

Regions and their Brussels' offices: A study of their relationship

Master Thesis Report

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Research is what I'm doing when I don't know what I'm doing.

Wernher von Braun

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Abstract

The structure of the EU caused many changes in the way traditional policy-making systems work. It also makes actors change their position and occupy new places. This is the case for the regions, which are playing an important role in the EU scene. With the idea of being closer to the EU, they started to establish representation offices in Brussels. This establishment implies the creation of a new relationship between the regions and these representations. In the present study we explore this relationship from an objective perspective and at the end we evaluate how effective it is. We used qualitative and quantitative data for our analysis that was collected from surveys and interviews to regions from four countries of the EU. We provided information about the resources, the agendas and procedures that are involved in this relationship. At the end we give information about the best practices that we found in some regions and we made some proposals that could help regions to solve the issues that they could be having in those areas.

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I not only use all the brains that I have, but all that I can borrow.
Woodrow Wilson

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Regions and their Brussels' offices

Nothing in life is to be feared. It is only to be understood.

Marie Curie

1. Introduction

The European Union (EU) is a complex structure where twenty seven countries get together with the purpose to work as a single body and improve conditions in the economical, political and social arenas. Coordinating all the member states is a challenging activity for the EU, and because of this fact this body has developed a particular policy making process that adds new roles to specific institutions and different actors like the regions. As examples of these transformations, we could see how the EU has done adjustments to involve regions in these processes in the Single European Act (SEA) and in the Treaty of Maastricht.

Regions within the EU are getting together to use the benefits that the EU has to offer to them, especially those coming from the structural funds. Regions are necessary to regulate and structure economic interests and to organize economic development. The relevance that regions have in economical matters, give them a privileged position at the national and EU level. But the importance of the regions is not limited to economic matters. Regions in the EU are important due to reasons linked to “proximity, efficacy, rapidity of reaction, experimentation or innovation”¹ in different fields. In addition, they can make the implementation of policies smoothly and they could provide reliable feedback to the EU about their effectiveness.

Due to the important role that they started to play in the international arena, in several matters, regions had the need to find ways to influence the EU decision-making process and incorporate in the policy agenda those topics of relevance for them. Regions count with different mechanisms to make this possible. One of these ways is to pressure their own governments to make specific demands in particular areas. Another manner is establishing partnerships with European institutions, like “the European Commission, to implement its regional policy.”² In addition, regions can use a common mechanism in the EU, lobbying, which is of great relevance for the present study. Lobbying allows regions to interact with actors from different levels in order to pursue their specific goals. Due to this fact, the regions begin to establish representation offices in Brussels. Their aim was being close to the EU's officials and institutions, exchanging information with them and providing effective information to their own regions.

¹ Le Gales, Patrick and Lequesne, Christian, Eds. (1998), *Regions in Europe*, UK: Routledge. 1998. P.2.

² Idem. P.24.

As we will discuss in further chapters, regions are in competition with other regions, and they should work hard to attract public funding and private investment. The regions have different kinds of interests in the EU, like for instance, political and economical, which make them want to gain all possible benefits at the EU level that they cannot achieve in the national level. The regions can use different lobby strategies to pursue goals which are going to benefit them, as well as the interests of the members of their networks on which they are immersed.

Nowadays, the regions are well structured, with the purpose of providing strategic answers to actual social, ecological and economical challenges. They should be integrated into the larger context of national, international and supranational cooperations to be effective in these areas. The EU has done some strategic movements to involve the regions in its policy-making process, which prove the importance of regions for national and international matters. The promotion of subsidiarity, transparency and the partnership with the regions are seemingly attempts by the EU to create and maintain support for its actions;³ reducing bureaucratic procedures, giving more flexibility and using the power issued to these new allies in the disputes with member states. EU actions need to be legitimized and justified, because “accusations of inefficiency, bureaucratization and centralization damage the effectiveness of the Union.”⁴ The participation of regions in the implementation of policies in specific fields can be seen as a guarantee for less bureaucratic steps and more flexibility.

The regions have to interact within this compound environment where different actors participate, with the purpose of achieving particular goals. With the purpose of developing an effective interaction in this complex environment, the regions need to have broad information about what is happening in the EU. This is possible due to the role that the representation offices play in Brussels, and because of this fact, the study of the relationship of the regions with their representation offices in Brussels is needed.

To do so, we are going to establish our central research question that will be answered with the support of sub questions. We are going to set up a conceptual framework, where we are going to study the concepts of region and representation office, and the theories of network, multilevel governance and lobbying. These concepts and theories are going to help us understand the relationship better, because we are going to know special features of the regions and the representation offices. Also, we could see how they are immersed in the multilevel governance system of which networks are a part and they use lobbying to move between these levels.

Then, we are going to present the research methodology that has been used to collect data. We have case studies where we collected the data mainly through surveys and interviews. Following we are going to present the findings in the chapter of empirical data. Then, we will present our theoretical

³ Onestini, Cesare. National and Regional Attitudes to the Committee of the Regions: a Synopsis; in: Jens Hesse, Joachim Ed., *Regions in Europe: Volume I*, Germany: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, Baden-Baden. 1995. P.212.

⁴ Ibidem.

reflections, where we related the findings provided by the empirical data with the theoretical framework. Finally, in the chapter of the conclusions we are going to provide answers to our research questions, present some proposals to improve the relationship between the regions and their representation offices; and discuss the limitations in the development of the present study. But first, we are going to present our objective and justification.

1.1. Objective and Justification

As we mentioned previously, the regions are having an active and relevant role in the EU, and they established representation offices in Brussels, to be active members in the day by day procedures of Europe. We found several works of different authors about the role that the representations are playing in Brussels, but not much information about how the relationship between the regions and these institutions is designed. The present study is developed due to an initiative of the Province of Gelderland, which aim is to explore this relationship more in depth, with the purpose of providing possible solutions to the problem that this region and others find when they want to keep the regions and their representations working in line.

Having this idea in mind we want to study the relationship between these entities, understanding how it is developed and identifying critical areas. The findings can be useful for the actors involved in this relationship from different regions that have access to this study, by finding issues in the areas that we are going to discuss. At the end of this document, we are going to provide possible solutions that can be used to improve this relationship.

We consider exploring the processes involved in the relationship between these organizations very interesting as it will help us to understand them and to find out how effective they are; identifying which areas are the 'issue areas', that must be improved with the purpose of developing an effective work. By effective we mean that the work can provide the desired results. In addition, we want to pinpoint best practices that can be found in some regions and can be implemented for some other regions to make their work more effective. In chapter 3 we are going to establish what is understood as best practices in the present study.

In the current research the relationship between regions and representation offices is going to be explored. We established some processes that are implied in this relationship that provide a new perspective to look into this relationship. These processes are: contact, coordination, exchange of information, report and monitor. In this study we explored these features, that together with a theoretical framework and some other variables, are going to help us to understand the relationship, to evaluate how effective it is and identify issue areas, providing possible solutions, or the so called proposals, in our conclusions chapter. But first, we are going to establish our research questions and sub questions.

1.2. Research question and Sub-questions

With the aim to develop the present research, these are the main questions that we established to lead our investigation and which are going to be answered in the Conclusions chapter:

Central question

How effective are European regions in the relationship with their representation offices in Brussels?

Sub-questions

The following are the sub-questions that were researched in order to answer the central question:

1. How is the relationship between regions and their representation offices developed?
 - a. What are the specific actors at the regions and their representation offices that are involved in this relationship?
 - b. What are the main goals that these actors want to pursue?
 - c. How is the communication process between the actors?
 - d. How are these actors institutional embedded?
2. What best practices can be identified?
3. What strategies can be developed for improving this relationship?

The content of the following chapters is going to provide us with the tools to answer all these questions. We hope that the reader enjoys the reading of this document and at the end, s/he can have a different view of the relationship between the regions and their representation offices.

2. Conceptual Framework

Whenever anyone says, 'theoretically,' they really mean, 'not really.'

Dave Parnas

In this chapter we are going to present the concepts and the theories that are going to provide us with the framework to study the relationship between the regions and their representation offices from a scientific perspective. Elinor Ostrom⁵ indicates that the creation and use of theories help to identify the relevant elements of the framework to answer the research questions. First, we are going to describe the relevant features of the main actors in this relationship: regions and representation offices. Then, we are going to discuss the theories of multilevel governance, networks and lobbying that will let us know how these actors interact in the EU. The content of this theoretical framework is going to help us to answer our research questions and draw conclusions about this relationship. We are going to start then, by exploring the main actors that we have, so far, in the relationship under study.

2.1. Main actors

As we just mentioned, we are going to explore briefly the main actors of the relationship under study: the regions and the representation offices.

2.1.1. Regions

We are going to start by providing a definition of the concept 'region' and by studying their main elements. Then we are going to follow the main developments of the regions in the EU and finally we are going to discuss the regional interests.

2.1.1.1. Definition

When we want to establish a definition of what is a region, we are facing the same challenge that several scholars had, because there is not a single explanation of what it is. Richard Hartshorne said that

*"Regions are subjective artistic devices, and they must be shaped to fit the hand of the individual user. There can be no standard definition of a region, and there are no universal rules for recognizing, delimiting, and describing regions. Far too much time can be wasted in the trivial exercise of trying to draw lines around 'regions'."*⁶

Sometimes, the word region is used as a synonymous for the words territory, area, district, neighborhood, place, province, space, etc. Anssi Paasi said that there are three broader categories of the concept of region. The first one is the '*prescientific concept of region*', where "region is

⁵ Sabatier, Paul A. Ed. Theories of the Policy Process. Westview Press. UK. 1999. P.40.

⁶ Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen. Re-constructing regions and regional identity. Available on: <http://www.ru.nl/socgeo/colloquium/Paasi1.pdf>
Visited on 7th August, 2008. P.2.

comprehended as a 'taken for granted' category.⁷ The second is the '*discipline centred interpretations*', where regions are considered as "a construction that is created by the researcher and which is used as a methodological tool and legitimization basis for the research, in order to classify or represent various phenomena."⁸ The third one is '*critical interpretations*' which "start from individual and social practice and they aim at conceptualizing the construction of the spatiality of the world on this ground."⁹

In order to provide a definition of region for the present research we are going to discuss some ideas developed by Paasi. He started by establishing the concept of institutionalization of regions: "this is a process through which a territorial unit becomes an established entity in the spatial structure and is then identified in political, economic, cultural and administrative institutionalized practices and social consciousness, and is continually reproduced in these social practices."¹⁰

Paasi also said that there are four common elements, that he called shapes, in the regions: territory, symbols, institutions and identity. The 'territory' is "the degree to which an area is distinct from other areas in spatial terms."¹¹ The 'symbols' are those recognizable elements like flags, rituals, songs, poems, etc. which are particular and special for certain areas. The 'institutions' are those formal bodies "that are capable of maintaining and reproducing territoriality and inherent symbolism."¹² The identity that refers "to the issue in how far is the region 'rooted' in the consciousness and social practices of people, being both individuals and groups."¹³

Thus, for the purpose of our research which is the study of the relationship between regions and their representation offices, we are going to understand as regions those space units that are the result of the combination of four elements: territory, symbols, institutions and identity.

The word region is used as a synonymous of the words territory, area, district, neighborhood, place, province, space, etc.

2.1.1.2. *Regional development in the EU*

Now, that we know more about the definition of regions, we are going to explore the increase of their participation in the EU. Since the sixties, some regional movements took an active role in their communities to make demands for the provision of specific matters to their respective states, which

7 Idem. P.4.

8 Ibidem.

9 Ibidem.

10 Idem. P.3.

11 Hospers, Gert-Jan. *Regional economic change in Europe: a neo-Schumpeterian vision*. Lit Verlag Munster. 2004. P.142.

12 Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen. *Re-constructing regions and regional identity*. Available on: <http://www.ru.nl/socgeo/colloquium/Paasi1.pdf>
Visited on 7th August, 2008. P.7.

13 Hospers, Gert-Jan. *Regional economic change in Europe: a neo-Schumpeterian vision*. Lit Verlag Munster. 2004. P.142.

they considered, belonged to them. The EU, at that time the European Community, started to work in topics related to Regional Policy. In 1968 the Directorate-General for Regional Policy was created. Later at the Conference of Heads of State in Paris in 1972, the Regional Policy was seen as an essential factor for strengthening the Community. These steps show that the regions were becoming relevant actors for, and, in the EU.

In the eighties, the European Commission involved regional interests and authorities in the development and implementation of national EC structural funds programmes. With the support of the Statistical Office of the European Communities, Eurostat, the use of special measure units was implemented, the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics, NUTS. The use of the NUTS had the purpose of making an administrative division of the countries for statistical purposes. In this way allocate the funds in an effective way, where all the areas get the resources that they needed. The NUTS have three levels of hierarchical classification according to the sizes of population. NUTS 1 are those regions with a minimum of 3 million and maximum of 7 million inhabitants; NUTS 2, regions with a minimum of 800.000 inhabitants and maximum of 3 million; and NUTS 3 with a minimum of 150.000 inhabitants and maximum of 800.000. In the methodology chapter we are going to see the usefulness of the knowledge of this measure for our study. Now we are going to talk about the regional interests.

2.1.1.3. Regional interests

Regions are in competition with other regions, and they should work hard to attract public funding and private investment, with the purpose of having enough resources to make their regions grow, and being internationally competitive. The regions have political and economical interests in the EU, which makes them want to gain all the benefits at the EU level that they cannot achieve at the national level. The regions can use different lobby strategies to pursue goals which are going to benefit them and the interests of the members of their networks. “European integration has promoted the emergence of new regional groupings, networks and processes which transcend the territorial and legal parameters of 'old' regions defined by the nation-state.”¹⁴ But the EU also sees an opportunity in its partnership with the regions, because “Brussels can rely on new allies to be deployed in any disputes with member states.”¹⁵

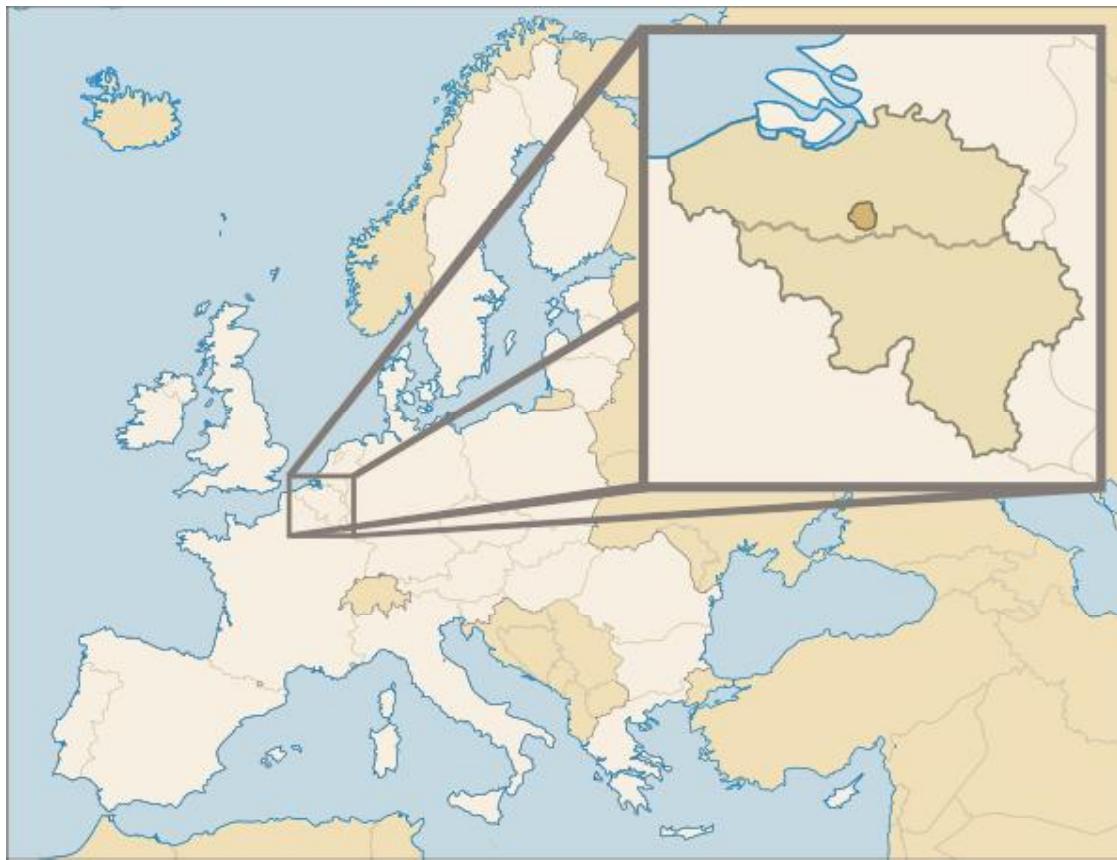
The regional interests are not just political and economical, they also make demands for public and private interests. When looking for public interest, the benefits that want to be achieved serve the society as a whole, for example better consumer protection, improved environmental protection or lower taxes. Private interests seek to achieve goals for their immediate members only.

We could see how the regions have been taking an active role in the EU with the purpose of

¹⁴ Mazey, Sonia. “Regional lobbying in the new Europe”, in Martin Rhodes (Ed.), *The regions and the new Europe: Patterns in core and periphery development*. Manchester University Press. UK. 1995. P.91.

¹⁵ Onestini, Cesare. *National and Regional Attitudes to the Committee of the Regions: a Synopsis*; in: Jens Hesse, Joachim Ed., *Regions in Europe: Volume I*, Germany: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, Baden-Baden. 1995. P.212.

participating in the policy-making process, and pursue most of their interests at the EU level. The regions have different kinds of interests which at the end are going to benefit their citizens. Now we are going to talk about the representation offices.



Map 1: Detailed location of Brussels in the EU¹⁶

2.1.2. Representation offices

In this part, we are going to start by giving a definition of what is meant by a 'representation office', and then we are going to point at the main tasks that this kind of office has in Brussels. Finally, we are going to mention some studies that had been developed in this area.

2.1.2.1. Definition

The representation offices are those agencies which represent and promote regional interests in Brussels. The representatives or officials are those people who are elected by the region due to their skills and formation, and they know very well the way how the region and the EU work.

The presence of regional representation offices in Brussels, from now on called 'representation offices', date back to the eighties, and it was "a direct response to the new opportunities available to local and

¹⁶ Source: Wikipedia. Available on: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Brussels_in_Belgium_and_the_European_Union.svg Visited on 15th August, 2008.

regional authorities because of a broadened integration process.”¹⁷ Diverse literature indicates that the first representation office was the Birmingham City Council which was opened in 1984,¹⁸ followed in 1985 by Saarland and Hamburg.¹⁹ The decision of the regions to establish representation offices at Brussels was “not simply a decision to extend representation to an additional arena, but a decision to do so independently of the central state.”²⁰

In the present work we use the word 'representation office' as a euphemism, because normally these agencies are called lobbying offices, and some sectors have a negative idea about lobbying. Later in this section, we are going to talk more about lobbying, and we are going to discover that these bad interpretations are just a matter of stereotypes. But now, we are going to talk about the tasks of the representation offices.

2.1.2.2. Main tasks

The representation offices have a main informative function, where five specific tasks can be recognized. First at all, they have the important function of *information gathering*. This is due to the fact that they need to be informed about EU legislation “in order to incorporate it into their own laws and practices and in order to monitor compliance in their own territory.”²¹ Also, “they explain the EU to the region, by relaying information on legislative developments, financing and cooperation opportunities,... providing explanations for policy developments and project requirements.”²²

A second feature is *networking*. When a representation office is opened in Brussels, the regions are located in the same place; they are putting in close proximity. They can get together according to their economic profiles, similarities in their political or geographical situation, etc. The proximity reduces the transaction costs of informational exchange. The third dimension is as *liaison between the region and the EU*. The representations give information to the EU institutions and actors about the home regions, “they explain Europe to the home region and provide technical assistance in setting up regional projects.”²³ The fourth informative function is *to influence EU policy*. These offices do that in 'soft politics' giving information to policy makers about the position of the region in specific areas. The last function is *regional marketing*. The representations “help to promote the region, notably by organizing meetings and public activities.”²⁴

17 Huysseune, Michel and Jans, Theo. Representation of local and regional governments to the European Union. Final Report. Research project carried out by the Institute for European Studies and the Political Science Research Department of the Free University of Brussels. 2007. P.5.

18 Brussels-Europe Liaison Office. Local and regional representations: a recent development. Available on: http://www.blbe.be/default.asp?V_DOC_ID=1867 Visited on 7th August, 2008.

19 Marks, Gary, Nielsen, Francois and Ray, Leonard. Competencies, Cracks, and Conflicts: Regional Mobilization in the European Union. Comparative Political Studies, Vol.29 No.2, April 1996 , pp.164-192. P.165.

20 Ibidem. P.169.

21 Marks, Gary, Haesly, Richard and Mbaye, Heather A. D. (2002) 'What Do Subnational Offices Think They Are Doing in Brussels?', Regional & Federal Studies, 12:3, 1 – 23. P.4.

22 Huysseune, Michel and Jans, Theo. Representation of local and regional governments to the European Union. Final Report. Research project carried out by the Institute for European Studies and the Political Science Research Department of the Free University of Brussels. 2007. P.16.

23 Idem. P.29.

24 Idem. P.30.

Besides these five specific tasks: information gathering, networking, liaison between the region and the EU, as well as influencing EU policy and regional marketing, the representation offices “serve as a two-way channel between their respective national arenas and the European arena. Although they have no formal role in the decision-making process, they challenge the monopoly of central state executives as the sole nexus between domestic politics and international relations.”²⁵

2.1.2.3. Representation offices as topic of study

The representation offices have become an interesting topic of study and proof of that are these interesting works. The first one is an article of Gary Marks, Richard Haesly and Heather A. D. Mbaye, called “What Do Subnational Offices Think They Are Doing in Brussels?”. In this article, the authors analyzed the activities and goals of representation offices with information collected on a survey developed in 1999. This survey was answered by regions of all EU member states, at that time. The main functions of these offices were related to four informative tasks: gathering information about EU legislation; exchanging information in subnational networks; mediating information to their respective home territories and providing information to decision makers in the EU.

Within this study the relevant role of the representation offices was exalted. In the last years another study was developed by Michel Huysseune and Theo Jans, “*Representation of local and regional governments to the European Union*” which presented the results of their research about the representation offices. They described the origins of the representation offices, what they called, the history; also, the way how these representations cooperate and how the issues are established. In this research they made a study of diverse literature that had been developed in the area. The methodology that is used in this research was a written questionnaire and interviews with representation offices and officers. This particular study was very important for our research because we had the opportunity to learn, in the case of our same area, how mixed methodology has been applied. Also, we had the chance to establish contact with one of the authors, Dr. Michel Huysseune, who furthermore provided valuable support to our research.

Relations between representation offices and the home region

The relationship between the representation offices and their home regions has to be developed in an environment of harmony and understanding. In Brussels, the representation offices need to achieve the tasks that had been allocated to them in the strategic plans of their regions, and which can be of one of the tasks that we mentioned earlier. Huysseune and Jans said that “the effective operation of the representation is dependent to a large extent on the way in which the home front and the representation are able to coordinate their activities.”²⁶ The representation offices need to be more accessible than EU institutions for their regional actors. They need to provide information to these actors about how the EU operates. The representations are the ears, mouth and eyes of the regions in

²⁵ Marks, Gary, Nielsen, Francois and Ray, Leonard. Competencies, Cracks, and Conflicts: Regional Mobilization in the European Union. Comparative Political Studies, Vol.29 No.2, April 1996, pp.164-192. P.184.

²⁶ Huysseune, Michel and Jans, Theo. Representation of local and regional governments to the European Union. Final Report. Research project carried out by the Institute for European Studies and the Political Science Research Department of the Free University of Brussels. 2007. P.39.

Brussels. Now, that we know the main actors of the relationship, we are going to explore the theories that are relevant for our study.

The representation offices have five specific tasks: information gathering, networking, liaison between the region and the EU, influence EU policy and regional marketing.

2.2. Relevant theories for the present study

Here, we are going to study the theories of multilevel government, network framework and lobbying, which are going to help us to better understand the environment in which the relationship between the regions and their representation offices evolves. The theory of multilevel governance is going to explain how the policy process works at the EU level and what the relevant institutions that participate in it are. The network framework is going to illustrate the relationship between the actors that participate in the just mentioned policy process, and the lobbying theory is going to show how this process of exchange of information and the interaction of these particular actors with other institutions and participants in the EU works.

2.2.1. Multilevel Governance

We want to start the revision of the relevant theories by briefly introducing what Multilevel Governance is and which the EU institutions are that are contacted by regions and/or their representation offices with the purpose of achieving specific goals, and participating in the decision-making process. This information is important to know because it is the arena where the regions and the representations have to interact. The 'Multilevel Governance' (MLG) is a special feature of the EU, where the power is distributed through the principle of subsidiarity between the EU, and national, regional and local levels. The principle of subsidiarity is established in article 5 of the Treaty establishing the European Community, and "it is the principle whereby the Union does not take action (except in the areas which fall within its exclusive competence) unless it is more effective than action taken at national, regional or local level."²⁷

Phillipe C. Schmitter defines MLG as:²⁸

an arrangement for making binding decisions that engages a multiplicity of politically independent but otherwise interdependent actors -private and public- at different levels of territorial aggregation in more or less continuous negotiation/deliberation/implementation, and that does not assign exclusive policy competence or assert a stable hierarchy of political authority to any of these levels.

Gary Marks said that MLG is:

"A system of continuous negotiation among nested governments at several territorial tiers -supranational, national, regional, and local -as the result of a broad process of institutional creation and decisional reallocation

²⁷ Europa. Glossary. Available on: http://europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/subsidiarity_en.htm Visited on 6th August, 2008.

²⁸ Schmitter, Phillippe C. Neo-Neofunctionalism, in Wiener, Antje and Diez, Thomas. European Integration Theory. Oxford University Press. U.K. 2005. P.49

that has pulled some previously centralized functions of the state up to the supranational level and some down to the local/regional level.”²⁹

MLG describes authority relations that are “unstable, contested, territorially heterogeneous, and non-hierarchical, rather than stable, consensual, territorial uniform, and hierarchical.”³⁰ The MLG theory explains that in the EU, “some decisional powers are shifted down to municipal, local and regional governments, some are transferred from states to the EC, and some are shifted in both directions simultaneously.”³¹ MLG is the result of two sets of developments, European integration and regionalism, that “converge in pulling decision making away from national states. What we are seeing is a messy process of deconstruction and reconstruction, rather than the replacement of one stable political order by another.”³²

Within MLG member states are losing power over some relevant aspects of decision making. Regions have new opportunities for mobilizations, and new models of interaction have been created among several actors at different levels of government. For the purpose of the present study, MLG is going to be understood as the political system of the EU where the decisions are taking by different actors at different levels, while none of these actors have supremacy over the others. However, it is important to provide a framework that gives as many benefits as possible to the citizens of the EU.

2.2.1.1. Main features

Marks, Hooghe and Black pointed at three main features of MLG in the EU. The first one is that the '*competences of decision-making*' are exercised and lie in national governments and institutions and actors at other levels. They said that the most important of these levels is the EU level “where supranational actors – of which the most important are the Commission, the EP, and the ECJ, are identified as exercising and independent influence on policy processes and policy outcomes.”³³ The second characteristic is that the '*collective decision-making*' by states at the EU level implies “a significant loss of national sovereignty, and therefore a significant loss of control by national governments.”³⁴ And the third one is that the '*political arenas*' are seen as interconnected rather than nested. Here, the channels and interconnections between the supranational, national and subnational levels of government are considered as real and relevant.

This innovative form of governance, which makes the EU special, involves different actors and

29 Marks, Gary. Structural Policy and Multilevel Governance in the EC. In Alan W. Cafruny and Glenda G. Rosenthal, Eds., *The State of the European Community*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner. 1993. P. 392.

30 Hooghe, Liesbet and Marks, Gary. “Europe with the Regions”: Channels of Regional Representation in the European Union. *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 26:1 (Winter 1996). P.91.

31 Marks, Gary. Structural Policy and Multilevel Governance in the EC. In Alan W. Cafruny and Glenda G. Rosenthal, Eds., *The State of the European Community*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner. 1993. P.407.

32 Hooghe, Liesbet and Marks, Gary. “Europe with the Regions”: Channels of Regional Representation in the European Union. *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 26:1 (Winter 1996). P.91.

33 Marks, Gary. Structural Policy and Multilevel Governance in the EC. In Alan W. Cafruny and Glenda G. Rosenthal, Eds., *The State of the European Community*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner. 1993. P.407.

34 Ibidem.

processes beyond the state, “the relationships between the state and non-state actors have become less hierarchical and more interactive, and the essential ‘business’ of government has become the regulation of public activities rather than the redistribution of resources.”³⁵ Within multilevel governance there are some EU institutions that are relevant for the relationship under study, because these are the organizations contacted by the regions and their representatives.

2.2.1.2. EU Institutions

The following EU institutions are relevant for regions because as we mentioned, they are contacted by regions and their representations, and because “the EU-state-regional/local government relations have begun to shift from a hierarchical model towards a more consultative style.”³⁶

One of the main tasks that the representatives of the regions have is to contact EU institutions. Maybe one of the most important institutions that is contacted is the *European Commission*. The Commission is an institution that acts as the executive branch of the EU, and it is responsible for the implementation of the decisions are taken by the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers. Besides that, the Commission also runs programmes and spends funds to achieve them. The Commission is independent of national governments and works in the representation and upholds of the interests of the EU as a whole.

The Commission is the most relevant channel through which representations operate. Contacts with the Commission are developed by each representation and also throughout the networks that they are a part of. Regional offices contact specific Directorate Generals (DG) according to their interests. With the purpose of increasing the legitimacy of its decisions and gain public acceptance for the EU, the Commission promotes the participation of interest groups in the policy process. With this aim in mind, it made “a plea for ‘better involvement and more openness’, that is, for opening up the policy process and for getting more individuals and organizations involved.”³⁷

Another institution, which is contacted by regions, is the *European Parliament*. This is due to the introduction of the joint-decision procedure. At an initial stage, regions contact the regional members of the European Parliament (MEPs) to promote specific topics. The power of the Parliament in the EU policy-making process varies between policy sectors “both because of the Treaties and because of the internal political dynamics of different policy sectors.”³⁸

The *Council of Ministers* is an institution that is considered to be not so open to the influence of lobbyists. The representations let the Council know their opinions through contacts with the national

35 Nugent, Neil and Paterson, William E. (Eds). *The Government and Politics of the European Union*. Palgrave Macmillan. USA. 2006. P.556

36 Mazey, Sonia. “Regional lobbying in the new Europe”, in Martin Rhodes (Ed.), *The regions and the new Europe: Patterns in core and periphery development*. Manchester University Press. UK. 1995. P.98.

37 Jachtenfuchs, Markus and Kohler-Koch, Beate. *Governance and Institutional Development*, in Wiener, Antje and Diez, Thomas. *European Integration Theory*. Oxford University Press. U.K. 2005. P.105.

38 Mazey, Sonia and Richardson, Jeremy. *Interest Groups and EU Policy-Making* in Richardson, Jeremy Ed. *European Union: Power and Policy-making*. Routledge. UK. 2006. P.260.

permanent representations.

In 1994, the *Committee of the Regions* (CoR) was created, to listen to what the regions have to say about EU policies. This body is playing as advisory role and a source of information to the Commission and the Parliament, which limits their role in the policy process. "However, the CoR deserves credit for giving local and regional authorities institutional recognition."³⁹ The CoR is a great help for regions and local authorities which are not familiar with the EU institutions. It has two mechanisms of influence: one, "its members speak for regional or local governments that implement European policies... Second, some of its members are in a position to pressure their national governments directly through the Council of Ministers or in their respective national arena."⁴⁰

The multilevel governance theory shows us how different levels of government are related to each other. It does not matter how different the interests are, what is important is that all the actors involved obtain benefits independent of how they approach to the EU. The MLG of the EU provides "numerous points of access at different levels of government, which results from the extraordinarily fragmented character of decision making... In such... interest groups (regions and their representations), could be expected to disperse their efforts according to rough criteria of efficiency and hit several points of access simultaneously."⁴¹ The complexity of all these levels that are part of the political system of the EU makes that some actors take part in networks to interact with them.

The 'Multilevel Governance' (MLG) is a special feature of the EU, where the power is distributed through the principle of subsidiarity between the EU, and national, regional and local levels.

2.2.2. Networks

The regions and the representation offices are involved in an interconnected system or network, where they work closely to pursue common interests. The term network is commonly used to describe groups of different kinds of actors that are linked in different areas, like for instance in political, social or economic arenas for mutual assistance or support. Through their connections, the actors spread information and can take collective actions.

A policy network is defined as "a set of relatively stable relationships which are of non-hierarchical and interdependent nature linking a variety of actors, who share common interests with regard to a policy and who exchange resources to pursue these shared interests acknowledging that co-operation is the best way to achieve common goals."⁴² For the purpose of the present study, we are going to

39 Huysseune, Michel and Jans, Theo. Representation of local and regional governments to the European Union. Final Report. Research project carried out by the Institute for European Studies and the Political Science Research Department of the Free University of Brussels. 2007. P.55.

40 Hooghe, Liesbet and Marks, Gary. "Europe with the Regions": Channels of Regional Representation in the European Union. *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 26:1 (Winter 1996). P.75.

41 Marks, Gary, Nielsen, Francois and Ray, Leonard. Competencies, Cracks, and Conflicts: Regional Mobilization in the European Union. *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol.29 No.2, April 1996. P.171.

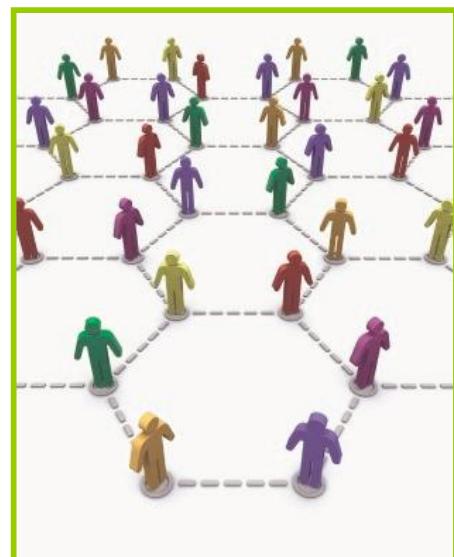
42 Borzel, Tanja A. What's so special about policy networks? -An exploration of the concept and its usefulness in studying European governance. European Integration online Papers (EioP) Vol. 1 (1997) No. 016. Available on: <http://eiope.or.at/eiope/texte/1997-016a.htm> Visited on 7th August,

understand as policy networks the interactions of different actors that share the same kind of interest in specific areas and which designate resources to achieve them.

Policy networks have three basic assumptions. It started with the idea that modern governance is commonly non-hierarchical. Second, “the policy process must be disaggregated to be understood because relationships between groups and government vary between policy areas.”⁴³ And third, the governments continue being the responsible for governance. “Policy networks can narrow options and shift the agenda by pursuing strategies that generate new political and economic forces.”⁴⁴

2.2.2.1. Kind of networks⁴⁵

Hooghe and Marks established three kinds of networks that can be found in the EU. The first one are those that “have been created expressly by the Commission and are attached to a specific Community program of initiative”.⁴⁶ Some of these networks are constituted by regional governments or local authorities. An example of these kinds of networks is the associations of Objective 2 regions. These specific regions, which are in industrial decline, had the specific goal “to put pressure on the European institutions as well as the national governments to support further funding for Objective 2.”⁴⁷ The second type of networks are those which have their origin in “self-directed mobilization among regions with common territorial features or policy problems.” These networks are looking to reduce regional equalities. An example for such a network can be the Association of European Borders Regions (AEBR). Finally, the third kind of network “entails self-organization on the part of relatively successful regions”.⁴⁸ These networks are driven by economic factors. A famous example of this type is the 'Four Motors Association' between Baden-Württemberg, Rhône-Alpes, Catalonia and Lombardy. “This association involves the most dynamic regions in their respective countries in promoting technological collaboration, research and development, and economic and cultural exchange.”⁴⁹



Rod Rhodes points at five types of networks according to the integration degree of their members, the kind of their members, and the allocation of resources between them. Rhodes places these network types “on a continuum ranging from highly integrated policy communities at the one end and loosely

2008. P.1.

43 Peterson, John. Policy Networks. In: Wiener, Antje and Diez, Thomas. European Integration Theory. Oxford University Press. U.K. 2005. P.119.

44 Ibidem.

45 Source graphic: Conservablogs. Available on: <http://conservablogs.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/05/policynetwork.jpeg> Visited 16th August, 2008.

46 Hooghe, Liesbet and Marks, Gary. “Europe with the Regions”: Channels of Regional Representation in the European Union. *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 26:1 (Winter 1996). P.87.

47 Ibidem.

48 Idem. P.89.

49 Ibidem.

integrated issue networks at the other end; professional networks, inter-governmental networks, and producer networks lie in between.⁵⁰

A study of the networks allows us to understand how the actors under study organize their relationship and how they share information and resources with other actors with the same kind of interests. We are going to continue our brief study of the theories, revising the concept of lobbying, which is an important process that allows regions and their representations to interact within the complexity of the EU.

The term network is commonly used to describe groups of different kind of actors who are linked in different areas.

2.2.3. *Lobbying*

Van Schendelen defines lobbying as “the informal exchange of information with public authorities, as a minimal description on the one hand, and as trying informally to influence public authorities, as a maximal description on the other hand.”⁵¹ He also describes the key elements of the definition. By *public authorities* we understand the body constituted by people who have formal power to take decision that can affect the society. By *information*, those descriptions of the reality that can be used to take a decision. And by *influence*, the “creation of an impact on somebody’s behavior and as such is focused on either changing or strengthening his intended behavior.”⁵²

Lobbyists need to inform and influence the public authorities with the purpose of avoiding that the decision-making procedure takes place with insufficient information and that the authorities take the wrong decisions. The information that is transmitted by the lobbyists to the public authorities is often reliable and valid. This information strengthens the position of the public authorities in the political system.

The concept of lobbying is related to agenda-setting because it is a strategy to influence the decision-making process and incorporate those topics into the agenda which have relevance to specific actors, in this case, the regions. When lobbying tools are used at the agenda-setting stage, they could provide higher rewards than when used at a later stage of the policy process, because the chances of surprises are minimized, and the targets can be pursued. "The permeability of the European institutions such as the Commission, the Parliament and the Court of Justice to lobbying and groups interest has made this a widely spread and commonly used strategy to achieve particular interests."⁵³

50 Borzel, Tanja A. What's so special about policy networks? -An exploration of the concept and its usefulness in studying European governance. European Integration online Papers (EioP) Vol. 1 (1997) No. 016. Available on: <http://eip.or.at/eip/texte/1997-016a.htm> Visited on 7th August, 2008. P.3.

51 Van Schendelen, M.P.C.M. Ed. National Public and Private EC Lobbying. Dartmouth.UK. 1994. P.3.

52 Ibidem.

53 Mazey, Sonia and Richardson, Jeremy (2006), "Interest groups and EU Policy-making", in: Jeremy Richardson, Ed., European Union, Power and Policy-making, UK: Routledge. P.251.

The EU's decision-making process is full of links between different bodies, and its variety of external linkages with the Member States provide a great number of access points through which to lobby EU authorities. When regions are engaged in lobbying activities they can use three channels: national delegations in Brussels; members of the many Council working groups; and national governments. "It is virtually impossible for any single interest or national association to secure exclusive access to the relevant officials or politicians."⁵⁴

We want to mention some relevant features that different authors discuss with regards to lobbying.

2.2.3.1. Relevant features

As we just indicated, in this part we are going to review what some authors recognized as relevant features of the lobbying process. For instance, Van Schendelen created a model he called the "*Game of triple P: persons-positions-procedures*" to describe some process in the lobbying work:

*The game's objective is to make the playing field more unleveled; its participants try to place the friendliest persons in the best positions in the most beneficial procedures. When others start to argue over the contents of the issue, triple P players have already prearranged the playing field and limited the other players' movements by their early settling of the procedures, positions and people favorable to their cause.*⁵⁵

Another author, Guéguen, divided lobbying strategies in three categories: negative, reactive and pro-active. *Negative* strategies are those which are opposed to Commission proposals "by proposing untenable counter-proposals,"⁵⁶ *reactive* strategies, are those in which prudence is more important over action and initiatives; and *pro-active* strategies, are those where a close team-work is developing with the Commission in a spirit of partnership and credibility.⁵⁷

Finally, Coen presented four strategic capacities that lobbying firms should have to succeed, these are:

- the ability to identify clear and focused policy goals;
- develop relationships and credibility in the policy process;
- understand the nature of the policy process and institutional access;
- and look for natural allies and alliances to develop profile and access.⁵⁸

We found in several sources that besides these features, the lobbyists should consider some principles to succeed in their daily labor.

2.2.3.2. Success principles

Lobbyists have a challenge on their hands anytime that they want to achieve a goal for their clients, or

54 Idem. P.8.

55 Idem. P.17.

56 Ibidem.

57 Idem. P.18.

58 Ibidem.

in the case of this paper, when they need to obtain benefits for the region that they represent. Lobbyists need to be very careful in the observations that they make, and they must consider "the issues at stake, the stakeholders involved, the time dimension and the arena boundaries, and also to reflect on their best management."⁵⁹ In the working paper of the EP "*Lobbying in the European Union: Current Rules and Practices*" there are two lists created by experienced lobbyists with the principles that should be observed if a lobbyist wants to succeed.

The first list was drawn by an American public affairs consultant based in Brussels, who said that it is important to assemble an own network within the EU institutions and other associations to have access to vital information. Also, it is important to be proactive because "the earlier one intervenes in the legislative process, the more effective will be. Build relationships before one actually needs something."⁶⁰ A good knowledge of the audience is relevant, "adapting the message to their interests will help to gain their attention and influence their decision-making."⁶¹ The principles of European integration have to be followed, and the proposal that is presented has to make a contribution to them.⁶²



In the same way, it is suggested to form alliances and find out who the opponents are, because "the argument will be more effective if it takes the opponents into account."⁶³ 'Never take without giving', meaning that when one is trying to prevent or change a regulation, an acceptable alternative has to be offered. "Providing information or supporting the Commission in areas that are not of one's direct interest could also build one's credibility and advance one's primary interest."⁶⁴ Another interesting matter that should be

taken into account is to always follow up, by which is meant to "follow up every lead, every letter you write, every contact you make, and every initiative you take."⁶⁵

The second list was proposed by a former MEP, which starts with the idea to anticipate the future thinking of the Commission, keeping close relations with their members in national and permanent representations. Also, it is important to understand what is wanted and to work with others to have a coherent lobbying. Special attention has to be given to the details, "making sure that you are following,

59 European Parliament, Directorate-General for Research. *Lobbying in the European Union: Current rules and practices*. Constitutional Affairs Series. 04-2003. P.20.

60 Ibidem.

61 Ibidem.

62 Source graphic: European Parliament. Available on: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/eplive/expert/photo/20080402PHT25496/pict_20080402PHT25496.jpg Visited on 15th August, 2008.

63 European Parliament, Directorate-General for Research. *Lobbying in the European Union: Current rules and practices*. Constitutional Affairs Series. 04-2003. P.21.

64 Ibidem

65 Ibidem.

developments throughout the full co-decision procedure.⁶⁶ The permanent representation is an important resource, because part of their job is to get the best possible deals for their own countries, and they could provide relevant information about the progress or even give advice on a piece of draft legislation. Finally he exalts the relevance of the national representatives, which are there "to serve national interests, irrespective of the political party to which they belong."⁶⁷

There is not an instruction manual which explains the procedures that have to be followed in order to succeed in lobbying strategies. Regions are putting their trust in lobbying groups, which use most of the features described in this part, to achieve certain goals and count with the economical and political support of the EU, for the development of their daily activities.

As we have seen, lobbying is basically a process where information is exchanged with the purpose of making good decisions. But for some people the idea behind lobbying is that it is an unknown world where obscure people make decisions that just benefit them and the interests that they represent. We have seen that these ideas behind lobbying - and specifically about the representation offices - is to provide the right information to the EU and the regions to make good decisions and benefits all the citizens of their region and the EU.

Lobbying has been defined as the informal exchange of information with public authorities, as a minimal description on the one hand, and as trying informally to influence public authorities, as a maximal description on the other hand. (*Van Schendelen*)

2.3. Conclusion

After the revision of concepts and theories in the areas under study (regions, representation offices, multilevel governance, networks and lobbying), we now have the tools to make an exploration of certain cases which are going to take us to study the relationship between regions and their representation offices.

So far, we know that the regions have an active and important role in the EU. They are in competition with other regions to obtain all the benefits that being part of the EU provides. Regions, established representation offices in Brussels with the purpose of obtaining and exchanging relevant information with other European actors.

Regions, their representation offices and the European institutions interact in a network, where a kind of non-hierarchical design is followed, and where different levels and actors participate. There are some European institutions which are more open to the participation of the regions and their representatives like the European Commission and the European Parliament. There are also some institutions that are

66 *Idem*. P.22.

67 *Idem*. P.23.

not too open to the influence of external actors like the Council of Ministers.

Finally, in this chapter we could see how the lobbying has an important role in the interaction of the regions at the regional, national and EU level, as the regions are not isolated. When they work with partners they could get more benefits. Many studies have been done on this topic, but there are some general features that can be identified.

In recent years, there has been an increase in the research of these topics, because the EU has changed some traditional ideas that were established to describe how government systems work. All these systems have been challenged and renewed. There is still some space left to continue making contributions, because with the accession of new member states to the EU, the conditions are still continuously changing.

Next, we are going to present the research methodology that has been used for the collection of relevant data with the purpose of better understanding the relationship between the regions and the representation offices and provide answers to our research questions.

3. Research methodology

What is a scientist after all? It is a curious man looking through a keyhole, the keyhole of nature, trying to know what's going on.

Jacques Yves Cousteau

In this chapter we are going to discuss the methodology that was used in the present research, in order to understand how the relationship between the regions and their representation offices takes place, and to answer our central research question and the sub-questions. We are going to use 'case studies'. We are going to start by describing these cases, which are "an ideal methodology when a holistic, in-depth investigation is needed".⁶⁸ Furthermore, we are going to combine qualitative and quantitative methodologies, collect broad data that allow us to explore this relationship. Finally, we presented the key variables that serve as a guide for the collection of data and, in later stages, for drawing our conclusions.

3.1. Case studies

In the present research the cases of five regions are going to be studied "Case studies are manageable, and it is more desirable to have a few carefully done case studies with results one can trust than to aim for large, probabilistic, and generalizable samples with results that are dubious because of the multitude of technical, logistic, and management problems."⁶⁹ We invited regions from the network of the Province of Gelderland, especially from the network Partenalia and Regional Framework Operation RFO "Change on Borders", to participate in our research. We are going to provide some information about these networks.

*Partenalia*⁷⁰ is a network that was created in 1993 by an initiative of the Diputació de Barcelona. Its aim is to represent the interests of the intermediate local administrations at the European level. This network provides training, working groups and support in their activities within the EU for their members. Right now, this network has twenty six members from seven EU member states.

Regional Framework Operation RFO "Change on Borders" was "a programme-based approach that promoted interregional cooperation among 25 different border regions in the European Union and beyond."⁷¹ Their activities started in September 2003 and ended in December 2007.

The cases where we made a more in depth exploration were Diputació de Barcelona (SPA), Diputación de Badajoz (SPA), Province of Torino (ITA), Département du Bas Rhin (FRA) and the Province of Gelderland (NL). We chose these cases because of the following reasons.

68 Tellis, Winston. Application of a Case Study Methodology. The Qualitative Report, Volume 3, Number 3, September, 1997.

69 Patton, Michael Quinn. Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods. Second Edition. Sage Publications. USA. 1990. P.100.

70 Partenalia. Available on: www.partenalia.eu. Visited on 6th February, 2008.

71 Change on borders. Available on: <http://www.change-on-borders.net/> Visited on April 10th 2008.

3.1.1. Criteria to choose cases of study

In the following, we are going to explain the criteria that were considered before choosing the five regions for our in-depth study. Due to the fact that all the just mentioned regions are part of the network of the Province of Gelderland it was easy to establish contacts to the regions to request their support in our research. Also, a very important reason was the fact that these regions were going to participate in the Steering Committee of Partenalia in Barcelona. We were going to have the chance to talk to them. Some contacts were made prior to the meeting at Barcelona with some of the regions under study, to inform them about the study, confirm their attendance at the meeting and make appointments for the interviews. We wanted to have the point of view from contact persons and representatives of the regions. In some cases, we had the opportunity to talk to both persons but in some other cases just with one of them. This fact can be considered as a bias because we did not talk to both persons in the regions under study.

We also established some particular criteria to be observed in the regions under study. First, all regions under study should possess the *four elements* described by Paasi: territory, symbols, institutions and identity. When we revised these elements in the five regions we could identify them easily. All of the regions accomplished these criteria.

Second, the participants should have a *representation office at Brussels*, indifferent of which kind. All of them have one. This condition also implies a bias, because we are ignoring those regions which do not have a representation office at Brussels. We decided to consider these specific criteria because we want to explore the relationship of the regions and their representation offices, and if we study regions that do not have one, they are not going to provide us with the information that we need for the present study.

Third, using the measure of the NUTS, which we mentioned in the previous chapter, we want to study regions of *different sizes*: big, medium and small. Having regions of different sizes enable us to evaluate if size matters. To do so, we are going to consider the number of inhabitants of the regions to establish their size and determine if this criteria is relevant for the development of their activities. In the theoretical framework we discussed this measure, and now we are going to use it. As regions of big size, we are going to consider those which can be classified as NUTS 1, a with minimum of 3 million and maximum of 7 million inhabitants. As regions of medium size, the regions that follow the NUTS 2, with a minimum of 800.000 inhabitants and maximum of 3 million; and finally, regions of small size, those that fit in the category of the NUTS 3, with a minimum of 150.000 inhabitants and maximum of 800.000. In the following table⁷² we can see the NUTS classification with their measures better.

⁷² Source: Eurostat Basic Principles of the NUTS. Available on: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/ramon/nuts/basicnuts_regions_en.html Visited on March 10th 2008.

Level	Minimum	Maximum
NUTS 1	3 million	7 million
NUTS 2	800 000	3 million
NUTS 3	150 000	800 000

Table 1: NUTS' classification

Using these criteria and revising the data about the population information of these regions, we classify the regions under study like this.⁷³ As big region we have Diputació de Barcelona with 5.309.404 inhabitants.⁷⁴ As medium regions, the Province of Torino with 2.277.686 inhabitants,⁷⁵ the Province of Gelderland with 1.975.704 inhabitants,⁷⁶ and the Département du Bas Rhin with 1.026.120 inhabitants.⁷⁷ Finally, as a small region, Diputación de Badajoz with 678.459 inhabitants.⁷⁸

Size	Region under study	Inhabitants
Big region	Diputació de Barcelona	5.309.404
Medium region	Province of Torino	2.277.686
	Province of Gelderland	1.975.704
	Département du Bas Rhin	1.026.120
Small region	Diputación de Badajoz	678.459

Table 2: Regions under NUTS' classification

The purpose of the NUTS, the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics is making an administrative division of the countries for statistical purposes. In this way the funds can be allocated in an effective way, where all the areas get the resources that they needed.

Another criterion that we want to add ex-post is the fact that most of the regions are located in two important regional economic structures in Europe, the 'Blue Banana' and the 'sunbelt', which we are going to explain next. The 'Blue Banana' is a corridor of urban areas in Central Europe. "The area

73 Please check Table 2: Regions under NUTS' classification, to see the classification that we made of the regions under study, according to the measures of NUTS.

74 Source: Diputació de Barcelona. Available on: <http://www.diba.es/latiputacio/es/quies.asp> Visited on May 20th 2008.

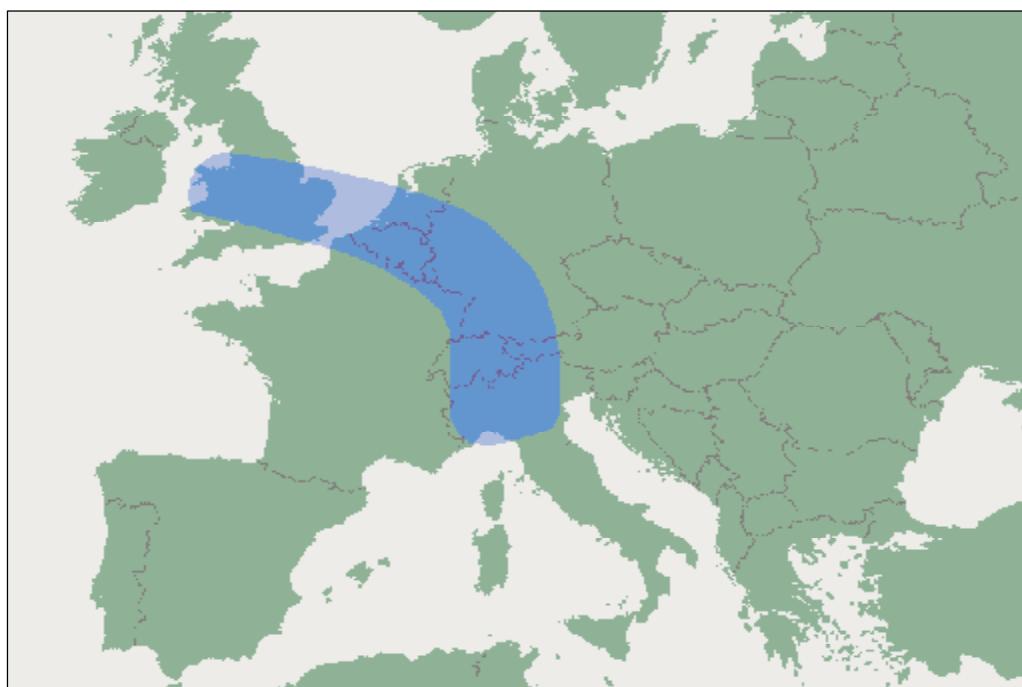
75 Source: Wikipedia. Available on: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Province_of_Turin Visited on May 20th 2008.

76 Source: Wikipedia. Available on: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gelderland> Visited on April 10th 2008.

77 Source: Wikipedia. Available on: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bas-Rhin> Visited on June 25th 2008.

78 Source: Wikipedia. Available on: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prov%C3%ADncia_de_Badajoz Visited on May 20th 2008.

comprises many large medium-sized cities... from London towards Milan.⁷⁹ It has special features in demographic, economic, infrastructural and cultural matters. For instance, it is highly populated and urbanized, it has large industrial concentrations and developed service centers, as well as solid telecommunications infrastructure and traffic networks. "The regions within the Blue Banana have higher per capita incomes and lower employment rates compared with the rest of Europe."⁸⁰ This corridor has a curvature that has the shape of a banana and the blue color was given in the study developed by Roger Brunet, from the group RECLUS, in 1989 on the opportunities of development for urban areas in the European economy. In the study the area was marked with blue color, and "it was the press that termed this core metropolitan zone in Europe the 'Blue Banana', thus referring to its banana shape and the color that was used by the RECLUS mapmakers and was meant as a warning signal for the public authorities in Paris: since France was not connected".⁸¹ In the Blue Banana we could find cities like Amsterdam, Arnhem, Basel, Brussels, Cologne, Frankfurt, London, Manchester, Milan, Rotterdam, Strasbourg, Torino, and Zurich. In the Blue Banana three of our regions under study are located: Province of Gelderland, Département du Bas Rhin and Province of Torino.



Map 2: Blue Banana⁸²

There is another growth zone of relevance in Europe, the so called 'Sunbelt'. This is located around the Mediterranean coast, from Milan to Valencia. "This arch-shaped belt with cities such as Nice, Marseille, Toulouse and Barcelona, is said to emerge on the basis of high-tech and service activities combined with a qualified work force and a pleasant working and living climate."⁸³ Within this area we could locate another region under study, Diputació de Barcelona.

79 Hespers, Gert-Jan. *Regional economic change in Europe: a neo-Schumpeterian vision*. Lit Verlag. Munster. 2004. P.15.

80 Ibidem.

81 Ibidem.

82 Source: Wikipedia. Available on: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Blaue-banane.png> Visited on August 9th 2008.

83 Hespers, Gert-Jan. *Regional economic change in Europe: a neo-Schumpeterian vision*. Lit Verlag. Munster. 2004. P.17.

Within these criteria of the 'Blue Banana' and the 'Sunbelt' we could locate four of the regions under study, however the Diputación de Badajoz is not possible to place in either of them, but this region accomplishes the previous criteria and still is an important actor to be studied. We could assume that with the active role that this particular region is having at regional and EU level, it can become part of the 'Sun-belt' in the near future.

It is more desirable to have a few carefully done case studies with results one can trust than to aim for large, probabilistic, and generalizable samples with results that are dubious because of the multitude of technical, logistic, and management problems. (*Michael Quinn Patton*)

3.1.2. Research typology

The typology of this research that is going to be used is '*formative evaluation*'.⁸⁴ The aim of this evaluation is to improve a specific program, policy, group of staff, or product. The formative evaluation is an excellent tool to study how the relationship between the regions and their representation offices takes place. This kind of evaluation is going to allow us to identify the strengths and weaknesses of this relationship. We can provide recommendation for improvements, in the case that they are needed. All the findings that we reach at the end of the present study are going to be presented at the General Assembly of Partenalia, that is going to take place at Gelderland, the 20th and the 21st of November. The formative evaluation assumes that people can and will use the information to improve what they are doing. We hope that at the end, we could provide information that help regions and their representations to have better and more effective relationships.

Within this kind of evaluation, we could make an analysis of their relationship, identifying best practices and the areas that need to be improved. In the chapter of the Conclusions of this research we are going to revise the main data obtained and we are going to point at the strengths and weaknesses of the relationship between the regions and their representations, and we are going to provide ideas about how to make the required improvements and the viable solutions to consolidate a solid and effective relationship between the actors.

3.1.3. Best practices

As we mentioned in the introduction, we want to establish what we understand as best practices. Best practices are defined as "a technique, method, process, activity, incentive or reward that is more effective at delivering a particular outcome than any other technique, method, process, etc."⁸⁵ With this idea in mind, we are going to consider as best practices all those particular actions that are developed by regions and representation offices that make their relationship more effective. Those actions that

⁸⁴ Patton, Michael Quinn. Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods. Second Edition. Sage Publications. USA. 1990. P.161.

⁸⁵ Source: Wikipedia. Available on: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Best_practices Visited on July 25th 2008.

make the development of the daily activities smooth, and that can be easily implemented by other regions and representations, improving their relationship.

Now that we know more about the case studies, and we know the cases that have been selected for the study as well as the criteria that enabled us to choose them, we are going to specify how the data was collected and later we are going to point at the key variables of the study.

Best practices are defined as a technique, method, process, activity, incentive or reward that is more effective at delivering a particular outcome than any other technique, method, process, etc.

3.2. Data Collection

We are going to start with the data collection. This had been done through surveys and interviews, with the purpose of understanding the relationship better and providing answers to our research questions. Staff from the Province of Gelderland discussed the aim of this research with the coordinators of 'Partenalia' and 'Change on Borders', to request their support. The researcher was the instrument for data collection. We are going to start by discussing the collection of quantitative data.

3.2.1. Quantitative Data: Surveys

In a first stage for the data collection we developed a survey questionnaire⁸⁶ that was divided in two parts. The first part has five questions about general information of the regions; the second part has twelve specific questions about the representation offices. We decided to have these two parts, because in those cases where the regions do not count with a representation office, at least they could provide us with some information about them that can be used in our research like for instance the areas and actors of interest, areas of activity or for future research in this area.

The surveys were accompanied by an introduction letter written by the director of the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Province of Gelderland, which explained the purpose of the research and indicated the deadline to submit the completed survey. The idea was that possible participants identify this person and want to support the present research, which was sponsored by Gelderland. The survey was written in English, and it was translated into French and Spanish. They were sent to the regions by email.

In the case of Partenalia, we agreed with the coordinator Mrs. Blanca Soler to send her the surveys in the three versions as she agreed to send it to the members of the network. Mrs. Soler sent it to the members by email on May 30th and the deadline to reply was set to be the 15th of June. Partenalia celebrated a meeting with their members at Barcelona (SPA) on 16th and 17th of June, and Mrs. Soler opened a space of 15 minutes to us, to make a presentation on the present research, with the purpose

⁸⁶ See Annex 1: Model Survey

to increase the participation rate. We extended the deadline to 30th of June. On June 26th, Mrs. Soler sent a reminder email to the members of the network to answer the survey.

In the case of Change on Borders the coordinator Mrs. Vera Krüger provided us with a list of email addresses of the members of this network. We sent an email with the surveys on 21st of May, and then we sent reminders on 2nd and 10th of June.

The data collected from the surveys provided us with the same kind of information from different regions, which can be compared easily under general criteria. Some of the information that was obtained from the surveys was explored in-depth in the *interviews* with the regions under study due to their relevance for our research. Now, we are going to revise the collection of qualitative data.

3.2.2. Qualitative Data: Interviews

Using the opportunity to participate in the Meeting of Partenalia in Barcelona, we contacted the target regions by email to make appointments with them and make interviews to have enough time to discuss topics relevant for the study. The persons that were contacted were the contact persons in the home regions and in some cases the representatives in Brussels. The interviews were recorded and the transcripts are available in the original language for further studies in this area.⁸⁷

In the following table we could see the person who was interviewed, the region which they represent and their position in the region.

Name	Position	Region	Country
Mrs. Blanca Soler	Representative official in Brussels	Diputació de Barcelona	Spain
Mr. Jose Luis Albarán	Contact person at home region	Diputación de Badajoz	Spain
Mr. Manuel Mendigutia	Representative official in Brussels	Diputación de Badajoz	Spain
Mrs. Claudia Fassero	Contact person at home region	Province of Torino	Italy
Mr. Philippe Fischer	Contact person at home region	Département du Bas Rhin	France
Mr. Doede Sijtsma	Contact person at home region	Province of Gelderland	Netherlands
Mr. Hein Canregieter	Representative official in Brussels	Province of Gelderland	Netherlands

Table 3: Interviews

For the interviews we used the information of the completed surveys and we asked the respondents to explain their answers in more depth. We added questions about the organization, the areas of interest and the actors and we explored the relationship between the regions and the representation offices, and their experiences in Brussels in more depth as well.

⁸⁷ The transcripts of the interviews are available in Annex 16 to 20.

In the design of the interviews and surveys and with the purpose of study the relationship between the regions and their representation offices, we considered the variables that are going to be described next.

3.3. Key Variables

With the purpose of collecting information that allows us to understand the relationship of the regions and their representation offices, and to answer our research questions, we are going to consider the following variables: resources allocated to representation offices, their agendas and the procedures that are followed by each of them. Within these variables we established sub-variables that we are going to explain next. Table 4 presents the specific variables and sub-variables to be studied for each actor.

Regions	Representation Offices
Resources allocated to representation offices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget destinated to representation offices • Number of staff • Kind of representation office 	Resources available <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget available for activities • Number of staff
Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main areas of action • Main areas of interest • Main actors of interest 	Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main areas of action • Main areas of interest • Main actors of interest
Procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact with representation office • Coordination of activities • Exchange of information • Report of progress • Monitor of progress 	Procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact with region • Coordination of activities • Exchange of information • Report of progress

Table 4: Variables under study

3.3.1. Resources allocated to representation offices

Through this variable we want to know better the resources that regions allocate to their representation offices for the development of their daily activities. The idea is to determine if it is a condition for the development of activities of the representation offices. We start our exploration of the representation offices in the following sub-variables, and they are going to help us to look into specific information.

-Budget: we want to see if the regions have the economical resources required for the development of their daily activities. The purpose is to determine whether the budget is a factor that influences the way how representations develop their activities.

-Staff: the information that we want to obtain about the staff at the representation offices is of a different nature. We want to know the number of staff that is available at the representation offices, as well as the basis on which they are working, for example whether they have part time or fixed positions. We also want to observe for how long the employees are working at the representation. We want to know if the fact that they are in a fixed position or part time position, or for a certain time can provide different

results.

3.3.2. Agenda

The purpose of exploring the agenda of the regions is to know their main areas and actors of interest, their main targets in Brussels. We established three sub-variables according to this purpose.

-Areas of activity: we want to know in which level the regions are active, because they could be active just at the regional level, they could be active just at the EU level, they could be active at both levels, the regional and the EU, or they can be not active at all.

-Areas of interest: we want to see what the specific areas are that are of interest for the regions. In the survey we presented a list with ten general areas that we have found as relevant in the literature review. These areas were: agriculture, cohesion policy/ structural funds, competition, environment, health and consumer protection; industrial development, research & development, social policies, telecommunications and water (quantity/quality). We also left a space left to let the regions inform us about other possible areas. These areas were also considered within areas of activity.

-Actors of interest: we want to learn who the specific actors are that the regions contact in Brussels to pursue their interests. We proposed the following actors: civil servants of the European Commission, members of the European Parliament, members of the Council of Ministers; members of the Committee of the Regions; colleagues from (an)other region(s); members of the Permanent representation; members of (an)other network(s). Also, we left space to the regions to point at other actors of relevance to them.

3.3.3. Procedures

Within this variable we want to know better how the relationship between the regions and their representation offices takes place. We considered that this relationship is composed of five procedures: contact, coordination, exchange of information, report and monitor. Next, we are going to talk about of each of them.

-Contact: in a relationship there should be enough contact to discuss issues on the agenda. What we want to know with this sub-variable is how frequent the contact between the regions and their representation offices takes place.

-Coordination: we want to explore how the regions coordinate the activities, that they have to develop, with the representation offices. We considered that the coordination of activities is very important in a relationship, to direct the efforts to the achievement of the same goals.

-Exchange of information: the relationship between these actors demands that the exchange of information will be permanent. Within this sub-variable, we want to learn how the regions exchange information with their representations.

-Report: the representations have specific tasks to develop in Brussels, and the regions need to know the progress that they are making in those matters. Here, we want to see the means that the representation offices use to report the progress of their activities at Brussels to their regions.

-Monitor: to improve the trust in the relationship, the regions need to monitor the development of activities by their representation offices. We want to know the mechanisms that the regions use to monitor the progress of the tasks that have been allocated to the representation offices.

Within these variables and sub-variables we can also see the concepts and the theories mentioned in the previous chapter that let us explore this particular relationship in the universe of the EU. For instance, at this point, we could assume that to develop activities at the EU-level, the representation offices need enough 'resources', whether it is money or staff. Their activities are developed within networks in the multilevel governance of the EU. In the case of the 'agendas', we could think that the representations are going to use lobbying to place their areas of interest in the agendas of different European institutions. The representatives are going to work in those topics within their networks and they are going to be immersed in the multilevel governance of the EU. Finally, we could say about the procedures that they are more related to the concepts of regions and representation offices.

3.4. Conclusion

Within this chapter we described the research methodology that has been used in our exploration of the relationship between the regions and the representation offices. We are going to develop case studies for which two kinds of data were collected: quantitative data by surveys, with the members of the networks Partenalia and Regional Framework Operation RFO "Change on Borders" in a first stage. And in a second stage, qualitative data by interviews to five specific regions: Diputació de Barcelona (SPA), Diputación de Badajoz (SPA), Province of Torino (ITA), Département du Bas Rhin (FRA) and the Province of Gelderland (NL).

We also presented the criteria that have been followed while choosing these regions and the key variables that have been considered for the data collection. Between the criteria we pointed at the elements that a region has: territory, symbols, institutions and identity; possession of a representation office in Brussels, and being regions of different sizes. In the key variables we considered: resources allocated to representation offices (budget, staff), agenda (areas of activity, areas of interest, actors of interest), and procedures (contact, coordination, exchange of information, report, monitor). All these elements are going to allow us to better understand the relationship between the regions and their representation offices. In the following two chapters we are going to analyze the data that was collected according to these methodological indications.

4. Empirical Data

Facts are the air of scientists. Without them you can never fly.

Linus Pauling

In this chapter, we are going to analyze the quantitative and qualitative data that was collected by surveys and interviews, from the members of Partenalia and Change on Borders, as well as the regions of Diputació de Barcelona, Diputación de Badajoz, Province of Torino, Département du Bas Rhin and the Province of Gelderland. Also, we are going to provide more information about these particular regions. Data analysis consists of “examining, categorizing, tabulating, or otherwise recombining the evidence to address the initial propositions of a study.”⁸⁸ Here, we are going to highlight the relevant information that has been collected according to the key variables that we established in the previous chapter: resources allocated to representation offices, agendas and procedures.

We are going to analyze the data obtained in various steps, according to the variables just mentioned. Initially, we are going to analyze the quantitative data obtained by the surveys. Then, we are going to study the qualitative data obtained in the open questions in the surveys and in the interviews with the five cases under study. Through this process, we want to compare and cross-check the consistency of the information obtained at different times by the different strategies: surveys and interviews. This procedure is also known as triangulation. As we mentioned, we are going to start then by analyzing the quantitative data.

4.1. Quantitative data

As we mentioned earlier, the quantitative data was collected by surveys. To process the answers of the surveys, we used the program SPSS (Statistics Package for Social Sciences). In total, we received fourteen answers from the members of the networks Partenalia and RFO Change on Borders.⁸⁹ The total number of regions that we invited to participate in the survey were 50.⁹⁰ The fourteen answers represent 28% of answer rate. With this percentage we cannot make generalizations about the findings. Now, we are going to organize the quantitative data collected in the surveys answered, according to the variables mentioned earlier.

We received in total fourteen answers to our survey from the members of the networks Partenalia and RFO Change on Borders. We cannot make generalizations about the findings, but we received interesting information for our research.

4.1.1. Resources allocated to representation offices

We are going to start by analyzing the resources allocated by the regions to the representation offices.

⁸⁸ Tellis, Winston. Application of a Case Study Methodology. The Qualitative Report, Volume 3, Number 3, September, 1997.

⁸⁹ For a detailed list of the participants in the survey, please check Annex 2: Respondents survey.

⁹⁰ The network Partenalia has 26 members and RFO Change on Border has 25 members. Together they are 51, but due to the fact that the Province of Gelderland is member of both, we just count it one. This is the reason why, we considered the possible participants as 50.

The idea of analyzing these resources is to evaluate if these entities have the resources needed for the development of their daily activities. We started to analyze this variable by checking if the regions under study have a representation office. If so, determining which kind of representation is, as well as when they were established. Then, we explored specific resources: their budget and their available staff. From the 14 responses received, just one of them does not have a representation office.

4.1.1.1. Kind of representation office

Then, we wanted to learn which kind of representation office our respondents have. For the survey we established five kinds: 'Regional authority'; 'Public-private partnership'; 'Shared with (an)other region(s) within own country'; 'Shared with (an)other international region(s)'; and, 'One that uses facilities of other regions in Brussels'. We also offered the alternative to choose for another kind, and we requested to indicate which one. This option was chosen by 6 out of 13 of our respondents.⁹¹ These are the answers that we obtained from the regions: 'Regional Association of Chambers of Commerce'; 'Organization non-lucrative'; 'Association of Co-financiers'; 'Regional Actors' (as cities, chambers, towns, etc.); 'Foundations'; 'Local administration'; and 'Partnership with other regional actors'.

What we can notice from the answers provided by the regions⁹² is that none of them has a representation office that is shared with (an) other international region(s). This point calls our attention because we could see that regions are in networks with other international regions, as the cases of Partenalia and Change on Borders, but they are not together in a representation office with international regions. We could assume that maybe for regions it is easier to work with regions within the same country, because they have more common matters, and their knowledge about the country is the same, for instance the legal framework, etc. Hooghe and Marks said that "the informal networks they form with each other are particularly dense among offices in the same country, so there is a strong national basis to regional interaction."⁹³

In this part we should point to a bias that we mentioned in the previous chapter, where we are just considering those regions for our study that have a representation office. With this decision we are indeed leaving out those regions which do not have a representation office at Brussels, and we do not know the ways that they use to interact in Brussels or within the European institutions. It would be interesting for further studies to get close to these kinds of regions.

4.1.1.2. Beginning activities

Next, we explored when the representation offices started activities at Brussels. From the 13 valid cases just 12 provided a valid answer.⁹⁴ We found that 10 of the representations have begun their activities in the nineties, and just 2 of them began in 2000. This shows us, that the nineties was a

⁹¹ We just considered 13 respondents because one of our 14 respondents does not have a representation office.

⁹² For more detailed answer rate, please check Annex 3: Kind of representation office.

⁹³ Hooghe, Liesbet and Marks, Gary. "Europe with the Regions": Channels of Regional Representation in the European Union. Publius: The Journal of Federalism 26:1 (Winter 1996). P.86.

⁹⁴ For more information about the years of beginning of activities please check Annex 4: Begin of activities.

decade where the regions have begun efforts to participate in Brussels in the decision making process of the EU. From the regions that started in the nineties, 3 belong to France, 3 to Spain, 1 to Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands and Poland. The regions which started in 2000 were both Spanish regions. In our conceptual framework we saw how in the eighties the European Commission started to involve the regions in the development and implementation of programmes like for instance the Structural Funds. We could argue that the opening of these offices in the nineties was an answer of the regions to the signal of the Commission to let them be an active part of the policy-making process.

4.1.1.3. *Budget*⁹⁵

Continuing with the analysis of the resources allocated to the representation offices we checked something of great relevance, the budget. We requested two kind of information about the budget from the regions, one about the total annual budget and the other related to the budget that is destined to the development of activities. First, we want to start talking about the '*total budget*'. When we were processing the information it was very surprising to see the budget of the Province of Torino, because it is just 2.000 Euros. This is an annual fee that the Province pays to the Unioncamere Piedmontese, their representation office in Brussels. When we compare this amount to those that are paid for other regions, this is very small, but what we heard from Mrs. Fassero, due to the benefits obtained, it is worth every penny. We could also draw the conclusion that the good development of the job in Brussels is not just a matter of money.



Besides this fact, we also want to mention that from the regions with representation offices, not all of them provided us with the information about the total budget that is allocated to them. Just 10 regions provided an answer. When we study these amounts we should be very careful, because we should check not just the amount but also the kind of representation that the region has, because in the cases of shared representation office the budget can be higher. In Annex 5, the detailed budget of the representation offices can be consulted.

About the '*budget allocated to the development of activities*' by the representation offices. In this point we also did not have answers from all the regions that completed the survey, we just received 5 valid answers. From that information we could see that the minimum amount allocated for activities is 18.000 Euros and the maximum 60.000 Euros.⁹⁶ These amounts should allow any region to develop activities of quality, with the purpose of promoting the interests of their regions.

2.000 Euros: This is the annual fee that the Province of Torino pays to the Unioncamere Piedmontese, their representation office in Brussels.

⁹⁵ Source image: Icenews. Available on: <http://www.icenews.is/wp-content/uploads/2008/05/euros.jpg> Visited on 18th August, 2008.

⁹⁶ Please check Annex 6: Total budget and budget activities.

4.1.1.4. Staff

Another important resource is the 'staff' that is available. We asked the regions and their representation offices about the people working with them in fulltime and part-time basis. In total we had 10 valid answers.⁹⁷ In the majority of the cases the employees were working only fulltime, and in just one case people were working in both bases. We consider the fact that in the majority of the cases the employees are working full time, to be a clear advantage, because that means that they are available all the time to work in the priority matters for their regions.

At the same time, we studied the '*working time*' of this staff in these organizations.⁹⁸ We found in the same 10 cases that the highest average of people working at the representation offices is of two kinds mainly, "Persons working 5 years and up" and "Persons working less than a year". From the first group we could say that this is good for the representation office and the region because these people can give continuity to their jobs and through the years working there, they know and have experience in Brussels. Checking the second group, we found some cases where the people of this group are interns, who in the future can become a permanent part of the staff of the representation. We think that for regions where the representatives are working less than a year it is a challenge, because they have to learn a lot about Brussels and the regions, getting enough knowledge to develop their activities in an efficient way.

Two cases called our attention where just one person is working at the representation. The first one is a representation office which started activities in 1998 and it has just one employee, who is working there for a period between 1 to 3 years. We did not make a deep exploration of this particular case, but it would be interesting to explore why this particular employee has that short time in the representation. We could create many hypotheses about it. Maybe it would be interesting to study this in future research. The second case is related to a representation office who started activities in 2004 and whose staff is working there for a period between 3 to 5 years, that means that this person has been there since the time that the representation begun activities. This continuity provides benefits to the representation because this person can create their own networks and closely follow the day by day activities at Brussels, and turn this into an advantage to achieve the goals that their regions want to achieve.

The representation of Diputación de Badajoz has one staff who is the one that started the office in 2004.

97 Please check Annex 7: People working and basis, for detailed information.

98 For more information please check Annex 8: Working time.

4.1.2. *Agendas*

Another variable that we considered important for our study was the one related to the agenda. Within this part we want to get information about the areas and actors of interest, as well as the areas where the regions are active. To learn about these areas and actors allows us to know the goals that regions and representation offices want to pursue, the topics that are in their agendas.

4.1.2.1. *Active areas*

To begin with, we are going to explore the *active areas*.⁹⁹ We established four levels of activity. The first level was “*Active only in region*”. In this part we could see that for 8 out of 14 respondents, the most active areas are: agriculture, industrial development, social policies and water. 5 responses pointed at health and consumer protection, research and development and telecommunications. 4 participants are active in this level for cohesion policy/structural funds; 2 respondents are active in other areas different to the ones that we listed; and just one is active in competition only in region.

The second level was “*Active only in the EU*”. The responses in this level were quite low. Just three respondents said that they are only active in the EU with one positive answer for the areas of health and consumer protection, industrial development and social policies.



In the third level, “*Active both in region and the EU*”, the responses showed a lot of activity at these levels. 10 respondents said that cohesion policy/structural funds and environment¹⁰⁰ are areas where they are active. 6 participants said that research and development and water; 5 respondents chose social policies and 4 responses pointed at telecommunications. 3 answers were given to agriculture, competition and others. Here, we asked to mention those other areas and the respondents said that renewable energy, tourism, transport, economic development, education, sports, culture, equity and citizenship. Maybe the regions have particular reasons because

they do not consider these areas inside the list. From our point of view education, sports, culture and equity and citizenship can be inside of the area of social policies because these kinds of efforts are developed to improve the life of the citizens and most of the time that is the main goal of the social policies.

Finally, in the “*Non- active*” level, 9 of the respondents chose competition as an area on which they are not active; 7 participants pointed at health and consumer protection; 4 respondents indicated that they are not active in telecommunications; and 2 answers for the areas of agriculture, industrial development and research and development. We learned that the regions are not active in those areas that they do not have competences for or they are not too strong in.

⁹⁹ For more information, please check Annex 9: Active areas and levels.

¹⁰⁰ Source graphic: Time Inc. Available on; <http://img.timeinc.net/time/2007/environment/images/opener.jpg> Visited on 18th August, 2008.

The area on which the regions that participated in our research are less active is competition, followed by health and consumer protection.

4.1.2.2. Areas of interest

Following, we are going to study the *areas of interest*.¹⁰¹ We could find three kinds of answers according to the level of interest: not important, important and very important. In this part, we are just going to consider the answers provided by the respondents that they considered as "*very important*" and "*important*". If we compare the areas of interest with the level of activity, we could see that the regions are very active in those matters at the level of region and the EU.

Between the areas of interest considered as "*important*", 9 of the respondents pointed at telecommunications; 8 answers to agriculture and health and consumer protection. 7 participants said that industrial development and research and development; 5 answers were for competition, social policies and water. 3 respondents chose cohesion policy/structural funds, and one sees environment as an important area of interest.

In the areas that are "*very important*" for regions, we could find that 13 respondents chose environment as the most important area of interest. 11 participants said that cohesion policy/structural funds. 9 selected water; 8 pointed at social policies; 6 respondents chose industrial development and research and development. 4 participants selected other areas, and they mentioned education, sports, culture and equity and citizenship. 3 respondents said that agriculture and telecommunications, and just one participant said health and consumer protection.

Inside these areas of interest, it was very interesting to see the case of the area of competition. In some areas the differences between '*important*' and '*very important*' for the regions is wide, for instance environment which is '*very important*' to 13 respondents and '*important*' to just 1 participant. In the case of competition, 6 respondents find this area '*not important*', 5 think that it is '*important*' and just 2 said that it is '*very important*'.

The areas of most interest for the regions that participate in our research are environment and cohesion policy/structural funds.

4.1.2.3. Actors of interest

Finally in this part, we wanted to study the *actors of interest* for the regions.¹⁰² We had the same categories as for the areas of interest: not important, important and very important. Here, we are going to analyze all categories. Between the '*not important*' we found that 5 of the respondents chose the

101 For detailed information please check Annex 10: Areas of interest.

102 For more information, please check Annex 11: Actors of interest.

'members of the Council of Ministers'. Maybe this is due to the fact that the lobbyist does not have too much access to influence them. Then, 2 participants pointed at the 'members of the European Parliament' and 1 to the 'members of the Permanent Representation'.

In the category of 'important', 9 respondents indicated the 'members of the Committee of the Regions'. 6 answers were for the 'members of the Council of Ministers', 'colleagues from (an)other region(s)', 'members of the Permanent Representation', and 'member of (an)other network(s)'. 5 participants pointed at 'members of the European Parliament'; 3 to the 'civil servants of European Commission', and one participant indicated that other actors like the Council of European Municipalities and Regions CEMR and the Assembly of European Region AER.

The third category is "*very important*", which is lead by the 'civil servants of the European Commission'¹⁰³ selected by 11 respondents; 8 pointed at the 'member of (an)other network(s)' and 'colleagues from (an)other region(s)'; 6 participants said that the 'members of the European Parliament' were *very important* for them; 5 chose the 'members of the Committee of the Regions'. 2 the 'members of the Council of Ministers', and one respondent indicated other, pointed at Arco Latino.¹⁰⁴



In this part we also find something very interesting, it is the fact that the respondents judged the importance of colleagues of other regions and members of other networks in the same way. For some of them, they are *very important* and for others just *important*. But the point here is to see how the networks are important in the EU, and how the team work is an option that provides benefits to all who participate in it. Also, the Multilevel Governance that characterizes the EU has built many links that connect different bodies, and it has created several access points through which to lobby authorities. The actors just mentioned are such points and the regions are using them to achieve those goals that are in their particular agendas and could provide great benefits to them and the members of their networks.

Besides European institutions, the members of other networks and regions are actors of interest for regions and their representation offices in Brussels.

4.1.3. Procedures

In this part we want to study the last variable that we placed in the methodological part, the procedures. We divided the relationship in the following procedures: contact, coordination, exchange of information, report and monitor. The first four procedures are going to be studied next, the procedure of monitor is

¹⁰³ Picture: Jose Manuel Barroso, president of the European Commission. Source: Kiev Ukraine News Blog. Available on: http://blog.kievukraine.info/uploaded_images/5059-749824.jpg Visited on 18th August, 2008.

¹⁰⁴ For more information about Arco Latino, please visit its website: <http://www.arcolatino.org/en> Visited on 24th July 2008.

going to be observed with the qualitative data, because we established an open question in the survey to let regions explain how they supervise the activities of their representation offices.

4.1.3.1. Contacts

First, we are going to start by studying the “*contact to discuss issues in the agenda*” between the regions and the representations.¹⁰⁵ The answers provided by our respondents gave the following results: 7 respondents have contacts daily; 3 participants do it on weekly basis; 2 choose other, ‘when is required by the Province’ and “once in a while”. One respondent selected twice per month. None of them chose once per month.

We could see within these different answers that the home regions and the representations maintained a permanent contact to discuss issues in their agendas. This is an important element in order to have a relationship that works well and that is effective.

4.1.3.2. Coordination

Second, we wanted to see the means that the regions and the representation offices use “*to coordinate their activities*”.¹⁰⁶ The coordination of activities is very important because it allows regions and representation offices to be in line, working to achieve the same goals.

The response that takes the pole-position here is ‘meetings at Brussels’, an option that was selected by 10 respondents. Second place are the ‘meetings at home region’ with 9 responses. ‘Other ways’ were chosen by 4 participants and they specified them as emails and telephone calls. 3 respondents chose teleconferences; and none of them chose the option of the virtual forum. Within these answers, we could see that the traditional means are used for the coordination of activities. By traditional means we mean the meetings and the telephone calls. Emailing will be discussed next. But those means like the ‘virtual forum’ are not used by these regions and their representation offices, and this specific resource can also provide the opportunity to discuss certain topics and coordinate their actions. Also, a virtual forum can reduce the costs that ‘traditional’ means often imply.

4.1.3.3. Exchange of information

Third, we wanted to know how the “*exchange of information*” between the actors is conducted.¹⁰⁷ The respondents chose ‘reports’ and ‘visits of officials of the representation to the region’ with 9 answers; 8 participants pointed at ‘other ways’, like emails and seminars. 6 respondents selected ‘newsletter’ and ‘events’; and 5 preferred the ‘website’.

¹⁰⁵ For more information, please check the contents of Annex 12: Contact to discuss.

¹⁰⁶ For more information please check Annex 13: Coordination of Activities.

¹⁰⁷ For more information please check Annex 14: Exchange of information.

We could see how the means to exchange information are diverse. Continuing a little bit in the same line of what we just mentioned in the previous part, here we could see that new means are indeed used. For instance, we could learn that the 'website' is an option that is very common nowadays. What can we say about the emails? We cannot deny that they are becoming a helpful tool in the world, because they are easy to use and they allow having records of information of relevance. Through emails, the information can be spread and shared in a fast and efficient way. The regions and their representations are using these new technologies to improve their relationship.

4.1.3.4. Report

Also, we want to know how representation offices "report" the progress of their activities in Brussels.¹⁰⁸ For 12 respondents 'email'¹⁰⁹ is the most common means for reporting. 7 of the answers selected are for the 'newsletter'; 5 participants chose 'other ways', like for instance the use of a website and yearly reports. 3 answers were for monthly reports and just one for weekly reports.



We consider the 'weekly report' not to be a common practice to report the progress of the activities by the representation offices, because sometimes the time in Brussels goes slower than in the regions. The representatives need to make calls and appointments to contact people in other regions and/or networks, as well as officials of the EU. These processes could take a couple of days or weeks and it makes no sense to report small things with no relevance. We think that in these cases emails are the better option, because when the officials obtain important achievements they could report them to the regions immediately. It is not needed to wait too long to let the regions know the good news.

4.2. Qualitative data

We should start this part by mentioning that the qualitative data can provide more detailed information for our research. This methodology lets us explore some relevant topics in depth. As mentioned earlier, we started to use qualitative data in the surveys, where we included some open questions. In those questions we want that the regions inform us about the mechanisms that they use to monitor the progress of the tasks of the representation offices; and an example of successful lobbying and the results that were achieved with that. We also used this kind of data, to develop interviews with the five regions.

4.2.1. Monitoring

First, we are going to analyze the answers that the members of the networks gave to the question about the mechanisms to 'monitor' the progress of the representation's activities. The answers were

108 For more information please check Annex 15: Report.

109 Source image: AIESEC. Available on: www.uvsc.edu/email/images/email-at1.gif Visited on 19th August, 2008.

basically pointed at two strategies, one by reports and the second by meetings. We are going to start to talk about the reports. The reports that are mentioned in the surveys are yearly, and they are prepared by the representative official, and sent to the authorities in the home region.

The meetings are a very common practice. Various regions mentioned different kinds of meetings that are developed with this purpose. We could find 'bilateral' and 'multilateral' coordination meetings. These kinds of meetings were presented by regions that have a representation office that is shared by several actors. The bilateral meetings take place when a particular region wants to talk about specific matters with the officials and the multilateral meetings when more partners or all the members want to discuss matters with the representatives. An example is the meeting that the Département du Bas-Rhin and the Département du Haut-Rhin holds every three years, where the partners who share their representation office at Brussels, get together to evaluate the development of activities by the representation.

Another kind of meeting are the 'monthly' meetings. Diputació de Barcelona broadly described this type for us during our interview. The purpose of these meetings is "to make that the people in Brussels keep in touch with the day by day life of the region."¹¹⁰ These meetings are very important to make the main actors get together. These meetings are held every 3 to 4 weeks in Brussels or in Barcelona. For these meetings 2 or 3 persons from a directive team¹¹¹ check the topics of the Annual Action Plan (Plan de Acción Anual), and discuss it. Diputació de Barcelona also has meetings 'twice per year', where all members of the Department of Foreign Affairs make an evaluation of what has been done. This meeting has a duration of approximately 4 hours and they can be used to make the planning for the coming year.

With the purpose of studying the relationship between regions and their representation offices, we divided it in five procedures: contact, coordination, exchange of information, report and monitor.

4.2.2. Successful lobbying

From the answers provided in the surveys, we could see how the regions had good experiences with their representation offices in the lobby area. We want to mention some examples of successful lobbying. One of those examples was provided by Lubelskie Voivodeship, about building partnerships with strategic regions in order to submit high quality projects. The Province of Torino mentioned the organization of an information day at the European Parliament where they presented the biotechnology district of Torino. Another example is provided by Département du Bas Rhin. They organized an international seminar on "Violence and EU". In which they discussed policies for young people in their region. The Council of Europe in Strasbourg built a network with universities, workers and international institutions in the topic. The Département looked for partners and within the network they wrote a

¹¹⁰ Words of Mrs. Blanca Soler

¹¹¹ Diputació de Barcelona has a Direction of Foreign Affairs which has three main offices: Office of European Cooperation (Oficina de Cooperación con Europa), Office of Cooperation for Development (Oficina de Cooperación para el Desarrollo) and Office of Municipal Diplomacy (Oficina de Diplomacia Municipal). These three offices are considered as the directive teams that we just mentioned.

message looking for a leader for the programme. It was a very efficient way to have contact with other regions and to develop an interesting initiative. We could see how the regions are obtaining benefits from the EU, thanks to the activities developed by their representation offices. If these offices were not there, maybe the chances to succeed for the regions would be diminished.

4.2.3. Regions under study

Through the interviews we have the chance to collect diverse information from the regions and their representation offices. Now, we want to present the main information that was collected in the interviews with the five regions under study. The order on which the regions are posted is the same one as the order in which the interviews have been conducted. The transcripts of the interviews are available in their original languages at Annex 16 to 20.

As we mentioned earlier we invited five regions to participate in our interviews. These regions were selected according to the criteria that we mentioned extensively in the previous chapter, and that we are going to summarize briefly. The regions should have a representation office at Brussels, it does not matter which kind. The regions should possess a determined territory; they should have symbols, specific institutions and identity. Also, they should have different sizes, for which we use the measure NUTS with the purpose of determining to which size they belong. They could be small, medium or large. Most of the regions under study belong to the 'Blue Banana' and the "Sun-belt", based on economical structures that can be identified through Europe.

These regions belong to four different countries not too remote from each other, where the procedures and the way to do things are nevertheless diverse. There are some specific features that make these regions well-known in the world. For example, *Badajoz* is recognized for the adventurous spirit of its citizens. Many of the explorers who set out to conquer the New World were from Badajoz, like for instance Hernán Cortés, Vasco Nuñez de Balboa and Hernando de Soto.¹¹² *Barcelona* is associated with the sublime works of Antoni Gaudí, Park Güell and the church of Sagrada Familia. *Bas du Rhin* has Strasbourg where several European institutions have their base, like for instance the Council of Europe, and EU institutions such as the European Parliament and the European Ombudsman. *Gelderland* has the famous Veluwe, a beautiful green area, which is a wonderful place to spend quiet holidays. *Torino* is considered to be the 'Automobile Capital' and is the home of the famous company Fiat. We are going to start our study with Diputación de Badajoz.

These regions under study belong to four different countries not too remote from each other, where the procedures and the way to do things are nevertheless diverse.

¹¹² Eurocities. Guide to Badajoz. Available on: <http://www.euroresidentes.com/euroresiuk/guides-spain/guide-to-badajoz.htm> Visited on July 30th 2008

4.2.3.1. Diputación de Badajoz



Diputación de Badajoz¹¹³ is the largest province of Spain. It is located in the autonomous community of Extremadura, in the western part of the country. It shares borders with “the provinces of Cáceres, Toledo, Ciudad Real, Córdoba, Sevilla, and Huelva, and by Portugal.”¹¹⁴

Having an interview with the contact person in the home region and the representative at Brussels at the same time was very interesting. It was an opportunity to know simultaneously, both sides of story. The representation office in Brussels represents Diputación de Badajoz, Diputación de Cáceres and Federación de Municipios y Provincias de Extremadura (Federation of Municipalities and Provinces of Extremadura).



For the “communication” between the representation office and the regions they use the communication tool ‘Skype’ and emails. Skype is a software that allows users to make calls by internet to a fixed line or to another computer, as well as instant messaging and videoconferencing.¹¹⁵ With Skype the Diputación de Cáceres and the representation are connected twenty four hours a day, which also allows them to exchange information. They leave messages to each other with questions, answers and comments. Within the representation and the Diputación de Badajoz there is an exchange of emails everyday, because at Badajoz they are not allowed to use programmes such as Skype.

For the “coordination of activities” the representative visits the regions every two months and they have a meeting with the contact persons in Cáceres, Badajoz and Merida. They also exchange emails and have telephone conferences for this purpose.

The representation provides an annual “report” with the progress of their activities. The regions check it and, if needed, they send emails to the official to remind him to work on matters that are very important to them. The regions do not have a “control” session to supervise or evaluate the progress of activities of representation office. They just read the report that the representative send.

We asked about which feature they considered to be innovative in their representation office, and the contact person said “the fact that Manuel (Mr. Manuel Mendigutia, representative at Brussels) is in

113 Source map and shield: Wikipedia. Available on: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Provincia_de_Badajoz Visited on May 20th 2008.

114 Ibidem.

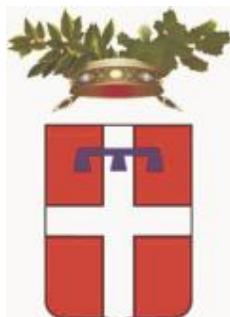
115 For more information, please check the website of Skype: <http://www.skype.com> Visited on July 12th, 2008.

Brussels because we could have chosen to send him to Madrid.”¹¹⁶

We requested them to point at some issues in their relationship, and they pointed at two facts. The first one is the distance, because they are far from Brussels; and the second, that the representative is alone and he does not have somebody to discuss things with. “Sometimes Manuel comments on things that for him are important but for us they are not. We are in different dynamics.”¹¹⁷ The representative said that “in cases where I cannot contact the region to discuss a specific topic, I contact other deputations to talk about it, like Diputació de Barcelona, because in Brussels there are topics that are more urgent day by day.”¹¹⁸

Finally, when we asked Mr. Mendigutia about the benefits for the regions of having a representation office, he said that besides keeping them posted about what happened in Brussels, it makes the Deputations take a common position about topics in the regional and European levels.¹¹⁹

“Sometimes Manuel comments on things that for him are important but for us they are not. We are in different dynamics.” (Jose Luis Albaran, contact person Diputación de Badajoz)



4.2.3.2. Province of Torino

The Province of Torino¹²⁰ is located in the region of Piedmont, one of the 20 regions of Italy. It is situated in the northern part of Italy. Its capital Torino is becoming a knowledge city and society. “The keystone for completing this transformation is the investment in human resources and innovation, and valourisation of the patrimony of local competences in order to adapt them to the new global context.”¹²¹

The Province of Torino is associated with Unioncamere Piedmont which is the regional association of Chambers of Commerce and represents this province and the other actors of this region in Brussels. The Unioncamere Piedmont has 33 partners¹²². This representation office developed activities to draw attention to the region, organizing seminars and conventions, promoting the cultural and industrial qualities of the region.



116 Words of Mr. Jose Luis Albaran, contact person Diputación de Badajoz

117 Ibidem

118 Words of Mr. Manuel Mendigutia, representative Diputación de Badajoz

119 For more information please check Annex 16: Transcript Diputación de Badajoz, where the complete interview is available in Spanish.

120 Source map and shield: Wikipedia. Available on: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Province_of_Turin Visited on May 20th 2008.

121 Comunian, Roberta. Urban branding and contemporary art 'Torino Contemporanea' as a model of cultural marketing. Regions: the voice of the membership No.268. Winter 2007. P.15.

122 Unioncamere Piemonte. Available at www: http://www.pie.camcom.it/EN/Page/t04/view_html?idp=32 Visited on 12 July

As we mentioned earlier, Torino pays an annual fee to the representation office. Mrs. Fassero manifested that the Province is satisfied with the job of this representation, because when they need any kind of information they provide them with it in an efficient way. It is considered to be as 'one stop shop', where the Province can find the right information for the development of their specific European projects.

We asked if they have a monitoring system to evaluate the job developed by the representation, and Mrs. Fassero said that they do not have one, because they think it is not needed.¹²³

The representation office of Province of Torino is considered to be a 'one stop shop', where the Province can find the right information for the development of their specific European projects.

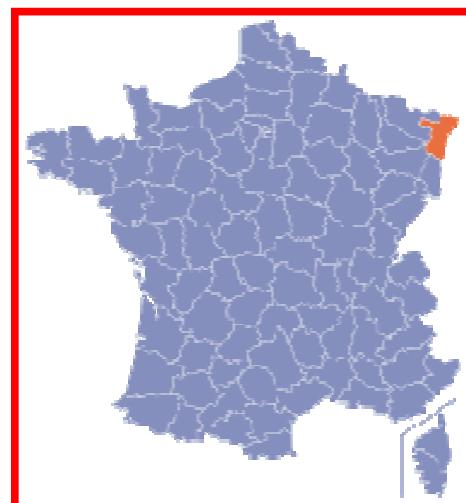


4.2.3.3. *Département du Bas Rhin*

Département du Bas Rhin¹²⁴ is located in the eastern part of France. "To the north of Bas-Rhin lies the Palatinate forest in the German Land of Rhineland-Palatinate, and the Land of Baden-Württemberg lies to the east. To the south lies Haut-Rhin, the town of Colmar and southern Alsace, and to the west the Département of Moselle in Lorraine."¹²⁵ Bas du Rhin is one of the original département created during the French Revolution.

When we started our interview Mr. Philippe Fischer clarified that the Département du Bas Rhin is not considered to be as a region. It is a local authority between the region and the districts. They have a budget of 1.200.000.000 Euros and they have 3.603 employees.

This Département shares the representation office with eight other regional actors. The benefits of the representation office for them are to share expertise with diverse partners such as provinces, main cities, chamber of industry, etc. Also, to coordinate EU policies and complement activities is also listed as a huge advantage. For the Département, the way the representation office is organized is fine.



Every two months they have meetings with all departments and check the opportunities at the EU level.

123 For more information please check Annex 17: Transcript Province of Torino, for the complete interview in English.

124 Source and shield: Wikipedia. Available on: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bas-Rhin> Visited on June 25th 2008.

125 Ibidem.

This kind of meeting works very well when EU action needs to be coordinated at the local level. The experts can explore what is happening in their domains at the EU¹²⁶.

Département du Bas Rhin has a total annual budget of 1.200.000.000 Euros and it has 3.603 employees.



4.2.3.4. *Diputació de Barcelona*

Diputació de Barcelona¹²⁷ is one of the fifty provinces in which Spain is divided. It is located in the autonomous community of Catalonia in the eastern part of the country. "It is bordered by the provinces of Tarragona, Lleida, and Girona, and by the Mediterranean Sea."¹²⁸

We had the opportunity to talk with Mrs. Blanca Soler, who is the representative of Diputació de Barcelona in Brussels. She told us that when the representative official has important information for the Diputació, s/he must report to the Director of the Department of Foreign Affairs or the Director of the Office for European Cooperation, and s/he would send the information to the specialist to do what is needed with that information.



Mrs. Soler pointed to the fact that there is quite some job that is done in Brussels and that it is difficult to show. She was mainly referring to calls, letters, attendance to meetings, etc. The representation compiles an annual report with the main activities developed. The representation office and the Diputació have a shared database where all the activities and actions developed are collected on a daily basis. Each month it can be seen what exactly the representation office has been done. This system can be used by several users at the same time and they have shared folders.

Also, Mrs. Soler commented that the representatives at Brussels, in general, not just for the Diputació de Barcelona, needs specialization in certain topics of the EU due to its complexity, and there are many topics, and nobody could know everything about all areas.

Finally, the official said that her representation office should have more personnel because with more

126 For more information please check Annex 18: Transcript Département du Bas Rhin, for the complete interview in English.

127 Source map and shield: Wikipedia. Available on: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barcelona_%28province%29 Visited on 7th August, 2008.

128 Ibidem.

people working the representatives could achieve more success at the EU level, doing their job, namely lobbying¹²⁹.

The representation office and the Diputació de Barcelona have a shared database where all the activities and actions developed are collected on a daily basis.



4.2.3.5. Province of Gelderland

The Province of Gelderland¹³⁰ is located in the central eastern part of the Netherlands. It is the largest province of the twelve that form the country. The Province is in charge of the Queen's Commissioner (Commissaris van de Koningin), and it has 56 municipalities, which are lead by the Mayor (Burgemeester).

Gelderland shares its representation office with other regions in the same country, at the House of Dutch Provinces. We had the opportunity to observe the meetings that the home region had with their representation officials Mr. Hein Cannegieter¹³¹ and Mr. Rob van Eijkeren¹³². In those meetings we saw how the discussions take place and the agreements are established. The coordinator of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Doede Sijtsma, prepares an agenda with the topics of relevance. The topics are discussed and Mr. Sijtsma takes notes about the agreements and the dates for that. In the meeting diverse people of the Department participate and colleagues of other departments are invited if they are needed, for example programme managers.

The Province develops an annual plan where all the areas that are important for them are established. This plan is based on the Work Programme of the European Commission for the following year, which is used to plan the priorities for the next period. For example, Gelderland, as well as the rest of the Dutch provinces and the Interprovinciaal Overleg IPO,¹³³ used the Programme of the Commission for 2008 that was released on 23rd October 2007 to select the priorities for 2008.



129 For more information please check Annex 19: Transcript Diputació de Barcelona, where the complete interview is available in Spanish.

130 Source map and shield: Wikipedia. Available on: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gelderland> Visited on April 10th 2008.

131 Mr. Hein Cannegieter worked until the 1st of July 2008 as representative official for the Provinces of Gelderland and Overijssel. Currently he is retired.

132 Right now, Mr. Rob van Eijkeren is the coordinator of the House of the Dutch Province.

133 IPO. The twelve provinces of the Netherlands are part of this cooperation organization, which aim is to optimize the conditions under which the provinces work. For more information, please check the website. Available in Dutch: http://www.ipo.nl/21-Dit_is_het_IPO.html Visited on 24th July 2008.

The Province organizes the priorities in several groups, and they describe the aims and the working area in charge of them. In each of these topics they indicated the way how they are going to be assessed. For instance, in this part Gelderland specifies if certain topic is priority for the national authorities, if it does not have a relation to the priorities of the Province, if it is indeed a priority for them, or indicate for which area or actor it is a priority. The information of this plan is available in the network, where everybody has access to it; making the access to the information for the different departments easy which on the other hand enables them to know their tasks.

There are two kinds of communications that are relevant for our study: 'Prioritaire Europese dossiers' (Priority European Topics)¹³⁴ and 'Eindrapportage prioritaire Europese dossiers' (Final Report of Priority European Topics)¹³⁵. We are briefly going to describe both of them. We are going to start with the 'priority European topics'. This communication is reported by Doede Sijtsma, who made a brief explanation of the three categories of topics. The first one are the common topics, those that are of relevance for Gelderland and the other provinces. The second are the priority topics that are very important to the Province. The third one are those topics that had been or need to be monitored. On some of these topics no actions have been taken, or they needed to be lobbied in order to obtain some results. In this communication a list with summaries about these topics is presented, as well as the main activities that related to them have been developed.

The second form of communication is the 'Final report of priority European topics', which is reported by the representative official in Brussels. He presented a lot of the topics that have been assessed by them. Then, they discussed the topics that are important for Gelderland, and which they also treat as priorities. They provided the results in their activities one by one. Starting with the state of the topic at the beginning of the year; the interest of the Province and the lobby target; activities developed; and the results for the 31st of December of the year of the report.

Sometimes, the representation officials received questions from Gelderland from diverse departments. Mr. Cannegieter said that "sometimes the questions from the departments are good, sometimes they are bad, some do not know what Brussels can and cannot do." The officials also received the information from Brussels and they give it to the Provinces of Gelderland and Overijssel. The regions need to make decision about that information, and to do so, they need experts. "If the regions decide it, we make appointments with representatives of the European Commission or the European Parliament to discuss that"¹³⁶.

We asked about the successes that the Provinces have been collecting in Brussels. Mr. Cannegieter mentioned various. The first one is a legislative proposal to the European Commission to allow the Provinces of Gelderland and Overijssel to directly provide subsidies to innovative enterprises within a

134 Own translation.

135 Own translation.

136 Words of Mr. Hein Cannegieter.

specific ruling. "This initiative saves a lot of paper work and the Commission can use us, as a good example, and the Provinces should keep the good work."¹³⁷ The Province of Gelderland also obtained a big success in the tourist area where they received 10 million euro for the area of Veluwe.¹³⁸ The representation office is working to obtain more funds for this area in the next shift.

Another example is in the field of environment, where their point of view survived against the one of the central government of the Netherlands. Mr. Cannegieter said that "people are looking at us because we have a good name in influencing policy at Brussels." He told us that the Dutch Minister of Internal Affairs, Mrs. Guusje ter Horst, went to the House of Dutch Provinces to have a meeting with its members to discuss how they are doing it.

For Mr. Cannegieter, the relationship with the Province of Gelderland is going to improve with the creation of the 'Lobby Desk'. The tasks of this office are going to be the screening of the information that the office at Brussels provides and to look into the departments of the Province for that information. He considered that if the 'Lobby Desk' works well, the way Gelderland handles information from Brussels will be improved a lot. He added, "Now you are depending on the enthusiasm of certain people, and in some departments there are people who are very enthusiastic, who really look into it, and do something with it, if it fits into their policy. In other departments it is not like that. It can be improved with a central desk"¹³⁹.

The representative officials ask experts from the region to go to Brussels for a couple of months, with the purpose of exploring in detail how the policies in her/his field at the European Commission and the European Parliament are like. Currently there is an employee of the Province of Gelderland of the Department of Planning who is preparing a 'Green book', that is going to be issued in September. "When this book is issued, we are going to be ahead of many provinces and regions in our knowledge about what the consequences of this 'Green book' will be"¹⁴⁰.

In the previous chapter we pointed to the possibility of having a bias because we do not talk to the contact person and the representative at Brussels for all the regions under study. What we can say is that the interviews with all participants were very interesting. But those interviews where we talked to both persons gave us a broader picture, and also we could produce an image where both people are on the scene. This was indeed a bias.

Gelderland shares its representation office with other regions in the same country at the House of Dutch Provinces.

¹³⁷ Ibidem

¹³⁸ More information about Veluwe, please check <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Veluwe>

¹³⁹ Words of Mr. Hein Cannegieter.

¹⁴⁰ Ibidem. For more information please check Annex 20: Transcript Province of Gelderland, for the complete interview in English.

4.3. Conclusions

Through this chapter we could see how all the pieces of information that look separate, get together. Within the first part of this chapter we analyzed the information collected in 14 surveys answered by the members of the networks Partenalia and Change on Borders. We learned about the different kinds of representation offices in which the participants are situated. Regions have a representation that suits their needs better. We found high activity in the opening of representation offices in the nineties. Also, we noticed that the regions provided the necessary resources to the representation offices for the development of their daily activities. Those resources can be called money, people, etc. We found interesting cases where the regions allocated small amounts of money to the representations but they are having optimal results. In the same way, we noticed regions that do not have many employees but they are having a good development of activities. These facts let us conclude that the money and the number of staff are not relevant. What matters is the attitude of the staff to achieve their goals and their knowledge of the EU and the right channels to achieve more benefits for their regions.

We have seen in this chapter that the agendas of the regions are diverse, but they are still having a general interest in the areas of environment and cohesion policy/structural funds. The actors of relevance at the EU level for the regions are still the civil servants of the European Commission and the colleagues of other regions and networks. Regions discovered that the teamwork provides common benefits and the processes and activities are developed in an easy way. The examples of successful lobbying provided for some regions are proof of this.

The processes that we pointed at as part of the relationship between the regions and their representation offices let us draw conclusions about how this relationship is developed. We noticed that in some areas the new technologies like the emails are being implemented, and in some others, the so-called 'traditional' means are still in use. For instance, the meetings in the regions or in Brussels.

In the second part of this chapter, we presented the main information collected in the interviews with the five regions under study. We presented maps with the location of the regions within their countries, as well as their representative shields. We wanted to show the shields of the regions to prove one of the characteristics mentioned by Anssi Paasi referring to the common elements of the regions. These shields are part of their symbols. Within the interviews we had the opportunity of exploring some findings collected in the surveys in-depth. Also we had the chance to connect specific examples with the information provided by the answers of the surveys.

In the following chapter we are going to put together the main findings of this chapter with the theoretical framework.

5. Theoretical reflections

Science is a way of thinking much more than it is a body of knowledge.

Carl Sagan

The elaboration of this chapter was very challenging because we made a combination of the theoretical framework with our main findings, presented in the previous chapter. In the first part we are going to check the main actors that we looked at initially, the regions and the representation offices. Then, we are going to highlight the findings that are related to the theories of multilevel governance, where we are going to talk about the European institutions, networks and lobbying. We are going to relate these concepts and theories with the key variables of our study: resources, agendas and procedures. To begin with, we are going to revise the concept of regions.

5.1. Regions

First, we are going to revise the concept of regions. For the purpose of this research and based on the definitions provided by different authors, we considered regions as those space units that are the result of the combination of four elements: territory, symbols, institutions and identity. In the theoretical framework we established the regions and the representation offices as the main actors of the relationship under study. When we were analyzing the data collected, we found that most of the representation offices of our study started activities at Brussels in the nineties. The theory told us that since the eighties, the European Commission involved regions in the development and implementation of the structural funds programmes. From this fact we could infer that the representation offices have begun their activities in that decade as an answer of the regions in general to the opportunity to participate more actively in the policy-making process of the EU.

In the theoretical framework and in the concept that we established about regions, we mentioned four elements as introduced by Anssi Paasi. These elements are: territory, symbols, institutions and identity. When we checked the possession of all these elements in the regions under study we could easily identify their existence. For instance, in the maps presented in the previous chapter we could see in the case of Spain, just to mention one specific example, the provincial divisions. The fifty areas shaped are the territories where the regions are located. So within these maps we could recognize the territory. In the previous chapter we also showed the regional shields, which are proof that these regions have symbols. When we visit the websites of any of the five regions under study we could see their organizational structure, where specific functions are assigned to specific bodies. All these elements get together to provide an identity to the citizens of that particular region.

When we were revising the concept of region, we also studied the regional interests. We have seen that regions have different kinds of interests like, for instance, political and economical interests. They make demands for specific topics that are relevant for them and the members of their networks. In our

surveys we provided a list of general areas to the regions which are of interest for them. From the fourteen answers provided by the participant regions in our research, we could see that the most important areas were the fields of environment and cohesion policy/structural funds. Environment is an important area due to its relevance for all regions around the world. This field covers relevant matters like resource management and issues like global warming, etc. The preference for the second topic, cohesion policy/structural funds, was not a surprise because it had been an important objective for the regions in Brussels for a long time. These funds are also very important because they provide resources to poor regions and for the improvement of infrastructures. This is the kind of extra support that regions need from the EU in order to provide better conditions for their nationals.

About other kinds of interests besides the general areas that we proposed, the regions pointed at education, sports, culture and equity and citizenship. We could see that the interests of the regions are not only of political and economical nature. The theory also showed us other kinds of regional interests like the public and the private. Public interests are those whose benefits serve the society as a whole. We consider that the benefits the regions want to achieve through their representation offices are mainly of this type, because they want to provide better options for their citizens. An example of the regional public interest is provided by Département du Bas Rhin. They organized an international seminar on "Violence and EU", with the purpose of discussing policies for young people in their region. The Council of Europe in Strasbourg reacted by building a network with universities, workers and international institutions on this topic. Bas Rhin looked for partners and within this network, they wrote a message looking for a leader for the programme. This was an effective way to establish contact with other regions and to develop an interesting initiative that provides benefits to many.

Related to the other kind of regional interests, private interests, we could say that they were not too common in our study, because they want to obtain benefits for their immediate members only. Regions are not isolated; they are part of a country, a bigger region or a network. The private interests are directed to achieve interests for particular enterprises or sectors, but regional interests are more general. In the answers provided by our respondents just one out of fourteen has a representation office public-private partnership, where both kinds of interests are combined.

We have seen that the regions have been consolidated as an important actor in the EU, participating actively in the policy-making process of the EU. This active participation can be recognized since the eighties, but we should not forget that since the sixties some regional groups have started to make demands to the European authorities. Also we have seen that regions have many different kinds of interests: political, economical, social, public, private. Now, to continue with our theoretical reflections, we want to analyze the main ideas and findings about the representation offices discussed in the theory.

The regions have been consolidated as an important actor in the EU, participating actively in the policy-making process of the EU.

5.2. Representation offices

As representation offices we considered those agencies which represent and promote regional interests in Brussels. In the theoretical framework we distinguished five specific tasks of the representation offices. These tasks can be easily identified in the information provided by the regions and their representation offices in our research.

1. The first task is '*information gathering*'. We could notice this feature in the activities of the Diputació de Barcelona. The Diputació's representation gets relevant information from and for the local level, with the purpose of making it part of the policy making process. This representation informs the region about what the EU is doing for them, and at the same time informs the EU know on what the region think about it.
2. The second function is '*networking*'. The representatives at Brussels have a unique opportunity of being closer to the most remote region in Europe. Also, the fact of being in Brussels opens up the chance of establishing links with different regions and actors to the regions, and in that way their networks grow. Related to this point we have the example provided by Lubelskie Voivodeship. They said that the fact of being in Brussels allows them to build partnerships with strategic regions in order to submit high quality projects. Lubelskie looks for support to do a good job and they share the success with those who support them.
3. The third activity is as '*liaison between the region and the EU*'. We could see this feature through the daily activities developed day by day by the lobbyists in Brussels. The representatives collect relevant information in Brussels and share it with their regions. The information is chosen thanks to the ability of the lobbyist to monitor and identify areas that are interesting for their regions. The regions need to process that information and make decisions, about what they can do with it. After decisions are taken at the regional level, the representatives can make appointments with the adequate officials of the EU to have discussions. In addition, the representatives can provide reliable information and help the EU institutions to make the right decisions, considering all points of view, and getting very close to what is happening in the real world. Proof of that is the fact that the EU is sometimes contacting the regions through their representation to discuss specific matters on which the regions have broader knowledge than the technical officials of the European institutions who develop different regulations.
4. The fourth task that had been mentioned in the theoretical framework is to '*influence EU policy*'.

In the example provided by Diputació de Barcelona about the initiative 'Urban', we could identify this feature. This initiative was directed to improve and recover public spaces located in big European cities, like London, Malmo, Copenhagen, Madrid, Prague, etc. The representation of Barcelona worked closely with the representation of Brussels-Capital Region to request from the European Commission the extension of the allocation of structural funds to this initiative 'Urban'. With that idea in mind they added efforts to prepare the documentation and held discussions with members of the Directorate of Regional Policy, members of Eurocities and other networks that were working on the same topic. At the end of this active process the initiative was considered again in favor of the urban areas in the regulation of the structural funds. It was included in the new planning period 2007-1013.

5. The last function is '*regional marketing*'. The Province of Torino mentioned that through their representation office Unioncamere Piedmontese an information day at the European Parliament was organized. The activities of this info day were directed at the promotion of the biotechnology district of Torino.

It has been very interesting to see how we could easily recognize these tasks in the representation offices. This fact proves that the representations in our study, in one or the other way, accomplished the functions for what they were created. Within our survey, we have also seen, that the representation offices are of different kinds like regional authority, public-private partnership, shared with (an)other region(s) within their own country, etc. From seeing the different tasks that these offices have, we could infer that this diversity is maybe due to the fact that certain offices are emphasizing some of these activities more than others.

The fact of being at Brussels opens the chance to the regions of establishing links with different regions and actors, and it that way their networks grow.

Now, we want to relate the concepts of regions and representation offices with the key variables of the present study.

Regions and Representation Offices in relation with the variables under study

In the chapter of the research methodology we established three key variables: resources, agendas and procedures. All of them have a relationship with the concepts of regions and representation office.

1. With the first variable, '*resources*', we wanted to determine if it is a condition for the successful development of activities in the representation offices. The main resources considered were: beginning of activities, kind of representation office, budget and staff. In the previous paragraph, we indicated that the '*kind of representation offices*' is diverse according to the needs and

preferences of the regions. With regards to the 'beginning of activities'¹⁴¹ we found in our study that 10 out of 12 respondents have begun their activities in Brussels in the nineties. From this we could infer that this is an answer of the regions to the opportunity that the European Commission provides them with to participate in the policy-making process.

When we talk about the '*budget*', we started with the assumption that this element is very important for the representation because it needs the economical means to afford things like an office, pay the basic services and salaries, organize activities, participate in events, trainings, seminars, trips, etc. Regions should provide these kinds of resources.

As with regards to '*staff*', we explored both the type of employment (part-time or full-time) as well as the duration of their employment. We found that most of the representatives are 'working full time'. We consider this fact to be beneficial to the continuity and the ability to pursue their tasks in Brussels. At the same time, the networks that the officials have built are permanent, and they could make use of them in a favorable way. We have seen that most of the officials are 'working for more than 5 years' and this fact provides them with the opportunity of knowing well which doors they should knock on to achieve specific matters within the EU and their networks.

Resources, budget and staff are important for the development of activities of the representation offices. The representatives have specific tasks but they need resources in order to achieve them. If the resources are provided sufficiently the representations are going to develop their daily work efficiently. With enough resources, especially with regards to staff, situations like the ones described for some officials are going to be avoided. For instance, a representative, who is the only staff at the Brussels office, manifested that sometimes he feels alone to discuss certain topics and take decisions. But he tried to solve these issues by contacting members of other networks to discuss the problems. Another official told us that sometimes they have to do a lot of administrative work, which takes valuable hours from their lobby time. The development of this kind of work removes efficiency from their main tasks in Brussels. These kinds of situations can be avoided by providing more staff for the representations.

2. With the variable '*agendas*' we wanted to know the main areas and actors of interest for the regions and their representations. In this chapter we have been discussed the main areas of interests for the regions that participate in our research. We just need to mention the actors that are relevant for the regions, and we are going to do that later in this chapter, when we talk about the European institutions that are part of the multilevel governance.

¹⁴¹ For more information, please check Annex 4: Begin of activities

About the areas of interest that are on the agendas of the regions, we would like to add a fact provided by a region under study. The representative mentioned that what sometimes is important for the representation is not as important for the regions. It is due to the fact that occasionally the regions are in different dynamics compared to the representation, because in Brussels there are different priorities that change on a daily basis, which are completely different to what is happening in the home region.

3. Now, we should talk about another variable that is related to the concepts of region and representation offices: the '**procedures**'. The idea behind this variable was to better understand how the relationship between the regions and their representation offices evolves. If we want to do that, we should observe the procedures that are involved in it. For our study, we have established five procedures that are part of this relationship: contact, coordination, exchange of information, report and monitor.

Concerning '*contact*', throughout our study we have seen that the contact between regions and representation is permanent, as it has to be. In our interviews we explored the contacts between the actors to discuss issues on their agendas. We found that different means are used for these contacts; one means that was innovative from our point of view was Skype, because this software provides a different form of interaction to the communications.

Related to '*coordination*', we have seen that Huyseune and Jans said that the effective operation of the representation depends on the way in which they and the home region are able to coordinate their activities. So this procedure is very important. We found that these actors use what we call '*traditional ways*' to coordinate their activities. By traditional we mean: meetings and telephone calls. Maybe the incorporation of new technologies can make this procedure more effective and reduce the costs that for instance are accumulated by the meetings of representatives in the home regions, and the regional authorities in the representation offices.

About the '*exchange of information*', we have found that for this purpose different ways are followed. For instance, reports, visits to the regions and/or representation, and emails. The point that we want to highlight here is that the actors are indeed exchanging information. This is one of the tasks of the representation offices that the theory told us (information gathering). We found in the case of some regions that they simply contact the representation offices to obtain specific information, and depending on whether they received it back on time, these regions considered the job done by the representation as effective and perfect. In the introduction of this research we defined effectiveness as the work that can provide the desired result. We could see in the testimonies of these particular regions that their representations are being effective in this exchange of information.

With regards to the '*report*' of the progress of activities by the representation offices, we found that this is mainly done by email and newsletters. We consider this element also to be of some relevance, because for the regions it is very important to know the status of the topics on the agenda. We thought the way in which a representation can report its work back to the home region was very interesting. It is a database used by Diputació de Barcelona to report all the activities that are developed day by day in Brussels. Just by pressing a button a complete report of the main activities developed by the representation and their progress can be obtained. The use of this kind of tool provides transparency to the activities that the representation develops and improves the trust and good communication between the actors involved in this relationship.

Finally, about the '*monitor*' of the progress on the tasks allocated to the representations, we found that this is done mainly by reports and meetings. We have seen that these two means can be diverse. For instance, the reports can be monthly, semiannual or annual. The meetings can be bilateral, multilateral, and so on. From these two means, we consider that the meetings provide more benefits to the relationship between regions and the representation offices, because it is a better way to explore the progress of the activities in more depth. Besides that, the actors have the opportunity to explain things broadly.

We have seen that the combination between the concepts of region and representation office with the variables of our study (resources, agendas and procedures) help us to identify specific features for each of them; as well, as characteristics that are common to both and are relevant in the relationship between them. These concepts and the variables are not separated from the theories of multilevel governance, network and lobbying, because like we are going to see next, these actors are immersed in a universe, the EU, where their interactions are ruled by these theories.

We found in our study that 10 out of 12 respondents have begun their activities in Brussels in the nineties.

5.3. Multilevel Governance

Now, we are going to talk again about the theories that are of relevance for this study: Multilevel Governance, networks, and lobbying. We are going to discuss them with facts that we found in our research. As we mentioned in the theoretical framework, Multilevel Governance is a special feature of the EU. We defined MLG as the political system of the EU where the decisions are taken by different actors at different levels whereby none of these actors has supremacy over the others. The power is distributed between the different levels through the principle of subsidiarity. This fact makes that in some areas the regions become leaders, due to their experiences or the will to promote this particular

area within the EU. As we have seen previously in the case of the initiative 'Urban' promoted by the Diputació de Barcelona and Brussels-Capital Region, and the Département du Bas Rhin with the international seminar "Violence and EU".

MLG in the EU has three main features, according to Marks, Hooghe and Black. The first one is the 'competences of decision making. What we saw within our study was that there are some regions with and without competences. The Province of Torino has competences only at the provincial level¹⁴² but in some fields they participate in EU projects, like agriculture, environment, industrial development, social policies and water. The Diputació de Barcelona does not have competences at the EU level, but the Comunidad Autónoma de Catalunya (Autonomous Community of Catalonia), where it is located, has some competences at the EU level.

The second feature is 'collective decision-making'. This characteristic enables the regions to be active and available to participate in particular or joint initiatives in the decision-making process at the national and EU levels. Sometimes the regions can support the initiatives of their own countries, and depending of the topic and the interests, they could support regions in other countries to reach a particular interest. The Province of Gelderland provided us with an example: They have an initiative in the environmental field that was different from the point of view of their country. The initiative of Gelderland was considered at the EU level, over the initiative of the national government. So, this proves that in the decision-making process all the ideas are considered, and the ones that are better for the whole community are the ones that survive.

The third feature of MLG are the 'political arenas'. The structure of the EU makes that different arenas are connected, because within the policy process of the EU, none of its parts are isolated. The decisions are taken after having taken into consideration a combination of the work done at different levels. It is not the 'old traditional' government structure where the decisions are taken top-down. The connection of the different levels of the EU allows that different actors at different levels participate actively in the process. We can see this complex participation better in the following paragraphs, where we will discuss the activities of the EU institutions.

5.3.1. European institutions

Now, we want to talk about the EU institutions which are relevant actors for the regions and their representatives in Brussels. In the surveys we established a question where we asked about the actors of interest to the regions and their representations. We listed seven actors and we gave the opportunity to point at other organizations, with the purpose of getting to know these other actors better. The actors that we listed were institutions like the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers, the Committee of the Regions, Permanent representation and we also provided the option to choose colleagues from other regions and networks.

¹⁴² Source: Mrs. Claudia Fassero, contact person at the Province of Torino.

In the answers of our survey we found that the institution that is most frequently contacted is the European Commission. Thanks to the theory we know that the Commission is an important channel through which representations operate, and the regions contact different Directorate Generals, according to their particular interests. Within the European institutions that were considered as 'very important', the second position was taken by the European Parliament, which is another institution that is contacted by the regions to promote specific themes. 5 out 14 respondents pointed at the Committee of the Regions which is maybe due to their advisory role, providing information to the regions that are not too familiar with the EU and its procedures. The last European body that was pointed at in this category was the Council of Ministers, and this fact can be due to being an institution close to the influence of lobbyists. The answers of our respondents introduced other institutional actors like the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and the Assembly of European Region (AER).

From our research we could also infer that not just the institutional actors are relevant for the regions and the representations. We could see that the members of other networks and regions are taking on an important role, because team work in the EU provides better benefits which can also be spread between more parties. Next, we are going to continue the revision of the theories with the networks.

The connection of the different levels of the EU allows that different actors at different levels participate actively in the process.

5.4. Networks

We defined policy networks as the interactions of different actors that share the same kinds of interest in specific areas and which designate resources to achieve them. We learned that the networks work closely to pursue common interests. As examples we have the networks Partenalia and RFO Change on Borders, where regions of different countries get together to work in common topics. Also, they provide support for them, like for instance, when they have seminars or trainings. Within these networks some members who are strong in certain areas can share their experiences and provide reliable information to other members.

In the theoretical framework, Hooghe and Marks presented three kinds of networks: those created by the Commission for a specific community program, self-directed mobilization of regions with common features and policy problems; and self-organization of successful regions. During our field work, in the interview with the representative of Diputació de Barcelona, we have learned that the networks can be of two more kinds: formal and informal. Formal are those that are formally established, they have a legal framework, they have a specific plan of action and specific members. Meanwhile the informal networks do not have such stringent structures. They are networks that every representative creates; they do not have a legal framework, or specific agreements of collaboration, just the common interest of

cooperating in specific topics. The regions are involved in these kinds of networks through their representatives or on their own, and they use them to pursue their particular interests. Now, we are going to study the last theory that was considered in our study, lobbying.

The regions are involved in different kinds of networks through their representatives or on their own, and they use them to pursue their particular interests.

5.5. Lobbying

We considered lobbying as a process where information is exchanged with the purpose of making good decisions. The purpose of lobbying is to exchange information with the decision-makers to enable them to make the right decisions. The representation officials are in Brussels for several reasons. For instance, they are there to follow what the EU authorities are doing in the areas of relevance for them. Also, as needed, they take advantage of the proximity to important actors in order to place their topics on their agenda, namely those topics that are important for their regions. Besides, the representatives also provide valid and reliable information to the EU institutions which helps them to take the right decisions.

Van Schendelen created the "Game of Triple P: persons, positions, procedures". Within our field work we had the opportunity of recognize these features. The author said about '*persons*', that they should be friendly. We could say that the representatives that participated in our study and those who we had the chance to interact with have this characteristic. We also observed that they were easy going; they knew how to express their point of view clearly, and in discussions they liked to reach an agreement. They do not leave pieces loose. In the debates at the meeting of Partenalia at Barcelona, we had the opportunity of see these features clearly.

About '*positions*', we could say that these people are in the right place: Brussels; because although some of the regions had the opportunity to send their representatives to other places, they still chose Brussels. The contact person of Diputación de Badajoz said that they intentionally decided to send their representative to Brussels and not to Madrid although that would have also been an option for them.

Finally, about '*procedures*', we can say that the representatives know which buttons to press in Brussels, because they know which member, in which EU institution, at what time, they should contact to discuss a specific topic on the agenda. Also, as needed, the officials can contact members of other regions or networks with whom they share interests, to try to get close to an EU institution together. A clear example is one expressed by the representative of Diputación de Badajoz. He said that sometimes he contacts members of their network to discuss specific matters, and make some ideas clear. In that way, the official could know if that specific matter is of relevance for his own region, and he could provide answers to the demands that are made by some European institutions, like the

European Commission.

Related to lobbying are also the 'classification of lobbying strategies of Guéguen'. They can be: negative, reactive and proactive. In the examples provided by the regions and their representation offices in our study we could find these three kinds. First, the 'negative strategies', which, for instance, oppose the proposals of the Commission, we could find in the case of Province of Gelderland with regards to one environmental field. In this area the point of view of Gelderland is very different than that of the Commission. What the Province is trying to do is to come to a compromise with the central government, and in that way, they both can push the people in Brussels onto the right path together, to achieve their particular interest. Second, 'reactive strategies', in which prudence is very important, we were able to identify another example in the Gelderland case. Last term they obtained 10 million euro for a project in the touristic field, and they are waiting for the next term to apply for more money for other purposes in the same field. We could see that they have an interest but they are waiting for the right time to satisfy it. Finally, for 'proactive strategies' we have one more example from Gelderland. They make a proposal to the Commission about a ruling that says that not every subsidy that the Province gave to an innovative enterprise has to be notified by the European Commission. This ruling saves a lot of paperwork. This is important for the Province because the Commission can use them as an example of something that is working very well, and that enables Gelderland to keep up the good work within this ruling, and promote some other initiatives.

With regards to lobbying we also mentioned the four strategic capacities to succeed by Coen: the ability to identify specific policy goals, develop relationships and a good name; understand the policy process and institutional access, and look for allies and alliances. We considered that all these strategic capacities can be found in the example that we mentioned earlier about 'one environmental field in Gelderland'. The Province knows the specific goals that they want to pursue, they do not share some ideas with the national government but they looked for a different way to achieve them, by working at the EU level. They could do that because they know the policy process at the EU. They looked for allies and they also made a good name for themselves. The representative Mr. Cannegieter said:

"You can see that people are looking at us, because we have a quite good name in influencing policy at Brussels. At this very moment the Minister of Internal Affairs of the Netherlands, Guusje ter Horst, is now in the House of Dutch Provinces in Brussels, having a discussion with the representatives about how we are doing it... She wants to know how we are working, what we are doing, how we can have some successes. It is very nice from her to come along and see how we can help each other because we are both working for the civilians here in Gelderland and the Netherlands¹⁴³."

In the section where we talked about lobbying, we also commented on the success principles that we can appreciate in general in the regions under study. In the working paper of the European Parliament

¹⁴³ Words of Mr. Hein Cannegieter. More information available in the Annex 20: Transcript Province of Gelderland. Available in English.

“Lobbying in the European Union: Current Rules and Practices” they pointed at some principles that lobbyists should follow if they want to succeed. That paper mentioned features like having an own network, to be proactive, knowing the audience, anticipate the thinking of the Commission, etc. We have seen that the regions and their representatives are very active and that they are doing an efficient job in general. We could say that these principles are well observed. What the representatives have to do at Brussels, they are already doing it.

Van Schendelen created the “Game of Triple P: persons, positions, procedures”. Within our field work we had the opportunity of recognize these features.

5.6. Conclusion

The elaboration of this chapter was very challenging and interesting, because we had the opportunity to see different facts that have theoretical basis. Throughout we have seen the facts and that the theory is based on something real. The theory is not abstract. It was a little bit challenging to identify specific theories within the facts but we think we managed well. We started studying the concepts of region and representation office. From the regions we have seen that since the eighties they started to have a more active role at the EU level, and the different kinds of interests that they have. Most of the representation offices in the regions under study have opened for business in Brussels in the nineties.

We pointed at the representation offices' main tasks, and we identified them clearly in the examples provided by the regions in our study. We used the variables 'resources, agendas and procedures' to analyze the relationship between these two actors. We revised the theory of multilevel governance, a special feature of the EU, and we checked some of the EU institutions that participate in it. These institutions are also the main actors of interest for the regions and their representations, and thanks to our study we noticed some other institutional actors like the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and the Assembly of European Region (AER). Then, we checked the theory of network. We learned that there are more kinds of networks, formal and informal ones. Finally, we re-studied the theory of lobbying, where some particular features where discussed.

It was very interesting that the regions and the representation offices that participated in this research provided us with new information that went much further than the ones that we obtained in books and articles. This was presented in the theoretical framework. They enriched our work. These theoretical reflections let us see the facts from the theory perspective. We could see the relevance of some observations and identify some particular information that was in the data collected, that maybe we did not consider to be relevant at first sight. But from the theoretical perspective it was important.

6. CONCLUSION

An expert is a man who has made all the mistakes which can be made in a very narrow field.

Niels Bohr

6.1. Summary of the main argument

The revision of concepts and theories of regions, representation offices, multilevel governance, networks and lobbying showed us how the structure of the EU implied many changes for traditional policy-making systems. It also implied that some actors changed their positions and occupied new places. This is the case of the regions, which have an active and important role in the EU. They have different kinds of interest and they are in competition with other regions to obtain all the benefits that the EU provides. Regions to be considered as such should have four elements: territory, symbols, institutions and identity. They opened representation offices in Brussels with the purpose of obtaining and exchanging relevant information with EU institutions and other actors. The representations have five specific tasks: information gathering, networking, liaison between the region and the EU, influencing EU policy and regional marketing. The way how the regions, their representation offices and the European institutions interact is what the theory calls a policy network. In a policy network, the relationship is non-hierarchical and interdependent, inter-linking different levels and actors.

Within MLG, a special feature of the EU, there are some European institutions which are more open to the participation of the regions and their representatives than others, like the European Commission and the European Parliament. Others, however, are not so open to external influences such as the Council of Ministers. We have seen how lobbying became an important tool for the interaction of the regions at the regional, national and EU levels, because they are not isolated. When regions work with partners they can get more benefits. Many studies have been developed in lobbying, but there are some general features that can be found in the lobbyists, the people that developed this kind of activities.

The research methodology that has been used in our exploration of the relationship between the regions and the representation offices was case studies. We collected two kinds of data: quantitative and qualitative data. The collection of these data was done in two stages. First by surveys, with the members of the networks Partenalia and Regional Framework Operation RFO "Change on Borders". We received fourteen answers. In a second stage we conducted interviews with five specific regions: Diputació de Barcelona (SPA), Diputación de Badajoz (SPA), Province of Torino (ITA), Département du Bas Rhin (FRA) and the Province of Gelderland (NL). We also presented the criteria that were considered to be useful when studying these regions. The regions should have the four elements mentioned earlier, in order to be considered a region. Also, they should have a representation office, although it does not matter which kind. The regions should be of different sizes, and to determine the sizes we used the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics NUTS as reference. Ex-post we added another criteria, namely that the regions are part of European economic growth areas. We pointed at

the 'Blue Banana' and the 'Sun-belt', that we explained in the methodological chapter. Four of the regions under study belong to these structures.

Within the methodology we also presented the key variables that were considered for the data collection: resources allocated to the representation offices, agendas and procedures. These variables were spread in sub-variables. Each variable has a goal. For instance the resources allocated to the representation offices want to determine if it is a condition for the development of activities of the representation offices. The variable agendas want to know the main areas and actors of interest for the regions and the representations in Brussels. Finally, the procedures let us understand better how the relationship between these actors evolves. All these variables and sub-variables let us explore the relationship between the regions and the representation offices in detail, which was the main purpose of this research.

Here, we should say that the fact that the regions under study should have a representation office was a bias because with this decision we left out those regions which do not have a representation office at Brussels, and we do not know the means that they use to interact at the European level. It would be interesting for further studies to learn how these kinds of regions represent their interest at this level. About the sizes of the regions under study, we discovered that this condition is not relevant, because for instance the Diputación de Badajoz is a small region, and it has one single representative at Brussels; on the other hand, Diputació de Barcelona, which is a big region, has just two representatives. Both of them are developing activities in an efficient way. It does not mean that because the regions are small, medium or big, they have more representatives or they achieve more successes than other regions. What is important is that the regions and their representations know well how the EU works and they accomplish their main tasks in Brussels in an appropriate way.

In the chapter of Empirical Data, we analyzed the data collected from the answers provided by the participants in the surveys and interviews. Their answers let us make conclusions about the way how the relationship between regions and relationship works. We guided our analysis with the variables previously mentioned, and their sub-variables, that explored specific features of the relationship under study. Then, we elaborated a chapter of Theoretical Reflections, where we linked the main findings of the data collected with the theoretical framework. Its elaboration was challenging and interesting, because it was an exercise that demanded a deep analysis. All these parts together provided us with the tools to answer the central question and the sub-questions that we established at the beginning of the present research. Next, we are going to provide answers to them.

6.2. Understanding the relationship

With the purpose of exploring and better understanding the relationship between regions and representation offices we established research questions where we wanted to know specific matters.

Within these questions we looked for the specific actors in this relationship, the main goals that they want to pursue, how the communication process between them is and if they are institutionally embedded. About the '*main actors*', we should say that at the beginning of the research, we wanted to explore which other actors are involved in this relationship, besides the regions and the representations. In the interviews we had the opportunity of exploring this matter; we asked regions about their organizational structure to have the opportunity to identify other actors. What we have seen is that in each region the structures are different, and these particular structures are not relevant for our study. So, we think that the main actors that should be considered in this relationship are the regions, in general, and the representation offices. We also learned that in the real world the regions can have different names like Diputación, Département or Province. These territorial units have specific departments that are in charge of the international and/or European affairs

Besides the differences within the structures, there is a common fact between the regions which is the development of a plan where the interests or specific tasks in Brussels are established. This fact introduced us to the feature '*main goals*' of these actors. The results of our analysis pointed at the fields of Cohesion Policy/Structural Funds and Environment, as the most interesting areas for the regions. They are very active in those matters at the regional level and the EU. We learned that regions want to obtain benefits in the areas in which they are strong. The representation offices should make the right contacts within the EU and their networks with the purpose of obtaining benefits in their regional strong areas.

In order to understand the '*communication process*' between the regions and their representation offices we established five specific procedures within our key variables that are involved in this relationship: contact, coordination, exchange of information, report and monitor. We could say after having studied these procedures that these actors have permanent '*contact*' to discuss the issues on the agenda; they '*coordinate*' their activities and '*exchange information*' by several means like telephone, emails, reports, visits to the regions, etc. To show the work that they have been developing, the representations '*report*' the progress of their activities in Brussels and the regions '*monitor*' these progresses. The establishment of these five procedures is an innovative element of the present research because we found several researches studying what the representations are doing in Brussels, but we did not find studies about the relationship between the regions and their representations. These procedures help us to better understand the relationship and achieve our aim of exploring it in more depth.

We could see that the regions and the representation offices are dependent, because the regions cannot obtain as many benefits in the EU without the support of a representation office. The representation offices have specific tasks that are dictated directly from the home region. These are the reasons why these actors are institutionally embedded. In general, we could say that in the relationship between the regions and the representations there is a communication process where information is

transmitted about the main areas of interest for the regions and what is happening in Brussels.

6.3. Best practices

In the methodological chapter we defined best practices as those particular actions that are developed by some regions and representation offices that make the development of the daily activities smooth, and that can be easily implemented by others to improve their relationship. In the information collected we could highlight the following practices.

1. The Database used by the Diputació de Barcelona. This database is shared by the representation office and the Department of Foreign Affairs at the home region. In this database all activities and actions developed are collected daily. Each month it can be seen what exactly the representation office has done. This system can be used by several users at the same time and the users have shared folders. With the use of this resource the regions can see exactly what the representation is doing, and with this, the transparency and the level of trust increases.
2. Another practice that we considered very interesting is the use of the communication software 'Skype'. It allows users to make calls by internet to a fixed line or to another computer, as well as instant messaging and videoconferencing. With this specific kind of software, the representative of the Diputación de Badajoz is connected with the region twenty four hours a day. They can exchange information by this means as well. Sometimes they left messages to each other, with questions, answers and comments. The use of a communication resource like this provides different ways of interaction as it is a tool that has diverse options. The users can choose the most convenient to their needs and preferences.
3. The following practice is not yet working, but it is going to start soon: the 'Lobby Desk'. It is going to be implemented by the Province of Gelderland. The tasks of this office are going to be the screening of the information that the office in Brussels provided and to look into the departments of the Province for that information. If this resource works well, the way how the Province of Gelderland handles information from Brussels will improve very much.

6.4. Strategies to strength the relationship

With the present research we also want to provide possible solutions or strategies to keep the regions and their representation offices working in line. During the interviews some regions pointed at some issues. Therefore, to provide a solution based on the findings of the present research, and on what we have seen during our internship, we want to propose the following.

1. Related to the idea of the database of Diputació de Barcelona, we would like to propose the development of an "*interactive tool*" that allows regions to be kept updated about what is

happening in Brussels. The idea is that this tool can be checked everyday. This tool should have a database that allows regions to know precisely what their representatives are doing in Brussels. Also, it would be a good option that this tool has different forms of interaction, like for instance instant messaging, calls and videoconferences, to have discussions on real time. This tool will improve the communication between regions and representations. The implementation of such a tool can also reduce costs, because some meetings at the home region or in Brussels could be replaced with these kinds of interaction methods.

2. We want to suggest "*field visits by the representative officials*". The idea is that the representatives spend some time at the home regions, knowing the sites and the processes where relevant initiatives are taking place. In that way, they could get to know better the main activities of their region and they could promote them in a better way within the EU institutions and/or with strategic partners in Brussels.
3. We would like to propose the "*centralization of contacts*" from the region to the representation office in one single person. The idea behind this initiative is that this particular person in the home region works as an exclusive channel of communication with the representation office. This person would be the one the representation should contact in case of doubts or when in need of support in specific matters. The incorporation of this particular task would be positive for the region because all the relevant information that is produced there would be sent to this person, and in that way, the information is centralized. At the same time, it is positive for the representations because they could have somebody to contact any time, to check and discuss topics that require fast actions. Like we mentioned within our research, there are different priorities in the day by day activities in Brussels and the representatives should have support by the regions all the time in order to make strategic moves within the institutions and the networks.
4. We consider it to be important to provide "*more administrative staff*" to the representation offices, based on demand. This way, the officials do not have to spend their time and expertise in matters that are not related to their tasks in Brussels.
5. Finally, we think that due to the diversity and complexity of areas at the EU level, the regions should allocate "*more experts in specific areas*" to their representations. The idea is to have personnel with a broad knowledge in certain areas, and in that way the regions can develop interesting proposals and explore the possibilities of those areas in the region and at the EU level. That way, more successes can be achieved in those complex areas.

We hope that these proposals can suit the needs of some regions that have some weak features in their relationship with their representations. We consider that some of these options can fill the gaps

that potentially exist in particular relationships.

6.5. Effectiveness of the relationship

At the beginning of the present study we defined the term 'effective' as the work that can provide the desired results. Thanks to the key variables of this study: resources allocated to representation offices, agendas and procedures, especially report and monitor, in combination with the concepts and theories of the theoretical framework we know how the work is developed at the home region and in Brussels. We know, that the regions developed a plan, generally on annual basis, where the goals for a specific period are established. Also, the specific tasks of the representation offices are determined. The representation becomes the eyes, ears and mouth of the regions in Brussels, and collects all the relevant information that could provide high benefits for their regions. So, we could claim that the representations are developing effective work methods in Brussels, but what can we say about their relationship with the regions?

To study the relationship between regions and representations within the variable procedures, we divided it into five procedures: contact, coordination, exchange of information, report and monitor. We have seen within this research that the actors are following all these steps. For instance, the contacts between them are frequent, as they should be. They use meetings, calls and emails to coordinate their activities. They exchange information by reports, emails or visits of the officials to the region. The emails are also used for the progress report on their activities; and the regions monitor the progress of the representations by reports and meetings. The fact that regions and representations are following these procedures shows us that they are having working in line. Thus, we could affirm that the relationship between regions and representations is effective, because it is providing the desired results, and they are working closely to pursue their specific goals in Brussels, providing benefits to their home regions.

6.6. Formative evaluation

As we mentioned in our methodology, we want to develop a "formative evaluation" throughout our research. We chose this kind of evaluation because it adjusted very well to the study of the relationship between the regions and their representations. We could identify strengths and weaknesses of this relationship, according to our findings within the regions that participated in our research, and we can provide recommendations for improvements. The strong areas of the relationship are pointed at in the part of the best practices. As we mentioned, these best practices can be easily implemented by regions to improve their relationship.

About the weaknesses, we should say that we presented them in a positive way in part 6.4. where we proposed strategies to strengthen the relationship. Those proposals were based on the findings that we

considered to be weak. These weaknesses are not causing strong damages to the relationship, they are just aspects that need to be improved for the development of an effective relationship between regions and representation offices.

6.7. Limitations

Before we finish, we want to point at the limitations that we found in the development of the present study.

1. The first one is that we have a low rate of answers to our survey, due to the summer break, and this fact prohibits that we make generalizations about our findings.
2. Second, we only had a short period of time to carry out the interviews with some of the regions and we could not get all the information that we wanted. For future studies, it would be better to have more time and being in a quiet place where all the conditions are provided to explore certain topics in depth.
3. Third, all the actors who answered our interviews belong to the network of Partenalia. Maybe this fact can add some tendencies in the answers collected, for instance about the areas and actors of interest, etc.
4. Fourth, we had problems with the use of the word 'region', because the political organizations within Europe are diverse, and in some countries there are formal regions, that are referred to as such, and in others they are not present, but due to the role that they play in the national arena, they are considered to be regions. In the presentation that we made about our research in the meeting of Partenalia at Barcelona, some Spanish people manifested that they had problems with the use of the word "region". From their point of view, a region is bigger than their area (Diputación). They said that if we wanted them to provide us with information in the survey for their 'regions', or what is meant by region in their opinion, they would have to do complicated research to find the answer. Thus, we should be careful about the use of this word, or explain more what we mean by it. Within our research we pointed at the four elements that a region should have as described by Anssi Paasi. We think that considering these elements allows us to call all those space units that have a territory, symbols, institutions and identity a region.

6.8. Final remarks

The development of this research provided us with the opportunity to learn more about some specific topics of the EU. We explored the regions and their representation offices, with the support of theories that gave us a different point of view to get close to these actors. It was very nice to see all that we had been reading in several books and articles in real life, and to have the opportunity of identifying specific

features. An example of such a feature is the 'Game of Triple P: persons-positions-procedures' described by Van Schendelen, where we recognized one by one each of these characteristics in the representatives. At the beginning of the research we expected to find terrible things, like for instance dark secrets that were to be revealed to us. But to our joy, we found that the relationship between regions and representations is working fine, and we could see that they are in line, they are in the same game. Of course, there are some areas that have to be improved by some regions, but they are minor changes, easy to correct, and they can continue the good performance in their relationship.

During the elaboration of the present study, the researcher had the opportunity to learn new and useful things. For instance, the opportunity of having an internship place at the Province of Gelderland, gave me the chance to see how a governmental agency works in the Netherlands. Also, I have seen what their interaction within the EU and at the regional level is like. It was a great opportunity to make use of my mother tongue, Spanish, and second languages, English and Dutch. The field work took me to Barcelona, where I had the chance of interacting in a multinational environment. I had contact with representatives of several regions and some of their representatives in Brussels. I could listen vivo-voce to their experiences in the field of our study, the relationship between the regions and the representations.

At the beginning of this experience I only had basic knowledge about the EU, its institutions, MLG and networks. But I cannot say the same about regional topics and lobbying. The demands of the research made me go more into depth in those topics as well as in those presented in the theoretical framework. Now, I think that I have a broader knowledge of regional matters. I consider this to be an area in which I would like to continue working, learning new things everyday.

In the present research that is now coming to an end, not everything has been said about the relationship between the regions and the representation offices, but we hope that our research contributes to its study. The relationship can be improved with new ideas for further research. Also, it will be interesting for future research to explore those regions which do not have a representation office, in order to establish how they work at the European level. We hope that the information provided in this study can help to solve any kind of issues that some regions could be having in their relationship with their representation offices.

Everyone is a genius at least once a year. The real geniuses simply have their bright ideas closer together.
Georg C. Lichtenberg

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Annex 1: Model Survey

EN

Arnhem, May 20th, 2008

To the members of Partenalia

Dear friends,

What happens in Brussels is relevant to regions in Europe. For that reason many regions have representation offices in Brussels. But how to organize the relation between your representation and your region? How to make full use of the eyes, ears and mouth of your region in Brussels? Within the Partenalia network we would like to discuss this theme later this year.

To prepare this discussion we asked the University Twente to set up a small research project on this. But no research is possible without input from the regional level and therefore we would like to request the support of your organization.

Attached you will find a survey which aim is to get relevant information about how the regions and their representation offices relate. We think that we can learn from each other, but the result of this study will be better and more beneficial to all of us if many of you would participate. To fill in the survey will cost you no more than probably ten minutes. The deadline to submit the small survey is **31st of May**.

If you have doubts or require more information about this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you in advance for the support that you could give us on this matter. Obviously, we will keep you informed about the results of the study. We will send you the final report as soon as it has been finished. We look forward to hearing from you!

With kind regards,

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Survey

I. General information

1. What is the official name of your region?

2. a. Does your organization have a specific department or coordinator to deal with EU matters?

YES _____
NO _____

b. Do you have a specialist in EU matters in various departments of your organization?

YES _____
NO _____

3. In which areas and on which level does your region have an active role?

Areas	Active only in region	Active only in the EU	Active both region and the EU	Non- active
-Agriculture				
-Cohesion policy/ Structural Funds				
-Competition				
-Environment				
-Health and consumer protection				
-Industrial development				
-Research & Development				
-Social Policies				
-Telecommunications				
-Water (quantity/quality)				
-Others. Please specify				

4. What are the main areas of interest for your region in Brussels?

Areas	Not important	Important	Very important
-Agriculture			
-Cohesion policy/ Structural Funds			
-Competition			
-Environment			
-Health and consumer protection			
-Industrial development			
-Research & Development			
-Social Policies			
-Telecommunications			
-Water (quantity/quality)			
-Others. Please specify			

5. Who are the main actors of interest for your region in Brussels?

Actors	Not important	Important	Very important
-Civil servants European Commission			
-Members European Parliament			
-Members Council of Ministers			
-Members of the Committee of the Regions			
-Colleagues from (an)other region(s)			
-Members of Permanent representation			
-Members of (an)other network(s)			
-Other organizations. Please specify			

II. Representation office

Here, we want to collect information about your representation office at Brussels.

1. Do you have any kind of representation office in Brussels?

YES _____
NO _____

2. Which kind of representation office do you have?

Kind of representation	
-Regional authority	
-Public-private partnership	
-Shared with (an)other region(s) within own country	
-Shared with (an)other international region(s)	
-One that uses facilities of other regions in Brussels	
-Other. Please specify	

3. When did your representation office begin activities at Brussels?

4. What is the annual budget allocated to your representation office?

- Total budget _____ euros
- How much is allocated for activities the office will have to organize? _____ euros

5. How many people are currently working at your representation office?

- How many persons work full time? _____
- How many persons work part-time? _____

6. From the people currently working at your representation office, how many persons are working on the following basis?

Period of time	Number of persons
-more than 5 years	
-3 to 5 years	
-1 to 3 years	
-less than a year	

7. How often does your organization have *contact* with your representation office to discuss issues on the agenda?

Frequency	
-Daily (3-4 times per week)	
-Weekly (1-2 times per week)	
-Twice per month	
-Once per month	
-Other. Please specify	

8. How does your organization *coordinate* activities with the representation office?

Means	
-Meetings at the home region	
-Meetings at Brussels	
-Tele conference	
-Video conference	
-Virtual forum	
-Other ways. Please specify	

9. How does your organization *exchange* information with the representation office?

Means	
-Newsletter	
-Website	
-Reports	
-Events	
-Visits of officials of representation to the region	
-Other ways. Please specify	

10. How does your representation office *report* the progress of their activities at Brussels?

Means	
-Email	
-Newsletter	
-Weekly report	
-Monthly report	
-Other ways. Please specify	

11. How does your organization *monitor* the progress of the tasks of the representation office?

12. Please mention one example of successful lobbying in Brussels and the way the result was achieved.

If you provide us your email address, we could send you a copy of the final report of this research.

Thank you for your cooperation!

-END-

Annex 2: Respondent's survey

Region	Country
Région Bruxelles-Capitale	Belgium
Conseil Général du Var	France
Conseil Général Val-de-Marne	France
Département du Bas-Rhin	France
Département du Haut-Rhin	France
Provincia di Torino	Italy
Province Gelderland	Netherlands
Lubelskie Voivodeship	Poland
Comunidad Foral de Navarra	Spain
Diputación de Alicante	Spain
Diputació de Barcelona	Spain
Diputación de Badajoz	Spain
Diputación de Ourense	Spain
Diputación de Sevilla	Spain

Annex 3: Kinds representation office

Kind of representation	Answers
-Regional authority	4
-Public-private partnership	1
-Shared with (an)other region(s) within own country	1
-Shared with (an)other international region(s)	0
-One that uses facilities of other regions in Brussels	1
-Other.	6

Annex 4: Begin of activities

Begin activities	Number of cases	Regions
1990	2	Département du Bas-Rhin
		Département du Haut-Rhin
1994	3	Région Bruxelles-Capitale
		Conseil Général Val-de-Marne
		Province Gelderland
1995	2	Comunidad Foral de Navarra
		Diputación de Alicante
1996	1	Provincia di Torino
1998	2	Diputació de Barcelona
		Lubelskie Voivodeship
2003	1	Diputación de Ourense
2005	1	Diputación de Badajoz
NA	2	Conseil Général du Var
		Diputación de Sevilla
Total	14	

Annex 5: Budget Representation Offices

	Total budget RO	Budget activities RO	Region
1	88,400.00	50,000.00	Diputació de Barcelona
2	2,000.00	.	Provincia di Torino
3	26,542.50	.	Diputación de Ourense
4	397,000.00	18,000.00	Département du Haut-Rhin
5	397,000.00	18,000.00	Département du Bas-Rhin
6	608,800.00	.	Conseil Général Val-de-Marne
7	150,000.00	.	Province Gelderland
8	120,000.00	60,000.00	Diputación de Badajoz

	Total budget RO	Budget activities RO	Region
9	36,000.00		Lubelskie Voivodeship
10	224,362.00	47,050.00	Comunidad Foral de Navarra
Total	10	5	

Annex 6: Total budget y Budget activities

	N	Minimum	Maximum
Budget activities RO	5	18,000.00	60,000.00
Total budget RO	10	2,000.00	608,800.00

Annex 7: People working and basis

	Persons working fulltime	Persons working part-time	Region
1	3	0	Diputació de Barcelona
2	4	0	Provincia di Torino
3	5	0	Departemen du Haut-Rhin
4	5	0	Departemen du Bas-Rhin
5	7	0	Région Bruxelles-Capitale
6	5	0	Conseil Général Val-de-Marne
7	2	0	Province Gelderland
8	1	0	Diputación de Badajoz
9	1	0	Lubelskie Voivodeship
10	3	3	Comunidad Foral de Navarra
Total	10	10	

Annex 8: Working time

	Region	Persons working 5 years and up	Persons working 3 to 5 years	Persons working 1 to 3 years	Persons working less a year
1	Diputació de Barcelona	1	0	1	1
2	Provincia di Torino	2	0	0	2
3	Departemen du Haut-Rhin	0	1	1	3
4	Departemen du Bas-Rhin	0	1	3	1
5	Région Bruxelles-Capitale	4	2	0	1
6	Conseil Général Val-de-Marne	4	0	1	0
7	Province Gelderland	2	0	0	0
8	Diputación de Badajoz	0	1	0	0
9	Lubelskie Voivodeship	0	0	1	0
10	Comunidad Foral de Navarra	2	0	0	4
	Total	15	5	7	12
	%	38.46	12.82	17.94	30.76

Annex 9: Active areas and levels

Areas	Active only in region	Active only in the EU	Active both in region and the EU	Non-active	No answer	Total
-Agriculture	8	0	3	2	1	14
-Cohesion policy/ Structural Funds	4	0	10	0	0	14
-Competition	1	0	3	9	1	14
-Environment	4	0	10	0	0	14
-Health and consumer protection	5	1	1	7	0	14
-Industrial development	8	1	2	2	1	14
-Research & Development	5	1	6	2	1	14
-Social Policies	8	1	5	0	0	14
-Telecommunications	5	0	4	4	1	14
-Water (quantity/quality)	8	0	6	0	0	14
-Others.	2	0	3	0	9	14

Annex 9a: Detailed information: Active area –Active only in the region

Active area – Active only in the region	Answers
-Agriculture	8
-Industrial development	
-Social Policies	
-Water (quantity/quality)	
-Health and consumer protection	5
-Research & Development	
-Telecommunications	
-Cohesion policy/ Structural Funds	4
-Environment	
-Others	2
-Competition	1

Annex 9b: Detailed information: Active area –Active only in the EU

Active area – Active only in the EU	Answers
-Health and consumer protection	1
-Industrial development	
-Research & Development	
-Social Policies	

Annex 9c: Detailed information: Active area –Active both in region and the EU

Active area – Active both region and the EU	Answers
-Cohesion policy/ Structural Funds	10
-Environment	

Active area – Active both region and the EU	Answers
-Research & Development	6
-Water (quantity/quality)	
-Social Policies	5
-Telecommunications	4
-Agriculture	3
-Competition	
-Others.	
-Industrial development	2
-Health and consumer protection	1

Annex 9d: Detailed information: Active area –Non-active

Active area – Non-active	Answers
-Competition	9
-Health and consumer protection	7
-Telecommunications	4
-Agriculture	2
-Industrial development	
-Research & Development	
-Cohesion policy/ Structural Funds	0
-Environment	
-Social Policies	
-Water (quantity/quality)	

Annex 10: Areas of interest

Areas	Not Important	Important	Very Important	No answer	Total
-Agriculture	2	8	3	1	14
-Cohesion policy/ Structural Funds	0	3	11	0	14
-Competition	6	5	2	1	14
-Environment	0	1	13	0	14
-Health and consumer protection	3	8	1	2	14
-Industrial development	2	7	6	0	14
-Research & Development	1	7	6	0	14
-Social Policies	1	5	8	0	14
-Telecommunications	1	9	3	1	14
-Water (quantity/quality)	0	5	9	0	14
-Others.	0	0	4	10	14

Annex 10a: Areas of interest – Not important

Areas of Interest – Not important	Answers
-Competition	6
-Health and consumer protection	3
-Agriculture	
-Industrial development	2
-Research & Development	
-Social Policies	
-Telecommunications	1

Annex 10b: Areas of interest – Important

Areas of interest – Important	Answers
-Telecommunications	9
-Health and consumer protection	8
-Agriculture	
-Industrial development	7
-Research & Development	
-Competition	5
-Social Policies	
-Water (quantity/quality)	
-Cohesion policy/ Structural Funds	3
-Environment	1

Annex 10c: Areas of interest – Very Important

Areas of interest – Very Important	Answers
-Environment	13
-Cohesion policy/ Structural Funds	11
-Water (quantity/quality)	9
-Social Policies	8
-Industrial development	6
-Research & Development	
-Others	4
-Agriculture	3
-Competition	2
-Health and consumer protection	1

Annex 11: Actors of interest in Brussels

Actors	Not important	Important	Very important	No answer	Total
-Civil servants European Commission	0	3	11	0	14
-Members European Parliament	2	5	6	1	14
-Members Council of Ministers	5	6	2	1	14
-Members of the Committee of the Regions	0	9	5	0	14
-Colleagues from (an)other region(s)	0	6	8	0	14
-Members of Permanent representation	1	6	6	1	14
-Members of (an)other network(s)	0	6	8	0	14
-Other organizations.	0	1	1	12	14

Annex 11a: Actors of interest in Brussels –Not important

Actors of interest –Not important	Answers
-Members Council of Ministers	5
-Members European Parliament	2
-Members of Permanent representation	1

Annex 11b: Actors of interest in Brussels –Important

Actors of interest –Important	Answers
-Members of the Committee of the Regions	9
-Members Council of Ministers	
-Colleagues from (an)other region(s)	
-Members of Permanent representation	6
-Members of (an)other network(s)	
-Members European Parliament	5
-Civil servants European Commission	3

Actors of interest –Important	Answers
-Other organizations.	1

Annex 11c: Actors of interest in Brussels –Very important

Actors of Interest –Very important	Answers
-Civil servants European Commission	11
-Colleagues from (an)other region(s)	8
-Members of (an)other network(s)	
-Members European Parliament	6
-Members of Permanent representation	
-Members of the Committee of the Regions	5
-Members Council of Ministers	2
-Other organizations.	1

Annex 12: Contact to discuss

Frequency	Answers
-Daily (3-4 times per week)	7
-Weekly (1-2 times per week)	3
-Twice per month	1
-Once per month	0
-Other	2
-No answer	1

Annex 13: Coordination of activities

Means	Answers
-Meetings at the home region	9
-Meetings at Brussels	10
-Tele conference	3
-Video conference	1
-Virtual forum	0
-Other ways	4

Annex 14: Exchange of information

Means	Answers
-Newsletter	6
-Website	5
-Reports	9
-Events	6
-Visits of officials of representation to the region	9
-Other ways.	8

Annex 15: Report

Means	Answers
-Email	12
-Newsletter	7
-Weekly report	1
-Monthly report	3
-Other ways.	5

Annex 16: Transcript Interview Diputación de Badajoz

Diputación de Badajoz

Junio 16 de 2008, Barcelona

José Luis Albarrán, persona de contacto Diputación de Badajoz (JLA)

Manuel Mendigutia, representante de la Diputación de Badajoz en Bruselas (MM)

Isabel Castaño, investigador (IC)

IC: *¿Cuál es el nombre oficial de la región?*

MM: Nosotros trabajamos para Diputaciones. Las diputaciones no son regiones, están a otro nivel de la región, pero es un nivel local. Un nivel intermedio entre región y municipio. El nombre oficial de la región es Extremadura, y yo trabajo para la Diputación de Cáceres, Diputación de Badajoz y para la Federación de Municipios y Provincias de Extremadura.

JLA: yo trabajo para la Diputación de Badajoz.

IC: *¿La diputación tiene poderes legislativos en el nivel nacional?*

JLA: En España, solamente tienen capacidad legislativa el estado y las comunidades autónomas. A través de las cortes y las ordenanzas. Las provincias solamente tienen competencias a nivel reglamentario para el desarrollo de legislación pero lo que se llama ordenanzas para regular tributos locales y funcionamientos.

IC: *¿La diputación tiene poderes legislativos en el nivel de la Unión Europea?*

JLA: No tiene capacidad legislativa en la Unión Europea.

IC: *¿Me puede describir la estructura organizacional de la entidad en la que ustedes están?*

JLA: La Diputación tiene dos órganos con competencia, que son el Pleno y el Presidente; el resto no tiene competencias propias. Porque hay una Junta de Gobierno que auxilia al Presidente y tiene las competencias que le pueden delegar el pleno y el presidente. Por ley, los que tienen competencia son el Presidente y el Pleno. Y en función de la importancia de la materia, regula uno u otro. Por ejemplo, a nivel presupuestario, contrataciones por arriba del 10% del presupuesto ordinario lo hace el Pleno y de menos del 10% el presidente. La gestión ordinaria de la Diputación la lleva el Presidente.

IC: *Cuando estos órganos toman una decisión, ¿por cuántos niveles tiene que pasar antes de llegar a ustedes?*

JLA: El Presidente decide propio, por decirlo de alguna manera. El Pleno pasa las decisiones por una comisión informativa y después ya llegan al pleno. A nosotros, lo que ellos hayan decidido, lo hacemos.

IC: *¿Cómo les llega a ustedes esta información?*

JLA: Las instrucciones que nos llegan, si son de materia económica, nos llegan Ordenanzas, que se publican en el Boletín Oficial de la Provincia. Y si son del presidente nos llega el Decreto, que son resoluciones individuales, actos administrativos.

IC: *¿Tiene su organización un especialista, un departamento específico o un coordinador que maneje las cuestiones relacionadas con la Unión Europea?*

JLA: El área que se ocupa de temas de la UE es el Departamento de Desarrollo local. En este Departamento hay una sección de 'Diseño de Proyectos' y como especialista en temas europeos esta Manuel que ya nos va a contar que es lo que hace. El es el mas especialista porque el es el que esta en Bruselas.

IC: *¿Cuáles son los beneficios de que Manuel este en Bruselas?*

JLA: Conocer de primera mano que se esta cociendo en la Comisión Europea, en las distintas Direcciones Generales, que nos puede interesar, antes de que salgan las convocatorias; por donde van a ir esta convocatorias, cual es la participación que podemos tener; los contactos a la hora de establecer socios; que quiere la Comisión que nosotros presentemos para trabajar juntos.

IC: *¿De las siguientes áreas, en cuáles tienen competencia?*

JLA: La propia Diputación no tiene competencias en todas estas áreas. Por ejemplo, en agricultura no hacemos nada.

MM: Todo lo que sea sectorial, no tenemos competencia.

JLA: Medio ambiente si hacemos, pero hacemos mas sensibilización, concientización, pero no tenemos competencias directas en estas materias. En política social, si, porque tenemos proyectos del Fondo Social. Desarrollo social con Pequeñas y Medianas Empresas, si. Agua y medio ambiente.

MM: Agricultura, no importante. Política de cohesión, fondos estructurales, muy importante. Competencia, no importante. Medio ambiente, muy importante. Salud y protección al consumidor, importante. Desarrollo industrial, muy importante. Investigación y desarrollo, importante. Políticas sociales, muy importantes. Comunicaciones, importante.

JLA: Aun que no lo llevamos nosotros, lo lleva el área de Nuevas Tecnologías que presenta proyectos europeos.

MM: Agua, importante.

IC: *Y las áreas que son importantes, ¿por qué son importantes?*

MM: Porque tenemos competencia.

JLA: Porque podemos trabajar en ellas, las otras no podemos.

IC: *¿Y están trabajando bien?*

MM: Sí, tenemos proyectos europeos.

IC: *¿Qué áreas quieren impulsar?*

MM: Queremos impulsar energía renovable por ejemplo, que ahora empezó en Extremadura, porque

antes no había mucho.

JLA: Y ahora hay un semillero de placas solares.

MM: Las placas solares y la energía eólica están impulsándose.

JLA: Trabajamos también en Políticas Sociales, Desarrollo tecnológico, llevamos mucho tiempo con Pequeñas y Medianas Empresas.

IC: *¿En qué áreas han conseguido más éxitos a nivel de la UE?*

MM: Política social, empleo, desarrollo local.

IC: *¿Y un ejemplo de esto?*

JLA: El proyecto que tenemos del Fondo Social, el Orión, que es de atención a personas con dependencia, con necesidades de cuidado. En eso hemos dado muchos cursos de formación, chicas becadas en empresas, hemos potenciado que los que han recibido esos cursos se den de alta como autónomos, y se formen, y empiecen a trabajar en el área de personas con necesidades por edad o por discapacidad.

IC: *¿En qué áreas han tenido problemas?*

JLA: Donde no tenemos competencia no nos hemos metido. Entonces no hemos tenido problemas, simplemente o no hemos entrado o si hubiéramos entrado, no lo hubieran aprobado.

IC: Ahora vamos a hablar de la Delegación en Bruselas. *¿Tienen ustedes una representación en Bruselas?*

JLA: Sí, tenemos un delegado que compartimos las dos Diputaciones y la Federación de Municipios y Provincias de Extremadura, que es Manuel.

IC: *Cuando empezó la oficina de representación sus actividades en Bruselas?*

MM: 2004.

IC: *¿Cuál es el presupuesto anual que es destinado a la Delegación?*

MM: 120.000,00 euros.

IC: *Y cuánto destinan para el desarrollo de actividades?*

MM: Depende de la actividad, por ejemplo, ahora vamos a hacer un viaje a Polonia, y la actividad total es entre 12.000,00 a 14.000,00. Los billetes, los hoteles y todos esos gastos.

IC: *¿Cuáles son los beneficios de que tengan una representación en Bruselas?*

MM: Pues las funciones principales son las que reportan beneficios son la de informar de manera directa de lo que allí ocurre. Representar a las diputaciones ante las instituciones europeas de los socios que están allí representadas; y aconsejar sobre los proyectos a presentar o las oportunidades de realizar actividades allí y en España.

IC: *¿Cuántas personas están trabajando allí?*

MM: Solamente yo.

IC: *Y de los cuatro años que lleva funcionando la representación, ¿cómo ha sido el trabajo?*

MM: Estuve dos años como becario de la Junta de Extremadura; y 2 años como delegado de las diputaciones.

IC: *¿Cada cuánto la Diputación contacta la delegación para discutir temas en la agenda?*

JLA: Semanal.

MM: Por ejemplo, yo uso el Skype y estoy todo el día conectado, con lo cual estoy 24 horas. Con la Diputación de Cáceres solamente utilizamos el Skype para hablar. En la Diputación de Badajoz no los dejan utilizar este programa.

JLA: Nosotros nos comunicamos cada semana. Lo que pasa es que los contactos se hacen directamente con el Presidente. Manuel llama a las personas que necesita.

MM: Con la Diputación de Badajoz nos comunicamos a través de correo todos los días.

JLA: En la mañana.

IC: *¿Cómo se comunican si tienen que coordinar actividades?*

MM: Yo voy allá y se los cuento.

JLA: A veces nosotros mandamos un correo para una reunión o lo que sea.

MM: Para que vaya para allá. Y lo que hago es ir a Cáceres, Badajoz y Mérida.

JLA: Sale de el (Manuel) porque nos informa de cualquier asunto o de nosotros hacia el (Manuel) porque nos llega información de que hay una reunión muy importante. También por teléfono y correo electrónico.

MM: Y luego cada uno o dos meses se planea un viaje y aprovechamos para discutir cosas.

IC: *¿Cómo informa la delegación los avances en su gestión?*

MM: cada año hay una memoria y luego a través de correo electrónico. Pongo 'importante' o 'urgente' en el email.

IC: *¿Cómo supervisa la Diputación el trabajo de la delegación?*

JLA: Regularmente no tenemos una sesión de control. Eso es a nivel de gobierno. Nosotros revisamos el informe del trabajo que el (Manuel) va haciendo y lo vamos revisando. O le pedimos información sobre algo. Pero no hay sesiones cada cierto tiempo.

IC: *¿Qué factor consideran innovador en la relación con la delegación?* El Skype es por ejemplo un factor innovador.

JLA: Yo creo que el factor de que ya este allá (Manuel) ya es innovador porque haber elegido que este en Bruselas y no en Madrid. Ese paso ya es innovador para nosotros, pero no para otros, porque hay otros que llevan allí mucho tiempo.

MM: Extremadura ha estado veinte años recibiendo y ahora estamos allí, no solo para recibir, si no estar allí y plantear cosas e iniciativas.

IC: *¿Cuál elemento consideran más difícil en su relación?*

JLA: En la relación tal vez es la distancia. Se sentirá solo y eso, supongo.

MM: Es que no tienes a quien comentarle las cosas que están pasando.

JLA: El nos cuenta un montón de asuntos que para el son importantes pero nosotros estamos en otra dinámica.

MM: Estar en la oficina que tengo temas importantes y yo no tengo con quien conversarlo. Llamo a Blanca (Blanca Soler, Diputación de Barcelona) y a otras diputaciones para discutir temas que a nosotros nos interesan a nivel local; porque no encuentro tampoco un contacto que no esté demasiado ocupado para discutir los temas, por que hay temas que día a día son más importantes, o por lo menos, más inmediatos.

IC: *¿Y algún ejemplo de lobby exitoso en Bruselas, algo que haya conseguido con la delegación?*

MM: Pues por ejemplo, la Diputación de Cáceres y Badajoz va a participar como socio español en la CEPLIN, en la Confederación Europea de Poderes Locales Intermedios, por lo menos vamos a estar allí presentes. Participamos dentro de los OPEN DAYS cada año dentro de la única red NUTS3 que hay en toda Europa. Hemos tenido facilidad para conseguir socios en INTERREG, gente que hemos conocido en Bruselas. También los técnicos y políticos extremeños han podido participar más en actividades que se celebran en Bruselas, facilidades para meterse y participar y charlar, y explicar la realidad extremeña ante los responsables europeos. Recibir información de primera mano para tomar decisiones en temas europeos.

IC: *¿Qué beneficio para las diputaciones considera ha traído la delegación en Bruselas?*

MM: Durante bastante tiempo las dos diputaciones han estado de espaldas y tener un delegado común hace que entre ellas se pongan de acuerdo para tomar una postura común, reciben información común cuando yo me reúno con ellos, muchas veces los obligo a que estén las dos, si no tienen la oportunidad de encontrarse juntos. Por ejemplo, el viaje a Polonia, lo estamos organizando conjuntamente Cáceres y Badajoz, con los cuales van los dos presidentes, los delegados que llevan los mismos temas y eso crea un lugar común no solo para hablar de Europa, sino de miles de cosas que pasan entre ellos, que el día a día no les deja tiempo para tratarlo. A mí me parece que también están ganando las dos diputaciones en eso, en ponerse de acuerdo, a parte de lo de Europa, por que no tienen otro nexo de unión.

Annex 17: Transcript Interview Province of Torino

Province of Torino

June 16th 2008, Barcelona

Claudia Fassero, contact person at Province of Torino (CF)

Isabel Castaño, researcher (IC)

IC: We are going to check some information from the survey that you region answered. From your point of view, *what do you think are the benefits of having an EU Department in your organization?*

CF: From my point of view, having a EU Department is good, because we can do a work of coordination, specifically in 2008 we start a sort of coordination work with all the organization; presenting the new programming period, we coordinate the departments of human resources, and the administrative department, concerning the EU projects,. For us, having this EU department is very important for this kind of matters, specific matters. We do not have specialists on EU matters in each department, but it is truth that there are a lot of people that we know are more involve in EU matters. They are not formal appointed but we know that they are very good in the EU matters. This is important for us, because when I have to visit somebody from the environmental department or another, I know, there is a specific person that understands me when I think about it and cooperation, and so on. Moreover, during this year we presented the new programming period and our coordination instruments of our administration and so, I a lot of many new colleagues met us, getting in touch and now I have new contacts and colleagues in the administration, dealing with EU matters.

IC: At the department, *how many people are working there?*

CF: In my department, the director and 6 persons. Another office, also at the department, called 'Europe Direct", and they are 3 persons and 3 staggers.

IC: *Can you describe for me for how many levels the information pass, the tasks that you have to accomplish, since a decision is making until you receive it?*

CF: We have a politic responsible that takes the bigger decisions in a general way. Then I have the director, my responsible, who directly gives me responsibilities.

IC: *What do you think are the benefits for your region of having a specific EU department?*

CF: The benefits are to have a unique 'one stop shop' for EU matters; because as you know when you have to do a project or look for information, you have a lot of sources of information and a lot of documents; and if you want to make a project you really need to look for a lot of information, about programming, about managing authorities, about partners, about 'auto-manage' inside the administration, the projects and for many of them we are the point of reference inside the administration.

IC: *The fact that you do not have a specialist in EU matters, do you think has any consequences for the Province?*

CF: Our structure that is not a formal responsible for EU matters in a department is a good organization because we are not a big structure; and in every department there are some people that with their attitude deal more with EU matters. It is not a simple mechanism but working together, and knowing each other, we know there are some people who are managing the projects, another people is reading the different documents. I think is not very structured, it is not programmed, but it is not bad.

IC: Now, about the areas where you are non- active. *Did you try to work on those areas or they are not important at all for you?* For example, I have the areas of competition and research and development

CF: The Province in Italy has not competencies in competition policy. It is complicated, we have competition rules but we are not programming competencies, the same thing for social development. We have a department dealing with economic matters, innovation but nothing with those. The regions have competencies in the Chamber of regions, in the regular law, in the research field. But the provinces should finance some activities, like masters in universities, but we are not politically responsible. We do not have competencies.

IC: Now, the other two environment and industrial development (areas on which they are very interested). *Can you give me some examples of important activities in these areas?*

CF: We have a lot of competencies in social policies, for example. Now, our social market works a lot in the local level. Environment and industrial development market, we have a lot of colleagues that are very active at the EU level. I mean, they have experience in European projects, and they are interested in European politics and so on. Especially in environment the provinces in Italy we have a lot of competencies.

IC: About your representation office. You told me earlier that you have a good relationship with them. *Have you considered the option to start a representation office but your own, or do you want to keep the things like until now?*

CF: I think that we still keeping this schema. Also, now the Piedmont region will developed more competencies at Brussels. There are more people working in Brussels. Maybe we have some advantages from the regional representation. For our administration now there are not any plans to open some direct representation at Brussels.

IC: You did not mention the *budget for activities* in the survey.

CF: We pay an annual fee. And they we can ask for services and so on.

IC: *I have a question about the monitoring system for the representation office.*

CF: We do not have a monitoring system, we work with them and our impression is positive. We do not have a very structured monitoring system.

IC: *Can you tell me a little bit more about the info day?*

CF: Our office in Brussels organized for us a presentation for the department dealing with economic development presenting the Piedmontese District of Biotechnology to the European Parliament. For us it was a good lobbying action.

Annex 18: Transcript Interview Département Bas du Rhin

Département du Bas Rhin

June 17^h 2008, Barcelona

Philippe Fischer, contact person Département du Bas Rhin (PF)

Isabel Castaño, researcher (IC)

IC: This is Philippe Fischer from Département du Bas Rhin

PF: Département du Bas Rhin is not a region; it is a local authority between the region and the districts. Do you want to have more information about the Département for instance? The budget is one billion two hundred million of euro, so it is quite a lot, I think. There are 3,603 employees working for the Département .

IC: I saw in your survey that you have a specific department to deal with European matters.

PF: Not only the European affairs, but we have a department dealing with economics and international relations.

IC: *What do you think are the benefits of having this kind of department with information about the EU?*

PF: I think is a good way to communicate on what we do well in a sense. It is also a good opportunity for our experts, specialists, to get some information about what is going good in other countries because depends of the domains. In some domains we are at the top of what we can do. In other domains, I think that we have to improve our own policies. To communicate on European scale or to try to get ideas what the other countries they do. We got also a developing policy tools to third world country regions.

IC: About the representation office that you have, *what do you think are the benefits that this office provides to your region?*

PF: First at all a direct contact to the European institutions because that is the main aim of the regional office in Brussels, because they know all the networks that counts in Brussels. They manage quite easily to find the correct person and they contact them for your European project or just to have an expert on a topic. So, it is important to have this kind of regional office. I can see other benefits that are very important to me, common regional office share in Brussels, you got many partners: the region that you work, provinces, the main cities, the chambers, the chamber of agriculture, the chamber of industry, different kinds of local chambers, etc. which is really important because it has to coordinate European politics of all the partners in regional case. That means that we could try not to be competitive, try to be a kind of complementary. This coordination is made basically by the regional office in Brussels.

IC: *Have you considered the idea of have your own representation office or in the way how things are*

organized not?

PF: We are not a local authority; I think it is not really relevant to have our own regional office. I think it is very good like that.

IC: *Can you describe how do you follow the activities that the representation office develops?*

PF: We have website, first. We have the newsletter as well, with all important dates, about the calls, or Département search. It works quite well. The dates of conferences or different kind of events at EU scale. It works quite well. We have regular meetings in region, and sometimes in Brussels like during the 'Open Days' or the events that are based in Brussels. Mostly they come to visit us, we got each two months meetings with all departments and we check in the projects, the opportunities of do something together at the EU. This is a great benefit to coordinate the EU action at the regional level.

IC: *Could you tell me a little bit more about the project DAPHNE that you mentioned as an example of successful lobbying?*

PF: Actually it was not successful yet, because we want to organize an international seminar on the topic "Violence and the EU". We want to have policies for young people in our region. Because we have the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. It can be very interesting to build a network with universities, social workers and international institutions on the topic. So, we had an international seminar that we want to organize and we thought put this kind of activity in the primer broader project and we went on the search of a leader to apply for DAPHNE programme. It is on its way, a good way. We are trying to find partners. It is just an example, I put it because it was one the more recent ones. I think it works quite fine because with networks I could just write a simple message. I was looking for a leader, and thanks to the regional office I received many offers, some of them were in the team that we want it; it was an efficient way to have contact EU wide.

IC: About the areas that you are active. *Did you find issues in some of the areas that you are active?*

PF: We have a couple of competencies, social affairs are very important, but for the EU is not that important. For the handicap, for the old people, more and more, this is going to be an issue at the EU level. Because the demography changing. I think this is an issue for all of us. Childhood I don't know if this an EU issue. But we tackle it at the national level. Social affairs are very important. For the EU economic development is more important. Environment, we work a lot on environmental issues and I think that is something that we can do, and we can cooperate with partners in INTERREG 4C. We are trying to work in the area environment and urban planning or regional planning. These kinds of issues are very important for us. River development and river protection, and things like that, because they could be a priority of the European Union and of us as well. Culture, could be a priority as well, like cycling paths this can be a priority for the EU as well.

Annex 19: Transcript Interview Diputació de Barcelona

Diputació de Barcelona

Junio 17 de 2008, Barcelona

Banca Soler, representante de la Diputación de Barcelona en Bruselas (BS)

Isabel Castaño, investigador (IC)

IC: Recibimos su encuesta contestada y queremos hacerle unas preguntas sobre la misma. *¿Cuántas personas trabajan en el Departamento que trata los temas de la Unión Europea?*

BS: A ver, nosotros tenemos un departamento en la Diputación de Barcelona que se llama la 'Dirección de Relaciones Internacionales'. Y esta dirección, comprende tres oficinas: Oficina de cooperación con Europa, Oficina de cooperación al desarrollo, y una tercera oficina de reciente creación, que se llama, Oficina de diplomacia municipal. Estas tres oficinas constitúan la Dirección de Relaciones Internacionales. Entonces la Oficina de cooperación con Europa y la Oficina de cooperación al desarrollo, a veces la Oficina de cooperación al desarrollo también gestiona fondos europeos. Entonces, ¿desearías saber el número de personas de toda la dirección de Relaciones Internacionales?

IC: Una idea generalizable

BS: En toda la Dirección de Relaciones Internacionales unas 25 a 27 personas.

IC: *¿Cuáles consideran son los beneficios de tener un departamento de este tipo?*

BS: Primero empezó siendo un departamento cuyo primer objetivo era obtener fondos europeos, porque este era el interés de los municipios de la Provincia de Barcelona. Había una serie de fondos, los llamados 'Fondos Estructurales', con los cuales se podían hacer muchos de los proyectos que las administraciones locales o provinciales, no podían hacer. Y poco a poco, aunque esta función no ha desaparecido, el segundo objetivo que cada vez se esta perfilando más, es como de alguna manera llevar este nivel local en el debate europeo. Osea, que de alguna manera, trabajamos para que el nivel local pueda opinar en el diseño de las políticas europeas y en el diseño de la legislación europea; porque hay que saber que más del 70% de la legislación que se aprueba en Bruselas se aplica a nivel local y regional. Por lo tanto, un tema clave es que el nivel local este presente en el momento de diseño y configuración de esta legislación que finalmente será el municipio el que tendrá que aplicarlo, pues que menos que intervenga en este proceso decisionado europeo. Y por otra parte incluso ir más allá del nivel europeo y poner el nivel local en las agendas al nivel de los estados y hasta a nivel mundial.

La Diputación de Barcelona y nuestra Dirección de Relaciones Internacionales forman parte del CGELU, que es el Consejo General de Gobiernos Locales Unidos. Es una asociación de gobiernos locales mundiales y recientemente la Diputación de Barcelona coordina una de las comisiones de trabajo, de esta organización mundial, que hace referencia a la descentralización y autonomía local;

para trabajar también a nivel mundial para que la opinión del nivel local sea considerada en instituciones internacionales y de los gobiernos a nivel mundial.

IC: *Desde que las decisiones son tomadas, ¿cuántos niveles tienen que pasar para que llegue la información a ustedes?* Para aclarar un poco, la estructura jerárquica de donde vienen las señales de lo que tienen que hacer.

BS: La Diputación de Barcelona tiene una oficina en Bruselas. La oficina en Bruselas cuando tiene información de interés para un nivel local o la administración intermedia inmediatamente informa a Barcelona al Director del Departamento de Relaciones Internacionales o al jefe de la Oficina para la Cooperación Europea, y este la pasa al técnico responsable para que este haga lo necesario con esta información.

IC: *De las áreas que son importantes para ustedes, ¿en qué áreas han conseguido más éxitos?*

BS: Los fondos estructurales, la principal área. Política de cohesión y fondos estructurales. Y medio ambiente. Son dos áreas de importancia local y nos hemos implicado mucho. Y también políticas sociales.

IC: *¿Y en qué áreas han tenido problemas?*

BS: ¿Qué quieres decir, a nivel interno o con la temática?

IC: Con la temática, que son áreas en las que ustedes quieren conseguir algo al nivel europeo pero es difícil.

BS: Un área clara en la que hemos querido implicar a nuestras colectividades locales y continúa siendo complicada y es dentro de lo que hace referencia a investigación y desarrollo. Es un tema que en nuestro territorio y en general en el territorio español está muy centralizado y monopolizado podríamos decir por las universidades. No hay una cultura, en la cual, seamos capaces de crear partenariales de universidades, empresas y administraciones locales, sindicatos, ONGs, o centros de investigación y desarrollo. Es una asignatura pendiente de tema.

IC: Ahora pasamos a la oficina de representación. Ustedes tienen una administración local. Esta pregunta no aplica mucho para ustedes...

BS: Explico un poco para situarlo en el contexto. España está dividida en diecisiete comunidades autónomas. Cataluña es una de las comunidades autónomas. Diecisiete regiones, Cataluña es una de las regiones más importantes de España. Cataluña está dividida en cuatro provincias. De estas cuatro provincias la más importante, no solo en desarrollo económico y en población es la Provincia de Barcelona; que, hay que tener presente, que de 7 millones de habitantes que tiene la región, 5 (millones) viven y trabajan en la Provincia de Barcelona. Por lo tanto, es la única provincia de la región de Cataluña, que tiene una masa crítica suficiente para poder permitirse tener una oficina en Bruselas. Osea, que es la única provincia de Cataluña con una oficina de representación en Bruselas. Se creó, como se indica aquí hace 10 años, este año hemos celebrado el decimo aniversario y precisamente se creó porque en su momento, la oficina de representación de Cataluña se consideraba que no trabajaba

suficientemente para defender los intereses del mundo local catalán. Y entonces, la administración de la provincia, la Diputación de Barcelona, decidió abrir una oficina en Bruselas, que trabajara exclusivamente en temas locales y de competencias locales.

IC: Ahora queremos preguntarle sobre la relación con la oficina de representación. En la pregunta 10 (de la encuesta) menciona que tienen una base de datos en la que recogen la información de las actividades que realizan. *¿Me puede contar un poco de esa base de datos?*

BS: Si, porque en Bruselas se hace mucho trabajo que difícilmente queda un rastro físico, podríamos decir. Hacemos muchas llamadas, hacemos cartas, vamos a reuniones, osea, no queda nada tangible. Entonces, de alguna manera, para poder hacer lo que hacemos. Hacemos unos balances, unos informes anuales de las actividades de nuestra Dirección de Relaciones Internacionales. Entonces lo que se decidió hacer, que es un poco paliza hacerlo. Se realizó una base de datos común con la oficina de Bruselas y la de Barcelona, donde se introducen todas las acciones y actividades que se han realizado. Por lo tanto, si se ha contactado un funcionario de la Comisión, para que quiera venir a participar en un seminario a Barcelona. Pues se introduce una ficha, contactada la persona tal, de tal dirección, quien ha contactado y con que objetivo. Si se ha asistido a un seminario, también se registra. De alguna manera, registramos al final del día, esto sería lo óptimo, dedicar cinco o diez minutos o quince minutos, a introducir todas las gestiones que se han realizado durante el día. Cuestiones que de alguna manera, no solo una llamada, sino gestiones un poco más importantes, podríamos sentir. Si se ha elaborado una carta y se ha enviado, pues también. De manera que tengamos, podamos ver, cada mes, que ha hecho Bruselas exactamente. Y es una base de datos que en principio tenía Bruselas y que era difícil compartir esta base de datos con Barcelona, pero informáticamente se ha establecido un sistema en donde todos introducimos los datos al mismo tiempo. Tenemos una línea de ADSL, podríamos decir, con carpetas compartidas con Barcelona y Bruselas.

IC: En la pregunta 11 ustedes mencionan que tienen reuniones mensuales con el departamento. *Me gustaría que me describiera un poco como son esas reuniones. ¿Son aquí (Barcelona), en Bruselas?*

BS: En principio, es muy importante para la gente que trabaja en Bruselas, no desvincularse de la realidad del territorio, de los intereses de los municipios y de lo que está ocurriendo a nivel local. Entonces, es importante que la gente de Bruselas y Barcelona tenga estos espacios de encuentro con una cierta frecuencia. Entonces lo que hacemos es, aproximadamente cada tres o cuatro semanas, la gente de Bruselas o va a Barcelona, o la de Barcelona viene a Bruselas, a nivel de 2 a 3 personas de los equipos de dirección. De alguna manera, se revisan los temas que se han marcado en el Plan de Acción Anual; para ver un poco el estado del calendario de las acciones y de los trabajos. Esta es un poco la frecuencia con la que nos vemos aproximadamente cada 3 ó 4 semanas. Unos suben o nosotros bajamos a Barcelona. Y podría decir que, dos veces al año se hacen reuniones de toda la Dirección de Relaciones Internacionales, para hacer de alguna manera, un balance de lo hecho o para presentarnos el nuevo plan de trabajo para el año que empieza. Un poco este sería el ritmo pero de

todo el equipo de toda la Dirección, y de las tres oficinas que comentaba al principio que forman parte de la Dirección de Relaciones Internacionales.

IC: *¿Y qué duración tienen esas reuniones?*

BS: Las que son de todo el equipo de Relaciones Internacionales generalmente dura toda una mañana. Podríamos decir de 10 de la mañana a 2 de la tarde. Y las que son más técnicas, pues unas 2 ó 3 horas.

IC: En la pregunta sobre un ejemplo exitoso de lobby, me puedes contar un poco más sobre el ejemplo de la política urbana.

BS: Pues es un ejemplo de lobby. Normalmente el lobby lo hacemos desde Bruselas y desde Bruselas en los últimos, podríamos decir, 5 o 6 años, han proliferado lo que se llaman 'redes informales', oficinas presentes en Bruselas, tanto de ciudades, regiones, provincias, con intereses comunes. Y, territorios que nos interesa trabajar con otros territorios europeos en unos temas concretos. Un nombre de redes que hay es el ERLAI, que es una red informal, todos son redes informales, sin ningún tipo de personalidad jurídica, ni acuerdos de colaboración concretos sino realmente un interés mutuo de cooperar en temas puntuales. Hay la red ERLAI en temas de migración, integración y asilo. Hay redes como EPRO, en temas medio ambientales. Hay redes como ERIN en temas de investigación y desarrollo. Y hay una red de capitales de países que se llama 'Capital Cities'. Y entre estas redes hay una que se llama 'Cities for cohesión', que son, principalmente representaciones de ciudades, en gran parte, donde los temas urbanos son prioritarios para sus administraciones y sus políticos. Y por lo tanto, hubo un momento en donde se vio que lo que se había logrado con fondos estructurales, que era la iniciativa 'Urban', para de alguna manera rehabilitar barrios en ciudades con problemas estructurales, pues se vio que en el nuevo periodo de programación de los Fondos Estructurales, las primeras propuestas que presentaron los estados miembros y la Comisión Europea, era que desaparecieran los fondos dedicados a promover una política urbana. Entonces este grupo retomó los trabajos, donde estaban integrados ciudades como Londres, Ile de France, Malmö, Copenhague, Greater Manchester, la Provincia de Barcelona, Madrid, Praga se integró luego, grandes capitales europeas, o grandes áreas metropolitanas europeas. Y se trabajó conjuntamente y se prepararon documentos de posicionamiento, para que de alguna manera, justificar ante la Unión Europea, la importancia que desde Europa se desarrollara una política urbana, para ayudar a la rehabilitación y recuperación de muchos espacios urbanos en estas ciudades; y que la iniciativa 'Urban', había tenido muchísimo éxito y que no había que dejarla sin tener un periodo de continuación en la programación de los fondos estructurales. Junto también con la oficina de representación de Bruselas, región Capital, se presentaron estos documentos a la Comisión, se habló con eurodiputados que trabajaban en la 'Comisión de política regional' y en la 'Comisión que hay también sobre temas urbanos'. Se trabajó también con otras redes como 'Eurocities', 'TELEUROPE', que también estaban haciendo posicionamientos similares y realmente se consiguió que en los reglamentos finales de los fondos estructurales, se retomara lo que en un principio se había dejado de lado, que era, acciones con el nuevo periodo de programación en favor de las zonas urbanas. No de una forma iniciativa

comunitaria, como había existido hasta ahora, sino de forma transversal en todos los objetivos, los nuevo objetivos, de la política regional del nuevo periodo de programación 2007-2013. Y realmente, pues la Comisión se lo apropió y consiguió introducirlo y que los estados miembros en el Consejo lo aprobaran.

IC: *En global ¿cómo consideras la relación de la oficina de representación?*

BS: Bueno, todo depende de la voluntad de la administración que decida abrir una oficina en Bruselas. Si esta administración pone una persona, lo que podrá hacer una persona, será limitado. Si pone dos personas, podrá hacer un poquito más, y hacer más áreas de trabajo. Y lo que podemos observar, es que las oficinas de representación con más personas y con realmente una división de las políticas europeas a seguir, clara, pueden especializarse y conocer en más profundidad cada uno de los temas. Nosotros en el caso de la Diputación de Barcelona, somos dos personas y probablemente una becaria en el futuro; y aunque queremos abarcar todos los ámbitos de interés local, ya intentamos abarcar temas de innovación, temas de medio ambiente, política regional, política social, política de long life learning, política exterior. Pero esto quiere decir que sabemos un poquito de todo y nada en concreto. Bueno, en estos momentos, yo creo que la Diputación de Barcelona es muy ambiciosa, quiere hacer muchas cosas y desde Bruselas se hace todo lo que se puede, que podríamos hacer mucho más, porque hay muchos proyectos en el tintero. Pero tenemos cuatro manos o seis manos, no hay más. Yo creo que con mas apuesta de una administración por su oficina en Bruselas y con un fuerte personal en Bruselas, yo creo que unos resultados más concretos y más visibles podrá obtener. Menos personal, pues serán unos resultados también concretos, pero menos en nombre, de productos finales obtenidos. Nuestro equilibrio, creo que es el óptimo, no somos una región, no tenemos una voluntad de actuación política externa, todo lo dejamos a la región, que ya tiene unas 15 personas trabajando. Nuestro rol tiene que ser mas bien técnico con un equipo de 3, 4, 5 personas, es suficiente.

IC: *¿Ha hecho propuestas a la Diputación de más personal?*

BS: Si, yo he hecho una propuesta de que en Bruselas, somos dos técnicos superiores trabajando y yo he hecho una propuesta de que necesitamos un administrativo. Porque además de trabajar y seguir la política europea, yo tengo que comprar el lápiz, comprar el sobre, escribo la carta, y tengo que ir a Correos, a tirar la carta y tengo que ir a pagar al banco la factura de la limpieza, la factura de agua, tengo que revisarlo todo. Tengo que si a mi, mi ordenador me falla, tengo que yo llamar al informático, yo atender al informático, yo resolver el problema, y es tiempo que dejo de utilizar para trabajo para el que he sido contratada. Entonces yo digo, necesito una administrativa, si tengo una factura que no me ha llegado bien o me han cobrado más, soy yo que tengo que coger el teléfono cada vez y decir esta factura no está hecha, hay que volverla a hacer, no está bien hecha, hay un problema. Entonces, hay que abrir el correo, hay que archivar las cosas, estamos de utilizando de alguna manera, un tiempo preciado de un técnico superior, haciéndole hacer un 20 o 25% de su tiempo, tareas administrativas, pagadas a precio de técnico superior. Esto es una pérdida para la administración, pero la respuesta es que me dicen, que es mejor tener un segundo técnico superior, y ser dos técnicos superiores, a ser un

técnico superior y un administrativo.

Annex 20: Transcript Interview Province of Gelderland

Province of Gelderland

June 25th 2008, Arnhem

Hein Cannegieter, representative Province of Gelderland and Province of Overijssel at Brussels (HC)

Isabel Castaño, researcher (IC)

IC: I heard that you receive the information from different parts of the Province. *What do you think about it?*

HC: The questions from departments good, bad, some does not know what Brussels can and cannot do. In general if there is a question it comes to us. We get a lot of information in Brussels and we give it to the Provinces Gelderland and Overijssel. They have, the experts, have to decide if the information is important of not. If they have to do something about it or not. If they decide to do something with it; they contact us, propose a time and we make appointments with people of the European Commission or the European Parliament to discuss this.

IC: *In which areas have you collected more successes?*

HC: Well, you never are not the only one that collects success. It is always a chain of people and happenings, and a lot of people is involved of the success. And we are part of it. Our successes are in the legislative. Proposals to the European Commission, for instance, the regional policy, also in innovation. We had a big success, with accepting by the European Commission a proposal for our side to... I explain. It is about a ruling, and it says that not every money you give, subsidy we give as Province, at an innovative enterprise has to be notified by the European Commission. There is a ruling now, that within a framework we can decide ourselves who to give the subsidy or not. That, of course, saves us a lot of paper work and a lot of problems. Of course, they could pick out, the European Commission, some examples if we are doing it in the right way. That of course, we want to do it in the right way, so there will be not question about what are you doing. That is another lately gains.

Now, we also have successes through departments here in the touristic field. We got a lot of money for the Veluwe. In the last term we get 10 million euro. So, it is quite something. And we are now working on the next shift, to see if we can get for other purposes in the touristic field more money. We also get real successes in the environment field. We influenced for instance, the framework, where we differ a little bit from the stand point of the central government of the Netherlands. At the end it was our view that survive and not the one of the central government. That was very nice of course. You can see that people is looking at us, because we have a quite good name in influencing policy at Brussels. At this very moment the Minister of Internal Affairs of the Netherlands, Guusje ter Horst, is now in the House of Dutch Provinces in Brussels, having a discussion with the representatives about how we are doing it. So, this is very nice. And she will be there for one and a half hour, what is quite a long time. She wants to know how are we working, what are we doing, how we can have some successes. It is very nice

from her to come along and see how we can help each other because we are both working for the civilians here in Gelderland and the Netherlands.

IC: *In which areas have you had experimented issues, problems?*

HC: We are now in discussions with the central government about the proposals of the European Commission about agricultural policies. We have a discussion with the central government. Another point where we are having discussion is about the air pollution framework. That is something where we have a little bit different opinions. Especially in the environment field. We try to come to a compromise with the central government, so that we both can push the people in Brussels in the right way.

IC: About the relationship with Gelderland. *What do you consider an innovative factor in your relationship with Gelderland, something that you think works very fine and something that needs to be improved?*

HC: Something that can be improve by Gelderland is working now, is the continuity of the screening of the information that we provide. It would be now a lobby desk here. And it would have the tasks to look into our information in the various departments of the Province. So that, it really is screen in a good way. That was not always the case, but we hope that with this central desk, it would improve.

IC: *From the options that I have here, which one do you consider the most difficult in the relationship: contact, exchange of information, report activities or the monitoring?*

HC: The coordination.

IC: *Could you tell me a little bit more about it?*

HC: It is what I said. The information that we pick up in Brussels has to be screen, and distributed and follows by this central desk. If that works well, you will see that the way how Gelderland handles information from Brussels, will be improve it very much. Now, you are depending of the enthusiasm of certain people; and in some of these departments there are people very enthusiastic who really look into it, that do something with it, if it fits in their policy; and in other departments is not as good as that. It can be improve, if there is better coordination by a central desk.

IC: *Do you think that you have enough resources at Brussels for the development of your activities, not just about money but also people working with you?*

HC: An innovative idea that we are having, and I implemented at the moment is that we are asking experts from the Province to go for a couple of months to Brussels to explore in detail what a policy at their field is at the European Commission and European Parliament. At this moment there is somebody of the special department of planning of Gelderland and he is preparing everything for a Green Book that would be issue in September. So, he would be having everything ready before September when this Green Book is issued. This is very good. We would be head of a lot of provinces and regions in our knowledge about the consequences of this green book will be.