

Interview with Jacques Santer: the working method of the Luxembourg Government (Sanem, 6 April 2006)

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[Étienne Deschamps] Jacques Delors, to whom you referred earlier, recalls in his memoirs that the period that he spent working alongside his Luxembourg friends — he refers to you, to Jacques Poos and to Jean-Claude Juncker — was a very happy time for him. What was your working method when you were working so closely with the Commission and with Jacques Delors?

[Jacques Santer] Of course we did work with the Commission. We were not always on the same wavelength as the Commission because we still had to reach compromises with the others. But we moved things along, and the Commission was fully involved in our activities. And I believe that this was a really good thing. Besides, in the book, the *Liber amicorum*, which was presented to Mr Pierre Werner on his 80th birthday, he refers explicitly to the Luxembourg Presidencies and discusses all three or four Luxembourg Presidencies; Werner was also a President. It was in Werner's time that they established the Luxembourg Compromise, during the 'empty chair' crisis. So in those days the Luxembourg Presidencies were famous for finding solutions to problems that seemed to drag on, bogging down the Community. There, I think, we had — above all with Delors, because he was the only one in charge at the time — we always understood each other, especially in 1985. In 1991, it was rather different. But in 1985, there was effective cooperation, and the result is there to be seen.