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EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW
(VENICE COMMISSION)

**UNIDEM
CAMPUS TRIESTE SEMINAR**

**“INTERREGIONAL AND TRANSFRONTIER CO-OPERATION:
PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC STABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT”**

Trieste, Italy

**Palazzo del Ferdinando,
MIB School of Management
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22 – 25 February 2010

SYNOPSIS

The UNIDEM Campus Trieste project is the Venice Commission's programme of legal training for civil servants from 16 countries¹ financed by the Region Friuli-Venezia Giulia. The first seminar in 2010 took place in Trieste, from 22 to 25 February 2010 on the topic:

“Interregional and transfrontier co-operation: promoting democratic stability and development”

The seminar aimed at raising the participants' awareness regarding the role of interregional and transfrontier co-operation in promoting democratic stability and development, and promoting the exchange of best practices in the matters of common interest.

During this four-day training, the 21 participants heard lectures given by leading European experts in this field, and explored various aspects of institutionalised cross-border co-operation through several specific workshops.

The seminar began with an introductory lecture on the historic background, and cultural, socio-economic and political factors that have favoured the development of an institutionalized cross-border co-operation. It continued with a lecture on the administrative and legal framework for transfrontier co-operation at the European level. The participants discussed the European Convention on cross-border co-operation between territorial authorities (Madrid Convention) and its protocols, the EC Regulation on European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation and further perspectives for transfrontier co-operation that these instruments open. The workshop that followed focused on transfrontier co-operation between EU and non-EU member states.

On the second day the seminar addressed euroregions, as a mechanism for strengthening transfrontier and interregional co-operation. The participants analysed the establishment, legal status, the characteristics and functioning of euroregions; and the development opportunities available to euroregions, and the challenges and obstacles they face in achieving them. The examples of Adriatic Euroregion and the recently established Black Sea Euroregion were analysed in some detail.

The training also covered the question of competences of the entities participating in an interregional co-operation project, and their relationship both with the Euroregion (or other form of structure) and with the central authorities, as well as the methods and tools to sustain and promote interregional and transfrontier cooperation.

On the last day of the seminar the participants attended the workshop “Training the Trainers” dedicated to the organisation of follow-up events. The workshop focused on various ways and methods for organising follow-up events, and discussed practical aspects linked to presentation and facilitation.

Four national delegations (from Albania, Armenia, Belarus and “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”) presented their specific experience in related matters.

The written reports related to the lectures will be available shortly on the Venice Commission's web site.

¹ *Armenia, Azerbaijan, Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, “The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, Slovenia, Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia and Ukraine.*