

Editorial



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A “knowledge based”

INTERREG

While, in the past, the European Commission's interventions for supporting regional development were mainly based on the provision of

capital and assistance for physical infrastructure, recent economic evidence and experiences suggest that upgrading knowledge might prove the most efficient routes for economic growth. It is now recognised that geographical proximity is a crucial advantage for exchanges, heavily weighing in the innovation process.

The recently experimented “Regions of knowledge” pilot action, introduced in the 2003 Community budget by the European Parliament, completely succeeded in demonstrating the central role of knowledge in driving regional development, as well as the capacity of regional actors to design their regions' future. From the Lisbon Summit of March 2000, which placed once again science and technology at the top of European priorities, the Commission adopted in October 2001, on the basis of a joint initiative from Commissioners Philippe Busquin and Michel Barnier, a special communication on the “Regional Dimension of the European Research Area” aiming to focus on the leading role that Regions may play in the overall context of economic growth based on knowledge and human capital.

Partnerships between advanced regions and lagging behind regions may prove very beneficial in terms of technology and transfer of know how. Many Regions have redoubled their efforts trying to consolidate sustainable economic growth. Beyond the classic need of exchange of experience there is a clear perception of the necessity to share

values and work on common projects. Such a strategy aims at building an attractive regional image on the region's own identity in the global economy, by essentially consolidating and attracting a pool of talents. Yet there is always the risk of regions being isolated, falling short of the opportunities of the interregional cooperation. Knowledge must be considered as a key tool for competitiveness at a regional level, while collective learning, exchange and benchmarking, in other words collective intelligence, remain essential for regional integration throughout Europe. At such a historic timing of the new enlargement, Europe should seize this challenge, different from just providing subsidies for physical infrastructures: by helping the Regions to cross-fertilise their human potential and investing in a knowledge-based future! □

What does INTERREG IIC have left for my organisation?



Source: DG Regio, European Commission

All European organisations that want to participate in interregional cooperation should jump on the INTERREG IIC train now, and not wait too long! The funding period of INTERREG IIC started in 2002 and runs till the end of 2006. The total ERDF funds available for the whole programme period amount to EUR 315.4 million.

Three application rounds have been run so far. In the first two rounds 112 interregional operations were approved, receiving a total of EUR 130 million ERDF funds. For now, we can only estimate the sums that will be available to new operations after the third round. Funding decisions on the more than

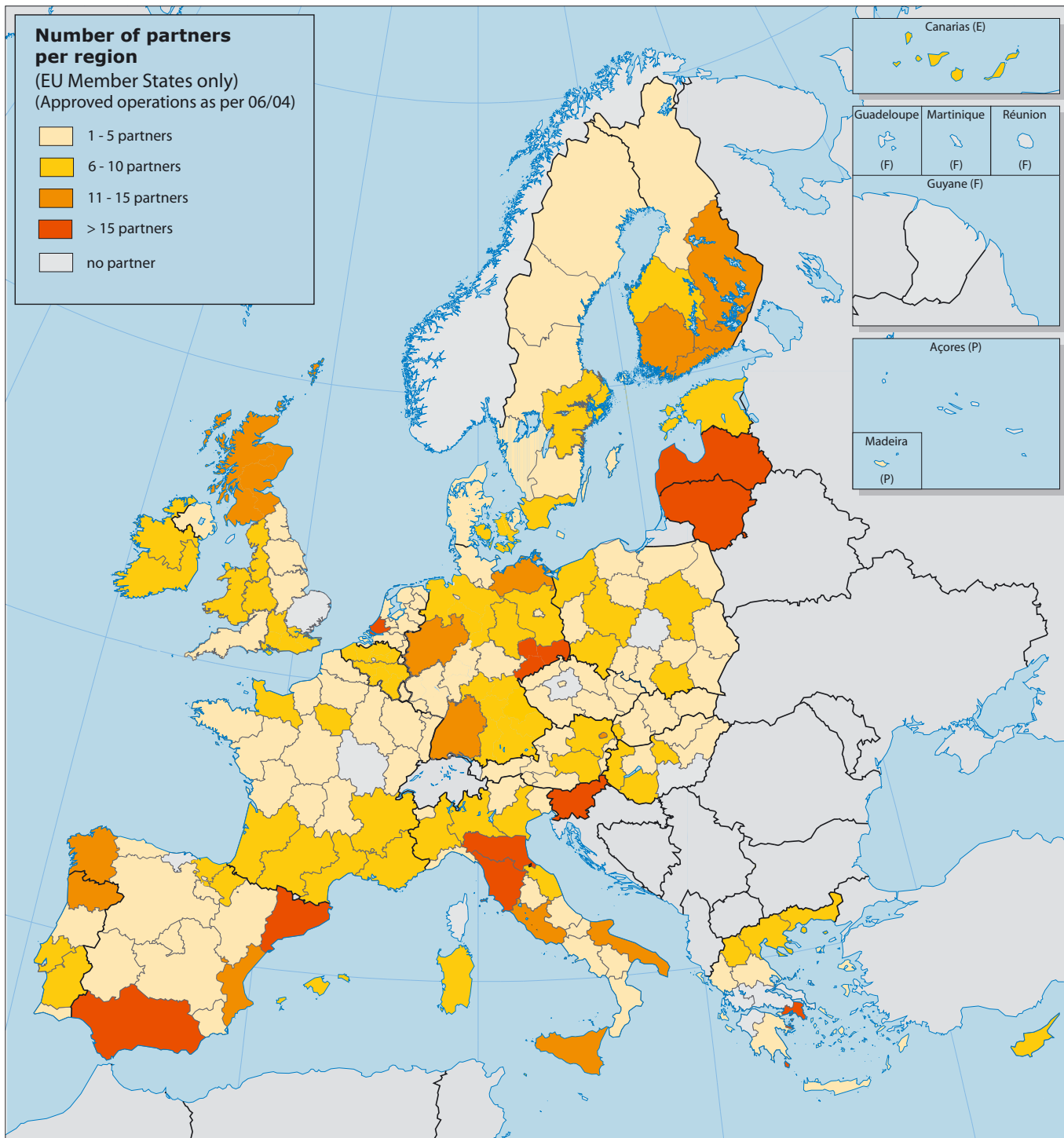
260 applications received in the third call have not been taken yet. On average, the approved ERDF contribution per operation is EUR 1.1 million. This would mean that, in addition to the 112 operations already running, INTERREG IIC could expect to co-finance about 160 new operations. Taking the experience of the first two rounds as a basis, it is expected that approximately 85 operations will join from the third round, co-financed with about EUR 94 million. Continuing this calculation, we can estimate that, after the third round, approximately EUR 90 million ERDF funds would remain. In any case, funds will certainly be left for the current calls and maybe even for further calls. □

Information on running calls for proposals

North, East and West zones launched the fourth call on 14 June 2004. The Application Pack is available for download from the programme's website. The deadlines for submission of applications are as follows: North & West: 8 October 2004; East: 19 November 2004. The South zone will not launch a fourth call this year. In the South, the third call is still open for Regional Framework Operations with an extended deadline of 8 October 2004. More information: <http://www.interreg3c.net/sixcms/detail.php?id=5379>

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INTERREG III C is boosting cooperation across the whole of Europe

Over 1 100 local and regional actors are involved in running operations so far

INTERREG III C was developed to support interregional co-operation across the entire EU territory and neighbouring countries, or in other words: across Europe. Looking at the number of countries involved in the 112

INTERREG III C operations currently running (North 14, East 33, South 39, West 26), one can really say: "INTERREG III C is boosting cooperation across the whole of Europe". At the moment, there are 1125 local and regional actors from 45 different countries involved. The majority of partners (94%) come from the EU Member States. The remaining 6% come from third countries including Norway, Switzerland, Croatia, and even Tunisia and China. However, INTERREG III C is a programme developed for regions, and

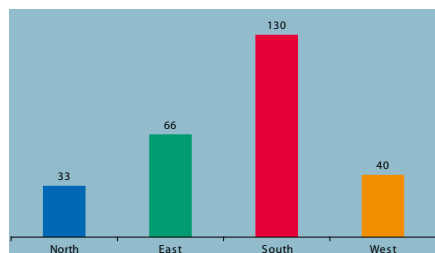
the aim is to encourage as many European regions as possible to co-operate in interregional partnerships. It is now amazing to see that already, with 182 participating regions, almost every European region is involved in an INTERREG III C operation.

The map above shows the level of involvement of the different regions. This picture will change as soon as the third round operations join in. We'll keep you updated! □

Assessment of third round applications comes to an end

Funding decisions will be taken soon

A total of 269 interregional partnerships including regions and cities from across the enlarged Europe have sought funding from INTERREG IIC in its third call for proposals, which closed on 30 April 2004*.



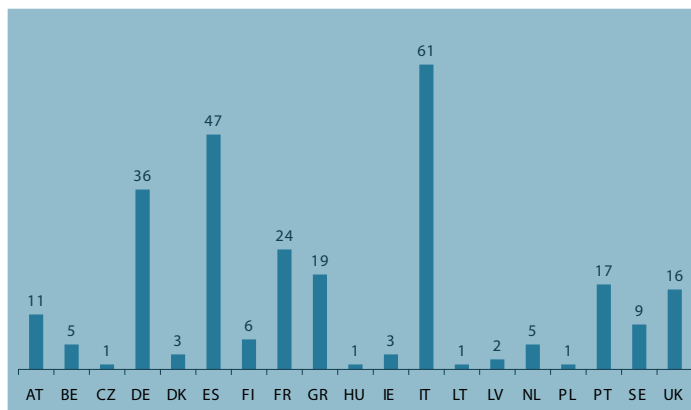
Number of applications received per programme zone

Since beginning of May, the four Joint Technical Secretariats (JTS) have been assessing the eligibility and quality of the proposals received. The eligibility check was the first step in the assessment process.

As in the other two rounds before, the large majority of the applications received met the eligibility criteria set by the programme. All eligible proposals were then subject to a quality assessment.

The four JTS, supported by external experts from different fields of regional development, have been assessing the quality of the proposed partnerships in respect of coherence and consistency, approach and management, partnership, results, and budget.

Now the quality assessment process is coming to an end. In end June/beginning of July the four JTS finalise their assessment results and forward them to the four Steering Committees, which meet in July to take the funding decisions.



Lead applicants per country

Steering committee dates:

North: 1-2 July 2004, Helsinki (FI)
 East: 19-20 July 2004, Vienna (A)
 South: 27 July 2004, Valencia (ES)**
 West: 12 July 2004, The Hague (NL)

Information on the results of the third round will be published on the INTERREG IIC website (www.interreg3c.net). □

*In the South zone the third call is still open for Regional Framework Operations (RFO) with an extended deadline of 8 October 2004.

** Decisions on Regional Framework Operations and Networks will be taken.

Regions initiate dialogue about the future of inter-regional cooperation

Brussels, 4 May 2004: More than 100 regional representatives from across the EU met in the European Parliament building in Brussels to discuss the new proposal of the European Commission concerning the future of interregional cooperation. In its third Cohesion Report the Commission proposes that regions incorporate measures for regional cooperation in their regional programmes. Questioning the usefulness and practicality of this proposal, the participating regions demanded a continuation of interregional cooperation as a separate programme, included in the objective European territorial cooperation.

Regional representatives voiced their concern that future non-objective regions will not be able to participate on an equal basis in the future and that there will not be enough of an incentive for them to participate. This would negatively affect the goal of know-how transfer, which is key to strength-

ening regional capacities and achieving the Lisbon and Gothenburg goals. This position was supported by regional representatives from the new Member States, who said they found the programme a very efficient way "to join our more developed and experienced partners in the EU".

Some participants also highlighted the need for continuation of the EU's existing funding schemes. They were satisfied with the quality of technical assistance provided to project promoters by the Joint Technical Secretariats and concerned that new schemes would lead to confusion and a possible loss of achievement. Anastassios Bougas from the European Commission's DG Regio stressed that the Commission is open to discussing how the concerns of the regions can be integrated into its proposal and that ultimately the decision would rest with the Member States.

A full report of this meeting as well as information on how to join this campaign can be found on the website of the Stockholm Region at www.stockholmregion.org (see the events pages). □

The European Parliament

"... underlines the importance of continuing the three strands of transnational, cross-border and interregional cooperation with the clear objective of promoting the harmonious, balanced and environmentally sustainable development of the territory of the Union; merely shifting interregional cooperation into mainstream programmes is not adequate to achieve that end", in its report on the Third report on economic and social cohesion, 7 April 2004.

The Committee of the Regions

"demands that interregional cooperation continue to be supported in the EU", saying: "It is worrying that the Cohesion Report provides for support for interregional cooperation only in the framework of the regional programmes," in its opinion on the Third report on economic and social cohesion, approved on 16-17 June 2004.

New Member States, INTERREG IIC and the regional development challenge

Now that the enlargement festivities are over, 'new' Europe will focus on making this largest and most historic extension of the EU membership a lasting success. Regional development will play a key role in tackling this challenge. Some 92% of people in the new Member States live in regions with GDP per head below 75% of the EU 25 average. Over two-thirds live in regions where it is under half this average. The EU's Regional Policy and its main instrument, the Structural Funds, will help close this gap.

In preparing for the implementation of the Structural Funds the new Member States have already undertaken wide-ranging reforms of their territorial administration and have invested in the institutional infrastructure for regional development. However, as the European Commission has highlighted, there are still shortcomings such as a lack of administrative capacity, in particular as regards programming and partnership, and an underdeveloped 'pipeline' for generating projects. In a recent interview the Hungarian Commissioner Designate responsible for Regional Policy, *Peter Balazs*, set out the main demands for the current funding period until 2006: "Good management, finding high-quality projects and setting up partnerships are all significant challenges."

Although many of the regions in the new Member States have had experiences with EU-funded projects and projects funded by other donors in the past, many experts believe that the state of preparation of local and regional authorities in the new Member States is still limited. "If the EU wants these actors to become veritable partners in the design and implementation of the Structural Funds and driving forces of regional development, regions and municipalities in the new Member States will not only need to develop more in-house capacity and know-how for strategic planning and project development, but also acquire first-hand experience on what has worked and what hasn't in implementing the Structural Funds," says *Andrej Horvat* of the Slovenian National Agency for Regional Development.



This, they can learn from their peers in the 'old' EU. In particular, from regions that have benefited from EU support in the past. "INTERREG IIC allows us to pick the partners with the right profile and experience to help solve our problems and tackle our development challenges," says *Peter Szilasi* from the West Pannonian Development Agency (Hungary), a partner in the RFO 'REGINS' ("Regional standardized Interfaces for a better integration of regional SMEs in the European economy"). REGINS combines regional and thematic elements of cluster management. The RFO aims at elaborating institutionalised and innovative solutions for fostering, developing, and speeding up SME's Research & Development activities. The project includes as other partners the Land of Upper Austria, the Stuttgart Region in Germany and the Italian Lombardy Region.

And *Joanna Waligora* from Wielkopolska (Poland), project partner in the RFO 'STIMMENT' ("Stimulating new ways of entrepreneurship") believes that their cooperation "allows us to benefit from the experiences of our partners and to create new and innovative tools together, which could be used through mainstream Structural Funds on a bigger scale in the future". Together with partners from Norrland (Sweden), Häme (Finland), Lorraine (France) and Brescia (Italy) Wielkopolska wants to identify and promote new and innovative approaches to dealing with structural changes in these

regions, and improving conditions for entrepreneurship.

Regions from the new Member States are increasingly keen to be involved in INTERREG IIC operations. Already 19% of partners in approved operations are from the new Member States. This number is poised to increase further with the Third Call operations to be approved this summer. For *Walther Stöckl* of the INTERREG IIC East Managing Authority in Vienna, the positive response to INTERREG IIC among EU regions and the strong interest from the new Member States is an important barometer that the programme is on the right track. He says: "Our programme helps the new Member States to get fit for managing the Structural Funds and develop good projects at regional and local level."

"That's why we have asked the European Commission to reconsider their proposal of integrating interregional cooperation into the mainstream regional programmes in the next funding period," Stöckl adds. "Without having a strong and independent programme framework such as INTERREG IIC the EU may risk losing this opportunity to upgrade strategic development skills at the regional and local level in the new Member States." □

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Forum brings regions together from across the enlarged Europe

Interest in the Berlin INTERREG IIC Partner Search Forum this March was unprecedented. The 900 participants representing regions from across Europe were testimony to the growing support for INTERREG IIC. Hundreds of regional and local authorities met to join forces on improving approaches to regional development. In a survey, some 95% of people coming to the event looking for partners said they had achieved their goal.

Opening the forum, Wolfram Martinsen, Coordinator for Middle and Eastern Europe for Berlin's Governing Mayor, launched INTERREG IIC's 3rd call for applications. Talks were led by Volkmar Strauch, State Secretary for Economic Affairs in the Berlin Senate; Elisabeth Helander, European Commission; and Ulf Johansson, Swedish Association of Local Authorities and the Federation of Swedish County Councils, for whom INTERREG IIC is "an instrument for implementing the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas on local and regional level". In parallel to workshops on themes ranging from spatial planning and transport to environment and risk management, INTERREG IIC operations and ideas were displayed on over 100 stands.



Looking for the perfect partner?

Throughout the event, discussions flowed freely between potential project partners, and members of the Commission, government bodies, and the four INTERREG IIC zones.

A detailed report is available for download at www.interreg3c.net. □

Events calendar

28 September 2004

Brussels, Belgium

INTERREG IIC All-Zones Workshop on "Building Regional partnerships for Europe" at the Conference on "Managing Regional Development"

Open forum for exchange between national, regional and EU players and institutions on regional policy management, best practices and the future of cohesion policy.

4 October 2004

Greece

INTERREG IIC All-Zones Annual Meeting

Representatives of the 25 EU Member States will take stock of the Programme implementation during the first half of the funding period and look into activities planned for the future.

6-7 December 2004

Rotterdam, Netherlands

Pan-European INTERREG IIC event

This forum will be similar to the pan-EU event held in Berlin (DE) on 8-9 March 2004. This time, however, the focus will be on the results of interregional cooperation, with presentations of approved operations and workshops for lead partners.

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The Forum drew some 900 people from across Europe

INTERREG IIIC Photo Contest “See the colours of an enlarged Europe”

On 1 May 2004, ten European countries joined the European Union moving Eastern and Western Europe together. EU enlargement has been a top issue for the INTERREG

IIIC programme since its early days. By launching the photo contest, the four INTERREG IIIC Joint Technical Secretariats invited professional and amateur photographers from across Europe to collect colours of the enlarged Europe and to make others see them. Many people, mainly from the new Member States, participated in the

contest. The winning photos came from two photographers from Latvia and Lithuania: **Liga Gaisa, Riga, Latvia and Romualdas Pozerskis, Kaunas, Lithuania.**

We thank all photographers for participating in the contest. □



Liga Gaisa, Riga (Latvia)
Waiting for the European Union. Riga.
30 April / 1 May 2004

During the concert “We for Europe” everybody could count the time left until the enlargement of the European Union.



Liga Gaisa, Riga (Latvia)
We are in! Riga. 1 May 2004

On 1 May 2004 the festivities celebrating the enlargement of the EU continued in the main square of Riga, the Dome Square. Visitors could visit info desks of almost all Member States.



Romualdas Pozerskis, Kaunas (Lithuania)
Lithuania celebrates

The smallest farmer of Lithuania celebrates with neighbours drinking “Euro beer”.



Romualdas Pozerskis, Kaunas (Lithuania)
The bridge to...

People troop the colours of Lithuania and Europe through the bridge cross the river Nemunas (Memel).

CosCo – Coastal communities and research institutions join forces to recycle sea grass and algae

Rostock (Germany), 10 June 2004 – INTERREG IIC North interviewed Melanie Fadel, EU-Coordinator for the Klützer Winkel Authority, Lead partner of CosCo, an Individual Project approved in the second application round and funded by INTERREG IIC North zone.

North: Could you briefly describe the CosCo project for us?

MF: Many coastal communities that rely on tourism have severe problems with seaweed and the high cost connected to beach cleansing. CosCo is a coastal cooperation project of nine partners from Germany, Denmark, France, Poland and Spain. Together we look at new ways of treating the flotsam. The basic idea is to use it as valuable natural resource that can be recycled instead of just deposited on waste dumps. It makes sense with regard to both, environment and economy. We want to find new application fields for products made of sea grass and algae. The aim is to strengthen the regional economy, create new jobs and improve the conditions of tourism.

North: How will CosCo tackle the problem?

MF: We divided our project in four main components: 1. Improving beach cleansing and treatment technologies; 2. Efficient beach policy with special regard to environmental aspects; 3. Development of new products out of sea grass and algae and their international certification; 4. Development of marketing strategies for the new products.

North: It sounds like a complex range of tasks. Did you start from scratch?

MF: No, of course not. Foundations were laid in a previous LIFE-Environment project where we developed the basic technology to collect and treat sea grass and algae in a way that biogenic products could be processed. Now, we want to take the idea a step further and not only create prototypes of new products, but also lay grounds to permanently producing them in the regions. Regional cycles will be developed. This is also important with regard to new EU waste management regulations that'll be effective in 2005.

North: Perhaps you could give us an idea of your partnership?

MF: CosCo comprises two types of partners: Coastal communities that are affected by the problem and public research institutions and technology centres, often working for the surrounding regions, which contribute to scientific and technological solutions. The Lead partner is the Klützer Winkel Authority in Northern Germany, on the Baltic Sea. Other partners are located on the Atlantic coast and the Mediterranean Sea. And with the City of Sopot we are glad to have aboard a partner from a New Member State.



Seaweed can improve a region's development

North: But bearing the geographical diversity in mind conditions probably vary in the different regions?

MF: Yes, that's correct. All partners contribute with their specific experience. Whereas in the Klützer Winkel and in the Bordeaux area beaches are mainly affected by sea grass, Sopot has tremendous problems with algae. Here, the improvement of water quality is a major topic. The Danish community of Moen also struggles with algae, but for them the rising of public awareness for the problem is very important. One topic they cover within the project is the beach policy. The research centre in South-western France contributes with technical solutions. They experiment with alternative methods of collecting flotsam and separating sea grass and algae from sand and stones. This is crucial for further processing the material. A Danish development agency covers the topic of product development.

Exchanging different experiences in CosCo, we help each other to make the most of seaweed, and thus to improve our regions' development.

North: What kind of products do you plan to develop?

MF: Sea grass can be used as bulk insulation material in the construction industry, for insulation mats or as cat litter. Right now, we experiment with injection moulding. New products are to be developed in the application field of pharmaceuticals and cosmetics, but also in agriculture. The food sector could be an option as well.

North: Will there also be effects outside the partnership?

MF: The dissemination of results is an important aspect of the project. During our previous operation, we quickly realised that flotsam is not only a problem at the Baltic Sea, but also in other coastal regions in Europe. Within the CosCo-Project we'll organise congresses and workshops to make the results of our work accessible to a wider range of European regions.

North: How much funding will you receive from INTERREG IIC?

MF: We will receive nearly a million euros from the European Regional Development Fund. Together with the co-financing of the project partners it amounts to a total budget of about EUR 1,556,000.

North: Let me ask a final question. With the experience of some months: Would you start an INTERREG IIC operation again?

MF: We have very good and reliable partners. This is the most crucial point. And you need a lot of time already in the preparation phase. If these two aspects were safeguarded I would start another operation. □

Workshop for Lead Applicants 6 September 2004, Riga, Latvia

The INTERREG IIC North JTS, supported by the Latvian Ministry of Regional Development and Local Governments, kindly invites all lead applicants, located in the North zone programme area, and intending to submit an application in the fourth round, which closes on 8 October 2004, to an information workshop in Riga on 6 September 2004.

For more information please visit http://www.interreg3c.net/web/north_en. The North JTS can be contacted at tel: +49 381 45484 5279; e-mail: north@interreg3c.net.

ENABLE – ENABLING European Entrepreneurship



Regional industries are being exposed to increased competition. Access to knowledge and the capacity for innovation are essential conditions if businesses and, ultimately, the regions they are located in, want to remain competitive globally. SMEs in particular are becoming more and more dependent upon networks and partnerships for the transfer of research & development and technology know-how. Another key aspect for staying competitive is the stimulation of entrepreneurship in the regions.

To jointly cooperate on and improve these critical success factors for regional competitiveness the regions Carinthia (Austria), Western-Norway, Kaunas (Lithuania) and Thuringen (Germany) have formed the RFO EN-ABLE. ENABLE supports individual sub-projects in three thematic areas:

- Within the field of ENABLE Technology Transfer, innovative procedures for the transfer of research and development results will be supported.
- ENABLE Networks will strengthen the innovative regional networks in order to empower and internationalise entrepreneurship.
- The focus of ENABLE Start-Ups is set on the stimulation, qualification and coaching of start-ups and on the regional instruments for start-up support in the ENABLE regions.

The target groups – and potential participants in ENABLE's sub-projects – include technology centres, cluster initiatives, universities, schools of applied sciences, SMEs, transfer agencies and associations, in Carin-

thia, Western-Norway and Thuringen. The region of Kaunas is integrated in the RFO level as a so called "Learning Region" that will benefit from the exchange of know-how concerning management structures and the transfer of know-how between the different European regions, but will not participate in the sub-projects. There will be two regular calls for proposals – in autumn 2004 and spring 2005. A pilot call for proposals was already opened on 7 June 2004 with a deadline of 25 June 2004.



Representatives from all ENABLE regions participated in the RFO's official kick-off meeting, which took place in Erfurt, Germany, on 21-22 April 2004. Since then, regional info days have been organised in the participating regions in order to promote the programme and the thematic areas of ENABLE to a wider public. First drafts for applications of sub-projects from lead participants were already being discussed in the context of individual consultations with the regional management units. The ENABLE Steering Committee will meet in Klagenfurt (Austria) on 4 July to assess the applications submitted in the framework of the current pilot call for proposals.

Further information about the RFO ENABLE is available at www.enable-net.info. □

Open Events of JTS East in 2004

The JTS East plans to organise the following events in the second half of 2004. Detailed information will be posted in the East section of the programme website at www.interreg3c.net/web/east-en

INTERREG III C East Info-Day in Krakow, Poland, 6 September 2004

Open to all project promoters and interested partners in the III C East programme area: Presentation of programme background and objectives, overview and experiences of first three calls, general info on application process and selection criteria, examples of flagship operations, experiences of Polish partners of approved operations.

INTERREG III C East Workshop on Financial Management of approved operations, 21-22 September 2004, Budapest, Hungary

Open to all Finance Managers of approved operations in III C East: Training on financial reporting, eligibility of expenditure and audit procedures.

INTERREG III C East Briefing and Individual Consultations for Lead Applicants, 11-12 October 2004, Bratislava, Slovakia

Open to all institutions planning to act as Lead Applicants in fourth call project submissions of III C East: Specific information on key issues of application process, eligibility check, quality assessment, possibility for individual consultations with JTS.

INTERREG III C East & North Workshop and INTERREG III C Info-stand at the 'EUREGIA', European Regional Development Fair and Conference, Leipzig, Germany, 27-30 October 2004 (together with JTS INTERREG III C North)

Open to all participants of this major regional development fair and conference: Workshop theme: "Reflection on two years of inter-regional cooperation – outlook for the next programming period".

The information activities of INTERREG IIC now require a more targeted approach, given the programme's advanced stage and past experience

Although the number of applications submitted in the South zone has increased over time: 93 projects received in the first call, 118 in the second and 130 in the third, improving the quality of the proposals remains a key challenge. This is why the information measures carried out by the Member States on the occasion of the third call for proposals have pointed towards the specific needs of the Programme after its implementation and of the potential applicants.

The initial info-days, aimed at presenting the INTERREG IIC Programme and encouraging potential applicants to seize the opportunities of interregional cooperation, have been followed by more specific and targeted seminars focusing, for instance, on how to develop a good INTERREG IIC proposal. Seminars also looked at the features of each type of operation, devoting particular attention to Regional Framework

Operations, bearing in mind the high proportion of funds the Programme allocates to RFOs and the difficulties that can be faced by potential applicants when preparing them. Thus, Spain* and Italy* have organised seminars involving lead partners of approved RFOs in order to thoroughly explain the process of preparing this type of operation.

Furthermore, certain Member States such as, Malta*, Greece* and Portugal* have complemented the seminars with days for individual consultations. At the same time, the Joint Technical Secretariat has offered personalised guidance to potential applicants before submitting their application. More than 40 projects asked for an appointment at the Secretariat during the third call for proposals. □

**Dates and venues of the seminars: Madrid, 20 February; Thessalonica, 15 and 16 March; Malta, 1 April; Lisbon, 22 April; Milan, 24 April. The presentations are available at www.interreg3c.net (South zone).*

INTERREG IIC South, Joint Technical Secretariat (sud@interreg3c.net)

Survey on Regional Framework Operations

The South zone is preparing a survey on Regional Framework Operations to be published on the website in July 2004.

INTERREG IIC South Steering Committee Meeting

The Steering Committee will meet on 27 July in Valencia in order to deliberate on the projects submitted in the third call for proposals. Given the number of applications received, a total of 130, Member States have decided to divide the decision process in two phases, studying first Regional Framework Operations and Networks and subsequently the Individual Projects.

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The multiplying impact of the "European Geoparks Network"



The "European Geoparks Network" is a partnership of nine "geoparks" (*) coordinated by the Petrified Forest of Lesvos (www.petrifiedforest.gr). The main aim is to provide a forum for sharing experience in geological heritage management. So far very little is known about geoparks, considered as natural monuments, an eco-tourism destination, suitable for educational activities. But geoparks are much more than this. Indeed "Geopark" is a UNESCO official designation conferred if and only if specific criteria are fulfilled. It is the first time that geoparks have been organised in a network, seizing the IIC opportunity. Through a structured work plan, partners are involved in activities aiming to develop integrated management strategies for geoparks and boost sustain-

able development in these remote areas. Scientific and promotional tools will be defined, based on quality standards, in order to organise the overall supply coming from geoparks and promote their historic and cultural value. The local economy, as part of the carrying capacity to mobilise, is at the centre of the project's activities.

On 13 February this year, the "European Geoparks Network" was presented in Paris at the UNESCO Headquarters, where it was decided to create a "Global UNESCO Network of Geoparks". □



Members of the Coordinating Unit of the Geoparks Network

() Other Partners are: the Réserve naturelle géologique de Haute Provence (FR), Nördlicher Teutoburger Wald Wiehengebirge (DE), LAG Gesäuse – Eisenwurzen (AT), Anaptyxiako Kentro Orinou Mylopotamou ke Meleviziou A.E. (AKOMM Psiloritis) Crete (GR) Geological Survey of Ireland (IE) GAL ISC Madonie (IT) Fermanagh District Council - Northern Ireland (U.K.) and Provincia Regionale di Enna (IT).*

ASCEND – Achieving The Socio-Economic Re-use of Former Military Land & Heritage

A Network of local authorities from eight European regions, all of which have been affected by cutbacks to their national military forces

In the first of a series of workshops set to pinpoint best ways to regenerate former military sites, ASCEND's partners will meet in July this year to discuss how to manage the transition of an area from military to civilian use.

More workshops will follow in September and November, this time to identify good practice in redeveloping military heritage for tourism and knowledge-based activities such as universities.

The results will be compiled in a guide for other local and regional authorities with former military sites.

Clem Smith of Medway Council (UK), the Lead Partner, said: "For all our partners, military installations and bases have historically been major contributors to the local economy – both as employers and consumers of local goods and services. But in the last three decades they have experienced widespread closures and downsizing..."

"Each closure can have a significant economic, social, and often environmental impact on the local area. Unemployment rises, incomes tend to fall, and residual contamination can be an obstacle to the re-use of land and buildings," he said.

The Network's partners believe that by adopting the right strategies, local and regional authorities can capitalise on their military heritage to generate new economic activity, improve the quality of life of local inhabitants and attract new businesses to their area.

ASCEND was approved in INTERREG IIC West's second round. □



Common Information to European Air (CITEAIR)

An Individual Project recently launched in INTERREG IIC West

The 14-strong partnership that includes bodies with experience in environment and traffic management from seven EU countries will identify ways for public authorities to improve monitoring and management of air pollution and comply with European legislation.

Road traffic causes 60-75% of air pollution in urban areas, says the Lead Partner's Nick Hodges. So, with experience from five core cities – Leicester, Paris, Prague, Rome and Rotterdam – and five follower cities, CITEAIR aims to harmonise techniques to measure air pollution in urban areas, find new ways of presenting data to policy im-

plementers and the public, and recommend a new approach to traffic management in Emilia-Romagna, Italy.

Partner cities have already tackled air pollution in various ways. Paris introduced bus lanes in pollution hotspots to reduce traffic; Rome set up low-emission zones accessible only to public transport vehicles and local residents; and Rotterdam has applied variable speed limits on motorways near residential areas.

These experiences will be published in a guidebook on environmental management in European cities and regions.

And, as part of the project's goal to raise awareness, a website will enable residents of partner cities to access real-time data on the air pollution in their local area. □

Dijon is latest stop on JTS West tour

INTERREG IIC West Information Day, 25 June 2004, Conseil régional de Bourgogne, Dijon (France)

The Dijon Information Day was the latest in a tour of INTERREG IIC's West zone that has included Brussels, Luxembourg, Utrecht, Manchester and Glasgow. Morning presentations set out the programme and its funding opportunities. In the afternoon potential applicants met members of the INTERREG IIC West secretariat in individual consultations.

For information on other West zone events, please visit http://www.interreg3c.net/web/west_en.

Lead applicant seminar – INTERREG IIC West

A day for lead partners of inter-regional partnership proposals for INTERREG IIC's fourth application round.

7 September 2004, Lille (France)

- Are you developing a Regional Framework Operation, Individual Project or Network?
- Do you aim to apply for funding in INTERREG IIC's fourth application round?
- Are you based in the programme's West zone?

If so, INTERREG IIC West invites you to its Lead applicant seminar on Tuesday 7 September 2004 in Lille, France.

You will learn more about conditions to consider when applying to the INTERREG IIC programme. You will be able to discuss the development of your operation proposal and clarify any last questions.

In addition, members of the Joint Technical Secretariat will be available for individual consultations at their offices on:

28 June 2004

16 July 2004

28 July 2004

6 September 2004, and afternoon of 7 September 2004

For registration and further information, please visit http://www.interreg3c.net/web/west_en.

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