Inter-regional cross-border cooperation

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Riitta MYLLER (PES, FIN) saw her draft report adopted on cross-border and inter-regional cooperation. The Committee considered that the EU's cross-border cooperation requires additional resources to develop cooperation and safeguard stability in regions close to the EU's borders. The future regional policy should increasingly stress cross-border cooperation in all border areas and at the same time improve the associated countries' readiness for membership of the Community. Inter-regional cooperation in its present form lacks an adequate strategy and the funding instruments are scattered and fragmentary. It was suggested that a single Community fund be set up to support inter-regional multi annual cooperation based on strategic thinking and exchanges of knowledge and experience. The rapporteur underlined the importance of cooperation in the Mediterranean and Baltic region and asked that a single Baltic programme be adopted. Regional cooperation should also be developed in Europe's Arctic regions and should be reinforced in the Barents Sea region, so that the environmental problems in this region (Kola Peninsula) can be tackled. Mrs MYLLER felt that a cooperation strategy should be drawn up for the regions on the borders with Russia and Central and Eastern European countries.