Associations are representing the largest share of ETN membership. Their commitment is rooted in the professional and/or vocational self-organisation of these Associations' members.

Artists associations are thereby prevailing in this connection, partly because most of their members are workers to free-lance whom facilities of an exchange of experiences are not open other than within this form of organisation, and partly because artists - more than, e.g. designers - are depending on contacts with the public, and to support their professional existence, are in need of presentation and exhibition facilities.

In the world of object relations, the designers, artists and craftspeople are, in fact, the true producers of culture. The products of their work determine the esthetic level, the differentiated character of the visual language and thereby, too, mankind-object relations of a cultural society.

A civilization which is failing to integrate its object designers into the economical process, will lose its cultural face in the long run.

A major task for the European Textile Network is to increase the integration of textile designers and artists into the social process of reproduction and, within the political and economical field, to stand up for a more productive co-operation climate.

Designers' Enquête

In almost all European countries, associations of designers, artists and craftspeople are in need of more favourable economical conditions, legal and fiscal support, as well as improved market prospects.

The Network is in possession of a "Nine-Items-Programme" set up in 1986, for a European Enquête, the realisation of which may lead to quantifiable results and to decisions towards immediate relief.

In view of the access now opened to the former Iron Curtain countries, this project is gaining new actuality and increased urgency.

Co-operation in Working Groups

Designers', artists' and craftspeople associations provide the basis of ETN activities:

1. They are part of the "Textile cultural Regions" and widely determine the picture of contemporary textile art production.

2. Many members of these associations are carrying on systematic esthetic and technological research, the results of which are of the highest value for industrial textile production, or act as criteria for interior decoration or clothing designs.

3. The associations are active organisers of advanced training courses, exchanges of information and experience, workshop days and programmes for self-instruction.

4. A major part of textile art exhibitions and competitions is organised and realised by the associations. They initiate numerous international activities such as professional meetings, symposia, designers' exchanges and participate in trade fairs and markets.

5. Many designers are active in publicity; they publish books, participate in catalogue publications and are represented as performers in the audiovisual media.

There is no need for the European Textile Network to activate designers' associations. Rather, it is a matter of leading their members out of the side-scenes of culture routine into the European cultural stage limelight.