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Subnational Mobilisation in The European Union

LIESBET HOOGHE

The turbulent ratification of the Treaty of European Union has given a new sharpness to old debates about democratic representativeness in the European arena. The crisis of representation after Maastricht was, however, limited in terms of who and what was criticised: Maastricht was a crisis of intergovernmentalism. There are several alternative ways for establishing links between the citizen and Europe. This paper focuses on the role of subnational intermediaries in day-to-day policy making. The first part of the paper places subnational mobilisation in a broader understanding of the Euro-polity. Three competing conceptualisations: a state-centric model, a supranational model, and multi-level governance make distinct predictions about the features, opportunities and constraints for subnational mobilisation. Next, the contemporary variety of subnational mobilisation is compared with each model. The final section points at some implications for representative democracy in the Euro-polity.

Interests can be represented on the European arena through various channels. One form of representation – through state executives and unelected European institutions – has been heavily criticised during the Maastricht debate. Another way to aggregate interests is through subnational mobilisation in the European arena. Subnational interests encompass all territorial definitions below the national state: regions, local, interlocal and interregional collectivities. In the European reality, regions, in particular those with elected authorities, are the core players. Subnational mobilisation is first placed in a broader understanding of the Euro-polity. Thereafter the varied pattern of subnational-EU links is analysed in the light of three competing conceptions of the Euro-polity.

MODELS OF THE EURO-POLITY AND SUBNATIONAL MOBILISATION

The debate about how the Euro-polity¹ compares with traditional

representative democracies is not new. Observers usually agree that it compares poorly. Opinions differ on how interests are aggregated and represented, and how lines of authority and accountability run. These divergent opinions stem from fundamentally different conceptions of how the European Union works.

Some analyses argue that the national state has been strengthened as a result of European integration. They could be grouped under the label of the state-centric model.² European integration is perceived as an international regime, designed by sovereign states which each seek to manage economic interdependence by engaging in international collaboration.³ Control remains vested in the constituent units, the member states.

The traditional competitor of this state-centric model argues that the dynamics of supranationalism are eroding state sovereignty.⁴ This is the supranational model: a compound polity has emerged where competencies are distributed among the general European and the constituent governing bodies, and where each is empowered to deal directly with the citizenry in the exercise of those competencies. The European polity has increasingly acquired features of a federation.⁵ Control has partly shifted to the supranational level, which has an independent impact on the outcome.

The contrasting descriptions of the state-centric and supranational model have recently been questioned by a third group of scholars, who have put forward a pattern of multi-level governance.⁶ They take from the supranational model that European integration has fundamentally transformed the national state in Europe. It has led to a European polity, not an international regime, where the supranational institutions have independent influence on European policy making. However, they also accept from the state-centric model that state executives are unlikely to be superseded by supranational institutions. National arenas are not going to be rendered obsolete by transnational interest mobilisation. State executives have lost their monopoly, though; in fact, decision-making competencies are shared among actors. The emerging picture is that of a polity with multiple, interlocked arenas for political contest. The European level is one of them, where state executives, but also European institutions and a widening array of mobilised interests contend.

The state-centric model leads to a confederal Europe, constructed around essentially voluntary collaboration among powerful national states; the supranational model sketches the contours of a European federation, where an autonomous supranational level has the resources to override national state interests in particular instances; multi-level governance amounts to a multi-layered polity, where there is no centre of accumulated authority, but where changing combinations of supranational, national and subnational governments engage in collaboration. Each model generates

distinct expectations about subnational mobilisation.

There is little room for direct subnational mobilisation in the state-centric model. Transnational contacts among local or regional authorities and interactions with the Commission are scarce and peripheral. To the limited extent they have grown, they are likely to buttress state executive power. Subnational actors need member states to further their interests in the European arena, because the latter are and remain the gatekeepers. The relationship between subnational actors and the member state is therefore hierarchical.

National institutions and practices determine the degree and nature of subnational mobilisation, not European or subnational pressure. Hence the differences across the European territory are enormous and are likely to remain so. In other words, the German Länder acquired the right to be involved in European decision making in their areas of competence, because this is in line with how they are entrenched in the German federal system, not because of an alliance between them and European institutions. It is unlikely to be emulated by other subnational actors in a totally different national context.

Subnational interests mobilise predominantly along national lines, not cross-cutting national constituencies. The default standard of aggregation is the member state. So the German Länder participate predominantly through the German channel, essentially through the German Permanent Representation. Finally, subnational input does nothing to mitigate the elitist and bureaucratic nature of European decision making; subnational interests in the European arena are represented by a select group of civil servants and political executives, excluding broader political or social actors. All in all, according to the state-centric model, Europe is and is likely to remain, a *Europe des patries*.

That is in stark contrast to the supranational model, where a European federation compounded of smaller, more natural units (regions) built around a strong supranational core is the most likely outcome: a *Europe of the Regions*. Subnational mobilisation is perceived as an instrument to challenge state power, and to support supranational authority. Subnational units compete with member states for control over territorial interest aggregation. So the relationship is one of contested hierarchy, in which the supranational arena is expected to be on the side of the subnational level.

Subnational interests are mainly mobilised in functional niches around specific policy issues, usually with a European-wide span. They organise around supranational institutions, first of all the European Commission and in the second place the European Parliament, as member state channels tend to be hostile. The European Commission plays an entrepreneurial role in shaping the functional niches, which are expected to spill over into other

areas and from there into politics, gradually building an uninterrupted, and uniform, subnational political tier. Hence the uneven pattern of subnational mobilisation will ultimately disappear. In other words, subnational actors are likely to be empowered not only in Germany or Belgium, but also in Portugal, Greece, or France, despite the much stronger national constraints under which the latter operate.

Finally, while member states have an interest in keeping the European decision process elitist to preserve their monopoly of representation over their constituencies, supranational institutions must nurture constituencies and therefore need to exploit any potential counterweight to national power. They are likely to encourage a pluralist setting, which would be open not only to bureaucrats or political executives, but also to regionalist movements, subnational interest groups, local action groups, and other alternative sources of interest aggregation.

Multi-level governance is the only model where regions would be a governmental level of importance next to national, European and local arenas. This Europe cannot be one of the national states, nor of the regions, but only a *Europe with the Regions*. Subnational units do not need member states to have access to the European arena. In fact, regional authorities in particular are important additional channels to tie newly mobilised interests to Europe. Subnational mobilisation does not erode, but complements the aggregating role of member states. Hierarchical relationships are weak but interdependence is high. Actors are linked through networks, which span several levels and in which each actor brings in valuable resources.

Subnational mobilisation has grown considerably, as clear hierarchical lines of authority have been eroded. It is spread unequally across European territory and comes in many guises: narrow functional or political mandate, European-wide associations, or a selection of subnational actors, etc. Like the state-centric model, but for different reasons, the multi-level governance model predicts that this multi-faceted picture is likely to be permanent. That means that German *Länder* will most likely always participate more strongly and through more channels in European decision-making than Irish, or even French, regions, because they can bring in more resources. Even though subnational actors will undoubtedly converge through transnational learning or competition, it is unlikely to lead to a uniform subnational layer as the supranational model implies.

There is no predominant territorial principle, according to which subnational interests are organised: European-wide, along national lines, various selections of European territory, individually. These various associations are clustered around European institutions, that is to say, the Council, the European Commission and the European Parliament. In addition, they set up independent institutions in the European arena.

The politics of multi-level governance is pluralist but with an elitist bias. There are no gatekeepers to close off the European arena, and resources for effective policy-making need to be collected from multiple arenas and actors. It also has an elitist edge, to the extent that only actors with valuable resources are likely to extract participation. Some subnational actors in Europe are better endowed than others, and, within each, bureaucrats and political executives are usually better bestowed than oppositional forces, collective action groups and movements, or private actors. Multi-level governance does not therefore anticipate a uniformly open playing field for mobilising interests.

SUBNATIONAL PRESENCE IN EUROPE

Mazey and Richardson have argued that 'interest groups ... act as a weather-vane for the locus of political power in society', and Marks and McAdam have refined the logic for subnational interests.⁷ So the pattern of subnational interest formation in the European Union should be a reliable pointer to the nature of the Euro-polity: state-centric, supranational, or multi-layered.

First, what is the primary arena for European decision making? To the extent that competencies shift from the national to the European plane, subnational actors can be expected to mobilise into the European arena.

Second, which actors gain from the transfer of competencies? If the Commission or Parliament win, one would expect a circle of mobilised subnational interests around those supranational institutions; if the Council of Ministers gains, subnational interests would cluster around that institution, in addition to existing national channels.

Third, how extensive is the shift of power? Subnational authorities will most likely want to institutionalise their position in the European decision-making process, if it affects a wide range of interests. So, depending on the model, one could expect either the extrapolation of national institutional arrangements into the European arena, or the insertion of special guarantees for subnational interests in the existing supranational institutions, or the creation of another European institution for subnational interests – independent from the existing institution. In other words, in addition to lobbying and pressure politics, subnational actors can be expected to demand some form of shared rule.

Finally, what kind of organisational channels do they use? Do they follow an individual or a collective strategy? Collective channels range from representation in partial (based on geographical, sectoral, or functional principles) or encompassing *national* associations, to representation in partial or encompassing *transnational* associations. National channels are

most likely when the Euro-polity resembles the state-centric model; all-European transnational channels would prevail under the supranational model; a mixture would be most likely under multi-level governance. Tables 1 to 3 give a snapshot of the situation as of mid-1994.

Table 1 summarises the forms of institutionalised access to the European arena. The most powerful channel would be representation encompassing the whole EU, independent from other institutions, and with decision-making power. Institutionalisation did not happen until after the Single European Act, the 'sympathetic and lethargic society meeting' of the Parliamentary Intergroup excepted.⁸ Two channels were put in place by the Treaty of European Union of 1993, largely as a result of pressure by the German Länder on their federal government; the third one was created a few years before.

Under the new Article 146⁹ of the Treaty, a member state can *send regional ministers to the Council of Ministers*, who are allowed to negotiate and bind the member state. So regional authorities can be at the centre of decision making. However, the channel is highly selective. Only Belgian regions (and communities) and German Länder have in practice access to it. The Spanish regions have demanded a similar arrangement, with no success thus far; the Austrian Länder would probably also take advantage of the new procedure. It is unlikely to be of use for subnational authorities in other member states. Furthermore, regional participation is nested in the member state, not independent from it; it does not disturb the delicate balance between member states. Regional ministers from Belgium are first of all Belgian representatives, and only secondly spokespersons for regional territorial interests – and then only of the shared interests of all Belgian regions, not those of their particular region.

The other innovation of the Treaty is the *Committee of the Regions*. Contrary to the Article 146 arrangement, the Committee has a guaranteed representation of all member states. It is independent, be it organisationally associated with the Economic and Social Committee. Several features weaken the Committee's capacity to act cohesively for subnational interests. Subnational representatives are appointed by their member state governments. All operate ultimately as national representatives, but the national mould restricts some more than others. It is fairly constraining in France, where not all regions and only a handful of localities have a representative, and the UK, where the 24 representatives of the UK are picked by the central government to represent a patchwork of local and 'regional' authorities. National constraints are virtually absent for the Belgian, Spanish, and German regions: each region has its own seat (or sometimes more than one) in the Committee of the Regions.

TABLE 1
INSTITUTIONALISED CHANNELS FOR SUBNATIONAL INTERESTS IN THE EUROPEAN ARENA

CHANNELS	ORIGIN	WHO?	ROLE
Article 146 (Council of Ministers)	Treaty of European Union (1993)	Ministers. German Länder and Belgian Regions/Communities (contested in Spain)	To decide (vote) on regional competencies in Council of Ministers. <i>Collective strategy</i> (in member state).
Committee of Regions and Local Authorities (Independent institution)	Treaty of European Union (1993)	Representatives by and large from elected subnational authorities. Whole EU.	Mandatory consultation by Council and Commission on five policy areas. Own initiative opinions on other matters. <i>Collective strategy.</i>
Consultative Council of Regional and Local Authorities (CCRLA) (attached to the Commission)	Commission decision (1988) Abolished in 1993	Representatives appointed by AER and CEMR. Whole EU. Equal weight for local and regional representatives for each member state.	Non-mandatory consultation by Commission on structural funds policy. <i>Collective strategy.</i>
Partnership under structural funds (with member state and Commission)	1990/1991-1993 New round: 1994-1997/99	Civil servants, sometimes social partners. Part of EU. 40% population (mainly least developed areas)	Policy instrument. <i>Individual strategy</i> (in member state).
Intergroup of Local and Regional Representatives in European Parliament	1980	MEPs with elected mandate at regional or local level. Variable membership across EU.	Exchange between EP and subnational authorities. Dormant existence. <i>Collective strategy.</i>

Second, the Committee is internally severely divided. The major conflict is between local and regional interests. The representatives are mostly regional in Belgium, Germany, France, Spain and Italy, while local nominees dominate in Denmark, Ireland, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, and the UK. The local-regional divide¹⁰ comes largely down to a conflict between federal or regionalised countries and unitary member states. It is cross-cut by a rift between northern Europe and southern Europe, which is not only about divergent economic interests

between contributors and beneficiaries of the EU budget, but also has a cultural-political dimension with a clash between political styles.¹¹

Finally and most importantly, the Committee has only advisory powers, not a co-decision right. It must be consulted by the Council or the Commission (not the Parliament) on five matters: education and vocational training, health, culture, trans-European networks, and economic and social cohesion. It may also provide opinions on any other matter. Ultimately, the Committee has to rely on persuasion or on those members who could pressure their national governments (Belgian, German and Spanish regions in particular).¹²

The third significant institutional channel is confined to *structural funds policy*. It consists of several hundred *partnership arrangements* (monitoring committees). The 1988 reform stipulates that the Commission, national authorities, regional or local authorities and social actors work in close, equal and ongoing partnership.¹³ The role of the monitoring committees is restricted to policy management, most often of a day-to-day technical-bureaucratic nature, not of a political character. Partnerships compile and organise development programmes (within broadly defined objectives), manage and follow up ongoing projects. Another limitation is the strict national mould in which the committees work. In the most decentralised cases, a committee connects the Commission with an individual region, with or without the presence of national representatives; more often, the Commission's sparring partner is the national bureaucracy, while subnational representatives participate in a junior position. The arrangements provide individual access to Europe, but the operation does not encourage subnational authorities to develop collective strategies.

This uniform set of rules has produced a highly uneven pattern of subnational mobilisation across the Community: partly by design, because regional policy is by definition a discriminatory policy. About 40 per cent of the population is covered by the structural funds, of which the whole of Spain, Portugal, Ireland and Greece (the four cohesion countries), and major parts of the UK, Belgium, Italy, Eastern Germany, and Luxembourg. Within those selected areas, partnership has worked out differently from one member state to another.¹⁴ In Belgium and Germany, national authorities are hardly present. In Spain, the role of Madrid is in general limited for the funds that are divided by region (about half of the budget), although the impact of the centre varies from one region to another. In the three smaller cohesion countries and the UK, subnational authorities are very weak. Yet, even here the impact of EU policy is being felt. Ireland and Greece have set up a regional administrative tier to comply with the EU partnership rules. Although neither of these adjustments have caused an observable shift of power away from the central government, the dynamics of EU cohesion policy-making are rapidly changing. In both cases, the regional monitoring

committees have provided subnational actors with fora for closer communication with national and European authorities, and for a greater awareness of their interests in EU cohesion policy and their possible contribution to making policy. Comparison of the negotiation round for the 1994-99 with the 1989-93 period shows that their input has been enhanced.¹⁵ The French case is a difficult one. The complex relations between local and national politics as well as politicians and bureaucrats make an unambiguous assessment difficult.¹⁶

The Committee of the Regions replaced the *Consultative Council of Regional and Local Authorities* (CCRLA). The latter had been attached by the European Commission to its Directorate General for Regional Policy (DG XVI) in 1988.¹⁷ The members were appointed by two European-wide subnational associations, the Assembly of European Regions (AER) and the Council for European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR). The Council was expected to give greater legitimacy to the Commission's role in the recently reformed cohesion policy.¹⁸ In reality, the Council played an unassuming role until it was abolished in 1993. It lacked independence: the agenda was set by the Commission. There was a major cleavage between regional and local authorities.

TABLE 2
INSTITUTIONALISED CHANNELS FOR SUBNATIONAL INTERESTS IN THE NATIONAL ARENA

CHANNELS	ORIGIN	WHO?	ROLE
Mandatory approval of Treaty revisions by subnational authorities	Germany (from beginning) Belgium (1980, 1989 and 1993)	Elected assemblies.	Assent. Germany: <i>collective</i> strategy Belgium: <i>individual</i> strategy
Regional observer attached to the member state's Permanent Representation	Germany (1970s) Belgium (1989-90) Portugal (?) Spain (planned)	Civil servants. German <i>Länder</i> , some Belgian regions, some Portuguese regions	Two-way information. Right to attend Council meetings. Germany: <i>collective</i> Belgium: <i>individual</i>
Council working groups.	Germany (1986) Belgium (1993) Portugal (?)	Civil servants. Germany, Belgium, Portugal	Germany, Belgium: decision making on own competencies (<i>collective</i>). Portugal: <i>advice</i> (<i>individual?</i>).
Commission working groups	idem (not Portugal)	idem (not Portugal)	idem
Regional electoral districts for European parliamentary elections	1979	Direct elections. Belgium and Germany (partly); Ireland, UK and Italy no national districts, but the districts are not coinciding with regions.	

The institutionalised EU channels have produced a highly uneven pattern of actual subnational mobilisation, even though they are in principle applicable across the EU. Regions with strong entrenchment in their domestic context, that is to say, the Belgian and German regions, have exploited the opportunities; others have not done so. The same bias appears with respect to national channels for subnational EU participation. Table 2 lists the most formalised domestic arrangements. Only Germany and Belgium have systematically taken the route of national institutionalisation. The Spanish autonomous communities are negotiating similar arrangements with Madrid. The surprise is Portugal, where the regions of Madeira and the Azores have obtained some (soft) guarantees. They have a regional observer in the permanent representation, and are allowed to attend certain Council working groups.

Germany and Belgium represent two models. The former has taken a gradual and moderate path, while the latter has changed radically over a short period of time; German regions have also generally worked collectively, while Belgian regions usually link up separately with the European arena. The latter distinction runs through nearly all arrangements. German *Länder* share a regional observer (*Länderbeobachter*) in the German Permanent Representation. For Belgium, the Walloon Region and the French Community have each one regional observer, while Flanders has not appointed a representative. The distinction between the two approaches is clearest in the regional role in Treaty ratification processes. While in Germany the Bundesrat (hence the collective chamber) votes on Treaty changes, in Belgium this is not a matter for the Senate only (the Belgian federal chamber), but for each regional and community assembly separately. Within the same logic, the German Bundesrat casts its vote over the whole Treaty – not only matters affecting regional competencies – while the Belgian regions and communities only vote on those Treaty parts affecting their competencies. Finally, the same distinction is reflected in the design of the electoral districts for the European elections. The German system works partly with a national district, partly with regional districts. The Belgian districts are regional.¹⁹

The distinction between a collective and individual approach rests upon fundamentally different premises. The *German position* accepts that regions are the third level in a multi-layered European polity, and that they are ultimately nested in a national arena. The *Belgian model* discards the national mould; Europe is a polity with multiple actors at multiple levels who act directly with European institutions within their competencies.

Formal channels are by no means the only ways to involve subnational authorities in European decision-making. Most member states have developed practices to take territorially diverse interests into account. In the

UK delegation in Brussels, the Welsh and Scottish administrations are represented indirectly through appointments in functional areas of special concern to them. So European fisheries policy and regional policy tend to be monitored by civil servants from the Scottish Office. However, these civil servants work ultimately within a unitary framework.²⁰ Similarly, the French system of *cumul de mandats*, in combination with party allegiance, can give regional politicians – not necessarily regional administrations – considerable room to influence the French position.

TABLE 3a
NON-INSTITUTIONALISED CHANNELS FOR SUBNATIONAL INTERESTS

CHANNELS	ORIGIN	WHO?	ROLE
Regional Offices (Independent actor)	First two in 1985 Rapid expansion from 1990.	Civil servants, some private input. Belgian, German, Spanish, French, UK, Danish (cities) authorities, a few transnational alliances 40-45% population.	Two-way information and lobbying. <i>Individual strategy (some collaborative efforts).</i>
AER--Assembly of European Regions. (Independent peak organisation)	1985	Elected regional representatives. European-wide membership (not confined to EU) Weak in Ireland, Denmark, the UK (southeast), Greece. 80-85% population.	Political spokesman for regions, lobbying, umbrella for interregional collaboration. <i>Collective strategy.</i>
CEMR--Council for European Municipalities and Regions (Independent peak organisation)	1984 (early roots: 1951)	Confederation of national peak organisations. European-wide membership.	Political spokesman for local authorities, umbrella for collaborative projects, lobbying. <i>Collective strategy.</i>

Moving from formal to informal ways of influencing European decisions, the picture changes dramatically. Table 3a and 3b summarise only the most significant instruments, radically simplifying a very complex picture.²¹ Three features stand out. Although the informal channels, like the institutionalised forms, produce an uneven pattern of subnational mobilisation, the inequality is less stark. It is more a matter of degree than of kind: regions have more opportunities than local authorities, and the wealthier parts of the EU do generally better than less well-off areas.

Furthermore, subnational authorities mobilise along two distinct paths. Some enter the European arena according to a sort of free market logic. Others are pulled into the European arena by the European Commission and by large encompassing representative associations. The pushing and pulled authorities form relatively distinct groups; together, they cover pretty much the whole EU. Finally, somewhat different from the institutionalised channels, subnational authorities don't choose between collective and individual strategies, but use both.

A spectacular 'push-form' of subnational mobilisation has been the growth of *Regional Offices in Brussels*. There are currently about 70 Offices, up from two in 1985, to 15 in 1988, and 54 in 1993. Their role lies somewhere between an informal 'embassy' for their particular region and a lobbying agency. They provide the Commission and Parliament with regional viewpoints on issues that concern them; they survey the European scene for upcoming issues and bring them to the attention of policy-makers in their home governments; they participate in networks with other regional offices or with other organisations; they provide a rudimentary welcome service to private actors from their region; and they lobby for a greater voice in EU decision-making.

Only a minority of the regions are represented in Brussels, which account for 40–45 per cent of the population. All German, all Spanish, all French regions, one Belgian region, many British local and regional authorities, and three Danish local authorities have set up a regional office. By early 1994 there was not a single office from Portugal, Ireland, and Greece, nor from the Netherlands nor Luxembourg; the Italian office for the Mezzogiorno is run by the national administration. The great majority are individual offices, although there are some collaborative efforts. Two offices represent transnational alliances: the French-Spanish Centre-Atlantique (Centre, Poitou-Charentes, Castile-Leon), and the British-French Essex-Picardie.

The incentives and the capacity to run an 'embassy' in Brussels are unevenly spread among subnational actors. The regions most likely to be present are strongly entrenched in their domestic context (federal or regionalised structure), have a distinct regional identity, or have had a different party-political orientation from the national level over an extended time period. There is no significant relationship between structural funding and regional representation, which suggests that EU funding does not encourage regions to establish *independent* footholds in Brussels. The structural funds have facilitated dependent forms of subnational mobilisation, either institutionalised through the nationally defined partnerships (see above) or informal through Commission efforts (see later).²²

The regional/ local cleavage among subnational authorities has given

rise to two distinct peak organisations at the European level: the Assembly of European Regions (AER) and the Council for European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR). Both emerged independently from EU initiatives, have a membership that reaches well into Scandinavia and Eastern Europe, and staff permanent offices in Brussels.

The *Assembly of European Regions* was founded by nine interregional associations in 1985. The members are the nine founding organisations and regions on an individual basis. The Assembly had some 235 member regions in 1993. The representatives come in principle from elected regional parliaments.²³ The AER members speak for 80–85 per cent of the EU population. The blind spots are in Ireland, Greece, the United Kingdom (mainly the south-east) and Denmark. The organisation has developed a close working relationship with the European Commission, particularly in the area of structural funds but also on institutional issues. It has pushed for an increased involvement of the regions in European decision making, such as a Committee of the Regions, the inclusion of the subsidiarity principle in the Treaty, and the changed wording of Article 146. The AER appointed the regional members in the CCRLA. It was also instrumental in the practical preparation for the Committee of the Regions, although its relations with the new body have become tenuous.²⁴ The Assembly seems set to become a more traditional interest group organisation as soon as the Committee of the Regions gains greater standing. The *Council of European Municipalities and Regions* (CEMR), the European section of the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA), has early roots in 1951. Although its current name (dating from 1984) suggests differently, it really represents local interests. Its role on the European arena is very similar to that of the AER.

All three channels pursue predominantly a political agenda. While the regional offices allow regional authorities to do that individually, the CEMR and the AER speak for the whole European Union. The next three types of instruments have essentially a functional or policy-oriented purpose. All three focus on transnational collaboration; naturally they use a collective strategy. Yet they are also rather exclusive 'clubs', not encompassing associations, because they bring together subnational authorities that share particular functional characteristics. For all three, access to EU funding is the main goal, although that purpose has variable importance. The main distinction between the three types lies in the role of the European Commission during their creation. The first type is predominantly a spin-off from Commission initiatives; it is the intended result of public policy. The second and third type have emerged bottom-up, often long before the European Commission had a policy for those issues. They became subsequently somehow affiliated with the European Commission, or even incorporated in the Commission networks, hence influencing public policy.

TABLE 3b
NON-INSTITUTIONAL CHANNELS FOR SUBNATIONAL INTERESTS

CHANNELS (continued)	ORIGIN	WHO?	ROLE
Structural Funds networks (Commission patronship)	1990s	Politicians and civil servants. Partial trans-European associations around specific Structural Funds initiatives.	Exchange of experience, implementors for Commission, lobbying. Collective strategy (subset of authorities)
Independent inter-regional and interlocal associations	1970s onwards	Politicians, civil servants. Partial trans-European associations of areas with common problems; mainly in least developed areas.	Aggregation, lobbying and coordination of collaborative projects; implementor for Commission. Collective strategy (subset of areas).
Independent collaborative projects and associations	1980s	Business, civil servants, politicians. Partial trans-European associations; mainly in advanced areas of EU.	Technical and political collaboration, lobbying. Collective strategy. (subset of areas)

The European Commission manages a budget of 178 billion Ecu for *structural funds* policy over the period 1994–99. The budget falls into three categories. About 90 per cent is allocated to the multi-annual programmes, as agreed by member state, and Commission in the second half of 1993 (Community Support Frameworks). Over the remaining 9–10 per cent the Commission has the last say, as long as the money is spent on broadly defined priority lines (Community initiatives), which have been agreed by the member states, and provided about 70 per cent of the budget goes to the least developed regions. In addition, the Commission has also some pocket money for pilot projects, innovative action and networking. The Commission has been very active in organising subnational interests.

For most networks, it is often difficult to determine whether the initiative came from the Commission or from subnational entrepreneurs. In principle, the goal is to attach a network or organisation to each Community programme or initiative. So there are large associations for objective two regions and for objective one regions, but also smaller ones around Community initiatives like Leader (local networks in rural areas), Rechar (help on coalmining areas), Retex (textile areas), or Renaval (shipbuilding).²⁵ Some are regional, others composed of local authorities. These networks counteract in a soft way the vertical segmentation of the EU structural funds policy, which keeps the implementation of regional policy-

making entirely within the national mould: horizontal coordination across national borders is not required, nor is communication among individual regions within the national framework.

In addition, the Commission runs several specific networking programmes to organise European space beyond the areas of the structural funds. One is the *Exchange of Experience Programme* (EEP), which was initiated by the European Parliament in 1989 and then adopted (and part-financed) by the Commission. The programme aims at promoting the transfer of know-how between developed and disadvantaged regions. The basic requirement is very simple: three regions from three different countries must agree on a project of 12–18 months. In 1993 alone more than 100 of the almost 160 regions of the EU completed over 60 projects. The AER helps the Commission in overseeing the implementation of the programme (AER documentation).

While the networks in the EEP programme may fade when the project is completed, *Recite* (Regions and Cities of Europe, launched in 1991 by the Commission) funds not projects but 37 networks around a broad range of subjects and with a variety of partners. They supplement the more substantial structural funds networks, by giving priority to 'self-help' exchange programmes between unlikely sparring partners in the European Union. So *Roc Nord* is a Danish-Crete network, in which the Danes share know-how in economic and environmental planning with Crete. The *Quartiers en crise* project exchanges experiences between 25 cities on problems of social exclusion. In *Dionysos*, ten French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese wine-growing regions pool resources to transfer technology to the least-developed regions among them. The CEMR acts as the intermediary between the subnational authorities and the Commission on *Recite* projects.

A second set of networks has roots outside the European Union framework. Some go back to the 1970s, such as most networks around the founding members of the AER. Each association brings together regions with common territorial features or policy problems: the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR), the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR), the three Alpes associations, the Working Community of the Pyrenees, the Working Community of the Jura, and the Association of European Regions of Industrial Technology (RETI – in fact regions in industrial decline). Analyses on whether and how these organisations have made a difference are scarce, and they tend to disagree, depending on whether one emphasises tangible policy outputs or the slower process of changing social and political relations. Some, like the Border Regions, and recently RETI, have become influential pressure groups with the European institutions.²⁶

A crucial factor determining their effectiveness as lobbyists is their capacity to recruit widely. And here, most associations face a dilemma. On the one hand, the European Commission has consistently been reluctant to deal with deficiently representative organisations.²⁷ On the other hand, the Commission is unable to reward organised members and 'punish' non-organised actors; it is committed to a generally applicable and objective policy. That confronts an association often with serious collective action problems, which are worsened by the fact that potential members are usually very unequal (from local to regional authorities, and from weak to very strong authorities) and that there is often no concrete agenda. Regions are therefore not keen to invest energy in a difficult enterprise knowing that they would benefit in any case from the association's eventual success.²⁸

The large encompassing associations do not face these collective action problems to the same degree. Even though the diversity of members and interests often causes significant strains within the organisations, they have been accepted by the Commission as the most representative interlocutors for subnational interests. The AER runs now a few policy-specific networks on its own. In 1989 it started the Interregional Cultural Network (ICON) for the exchange of information and the implementation of joint projects. It has intensified collaboration between the European regions' cultural administrations. In 1993 it received some funding from the EU (AER documentation). Similar initiatives emerged around local authorities associations over the past 20 years.

The networks in this second type seem to share a concern to reduce disparities or imbalances. Most focus on, or include, less well-off areas of the EU, which are often in desperate need for EU money for restructuring and development. Hence, they represent the bottom-up cohesion effort by subnational authorities, but have in the process become dependent on the European Commission.

The last category of *networks has emerged from a position of strength in the European Union*. The most famous example is the Four Motors arrangement between Baden-Württemberg, Rhône-Alpes, Catalonia and Lombardy, which combines the most dynamic regions in their respective countries. The purpose of the 1988 agreement is to promote technological collaboration, research and development, and economic and cultural exchanges. The signatories of the agreement explicitly endorse greater European integration. Wales established links with the four in 1990 and 1991. Essentially, the regional governments act as brokers, who set a broad regulatory framework and bring interested parties together, while the decisions about possible collaboration are mainly left to business or other private actors. Other examples are the Euroregion partnerships, such as the Euroregion encompassing the dynamic three-country meeting area of

Maastricht (NL)-Liège (B)-Hasselt (B)-Aachen (G)-Cologne (G). On the local side, many long-standing town-twinning schemes have been extended to economic partnerships and trading and technology transfers. The open-textured nature of networking makes it very difficult to come up with reliable data on the density of the networks. The British Audit Commission estimated that 22 per cent of the British local councils are involved in programmes outside the structural funds.²⁹

This third category of networks is more driven by a market logic. Subnational political leaders and civil servants act as 'ministers of external trade' for their subnational territory. That role is in line with the current paradigm in regional development policy, where subnational political leaders are expected to act as brokers rather than development planners.³⁰ The success of brokers does not depend on their having direct control over services, but on their political connections with those controlling services and money. In other words, leaders from Baden-Württemberg do not have to create new services nor spend large sums on projects, but mobilise resources from the private sector and from the European coffers.

MULTI-LEVEL SUBNATIONAL MOBILISATION AND THE CRISIS OF REPRESENTATION

Subnational mobilisation has accelerated since the mid-1980s. The pivotal moment is the SEA and the internal market programme. Since then, the European polity has come to resemble multi-level governance much closer than either the state-centric or supranational model. A variety of channels and strategies are available; some are clustered around the Commission, a few weak ones around the European Parliament, others around the Council of Ministers, yet still others are national, and there are several independent channels of subnational mobilisation; the opportunities to use them are unevenly distributed; there are as yet few signs of a 'shake-out' of less efficient forms of representation, suggesting that the uneven and complex pattern of mobilisation has structural rather than conjunctural causes.

Actual access to these channels is determined by three distinct, but interrelated properties. First, institutionalised channels are on average much more effective routes to European decision making than non-institutionalised channels. The latter's role is usually confined to aggregation, consultation, or co-decision on technical and narrow matters. Second, the subnational community is sharply bifurcated between those who have access to the institutionalised channels and those who have not. The 'have's' constitute a very select group: the Belgian and German regions. The Committee of the Regions is an exception, but it is also one of the weakest institutionalised access opportunities. Third, the overall pattern

of mobilisation is one of ordinal hierarchy, in which an actor with access to a stronger channel usually makes use, too, of all weaker routes. So strong and weak actors do not operate in clearly segregated access markets; rather, the more powerful actors have privileged access to a sub-market of a larger, more varied array of participative opportunities.

What does this uneven and complex pattern mean for the democratic representativeness of Europe? It is clear that there are alternative channels to the somewhat tarnished state executives. However, the opportunities for using these channels are unevenly distributed. Some areas are likely to lose out. As a consequence, it may paradoxically be more difficult to arrive at genuinely *representative* policy decisions. The subnational actors most likely to be involved are a privileged subset: regions rather than local authorities, domestically well-entrenched authorities more than weakly institutionalised or contesting regions, resource-rich rather than poor regions, that is to say, the Belgian and German regions, but not the Greek local authorities. Moreover, the *democratic* character, the capacity for the citizens (through their intermediaries) to wield effective power, is low for most channels of subnational mobilisation. There is an inverse relationship between the accessibility of these channels and their decision-making capacity.

How could the lack of open subnational mobilisation against the European Union be interpreted? By and large, subnational authorities and non-secessionist regionalists support a federal-type EU, and by implication a more autonomous supranational core. Secessionist nationalists would like to see a confederal Europe, which brings them closer to the position of state nationalists. Some were originally negatively disposed to European integration, but their scepticism tended to abate when they arrived on the European scene.

Subnational opposition may not be emerging either because institutional hurdles keep opposition out or because the European Commission and the subnational actors have shared interests. Anti-European subnational actors would have to climb many hurdles to stage a persistent, visible, and viable opposition. Thus, the European electoral system tends to favour larger, usually moderate parties.

The possibilities for organised extra-parliamentarian opposition are even more limited. The multi-level political structure does not provide action groups with a clearly identifiable target. It is also very difficult to organise an opposition consisting of territorially dispersed pockets and culturally and ideologically disparate parties. Even the handful of nationalist and regionalist parties in the European Parliament have to date not been able to form a fraction.

Furthermore, the issue of Euro optimism or scepticism is firmly owned

by nationally organised groups and political parties. More resourceful national actors have pre-empted the terrain of subnational or European-wide anti-Europeanism. Oddly enough, the national arena seems also the most effective arena for actors without resources, such as fishing or agricultural communities in distress. 'Those without resources have only their numbers, potential disruptiveness, and electoral clout' to make authorities listen to their needs.³¹ In Europe, national authorities are responsible for law and order, and the most powerful political leaders are elected nationally. So it makes sense to target national governments even for demands which evolve from European policies (like fisheries).

Another reason for weak anti-Europeanism among subnational actors is the extent to which supranational and subnational actors share certain common interests. Several channels for subnational mobilisation are the outcome of an alliance between the Commission and the larger representative subnational organisations. In addition, the Commission has eagerly subsidised bottom-up subnational initiatives *provided* that these enterprises are transnational and recruit European-wide. The expectation is that these functional ties will pave the way for a greater political role for subnational authorities in European decision making.³²

At first sight, the creation of the Committee of the Regions and the revised Article 146 on the Council of Ministers seem to make this strategy credible. Yet there are reasons to believe that the coalition between the Commission and subnational authorities may be fragile, especially in a framework of multi-level governance.

The timing and the form of a European institutionalisation of subnational mobilisation was to a significant degree prescribed by the domestic needs of the German federal government, which needed a European solution to break the domestic deadlock with the Länder. Furthermore, the Commission's support for a stronger political presence of subnational authorities was at best lukewarm during the negotiations. Despite earlier statements by Jacques Delors in favour of political representation,³³ it recommended in its Opinion of June 1991 on a Committee of the Regions essentially a polished version of the Consultative Council for Local and Regional Authorities: a composition of regional and local authorities rather than regions only, affiliation with the Commission rather than independent status, no right of initiative, a predominantly technical agenda rather than a political role.

The Commission was faced with a serious dilemma. While a greater *political* role for subnational authorities would in theory undermine state-centric tendencies, an independent political *presence* for subnational authorities would become another form of political *control* on the Commission, weakening the main supranational actor in the arena and

ultimately strengthening state-centrism.

This places the Commission for a choice. It could either slow down subnational mobilisation and forsake possible allies against member state executives, or it could promote subnational mobilisation and take the risk of being controlled from either political intermediary. It also forces the dilemma upon subnational authorities, which can either exercise their independent political power and risk weakening the most accessible actor, the Commission, or restraining themselves to functional collaboration with the Commission and improving European access through national channels, hence accepting the unequal opportunities for representation. In the medium-to-long run, the alliance between some, if not all, subnational authorities and the European Commission may simply be untenable.

NOTES

1. As Philippe Schmitter recently reminded us, 'it is the particular mix of territorial and functional constituencies, along with their corresponding relations of authority and accountability that defines the type of polity'. Philippe C. Schmitter, 'Representation and the Future Euro-Polity', *Staatswissenschaften und Staatspraxis* 3/3 (1992), p.383.
2. See, e.g., Stanley Hoffmann, 'Obstinate or obsolete? The Fate of the Nation-State and the Case of Western Europe', *Daedalus*, 85/3, (Summer 1966); idem, 'Reflections on the nation-state in Western Europe today', *Journal of Common Market Studies* 20/1-2 (1982), pp.29-37; Paul Taylor, 'The European Community and the State: Assumptions, Theories and Propositions', *Review of International Studies* 17 (1991), pp.109-25; Andrew Moravcsik, 'Preferences and Power in the European Community: A Liberal Intergovernmentalist Approach', *Journal of Common Market Studies* 31/4 (1993), pp.473-524; Andrew Moravcsik, 'Why the European Community Strengthens the State: Domestic Politics and International Cooperation', Presented at the American Political Science Assoc., New York, 1-4 Sept.1994; Andrew Moravcsik, 'Negotiating the Single European Act', in R.Keohane, S.Hoffmann (eds.) *The New European Community. Decisionmaking and Institutional Change* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991), pp.41-84.
3. Robert Keohane, and Stanley Hoffmann, 'Institutional Change in Europe in the 1980s', in R.Keohane, S.Hoffmann (eds.) *The New European Community. Decisionmaking and Institutional Change* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), pp.1-40; Robert Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1984).
4. Ernst B.Haas, *Beyond the Nation-State: Functionalism and International Organization* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1964); Leon N.Lindberg, S.A. Scheingold, *Europe's would-be polity: Patterns of Change in the European Community* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1970).
5. For a definition of federation, see Daniel Elazar, *Exploring Federalism* (Alabama: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1987). On Europe and federalism, see, e.g., Michael Burgess, *Federalism and European Union: political ideas, influences, and strategies in the EC, 1972-1987* (London: Routledge, 1989); Alberta Sbragia, 'The European Community : A Balancing Act,' *Publius* 23 (Summer 1993), pp.23-38; Alberta Sbragia, 'Thinking about the European Future: The Uses of Comparison', in Alberta Sbragia ed., *Euro-Politics: Institutions and Policy-Making in the 'New' European Community* (Washington: Brookings Instn., 1992), pp.257-91; Renaud Dehousse, and Joseph H.H.Weiler, 'The Dynamics of European Integration: The Legal Dimension', in W. Wallace (ed.), *The Dynamics of European Integration* (London: Frances Pinter, 1990), pp.242-60; J.H.H. Weiler, 'The Transformation

- of Europe', *Yale Law Journal* 100 (1991), pp.2403-83.
6. For an overview, see James A. Caporaso, and John T.S. Keeler, 'The European Community and Regional Integration Theory', Presented at the Third Biennial International Conference of the European Community Studies Association, Washington DC, 27-29 May 1993; Liesbet Hooghe, 'EC Politics beyond Maastricht: A Historical Perspective on Political-Administrative Interaction in the European Community', unpub. paper 1993; Gary Marks, 'Structural Policy and Multi-Level Governance in the EC', in Alan Cafruny and Glenda Rosenthal, (eds.), *The State of the European Community II: The Maastricht Debates and Beyond* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner); Gary Marks, Liesbet Hooghe and Kermit Blank, 'European Integration and the State', Presented at 'The Politics and Political Economy of Contemporary Capitalism' Workshop, UNC-Chapel Hill and Duke, 9-11 Sept., 1994; Philippe Schmitter, 'Representation and the Future Euro-Polity', *Staatswissenschaften und Staatspraxis* 3/3, (1992), pp.379-405.
 7. Sonia Mazey, Jeremy Richardson, 'EC Policy Making: An Emerging Policy Style?', D.Liefferink and P.Lowe (eds.), *European Integration and Environmental Policy* (Scarborough: Belhaven Press, 1993), pp.14-25 ; Gary Marks, Doug McAdam, 'Social Movements and the Changing Structure of Political Opportunity in the European Union', Paper at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Assoc., Washington, 2-5 Sept. 1993; Gary Marks, Francois Nielsen, Jane Salk, 'Regional Mobilization in the European Union', unpub. paper.
 8. Hervé Dupuis, 'Committee of the Regions. The Case of France' in J.J.Hesse (eds.), *The Institutionalisation of the EC Committee of the Regions* First Intermediate Report to the German Länder (1993); Francis Jacobs, and Richard Corbett, *The European Parliament* (Harlow: Longman, 1990).
 9. Article 146 reads: 'The Council shall consist of a representative of each Member State at ministerial level, authorized to commit the government of that Member State.'
 10. The newly elected president M.Jacques Blanc, (representing a French regional council) announced immediately that the Committee will advise the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference to divide the Committee into two separate institutions, one for regional and another for local authorities. The regions are currently outnumbered by local representatives (about 45 per cent to 55 per cent).
 11. Some observers expect representatives to line up according to party political affiliation, which would constitute a third cleavage.
 12. Under the new Article 146, it is conceivable that Belgian and German regional ministers would sit simultaneously in the Council of Ministers and in the Committee of Regions. On culture or regional policy, they would be negotiators in the Council of Ministers, and advisors to the Council in the Committee . . . hence advising themselves. The internal regulations of the Committee have foreseen this situation, and require that members with conflicting interests are replaced by an alternate.
 13. The original wording in the regulations spoke of 'competent authorities designated by the member state at national, regional, local or other level' as the third partner, but it was obvious that regional and local authorities were meant. The formulation was strengthened in favour of regional and local authorities in the 1993 regulations.
 14. For an overview, see Gary Marks, 'Decision Making in Cohesion Policy: Charting and Explaining Variations', in L.Hooghe (ed.), *European Integration, Cohesion Policy and Subnational Mobilisation* (Oxford: OUP, forthcoming); for systematic case studies, see the country chapters in *ibid*.
 15. On Ireland: Brigid Laffan, 'Ireland, A Region without Regions: The Odd Man Out?' in Hooghe (note 14). On Greece: P.K. Ioakimidis, 'The Implementation of EC Cohesion Policy in Greece: The Tension between Bureaucratic Centralism and Regionalism', in L.Hooghe (ed.); Susannah Verney, Fouli Papageorgiou, 'Prefecture Councils in Greece: Decentralisation in the European Context', in R.Leonardi (ed.), *The Regions and the European Community: The Regional Response to the Single Market in the Underdeveloped Areas* (London: Frank Cass, 1993) pp.109-38.
 16. Richard Balme, and Bernard Jouve, 'Building the Regional State. French Territorial Organisation and the Implementation of Structural Funds', in Hooghe (note 14); Hervé Dupuis,

- 'Committee of the Regions...'; Robert Ladrech, 'Europeanisation of Domestic Politics and Institutions: The Case of France', *Journal of Common Market Studies* 32/1 (1994).
17. In a way, it replaced an earlier consultative committee of local and regional institutions (created in 1977), in which the representatives had been appointed by the member states. That committee had not met since 1986.
 18. The president of the Commission, Jacques Delors, considered the CCRLA more ambitiously as the first step towards a wider and more political involvement of subnational authorities in European decision-making. Delors spoke on the inauguration of the Council: 'Ce geste n'est donc pas simplement de procédure. C'est un geste politique qui en annoncera d'autres.' (Discours du président Delors à l'occasion de la réunion constitutive du conseil consultatif des collectivités régionales et locales, Bruxelles, 20 Dec. 1988.)
 19. Strictly speaking, the electoral constituencies in Belgium are based partly on territory and partly on language: 15 seats are distributed among votes in the Flemish region and on Flemish candidates in Brussels; 11 seats among votes in the Walloon region and on Francophone parties in Brussels; one seat for the German-speaking region. On Belgium, see L. Hooghe, 'Belgian Federalism and European Integration' in B. Jones and M. Keating. (eds.), *The European Union and the Regions* (Oxford: Clarendon, forthcoming). On Germany see Richard E. Deeg, 'Germany's Länder and the Federalization of the European Union', presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, NY, 1-4 Sept. 1994; Rudolf Hrbek, 'The German Länder and EC Integration', *Journal of European Integration* 15 (Winter/ Spring 1997); pp. 173-193.
 20. Mette Jensen, 'Regional Mobilisation in Response to European Integration. The Potentiality of a Europe of the Regions' (unpub. MPhil. Th., Oxford, 1994); James Mitchell, 'Lobbying Brussels: The Case of Scotland Europa,' presented at the European Consortium for Political Research Workshops, Madrid, April 1994; Sonia Mazey, James Mitchell, 'Europe of the Regions? Territorial Interests and European Integration: The Scottish Experience' in S. Mazey, J. Richardson (eds.) *Lobbying in the European Community* (Oxford: OUP, 1993); Barry Jones, 'Wales and the European Union: The Development of a Regional Political Economy', presented at the Eur. Consort. for Political Res. Workshops, Madrid, 17-22 April 1994; Michael Keating, 'Le Monde pour Horizon. Québec, Catalonia and Scotland in the European Union', presented at the Int. Political Science Assoc., Berlin, Aug. 1994.
 21. This is just one of many possible classifications. Bennington and Harvey made a useful one for local authorities, see John Bennington and Janet Harvey, 'Spheres or Tiers? The Significance of Transnational Local Authority Networks', in P. Dunleavy, J. Stanyer (eds.), *Contemporary Political Studies*, 1994, (Political Studies Assoc. of Britain, 1994), pp. 943-61.
 22. Relying on a statistical analysis of survey data encompassing all regional offices, an American research team has explored which factors correlate significantly with the presence or absence of particular regions. See Gary Marks, Francois Nielsen and Jane Salk, 'Regional mobilisation in the European Union', (Chapel Hill, unpub. paper, 1993); Jane Salk, Francois Nielsen and Gary Marks, 'Patterns and Determinants of Cooperation Among Subnational Offices in Brussels: An Empirical Investigation' (Duke Univ., unpub., 1994).
 23. Failing this (which is the case in six member states), they are appointed by an association or body constituted at the regional level by the local authorities at the level immediately below. *AER documentation: Visiting Cards. European Regions* (Brussels: AER, Dec. 1992, Dec. 1993).
 24. Interview with a spokesperson of the AER in Brussels, June 1994. The AER considers it as its role to promote the interests of the weaker regional authorities in particular. It had therefore asked for a privileged link with the Committee as institutionalised 'patron' for the weaker regions, but was rebuffed. Confirmation from an interview with a Commission official, June 1994.
 25. Liesbet Hooghe and Michael Keating, 'The Politics of EU Regional Policy', *Journal of European Public Policy* 1/2 (1994); John Bennington and Janet Harvey, 'Spheres or Tiers?...'; Paul McAleavy, 'The Political Logic of the European Community Structural Funds Budget: Lobbying Efforts by Declining Industrial Regions', Eur. Univ. Paper RSC No. 94/2 (1994).

- According to McAleavy, the objective 2 network had its origins in a meeting held in Brussels in July 1991, which brought together the 60 regions eligible for objective 2 assistance (regions in industrial decline). It was organised by the European Commission. Ostensibly a gathering of experts in regional economic development, it had also a clear political goal: to put pressure on the European institutions as well as the national governments to support further funding for objective 2. The Commission let it be known that further initiatives would have to come from the regions. Within two weeks, eleven objective 2 regions got together to organise a follow-up meeting. That second gathering appointed a core group of eight regions to represent the interests of the objective 2 regions in meetings with Commissioners and representatives of other EU institutions.
26. See Susanna Borrás, 'The Four Motors for Europe and its Promotion of R&D Linkages Beyond Geographic Contiguity in Interregional Agreements', *Regional Politics and Policy*, 3/3, (1993), pp.163-76.
 27. W. Averyt, 'Eurogroups, Clientela and the European Community', *International Organization* 29/4 (1975), pp.949-72; Justin Greenwood, Jürgen Grote, and Karsten Ronit (eds.) *Organised Interests and the European Community* (London: Sage, 1992); Robert Hull, 'Lobbying Brussels: A View from Within' in S. Mazey and J. Richardson (eds.), *Lobbying in the European Community* (Oxford: OUP, 1992), pp.82-92.
 28. The difficult and uncertain ascendancy of RETI illustrates the dilemma. RETI was formed in 1984 as the Assoc. of Traditional Industrial Regions of Europe. The European Commission was present at its first meeting. From the beginning, its membership was flawed. The core consisted of such diverse partners like the French region of Nord Pas-de-Calais, the Belgian province of Hainaut, the German Land North Rhine-Westphalia, and the British local authority West Yorkshire Metropolitan County Council. Moreover, the association was not representative, in the sense that it was numerically dominated by UK local authorities, and had no representation of a number of member states. The Commission took a very cautious stand throughout the 1980s, even to the point that it decided in 1991 to persuade the objective 2 regions (de facto the RETI constituency) to form a new representative lobby (see footnote 12). The challenge transformed RETI in 1992. RETI changed its name to the more optimistic European Regions of Industrial Technology and declared it sought to encompass all objective 2 regions. The new objective 2 lobby and RETI are now working closely together to lobby the European Commission. However, the basic collective action problem deriving from unequal members, diverse interests and absence of clear membership advantages remain alive. One outcome is that the most powerful member, Nord Rhine-Westphalia, allowed its membership to lapse, implying that it has much more effective channels for defending its interests in the European arena than the troubled association. RETI is dispensable. The RETI tale illustrates also how the survival of these networks seems to depend on the receptiveness of the Commission. The European Commission is centrally placed to encourage or discourage, direct and shape interest formation. (P. McAleavy, 'The Political Logic of The European Community Structural Funds Budget: Lobbying efforts by declining industrial regions', European Univ. Paper RSC 94/2, 1994).
 29. Quoted in Stephen George, Ian Bache, and Rod Rhodes, 'The UK and the Committee of the Regions' in J.J.Hesse (eds.) *The Institutionalisation of the EC Committee of the Regions*. First Intermediate Report to the German Länder, 1993. Further sources: Peter John, 'The Presence and Influence of United Kingdom Local Authorities in Brussels' P. Dunleavy, J.Stanyer (eds.), *Contemporary Political Studies*, 1994. (Political Studies Assoc. of Britain, 1994), pp.906-22; Barry Jones, 'Wales and the European Union: The Development of a Regional Political Economy', Presented at the Eur. Consort. for Political Res. Workshops, Madrid, 17-22 April 1994.
 30. See Udo Bullmann, Michael Goldsmith and Edward C.Page, 'Subnational Government Autonomy and Political Authority: Regions, Localities and the Shifting Balance of Authority in Europe', Presented at the American Political Science Assoc., New York, 1-4 Sept. 1994; Michael Goldsmith, 'The Europeanization of Local Government', *Urban Studies* Vol.4/5 (1997), pp.683-99; Raffaella Nanetti, 'Cohesion Policy and Territorial Restructuring in the Member States', Presented at the Conference for 'Policy Networks and European Cohesion Policy', Nuffield, Oxford Univ., 2-5 Dec. 1993; Robert Leonardi, and Raffaella Nanetti

- (eds.), *The Regions and European Integration. The Case of Emilia-Romagna* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1990).
31. Sidney Tarrow, 'The Europeanisation of Conflict: Reflections from a Social Movement Perspective', *West European Politics* 18/2 (April 1995), pp.223–51.
 32. This reliance on a neo-functional logic is not new. It has been observed throughout the Commission's history. See Frank Wilson, 'Interest Groups as Domestic Political Actors in the European Union', Presented at the American Political Science Assoc., New York, 1–4 Sept. 1994; David Coombes, *Politics and Bureaucracy in the EC. A Portrait of the Commission of the EEC* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1970). It has become particularly pronounced under the presidency of Jacques Delors. See on networking as Commission strategy: Les Metcalfe, 'Après 1992: la Commission pourra-t-elle gérer l'Europe?', *Revue française d'administration publique*, 63, (1992), pp.401–12. See on the concept of 'espace organisée': George Ross, 'Sidling into Industrial Policy: Inside the European Commission', *French Politics and Society* 11 (1993), pp.20–44. For the Commission's application in cohesion policy see: L.Hooghe, 'Building a Europe with the Regions. The Politics of the European Commission Under the Structural Funds', presented at the Council of Eur. Studies, Chicago, 31 March–2 April 1994.
 33. As late as Oct. 1990, he seemed to lean towards a body representing regions only, not local authorities. He admitted that the diverse regional structures in Europe would make its creation difficult, but believed that a harmonisation in ten years time would be possible. See J.J. Hesse, A. Benz, C. Onestini, 'The Institutionalisation of the EC Committee of the Regions', First Intermediate Report to the German Länder, 1993.