

Commission services, donor and beneficiary countries; to strengthen complementarity and coherence of G-24 assistance; and to promote joint actions and new initiatives.”¹⁰ Bureaucrats from the Commission, along with five experts seconded for two years from the twelve non-EC governments, monitor assistance and prepare background reports on reforming economies. Among the donor countries, the process of consultation and coordination takes place at three levels. First, a “Brussels network”, made up of those in national government missions to the EC, meets regularly, dividing up into the G-24 working-group subject areas. Second, “Senior Officials” or delegates from the national capitals, usually some four to six people at the level of a Canadian director general, meet to exchange views and put into place the agenda for ministers. They have met ten times thus far.

This coordination process appears as elaborate as that of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) for Third World aid donors. In fact, although the G-24 Unit prepares situation reports for the senior experts, its real function is to act as a “scorekeeper.” The consultations in the Brussels network and among the Senior Experts do give each government a sense of how others assess the issues. It is, however, primarily at the third and highest level, the G-24 “ministerials” convened once a year, where broad policy guidelines are set. Here, whatever consensual view of the CEEC reform progress emerges, it is announced in a communique indicating intent either to increase commitments or to wait and see in dubious cases (Romania 1990; Yugoslavia and Albania 1991).

Bilateral assistance, which is then “counted” as G-24 assistance, naturally varies by country — as some donors are more committed than others — and also by type of assistance and by recipient. An ECE study (see Appendices I and II) shows the distribution by donor to the original PHARE programme. Germany was clearly in the lead and even Japan’s share of assistance was initially greater than that of the United States. Japan, however, overwhelmingly contributes export credits and loans rather than hands-on grants or technical assistance programmes. For these forms of aid a small country, Austria, with its proximity and close business ties to central Europe, gives a great deal more than Japan.

The latest scoreboard published by the G-24 (Appendix III) confirms the early pattern. According to the share of total assistance committed in all forms, Germany accounts for 32 percent, the EC members taken together 45 percent, the United States and Japan 6.7 percent and 6.5 percent

10 Commission of the European Communities, Directorate General, External Relations, “G-24 Coordination Unit”, Brussels, 12 March 1991.