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INTERREG IIIC

FIVE YEARS OF BRINGING
EUROPE'S REGIONS TOGETHER

North East South West
 INTERREG IIIC



INTERREG IIIC: FIVE YEARS OF BRINGING EUROPE'S REGIONS TOGETHER



INTERREG IIIC NORTH



INTERREG IIIC EAST



INTERREG IIIC SOUTH



INTERREG IIIC WEST



This publication is dedicated to the achievements of INTERREG IIC, a Community initiative promoting co-operation between European regions in 2000-2006 programming period. Its main aim was to encourage regions from around the continent to work together in order to promote sustainable regional development and to lay foundations for future inter-regional cooperation in this area. INTERREG IIC also enables partners to share knowledge about how to create the best policies and initiatives fostering sustainable development.

While the projects supported by INTERREG IIC involved several EU countries, the work was done locally, within regions. The local level is often the most effective place to take action, even when it comes to addressing worldwide issues like climate change or the need to remain globally competitive through innovation.

Innovation and the environment were both cross-cutting issues that were taken into consideration in designing the INTERREG IIC projects. This emphasis on innovation and the environment is in keeping with the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas, which call for making Europe the leading knowledge-based economy in the world, while ensuring that development is environmentally and socially sustainable.

Many INTERREG IIC projects focused specifically on environmental work. These included efforts to promote alternative energy, like wind-power or biomass, efforts to cooperate on controlling floods or forest fires and efforts to change wasteful behaviour by consumers.

Other projects focused specifically on innovation, such as efforts to foster new ideas through business clusters and efforts to encourage innovative approaches to technology.

One key result of all this work has been a wide distribution of useful knowledge, which can help level the playing field in Europe. Sustainable development can be achieved more widely if more local and regional authorities have the necessary knowledge, and access to the best methods available.

Another significant result of INTERREG IIC has been the development of networks of regional authorities, and other local and regional actors, who can continue to work together for mutual benefit under the future Objective 3 of the Cohesion Policy, focused on territorial cooperation.

The importance of the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas continues in the current programming period, 2007-2013. New projects in INTERREG IVC, and other programmes funded by the European Regional Development Fund, are all expected to give priority to innovation, competitiveness and social and environmental sustainability.

Thus, the work that was done during INTERREG IIIC and described in this publication increased capacity needed to build a more competitive, innovative and sustainable Europe through the efforts of its regions. As such, it is a good reference for considering future ventures for interregional cooperation toward sustainable development in Europe.

Danuta Hübner, EU Commissioner for Regional Policy

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'D. Hübner', is centered on the page. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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INTRODUCTION

Bringing regions together to address common problems

Officials from mining regions in 10 different European Union countries helped create a roadmap for future development that can be adopted by other European regions with similar circumstances. Partners in distant areas of six EU countries cooperated in an effort to make public transit more accessible to disabled people. Regional officials in Estonia, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK teamed up with an international organisation to share information on changing attitudes toward environmentally unsustainable consumption. And experts from 10 regions have developed a concept for a new kind of school, which will produce multicultural, multilingual students, who look at the world from a broader, Europe-wide perspective.

These were just four of the 270 projects initiated during the period 2002-2006 through INTERREG IIIC, a €315-million programme to enhance cooperation among Europe's subnational regions. The programme was financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) as part of the Structural Funds, with co-financing by national project partners.

This publication outlines the work that INTERREG IIIC has done, by describing the activities and approaches of the various projects that the programme supported. As these projects show, Europe's regions can help one another tackle common concerns. INTERREG IIIC was built on the understanding that administrators in subnational regions around Europe are addressing similar problems. The cooperation made possible by INTERREG IIIC meant that regions did not have to deal with these problems alone.

Over the past five years, INTERREG IIIC has helped partners from 194 regions around Europe to assist five another, by cooperating economically, socially and environmentally through projects that share knowledge and experience. INTERREG IIIC promotes interregional co-operation between public and public-equivalent bodies that are responsible for regional policy issues across the entire EU territory and neighbouring countries. The programme allowed regions to work together on common projects and to

develop networks of co-operation. The regions involved were from all around Europe, and the partners did not necessarily share borders. What they did share were similar development concerns.

The large-scale information exchange made possible by INTERREG IIIC was intended to improve the effectiveness of regional development policies, instruments and strategies. The goal of this effort was to enhance development and economic and social cohesion across Europe, and to help Europe's lagging regions catch up with more developed areas. INTERREG IIIC worked by inviting regions from around the EU to propose projects and apply for funds. The programme then helped representatives of EU Member States to select the projects that would deliver the best results. Administrations from different EU regions shared their knowledge about new working methods, innovative ideas and policy tools. The partners chose the best means possible to share knowledge, including training, seminars, conferences, databases, websites and staff exchanges.

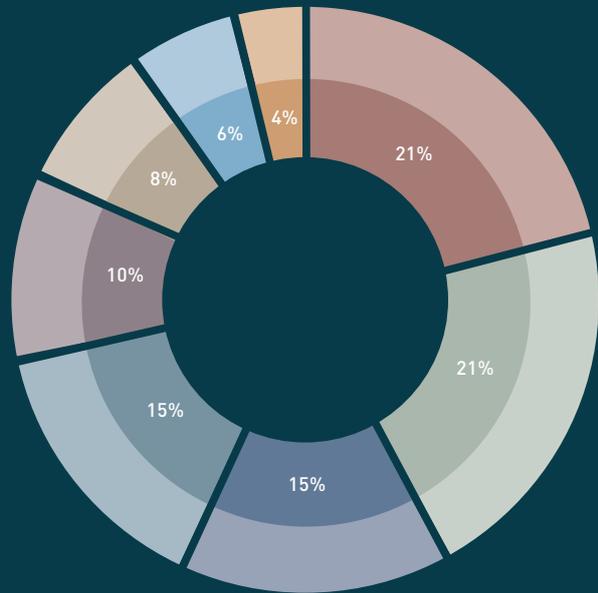
The projects conducted under INTERREG IIIC were designed to bring benefits to the regions and have a positive impact on society while encouraging real progress in regional governance. The work of the projects focused on the following eight thematic areas, all of which have an impact on regional development:

- Research, technology and innovation.
- SME development and entrepreneurship.
- Information society and e-government.
- Employment, social inclusion, human resources and education.
- Environment, risk prevention, energy and natural resources.
- Regional planning, territorial regeneration and urban development.
- Tourism, heritage and culture.
- Accessibility, mobility and transport.

There were three types of operations supported by INTERREG IIIC:

- "Networks" represented the level of cooperation, in which partners of larger groups worked together on various aspects of regional development and the goal of their cooperation was to establish efficient linkages between the project partners that resulted in more concrete future cooperation projects;
- "Individual Projects" represented a more intensive level of cooperation, since the goal of the cooperation was to work together on one concrete topic, including development of instruments to be implemented and transferred to the regional policy actions and regional action plans;

THE PERCENTAGE OF INTERREG IIIIC PROJECTS IN EACH FOCUS AREA



- Regional planning, territorial regeneration and urban development
- Environment, risk prevention, energy and natural resources
- Tourism, heritage and culture
- SME development and entrepreneurship
- Research, technology and innovation
- Information society and e-government
- Employment, social inclusion, human resources and education
- Accessibility, mobility and transport

- “Regional Framework Operations” (RFOs) reached the highest level of cooperation among a group of regions. They constituted the most innovative type of IIIC cooperation as the goal was to produce a clear strategic approach for interregional exchange by developing a limited number of smaller projects, the so called “subprojects”. Such subprojects were the RFOs specific feature, multiplying cooperation in each regional partner territory. A specific section on RFOs can be found later in this publication.

INTERREG IIIC’s administration was divided into four geographical zones. Each project was funded and overseen by the North, East, South or West zone, according to the location of its lead partner.

The following section of this publication contains descriptions of successful projects from each of these zones, in each of the eight focus areas. This is just a small sampling of the fruitful projects made possible by INTERREG IIIC, as there is not enough space here to list all of the successes produced by the programme. Still, these projects should give an idea of the kind of work made possible by INTERREG IIIC.

After the main section, describing a wide range of projects, there is a description of four RFOs, one from each zone. Again, these are only a few examples of the many successful RFOs. The publication ends with a look at the directions for the future that will be taken up by INTERREG IVC. This new programme will continue to encourage cooperation among regions while giving an increased focus on innovation, competitiveness, the knowledge economy and socially and environmentally sustainable development—as is prescribed by the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas.

A look at the achievements of INTERREG IIIC makes it clear why this work should continue: By working together, the regions of Europe can help one another deal with the challenges that the future holds.

1

PROJECT THEME 1

Research, Technology and Innovation

No matter what their geography or cache of natural resources, every region in Europe can enhance their economic competitiveness and ability to sustain healthy development through research, technology and innovation. INTERREG IIIC helped regions from around Europe work together to discover the type of investment they needed to turn new ideas into tools for achieving sustainable development. The exchange of ideas made possible by INTERREG IIIC let distant regions that face similar challenges share innovative concepts with one another.

Efforts to encourage innovation are in keeping with the European Union's Structural Funds Objective 1 programmes, which provide support to regions lagging behind by helping them develop missing infrastructure and encouraging investments, so these regions can catch up. The emphasis on innovation is also in keeping with the Lisbon Agenda, which seeks to use innovation to make Europe the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world. Because of the importance given to innovation, a focus on innovative actions was a priority for programmes funded through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in the 2000-2006 period.

Projects supported by INTERREG IIIC encouraged innovation in such diverse ways as promoting development of cleaner energy, enhancing exchange of information among research centres and helping experts in biotechnology centres find out more about what their colleagues are doing. 10 percent of projects were focused on research, technology and innovation. Some successful examples include the following:

- Wind-Tech-Know encouraged the production of cleaner energy through wind power by: offering education and qualifications for wind energy specialists; developing strategies and building knowledge on the subject; and involving the public and transferring key know-how. See more at: <http://www.lk-dbr.de>.

- RUISNET sought to improve university-industry relations in the participating regions with the aim of developing a shared methodology of good practices and encouraging communication among diverse regions on how to address innovation. Regional data have been collected, analysed and ranked to set up Data Bases links, an observatory and a specific methodology to promote regional innovation advantages. The best European cases have been presented in the “I European Awards of University – Industry Cooperation with Regional Impact” organised in Brussels, April 20. See more at: <http://www.ruisnet.net>.
- CORINNA sought to exploit the full potential for innovation among partner regions by stimulating the exchange of information. One concrete output from that project is a database of private research organizations, innovation centres, universities and non-governmental institutions active in the field of research and science in the six participating regions, from Austria, Hungary, Slovenia, Italy and Germany. See the database and more information about the project at: <http://www.corinna-net.info>.
- Hanseatic Innovating Regions is a subproject of the Hanse Passage Regional Framework Operation. It developed a sustainable entrepreneurial innovation network that helps get small- and medium-sized businesses more directly involved in encouraging innovation through support for interregional “clustering” activities. See more at: <http://www.hanse-passage.net>.
- BbaS, a sub-project of the GROW Regional Framework Operation, built relationships between higher education institutions and business organisations to provide rapid and timely application of innovative research in three broad areas: biotechnology and health; new materials and information and communication technology; and technology and environmental solutions. See more at: <http://www.growbbas.com>.
- INNOTRAX created partnerships between small- and medium-sized enterprises and research and development companies by creating a database of contacts involved in research and development and by facilitating staff exchange between the partner regions. See more at: <http://www.innotrax.net>.
- BEPART promoted more effective entrepreneurship through education on the subject and through investigation of sustainable combinations between entrepreneurship promotion and regional development. See more at: <http://www.bepart.info>.

The following pages give more detail about four other INTERREG IIIC projects that have helped encourage research, technology and innovation as a means for driving regional economic development.

COMPETENCE KEEPS TRACK OF BIOTECHNOLOGY ABILITIES IN EUROPE

The collective competencies of scientists working in different research centres are sufficient to ensure that Europe is on the cutting edge of development in biotechnology. To take full advantage of these competencies, it is important that scientists in various locations are aware of what colleagues in their field are working on.

COMPETENCE, a pan-European network of biotechnology research competence, was designed to make sure that the abilities of researchers and research centres around the continent are known to all. The project partners, from six different countries, developed a platform that facilitates sharing of information about who in Europe has competence in specific areas of biotechnology.



BETTER EXPLOITING RESEARCH COMPETENCES IN THE AREA OF BIO-TECHNOLOGY

By increasing awareness about where biotechnology expertise can be found, the project not only helped scientists and industry find partners for collaboration on research and development, it also helped the regions where these partners work. As the project's brochure pointed out: "A region's growth potential cannot be fully exploited unless local academic research competences are made more visible and accessible."

The project developed a prototype online platform that stores information outlining the work being done in biotechnology. The platform was designed to make information searchable by many parameters, including broad themes within bioscience, this makes it easier to start a search based on general terms and browse the different types of work being done. The idea behind the platform was to create a professional system, exclusively designed for management of research information and competencies, in the belief that such a system would be more effective than ad hoc solutions built on a case-by-case basis.

By developing this platform, and undertaking related work, COMPETENCE gave access to the competencies of the partner universities. This communication provided partners with a support tool for analysing and planning their development of competencies and for positioning European biotechnology through a joint marketing strategy.

For more information on the project, see their website at: <http://www.biocompetence.org>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Stockholm, Sweden (lead partner); Rhône-Alpes, France; Közép-Magyarország, Hungary; Zuid-Holland, Netherlands; Oslo, Norway; South East U.K.

BUDGET:

€1,900,000 (ERDF contribution: €895,000)

✦ EAST ZONE



REGINS SUBPROJECTS FOSTER INNOVATION THROUGH BUSINESS CLUSTERS

Global business is not the exclusive domain of multinational corporations. Small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can work with distant partners to make themselves more competitive, but to do this, they must locate the right partners. Governments seeking to support SMEs have begun to turn to clusters—local groupings of businesses whose activity is connected, either horizontally or vertically. By making it possible for small firms to collaborate with one another, a cluster can assist in the growth of businesses, especially those providing new technologies.

A project called REGINS used cluster management to encourage business activity between companies in the regions of the four participating partners. As a Regional Framework Operation (RFO), which funds diverse initiatives, REGINS involved cooperation that led to the establishment of 28 subprojects. Most of the REGINS subprojects promoted research and development or new technologies, and all of them encouraged interregional cooperation through business clusters.

“The clusters act as mediators between SMEs,” explained Matyas Lazary, of West-Pannon Regional Development Agency, the Hungarian partner in the project. “A textile company here in Hungary needs certain technology to get a client, and the Government of the Lombardy Region is finding that technology in Italy.” In another subproject, “the clusters are circulating new technologies between a Stuttgart SME and Hungarian SMEs,” Lazary said.



REGINS TRANSFERS KNOW-HOW ON CLUSTERS-MANAGEMENT AND INITIATES JOINT RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Aside from assisting individual businesses, the REGINS project sought to set up a more permanent framework for cooperation. By helping regions transfer know-how on cluster management, and by encouraging the establishment of policies that support cluster management, REGINS laid the groundwork for other regions to use this tool. The project published a good practices guide that contains general lessons other regions can use to encourage development through clusters. The activities of the project have resulted in very concrete outputs that involved fruitful cooperation between SMEs in the fields of the automotive industry, logistics and biotechnology.

For more information, see the project's website at: <http://www.regins.org>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Upper Austria, Austria (lead partner); Stuttgart, Germany; Lombardy, Italy;
West Pannonia, Hungary.

BUDGET:

€7,035,223 (ERDF contribution: €3,667,611)

 **SOUTH ZONE**



MATEO FINDS A DOZEN WAYS TO PROMOTE TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION

When it comes to encouraging technology-driven innovation that can spur local growth, regional authorities may feel overwhelmed and isolated. Instead of relying on independent, one-off initiatives to stimulate innovation, the partners in the RFO MATEO agreed to address the challenge together, with a focused effort based on an array of coordinated activities.



MATEO REGARDS INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION AS A MEANS TO STIMULATE INNOVATION

MATEO was established as a Regional Framework Operation (RFO), which means that it let the diverse regional authorities involved support a variety of subprojects aimed at one overarching goal. In this case, the goal was encouraging technology-driven innovation, and 12 subprojects were undertaken. Examples include the following:

- The MedScout subproject sought to take good ideas that occur to working medical professionals and find ways for businesses to realise these ideas while turning a profit.
- The E-Clue subproject sought to create a business cluster, which lets firms help one another by sharing information. Unlike typical business clusters, which are usually concentrated within one region, the E-Clue cluster grouped businesses in the four partner regions, using a digital platform.
- The PTT-RenEnergy subproject sought synergies between businesses in different regions that are developing renewable energy technologies. The aim was to help small- and medium-sized enterprises, while promoting more sustainable energy sources, through interregional cooperation.
- The NAVISTO subproject sought to help project participants identify and utilise opportunities for exploiting global navigation satellite systems. The results included business cases and plans.

The MATEO project has already had impacts on planning in the partner regions. The work of the project influenced the multi-annual working plan of North Brabant and the innovation policy of South-West Bohemia. Danuta Hübner, European Commissioner for Regional Policy, noted the effectiveness of the MATEO project while speaking at the Regions for Economic Change conference in Brussels in March 2007.

For further information on the project, see their website at: <http://mateoproject.org>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Cataluña, Spain (lead partner); South-West Bohemia, Czech Republic;
Lombardy, Italy; Noord-Brabant, the Netherlands.

BUDGET:

€7,710,332 (ERDF contribution: €4,302,225)

 **WEST ZONE**



TINIS PARTNERS PLANT SEEDS FOR ICT INNOVATION

Information and communication technology (ICT) has become the backbone of modern business, and innovation in this field is vital to keeping a region's economy strong. This is why regional and local authorities around Europe are concerned with making sure that their regions remain innovative in the realm of ICT.

Through a project called TINIS, six partners from Belgium, the Czech Republic, Greece, Luxembourg and Slovenia shared information on how to develop structures that enhance innovation in the ICT sector. The partners were able to identify local and regional government policies aimed at fostering innovation, and to analyse which of these policies were most successful.

The lessons learned from this cooperation were compiled and disseminated, so that the results of this project can contribute to a better approach to encouraging ICT innovation throughout Europe. Through a series of workshops and conferences, the partners in TINIS produced several publications on how to create an environment that makes ICT innovation possible. Catalogues outlining the best tools, methods and available networks were developed to point the way for officials seeking a step-by-step approach to bolstering ICT in their region.

Along with producing publications, the partners also developed formal networks for cooperation. These networks provide contacts between different ICT providers in various regions, thereby facilitating exchange of information and methods. The various partner regions can also take advantage of the methods they themselves have compiled and shared. Furthermore, through their cooperation, the partners have a better understanding of each others' capabilities, so that they can plan future work on joint projects.

While the methods put together by the TINIS project were especially aimed at improving innovation in the ICT sector, they also have relevance for other sectors. By highlighting policies that encourage innovation in general, TINIS provides a roadmap for helping Europe's regions stay competitive.

For more information about the project, see their website at: <http://www.tinis-project.net>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Walloon, Belgium (lead partner); Moravskoslezsko, Czech Republic;
Dytiki Ellada, Greece; Grand-Duché, Luxembourg; Slovenija, Slovenia.

BUDGET:

€1,045,605 (ERDF contribution: €654,047)



TINIS IS FORGING STRONGER LINKS TO PROMOTE INNOVATION IN THE ICT SECTOR

2

PROJECT THEME 2

SME Development and Entrepreneurship

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are seen as the backbone of any regional or local economy. SMEs are dynamic businesses, with a potential to grow rapidly, experts recognise the potential of these businesses to create new jobs.

In its first annual progress report on the Lisbon strategy in January 2006, the European Commission named support for SMEs as a priority area where more action is needed. The EU's efforts to take such action include the new Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), which will give €3.621 billion from 2007-2013 to support SMEs as a means of promoting entrepreneurship, innovation, information communication technology and intelligent energy.

Clearly, European regions need to support an environment conducive to SMEs, which can serve as the building blocks of a diverse and strong local economy. Toward this end, INTERREG IIIC has promoted the transfer of knowledge between diverse regions that can help one another develop strategies to promote SMEs.

INTERREG IIIC projects supported SMEs and entrepreneurship in a variety of fields through a variety of approaches. Some partnerships promoted SMEs in general, by looking for the best kinds of regional policies to help these businesses, while others focused on specific types of SMEs, such as those that specialise in innovation, or SMEs located in low-population density areas. Other projects to encourage a new generation of SME owners promoted entrepreneurship among students or sought to facilitate transfer of SMEs by owners who are retiring.

15 percent were focused on SME development and entrepreneurship. Some successful examples include the following:

- Aquareg encouraged regions in Ireland, Norway and Spain to share strategies for addressing the problem of over-fishing and to promote aquaculture. See more at: <http://www.aquareg.com>.
- Next Business Generation focused on the need to transfer business from one generation to the next, so that healthy SMEs do not close down just because their owners are retiring. Participants in the project looked at policies to promote this kind of business succession. See more at: <http://www.next-business-generation.net>.

- DQE, a project involving a group of peripheral regions that are especially dependent on SMEs for their local economy worked on ways to stress the incorporation of design, quality and the environment into products being produced locally. See more at: <http://www.kainuunetu.fi>.
- TRATOKI brought together several regions to share policies and approaches for encouraging business. The project produced a toolkit to help decision makers and other stakeholders determine when and how public authorities should get involved in supporting businesses. See more at: <http://www.tratoki.org>.
- MORE COOPERATION, focus on coaching and support for Eastern and Western Europe industrial SMEs, mainly in the field of “B2B” services (manufacturing licence, setting up, outsourcing, subcontracting, know-how and technology transfer, etc.). Existing methodologies are the bases for common and structured tools’ streamline aiming to better support small companies (SMEs) in their approach of industrial cooperation and foster interregional industrial links. See more at: <http://www.more-cooperation.com>.
- SEED-REG helped participating regions develop concerted policies and actions to promote the start-up of innovative enterprises. The project produced a collection of good practices and model strategies, which other European regions can adapt to their own needs. See more at: <http://www.seedreg.com>.

The following pages give more detail about four other INTERREG IIC projects that have helped encourage SME development and entrepreneurship as a means for driving regional economic development.

❖ NORTH ZONE



EKIE HELPS LESS POPULATED REGIONS ENCOURAGE INNOVATION

Europe is dotted with small cities in rural areas that face challenges to developing and staying competitive in a hi-tech world. While the people in these locations may feel isolated, they are not all alone: they can team up with similar regions around the continent that are facing the same kind of challenges.

EKIE brought together low-population density regions from Europe, so they could help each other find common solutions to their need to encourage technology and innovation. More specifically, partners in EKIE sought to meet goals set by the European Union at the Lisbon European Council by

improving innovative capacity at the regional level. The partners attempted to create policies that could facilitate appropriate development of technology parks; public economic development organizations and incubators; research and development activities; and higher education.

By encouraging technology parks, the project partners sought to foster a new kind of regional cooperation entity that is created through a strong relationship between companies, a technology park, a university, a polytechnic, an incubator, public authorities and various research and development and funding organizations.

To encourage business incubators, project partners sought to create a model for incubators and public development organizations that work to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) develop their business processes. The model, which would facilitate development and promote entrepreneurship, innovation and employment, was specially created for areas with low population densities - it was to be piloted in Tamsalu, Estonia.



KNOWLEDGE-INTENSIVE TECHNOLOGY ENTERPRISES HELPING STIMULATE NEW BUSINESS

As a means of supporting research and development, the project partners sought to create new means to enhance dissemination of the latest technology to SMEs in selected fields, encourage networks of SMEs, and initiate different research and innovation projects to answer the needs of SMEs. In the area of higher education, the project sought to encourage education activities that can better meet the needs of SMEs and students.

Through this combination of activities, EKIE creates a blueprint for sparsely populated regions of Europe to help themselves by improving their level of research, development and innovation. For more information, see the project's website at: <http://www.ekie.net>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Pohjois-Suomi, Finland (lead partner); Estonia; Hessen, Germany; Border, Midland and Western, Ireland; Marche, Italy.

BUDGET:

€1,680,737 (ERDF contribution: €946,361)

■ EAST ZONE



E-TEAMS BRINGS BROAD RANGE OF STAKEHOLDERS TOGETHER TO SUPPORT SMES

It's not just business people who want to see small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) succeed. Given the importance of these enterprises to a region's economic health, many stakeholders are concerned with their success.

A project called E-Teams (the E stands for entrepreneurial) was designed to discover effective policies to support SMEs by bringing together a broad range of people and institutions—including policymakers, business support organisations, university experts, and the SMEs themselves. The regions partnering in the project shared their experiences in order to discover best practices for cooperating to support SMEs.

The project worked by creating two groupings, multi-actor partnerships (MAPs) and E-Teams. "With multi-actor partnerships, we establish networks of policymakers, chambers of commerce, regional development agencies and universities, who discuss their approach to SMEs. This is a top-down approach," according to Marcin Baron of the Karol Adamiecki University of Economics, the lead partner in the project. "And we have the bottom up approach, the E-Teams, which are made up of SMEs, who, through their daily activity test the policies."

In the meetings of the various E-Teams, members of SMEs were able to discuss the kind of policies and support they felt their businesses needed. An E-Team leader was chosen in each region to coordinate the input of the team. The partners involved in the MAPs could use the input of the E-Teams to determine the best means for supporting business in their region.

The information put together by the MAPs and the E-Teams were shared by the various regions, which were able to produce such outputs as a methodology for regional benchmarking of SME support, a handbook on the E-teams approach and guidelines for SME policy development. With these materials, other regions from around Europe can use E-Teams as a means for supporting their own SMEs.

For more information, see the project's website at: <http://www.eteams.ae.katowice.pl>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Slaskie, Poland (lead partner); Pohjois-Suomi, Finland; Sachsen, Germany; Kriti, Greece;
Lietuva, Lithuania; Centro, Portugal; Cataluña, Spain; Stockholm, Sweden; West Midlands, U.K.

BUDGET:

€1,239,590 (ERDF contribution: €793,831)



E-TEAMS BOOSTS ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INTERNALISATION OF SMES

 **SOUTH ZONE**



DISTRICT: INDUSTRIAL REGIONS COOPERATE TO ADDRESS COMMON CHALLENGES

While they belong to four different zones of the INTERREG IIIC programme, the four regions cooperating in the DISTRICT project feature common economic traits: all are heavily dependent on industry, and all are looking to make a change.

True to its name, DISTRICT (Developing Industrial Strategies ThRough Innovative Clusters and Technologies) worked to improve regional innovation systems and support further development of the knowledge economy.

The partners' dependence on industry means that their economies are seriously challenged by globalisation. Their industrial systems experience declining competitiveness because of factors like: limited access by small- and medium-sized enterprises to technological innovation; relocation of production to lower-cost areas; and underperformance of innovation-related institutions, including universities, research centres, business services providers, etc.

DISTRICT was established as a Regional Framework Operation (RFO), which means that the partners cooperate in developing and supporting a series of subprojects with focused strategic goals. DISTRICT funded 11 such interregional subprojects seeking to promote technological innovation. The project successfully managed a quick and effective call for proposals. The “innovative ideas” meetings, organised before the call, produced excellent applications—even more than the project could actually fund. The 11 subprojects fostered broad cooperation involving more than 50 local actors, including 19 university departments, 19 research centres, 10 business service providers and two public administrations.

The subprojects focused on the three DISTRICT’s themes for cooperation:

- connecting clusters and business networks to innovation, within the global context;
- SME innovation projects, in collaboration with universities and research and transfer centres;
- innovation in financial engineering, seed venture capital, start-ups and spin-offs.

The RFO was able to achieve positive results through complementarity and integration of know-how, solid management, effective monitoring of technical and financial progress, a concerted approach to the call for proposals and bottom-up involvement of key territorial actors.

For further information, see the website at: <http://www.district-rfo.eu>.



WORKING TOWARDS DEVELOPING KNOWLEDGE BASED INDUSTRIES

PARTNER REGIONS:

Toscana, Italy (lead partner); Sachsen, Germany; West Midlands, U.K.;
Västra Götaland, Sweden.

BUDGET:

€6,646,575 (ERDF contribution: €3,686,343)

CLOE HELPS MAKE BUSINESS CLUSTERS COMPETITIVE

Business clusters are a good idea: Small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), whose activities are connected horizontally or vertically, partner with one another and with research institutions involved in related activities. Clusters can help a region improve the capacity and competitiveness of its businesses, especially in the case of businesses providing new technologies.

In recognition of the benefits of clusters, a project called CLOE (Clusters Linked Over Europe) helped diverse regions exchange information on the best way to encourage such cooperation. The work conducted through the project continues to help the partners identify and share the best means for developing and managing successful clusters.

The original partners in CLOE were seven European regions, but the network has been open to new partners and has constantly grown since it officially began in December 2004. CLOE allows representatives from regions all around Europe to meet and discuss means for establishing and managing clusters and networks. It also makes it possible for the cooperating regions to develop business opportunities for companies cooperating in the clusters. While some meetings have been conducted in person, the CLOE website also provides a living platform, where businesses and officials can meet in a virtual space. The website is intended to serve as an entry point for cluster initiatives in the participating regions, and it offers access to information on the competencies of participating regions and companies that are involved in clusters.

One of the activities conducted under the project is a CLOE scholarship, offered to outstanding young professionals from the original partner regions. Scholarships are available for those seeking a Masters of Science degree in certain engineering and management fields at the HECTOR School of Engineering and Management.

The results of the program are already being put to practical use in the Region of Värmland, Sweden, where the CLOE good practice manual on cluster management was used to draft a measure in the region's competitiveness operational programme.

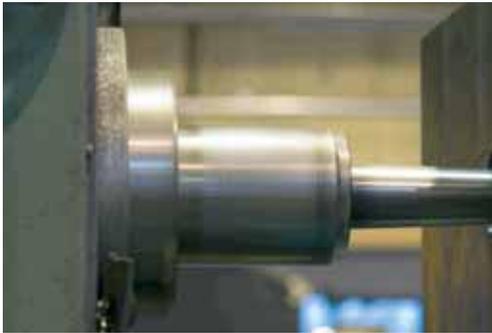
In fact, the CLOE project has been selected in June 2007 to receive extra ERDF funding to test how the good practices it identified can be transferred to mainstream programmes. For more information about the project, see their website at: <http://www.clusterforum.org>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Karlsruhe, Germany (lead partner); Lyon, France; Upper Austria, Austria; Tartu, Estonia;
Timisoara, Romania; Kaliningrad, Russia; Värmland, Sweden.

BUDGET:

€1,808,000 (ERDF contribution: € 800,000)



BUSINESS CLUSTERS CAN SPARK NEW OPPORTUNITIES

3

PROJECT THEME 3

Information Society and e-Government

Since the 1960s, developed countries in Europe, and around the world, have gradually transformed from manufacturing or heavy industry societies to information societies. While the digital revolution has increased the possibility for regional economies to become more knowledge-based, it has also made it easier to open up the workings of government to everyone. By ensuring that they have more efficient economies and more transparent governments, the regions of Europe can make it easier for concerned citizens and authorities to promote sustainable development, equality and cohesion.

The importance of encouraging electronic government and promoting information society were recognised by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Promoting information society was one of the priorities for the ERDF's innovative actions during the 2000-2006 period.

e-governance and information society policies have been limited or non-existent in most regions of Europe. Spreading these practices more widely requires new, innovative approaches.

With this in mind, INTERREG IIIC sought to encourage projects that partnered various regions in the quest to reap all the possible benefits that technology can offer to enhance information societies and open up governance. Project activities sponsored by INTERREG IIIC in this area included: trying to protect privacy as government information grows; encouraging transparency and citizen participation in governance through the use of technology; developing a robust mapping technique, which can compare economic and environmental aspects of the regions of Europe; and creating a means for benchmarking progress toward becoming an information society.

8 percent of projects focused on information society and e-governance. Some successful examples include the following:

- eGOVREGIO developed a tool to measure how ready governments are for e-government and to assess the various regional action plans that are available. See more at: <http://www.e-govregio.net>.

- EUPOS-IRC improved partner regions' knowledge of satellite and positioning systems, as well as geo-information data, to develop a corps of regional experts. See more at: <http://www.eupos.org>.
- ESTIIC, a Regional Framework Operation (RFO), brought together partners from Spain, Germany and Ireland. These partners worked together to increase the impact of policies in the field of innovation, promote new and better working methods with new technologies, improve the efficiency of regional policy for promoting information society, encourage development of broadband-based platforms, help modernise administration of the private sector, promote long-term transregional cooperation and identify best practices. See more at: <http://www.estiic.org>.
- E-PRODAT, encouraged an exchange of best practices in the area of protecting the increasing amount of personal data stored in digital form by governments and public administrations, especially information used for e-governance and information exchanged via the internet. See more at: <http://www.eprodat.org>.

The following pages give more detail about four other INTERREG IIIC projects that have helped encourage uptake of information society and e-government techniques.

❖ NORTH ZONE



CITIES ACROSS EUROPE LOOK TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION THROUGH eCITIZEN

Local and regional governments that are looking to be more transparent can bring themselves closer to their citizens with the Internet and other electronic platforms. Through a project called eCitizen, 11 cities in eight regions around Europe cooperated to find ways to be more transparent by using technology. The partners came from as far west as Sheffield, U.K., as far east as St. Petersburg, Russia, as far south as Bologna, Italy, and as far north as Tampere, Finland. What all these cities have in common is a commitment to incorporating the European Union's principals on use of electronic information as a means for supporting regional economic and social development.

Almost all European local administrations are undergoing a process of change designed to increase participation, and to take advantage of the possibilities provided by information and

communication technology. The partners in eCitizen gave themselves a head start in this process, by sharing ideas and best practices to address a set of challenges that they all have in common.

The focus of the project's activities was to help participants develop and pilot innovative outputs, such as electronic management systems for city administrations, online public services for citizens and electronic services aimed at allowing citizen participation through digital platforms. The work also involved promoting public awareness of e-governance activities, through local information campaigns and through publication of studies on the subject.

The partners of the project shared their experiences and expertise through study tours, which allow participants to focus on specific applications; through training seminars, which put an emphasis on e-learning tools as an alternative to traditional training methods; and through bi-annual meetings of the steering group, which bring together representatives of all the partners.

The findings and proposals generated by the eCitizen cooperation have already borne fruit. Some partner cities have begun to incorporate experiences from the project into their regular governance practices.

For more information about eCitizen, see their website at: <http://www.baltic.org/ecitizen>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Etelä-Suomi, Finland (lead partner) Länsi-Suomi, Finland (lead); Jylland – Fyn, Denmark; Estonia; Emilia-Romagna, Italy; Trentino, Italy; Lithuania; St. Petersburg, Russia; Yorkshire & The Humber, U.K.

BUDGET:

€1,335,370 (ERDF contribution: €719,486)



KNOWLEDGE SHARING IN ACTION: eCITIZEN PARTNERS EXPERIENCE eVOTING AT KIOSKS IN SHEFFIELD

UNDERSTAND SEEKS BENCHMARKS OF PROGRESS TOWARD INFORMATION SOCIETY

Regions throughout Europe are eager to ensure that they truly belong to the information society—a society in which the creation, distribution and use of information improves the activities of government, business and culture. But it can be hard for local stakeholders to know if their region is really making progress toward achieving this kind of society.

Through a project called UNDERSTAND, a group of partners from 10 regions within the European Union sought to set up a system of benchmarking that can be used to measure local progress toward becoming an information society.

The partners in UNDERSTAND all came from regions with experience in benchmarking information society progress. They united in this project to seek a consensus on the best means for benchmarking. With an online database, the partners identified the aspects that make certain regions perform better than others when it comes to encouraging the development of the information society.

The project was created in response to a need to assess the heavy investments being made by Europe's regional authorities, and other stakeholders, on information society initiatives. While there were "benchmarking eEurope" standards to measure the progress that various EU countries are making in this regard, there were no comparable means for regional decision-makers to assess how well their investments in the information society are performing.



UNDERSTAND DEVELOPS BENCHMARKS FOR E-EUROPE IN THE REGIONS

UNDERSTAND produced a regional benchmarking toolkit, as well as a database, which was filled with data from surveys in the participating region. Using the toolkit and the database, other regions can save time and money in developing their own means for benchmarking information society progress. Thus, the concrete results of the UNDERSTAND project are easily transferable to other regions.

Several meetings allowed the partners to agree upon common indicators for their benchmarking toolkit and produce a handbook outlining the indicators and other parameters of the toolkit. At a final conference in Poznan, Poland, in June 2006, the partners pledged to continue their groundbreaking work in information society benchmarking in order to spread awareness about the importance of this work and to investigate possible future projects.

For more information about UNDERSTAND, see: <http://www.understand-eu.net>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Emilia-Romagna, Italy (lead partner); Aquitaine, France; Hessen, Germany; Piemonte, Italy; Wielkopolska, Poland; Islas Baleares, Spain; Comunidad Valenciana, Spain; Mellersta Norrland, Sweden; Yorkshire & The Humber, U.K.; Wales, U.K.

BUDGET:

€1,370,000 (ERDF contribution: €811,825)

SOUTH ZONE



GRISI'S MAPS ADD ANOTHER DIMENSION TO PROJECT EVALUATION

A geographic information system (GIS) is like a map and a database combined. It allows users to look at the spatial distribution of a number of parameters, whether this means highlighting the areas of a region that get the most rainfall, pinpointing high traffic areas or identifying the parts of a city with the highest incidence of tuberculosis.

GRISI, a Regional Framework Operation (RFO) in which partners support a series of subprojects with a common objective, used the robust kind of mapping made available with GIS to analyse the results of projects in rural areas funded by European Union Structural Funds. The partners in this RFO hope to use this information to promote innovation and modernisation in these areas. The RFO assisted in long-term efforts to develop a robust web map of Europe, based on INSPIRE European directive recommendations and compliant with international GIS interoperability standards. This Spatial Data Infrastructure would allow

extensive comparisons between regions, to see where they share similarities. Such an analysis would make it easier to identify far-flung regions that have common problems, so that they can work together and share best practices to address their problems.

In the case of GRISI, all the partners came from rural regions, and they all share a need to encourage innovation. The overall objective of the subprojects within GRISI was to provide another method of looking at areas that have been the beneficiaries of projects. It was hoped that GIS mapping would bring added value to these projects by:

- pointing out complimentary aspects of projects;
- providing new ideas;
- improving visibility of projects and their results on the internet by using maps to overcome language barriers;
- giving regions a clear image of the attributes of areas in which projects focus;
- improving the appeal of each region involved.

For more information about the GRISI project, see their website at: <http://www.grisi.org>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Midi-Pyrénées, France (lead partner); Abruzzo, Italy; Latvia; Navarra, Spain.

BUDGET:

€3,380,606 (ERDF contribution: €1,823,636)



GRISI CREATES GEOPORTALS TO DISPLAY REGIONAL PROJECTS ON THE INTERNET



BRISE SEEKS TO BOOST INFORMATION SOCIETY EXPERTISE

The benefits of joining the information society are clear: economies based around new technologies are more competitive and less dependent on scarce natural resources. What may not be clear is how regional authorities can encourage the development of information societies.

In a network project called BRISE (Boosting Regional Information Society Expertise), European regions sought to work together, through knowledge exchange, networking and cooperation, to promote the development of the information society. Thanks to BRISE, an information society strategy is being produced for each of the partner regions, in the countries of the Czech Republic, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Spain and the U.K.

BRISE helped to promote knowledge exchange between the partners, all of whom are interested in the possibilities offered by the information society. The network has also helped to identify practical steps that more geographically peripheral regions can take to increase their share of information society investment. In County Donegal, in the north-west of Ireland, for example, business clusters are learning about e-business techniques from a handicraft cluster in Kainuu, Finland.

Through BRISE, the partners worked on interregional proposals to further the development of clusters within their regions. Business clusters are groupings of businesses and other organisations with similar interests. Five working groups were established in the regions, to advance innovation in e-government, e-business, broadband, ICT inward investment and e-learning. The network also facilitated an Internet knowledge exchange, designed to improve cooperation between interregional partners interested in developing the information society. In addition to sharing information with one another, the partners in BRISE also sought to spread information about the benefits of the information society around Europe. To this end, the project organized the "i2010 for European Cities and Regions Conference" in Olomouc in the Czech Republic in October 2006. More than 100 delegates from 15 European countries attended to discuss and learn about the i2010 agenda, which calls for improving business, research and quality of life in Europe through digital innovation.

To learn more about BRISE, and to see the reports and studies already produced by the project, see the website at: <http://brise.ernact.net>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Border, Midland and Western Region, Ireland (lead partner); Stredni Morava, Czech Republic; Itä-Suomi, Finland; Emilia-Romagna, Italy; Veneto, Italy; Cantabria, Spain; Pais Vasco, Spain; North West (inc. Merseyside), U.K.; Northern Ireland, U.K.

BUDGET:

€1,453,000 (ERDF contribution: €999,750)



WORKING ON THE PERIPHERY TO BOOST INFORMATION SOCIETY

4

PROJECT THEME 4

Employment, Social Inclusion, Human Resources and Education

The most valuable asset any region has is its people, so perhaps the most worthwhile investment any region can make is in its human capital. Ensuring that everyone enjoys a good education and adequate employment, and that they feel included in all aspects of society, is key to ensuring social cohesion.

Increased employment and greater social inclusion are both goals of the Lisbon Agenda. Efforts to improve education and increase the capacity of human resources can create the skilled workforce needed to encourage innovation. In its mid-term assessment of the Lisbon Agenda, the European Commission called for the creation of a “Partnership for Growth and Jobs,” that would focus on increasing employment.

The importance that the EU gives to employment, social inclusion, human resources and education were reflected in several INTERREG IIIC projects.

In many ways, employment and education were cross-cutting themes among all INTERREG IIIC projects. The programme itself focuses on raising the capacity and knowledge of officials on the regional level, and a desire to increase employment is implicit in any efforts aimed at development. There were also initiatives focused specifically on employment, social inclusion, human resources and education, and these made up 6 percent of INTERREG IIIC’s 270 projects. Examples include the following:

- Future Health was a project with the goal of promoting development of the regional health care systems of partner countries. This goal was achieved by developing system models that can be implemented in different national environments. See more at: <http://www.futurehealth.fi>.
- REVOS, a network developed through the cooperation of 15 European organisations, had the goal of giving regional administrations the tools they need to support volunteerism and civil society organisations. See more at: www.eu-voluntariado.org.

- Factors, a subproject of the Regional Triangle of Weimar project, aimed to find ways to employ the long-term unemployed, through cooperation between educational institutions and small- and medium-sized enterprises. See more at: www.trireg.net.
- POSEIDON sought to stimulate the economies of deprived urban areas by identifying best practices and putting them to work. See more at: <http://www.poseidon-partnership.net>.
- CASE was a project looking for innovative solutions to the socio-economic problems of partner regions that had been adversely affected by the transition to a market economy. See more at: <http://www.interreg-case.net>.
- C2C (City to City) is a RFO involving partners from Italy, Germany, Latvia, Spain, Turkey and the U.K. in an exchange of experience about the phenomenon of migration from city to city. The project addressed immigration and migration policies and related matters. See more at: <http://www.interregc2c.net>.

The following pages give more detail about four other INTERREG IIC projects that have helped encourage support for employment, social inclusion, human resources and education.

❖ NORTH ZONE



ALICERA FOCUSES ON REGIONAL IDENTITY AND COMPETENCE IN RURAL AREAS

To meet the challenges facing the rural areas of Europe, local citizens need the capacity to get involved in regional development, and they also need a sense of identity with their own regions. Educators who recognise the importance of instilling a strong sense of regional identity and better skills among inhabitants have developed a new educational instrument, called “rural action learning.”

ALICERA was a project designed to allow experts from a group of rural regions to further investigate the possibilities of using rural action learning as a way of ensuring a better future for residents of rural locations around Europe. The primary objective of the project was to strengthen the regional identity and competence of people in rural areas, especially through education. A related, secondary objective of the project was to identify innovative educational instruments that can be used to mobilise a region’s home-grown potential to achieve regional development.

ALICERA especially focused on the benefits of rural action learning, which is based on cooperation between the education sector and the agriculture/food industry sector. Rural action learning activities take place within agriculture and food businesses, and participants receive on-site training.

Working together, the partners in ALICERA investigated the possibilities for stimulating rural action learning, for children and adults, by collecting two types of data:

- A large-scale questionnaire sought information from various members of regional education networks, those involved in rural action learning and the groups targeted by rural action learning.
- More qualitative interviews with rural action learning professionals and regional cooperation partners helped to provide more details about the cause-effect relations of rural action learning.

The findings from the project were intended to indicate the potentials of rural action learning, so that regions can consider developing projects around this concept for the 2007-2013 Structural Funds period.

For more information, see the project's website at: <http://www.alicera.org>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Vechta and Lower Saxony, Germany (lead partner); Tyrol, Austria; Brittany, France; Western Hungary, Hungary; Jelgava, Latvia.

BUDGET:

€1,415,780 (ERDF contribution: €800,676)



USING EDUCATION TO STRENGTHEN REGIONAL IDENTITY

EDGATE ENVISIONS A SCHOOL FOR THE NEW GENERATION
OF EUROPEANS

Imagine a new kind of school, where students learn to be European citizens, instead of simply citizens of one country. Children would graduate speaking their mother tongue, English and at least one other language. They would be proficient in “European Studies,” and they would be comfortable with people from other countries and cultures.

This was what a group of education experts were imagining when they met at two conferences to develop a pilot plan for the European Regional College (ERC). The experts were involved in EdGATE, a network of 12 partner organisations in 10 European regions in Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Germany, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Ukraine and U.K. The network was put together to foster a professional educational exchange between institutions and their representatives from all over Europe, with the aim of strengthening economic and social cohesion. Participants in EdGATE shared best practices regarding various educational policies and approaches, and they worked together to create a pilot concept for a European school on the ERC model.

The ERC concept was developed as a template that can be taken up in regions all around Europe. As ERC's are envisioned, they would be open to all of a region's students, from ages 6-18, as well as foreign visitors. ERC schools around Europe would have similar curricula, making it easier for students to transfer among them, and thereby facilitating mobility. This



EDGATE PROMOTES NEW SCHOOL MODELS FOR THE EUROPEAN KNOWLEDGE-SOCIETY

uniformity would also help bring about a Europe-wide curriculum, and could lead to more consistent standards of teaching throughout the continent. The curriculum would include European Studies, and would look at history, economics, social issues and other subjects from a European point of view, rather than just a national one. Students would be trained in languages, would be exposed to many cultures and would be encouraged to work together. The graduates of such a school are expected to be more capable of flexible thinking, more open to new ideas, more adept at communication and more tolerant of others.

Project partners developed plans for the school through a series of workshops and meetings, laying the groundwork for a new kind of education. For more information, see the project's website at: <http://www.edgate.eu.com>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Vienna, Austria (lead partner); Bosnia and Herzegovina; Zagreb, Croatia; Mecklenburg-West Pomerania, Germany; Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany; Malopolskie, Poland; Belgrade, Serbia; Calarsi, Romania; University of Edinburgh, U.K.; Kiev, Ukraine.

BUDGET:

€1,493,983 (ERDF contribution: €796,832)

 **SOUTH ZONE**



A.D.E.P. BUILDS THE CAPACITY TO GET OVER MOUNTAINS

The isolation faced by mountainous regions of Europe can act as a bottleneck to development by hampering the exchange of trade and ideas. But less-populous areas don't have to go it alone.

Seven comparatively isolated regions, spread from the Navarra Mountains in Spain to the Pohjois-Suomi region of Finland, benefited from their cooperation in a project called A.D.E.P., which was aimed at sharing ideas about how to handle common concerns. A.D.E.P. is a Regional Framework Operation (RFO), a means of cooperation that helps regions benefit from information exchange while supporting a series of subprojects with a common objective. Through A.D.E.P., the regions were able to fund subprojects that were intended to improve regional and local policies for cohesion and development. The cooperation built through this RFO was intended to foster continued exchanges of information and best practices and to help create better development policy.

A.D.E.P. involved a major capacity building component, so that subprojects not only received financial support; they were also backed throughout their work by training. After assessing local needs, and choosing the most promising ideas, A.D.E.P. provided tailored training to help local participants make the most of their subprojects. The process raised the capacity of local administrative professionals and helped them integrate into knowledge networks. As a result, officials in isolated areas became better equipped to address their problems, and they do not have to act alone.

The network is open to cooperation from other regions around Europe that want to take advantage of the pool of knowledge collected through A.D.E.P. By providing a uniform approach, based on tried and proven practices, the project is helping to create a new model for development in isolated and sparsely populated areas of Europe.

For more information, see the A.D.E.P. website at: www.adep-europe.com.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Midi-Pyrénées, France (lead partner); Pohjois-Suomi, Finland; Toscana, Italy; Border, Midland, Western Region, Ireland; Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Poland; Podkarpackie, Poland; Navarra, Spain.

BUDGET:

€4,475,416 (ERDF contribution: €2,824,755)



SUPPORTING LOCAL PILOT INITIATIVES FOR IMPROVING REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

SEEKING TO STAY AFLOAT, PORT CITIES COOPERATE THROUGH NEW EPOC

Port cities around Europe face challenges ranging from globalisation and technological shifts to more intense competition and climate change. The future development of these cities depends on their ability to regenerate their economic basis, to maintain the institutional and financial capacity for political steering and regulation and to change traditional mentalities, so they can build a modern identity.

Partners from 10 European port cities, working through a project called NEW EPOC, cooperated to gather and disseminate information, expertise and useful guidelines for action for local decision makers. These cities had already been cooperating in the Maritime Cities Network, and NEW EPOC allowed them to deepen their cooperation and broaden its reach, through workshops and joint research.

The work produced by the project has already fostered practical applications. For example, the regional waterfront strategists in Southampton City Council directly benefited from the long-term vision approach identified in the project's workshop in Bremen. Similarly, the Italian partner in Taranto has adopted the model of NEW EPOC's Bremen Architects Workshop.

The NEW EPOC final report, which outlines the project's findings, states in its summary that: "At the end of intense discussions and analyses involving 10 European port cities there is a good news story: Despite all problems with industrial decline and economic crisis, the European port-cities are emerging as modern maritime cities with strongly performing ports, but also new economic sectors like high tech production, science and research, tourism, culture and other modern services." In its section on "Port City Stories," the report outlines the individual situations, and solutions taken, in the port cities of Bilbao, Bremen, Cherbourg, Gijón, Kaliningrad, Patras, Southampton, Taranto and Trieste. For example, in Bilbao, the city revitalised its waterfront with high-quality architectural developments on the sites of old shipyards along the river. This revitalisation included developing the Guggenheim Museum, a shopping mall and the Euskalduna concert hall, all served by a new tram line. Bremen has also done work to develop its waterfront, while Gijón is an example of a town seeking to encourage innovation and research.

By detailing case studies of these cities through a variety of documentation, the NEW EPOC project makes it easier for port cities to transfer ideas to one another.

For more information, see the website at: <http://www.new-epoc.net>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

South East Region, U.K. (lead partner); Basse-Normandie, France; Bremen, Germany; Peloponnisos, Greece; Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Italy; Puglia, Italy; Kalingrad, Russia; Pais Vasco, Spain; Principado De Asturias, Spain.

BUDGET:

€2,081,150 (ERDF contribution: €1,196,345)



PORTS ARE FINDING NEW WAYS TO MANAGE SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE

5

PROJECT THEME 5

Environment, Risk Prevention, Energy and Natural Resources

On the global level, unsustainable behaviour depletes non-renewable resources and has unpredictable impacts on the climate. On a more local level, neglecting the environment can also put a strain on natural resources that make up a region's wealth. By supporting sustainable development, authorities help to prolong the life of the earth while maintaining the value of their regions' assets.

In Europe, and around the world, the urgent need to switch away from fossil fuels to more sustainable sources of energy is widely recognised. European ministers committed the European Union to addressing this need when they signed the 2001 Gothenburg Agenda, which calls for ensuring that development on the continent is environmentally and socially sustainable. Environmental concerns also take on an economic and social context when it comes to prevention of risks, such as floods, which have become a growing problem in Europe, due to climate change and increasing development on flood plains.

The importance of keeping development sustainable was taken into consideration in all of INTERREG IIIC's projects. In addition, 21 percent of INTERREG IIIC's 270 projects focused specifically on the related issues of environment, risk prevention, energy and natural resources. The projects sponsored by INTERREG IIIC have addressed environmental concerns in many ways, including by seeking to bolster the use of renewable energy sources, by encouraging the uptake of more environmentally friendly farming techniques—and even by trying to change the attitudes of consumers.

Some examples include the following:

- CosCo found means for preventing waste by processing sea grass, the seaweed that washes up on beaches and is usually just thrown away. As new products were developed, this effort created a potential source of income from what was once waste. See more at: <http://www.life-seegrass.de>.
- SOUSTENERGY promoted a new energy culture combining the technological and the social component of sustainable energy habits and management. Following a scope of good European energy-saving and energy-efficiency practices analysed in the "Methodological Guide",

travelling exhibitions and pilot experiments were implemented. Worth noting the energy audit, placing special emphasis on the energy and economic-saving potential of behavioural and management measures involving no cost. See more at: <http://www.soustenergy.net>

- REGENERGY encouraged innovative energy solutions by promoting the use of locally available resources for heating. The project investigated new financing instruments to support local heating projects. The results will be published in a guide with good practices and case studies. See more at: <http://www.reg-energy.org>.
- ENERCY'REGIO, a Regional Framework Operation, supported nine subprojects to develop toolkits that met local needs in the areas of renewable energies and energy savings. See more at: www.enercyregio.net.
- FLAPP is a network of 37 partners working to address the problems of flood control and management, especially in border areas, where this work requires cooperation of two different countries. See more at: <http://www.flapp.org>.
- Union des Terres de Rivières (U.TdR) focused on fluvial landscape and aquatic surroundings management. The EU Water Framework Directive, the ecosystem approach and local governance practices on water land use were key tools of this ambitious network: 24 partners from 10 Members States have been working together fostering local links between fluvial landscape towns that currently look beyond to a more tight cooperation scheme. See more at: <http://www.terresderivieres.eu>

The following pages give more detail about four other INTERREG IIIC projects that have helped encourage support for environment, risk prevention, energy and natural resources.

❖ NORTH ZONE



LOF GIVES A LIFT TO LOCAL ORGANIC FOOD MARKETS

More and more alert consumers in Europe are looking to increase their purchases of healthy food and reduce their impact on the environment by buying organic foods. Many shoppers will gladly seek out produce that is produced locally, without environmentally unfriendly practices.

If consumers in rural areas of Europe take an interest in food that's grown in their area, with fewer chemicals, they will not only stand a good chance of improving their diet but they will also plant the seeds for a healthy market for local organic produce, as well as helping create jobs in agriculture, while encouraging environmentally friendly practices.

LOF allowed eight regions from Estonia, Sweden and the U.K. to work together on activities designed to develop and promote increased production and consumption of organic foods. The work undertaken through LOF encouraged efforts to strengthen both the supply and demand for organic foods. Baseline studies of needs were conducted in all three countries, and then specific pilot projects were designed for each.

In the islands of Saaremaa and Hiiumaa in Estonia, the focus was on traditional local food culture. The work involved supporting the establishment of local organisations that market organic products, developing logistic schemes for distribution and finding outlets to sell the products.

In Jämtland County and Södertälje municipality in Sweden, the pilot worked on small-scale processing of local and organic food. This involved a workshop on the relationship between traditional food processing techniques, food quality and health.

In the U.K., the topic was marketing and purchasing of local and organic food. Through this pilot, a network of existing and new local food businesses was established.

In all these areas, the pilot projects were supported by LOF with capacity raising, provided through seminars, workshops and study tours. The lessons learned from every country were used to develop policy recommendations and local strategies for promoting small-scale processing of organic food, local purchases of this food and a local food culture.

For more information, see the website at: www.ceet.ee/lof.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Estonia (lead partner); Mellersta Norrland, Sweden; Stockholm, Sweden; South West, U.K.

BUDGET:

€458,282 (ERDF contribution: €296,839)



TAPPING INTO THE BENEFITS OF LOCAL AND ORGANIC FOOD

✦ EAST ZONE



REGIOSUSTAIN PROMOTES BIOMASS AS A WAY TO STOKE RURAL ECONOMIES

Biomass cultivation can turn animal waste, crop residues and by-products of the forestry industry into locally produced energy, to the benefit of a region's economy and environment. The biomass fuel that is produced is generally combusted like a fossil fuel, but it discharges considerably less carbon dioxide, and its production actually absorbs the gas. It is also a renewable source of energy. Biomass cultivation is an economic activity that residents of rural regions can initiate easily, making it a viable means for supporting development.

REGIOSUSTAIN is a project that promoted the use of biomass in locations that could benefit from it. The project involved cooperation of officials in rural regions in Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Poland and Slovenia. "One of the main objectives of REGIOSUSTAIN is to enhance knowledge about the potentials of biomass," said Agnes Borsig of the lead partner, Leibniz-Institute of Regional Geography in Germany. "In the long term, the project aims to improve social and economic cohesion within disadvantaged regions that are dominated by agriculture and forestry."

Borsig said that biomass could provide an economic boon to these regions by creating a new industry and lowering the cost of energy for a region's consumers.

She explained further in an analytical paper she produced about the project: "The whole value added—from the cultivation of biomass to the energetic utilization and consumption—remains in the region." Borsig stressed the importance of information in the process: "By the exchange of existing experiences and the involvement of experts contributing their specific knowledge in the field of biomass, REGIOSUSTAIN passes on know-how to local and regional actors as a tool for them to initiate regional economic cycles."

REGIOSUSTAIN achieved this spread of knowledge by setting up regional information and service centres to educate people on the uses and advantages of biomass for producing energy. The partners also shared their own know-how on biomass through a number of workshops, conferences, exhibitions and training events. The project was managed by regional working groups, which consulted regularly with experts from research and development institutions and the national forestry services. In addition, the project has successfully linked its activities with another INTERREG IIIC project, RECORA, in which seven partners—from Austria, Germany, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Greece—work together to exploit the renewable energy potential of participating regions.

For more information on the project, see the website at: <http://www.regiosustain.net>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Sachsen, Germany (lead partner); Vienna, Austria; Moravskoslezsko, Czech Republic; Dolnoslaskie, Poland; Wielkopolskie, Poland; Slovenia.

BUDGET:

€704,000 (ERDF contribution: €507,000)



REGIOSUSTAIN PROMOTES BIOMASS FOR THE BENEFIT OF RURAL REGIONS

 **SOUTH ZONE**



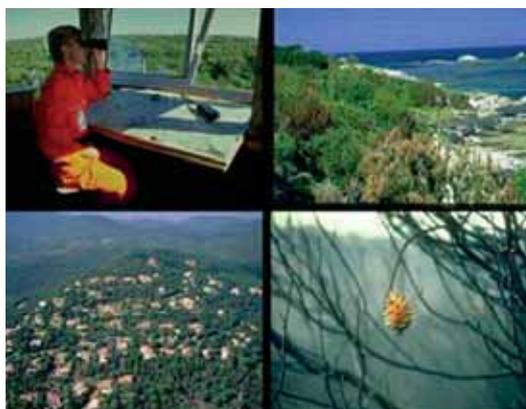
THROUGH INCENDI, MEDITERRANEAN REGIONS FOCUS ON FOREST FIRES

The forest fires of 2003 and 2004 hit hard in five countries along the Mediterranean—France, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece—causing casualties and loss of property. Today the Mediterranean region is increasingly exposed to the risks of forest fires, due to uncontrolled development, extension of the size of forests as agricultural land is abandoned, constantly increasing tourism, and overuse of certain areas because neighbouring areas are inaccessible. Even though the problem affects many countries in the Mediterranean region, they had not been cooperating to address the issue uniformly.

That situation changed with the establishment of INCENDI, a project aimed at encouraging work between regions in France, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece to identify the best approaches for programmes and policy recommendations. INCENDI is a Regional Framework Operation (RFO), which means it lends support to several subprojects. The point of an RFO is to bring together regions that can truly benefit from cooperation on a key issue, so the

members of an RFO usually have strong reasons to continue working together beyond the life of the project. INCENDI represented the first large-scale cooperation among Mediterranean countries on the issue of forest fires, and it filled a clear need.

INCENDI's seminar on cartography of forest fires in the Mediterranean allowed for the first definition of a common method for mapping out fire risks in the Mediterranean area. This



FOREST FIRES LEAD TEN SOUTHERN REGIONS TO PROPOSE AN EUROMEDITERRANEAN POLICY

knowledge can now be used to produce information that is essential in developing policies to prevent fires. Among the many useful subprojects of the RFO was one that assisted officials in the French region of Corsica. This subproject encouraged the distribution of information about the risk of fire on the Internet. The idea was made into departmental policy by officials in Corsica. Data on the daily risk of fire is now posted in Corsica.

The INCENDI project cooperated in the fourth world wildfire conference in Sevilla, Spain, where its partners can continue to share, and gather knowledge on how to address forest fires.

For more information, see the project's website at: <http://www.ofme.org/ocrincendi/>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur, France (lead partner); Corse, France; Languedoc-Roussillon, France; Notio Aigaio, Greece; Toscana, Italy; Sardegna, Italy; Tanger-Tétouan, Morocco; Algarve, Portugal; Andalucía, Spain; Islas Baleares, Spain.

BUDGET:

€7,036,580 (ERDF contribution: €4,250,790)



CHANGELAB INVESTIGATES WAYS TO ALTER CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

As Europe has grown more prosperous, the level of consumption has put increasing pressure on the environment. This pressure could be reduced if consumers could be encouraged to recycle, to be more aware of their consumption of fossil fuels, and to be aware of their consumption in general. In other words, one way to change the situation is to encourage consumers to undergo a change of lifestyle.

That was the idea behind ChangeLAB, a project seeking ways to alter wasteful consumption habits without having an impact on quality of life. ChangeLAB sought to assist decision makers by giving them the knowledge base they need to develop policies and projects that would reduce wasteful patterns of consumption. ChangeLAB was co-ordinated by Surrey County Council in the U.K., and involved seven partners in Estonia, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden and the U.K.

Through workshops and other means of communication, the partners in ChangeLAB developed the concept of the knowledge base, while building their own capacity in the area of consumption behaviour.

At the Knowledge Base Workshop organised in September 2005 in Brussels, groups discussed the methodology of focusing on “moments of change,” which involves seeking to encourage sustainable habits among consumers at times in their life when they are developing new consumption patterns—for example, when they move house or have a baby. The Dutch partner (Province of Utrecht) presented their informational CD, which is circulated to people moving house and describes how to set up a new house in a sustainable fashion. The UK partners (Hampshire County Council) developed a programme for waste prevention using four different “moments of change.” This programme has been successful in securing some funding from the U.K. government.

The outcome of the workshops and other ChangeLAB work is a database of 160 case studies from previous projects that provide clear information about how to proceed. The case studies are arranged in a uniform format that makes it easy to quickly identify the lessons learned by each project. Users can search by a variety of parameters to find projects similar to the ones they are undertaking.

The knowledge base is available at the top of the ChangeLAB project’s website at: <http://www.changelabproject.org>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

South East Region, U.K. (lead); Estonia; Kentriki Makedonia, Greece; Közép-Magyarország, Hungary; Liguria, Italy; Utrecht, Netherlands; Stockholm, Sweden.

BUDGET:

€1,597,251 (ERDF contribution: €914,037)



THROUGH CHANGELAB, PEOPLE ARE WORKING TO ENCOURAGE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PATTERNS OF CONSUMPTION WITHOUT LOWERING QUALITY OF LIFE AND PROSPERITY

6

PROJECT THEME 6

Regional Planning, Territorial Regeneration and Urban Development

Carefully planned urban development is necessary for sustainable growth, and it can also be used as a tool to help spark regeneration in deprived areas.

The European Union seeks to address the need for planning to help deprived urban areas through many of its Structural Funds Objective 1 programmes, which provide support to regions lagging behind by helping them develop infrastructure and encouraging investments. Objective 2 programmes, which seek to assist regions facing structural difficulties, also give importance to deprived urban areas. In addition to this Structural Funds support, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) sought models for economic and social regeneration of troubled urban districts in 2000-2006 through the URBAN II community initiative. Many INTERREG IIIC projects also gave assistance in this area.

When cities address their development needs, they face a wide array of competing pressures. Regional and local officials need the right knowledge for addressing these pressures. INTERREG IIIC's focus on increasing knowledge was especially well-suited to projects aimed at urban development and regional planning, because this work requires a great deal of research and analysis. Projects that fell into this category were aimed at helping areas that have fallen behind in development, like neglected inner-city neighbourhoods and former mining regions—as well as regions where development may be growing too quickly.

21 percent of projects focused on regional planning, territorial regeneration and urban development, making it one of the most common themes for the programme. Some of the projects conducted in this area included the following:

- STRAIR focused on the needs of seven airport regions around Europe. These regions are all among the fastest growing regions in their countries, but they need to control and focus this development. STRAIR sought to assist by improving innovation systems for development in airport regions and by establishing a network for sharing knowledge on the subject. See more at: <http://www.rtk.sll.se>.

- RECORE brought together former coal mining regions, which are facing development challenges, into a network that allows them to share information about fostering improvement. See more at: <http://www.recore-programme.com>.
- INCORD brought together partners from Germany, the Czech Republic, Poland and Estonia to promote mutual learning on the kind of holistic development planning encouraged by integrated Regional Development Concepts (RDC). The project published a handbook that includes common guidelines; recommendations and good practice examples, as well as a step-by-step guide to put together regional development concepts. See more at: <http://www.incord.org>.
- ICNW produced a Good Practice Manual for municipalities that need to establish communal infrastructure, for such purposes as waste management or the production of renewable energy. See more at: <http://www.icnw.org>.
- RESNAFRONT addressed the needs of rural interregional border regions that face challenges such as supporting subsistence farming and forestry, addressing over-exploitation of natural resources, dealing with population decline and a lack of infrastructure. See more at: <http://www.resnafront.eu>.

The following pages give more detail about four other INTERREG IIIC projects that focus on the area of regional planning, territorial regeneration and urban development.

❖ NORTH ZONE



ENMR HOPES 'MAP' PUTS MINING REGIONS ON THE ROAD TO SUCCESS

Europe's mining regions must make difficult choices about how to address a raft of challenges, from staying competitive to encouraging non-mining activity, while also addressing existing environmental problems. What these regions need is a roadmap to help them navigate the choices they face.

With the goal of creating such a roadmap, 20 partners from 10 European Union Member States united in the European Network of Mining Regions, (ENMR). The guidelines produced by the project were intended to ensure that there is a uniform strategy to address the needs of Europe's mining regions.

By pooling the knowledge of the diverse partners, the network was able to develop a 40-page document, with strategy and policy recommendations. As the document notes, mining is

a vital part of Europe's economy: "In active mining regions in Europe, the impacts of a resurgent mining industry can be seen in the form of increased industrial output and development, newly-created and well-paid jobs that lead to increased tax revenues and further diversification of regional economies." The document, called "Towards a Roadmap for European Mining Regions," also points out the importance of maintaining a healthy mining industry when it comes to ensuring a reliable supply of raw materials.

Major recommendations of the document are to:

- continue and strengthen the European Network of Mining Regions as a platform with a strong presence in Brussels;
- provide a platform within the ENMR for the sharing of knowledge with regards to the implementation of environmental legislation and the remediation of mining legacies;
- provide a platform within the ENMR for the sharing of knowledge with regards to social and economic planning and development throughout the mining lifecycle;
- undertake the development and promotion of an EU-level mineral policy and raw materials supply strategy.

Producing the roadmap required interregional cooperation through five workshops and a series of meetings. The network was also able to communicate through its website and other contacts.

For more information, see the website at: <http://www.enmr.eu/index.html>.



MAINTAINING A HEALTHY MINING INDUSTRY WITH THE ENVIRONMENT IN MIND.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Övre Norrland, Sweden (lead partner); Itä-Suomi, Finland; Pohjois-Suomi, Finland; Sachsen, Germany; Peloponnisos, Greece; Liguria, Italy; Valle D'Aosta, Italy; Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Poland; Alentejo, Portugal; Andalucía, Spain; Cataluña, Spain; South West, U.K; Vychodne Slovensko, Slovenia.

BUDGET:

€1,349,333 (ERDF contribution: €937,000)

EAST ZONE



REREGIONS PARTNERS SEEK WAYS TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Coal, once one of the most important energy sources, is still considered by the European Union as a significant element of power self-sufficiency and individual member states' security. Nevertheless, the energy coal excavation mainly in open-cast coal mines has had a very negative impact on landscape. Another adverse aspect of the open-cast mining is the fact that in regions where coal has been excavated it is largely used to fuel coal-fired power stations and related industrial plants. This has resulted in single-oriented, and thus, easily vulnerable local economy, which can hardly react promptly on changes caused by gradual decline or close-down of coal mines.

Six European regions sought solutions for their common problems through a network project called ReRegions. The name indicates that the co-operation focused mainly on activities whose names start with "re-" prefix, such as revitalisation, regeneration, restructuring and/or rehabilitation. The aim was to create a platform for exchange of information, experience and ideas among regional politicians and authorities.

For example, Blanka Maixnerova of the Ústí region in the Czech Republic said her region had strengths to share and weaknesses to address. "We have a long-term history, mainly in the environmental dimension," she said. "But we want know-how from other countries, like Spain and the United Kingdom, because they have better experience in addressing unemployment." During the project implementation partners found out that there was not a single, generally applicable solution, but always a good experience to get inspired by or mistakes that could be avoided elsewhere.

ReRegions was implemented by two working groups, which produced two handbooks of best practices focusing on environment and employment. Each handbook contains 10 case studies. During the development of these manuals, the working groups shared

knowledge through partnership meetings, workshops and staff exchanges. They were also able to communicate through a network internet site and a series of newsletters. During the final conference of the project held in Most (CZ) in April 2007, two final Policy Papers were presented containing recommendations of the ReRegions project in the socio-economic and environmental field.

The network project revealed a wide range of possibilities for brown coal areas. For example, the environmental problems caused by abandoned mines can be addressed by filling the mine with water, to create a recreational lake, or by covering the old mine over and reforestation. In the area of employment, case studies detail efforts aimed at unemployed youth and women re-entering employment.

ReRegions worked to establish a permanent network of former brown coal mining regions. Through this network, solutions were shared among partner regions and with other, similar regions around Europe.

For more information, see the website at: <http://www.reregions.com/>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Ústí nad Labem Region, Czech Republic (lead partner); Sachsen-Anhalt, Germany; Dytiki Makedonia, Greece; Malopolskie, Poland; Principado De Asturias, Spain; Scotland, U.K.

BUDGET:

€1,034,000 (ERDF contribution: €756,000)



REREGIONS HELPS TO RESTRUCTURE MINING REGIONS



PROGRESDEC PROMOTES IMPLEMENTATION OF SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

The European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), adopted in Potsdam, Germany, in 1999, sets a common model for territorial development in the European Union. It is vital that the document, which represents an agreement between the European Commission and EU ministers in charge of spatial planning, is translated down to the regional and local levels.

A project called PROGRESDEC promoted cooperation between regions to assess, and improve, implementation of the ESDP at the subnational level, where many development decisions are made. The project involved nine regions, which are working together in a Regional Framework Operation (RFO), a type of project that supports several subprojects, all of which have the same overarching aim.

In this case, the aim of the subprojects was to promote interregional cooperation across the entire EU, as a means of building support for the approach to spatial development spelled out in the ESDP. There were 14 subprojects funded under PROGRESDEC, and all focus very clearly on the core issues. The subprojects were designed to implement innovative techniques that came up as a result of the exchange of good practices in implementing the ESDP. One component of PROGRESDEC was devoted to the analysis of the subprojects results.

While the subprojects were to run until October 2007, by October of 2006, they had already produced good practices worth emulating. Examples of the subprojects include the following:



PROGRESDEC VERIFIES THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

- “Sustainability on Urban Renewal Programs In Southern Europe” allowed comparison of best practices in order to develop methodologies to be used in urban regeneration programmes.
- “Master Plans for the Development of Cultural Tourism” looked at cultural tourism as a means for allowing regions to increase their incomes while keeping development in check.
- “Landscape Management for Countryside Development” involved rural partners whose landscape and environment is a major resource for economic development. The partners worked on producing joint guidelines for appropriate spatial development.

For more information about this project, see their website at: <http://www.progresdec.org>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Regione Lazio, Italy (lead partner); IRS-Brandenburg, Germany; Perifereia Dytiki Makedonia, Greece; Perifereia Kentriki Makedonia, Greece; Regione Piemonte, Italy; Regione Siciliana, Italy; Dienst Landelijk Gebied-Utrecht, Netherlands; Gobierno de Navarra, Spain; Comunidad De Madrid, Spain.

BUDGET:

€5,765,836 (ERDF contribution: €3,454,627)

WEST ZONE



CITIES JOIN LNET TO SHARE STRATEGIES FOR AIDING DEPRIVED URBAN AREAS

Efforts to promote innovation and enterprise in deprived areas within inner cities can be a key part of a region's overall development policy. But these efforts will only be effective if regional and local authorities have sufficient knowledge to succeed.

Recognising the need to provide a cohesive strategy on enterprise in inner cities, Amsterdam, Hamburg, London, Milan and Prague united in a network called LNet. All the partner cities in LNet were already developing and implementing policies to promote enterprise in deprived neighbourhoods. The network allowed the partners to share their knowledge, and identify the best solutions.

The work of the network focused on the three themes of entrepreneurship, innovation and social enterprise. Entrepreneurship drives development, but deprived areas have fewer start-ups and a greater likelihood of small-business failure than in other areas. They also have fewer research institutions and new businesses to assist with innovation. Social enterprises—businesses that have primarily social objectives—have already proven to be an effective means for promoting regeneration of local communities.

Project partners completed questionnaires analysing the way each city approached entrepreneurship, innovation and social enterprise. This helped to identify the knowledge that the partners had to share. The partners also compiled a portfolio of case studies detailing successful practices for promoting entrepreneurship, innovation and social enterprise. The participating regions were able to assess the transferability of these case studies to their own local situation. The case studies were then compiled in an online manual, tailored for use by policymakers and experts around Europe.

The case studies describe a variety of creative projects. For example:

- The Hidden Art project in London helped create a market for local designers by providing an online platform where they could exhibit and sell their work.
- Matrend, which was implemented in Milan, promoted cooperation and knowledge exchange between universities and research centres and innovative small and medium-sized enterprises.
- The regeneration of the Andel region of Prague involved promoting entrepreneurship in a former industrial site through a public-private partnership between the local municipality and ING Real Estate.

These and other case studies are visible in the manual, online at:

<http://www.thelearningnetwork.net/lnetmanual/index.htm>.

Further information about the LNet project is available at <http://www.thelearningnetwork.net>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

London, England (lead partner); Praha, Czech Republic; Hamburg, Germany; Lombardia, Italy; Noord-Holland, Netherlands.

BUDGET:

€1,394,826 (ERDF contribution: €697,413)



THE FIVE PARTNER CITIES AIM TO UNLOCK THE POTENTIAL OF EUROPE'S INNER CITIES

7

PROJECT THEME 7

Tourism, Heritage and Culture

All European regions, and especially rural ones, can benefit from sustainable development through culture promotion. If a region's local heritage and culture is used to attract tourism, there will be a greater interest in preserving history and traditions. To help partner regions take advantage of the possibilities for development offered by tourism, INTERREG IIIC supported a range of projects in this area. These projects sought to promote tourism on the basis of natural resources, such as bodies of water, or traditions, like growing olives. Others sought to revive traditional industries, such as working with dry stone.

Efforts to use sustainable tourism as a means for promoting economic activity are in line with the European Union's Structural Funds Objective 1 programmes, which provide support to regions lagging behind by helping them develop infrastructure and encouraging investments, so these regions can catch up. The idea of building local economies around local heritage and culture also coincides with the Objective 2 focus on regions with structural difficulties.

15 percent of projects concentrated on tourism, heritage and culture.

Some of the projects conducted within this theme included the following:

- Watertour brought together regions that were looking to develop inland waterway tourism. The partners, in Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland and Portugal, were all seeking ways to improve cooperation with small and medium-sized enterprises within water tourism regions, as a means of improving competitiveness. See more at: <http://www.watertour.org>.
- OLEOTOURISME involved European, as well as African partner regions in a network that sought to identify the best ways to enhance tourism in olive growing regions. Regions in Croatia, France, Greece, Morocco, Portugal, Spain and Tunisia looked at using their olive growing and production traditions to attract tourists. See more at: <http://www.oleotourisme.org>.
- DOSTWELL created a partnership between regions with the potential to develop wellness tourism through the use of their water resources, such as hot springs or the sea. The

partners, from regions in Austria, Germany, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Slovenia and Switzerland, met frequently in a network to share experiences. See more at: <http://www.dostwell.eu>.

- MONOPI set up an interregional co-operation platform for monasteries and produced a handbook on “Good Management Methods for Monasteries.” The handbook collects tools suitable for promoting the roles of monasteries and lists new and innovative uses of monasteries for tourism. Along with preparing policy recommendations, the project elaborated a feasibility study for the European Agency of monasteries. See more at: www.monopi.ath.cx.
- PASTOMED focused on pastoral agriculture, looking to identify best practices for a range of related issues, including encouraging environmentally sustainable practices, improving stock and incorporating the latest technological advances in pastoral farming. See more at: <http://www.pastomed.org>.
- QUALICITIES was designed to help historic cities and regions of Europe identify ways to plan sustainable development that helps them maintain a measurable standard of quality. See more at: http://www.qualicities.org/accueil_en.html.

The following pages give more detail about four other INTERREG IIC projects that focus on the theme of tourism, heritage and culture.

NORTH ZONE

Desti Link

DESTILINK REGIONS GO GREEN TO BECOME FAVOURED DESTINATIONS

Rural regions that are looking to increase their income while protecting their environment can benefit from sustainable tourism practices, which add value to the environment and thus encourage environmental preservation. For example, a region that markets itself as a destination for hiking or camping, turns its pristine natural resources into a means for making money. Other sustainable tourism approaches include promoting the purity of local produce, such as wine or food, so that environmentally friendly activities like organic farming can create income.

In recognition of the benefits that sustainable tourism can bring their regions, 17 European partners, spread from Latvia to Spain's Canary Islands, started cooperating in DestiLink, a network of rural regions and research institutions seeking to exchange information and best

practices on how to enhance sustainable tourism. The network was born out of a previous cooperation between several of the partners. This cooperation was enhanced, so that more partners could be included.

DestiLink was designed to promote the concept of managing a region as a destination—in this case a destination for sustainable tourism. A focus on sustainable tourism gives shape to strategic planning for a region, and destination management can become a key component in development. The partners involved in the project have all had some experience in promoting sustainable tourism practices, but they can benefit by learning from one another and by improving their ability to take a destination management approach. For instance, in the area of Wild Redesdale, England, a network of about 50 local businesses were brought together to promote sustainable tourism activities like hiking and appreciation of nearby Roman ruins. This cooperative approach is already being replicated elsewhere around North East England, and other regions of Europe could benefit from this example.

An important objective of the DestiLink project was to establish a network of stakeholders and research institutes that are concerned with sustainable tourism. This network was able to link regions with the research community and it helped the regions build their capacity in the area of sustainable tourism.

The main activity of the project was to collect and disseminate best practices in a broad range of areas, with special emphasis on developing tools for planning and managing sustainable tourism destinations. This collection of information was conducted through a series of workshops and meetings and was disseminated by means of a website.

For more information, see their website at: <http://www.destilink.net>.



SUPPORTING ORGANIC WINE PRODUCTION.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Zealand, Denmark (lead partner); Niederösterreich, Austria; Hovedstadsregionen, Denmark; Southern and Eastern Ireland; Latvia; Pais Vasco, Spain; Canarias, Spain; Sydsverige, Sweden; Northern Ireland, U.K.; Scotland, U.K; Utrecht, Netherlands; Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Italy; Pomorskie, Poland, Switzerland.

BUDGET:

€1,014,766 (ERDF contribution: €584,999)

❖ EAST ZONE



TOURISMPARTNERS HELPS BORDER REGIONS PROMOTE THEMSELVES

It can be difficult for rural regions working by themselves to attract the tourism they need to fuel development. Adjacent regions can cooperate to be more effective in drawing in tourists, but if there is an international border between two such regions, the cooperation can become more complex.

A project called TourismPartners Europe brought together several partners, all from rural cross-border tourist destinations that were looking for ways to promote themselves. The project was able to achieve concrete results by promoting cross-border tourist destinations, elaborating tourism packages and elaborating SWOT analyses for the partner regions.



TOURISM PARTNERS EUROPE HELPS PROMOTE CROSS-BORDER TOURIST DESTINATIONS

The overall project provided a common body of knowledge for all the partners. Thus, the cooperation allowed for regions from around Europe to share knowledge on the unique challenges of cross-border tourism areas. Meanwhile, special projects in each of the partner regions provided focused efforts to encourage tourism in those localities.

For example, in the Beskidy Mountain region, on the Slovak-Poland border, the diverse landscape features large forests, inland waterways with adjacent recreation areas and thermal springs that make for natural spas. But these resources were not sufficiently utilised. One of the first actions of the working group for this partner region was to publish a welcome folder called "Meet Beskids" ("Poznaj Beskidy"). The folder, which was distributed in cities and travel centres on both sides of the border, gives information on attractions, accommodation and other facts that tourists need.

In the partner region of Lower Silesia/Upper Lusitia, on the German-Polish border, the work involved the production of a brochure on the handicrafts of the region. This slick publication recommends tours around the region and highlights specific crafts people.

In Pomerania, a German-Polish region with sandy beaches located on the Baltic Sea/Ostsee, cooperation allowed for the development of a new tour, a cross-border trip around sea two islands that are right on the border.

In the Carpathian Mountain region, participants on the Slovak and Ukrainian border cooperated on efforts to market their region, which is rich in culture and features medieval spas.

To find out more about the project, see the website at: <http://www.tourismpartners.net>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Sachsen, Germany (lead); Severozapad, Czech Republic; Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Germany; Dolnoslaskie, Poland; Slaskie, Poland; Zachodniopomorskie, Poland; Stredne Slovensko, Slovak Republic; Vychodne Slovensko, Slovak Republic; Carpathia, Ukraine.

BUDGET:

€1,222,208 (ERDF contribution: €897,906)

SOUTH ZONE



REPS NETWORK PARTNERS SEEK TO BUILD ON STONE WALLS

You can see them all over the countryside: stone walls, many built hundreds of years ago by farmers clearing the land for grazing or cultivating. These beautiful old walls create an important natural habitat, protect against erosion and constitute a piece of

our historical heritage that should be protected. At the same time, the traditional trade of building in dry stone offers a potential source of employment that can help revitalise local development. Yet dry stone walls have been allowed to deteriorate as traditional activities have been abandoned in rural areas.

Several regions around Europe that have a significant number of dry stone walls banded together in a network that shares best practices and policy concepts on how to protect their heritage. The network, called REPS, included partners from Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Sweden, Spain and the U.K.

On the basis of the work, the Ministry of Science in Croatia, a partner in REPS, has implemented a national project to protect the heritage value of dry stone walls. Furthermore, all the partners became signatories to a European Convention on the Protection of Dry Stone Features. It is expected that the project's results will also be taken up to create further projects and policies in this area.

A key objective of the project was to create a network that allows for interregional cooperation to assist in local development through the promotion and rehabilitation of the traditional trade of building in dry stone. It also sought to promote the importance of old and new dry stone structures.

REPS helped develop strategies for revitalising rural European regions that have dry stone heritage by sharing information among the partners and conducting research. The project allowed partners to cooperate on:



BUILDING ON STONE WALLS

- formulating plans for training workers in the dry stone trade;
- developing a system of qualification for dry stone builders;
- developing a method for classifying dry stone structures;
- sharing and assessing techniques for restoration;
- proposing methods to protect buildings and landscapes;
- sharing experiences in local development and the promotion of stone structures;
- create a lasting network for sharing information about issues related to dry stone.

For more information, see the website at: <http://www.conselldemallorca.net/mediambient/reps/>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Mallorca, Spain (lead); Zagreb, Croatia; Nicosia, Cyprus; Corse, France; Provence-Alpes-Côte D'azur, France; Notio Aigaiio, Greece; Piemonte, Italy; Liguria, Italy; Sicilia, Italy; Småland Med Öarna, Sweden; Wales, U.K.

BUDGET:

€721,832 (ERDF contribution: €405,791)



COTOUR INFORMS POLICIES ON UPGRADING TOURISM AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The local crafts of Europe's rural regions are part of what makes them unique. Regions that promote traditional products, and generally upgrade their tourism, can enjoy a higher income. This was the kind of thinking that went into COTOUR, a project that creates a strategy for upgrading tourism as a tool for regional development. The project involved a partnership of five far-flung regions of Europe, all of which are concerned with building up tourism and promoting their regional products. These partners worked together to share their experiences and develop a strategy for upgrading tourism as a tool for regional development.

The project has already borne fruit, as COTOUR's recommendations were incorporated into real policies. COTOUR contributed to the integrated strategy for regional development of the County of Telsiai, Lithuania. In that policy document, established 17 December 2004, COTOUR drafted a measure on "Establishment of a Rural Crafts Centre" and a measure on "Development of small businesses in rural areas." The project also influenced the 2007-2013

regional strategy for the region of Malopolska, Poland. Lessons that COTOUR has learned in the area of regional development through tourism were incorporated into Malopolska's policy document.

While the project was aimed at efforts to upgrade tourism in general, it also included a special focus on three areas of development: culture and habitat; nature and landscape; and tradition, through regional products.

COTOUR's activities centred on training local initiators, who could use their new knowledge to develop traditional regional products or upgrade tourism through other means. The project work, and case studies identified from earlier work in each region, provided the information needed to come up with a strategic approach for considering a region's various tourist objectives during the coming years.

The information gleaned through all these activities was packaged and disseminated by means of regular communication seminars, the website and a variety of means.

For more information, see the website at: <http://www.cotour.org>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium (lead partner); Vlaams Gewest, Belgium; Limousin, France; Sicilia, Italy; Lietuva, Lithuania; Malopolskie, Poland.

BUDGET:

€810,000 (ERDF contribution: €485,325)



REGIONS CAN LEARN FROM EACH OTHER TO DEVELOP SUCCESSFUL TOURISM STRATEGIES

8

PROJECT THEME 8

Accessibility, Mobility and Transport

Well-used public transportation reduces stress on the environment and decreases traffic. A region will enjoy better development if its residents can get to work and go shopping easily, without traffic delays. But environmentally friendly and economically viable transportation is not enough; authorities also need to meet the needs of under-served and special groups, like the disabled.

It is increasingly understood that accessibility within, and between, cities is essential to making those cities more competitive. Effective transport makes a region a more attractive place to live. Without good transport, a region risks losing its most skilled workers, thereby losing a vital resource. For 2007-2013, the European Regional and Development Fund gives special attention to regional competitiveness and employment and treats access to good transportation as a key part of making a region more attractive and competitive.

But mere traffic management is not enough. Effective, energy-efficient public transportation is recognised as an essential part of addressing threats to the environment in the Gothenburg Agenda, which adds an environmental dimension to the Lisbon Agenda. One of the four priorities of the Gothenburg Agenda is sustainable transport, including a decoupling of growth of gross domestic product from transport growth, addressing rising traffic volumes and encouraging investment in environmentally friendly transport and related infrastructure.

INTERREG IIIC's approach of gathering and disseminating knowledge was especially well suited to supporting the kind of intensive planning involved in developing good public transportation. 4% of projects funded by INTERREG IIIC focused on the areas of accessibility, mobility and transport. Some examples include a focus on the development of regions with airports or sea shipping ports, as well as intra-urban concerns, like traffic and public transportation.

Examples include the following:

- CITY PARKING sought innovative parking concepts and solutions to make traffic flows more efficient and reduce traffic-related environmental impacts. The partnership is

currently developing a database of best practices and possible solutions to city parking, which will be published on its website, <http://www.city-parking-in-europe.net>.

- EUROPLANE sought to improve the knowledge base for policy decisions on strategic regional airport development. The project also looked at how to secure the existence of regional airports in European Union member states. An analysis of constraints and challenges was developed and a study is being prepared. See more at: <http://www.europlane.net>.
- Connected Cities was established as a network that seeks to address the related concerns of sustainable transportation and spatial development, thereby seeking to improve quality of life in both urban and rural areas. See more at: <http://connectedcities.eu>.

The following pages give more detail about four other INTERREG IIIC projects that focus on the related issues of accessibility, mobility and transport.

NORTH ZONE

Port Net

PORT-NET ENCOURAGES PORT REGIONS TO SHARE KNOWLEDGE AND STAY COMPETITIVE

Just because the ports of Europe do business on a global scale, that doesn't mean that they don't have local concerns. They need to remain competitive while also developing alternative sources of income. And they need to know how to do this.

A project called Port-Net allowed 20 partners, from port regions in 12 European countries and Russia, to share knowledge on how to address mutual problems and encourage sustainable development.

Port-Net sought to identify the obstacles involved in improving the operating structures and capacities of ports, while also ensuring that the ports are well integrated into the surrounding region. The activities undertaken through Port-Net were divided into three topics:

- applying and further developing European Union policies;
- improving the flow of freight and traffic by improving the multi-modal transport structure;
- approaching tourism and urban development from the perspective of a port region.

The project allowed for a series of conferences and workshops in which partners from the wide-spread regions involved gathered to share experiences. Six conferences and

workshops focused on the topic of EU policies, port administration, management and finance. Although Europe's various ports differ in their location, the type of demands they meet and their infrastructure, they must comply with the same EU policies, which are translated into national rules. The project encouraged a dialogue on best practices among the different administrative, management and financing forms that are available within the EU policies. The goals of this dialogue are to increase efficiency in managing ports and to reduce the cost of trade.

The investigation of "Maritime Cargo Transportation Challenges" was undertaken through three workshops and one study tour to look at best practices and current developments in cargo transport in the Mediterranean and Baltic seas. Several workshops and one tour to investigate best practices were held on the topic of port operations and distribution in the hinterlands.

Five workshops and one tour to see best practices focused on "Ports and People"—handling the increase in passenger traffic and the potential for encouraging tourism. The trend toward more sea passengers provides a promise of growth, but it also requires adjustments in infrastructure.

In addition to these meetings, Port-Net also produced several specific studies that analysed case studies and existing knowledge of best practices to give specific answers to questions involving ports and multi-modal transport. The studies covered the topics of port dues, feeder and ferry traffic, EDI and cargo flows, and ports and passengers.

For more information, see the Port-Net website at: <http://www.port-net.net>.



PORT-NET BETTER REGIONAL INTEGRATION OF PORTS

PARTNER REGIONS:

Hamburg, Germany (lead); Vlaams Gewest, Belgium; Hovedstadsregionen, Denmark; Estonia; Etelä-Suomi, Finland; Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Germany; Schleswig-Holstein, Germany; Emilia-Romagna, Italy; Liguria, Italy; Marche, Italy; Piemonte, Italy; Lithuania; Latvia; Region Malta, Malta; Warminsko-Mazurskie, Poland; Zachodniopomorskie, Poland; Kaliningrad, Russia; Eastern U.K.

BUDGET:

€1,582,000 (ERDF contribution: €904,000)

✦ EAST ZONE



DECISION MAKERS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF TRANSURBAN'S POLICY RESEARCH

Big cities know that, by reducing traffic, a good public transportation system facilitates a faster pace of commerce while limiting stress on the environment. More and more small- and medium-sized cities around Europe are looking to enjoy the benefits that public transportation can bring to their regions. Given the high cost of the initial investment,



TRANSURBAN EXCHANGES EXPERIENCES ON URBAN TRANSIT SYSTEM

and the need for infrastructure work that will change existing roadways, regions considering transit systems need as much information as possible.

A project called TRANSURBAN sought to provide local and regional officials the knowledge they need to develop and operate new transit systems. These transit systems would be designed so that they foster urban regeneration and help achieve sustainable development. TRANSURBAN brought together partner regions from Austria, Greece, Italy, Spain and the U.K. to share their experiences and increase their collective knowledge.

The results of the project are already being considered by regional decision makers for the creation of programmes and policy. TRANSURBAN produced a strategic plan and a marketing plan for a new transit system in Volos-Nea, Greece. Thanks to the project analysis the regional authorities have launched a call for implementation of the new transit system (light tram) in Volos. In Cambridgeshire, U.K., the project conducted an impact assessment of developing a new transit system (guided bus system). In Linz, Austria, in Livorno, Italy and in Valdemoro, Spain, the project analysed the existing and planned transport concepts, produced feasibility studies and evaluated different transit system scenarios.

The policy research conducted through TRANSURBAN includes market research and travel behaviour analyses, feasibility studies, investment appraisals, monitoring of ongoing projects, integrated transport pricing and financing, energy efficiency, socio-economic development and cohesion analyses and multi-criteria evaluation. This work was conducted through interregional workshops that brought the partner regions together.

TRANSURBAN produces several tangible results, including: a Best Practice Guidelines for implementing and operating urban transit systems, based on the experiences of several European cities; a Technical, Planning, Design, Appraisal and Implementation Manual for city authorities and agencies; and a Guide to Evaluation of Socio-Economic Development Impacts, which looks at urban regeneration and cohesion issues. In addition, the project also produced guidelines on intermodality, financial analysis and funding procedures and institutional and legal frameworks and requirements.

For more information, see the project's website at: <http://transurban.demekav.gr>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Thessalia, Greece (lead partner); Vienna, Austria; Toscana, Italy; Comunidad de Madrid, Spain; Eastern Region, U.K.

BUDGET:

€1,440,000 (ERDF contribution: €850,000)



SUNRISE PROMOTES MORE FLEXIBLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

As they seek to meet the needs of under-served groups, more and more cities are relying on Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) schemes. A DRT scheme provides flexible transport services to supplement the regular transport service, thereby improving the system's overall coverage and the ability of people to get around. DRT schemes, in which vehicles pick up passengers when needed instead of on an inflexible schedule, can improve services during hours of low demand and in areas with small populations. These schemes may also be focused on meeting the needs of specific target groups, such as the disabled, the elderly, students or tourists.

A project called SUNRISE allowed seven partners from six European countries to share and increase their knowledge about DRTs. With better know-how, the partner regions can promote and encourage the efficiencies made possible by establishing a DRT. The outputs, which included feasibility studies on using DRT and application of DRT in partner regions, can be used to determine future policies and programmes.

The activities conducted through the SUNRISE project include:

- Exchanging experience and knowledge on DRT services in tutorial courses covering different aspects of these services. Partners with better know-how on DRTs acted as the tutors, offering other SUNRISE partners their experience with investigation, analysis, feasibility studies and running a DRT service.
- Developing an investigation methodology on DRTs that was used by some partners and conducting a feasibility study investigating the use of DRT services in all SUNRISE partner areas. The methodology addresses the challenges European regions face in stimulating DRTs.
- Running DRT services based on the knowledge gained through the feasibility studies. Four new DRT services were put into operation in Toscana, Italy, Kentriki Makedonia, Greece, the Southern and Eastern region of Ireland, and Cataluña, Spain.
Transferring the experience of some SUNRISE partners in planning, operating and organising DRT services.
- Identifying and developing a specific SUNRISE evaluation methodology that makes use of social, economic and technical performance indicators, and performing a comparative assessment of the partners' technology, organisation and other factors affecting implementation.
- Giving assistance to local authorities and local transport operators in defining, operating and evaluating DRT solutions.

- Creating a “good practices” handbook that collects knowledge from the various partners after they implemented DRTs.
- Disseminating the results of SUNRISE by producing material and organising conferences to support decision makers in assessing and deploying DRT services.
- Stimulating the market and getting authorities interested in DRT services.

For more information about the project, see the website at: www.interreg3csunrise.com.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Toscana-Florence, Italy (lead partner); Kentriki Makedonia, Greece; Southern and Eastern, Ireland; Toscana, Italy; Bratislavsky, Slovakia; Cataluña, Spain; North East Region, U.K.

BUDGET:

€1,371,790 (ERDF contribution: €779,645)

 **WEST ZONE**



PIMMS RECOMMENDS WAYS TO IMPROVE TRANSPORT THROUGH MOBILITY MANAGEMENT

In their quest to offer the kind of quality public transportation that is needed to maintain a healthy economy and reduce stress on the environment, local and regional planners are investigating a variety of methods and policies. One new concept in the field is Mobility Management, a demand-oriented approach that encourages flexibility, so that transport resources are mobilised when and where they are most needed. This concept can be used to supplement standard transport management, thereby making the whole system more efficient.

A network project called PIMMS (Partner Initiatives for the development of Mobility Management Services) sought to encourage mobility management by bringing together eight cities from around the European Union to exchange information on mobility management and to analyse the effective use of this new type of transport management.

The results of the policy analysis conducted by PIMMS have already been incorporated into government programmes and activities. For example, thanks to PIMMS, Stockholm, Sweden now has a document called “A Platform for Sustainable Travel and Transport in Stockholm,” which decision makers will use when planning transport policy. In Terrassa Spain, PIMMS supported plans for development of a bicycle project to improve accessibility for an industrial park with 6,600 workers. The network also successfully lobbied Terrassa’s regional government to make changes

in the way schools are built, to create more pedestrian friendly areas. In Frankfurt, Germany, the project assisted the school authority with several projects on mobility for pupils.

PIMMS focused on eight "Mobility Management Domains":

- clean vehicles;
- individualised travel marketing, which sought to reach individual households with
- information about transport services;
- mobility and education, which focused on addressing the mobility needs of students and
- also on educating people about the benefits of mobility management;
- integration of municipal policies into regional and national strategies;
- road pricing, which was used as a means of addressing the negative impacts of congestion;
- road safety, which was encouraged by better infrastructure, awareness raising and other, "soft" measures;
- awareness raising among the public;
- travel planning, designed to affect a positive modal shift—away from cars and toward mass transit—for specific destinations, like schools, employers or retail centres.

For more information, see the project's website at: <http://www.pimms-eu.org/project>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

London, Borough of Bromley, England (lead partner); Steiermark, Austria; Hessen, Germany; Kentriki Makedonia, Greece; Veneto, Italy; Lisboa E Vale Do Tejo, Portugal; Cataluña, Spain; Stockholm, Sweden.

BUDGET:

€1,860,071 (ERDF contribution: €1,019,282)



AWARENESS AND INVOLVEMENT IS ENCOURAGED THROUGH AN ART COMPETITION ON THE THEME OF ROAD SAFETY FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN IN TREVISO (ITALY)

Regional Framework Operations encourage continued cooperation

INTERREG IIIC sowed the seeds for future cooperation among regions by encouraging the development of a new type of cooperation addressed to the regional administrations: the “Regional Framework Operations” (RFOs). RFOs were cooperation schemes where a group of regional authorities (or at least authorities supported by regions) were set to exchange experience not only between the RFO partners themselves but also among other local actors selected, through open calls to participate in a certain number of “sub-projects”.

Regions chose to band together in an RFO because they realised that they had a common set of concerns. For example, regions along the Mediterranean found that they shared a need to address forest fires, cities from around Europe faced similar challenges in developing deprived areas, and different rural regions had similar needs when it came to addressing their isolation and a desire to spur innovation. When creating an RFO, the partners agreed not only a series of common problems but also on how to deal with these common problems.

Each RFO was designed to address a select number of subjects relevant to its participating regions, so that it developed a focused range of smaller subprojects. This approach aimed to bring together additional actors from the participating regions and to test the mobilisation capacity of each region in the selected field. The 40 RFOs involved 240 partners, which in turn generated 473 sub-projects and 2046 participants.

The two-stage cooperation activity was the IIIC RFOs specific feature, assuring learning and cooperation processes which can grow over time and effectively help regions to improve their regional policies in the selected fields.

The following pages highlight four successful RFOs.

REGIONS LEAN ON **TOWER** TO PROMOTE INNOVATION

Innovation can be a powerful engine for driving regional economic growth. But when it comes to encouraging innovation, regional authorities have to do a little innovating of their own.

In the hope of spurring development, five different regions from around Europe got together to share knowledge and experience on the process of innovation in a project called TOWER. Because the project is a Regional Framework Operation (RFO), it involved the funding of several subprojects, all aimed at promoting innovation.

TOWER worked by improving tools at the project level, while also testing and implementing findings of the project, so they can be incorporated into regional strategies.

Examples of some of the subprojects supported by TOWER include:

- IWE, Inspiring Women Entrepreneurs: This subproject sought to encourage long-term cooperation and sharing of know-how among women entrepreneurs from France, Sweden and the U.K. The women were able to meet and cooperate through a series of workshops, on the local and interregional level.
- SIMPLE: This subproject looked at ways to encourage methodologies and approaches for eco-design, which is design that has a reduced environmental impact. The subproject used networking, education, individual projects and knowledge transfer to make design and production methods more environmentally friendly.
- Spin Off Generator: This subproject focused on encouraging new business spin-offs from medium-sized companies as a way of generating employment and new investment in research and development. The subproject worked by developing tools and methodologies that support spin-offs.
- Young Alumni in Business: The purpose of this subproject was to find ways to encourage and support recent university graduates in establishing their own startups. The subproject looked at ways to get universities and other local stakeholders to support such highly educated entrepreneurs.
- InnoCenter: This subproject sought to develop a pattern for an institution called an innovation centre, which would support small- and medium-sized enterprises in innovation, thereby encouraging a culture of innovation in the local economy.

For more information, see the TOWER website at: <http://www.towerprogramme.com>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

East Central Region, Sweden (lead partner); South Great Plains, Hungary; Gelderland, Netherlands; Rhône-Alpes, France; North West England, U.K.

BUDGET:

€4,893,328 (ERDF contribution: €2,679,718)



IMPROVES REGIONAL STRATEGIES FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

 **EAST ZONE**



ENABLE IMPROVES THE ABILITY OF SMES TO INNOVATE

Looking to shed their dependence on agriculture, forestry and industry, regions around Europe have been turning to the knowledge economy as a route to a more sustainable future. To assist in this transition, local and regional governments need to encourage the kind of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that rely on innovation and technology.

Institutions from four European regions united in a project, called ENABLE, to encourage innovation. The partners in the project are all regions that are distant from capital cities and other economic centres. They can be expected to continue their cooperation because ENABLE is a Regional Framework Operation (RFO), which is usually established between partners who can benefit from joint projects. RFOs unite institutions that might otherwise not work together, opening the way for their interregional cooperation.

According to Bertram Harendt of the Thüringen State Development Corporation, the lead partner in the project, ENABLE's diverse work helped the partners understand more about policies to promote innovation. "ENABLE is used as a laboratory and testing framework to

improve these policies, and government implementation of structural fund programs are adapted based on the results of ENABLE," he said.

ENABLE funded more than 20 subprojects. These subprojects took concrete steps towards mobilizing local actors and involving high-level politicians, and they produced concrete results in the thematic areas of technology transfer, networks and start-ups.



ENABLE MOBILISES REGIONS TO STIMULATE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION

For example, under the theme of start-ups, the subproject Entrepreneurship-Education for Upper Secondary Vocational Schools focuses on increasing the number of technical start-ups by stimulating the topic of entrepreneurship among students between the ages of 14-19. The goal is to introduce students to the possibility of entrepreneurship through alternative learning methods.

Other ENABLE subprojects include:

- Metastore, a technology to search and retrieve specific multimedia content on the Internet.
- Techtra, an information distribution system intended for SMEs and start-ups.
- Textile Light Gate, a joint venture between Austria and Germany to create self-shining textile for emergency applications.

For more information, see their website at: <http://www.enable-net.info>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

Thüringen, Germany (lead partner); Carinthia, Austria; Kaunas, Lithuania; Western Norway.

BUDGET:

€5,738,000 (ERDF contribution: €2,493,125)

ROBINWOOD HELPS FORESTED REGIONS PICK MONEY FROM TREES

Europe's forestland represents a vast, valuable and renewable resource. Forested regions could use this resource to help create a sustainable, local source of income.

Five European regions with forests joined together in Robinwood, a project promoting sustainable forest management and development of rural economies. The project sought to achieve its goal by encouraging revitalisation of the wood supply chain. Because it is a Regional Framework Operation (RFO), Robinwood involves support of a variety of subprojects, all of which seek to encourage sustainable use of forest resources.

Robinwood began with studies to determine the situation in all the partner areas. Then the RFO's subprojects were designed and financed through a call for bids.

The work of Robinwood's subprojects involved the private sector as well, including timber and energy companies, forest owners' associations and other business. For example, companies that deal with wood participated in a survey designed to determine their needs and to help develop supportive policies and actions to allow rural regions to better supply these companies.

The work of the subprojects followed three different themes:

- Hydrogeology: In this component, there were subprojects involving naturalistic engineering and river upgrading and management of river-bank vegetation.
- Forest management: This component involved subprojects aimed at forest management in protected areas (Parks and Rete Natura 2000), forest certification, forest management models, GIS forest management systems, technological characterisation of wood and the forest products market.
- Biomass energy: This component included projects on analysis of economic feasibility of biomass plants and analysis of biomass supply availability.

Once the studies were undertaken and subprojects conducted, the partners compiled the information and lessons learned. This information was put together in the form of guidelines and recommendations for integrated forest management. The results were recently discussed and disseminated at an international conference in Wales, U.K., attended by more than 170 participants.

For more information, see the website at: <http://www.robin-wood.it>.



INTEGRATED FOREST MANAGEMENT TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF MOUNTAIN AND RURAL AREAS

PARTNER REGIONS:

Regione Liguria, Italy (lead partner); Land Brandenburg, Germany; Murcia, Spain; Vychodne Slovensko Slovakia; Wales, U.K.

BUDGET:

€6,684,925 (ERDF contribution: €4,343,839)

 **WEST ZONE**



GROW HELPS FAST-DEVELOPING REGIONS STAY HEALTHY WHILE GETTING WEALTHY

Business is booming in certain areas of Europe. In fact, some regions are currently experiencing such rapid development that they now need to make sure that growth itself is not a problem.

To handle this challenge, a group of fast-growing regions joined together in GROW, a project that involved a range of initiatives to ensure that the partner regions experience “green growth, business growth and inclusive growth.” The GROW project is a Regional Framework Operation (RFO). Regions that share their experiences and methodologies through an RFO can find many reasons to continue working together beyond the life of the project.

For example, through GROW, an evaluation methodology developed by the Dutch partner region proved useful to the Polish partner. The Dutch methodology was included in the Polish partner's long-term development strategy.

GROW approved the support of 16 subprojects designed to address the following common areas of concern for rapidly developing regions: sustainable construction; brownfield regeneration; flood risk management; resource management; business incubation; technology transfer; trading; clusters; the culture of entrepreneurship; social inclusion; and human resource management.

Examples of some subprojects include:

- A subproject for “a blue print for the planning and purchasing policies for sustainable built development” involved partners in the UK, Spain and Poland in developing research and testing solutions, and sharing these through an international sustainable network.
- A subproject called RAMEA, focusing on resource management, aimed to create tools that let decision makers consider environmental accounts, alongside monetary accounts, when developing policies for sustainable development.
- A subproject on business incubators called GROWENTERPRISE used workshops, cross-cultural learning, business coaching and awareness-raising to allow regions to share experiences and knowledge about how to support young hi-tech businesses.
- A subproject on inclusive development called ECOSOCIAL investigated means for supporting growth in more deprived areas through entrepreneurial development of social economy enterprises.

For more information see the project's website at: <http://www.grow3c.com>.

PARTNER REGIONS:

South East England, U.K. (lead partner); Andalucia, Spain; Emilia-Romagna, Italy;
Malopolska, Poland; Province Noord-Brabant, Holland.

BUDGET:

€7,844,765 (ERDF contribution: €4,323,349)



ENSURING INCLUSIVE GROWTH FOR ALL MEMBERS OF SOCIETY. GORDON BROWN WITH RICHARD WILLIAMS OF THE ENVIRONMENT CENTRE

INTERREG IVC carries on interregional cooperation

In the future, support for cooperation between various regions across Europe will be provided by the Interregional Cooperation Programme INTERREG IVC.

Like the INTERREG IIIC programme, INTERREG IVC will continue to fund projects in which regional and local authorities exchange and transfer their experiences and work together to improve the effectiveness of regional development policies. However there will be some changes in priorities and approaches.

For example, in line with the Community Strategic Guidelines for Cohesion Policy 2007-2013, INTERREG IVC will concentrate more specifically on contributing to the European Union's strategy for growth and jobs. As such, it is an important instrument for the implementation of the EC initiative Regions for Economic Change (RFEC), which is designed to help regional and urban networks discover best practices in economic modernisation, and to spread those practices to all regions.

INTERREG IVC is structured around two thematic priorities:

- Priority 1 addresses innovation and the knowledge economy, focusing mainly on the sub-themes of: innovation; research and technology development; entrepreneurship and small- and medium-sized enterprises; the information society; and employment, human capital and education.
- Priority 2 targets environment and risk prevention, most notably the sub-themes of: natural and technological risks; water management; waste management; biodiversity and preservation of natural heritage; energy and sustainable transport; and cultural heritage and landscape.

These two priorities are based on the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas, which act as the guiding principles of INTERREG IVC. The Lisbon Agenda, established in March 2001, is an agreement by Member States to take up the challenge of making the EU "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth

with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion.” The Gothenburg Agenda, which was set in June 2001, adds to this challenge by emphasising that the development encouraged through the Lisbon Agenda must be environmentally and socially sustainable.

The Council of Europe has noted that the objectives of the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas will only be realised if they are taken up by regional and local actors and social partners. This regional involvement is of particular importance in fields where greater proximity is essential, such as in innovation and the knowledge economy, employment, human capital, entrepreneurship, support for small and medium-sized enterprises or access to risk capital financing.

Thus, much of the work of building competitiveness and cohesion in Europe on a sustainable basis will be conducted on the regional and local level. When it comes to assisting that work, the new INTERREG IVC programme should play a vital role and continue INTERREG IIIC efforts in this area.

INTERREG IVC is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). It has a total available ERDF budget of €321 million for the 2007-2013 period. The programme area covers the whole territory of the European Union plus Norway and Switzerland. The programme co-finances the participation of public authorities and public equivalent bodies from these countries. Participation of actors from outside this area is possible under certain conditions.

For more information on the INTERREG IVC programme: www.interreg4c.net

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