Euroregion and which we must make good use of so that the Axis pronounces on the scope of its own patterns of water management.

On 9th November, the Association of Cross-border Municipalities Uniminho submitted its own strategic plan. In it, there are a group of actions — valued at more than 511 million € — which include programmes of tourist promotion, improvement of environmental viability, entrepreneurial invigoration and support to public services. Towns in the Atlantic Axis should make good use of this initiative and complete it with a specific study of management of the whole bowl-basin of the Minho River, because such project may be an innovative dominion which can be especially associated with the Axis.

In the same way, this action will allow to specify the coherence of the plans to protect the landscape (for example, LIFE in Lugo) with the projects of leisure development (green routes in Valença-Monção and Caminha-Moledo).

5.2. Sewerage of littoral and interior water

As we have just highlighted with respect to the abovementioned action, the study of water must not be restricted to an environmental study of water quality, but it needs to be included into a project of integral arranging. The criticising report of the EU must make us think on the quality of littoral and continental water, without forgetting that this situation comes from the arranging of the littoral terrestrial space and from the idea of the sea as a support of economic resources, which gives way to a questionable policy of that space. The study and management of water resources implies a group of concrete actions which must be given priority by local authorities.

Logically, the main duty of the local administration is carrying out a rigorous study about the quality of refined water, or non-refined water, which flows into the *rías*, rivers and seas which are near towns. Local water enterprises are responsible for the analysis of the network of sewage. This study is urgent if it has not been fulfilled by every municipality yet.

Once this study has been implemented, it must be limited geographically (with the help of GIS) to neighbourhoods, villages, parishes and singular spaces which have problems of sewage pollution and phreatic stratum pollution, paying special attention to the georeference of the existing septic tanks, which are a more than potential threat to health.

The former study must be useful both to start an action plan which leads to solve the abovementioned problems and to avoid the proliferation of isolated urbanisations and buildings, without having secured the connection to a sewage network which finishes treating sewage. This implies that in the GLDP of the different municipalities the areas where it is not allowed to build must be collected because they commit an outrage against sustainable development. This is a measure which must be accompanied by the spreading of arranging criteria for a controlled urban expansion.

However, taking into account the scattered character of the Euroregion population, it would be advisable to study the alternative sewerage means for small groups of places, villages or parishes, so that great infrastructures to clean up areas of scattered population are not necessary.

5.3. Completing the infrastructural networks of water supply and sewage in the urban areas of the Atlantic Axis

This measure must be one of the main local priorities, because it affects the health of neighbours in municipalities. We have moved forward a lot in this field, specially by making good use of the European Economic Funds (Cohesion Funds). But there are still a lot to do, as we point out in the *Second Strategic Studies*, for example in villages such as Guimarães or with respect to the quality of water in the *ría* of Vigo.

Consequently, it is urgent a study of the current supplying network by calculating the capacity of water purification for a new population, which must define and delimit the demographical growing of the general plans of municipal arrangement. Likewise, the sewage network has to be connected with the necessary sewage plants which allow the sustainable development. This action must be complemented by the specific study of spontaneous industrial areas, because there would be able to be some danger of polluting the phreatic stratum with chemical products.

5.4. Plan of sewage exploitation

Although it was accepted the definition of water as a territorial mark of the Atlantic Axis, this idea is not still settled either in the public opinion or in the administrative political decisions. Because of this, it is necessary to promote the following initiatives on the part of politicians:

a) Beginning to recycle water in order to clean and in order to water public streets, groves, gardens and parks. Moreover, this must be accompanied by an operative

measure of spreading the importance of recycling and reusing water among students and public opinion.

b) Planning a group of fiscal measures in order to encourage to use recycled water in farming activities in the vicinity of towns, and in associations devoted to leisure, free time and sports.

5.5. Implementing programmes with actions about the cycle of water in the different hydrographic basins

The negative effects of forest fires stretch to the cycle of water. In order to solve, apart from preventing, it is important to carry out and to specify programmes of reforestation and covering of ground with suitable species which protect it against erosion and secure the presence of supply of every watercourse.

MEASURE 6

DRAWING UP A PROGRAMME OF QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE TOWNS OF THE ATLANTIC AXIS

A repeated recommendation of community authorities for the new budget period shows the need for making European towns attractive, so that they can become motors of growth and creation of jobs. The actions designed to favour social inclusion policies are the most important, paying attention preferably to the weakest sectors. Environmental actions are the other important element in order to improve the quality of life in our urban system. In this sense, the drawing up of models of urban management, innovative in the context of local action, must be a preference aim in the Axis. The most urgent matters that must be solved are institutional and governing. And the Axis must look for its own discourse and innovative proposals which inform about future scheduling. Consequently, we propose the following

Operational procedures

6.1. Urban restoration of historical centres and dilapidated modern areas, by promoting social and economic restoration and regeneration

As there are a great number of dilapidated buildings, not only in the historical centres of the towns, but also in the modern districts of more than 30 years old, local authorities should carry out, firstly, an inventory of the buildings in such a situation. The buildings from the 1950s and 1960s do not frequently have materials and services suitable for current necessities, but they were conceived within a reasonable urban planning, which provides them with infrastructures of services such as parks, schools or socio-cultural centres. An institutional plan with those objectives would be directed to increase the offer of good-quality renting, even with option to buy, always and in any case, under conditions which secure the maintenance of heritage and which do not leave unprotected owners.

The market must be articulated to buy and to hire. Most of young people do not know where they are going to live, or they do not have any means to buy their house. The hiring market will be flying for those who are not settle down in their place of residence.

Besides, its restoration would have an acceptable cost through fiscal and financing policies of suitable public work, where the private initiative does not invest sufficiently. Some of the historical towns in the Euroregion started, or they are starting, programmes of restoration of their historical centres, by making good use of the community initiative 'Urban', or by creating societal structures or other ones in order to solve the problem. In spite of that, not only for the towns which have already done it but also for those which have not received the assistance of the abovementioned plan, it would be interesting an exchange of experiences between them and other European towns, so that the programme can be completed and improved from the relationship monuments-tourism-income.

In order to achieve enduring results, the programmes of restoration of historical centres will have to have an integrated approach which takes into account the different areas and, at the same time, they will have to incorporate economic, social, environmental and cultural dimensions. In this sense, urban restoration programmes are proposed to involve 'Urban Area Managers' to solve locally the tensions and disputes because of the interests which these processes have and in order to look for solutions for the different kinds of problems, together with the responsible authorities.

The main problem to achieve positive results through this action and to carry them out with social rationality is getting an efficient management of every action, always taking into account the preservation and social use of heritage. It would be necessary an agreement-coordination between the different administrations in order to fulfil social development projects which the municipalities will arrange, by decentralising, therefore, the social policy, by making innovative actions possible in accordance with the needs each municipality has and by generating, consequently, new holdings for its daily arrangement.

6.2. Rational Use of Energy

Throughout Europe, an important debate on energy is open; the impact of its consumption in the climatic change, the energy dependence of the European Union and the problems which derive from the end of fossil energies. In this context, the quality of urban life is directly connected to the rational use of energy resources.

Although the general competences of energy planning correspond to other administrations, the abovementioned problems are very important in urban life and the municipalities can carry out relevant actions in this field. Nowadays, there are towns in Europe which are developing very interesting programmes which can become a reference, taking into account the important European financing for this aim. From firewood, which comes from the pruning of trees and which can be used for heatings at schools, to the normative on urban architecture, going through the ecological mobility and, of course, the programmes of education and mental preparation of citizens about this matter, are fields of local action to achieve a sustainable urban system. A very interesting idea which there is place for in the towns of the Axis is the one of the 'eco-boulevard' which design air or water trees which produce energy and, at the same time, make meetings and social life easy in their 'shade'.

In this sense, the municipalities of the Atlantic Axis should organise holdings for energy agencies with different representative entities of production, research and use of energy, in the sense of defining regulations and promoting the application of more efficient rules.

6.3. Ecological mobility in towns and removal of urban noises

The Agenda 21 stresses the sustainable development and the environmental management in the municipalities, which logically must reach the mobility of people in towns.

Local action must start a study to carry out, at the same time, a measuring of noises with the purpose of establishing a map of black environmental points in this aspect, as well as of identifying their origin. Within the local competences, it is possible

to carry out a medium-term plan of ecological transformation of public transport, but this measure must be completed with relevant changes in the performance of private transport. The innovative aspect will consist of proposing projects which cause a strong show effect and which encourage the exchange of experiences between the towns in the Atlantic Axis.

Following the community strategic guidelines as regards cohesion, with respect to urban transport, that transformation plan should include deterrent parkings, bypasses, rise in safety in the crossroads with alternative transit (cycle lanes or pedestrian lanes, among others). It must also include measures to guarantee the accessibility to services of public transport for certain groups (grown-ups or people with disabilities) and to provide, at the same time, the vehicles with networks of distribution of alternative fuel.

The second phase of the plan would be focused on a campaign to raise public awareness, a campaign which has positive motivations, together with a regularisation of ecological use of urban lanes, a regularisation which considers sanctions in order to guarantee their fulfilment.

The larger towns in the Atlantic Axis would be also able to analyse the costs and applicability of solutions such as the “underground town”, which would solve not only the problems of parking but also the mobility in the historical centres, location of infrastructures, or refuse collection, among others, by clearly improving the environment.

6.4. Procedure about the social problems derived from the ageing of population, and about children’s needs

The towns in the Axis must carry out interventions to treat rationally this phenomenon. The predicted demographic evolution force us to create interventions to undertake these problems thinking on the future and, in this case, the GIS can be a particularly valuable instrument to establish the map of needs, by taking into account the areas where there are the highest densities of these two segments of population. Once we know these areas, it can be drawn up a programme of phased concentric actions and under the budget limitations they are submitted to, in order to reduce progressively the distance of accessibility to equipments for this population.

6.5. Creation of ecological paths in urban spaces

Nowadays, most of the towns in the Euroregion have a reasonable amount of green spaces which, even so, responds in a historical way to the needs of the inhabitants of central areas and to the consecutive urban actions which were not always joined to a reserve of these spaces for the enjoyment of new inhabitants.

As a result of the generic concept of quality of life, and thinking on innovative interventions, and in accordance with current urban normatives, it can be proposed the extension of continuous green spaces in towns and metropolitan green spaces, by making good use of periurban areas which would acquire residential value, by integrating better in the urban dynamic and placing very close to the concept of ‘metropolitan garden town’. These actions must have distinguishing elements for new public uses and different designs and features, to guarantee the access to enjoyment for the whole citizenship. It will be convenient to have manuals and other instruments about

environmental education, such as handbooks for identifying present botanical species, particularly native ones.

6.6. Programme of environmental education

The environmental investments help to the success of economy in different ways; by guaranteeing the viability of the use of resources and growth, by reducing the negative outsources and encouraging innovation together with creation of employment and, of course, in any case, to improve the citizens' quality of life.

Within this context and following suitable community strategic guidelines during the period 2007-2013, to secure the consolidation of those economic effects and achieve the conscience and participation of citizens in the environmental management, this must have a relevant preference in the action of local authorities who try to get, in any case, the active collaboration of trade unions and civil associations in order to maximize the effectiveness of this and other coincident actions about the preservation of natural environment.

MEASURE 7

PROMOTION OF POLICIES OF SOCIAL INCLUSION

Every action of this measure is logically related to the former, while the achievement of the aims which make reference to social inclusion are an important basis for the quality of life of the whole citizenship. The policies of social integration must go beyond the prevention of conflicts. They have to set up levers which incorporate the socially-excluded into the productive system and turn them into full citizens. We propose the following

Operational procedures

7.1. Plan of training and labour insertion

Defining a project of social inclusion means necessarily an horizon of eradication of any kind of marginalisation. For this action, it would be necessary to establish a diagnosis about the situation of groups which have the greatest difficulties to access the labour market and, immediately, carry out a training programme to adapt his professional skill to the opportunities of employment and to propose the incentives which make it easy, by using the coincident legal and financial instruments from the different administrations. Disabled people must count on a preferential action from the public powers in every field: training, recruitment or deletion of architectural barriers, among others.

The same local institution can carry out a public recruitment programme with this aim, in accordance with the economic and social agents (managers and trade unions, among others), by creating a positive atmosphere to favour, at the same time, the private recruitment and to encourage self-employment.

It must be developed a group of training actions in order to encourage the undertaking, by resorting to means suitable to the age of the addressees.

7.2. Encouraging the creation of microenterprises by disadvantaged sectors

One of the recommendations of the conference held in Lisbon, which refers to the actions of governments for reducing unemployment in Europe, is just directed to encourage self-employment, which has special relevance for the groups which have difficulties in the labour market.

The action of local governments should start from a previous analysis about the existing experiences in Europe and in the backward countries, where this practice had a considerable extension thanks to the support of financial entities specifically devoted to microcredits. After studying that documentation, a previous step would be to establish a classification of activities which have the greatest calculated viability, by carrying out and adapting the formative contents of qualification programmes for those social groups, to the abovementioned hierarchy of activities. It is very interesting the

experience of the enterprises of insertion which are non-profit-making entities, but whose aim is creating employment in an unfavourable social environment.

Moreover, taking into account the mixed public-private character of savings banks, there is no doubt that a financial support to this action should be also focused on the establishment of a credit line for microenterprises.

7.3. Encouraging policies of gender equality

Measure also recommended by the conference held in Lisbon and coincident with the new legislation which will be approved in Spain in the following months.

It is important that women are helped by local public authorities to look for a job and to be paid the same amount of money as men. Although women's conditions of access to the labour market are theoretically very similar to men's, it is necessary to keep some specific actions which can establish a positive discrimination for women, taking into account the situation of current inequality.

For example, a lot of women confirm that in spite of their qualifications, lack of previous professional experience is for them a bigger burden than for men, an effect which can be reduced through encouraging public measures. Something similar can be commented with respect to pregnant women, who have to resign their promotions, when their role in that moment is just very relevant for the whole society. The discrimination can be solved, simply, with infrastructures where children can be looked after while they are working.

7.4. Creating mediators of conflicts

This concrete action is related, and to a certain extent determined, by the need to recognise and assume the resolution of social conflicts within the towns, conflicts which it is not always possible to treat from the social services of town councils-local chambers. It seems to be evident that the policies of social inclusion must be managed more professionally, which means that specialists must work and take part in order to secure a correct handling of this kind of problems.

STRATEGIC IDEA NUMBER III.- MORE CENTRALISED TOWNS

Competences: General Direction of Transports of the *Xunta de Galicia*, Portuguese Ministry of Infrastructures. Town Councils-Local Chambers (ground reserve for the planning of intermodal centres of transport and the granting of licences to make the change to digital system easier). General Direction of Harbours of the *Xunta de Galicia*, Ministry of Public Works, Portuguese Administration of Harbours.

Prior coordination: Town Councils-Local Chambers with the Central Administration of Transports and Harbours, Administration of Environment, and Administration of Industry and Innovation, too.

Financing: the mobility policies are funded by the Structural Funds. Equally, the extension of computer networks until residences are funded by the Cohesion Funds. ARTS Programme for the subsidy of the transport for rural areas.

MEASURE 8

DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTERMODAL SYSTEM OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT FOR THE ATLANTIC SPACE

Some of the general actions of this measure are being put into practice in several towns of the Euroregion, but in an autonomous way and without a common aim which makes good use of synergies and increases their efficiency and the improvement of quality of services to citizens. Joint planification and intermodality become central elements of the intervention and positioning of the Axis in order to strengthen a sustainable network of public transport in the Euroregion, not only by opening the debate about the role of intermodality in low-density areas, but also by reforming the policies of subsidised public transport according to the design of models of efficient management. At the same time, the creation of a Cross-border Transport Consortium is an action which joins viability and symbolic value, which strengthens the idea of the Euroregion. We propose the following

Operational procedures

8.1. Strengthening public transport not only in the more populated municipalities but also in the interior ones

This concrete action can complement measure 6, because public transport must have among its aims the tendential feature of getting ecological mobility.

If we consider that another feature of transport must be intermodality, this measure is clearly focused on that direction, by considering that four of the big towns in the Atlantic Axis have an airport and six of them send goods and passengers, or unload catch in their commercial harbours. This observation means the need to link different lines of transport in order to provide people and enterprises with the joint use of those services and to reach their aims of mobility more comfortably and faster, and, consequently, it should be a preference for local governments.

When the demographic dimension of towns and metropolitan areas justifies it, we must create Transport Coordinating Authorities, with predominantly intermodal vocation.

8.2. Functional restoration of historical centres by pedestrianising

We have, among the towns of the Atlantic Axis, a lot of very interesting essays about restoration, essays which recommend an exchange of experiences between these ones and other European towns, to complete and improve that programme from the relationship between monuments-tourism-income.

From that perspective, it should be established a local action by looking for synergies with the abovementioned measure, to make mobility and enjoyment of historical centres easy.

8.3. Plan of suburban transports, by encouraging the secondary railway network

The improvement of the railway is, without any doubt, one of the most relevant pending matters for the authorities of the Euroregion, taking into account not only the cost of the opportunity, cost which is derived from its lacks with respect to the ways of current mobility of citizens (spent time, discomfort) but also because of the economic potential which is being lost due to this situation.

Excluding financial difficulties, it would be important to study the social and economic viability of a circular suburban system, which links the two axis of the Euroregional towns and which would be able to be structured in phases, by starting from the unity of the main towns of the littoral (unity which was considered in the sketch of the European economic framework 2007-2013), trying to instal the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) and completing the circuit successively in the same way as the other towns in the interior axis.

8.4. Airport connectivity to favour the connection with the exterior

It is obvious that every operational procedure which is completed in this measure 8 is interrelated and it cannot be completed separately, so that the abovementioned general aim of intermodality must deal specially with the facilities to access to the airport and high-speed railway transport, which at this moment are the main routes of exterior communication in the Euroregion and the main concern of local governments. The Atlantic Axis can be, is being, a privileged forum to tackle the airport system from a euroregional perspective.

8.5. Creation of a cross-border consortium of transports

It would be difficult to tackle the actions to improve intermodality in the Euroregion without a cross-border consortium of transports, which is in charge of coordinatin actions and programmes, of analysing the previous studies and of carrying out, where appropriate, intervention phases within the fixed goals. This competence does not belong to local goverments but to the Atlantic Axis, and taking into account the existence of a Sectorial Commission of Infrastructures and Transports in the Work Community, it should be highlighted its short-term dynamic to provide it with greater effectiveness.

8.6. Access to information and transport services through the Internet

The information society cannot be apart from the general aim of getting a bigger centrality of the towns and, obviously, of intermodality. In this case, the proposed action is the result of the trend which is marked in several measures of this document, and it tends to encourage the use of new technologies to favour the efficiency of the improvements in the transport structure.

MEASURE 9

PLAN OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARITIME TRANSPORT

The intermodality quoted in the abovementioned measures plays a specific role in the littoral, where, as we have already pointed out, six towns have economically relevant harbours, which should improve the integration of the Euroregion in the great guidelines of cabotage which are being designed in Europe in the medium term. Parallel to the concept of intermodality, it must be encouraged the dotation of industrial ground which is near harbours and logistic platforms which allow its future growth. We propose the following

Operational procedures

9.1. Studying a joint plan for the harbour system in the Euroregion

The redefinition of the more efficient use of current harbour facilities, by looking for synergies and consistent with the ideas quoted in measure 4, requires a previous joint analysis of its effectiveness and complementarity, by considering the effects and the dynamic of every use of the littoral, but also and farsighted, by taking into account the guidelines of the new harbour design in Europe. In this sense, it is important to reach a proposal of joint work with the main authorities of harbour management in the Euroregion.

From this point of view, it is necessary to remember here the role of the abovementioned Sectorial Commission of Infrastructures and Transports in the Work Community, which, promoted by the towns of the Atlantic Axis, should coordinate the studies and actions on this subject.

It must be specially taken into account the harbour of fastening in the maritime motorways, and everything related to the operationalisation of the former. In addition, the big harbours must be provided with terminals for cruises.

9.2. Plan to improve the transport in the rías and adaptation of medium depth harbours for transporting passengers

Equally related to measure 4, this action seems to be focused on the polyvalent uses of the littoral, taking into account that, on the one hand, Galician *riás* are a particular and specific phenomenon in the Euroregion, and, on the other hand, there are several second-level harbours which are potentially valuable to be used to transport passengers.

Until 1970s, the *riás* were part of the system of passenger transport in Galicia, even with very important intermodality features, more reasonably adapted to the necessities of that depth. Nowadays, except for the *ría* of Vigo, there are no remainder of that system and second-level harbours in the *riás* are hardly used to unload fish or seafood.

In spite of that, its facilities can be adapted to the new designs of passenger transport and they can also complete the aims of intermodality in the whole territory, by contributing to reduce the overload of vehicles which run along the roads in the littoral and, even, to create new uses related to leisure and tourism. The experience of the project Pescanatur, headed by several fishing guilds in the *Rías Baixas* and supported by European funds, should be analysed by local governments and put into practice by taking into account this measure.

9.3. Plan of intermodal communications between medium-sized harbours-high capacity roads and railways

The aims of this action complete the former and coincide globally with the ones from measure 8, once they mean to integrate the intermodal network between the littoral, the overland roads and the railway. This plan should be designed in coordination with the abovementioned one achieve the greatest number of synergies among converging actions. In this case, the experience of intermodality between river communication networks and the railway in the centre of Europe is particularly important for administrative decisions, which is necessary to make good use of for the most suitable design of use of second-level harbours in the Euroregion.

9.4. Inclusion of Euroregional harbours into cabotage and seaways lines which are being designed in Europe, and in other regular maritime lines

In coherence with the actions displayed until now, it seems to be evident that the Euroregion must be integrated not only in the European projects for the great transport lines but also in the design of the cabotage line which will affect, above all, second-level harbours.

The political action should be centred in a more active positioning so that, firstly, the Euroregion becomes externally visible and so that European decision and planning centres take into account this territory when they design programmes and objectives, and this requires the presentation of documents and the support of governments in Madrid and Lisbon. But, at the same time and in parallel, it must be used every previous information which can be achieved about those projects to put pressure on harbour and government authorities so that the modifications are hastened in harbour facilities and, if necessary, in the training of pilots, by interesting current and future managers in this subject. The European Union is going to invest in seaways between 2007 and 2013, by considering the financing of until 20 per cent of the works related to connectivity and creation of logistic platforms in the chosen harbours. This choice is going to be carried out by the respective central governments in each country.

9.5. Creation of logistic platforms and industrial ground near central harbours

The model of logistic platforms is closely related to the concept of intermodality in the field of goods transport, and from that approach, one of the most serious problems of the big harbours in the Euroregion is derived from urban invasion along the littoral, which in general makes it difficult, and even hinders, the growth of transport. The solution proposed by the logistic platforms reduces that negative effect, by acting as an intermodal nexus between production places and loading and distribution points, and by

increasing the competitiveness of the productive sector, so that it must be a basic aim of local governments.

Taking into account the high costs of this kind of infrastructures, it would be necessary that from the towns (through the Axis instruments) it may be carried out an avaluation of viability of platforms announced in the last months to press and to achieve the best decision about the cheapest places with respect to time and energy so that platforms could serve a greater number of enterprises, always by using resources in an efficient way.

MEASURE 10

PIONEERING USE OF ICT AS A FACTOR OF MINIMISATION OF PERIPHERAL CONDITIONS IN THE EUROREGION AND IN THE URBAN SYSTEM OF THE ATLANTIC AXIS

Apart from the advances which have taken place in recent times, Spanish and Portuguese societies still present considerable deficiencies, compared with the most advanced European societies in this subject, from the point of view of creation of sociable conditions for the use of these technologies. The quality of infrastructures and the costs of access to the same go on discouraging a widespread use of this kind of technologies, use which is all the more relevant because the territory in question is more peripheral.

In this context, the pioneering use of ICT as a fighting factor to the peripheral condition of the urban system of the Axis is a measure of complex and difficult operationalisation, which involves previous actions in the national and regional level to succeed in achieving, in the field of intervention of towns, conditions of preferential use. In any way, the distinguishing and pioneering mode as these technologies are used is nowadays a very relevant factor of competitive differentiation of towns, and therefore even within complex conditions it is justified as an operational measure of one of the strategic ideas for the future of the urban system of the Axis. We propose the following

Operational procedures

10.1. Free Accessibility to Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) from Institutional Centres

Political action which the Atlantic Axis must develop together with the respective regional and national administrations and the main entrepreneurial groups of telecommunications in the sense of reinforcing policies and programmes directed to create a more favorable environment to the spread of information society in the two regions.

In the field of this action, we propose the contractualisation, for the municipalities / towns of the Atlantic Axis, of a group of measures and pilot projects which place the use of ICT in the service of citizens and of a greater spread of local information together with the served populations. It is basic that this operation affects existing devices, such as the projects of digital towns, in the Portuguese case, by extending their action and diversifying its available contents and the ways of attracting new customers, to turn such initiatives into transversal processes to every intervention in the Atlantic Axis.

10.2. Study of Harmonisation of the initiative “VIRTUAL CAMPUS”

This initiative links the main university campuses of the Portuguese littoral, including the University of Minho, under broadband, with its extension to the campus of Galician universities and other educational and training institutions placed in the interior of the Euroregion. The “rationality” of this measure will consist of incorporating progressively in the digital network meanwhile creating new institutions which hold concrete projects of cooperation with the university institutions of the Axis.

10.3. Invigorating, based on regional competences, pilot projects in the area of the information society for the most depressed and lowest-density areas in the Euroregion

This action has to be carried out with the leading and active participation of the towns of the Axis whose areas of influence are within this typology of territories and with participation of the universities and research centres with signifying resources.

The invigoration of protocols of cooperation with national and regional health services, social security, civil protection, employment and others, so that the pilot projects are provided from the beginning with practical, concrete and useful contents for the population of such more disadvantaged and rural territories.

10.4. Development, in the field of projects mentioned in 10.3., of training processes directed to encourage more widespread impacts in terms of old audiences of the same projects

It is necessary to extend basic competences of user according to the logic of learning along life and of fighting conditions of social exclusion determined by high levels of infoexclusion.

The strategy of this measure consists of articulating training processes together with other projects which are practical and socially useful for the population of the abovementioned territories.

10.5. Invigorating, from the towns in the Atlantic Axis, pilot experiences of participation and citizenship with the use of ICT as a basic instrument of operationalisation

Among the priorities which must be promoted we find the projects which involve fields such as communication between schools, parents, teachers and pupils, managers, entrepreneurial associations and other institutions of the civil society in the field of territorial teaching associations, development of useful contents for the more active seek of a job, deep discussion of some projects and local *dossiers*, establishment of thematic groups of discussion about relevant local topics, transparency in the urban proceedings and processing.

The strategic rationality of this measure consists of making the towns in the Atlantic Axis pioneer of local electronic government, in association with the projects of electronic governing in both countries.

10.6. Creation of incentives to the carrying out of doctoral theses with potential application in the abovementioned fields of use of ICT

It is about invigorating in the Euroregion the production of relevant knowledge in order to feed these processes, through the appearance of solutions from open-code *software*, that is, which can be generally used.

STRATEGIC IDEA NUMBER IV.- PROMOTION OF GOVERNMENT AND HOLDING

Competences: the County Council Department of Labour of the *Xunta de Galicia*, the Portuguese Ministry of Labour and the corresponding administrations of social services of the Town Councils-Local Chambers. Also, other associative organisations such as the Forestry Assemblies, for example, have at their disposal some normative competences usually underutilised.

In accordance with the regulation 1082/2006, the local and regional authorities of one State of the Union may have the status of members of one EGTC, as well as the associations composed by national, regional or local organisations (the example of the Axis). The members of a EGTC are perfectly qualified to develop an agreement and the statutes, even though the authority to form part of a EGTC is direct competence of the States to which they belong.

Prior coordination: the central measure proposed here requires to make an effort to draw up the associative data of the Euroregion and, therefore, the coordination of every administration with competences in that area. The EGTC will be necessary among the Town Councils-Local Chambers, the *Xunta*, the CCDR-N and the corresponding States.

Financing: the main contribution comes from the ESF, the ERDF and from the JESSICA, since the specific proposals of the local services are included on their budgetary strategies. The Cross-Border Cooperation Funds would be essential for the EGTC.

MEASURE 11

INTERACTION BETWEEN THE INSTITUTIONAL AND THE ASSOCIATIVE NETWORKS FOR THE INNOVATION IN THE EUROREGION

This measure is considerably ambitious. The largest horizon would lead us to walk towards a more participant society, with a richer citizenship, stronger networks of civil societies, a less controversial methodology of solution of problems and, finally, a management of resources and innovative capacities. The reference document of the community is still the Economic and Social Committee's report about "The promotion of the associations and the foundations' role in Europe", of 28th January 1998, commented on by Carlos Veloso da Veiga in his article of Current Strategic Studies Book II. Here, he details a series of recommendations to the public institutions and those associations worthy to be reproduced in the line of the interaction proposed here. For the public institutions:

- a) Involving associations in the fight against unemployment;
- b) Implying associations in the national programmes of scientific research;
- c) Delegating some competences of current responsibility of the public organisations in the existing associations;
- d) Confering Public Funds provided to associations in terms of eventual agreements, trying to avoid the purely occasional decisions;
- e) Avoiding alterations of fiscal policy which may affect the self-interests of associations;
- f) Making associations more accessible to Structural Funds.

For the associations:

- g) Reinforcing their capacity of self-financing and self-preservation through: first of all, a better cooperation of their members, by means of increasing the number of members, their membership fees or the price of the services and goods given; secondly, a higher capacity of getting resources from the civil society and the entrepreneurial sector; thirdly, a reinforcement of the holding with organisations of social economy and trade-union movements in terms of environment, welfare, culture, education and/or social protection; fourthly, a better use of programmes of professional training to improve the aptitudes of officials and managers; and finally, the increase of the voluntary service.

Bearing in mind these recommendations, they propose the following

Operational procedures

11.1. Promoting the associativism in a throughout and balanced way in the whole euroregion

The study of Carlos Veloso da Veiga is useful to concentrate the efforts on the fields in which the difference between the Axis and the rest of Europe is higher: that is, sports and recreational, sindical, professional associations, ecological and feminist. These data refer to the North of Portugal, but they are, basically, extrapolated to Galicia. With respect to the territorial balance, the study points out, according to the general weakness of the associative network, the necessity to proceed in Guimarães, Vila Nova da Gaia, Viana do Castelo, Chaves and Peso da Régua in Portugal; Vigo, Monforte, Pontevedra, Lugo and Ferrol in Galicia. Nevertheless, Galicia doubles the number of associations (for every 1.000 inhabitants) with respect to the North of Portugal. Civil services must help in the process of consolidation of the associationism by means of: an appropriate local and autonomous regulatory framework; the endowment of spaces and minimal infrastructures into the associative movement; and the demand of good practices or policies of citizen participation to those associations protected by benefits.

The Atlantic Axis is perfectly located to work into the balanced dimension of the euroregional associative movement, creating sectorial fora to encourage the rising of new euroregional federations in every field which may allow the constant exchange of experiences and good practices through networks.

11.2. Creating a programme of development of the government to establish in the different institutions and the political-administrative levels of the euroregion and their interaction with the associative movement

This programme, which should be carried out by experts, political participants and members of the associative movement, should include a code of good practices of government which has necessarily to consider the following aspects with respect to public institutions: transparency, participation, subsidiarity principle, horizontal and vertical holding, and evaluation and reduction of the administrative responsibilities of the economic agents. As far as the associative movement is concerned, it should be based on this code: transparency in the management, the free possibility for citizens to take part in, periodical reorganisation of executives, and a minimal involvement according to the aims previously established by every association. It must be necessary a drawing up of some agreed indicators to determine the degree of large representation of the associations in terms of their access to the delegation of those competences that the institutions can accomplish, and to be in contact with the consultative councils liable to be formed.

Thus, bearing in mind the potential and large representation of towns, the function of the Atlantic Axis must be centered on providing a coordination and a homogeneity of the codes of government freely proposed by the authorities and the associative movement. In addition, it must encourage the delegation of competences and the formation of consultative councils inside the administrations of their members.

11.3. Developing a multi-year programme of euroregional scope designed to the promotion of organised administrative patterns in order to emphasize the closeness to citizens and to persuade the use of the new technological resources that favour this closeness

Similar to the previous study and bearing in mind the same degree of implication of experts and the political and associative participants, and once determined the code of governmental good practices and the criteria of large representation of the different associations, it is crucial to work out a specific euroregional programme of citizen participation. This programme must pay attention to: A) The spheres of participation, hierarchizing the most significant ones, such as urbanism, social services or environmental education. B) The most suitable means to participate, that is, consultative councils (Economic-Social Councils, Town Planning Councils, Educational Councils); internet as a tool for people to look up preliminary plans of regulations of local ordinances, for example; internet, as well, to contemplate online opinions and suggestions of people; and, the delegation of competences to associations of large representation (those devoted to social services, for example). C) The councils of extrajudicial arbitration, mainly those specialized in customers' rights. D) The exchange of good practices through the creation of associative and institutional networks in every area as well as through the development of seminars and the sharing of particular experiences of every town according to the joint programming. E) The development of follow-up commissions in charge of the evaluation of the level of participation and the level of individual and collective gratification of the citizenship with the established programme.

11.4. Drawing up a programme of government, a public-private holding and citizen participation for the follow-up of the Agenda 21

During the following years, we will have to transform those results shown in the Agenda 21 of the towns that form the Axis into concrete and viable purposes. The management of these already agreed measures will succeed if it includes mechanisms of public-private holding that could merge the aptitude and efficiency of the private sector with the responsibility and transparency that should prevail in the public sector. The follow-up of the programme used is absolutely essential to determine its efficiency and, at the same time, it offers a good chance to prove mechanisms of new government and citizen participation through the formation of an exhaustive Commission, or a follow-up Council, where the implied public administrations, the associative movement, the social and economic agents and the university experts should be reflected on. This Committee or Council, on the one hand, must have the competence, throughout the whole process, to urge the responsible authorities and institutions to take accurate measures to aim at the purposes scheduled in the Agenda 21; and on the other hand, it must evaluate the different stages and the final result of the programming.

11.5. Establishing a programme of government and citizen participation in the management of local urbanism

One of the main features to determine the attraction of a city is the kind of urban model which has been previously designed and still preserved. It would be quite interesting (following the example of the nordic countries), to commit ourselves to convey Consultative Councils composed by members of the associative movement,

experts or professionals, freely assigned by the local authorities at the beginning of every term. Following the same structure, another possibility, is the north-american model called “good persons”, that is, a group of wise men, (also freely assigned by the authorities), with enough aptitudes to advise in terms of town planning policies. It is the citizenship who cares for the valuation of the assignment as right or wrong.

MEASURE 12

REINFORCEMENT AND INSTITUTIONALISATION OF INTERREGIONAL HOLDINGS OF COOPERATION

One of the regulations of the regional policies has the EGTC as the main purpose. Thus, the Euroregion should take this into account to improve on the failures pointed out in the Treaty of Valencia.

Operational procedures

12.1. Evaluation of the capacity of coordination of development policies in the Euroregion and the creation of a EGTC

Before getting the EGTC off the ground, it would be wise to realize a balance of the euroregional cooperation focused on the capacity of coordination of the already existing structures: Community of Labour, Atlantic Axis, Cooperation Territorial Communities, CEER Foundation and Universities. This study will allow us to establish the degree of efficiency and fulfilment of the coordination to decide the most suitable members to form part of the EGTC. It also covers other issues such as the viability and the suitability to create more than one specialized EGTC to be absorbed in another global superior one, always bearing in mind the aims and the competences they are attributed to according to the community Regulations to which they belong. If this is the option to choose, it would be appropriate to state clearly the functions of every one, liable to be fitted into the purpose of the territorial cooperation of Structural Funds or, more precisely, liable to reinforce the economic and social cohesion.

MEASURE13

INTEGRATION OF THE ATLANTIC AXIS INTO THE NEW EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK-PROGRAMME FOR THE EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES AND GOOD PRACTICES

This measure comes from the agreement announced by the Commission, more precisely by the document about the cohesion and towns policy, COM (2006) 385 final, which proposes the drawing up of an European framework-programme (covering 2007-2013), to promote the exchange of experiences and good practices already exposed by the COM (2006) 675 final, of 8th November 2006: “*The regions for the economic change*”. The most immediate precedent is the huge result obtained with programmes such as URBACT, INTERACT or INTERFORM. To guarantee the success of this measure it becomes decisive the choice of the preferential holding from the rest of the European countries for concrete programmes, as well as the institutional spaces to increase the visibility of the euroregional institutions. The hierarchy established does not depend so much on the sequence of actions (since they should be in parallel) as on the importance that it has in relation with the last purposes pointed out for this measure: visibility and the search for holding. The following ones are proposed:

Operational procedures

13.1. Regular assistance (if possible participation also) to the different workshops about urban, social and territorial cohesion policies in Europe which take place throughout the year

This matter happens to be prior at the present moment the community programmings for 2007-2013 are being conceived; and more precisely, there should be a coordination between cooperative institutions and local and regional authorities to make the whole profit from ones’ actions. The following meetings with a quite periodical status and highly interesting to be held are:

a) The annual conference “The Regions, in favour of the economic change”. The Commission has just suggested this initiative to meet together representatives of European towns with high experience in positive economic development in terms of the Strategy of Lisbon, highlighted and spread out in the forum proposed by the Commission: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperation/interregional/ecochange/doc/staffworkingdocument_en.pdf. This conference will coincide with the European Spring Council, and its first contact will be in Brussels, on 7th and 8th March 2007.

b) **OPEN DAYS. Semaine européenne des régions e des villes.** During the last one celebrated in Brussels (9th-12th October 2006), 135 regions and towns took part, and it was organised 111 *ateliers* and conferences about “Investing in the regions and towns of Europe: public and private holdings for the improvement and employment”. There is one meeting a year, every October. Perhaps it would be appropriate to include the people of the Galicia-Europe Foundation.

c) **Deuxièmes Entretiens du transfrontalier: D’INTERREG III à l’Objectif de coopération territoriale européenne: nouveau contexte, nouveaux enjeux,**

nouveaux métiers, were held in Kehl, on 30th November and on 1st December 2006. We should keep an eye out for the third edition, although the programme from which they depend on is INTERFORM, centered on the cooperation between France and the other members of the EC.

Another way to make this operational measure be accomplished is the presence of the Axis itself in every fora online, where there are opinions demanding about future strategies for the community. For example, last months showed an opened enquiry about the 'Access to broadband: the exchange of experiences and plans of cooperation' to try to rectify the "digital split". See http://www.ianis.net/broadband_survey/index.php?lang=es. A second enquiry dealt with the document 'Communication about culture', which the Administration of Education and Culture will expose during the first three months of 2007. See http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/communication/consult_fr.html.

In the future, there should be disclosed a general calendar, preferably during the last trimester of the previous year.

13.2. Incorporation of new European networks in collaboration with other cooperation institutions and with local, regional and national authorities

It should be considerably important that the regional and national authorities of Spain and Portugal (encouraged by institutions like the Axis), try to propose themselves candidates to the management of programmes that subsidize the coming up of new networks, as France did by following the URBACT and the INTERFORM, from the previous period.

At the same time, the projection of the Axis into the Atlantic Space is essential. Therefore, we should be aware of the formation of networks in this geographical field, or even we should lead the development of one of them. To that end, two factors may provide us some help: first, since June, the presidency of the Atlantic Arc resides in Asturias, our closest community and, by the way, part of the North-West; and second, there is an only future cell of the CPMR, placed at Porto.

13.3. Creation of a foundation to establish stable holdings of the Axis with semipublic and private sectors of the Euroregion

Following the emphasis expressed by the Commission on the public-private holding as the main source to finance the urban development and regeneration, and on the necessity to increase the governmental practices, we think quite interesting to follow the essential steps to constitute a Foundation, or, another more suitable juridical formula, composed by the 18 towns of the Axis and by financing and entrepreneurial institutions, paying attention at, at least, two of these main purposes: a) to support the periodical holding of interdisciplinary seminars to think about de euroregional development; b) to account for an open communication between local and regional authorities and economic and social agents to come up with concrete and joint plans in several fields (management of water, of rubbish, collective means of transport, tourism, housing, urban centres commercial development, environment or computing).

13.4. Making new contacts with other networks of towns whose main goal is cross-border cooperation

Nowadays, the Atlantic Axis is the only network of towns consolidated in Europe. The lack of activity that characterised the one called C-6, covering Saragossa, Valencia, Palma de Mallorca, Barcelona, Montpellier and Toulouse (capitals of the Pyrenees-Mediterranean part of the Euroregion), suggests the search for similar holdings. The foreign projection of the Axis may arise networks of urban systems similar to the ones we have experienced. At the moment, the Association of councils of France and Germany, Saar-Moselle Avenir, provided with interesting strategies (although not extrictly about urbanism), may be useful to conquest new spaces and to project the Axis (and, by the way, the whole Euroregion), into European and international fora, where these towns would be better considered. The website of this Association is www.saarmoselle.org.

13.5. Boosting the development of an organisation of coordination of croos-border cooperation in the peninsula following the French Mission Opérationelle Transfrontalière (MOT), for example

This measure happens to be the most complex. The French model would be easy to apply in Portugal, but not in Spain, due to the difficulties that the State implies. However, it would worth the trouble that local and regional authorities, involved in the cross-border cooperation between Spain and Portugal, try to search eagerly for a share structure of these features in one of the following Hispanic-Portuguese summits to take place.

STRATEGIC IDEA NUMBER V.- COMMITMENT TO THE SOCIETY OF KNOWLEDGE AND INNOVATION

Competences: those decisions about the equipments correspond to the Town Councils-Local Chambers, and the programme of educational and formative projects correspond to the Ministry of Education and to the Ministry of Labour. Administrations, trade unions and employers (a Tripartite Foundation since the agreement of 7th February 2006) are in charge of the management of this competence. Moreover, the *Xunta de Galicia* specialises in the technological RDI policies, since the Technological Area in Portugal is directed by the Agency of Innovation (AI).

The County Council Department of Rural Environment of Galicia and the Regional Directions of Agriculture (Entre-Douro-e-Minho, Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro, in the North of Portugal), care for those decisions in terms of rural development, although the process seems to be really quite complex, since the areas with preserved landscape and the territories of the Rede Natura 2000 (accomplished by the County Council Department of Environment and the Ministry of Environment), sometimes show their own structures of management.

Prior coordination: vertical coordination turns out to be extremely important between the already mentioned County Council Departments and Ministries and the social agents belonging to the Tripartite Foundation. The Atlantic Axis, through the Galicia-North of Portugal Community of Labour, may convey a structure of coordination with an implied strong participation of centres of research and infrastructures of technological basis, in which the involvement of enterprises will be also ensured, by supressing, at the same time, the instability of the institutional framework between the two regions.

Financing: European Social Fund, Spain and Portugal Social Security Funds (entrepreneurial and working installments) and the Tripartite Foundation. It is crucial to bring forward the 7th Framework Programme for this subject, even though in the field of the Regional North and Galicia OP, it has been demanded the attention, on the one hand, on those structures that support the policies of competitiveness and, on the other hand, on the EAFRD. In Portugal, it is being proposed a programme devoted specifically for low-density territories – PROVERE.

MEASURE 14

INTERACTION BETWEEN EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUROREGION

The most recent theories about development point out that those spheres of education, training and employment (preserving their universal nature), have to be specific concerns of those more decentralized levels of decision, closely linked to the target of the public policies and to the territories that welcome such targets. Although it is not ensured a viable participation of the town councils and towns in these kind of processes due to the current situation of the regional competences, it is generally thought that the dynamics of the Axis should not show an indifferent position towards this decentralization. The cooperation must be guided in terms of coming up with the solutions to the most recurrent problems of the qualification, carefully examined in the territories of influence of the towns that compose the Axis. In this sense, this measure is suggested to be brought about concerning the following sequence of strategies/initiatives.

Operational procedures

14.1. Boosting cooperation projects involving educative communities and school associations in the spheres of influence of the towns belonging to the Atlantic Axis

It comprises the emergence of projects with different purposes according to the struggle for those common problems derived from the massive education; that is, the decline in the quality of secondary education, the loss of the high relevance of technological training, the negative results in subjects such as Mathematics and Physics, the high rates of school drop-out and failure, a citizenship training and the training for environmental responsibility.

The concepts about educative communities and school associations (embracing different schools), are extremely important to accomplish any action in this sphere, being necessary, first of all, to establish links of comparison and cooperation between the towns, with the purpose of increasing the exchange of experiences and the improvement of the different institutional contexts.

The problems presented by the educative communities cover institutions, territories and population; so, this provides the process of cooperation a high diversity of implication of participants and organisations, which reflects the possibility of turning school matters not only into corporative problems, but also into topics of considerable interest for the people involved in the process. In other words, we examine concrete problems, then we carefully observe them in those specific territories (accepted by the educative communities) and we rely on cooperation to look for the most suitable solutions for each territory.

As for Galicia, what seems to be more important now is to change the programmes to make them similar to the system adjusted: AE (adults), PSG

(Programmes of Social Guarantee), where local authorities have more presence. Likewise, we strongly recommend to analyse, from the town councils themselves, the transformations of the regulated system and to operate according to the planification of adult programmes, social guarantee, and/or programmes of social services (for example, campaigns against the school absenteeism).

It seems evident that the problems derived from education need a current political-social agreement that will affect the local competences. This is the reason why it will be crucial to undertake a study on the real possibilities (financing constraints) of the development of those actions from the local sphere itself.

Managers, entrepreneurial associations and other institutions of the civil society must be implicated in this commitment if we bear in mind that one of its main purposes is that students may find a job.

14.2. Boosting cooperation pilot projects directed to the extension of the education and to the technological training

The two regions show similar patterns of the depreciation of the technological culture, whose PMA is promoted from the very beginning in primary and secondary levels of education; then being extended to higher education, which may strongly penalize the performances of innovation for the future, due to the scantiness of human resources familiarized with technological change.

The articulation between Universities and the polytechnic education, secondary education schools and professional training schools, is crucial to grant the continuity of perspectives over the different levels of education and the constant update towards the main tendencies of technological change. The towns that comprise the Axis must, therefore, exploit their possibilities to make people get interested in them, ensuring opportunities of participation for the different entities. The contribution of the pedagogical thought and of modern information and communication technologies to the pedagogical service for the technological training, must constitute a priority in the organisation of projects.

Likewise, managers, entrepreneurial associations and other institutions of the civil society must be implied in.

14.3. Boosting pedagogical projects devoted to the revalue of Mathematics

From the moment when the generalised bad results in this subject has the penalizer effect of keeping the youth away the technological training, it seems necessary to intervene in the heart of the problem and try to improve the positions of the two regions in this matter.

Again, by giving priority to the establishment of links of cooperation among the diverse levels of education (primary, secondary and higher), the project should lead us into the creation of pedagogical equipments disposed to be spread, centered on problems of the regional and spheres of influence of every town, also liable to be used by other educative communities.

14.4. Formation of a cooperation process between networks of social support with activity in every town forming the Axis, oriented, on the one hand, to go deep into educative methodologies for underprivileged people; and on the other hand, to the development of new kinds of professional programmes with higher possibilities for future employment

The social networks that form the local sphere have a great and diversified experience in working with the education of underprivileged people, including the new problem of ethnic minorities. That is why the show and conceptualisation of these experiences become very important, going deep into the kind of methodologies and acquainting the local policy with new methods of social intervention, fitting to the new variety of underprivileged people.

This process welcomes the help of regional institutions of security and social segregation, since the local organism has already taken part in these matters.

14.5. Creation of common websites directed to the search for employment, including an important component of support in the search for education to get a job

One of the most crucial scopes of the integration between education, training and employment is the encouragement of new solutions of information basis in the search for employment, making use of the potential of new technologies of communication to spread methods of professional advising. The crossing of employment opportunities with training opportunities has revealed, in other countries, an important method to stimulate the looking for a job under conditions of a stronger potential of employment.

The towns that form the Axis, by defending a project of this nature, will be contributing to a higher relevance in the search for a better training, offering profitable chances to choose and to reject, in a positive way, those solutions offered with more quality and involvement to the specific alerts of jobs.

It becomes highly important the participation of centres of employment and institutions aimed at professional advising and career guidance counselling.

14.6. Programmes of constant and continuous professional training in integrated schools

Following the established in the previous measure, first of all we should account for an analysis of the productive structure of every urban area of the whole 18 councils of the Atlantic Axis. This study must coincide with another analysis of the current human resources, assigning a level of qualification to provide the most appropriate solutions for the stable job demands. This study may be accomplished by local organisms, such as the Local School Council or the Integrated Centres of Professional Training Social Council, already present in some towns of the Atlantic Axis. The research will result in a map of professional training for employment, confronting the necessities with the resources available.

In exchange for this, it is necessary to program the professional training, constant and continuous, giving a particular role to the social agents. It would be appropriate to create an agreement of collaboration with the associations of managers, trade unions and public administrations to design a programme of permanent training,

where there will be included initiatives that, at the present time, are dispersed in the programmes of continuous and regulated professional training.

This will lead us to the design of training programmes in specific centres, the so-called integrated schools, which will be organised under an integral centre of regional or metropolitan nature, and, by the way, will constitute the starting point to other entrepreneurial initiatives and educative innovations.

Finally, following the imposed community guidelines of education, to go deep into the adult training, making differences between those proposals of training for finding a job and those for cultural and citizenship formation.

14.7. Continuous training for administrative officials, specially teachers

This programme must be fulfilled bearing in mind the project of development of the basic educational competences of the OECD and of the EU. At the same time, it will be carefully considered the incorporation of new technologies of information and communication into the administrative services.

MEASURE 15

VALUING THE COMPLEMENTARITIES AND THE EXCELLENCE OF THE SCIENTIFIC, TECHNOLOGICAL AND INNOVATIVE SYSTEMS OF THE EUROREGION

If there is a sphere in which the placement of the main active members of the Euroregion coincides in great measure with the system of towns of the Atlantic Axis, this is surely the one formed by the scientific, technological and innovative systems. In this context, it becomes crucial that the Atlantic Axis may center on the main institutions and teams of excellence with practise in these systems. Besides the institutional participation of universities and other entities, it is important that cooperation might be specified by teams and concrete groups of intervention highlighted in the scientific, technological and innovative systems in the Euroregion.

In addition, bearing in mind the structural weakness of the Euroregion in terms of innovation, it is strictly necessary that the fulfilling of this measure should be carried out with the aim to ensure an increasing participation of enterprises (endogenous as well as the foreign ones) in activities of innovation. In this way, it must be done from the new knowledge produced by the scientific and technological system.

Thus, apart from trying to take part in the spheres that have to do with the development of regional, national and community policies, the division of the Axis must contribute to minimise the main structural obstruction of the scientific and technological systems of the Euroregion – the low participation of the local enterprises and the poor ability to draw the attention of new enterprises with higher innovative potential.

Taking into account these conditions, the measure is proposed to be fulfilled throughout the following rules

Operational procedures

15.1. Creation of a euroregional award directed to show model projects of R&D which may give place to new enterprises of technological basis or, by the way, organised technological events of already existing enterprises

In this case, it has to do with the political action of the Axis, which may contribute to the display of successful experiences of entrepreneurial R&D projects, including the ones from what they start to, in their conception of the nature of public-private consortia, with the participation of enterprises.

15.2. Reinforcement and internationalisation of the Iberian Institute in the area of the nanotechnologies to place in the sphere of influence of the University of the Minho, becoming an excellent appealing for the scientific and technological competences of the Euroregion and of new enterprises of technological basis

The transnational nature of this project, which will constitute the first Portuguese-Spanish science and technology institution, includes all the conditions to be a potential headline of the Iberian and European consolidation of the Atlantic Axis, due to its location and its implication with the towns of the Axis.

The system of towns in the Atlantic Axis must fight for making this project more attractive to new enterprises of technological basis in the field of the nanotechnologies and similar spheres, trying to associate the production of knowledge in this field with a pool of enterprises devoted to their productive transformation. It must be prior the creation of Portuguese-Spanish entrepreneurial consortia devoted to the productive valuation of this potential of knowledge.

15.3. Promotion of public-private consortia to conceive and to put into action pre-competitive R&D projects, creating the necessary conditions for a proactive participation of the Euroregion in the 7th Science and Technology Framework-Programme in those highly fields of competition for the development of knowledge

In terms of complementary or reinforcement of critic masses in common fields of excellence, it is possible to identify some high potential competitive spheres in the scientific and technological system of the Euroregion. Safety sciences and its connection with biomedicine and bioengineering, the biotechnology, electronics and the polymers and its potential link to automobile industries and alternative energies, represent some of the most significant scopes of this possibility.

The importance here relies on the support of public-private R&D consortia, necessarily implying enterprises, so that it may be reinforced the whole collective of enterprises of technological basis forming the Euroregion.

This action counts with supports in the field of the Regional and National Programmes (competition and innovation) and it should lead to its inclusion into the Science and Technology Framework-Programme. For that purpose, it will be also prior the mobilization of financial resources from the JEREMIE Programme.

15.4. Going deep into the exchange of experiences and methodologies of valuation of the undertaking of technological basis and mobilization of capital risk

The undertaking of technological basis pursues a natural extension of the two previous already mentioned actions, since the entrepreneurial basis of the Euroregion lacks of technological foundation. In this field, the tendency to propagate these kind of institutions and their progressive atomization evokes a recurrent downward trend of the competences of intervention, entrepreneurial competences and the inability to offer relevant services for the incubation.

The towns forming the Atlantic Axis must mobilize their most representative institutions to support the undertaking of technological basis, to introduce a process of exchanges of experiences and, above all, a process of consolidation of methodologies of

intervention, arranged by the most modern paradigms of help to the formation of start-up's. This action becomes essential to ensure increasing levels of visibility of the Euroregion to the Capital Risk Funds, which reveal a very low capacity of action in the two regions.

In this sense, it becomes crucial the implication of the most important Business Schools, universities and politecnic schools in these scientific and technological fields. Following the sequence of the Iberian market, the idea of undertaking must be promoted.

15.5. Cooperation projects including institutions and infrastructures of technological basis directed to the redevelopment and the structural removal of regional clusters of activities unduly classified

In the Euroregion, the productive structure of the most traditional nature (that is, food-agricultural sector, textile, furniture, civil industry and nautics) appear strongly formed in clusters, primarily of territorial basis. This model of organisation led to the formation of institutions and infrastructures of technological basis (for example, the sectorial technological centres) which has been storing up a great knowledge about the so-called clusters.

It is time to make these institutions and infrastructures **attractive** for the entrepreneurial cooperation devoted to the incorporation of high levels of creativity, knowledge and design in these sectors, aiming at supplying a structure of services of high increased value for the support of these clusters.

It must be also stimulated the valuation of the display of some of the experiences of entrepreneurial success of traditional activities redevelopment, without forgetting that the same pattern must be extended to other newer sectors of large projection, like the audiovisual one and the one concerning the cartographical-GIS.

15.6. Promotion and valuation of the competences in the sphere of patents register

The low level of patents observed in the Euroregion does not reveal the poor level of innovation in its industry; on the contrary, it stands out the reduced familiarity that scientific institutions show in the sphere of patents and processes for their constitution.

This action is assigned to spread a critical mass of competences in this sphere within the technological university institutions.

Apart from the implication of the already existing institutions, it is essential to associate this project with European institutions specialised in the field.

MEASURE 16

INTENSIFICATION OF THE ROLE OF THE ECONOMIC BASIS, KNOWLEDGE AND THE R&D IN THE MOBILIZATION OF ENDOGENOUS RESOURCES IN LOW- DENSITY AREAS

There is a strong necessity to include those low-density areas (or, in other words, those areas of high levels of rurality) into the competitive theories, liable to value in a competitive way the specific resources of such territories in the open market, and in this way, the intensity of the knowledge of these productive processes should be reinforced.

The low-density territories that also involve those spheres of influence of the towns of the Atlantic Axis, although provided with universities and other institutions of high education (no matter Universities strictly speaking, as in the case of Galicia, or autonomous foundations, as in Portugal), lack of mechanisms of cooperation with the coast regions to emphasize the critical masses of production of knowledge socially useful for these territories.

The Atlantic Axis, which reflects on its constitution the solidarity between low and high density areas, must promote the expansion of RDI policies to these territories in order to value, in a competitive way, the endogenous resources, always regarding the entrepreneurial holders of such initiatives.

The fulfilling of this measure is supported by the standing point of the community programme of 2007-2013 about competitiveness, and the plans proposed must be held by the regional programmes North and Galicia, and the cross-border INTERREG.

This measure is proposed to be displayed by bearing in mind the whole sequential actions that should cover the concrete resources of the low-density areas with great potential of competitive valuation.

Operational procedures

16.1. Promotion of the excellence and security of the food sector following the steps of agriculture and fish products

The agriculture and food production line organised from the produces and specific costumes of the rural areas associates its competitive valuation with the valuation of the aspects of the excellence of quality and security of the food sector; at the same time, being demanded a more intensive level of production of innovative knowledge in these fields. This valuation tends to lead to a heavy commitment to the biotechnology, the chemical food sector, or the development and qualification of methods of experimentation in biologic agriculture, among others.

In terms of mobilization of potentials of research and development that the power of the Axis may promote, it is quite interesting to conceive and to introduce cooperative projects to value the complementarities of the Euroregion, by highlighting, among other aspects, the already existing market between the two areas (see, for

example, the case of the chesnut or the wine itself, which imply deals at the level of the original product without the consequent actions of transformation).

Thus, in this field it should be crucial to rely on the organisations of producers for the processes of certification of products, as well as to favour the register of trends and the activities of promotion and marketing.

16.2. Development of cooperative projects liable to the intensification and application of scientific knowledge in the spheres of valuation and preservation of the flora, including the production of more sophisticated systems of fire risk monitoring structure and the valuation of the energy potential of the biomass

The scope of this project has to do with the one previously proposed referred to the promotion of public-private consortia of R&D production in a pre-competitive atmosphere. To that end, we must resort to the cooperation between the most dynamic universities of the areas forming the coast and the interior.

16.3. Boosting cooperative projects to manage and value the preserved landscape areas

The use of the areas classified as REDE NATURA and other territories involved in environmental matters, susceptible of being influenced by a strategy of rural development and of the competitive valuation of the endogenous resources of low-density areas, lack of the essential scientific knowledge of a good monitoring structure of these uses.

The application of this potential to the territory of Peneda Gerês-Xurés and other environmental areas such as the Minho River, requires the setting up of cooperative projects implying the relevant scientific resources and the entities with a regulated and supervising intervention in these territories.

The cooperative projects must influence, on the one hand, on the development of evaluation methodologies of the collective using burdens compatible with the environmental characteristics of the areas; and, on the other hand, on the founded identification of economic opportunities valuation in this kind of territories.

16.4. Boosting market pilot projects of endogenous products of low-density territories, based on the simultaneous development of platforms of electronic market and on procedures of strategic and effective market fitted to this model of marketing

The experiment promoted by these cooperative projects consists of the simultaneous development of electronic market methodologies, mobilizing the existing knowledge in the universities of the Euroregion.

16.5. Boosting a competitive and qualified agriculture in new and old products

Wine, due to its nature of a shared crop, is one of the products of symbolic value which has increased more in the Euroregion, not only in the works practised, but also in the wine-producing used. The existence of remarked regions and prestigious Ethnological Centres of Research makes the appearance of the competitive sector easier.

But, it would be interesting to make progresses in the analysis of the potential of new products that have recently aroused an economic interest, like for example flowers, biofuel or mushrooms. Particularly, in the case of the mushrooms it would be necessary to go deep into its knowledge and conditions of production. It would be also essential the creation of certifications of manufactured products proceeding from traditional craftwork in this process of encouragement.

16.6. Development of a great cooperative project centered on the valuation of the technical-scientific knowledge directed to evaluate objectively the Euroregion vulnerability in terms of disasters and natural risks, and the drawing up of proposals of scientific basis for the reorganisation of civil protection services

In the case of the North Region, the efforts in the drawing up of the Regional Programme of Territorial Planning, will allow the further development of studies of identification of risky areas prone to measures of territorial planning. Besides, those cases of forest fires and the case of the PRESTIGE, among others, show that the territories of the Euroregion are similarly prone to risks of the same kind. This is why we need cooperation institutions in the spheres concerning forest fires and coast pollution; but without forgetting other fields that also deserve special attention: floods, the fight against erosion by means of forestation, the high level of the sea, the prevention from disasters derived from the industries (accidental oil spilling, emission of poisonous gases), or the processing of the land and the global forest planning.

In this context, the Atlantic Axis should insist on the fusion of technical and scientific efforts to favour the conception of systems of monitoring structure of specific risks, acquainting them with the best conditions of knowledge.

STRATEGIC IDEA NUMBER VI.- AN ENDURING DEVELOPMENT FOR JOB CREATION

Competences: in the case of Portugal, the figure of the Regional Poles of Competitivity will tend to encourage regional consortia of diverse entities directed to the integrated assistance of services to SME; whereas in Galicia this competence belongs to the County Council Department of Economy and to the County Council Department of Labour.

Prior coordination: the CLUSTER must be the unit of policies and projects coordination, involving the diversity of the providing entities of services to SME. The regional level constitutes a more appropriate coordination space. The relevance of the services offered in this sphere of cooperation and the strong presence of the university system associated to the Atlantic Axis, justifies its encouraging role in the programme Atlantic Space of transnational cooperation, ruled by the North Region of Portugal (CCDR-N) for the period 2007-2013.

Financing: the Programme of Atlantic Space (transnational cooperation), the regional OP and the national/regional policies directed to the competitiveness will be the main resources for financing.

MEASURE 17

CREATION OF A POOL OF COMPETENCES IN THE FIELD OF THE SERVICES ADVANCED TO SME

The SME, and particularly the microenterprises, are the ones that represent, in a traditional way, a higher integration between the territories, regardless if they had worked for external or internal market. This is the reason why they respond in a more decisive way to the stimuli resulting from the public territorialised policies and the actions led by cooperation networks of territorial basis. But, this prototype of enterprises requires advanced methodologies of intervention, mainly because it claims for global scopes at the expense of a segmented consultancy, since the dimension of SME makes this excessive specialisation unfeasible.

The production fabric polarised by the Towns of the Atlantic Axis includes these features, and it has been almost inexistent the appearance of centres of competences in terms of advanced services to these enterprises. Then, the fabric production of SME faces with challenges of internationalisation, of directional reorganisation of higher increased products' value and of the formation which requires special competences. For this purpose, this fabric production should be able, in the near future, to absorb a high number of graduates than actually exist, by the way, essential condition to increase the quality level of the structure of SME.

The fulfilment of this measure concerns with a set of cooperation projects whose rationality is beyond the promotion of centres of competences in the Euroregion prepared to respond to these requisites, and to avail the opportunities of the community policies directed precisely to the valuation of the role of SME in terms of innovation and creation of more qualified employment. Furthermore, we should pay attention to the cross-border fields of work as a first step to make the interrelation between our enterprises possible. The following proposals aim at this

Operational procedures

17.1. Stabilisation of institutions devoted to the advanced rendered services for SME with extension to the Euroregion

The methodology of cooperation projects implying institutions which are potential providers of advanced services to SME must stand out as a chance to value the shared competences in the Euroregion, stating the exchange of experiences in the field of the identification of structural problems of organisation in SME. The method proposed for the fulfilling of these projects consists of the development of a joint work centered on the universe of those SME located at territories that surround the towns of the Atlantic Axis. This work must provide a data base about this project, based on a systematic response to a research devoted to identify the structural problems of action and organisation. Following these steps, it will be possible the construction of a typology of models of intervention for SME according to this: i) Response to challenges of internationalisation; ii) Response to challenges of productivity; iii) Response to

challenges of quality of entrepreneurial capacity; iv) Response to challenges of energy efficiency; and v) Response to challenges of technology transference.

Bearing in mind this typology of structural problems, we will account for outlines of specialisation for institutions of advanced rendered services to SME, without forgetting the global and integral scope.

The involvement of institutions is ensured by the active participation of technical frames of candidate institutions to the participation into the cooperation processes, throughout methodologies of formation-action.

17.2. Projects to exchange experiences and to go deep into methodologies of intervention in the sphere of the formation-consultancy of SME

Nowadays, there is a recognized idea that the best way to spread strategies of formation of SME, usually opposed to participate of the opportunities that the existing programmes offer, has to do with the development of programmes of formation-consultancy. The experience in Portugal has been highly positive, and certainly this method has great possibilities to make progresses in the Galician SME.

Thus, the main idea consists of promoting cooperation projects involving institutions with experience in developing this kind of methodologies, directed, as well, to the evaluation of the stored up experience and knowledge, to the formalization of the learning carried out and to the position of this knowledge in order to make the method advance with higher efficiency.

The product of these cooperation projects will search for the drawing up of platforms of formation, the so-called electronic platforms, which may be displayed at the service of SME to help them in their internal efforts to specify the necessities of the formation. The inclusion of Business Schools in this project is crucial to ensure the mobilization of relevant knowledge. Besides, they should keep relations of cooperation between them.

17.3. Constitution of consultancy lists specialised in the advanced rendered services to SME

Once it has been created a directory of SME with identification of their main structural problems of operation and organisation, as well as the treatment of exchanges of experiences between the institutions of our pursuing methodologies, a new scope demands also a directory of consultants, transformed into a consultancy list, mobilized for the specification of intervention policies distinguished in SME.

The increasing worth of the project will concentrate on the extension to the field of intervention of consultants regarding the strategies of market in the Euroregion, providing them with knowledge and methodologies of a scope compatible with the philosophy followed by the already mentioned actions. The role of the postgraduate training is crucial to reinforce this aim, being also desirable that the Business graduates may be associated with this project, proclaiming modules of training in strategic management and strategic planning subjects directed to the global scope of SME.

17.4. Creation of a casoteca with case-studies conceived depending on structural problems of operation and organisation

It has to do with the support of a cooperation between MBA and Business Schools in the same line as it has been conceived, on the one hand, cases of study centered on structural problems of operation and organisation of SME, and, on the other hand, cases of successes of SME in the Euroregion with the purpose of spreading knowledge and supporting the actions of formation-consultancy previously mentioned.

17.5. Formation of a market of contents regarding culture industries, encouraged by the cultural action of the towns forming the Atlantic Axis liable to boost the appearance of SME in this section of production

In this case, the process will try to make use of the potential of the local public markets that the action of cultural and territorial marketing of the Towns has been trying to stimulate the consolidation of SME in these spheres of market.

This competence should be placed on the field of the choices of selection and direction to the competitiveness, which are about to be defined in this programme made by the *Xunta de Galicia* and the CCDR-N. Bearing in mind the dominance of SME in those areas considered appropriate for the Cooperation Objective, it will not be difficult to justify the typology of intervention in the scope of this programme.

To that end, we have clearly identified some financing opportunities in the context of the Portuguese programming. We point them out:

- The OP of the Qualifications (valuing human resources), will give, in terms of professional training, a huge importance to the topic of professional training – consultancy to SME, following the formation of strategic evaluations of the necessities for each specific SME; this is the reason why it will be possible to receive the proposals of regional institutions, entrepreneurial associations and even processes of consultancy formation for SME. Finally, the last thing to deal with is to clarify if the Spanish and Galician programming give the same importance to this category of professional training.
- Apart from this, according to the Regional OP in association with the Competitiveness OP, we have at our disposal the condition to explore the element of formation of competences to approach SME, designed in the sphere of the Regional Poles of Competitiveness to be created. We will have to concentrate on the hypothesis of complementarity with similar actions in the field of the programming of the *Xunta de Galicia* in these matters.
- Finally, concerning the creative industries, there must be two financing opportunities: on the one hand, the North Regional OP will contribute to this problem with a specific measure and it will constitute one of its first priorities; and on the other hand, the Portuguese Ministry of Culture will bring out a programme of community co-financing for projects for international and national valuation of active towns, for which, at least Guimarães and Porto, represent excellent conditions of promotion, by the way reinforced by the candidacy of Guimarães as European Capital of Culture.

MEASURE 18

DRAWING UP COOPERATION PROJECTS DIRECTED TO VALUING AND STRUCTURING NEW CLUSTERS OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

The territories that form the spheres of influence of the towns belonging to the Atlantic Axis and the Euroregion in general, have been suffering difficulties in the structure of new clusters of economic activities, because of a higher potential of productive diversity and, above all, because it has been making this from the perspective of promoting complementarities in the Euroregion itself. Such difficulties can be observed even in those activities that correspond to endogenous resources of both Regions, being almost impossible to intensify inter-industry relations, more advanced models of services and more modern ways of marketing over them.

In terms of the wide opportunities surrounding the Structural Funds programming for 2007-2013, it happens to be necessary to open new ways of cooperation in order to contribute to the structuring and the valuation of new opportunities in this sphere of stabilisation of new euroregional clusters. The identification of such opportunities must decide on the definition of the priorities of the development already carried out by both regions for the following programming period. In terms of the knowledge available, the clusters to emerge as possible priorities are the ones regarding sea activities, alternative energy, automobile and granite.

The fulfilment of this measure involves the proposal of cooperation projects of sectorial basis; composing the mobilization of relevant scientific knowledge for the valuation of the referred productions; the participation of institutions devoted to the presence and transference of technology to these sectors; public regional institutions devoted to the regulation of the quality in these spheres and, obviously, representative enterprises liable to hold projects of diversity and productive internationalisation and institutions of specialised formation. We propose the following ones

Operational procedures

18.1. Promotion of an institutional network to generate relevant scientific knowledge to value the cluster in those activities regarding the sea

Bearing in mind that the sea comprises one of the most traditional resources of the Euroregion economy (it has given rise to fishing activities of extraction, of industrial elaboration complementing the land and, actually, leisure time and tourism), it must be a crucial assumption for public local institutions to accomplish agreements and to mobilize other administrations to increase the generation of knowledge and thus the increase of the value of these activities; mainly through the formation of networks of researchers interconnected not only into the Euroregion itself, but also, into other scientific centres all over the world to achieve a huge efficiency in their works. At the same time, local administration may arouse the transmission of this knowledge to the economic centres, performing an important role of developer of technological

innovation in productive sectors currently suffering from problems of entrepreneurial competitiveness. The entrepreneurial associations of the sector must cooperate.

With respect to the valuation of the clusters concerning the sea, the best financing opportunity is the one of the Galicia-North of Portugal Cooperation Objective and the Regional North OP for the Portuguese towns. Both documents will give a huge priority to value the sea, and, evenmore, in the North, it has been created an institution of research IDCEM, with participation of the Universities of Porto and Minho and some associations like VALIMAR. The remaining measures are included into the Regional OP claiming for the valuation of new poles of competitiveness and the competitive value of endogenous resources.

18.2. Reached procedure of the better use of opportunities open by the initiative of the European Commission (Green Book About the Sea) and by the association of regions of the Atlantic Space

The Green Book About the Sea establishes a group of orders related to other measures already commented on (such as cleaning-up the coast, regulated town planning or ecological use of harbours), also dealing with the preservation of resources without minimizing the pay in of the seaside communities.

Local administrations, in coordination with the regional ones, should have as a preferential competence the fulfilment of these advices, taking part in the dynamics of meeting together to take decisions, and thus to reach a better efficiency in the measures to be carried out together.

18.3. Promotion of an institutional network to generate scientific knowledge relevant to value the cluster of activities about the alternative energies

After the crisis of the 70s, still present nowadays, one of the unresolved problems in the increasing of the European economy as well as the well-being of citizens was the dependence derived from the energy model upheld in the use of mineral fossils, from which Europe does not own relevant reserves, economically speaking.

Since the approval of the first energy European plan at the beginning of the 80s, the scientific progresses that allowed an adequate transmission of technological innovation to the industry were rather poor, among other reasons, because of the lack of a joint energy policy. Nowadays, however, a high number of research groups are working individually, with evident efficiency, in the generation of scientific knowledge that could influence significantly on the technological improvement of our enterprises. It is in the competences of local public authorities, on first place, that lies the preferential fulfilment to stimulate the creation of institutional networks of science production in this field of knowledge, and, in the second place, to form and use contractual ways to let the enterprises use that knowledge and their integration in the productive system.

18.4. Promotion of an institutional network to generate scientific knowledge relevant to value the cluster of activities about the automobile

In high connection with the former, this fulfilment must go on with the reinforcement of the important role of the automobile industry in the Euroregion, above

all, if we consider that the cluster of these activities provides around the 20% of the total generated employment in our territory during the last two decades.

Likewise, it seems evident that local public authorities must promote and encourage the creation of scientific institutional networks to ensure the production of enough knowledge to keep, and to improve as well, the current pace of technological innovation in this sector.

18.5. Promotion of an institutional network to generate scientific knowledge relevant to value the cluster of activities about the stone

The mineral reserves referred to the ornamental stones in the Euroregion are still of considerable importance to ensure the continuity of the enterprises that deal with it; but, in any case, it persists a serious technological problem that minimises the increased value of its production. As in the previous examples, the local authorities must make the most of all the existing scientific resources to increase the technological level of the whole activities that form the cluster of the granite, the slate and other ornamental stones. This should be done by encouraging the coordination and the work together of scientific institutions and by using their competences to transmit this knowledge to the industry.

STRATEGIC IDEA NUMBER VII.- A common cultural space

Competences: respective hydrographical confederations, County Council of Environment (Galicia) and Ministry of Environment (Spain and Portugal), respective administrations of tourism. In the cultural sector, the competences appear remarkably diversified between the public sector (cultural policies of the States, *Xunta de Galicia*, delegations, town councils-local chambers), the semipublic sector (semipublic funding organisations, foundations, associations) and the strictly private sector of cultural programmes, as well as the ones of the stars and the more and more numerous enterprises of cultural services.

Prior coordination: between the administrations and the already mentioned organisations and the private sector, besides a concerted work between the cultural and tourist administrations of Galicia and Portugal.

Financing: ERDF, Cohesion Fund, IGAPE and the private sector. Also, the previous attempts to analyse and promote should count on the support preferably coming from the EU through the ESF and other specific programmes; whereas the development of the focal points should be projected –even taking for granted the possible supports from the public or the private-, into a future self-financing. Such focal points having as head, in a temporary time, public or semipublic organisations, would depend on the support of the organisations that promote them.

MEASURE 19

JOINT USE OF TOURIST RESOURCES, BY PAYING SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE BASIN OF THE MIHNO RIVER AS A TOURIST AND ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION PRODUCT

The territory of the basin of the Minho River stands for one of the most outstanding examples of regional interrelation. Throughout history, yet before we were taking part of the EU, it embraced not only conflicts, but also the social cross-border cooperation. Nowadays, for the new generations, we shall say that it remains, on the one hand, as a worthwhile monumental heritage that should be restored and, on the other hand, as natural spaces that should be managed as a whole, in order to offer a particular tourist product. To that end, we propose the following procedures

Operational procedures

19.1. Restoration of the monumental heritage of the Minho River (specially the fortresses with bastions)

Even though there are already diverse procedures with this purpose, we can affirm that the whole historical monumental heritage in the basin of the Minho is quite far from being restored for enjoyment and, therefore, far from spreading the knowledge and the identification of our shared history and culture.

One of the cultural authorities most accepted conclusions with respect to the monumental heritage, is that the expenses of the preservation are inversely proportional to its use; thus, we recommend to attach to the restoration projects a study of the distribution of the expenses, in which the social enjoyment of the heritage may be linked to the involvement of users (tourists and visitors mainly) in the contribution to the expenses of maintenance and exploitation. The European experience points out that the inhabitants themselves are more disposed to assign resources for the preservation when they discover this plan of distribution and, above all, when they observe that visiting the monuments mean the creation of employment and the consequent earnings for them. Evenmore, it is necessary to make use of the monumental heritage not only for tourism, but also for generating precisely jobs (accommodation, museums).

Once restored, it is recommended to organise tourist routes covering all the main monuments, by means of a finest programming of activities and by providing group entries to visit diverse monuments with the same ticket. Means of transport throughout the river (apart from providing sustainable benefits) will be very attractive.

19.2. Creation of joint circular culture-nature routes surrounding the river

Considering the river as the central nucleus of the tourist offer in the basin of the Minho, we can see that both banks are filled with rich resources and attractive resorts, with the peculiarity that they are practically symmetrical, due to long centuries of a common history which have resulted in a joint heritage and culture.

The European programme 'Culture 2007' gives a special preference to the dynamics of cultural cooperation in cross-border areas. In our case, this entails the discovery and the value of the potential of the resources previously mentioned, not only to preserve them, but also to use them as an important factor for local development. The three bridges placed throughout the course of the river and a ferry placed at the mouth of the river favour the local intervention to design a project of circular routes throughout the basin (in terms of the model of cultural tourism), which may be also extended to the natural areas, already quoted, of the Gerês-Xurés.

19.3. Promotion of cross-border networks of enterprises

In relation with the previous intervention, this one pursues to go deep into the economic cooperation, creating and making use of the synergies that may go beyond the limits of the tourist sector itself with a view to other activities of the productive system of this territory.

Political actions must work for the convergence of these two measures, under the consideration that the creation of networks of enterprises in the tourist activity tends to ensure the consolidation of this sector, projecting an image of efficiency and favouring the generation of employment. But, due to the purpose of showing, it also stimulates the horizontal cooperation with other sectors of economy and gives an impulse to local development.

19.4. Cooperation in the projects of the integral development of the cross-border parks of Peneda-Gerês/ Xurés

The arguments exposed when talking about the historical and cultural heritage can be used to refer to the natural heritage and, in this case, the cross-border coordination must be put by imperative into practice, since nature has nothing to do with artificial or administrative limits.

Perhaps, the whole space Gerês-Xurés stands for one of the most beautiful and rich natural areas of the euroregion; green space and tourist resource of incalculable value which embraces, at the same time, considerable traces of history, as important as poorly known nowadays.

It would be essential to go deep into the already existing conventions about the joint management of this natural area, forming a specific organism of coordination to face executive competences and to ensure, thus, the coherent interventions according to the necessities of preservation and use; without forgetting that these rules are different in Galicia and Portugal.

19.5. Joint programme for tourist promotion of the towns of the Atlantic Axis

At the present moment, all the towns of the Atlantic Axis reflect important tourist offers, but, they lack the put into practise of an overall promotion (neither by segments of the product, nor by routes); fact that minimises the efficiency of the resources spent.

Apart from the correlation with interventions 3.4, 19.3 and 21, this measure is directed to the projection, into the issue markets, of an image of the euroregion as a global tourist destination, centered on the complementarity of the different urban offers. Moreover, the purpose of pulling temporary apart the coming of tourists into the towns, will be appropriate to improve the quality of life and enjoyment of their services, both for tourists and inhabitants. The only thing required is the willingness of the local political organisms to carry out this procedure.

The promotion should be fulfilled in a global way, but also regarding thematic aspects (the Romanesque, the Gothic, the culinary or the sportive ones, for example).

MEASURE 20

CREATION OF THE TOURIST PRODUCT 'CROSS-BORDER PLACES OF MEMORY'

This measure does not leave out the interest to promote the formation of other tourist devices, that is, what we have already stated as the combination of tourist-cultural-environmental routes along the euroregion, following the steps of the tourist guidebooks Galicia-North of Portugal already published by the Atlantic Axis. The hierarchy of the necessary interventions must be determined by the progressive stages for its full execution: the analysis of the available resources, the specification of the suitable places of memory, the design of the tourist product, the project's coming into operation and the follow-up of the results.

Operational procedures

20.1. Drawing up and updating of a guidebook of equipments and cultural services of the euroregion

In 1999 the Atlantic Axis published *Guidebooks of Cultural Resources* which were completed with the catalogue of cultural equipments, carried out in the context of the *Second Strategic Studies*. Now, it is necessary to update these works and to apply them into the main nucleus of the euroregion, specially emphasizing on the shortage of centres for interpreting, jointly co-financed by LEADER and PRODE Funds.

The drawing up of this guidebook must aim at the achievement of the following results: to get in touch with the equipment and devices network's density, to search for complementarities, to reduce duplications and to detect deficiencies. Every administration is acquainted with a register of these matters that must be temporarily revised and periodically updated to show an annual version in the website. It will be quite difficult to make these measures effective in the cultural sphere if this guidebook ignores this planning. Besides, this guidebook should help to avoid the 'equipmentalism', mistake that sometimes we tend to make.

20.2. Drawing up guidebooks and routes about the places of memory and the history in the field of the euroregion

The places of memory is a historiographic concept stated by P. Nora in the 80s which has been quite successful and put into practised. We think that the one that most fits with the encouragement of the cross-border cooperation is the one developed by the INTERREG IIA, in the euroregion Saar-Lor-Lux, which you can look up in <http://www.memotransfront.uni-saarland.de/nav/framset1.htm>.

We consider quite positive the typology used, based in A. Assmann, which focuses on generational places, saint places, commemorative places and traumatic places. Always keeping in mind three kinds of locations: first, the ones where historical facts specifically linked to the frontier were developed; second, the ones that, due to their architecture, may be proposed as centres of inter-incisiveness and antagonisms of

the cross-border space; and finally, the ones in which human activities were developed, basically economic and cultural, which may establish the features of the cross-border union.

This study should be completed following the last publications of the Axis about the prehistoric epoch with routes to value the history: *Castro* culture, Romanesque, Swedish Period, Christianity, Galician *Pazos* and monasteries, emigrants, exiles and gardens with peculiar species (camellia or rose). We must pay particular attention to the villages with historical, architectonic and ethnographic interest.

The conclusions of this measure must plead for the development of the territory closer to the frontier, centered on the tourism benefits and the economic synergies to be derived from. We must not forget the dynamic factor of the euroregional awareness and the dialogue between villages that the measures of this kind usually promote.

20.3. Boosting the theatre as historical representation

Once fulfilled the former measure, it would be necessary to imply the cultural actors and even the inhabitants of both places into an original experience to bring forward: the popular theatrical representations of historical facts or ethnographic processes already lost (or almost lost). Nowadays, we are experiencing the revival of festivals of historical representation and we must take the most of this phenomenon to establish a viable future. Local and regional administrations must function as useful channels to make the civil society be in charge of this measure. There are ancient theatrical texts that could be recovered, even though clearly chauvinist, to give them a positive interpretation. Take as an example the *The Dispute of the Farmers of Caldelas* (1671), of the graduate Gabriel Feixoó de Arauxo, which is about the fight between Galicians and Portugueses for the practise of fishing in the Minho near the area of Tui.

20.4. Plan for the better economic use of the chosen places of memory and historical routes carried out

The implication of public-private holdings and economic agents will determine the degree of better use of this tourist device. The role of public administrations must go on with the functions of these other participants with the cultural appropriate equipments if needed. With this, we must pay careful attention to begin this project: it is necessary to choose the first intervention among those that may provide more help, more support and more possibilities to succeed. Then, we will use the so-called snowball method, revising that the process may not suffer a spill over. Finally, we would suggest the next two events provided with a clear euroregional perspective: the XI centenary of San Rosendo and the Bicentenary of the War of the French.

MEASURE 21

CONFIGURATION OF A EUROREGIONAL CULTURAL SPACE

This measure depends clearly on analyses that may avoid the dispersal of resources and interventions. The coordination between the cultural participants of the euroregion, no matter public or private, is essential. The cultural activity of the towns of the Axis is highly valued and it has surprisingly increased during the last decades. Coordination is essential to avoid wasting the resources and to try to project itself into the euroregion and even further. But, these analyses should be conveyed by more concrete operational procedures, endowed with a high symbolic value, and even some of them may work in parallel with the procedures directed to the study and planning. Following the coherence of this criteria, the hierarchy proposed is the following one

Operational procedures

21.1.1. Knowing, evaluating and cataloguing experiences of cultural euroregional cooperation promoted by public and private organisations and agents

Before designing concrete strategies, we should get in touch with what we have done up to now. Resources are always poor and we should take this into account; so instead of drawing up a guidebook of cultural activities, first we may work on a catalogue of activities shared by the cultural euroregional agents. The contribution of the local and autonomous administrations as providers of information is crucial. Besides its nature as a tool for evaluating the design of the whole cultural space, this measure pretends to identify the euroregional agents to make the new measure be implemented.

21.1.2. Interconnecting the agents and the already existing public, semipublic and private cultural institutions

Derived from the previous procedure, and once identified the agents and the institutions with an euroregional dynamics, the following step is the creation of a network. This one should be extended to those other agents and institutions which play a remarkable role in the cultural encouragement, but remain still unaware of the euroregional dynamics, and, by the way, public institutions must stimulate agents and already existing institutions to form part of it. It deserves special mention the role that universities must develop inside this network; in fact, nowadays we cannot think about them as exclusively sources for research, training and transference because this would miss the tradition as cultural providers that they have always had and should still have, mainly, the schools of Arts and Letters. This network, once set up, must be relevant for the next measure.

21.1.3. Establishment of prior cooperation lines drawing up a worked strategy by significant sectors and agents of the cultural euroregional field

The network of cultural agents of euroregional cooperation must be responsible (together with public administrations) for the design of a strategy of prior cultural procedures to form the common cultural space. Thus, its implication will be much deeper and the degree to achieve success quite high.

21.1.4. Selection and planning of a constitution of sources of cultural cooperation inside the euroregion according to the proposals of the EU

The community programmes related to culture have shown a high degree of an existing correlation between culture, industries and employment. The Commission has already stated the framework-programme Culture 2007, which replaces Culture 2000 for the new estimated period 2007-2013. Then, we have to draw our attention to this process.

From the programme Culture 2000 it would be interesting to rescue the idea of setting up cultural sources, adapted to the new situation. The reason to create them is precisely to favour their development from the associative organisations or the current cultural members, like cooperative agents and the exchange of services, construction, events and audiences; and so giving rise to their self-financing from the resources coming from their own activity. The audio-visual industry offers an open window of opportunities which would be interesting not to miss.

From the point of view of the symbolic procedures, we may begin with the easiest one to implement, to keep on with the complex ones then:

21.2.1. Building a common cultural website following other current European examples

Perhaps the closest example is the euroregion of the Pyrenees-Mediterranean, which you can analyze in <http://www.euroregion.eu/portalcultural/agenda.html>. Internet happens to be cheaper than the publication in the cultural agenda and, of course, more dynamic and adaptable. It may also include the possibility of booking and purchasing online tickets for shows, bearing always in mind the implication of all the holdings of the cultural activities in the euroregion. In any case, the inclusion of a section to establish relationships between the qualified persons of the culture, is quite interesting, following the model of the proposed website, where we can find diverse examples of INTERREG programmes of cross-border cultural cooperation.

21.2.2. Drawing up a joint candidacy to be Patrimony of Mankind by the UNESCO

The failure in the candidacy of the Galician-Portuguese immaterial culture in the past convocation must be a referent to try to improve the mistakes made. We should concentrate our efforts on something more concrete and actually prone to disappear; one of the possibilities is the tradition of oral literature linked to the practise of the agriculture; *foliadas*, *muiñadas* or *regueifas*. A well-documented commitment in this direction would give an international condition to this cultural space pursued.

Another alternative with material basis which claims, at the same time, a great research, is related to the *Castro* culture, highly typical of this part of Europe.

21.2.3. A Cross-border band formed by youngsters

Music is one of the most important arts. Last years have shown a revival of the musical education: on the one hand, as a compulsory subject in the new school curricula, and on the other hand, providing town councils with conservatories to satisfy the long for learning the new generations show. There is, thus, enough basis for the local and autonomous administrations to begin with a project of this nature. Besides, we must not forget that one of the first interventions of the expert Regio Basilensis was the formation of a band with these features in the 70s of the past century.

21.2.4. Forming a cross-border stable company of theatre

In this case, we have the tradition of the Festeixo, celebrated annually in Viana do Castelo, with the contribution of theatre enterprises of Galicia and Portugal. In the scope of the cross-border cooperation in Europe, we may make use of some profitable models. For example, the case of the Centre Transfrontalier de Création Théâtrale Tourcoing/Mouscron (France-Belgium) and its company La Virgule in <http://www.lavirgule.com/>.

MEASURE 22

EUROREGIONAL SOCIAL AWARENESS PLAN AND CAMPAIGN

In this measure the degree of ambition can be so broad as the commitment of public administrations to defend the euroregional ideals. Bearing in mind the current perspectives, it will be appropriate to begin with operational measures easy to implement and cheap to maintain. We propose the following

Operational procedures

22.1. Foundation of a Euroregional Youthful Forum

Still keeping the contacts between the Axis, the Galicia-Europe Foundation, the Galician Council of Youth and the Portuguese Department of Youth, within the Mobilitas programme of the INTERREG IIIA, it would be suitable to create this Euroregional Youthful Forum constituting a consultative council with an imperative audience (in the topics agreed) and an associate statute. In other words, it would have rights but it could not vote, or it would be like a holding with fullness of rights in every institution of euroregional cooperation, if necessary. The involvement of the youth is the best guarantee to stabilize the euroregional ideals.

22.2. Creation of a cross-border Socrates/Erasmus programme

The Galician and Portuguese public administrations must commit themselves to the exchange between students, graduates, teachers and lectures of the euroregion.

The exchanges for students have mainly a recreational purpose during the stage of primary education, connected with the channels of job placements and employment during the stage of secondary education, and attempting to the scientific specialisation, without forgetting employment, during the university education stage.

For teachers and lectures the purpose must lie in the exchange of didactic and pedagogical experiences and, during the university stage, experiences related to the basic research and RDI. Following the example of Bologna, it would be quite important to draw a map of complementarities between the universities of the euroregion to establish common post graduate doctorates and joint programmes of applied research.

22.3. School programme for a euroregional awareness

We can make use of the didactic guidebook made for the exhibition: *Galicia-North of Portugal: Two regions. A euroregion*, to draw up units of work which will be included in the correspondent curricula of levels of non-university education, by the *Xunta de Galicia* and by the Portuguese Ministry of Education, about the subjects related to geography and history.

The abovementioned materials used in the travelling exhibition may be used again to program the combination of routes to go round schools disposed to work with these materials to explain the euroregional structures of cooperation.

22.4. Weeks of towns of the Axis

This measure may embrace different perspectives, always with the active involvement of local administrations and economic and social agents. The coordination of the Atlantic Axis would be essential to establish an agreed calendar. A possible methodology to operate could include the following points:

Great Week of the Town of.....; during fifteen days in the year, a city becomes the heart and soul of the euroregion and goes deep into the signs of its own identity and territorial marketing. This town must organise activities to welcome students, youths, the old age, professionals, managers and/or artists, of all the rest of the euroregion and try to sell them its excellences. The other towns must commit themselves to advertise the neighbour weeks, to mobilize the implied sectors and to provide means of transport.

Weekend of the City of.....in.....; during three or four days one city will welcome shows, exhibitions, launches of gastronomic, commercial, tourist and cultural products; as well as entrepreneurial fora, from another town of the Axis. Public administrations must apply measures of positive discrimination in favour of the towns of the interior, the smallest ones and the ones with a slight degree of visibility to achieve a harmonic and sustainable development of the euroregion.

Week of the Axis in Brussels; during one week a year, a selection of three or four towns of the Axis, following the same pattern made for the “Weekends”, would project their signs of identity and territorial marketing into the exterior of the euroregion. The annual selection must respect some criteria of a considerable thematic and territorial coherence, without wasting the opportunities prone to come up. The choose of the destination can be replaced by another town considered more attractive.

22.5. Joint television and radio programmes

The experience of the series ordered by the Atlantic Axis about the euroregion must go on. It would be interesting that public media start to include in their daily bulletins fixed sections of news of euroregional scope. Then, the next step would be a periodical monographic programme about the euroregional dynamics. The coming of private media participants would be the culmination of this process.

22.6. Publishing a free euroregional newspaper

In the sequence of the work ordered by the Axis to value the viability of a newspaper of these features, it is necessary to encourage the private media participants to set it off. The newspaper would reflect the same news in the two sides of the frontier, respecting as well both languages. Its self-financing would be the creation of a head office of advertisings able to solve the problems that Galician and Portuguese advertisers find at the present moment to promote themselves in other countries.

22.7. Forming a Unit of Volunteers for the Euroregion

Last summer’s wave of forest fires has focused the attention on the importance of the international cooperation to fight against specific ecological disasters. The services of the civil defence are under the responsibility of the *Xunta de Galicia* and the

services of firemen are local competence. In Portugal, volunteer firemen depend also on the councils. The Red Cross is a NGO which operates in both countries. The idea is to form a Unit of Volunteers for the euroregion ready to accomplish the orders of a common authority. If the formation of this unit happens to be complex, we can also resort to, as a first step, the model of the European forces of fast intervention. In other words, each country makes the Unit of Volunteers available with units of specific effectives who, meanwhile not needed, still keep on operating as up to now and they only meet in case of emergency.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I:

SOURCES OF FINANCING

Regarding the economic framework 2007-2013 for the whole EU, two considerable sources of community financing are highlighted for the new seven years period: on the one hand, the subsidies, and, on the other hand, the loans and other methods for repaying.

Referring to the Help Funds as a subsidy, during the next days the Commission will include the NUTS II, Galicia and the North Region into the category of the ones which may profit from the aim of convergence established in the programme 2007-2013. This means that we will have the possibility of accessing to a financing coming from the ERDF and from the ESF. Furthermore, the Portugal NUT I will be acquainted with the benefits of the Cohesion Funds, and the Spain NUT I will enjoy a temporary period with this status. As a consequence, the items of the Cohesion Fund will be also available throughout the whole period or, at least, a considerable part of time.

Besides this, at the expense of the decision of the Commission, the NUTS III; Pontevedra, Ourense, Minho-Lima, Tâmega and Tras-os-Montes (taken as cross-border demarcations) and the rest of the NUTS III of the euroregion, within the transnational Atlantic and the community interregional spaces, will be supplied with the ERDF Funds as participants of the purpose of territorial cooperation. As the recently approved rules denote, the operational programmes will take into account, as well, the synergies that in every specific territory may coexist with other sources of community financing without structural status, the already mentioned EAFRD and the EFF.

In relation with the second category of sources of financing, from the ones which require to repay, happen to have special importance the EIB, the EIF and the EBRD; but, moreover, three new initiatives have been created to help the entities and administrations with projects to present as requests in Brussels. They are JASPERS, JEREMIE and JESSICA.

JASPERS is preferably directed to new countries members of the EU. In fact, taking for granted its eminent success, it is thought to place (besides the central one placed at Luxembourg) regional offices at Warsaw, Prague and a third one possibly at Bucharest or Sophia. With this, it is still possible, in our opinion, to consider the financing that offers this initiative for the drawing up of the specific projects deriving from the measures here defined which, finally, may be also presented as candidacies to the European Funds.

JASPERS (Joint Assistance to Support Projects in the European Regions), is a tool of technical assistance to improve the preparation of projects candidates to be financed by the Structural Funds and Cohesion Funds. This support will cover technical, economic and financing aspects. The projects embraced by this initiative must carry out with some boundaries, since they must exceed over 25 millions euros (referring to the local environment) and over 50 millions (referring to means of transports or other kind of infrastructures). The fact of receiving help from JASPERS does not imply to apply for a loan from the EIB or the EBRD to complete the subsidies of the community Funds. The support held by JASPERS should be not only demanded by every member of the EU, but also coordinated by the authorities of management, chosen by every State.

Taking into account, as it has been already stated, that the ones to profit from this initiative are the new ten Members of the Union (besides Bulgaria and Romania), it seems difficult that the other ones could be provided with these advantages as well. To that aim, it has already been prepared a set of annual programmes, corresponding to 2006 for these 12 countries.

Anyway, it should be wise to proceed to the management with the contact of Luxembourg:

Mr. Patrick Walsh

Associate Director

Head of JASPERS

European Investment Bank

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JEREMIE (Joint European Resources for Micro-Enterprises), is another tool from the Commission in cooperation with the group EIB (EIB and EIF) to support the access of SME to financing resources by means of microcredits. JEREMIE pursues three main purposes: first of all, the improvement of the conditions and the appropriate levels of financing to develop new enterprises with loans and own funds; secondly, the contribution to achieve a better coordination in the national and regional fields for an effective course of the public resources; and finally, the intensification of the absorption of the resources in the framework of the programmes of the EU.

In a previous stage, we should have paid attention to the possible failures in the market, that is, the temporary deficits between the demand of products of financing engineering to support SME and the capacity of the financing mediators, to provide these products local and regional levels. The results of this analysis will be present in the operational programmes 2007-2013, by remarking the suitable aims and resources for the specifics procedures. In addition, from this moment on, the authority responsible in every programme will organise the processes of hiring to identify and to select the best collector of funds. In the last stage, there should be a convocation open to interesting suggestions for the financing mediators.

In this case, the contact in Luxembourg is:

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JESSICA (Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas), is another tool that founds a framework of advanced cooperation in the financing engineering for the policy of urban sustainable development, through the appropriate combination of subsidies, loans and other financing products. Besides, it also adds contributions of the operational programmes of the Structural Funds to the Urban Development Funds and to the resources of loans. JESSICA is quite similar to JEREMIE (in fact, they are directed to be complementary), in the same sense it tries to improve the access of the urban SME to the financing resources, supporting networks and projects of urban infrastructure, intelligent energy or ICT projects. Its programme reflects two possible scopes; the first one implies that the operational programmes contribute in a direct way to the Urban Development Funds; whereas the second one is organised by means of the Holding Funds, leaving aside the subsidies of operational programmes of Structural Funds. The two scopes must count on additional capital risk added to projects, specially, if the group EIB is the Fund to be chosen.

The person to be addressed to in Brussels is:

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ANNEX II

COMMISSION OF ONGOING SUPPORT

After approving the Strategic Agenda in the General Assembly of the Atlantic Axis, the Executive Commission must form a Commission of Ongoing Support to encourage the scheduling of each of the measures considered, to keep on with the fulfilment of the terms established, to evaluate the stages of the process, to suggest the necessary modifications and arrangements and, finally, to realize a critical balance at the end of each stage.

The nature of this commission is responsibility of the political democratic authorities of the towns that form the Local Agreement. However, the members in charge must provide the commission with balance from the point of view of the territorial, institutional, associative, professional, gender and age scopes. Concerning its structure, the final decision corresponds to the Executive Commission. Therefore, we can suggest one that may consider sectorial formation –one for every strategic idea, for example-, one permanent –composed by the coordinators of each section; the general coordinator, the general secretary, the vice-president and the president of the Axis-, and a plenary –formed by all the previous members and the rest of the Executive Commission which should meet to approve the final balance of the Agenda-.