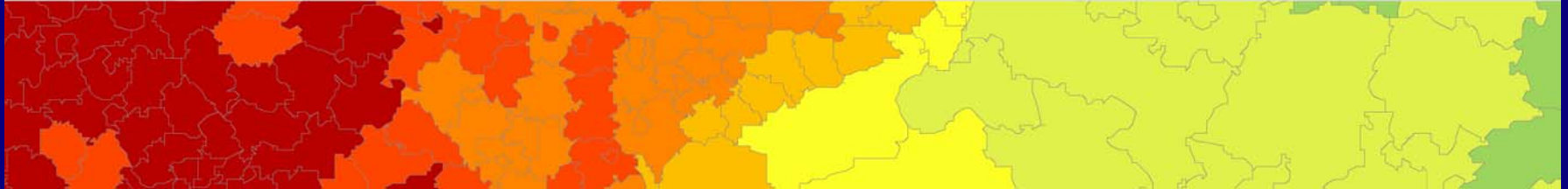




EUROPEAN SPATIAL PLANNING  
OBSERVATION NETWORK



ESPON SEMINAR  
EVORA, 12-13 NOVEMBER 2007

PARALLEL WORKSHOPS – SECOND SESSION

***EUROPE IN THE WORLD CONTEXT***

**WORKSHOP F: THE ARCHIPELAGO VISION**

Report by Phaedon ENOTIADES, MC Member, Cyprus

# Europe in the World Context: overview of the second workshop session

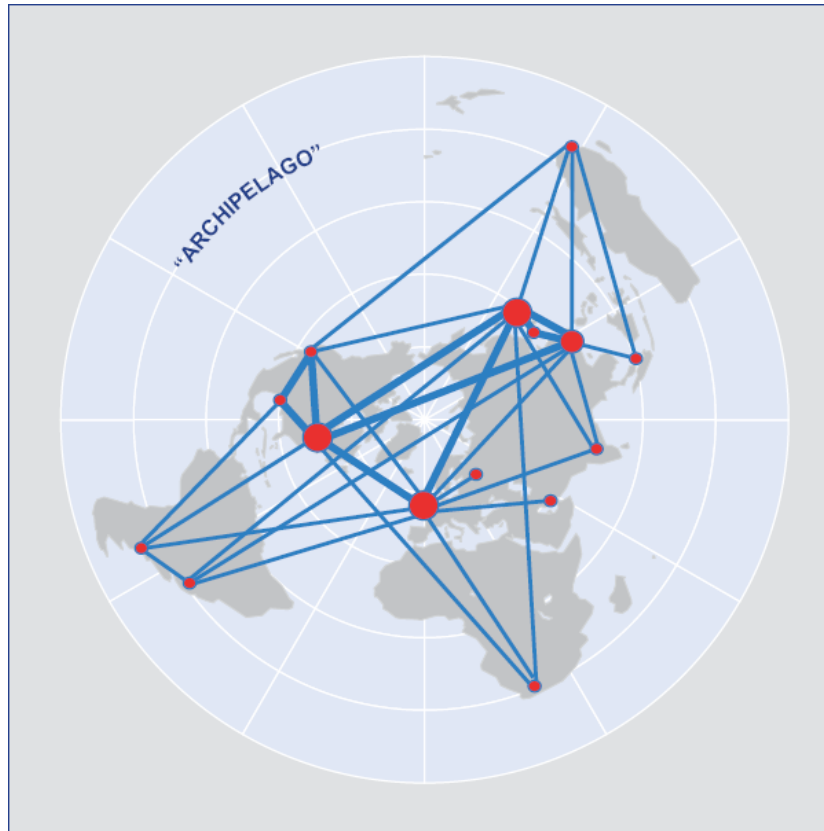
## JOINT SESSION:

- Introduction – Peter Schoen
- Presentation – Claude Grasland, Pierre Beckouche

## PARALLEL WORKSHOPS:

- *Workshop D – “The Continent Vision”*
- *Workshop E – “The Centre-Periphery Vision”*
- ***Workshop F – “The Archipelago Vision”*** ✓
  - **Chair – Sandra di Biaggio**
  - **Input statement – Claude Grasland**

# The Archipelago Vision: towards rising territorial polarisation?



*Everything is related to everything else,  
but are near things more related to distant ones?*

# The Archipelago Vision and its territorial impacts

## Territorial assets:

- (i) Major European cities become highly internationalized metropolitan areas
- (ii) Western European countries benefit the most from international metropolises
- (iii) The Western metropolises are most integrated in the global top urban system

## Shortcomings:

- (i) Increase of territorial disparities in Europe
- (ii) Eastern Member States rapidly lose their competitive advantage (rise of costs in their capital cities)
- (iii) Substantial destabilisation of the economy of Mediterranean neighbours (rough 2010 liberalisation)
- (iv) Border situation: toward the “continent” vision

# The Archipelago Vision: presentation of the archipelago approach

- **Social dimensions:**
  - a network of wealthy cities
  - conformity and standardisation
- **Ecological dimensions:**
  - ecological footprint impacts
  - environmental degradation
- **Theoretical dimensions :**
  - evaluation of flows (*e.g. London-Paris flight not as “global” as London-NY flight, but then how global is the NY-LA flight, i.e. great distance but still within one country?*)

## The Archipelago Vision: workshop discussion

- The proposal attempts to illustrate, through the distribution of air connections between world cities, the assumption that network relations are more important than purely geographical proximity
- This analogy was criticised as it does not fully reveal the complex secondary relations between Europe's world cities and its smaller towns;
- Moreover, it was pointed out that airport flows are distorted by bilateral aviation agreements, while
- On the other hand, some of the gateways derive their strength from their own neighbourhood, and one must bear in mind that all "visions" are concurrent.
- It was also admitted that air flows were used as one of the few appropriate indicators available at the time the relevant research was carried out.

## The Archipelago Vision: other issues raised

Other questions put forth included:

- If any of these visions are actively pursued, which are the winners and losers among Europe's cities and regions?
- To what extent does current economic development correspond to these visions?
- The reality seems to be much more complex than the visions presented, so why not construct a more complete picture with information on additional flows (rather than just air links)?
- Could the various visions put forth all be aspects of the same concurrent trends?
- Is the archipelago not a more relational conceptualisation of space, not only in terms of economic, but also in terms of social and environmental links?
- Is it, then, a question of defending the "space of places" against the "space of flows?"

## The Archipelago Vision: recommendations for future research

- It was suggested to first identify territorial issues with a regional dimension relevant to the overall theme;
- It was thus proposed that various types of **impacts on border regions** should be examined in relation to exchanges between Europe and its neighbourhood.
- Concerning the place of Europe in the world, it was indicated that global vs. neighbourhood relationships should be examined not as mutually exclusive or opposing alternatives but as **two different aspects of reality**.
- Another project could examine whether a centre-periphery or archipelago pattern can be discerned in **current economic and territorial trends**.
- An investigation could also be carried out into the possible **repercussions of relatively low investment** by Europe in its own neighbourhood and,
- Finally, would it be possible to examine the conditions under which **medium-sized towns** become well connected into the global archipelago?