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European Union
Regional Policy

Structural policies and European territory Islands and coastal regions



European Commission

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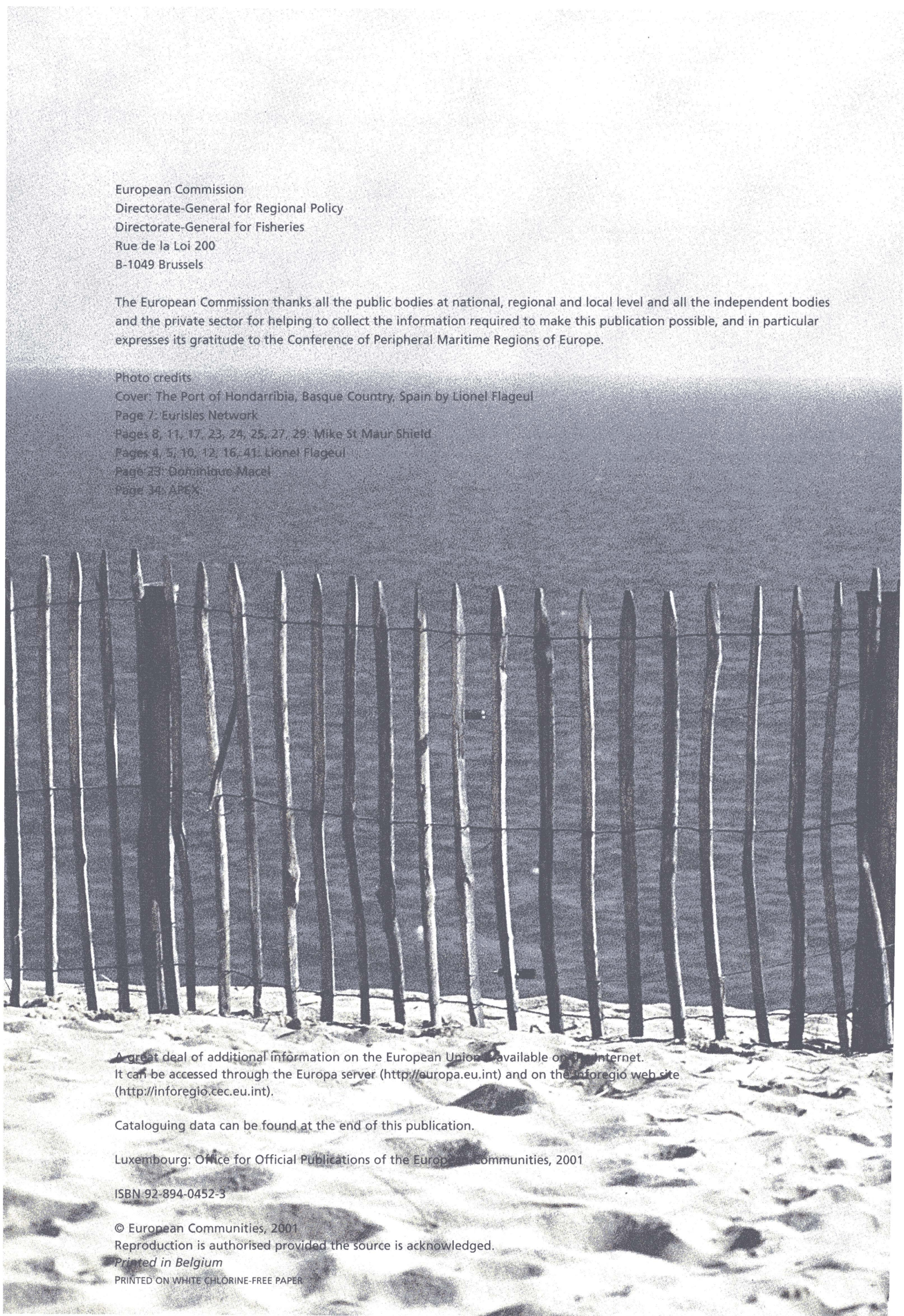
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A great deal of additional information on the European Union is available on the Internet. It can be accessed through the Europa server (<http://europa.eu.int>) and on the InfoREGIO web site (<http://infoREGIO.cec.eu.int>).

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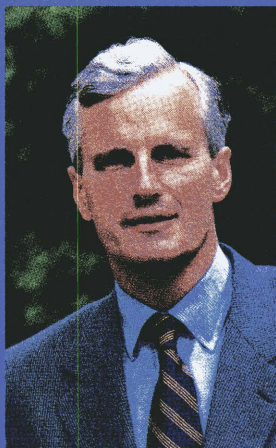
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Development in tune with the balance of nature

Islands and coastal regions are areas with character, offering multiple facets to those seeking to discover them. They are also at a crossroads, a meeting point between the sea and the land, traditional cultures and expanding tourism, industrial ports and traditional fishing practices, and so on.

Islands are cut off from the mainland, some of which are located in the far-flung corners of Europe. Generally small, they often lack local resources of their own and depend on the mainland for their supplies and must cope with high freight costs.

One of the priorities of the regional policy for which I am responsible at the European Commission is to help these regions develop their communications networks, both internal and external, as well as their basic infrastructure in key fields such as education and energy supply.

The Structural Funds also encourage islands to adopt innovative technologies suited to their specific situation. Integrating them into the information society and promoting alternative sources of energy are promising examples of this strategy.

Commercial and human activities, too often in competition with each other, co-exist in many coastal areas. Major ports, for example, where heavy industry is concentrated, need to make room for more traditional activities like fishing. The fishing industry itself is undergoing immense changes as witnessed by the rise of aquaculture. Finally, the development of tourism in coastal areas is both an opportunity for growth and a challenge in terms of quality and balance.

A large number of the problems affecting our coastal areas have gained a European dimension. To this end the Commission in September 2000 proposed a European strategy for the integrated planning of coastal areas, based on problems identified on the ground with the coordinated participation of who contribute to the development of like areas. The importance of coastal regions in terms of the natural and cultural heritage of Europe was stressed in the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) published in 1999.

The goal of Community regional policy is to protect the fragile natural balance of these areas while at the same time allowing those who live and work there to continue carrying out their activities under the best possible conditions. The European Union is careful to integrate environmental concerns into the development projects that it part-finances: ports, industries, urban projects, tourist centres, laboratories, etc.

More generally, as we have demonstrated in a previous brochure on mountain regions, the Union's regional policy provides a broad range of funding under Objectives 1 and 2 of the Structural Funds for islands and coastal areas which are recognised as being underdeveloped, disadvantaged or declining.

As you will discover from this brochure, actions by ordinary people and their representatives at local, national and European level are helping islands and coastal regions to achieve sustainable development. These actions, conducted in a concerted and determined fashion, will enable us to safeguard and develop the unrivalled cultural, economic and social heritage of these areas on the fringes of Europe.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Barnier'.

Michel Barnier

Member of the Commission responsible for Regional Policy

I - Strategic territories

The position of islands and coastal regions as natural boundaries between Europe's seacoast and the interior make them strategic territories for the European Union. They comprise major commercial centres and are important communication interfaces. Islands account for an area of 109 423 square kilometres (3.4% of the EU total) and are home to 14 million people (3.43% of the EU total). Coastal regions extend over 89 000 km and contain many cities with populations over 50 000, including several capitals: Athens, Copenhagen, Lisbon and Stockholm.

Coastal areas as centres of attraction

As coastal areas combine the beauty of their landscapes with the pleasures of the seaside they are major centres of tourism in Europe. However, their economic role extends far beyond this. Because of their strategic position between sea and land, they are heavily involved in food production and trade.

The development of economic activities has resulted in enhanced tourism facilities and new transport infrastructure. The social fabric of many coastal areas has evolved in recent years in light of the restructuring in the fishing industry and in traditional agriculture. Although some coastal regions have experienced an important outmigration of the local population, most are faced with increasing demographic pressure and substantial seasonal fluctuations in population in large part due to tourism.

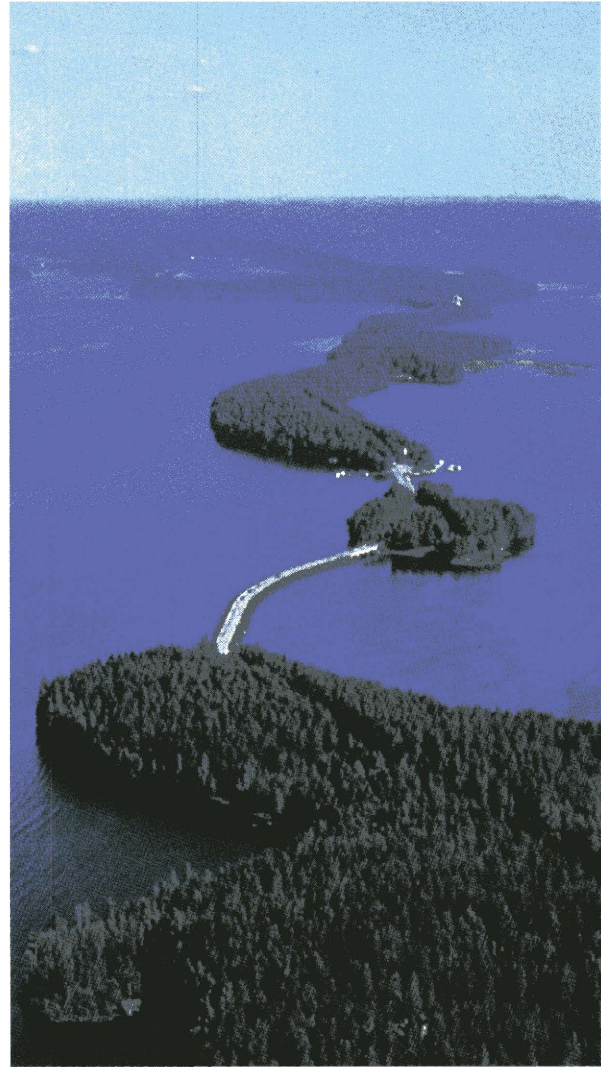
The major works on urban and other development schemes can also threaten the coastal environment. Civil engineering works carried out without sufficient knowledge of coastal dynamics can often accelerate erosion of the coast. Natural habitats may disappear and biodiversity decrease both on land and in the sea. Pollution from marine and land sources may contaminate the soil and drinking water reserves.

The coastal regions are therefore prone to recurring conflicts. Demographic and economic pressures as well as the claiming of idle land for entertainment and tourism purposes heavily burden regional development planning. The lack of integrated management of sea and land resources causes serious tensions between various activities (fishing, services, agriculture) and hampers the sustainable management of coastal areas.

Islands and dependency

The geographic and demographic nature of Europe's islands classifies them as distinct parts of the Union. Most of them undeniably attract tourists but their innate situation (distance from the mainland, peripheral aspects, small-scale market, etc.) ensure that they remain dependent on the mainland. Island economies are fragile economies. Despite the considerable efforts made in recent years, often with aid from the Union, they continue to suffer from a series of structural handicaps: scarcity of usable land, heavy dependence on transport and communication links, limited water and energy resources, marine pollution and shortage of skilled labour. The reduced scale of their local economies, their dependence on a small number of key sectors, demographic pressures and unemployment all make these regions particularly vulnerable to internal and external economic shocks. The problems of the islands and their permanent structural constraints are dealt with by Articles 154 and 158 of the EU Treaty as recently amended, as well as in Declaration No 30 adopted as an annex to the Amsterdam Treaty.

Coastal areas generally consist of a strip of land and sea whose width depends on the nature of the local environment and the human activities linked with marine resources. Taking into account these two factors, such regions can extend beyond territorial limits and quite far inland.



The outermost regions

Among Europe's islands and coastal regions are some areas which have a special status explicitly recognised in Article 299(2) of the Amsterdam Treaty: the outermost regions. These are the four French overseas department (Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana and Réunion), the Canary Islands of Spain and the Portuguese islands of the Azores and Madeira. All these regions lie far away from the European mainland, making it difficult for them to integrate into the Union's single market. They generate a level of GDP much lower than the Community average (59%), generally have a high unemployment rate, and their economies are based on a limited number of sectors. Lastly, they face very stiff competition from neighbouring countries because of their labour costs.

In this specific context, the Commission proposed an overall strategy of sustainable development for the most remote regions based on support for fishing and agriculture and for diversification of the economy. Between 1989 and 1999, EUR 7.2 billion from the Structural Funds was allocated to development programmes in these remote regions. In 2000-2006, these regions are fully eligible under Objective 1 (assistance for regions lagging behind in development) and qualify for three special programmes under the Interreg Initiative (strand III B) concerned with transnational cooperation. Future plans are expected to improve the coordination of the Structural Funds with other instruments such as state aid, lending and fiscal mechanisms in order to take advantage of the regions' potential.

Finally, the Commission proposed to the Council of Ministers on 29 November 2000 that it should supplement these measures by raising assistance levels for several Structural Fund programmes operating in the outermost regions and by revising the instruments employed under the POSEI programmes (specific option programmes for remoteness and island location). At the European Council in Nice on 7-9 December 2000, the Heads of State and Government took note of these proposals from the Commission proposals and asked the Council to examine them promptly.



Fishing as a way of life

Fishing and aquaculture are the most traditional human activities in coastal areas. Small-scale fishing (both offshore and inshore) concentrates on species available in limited quantities but with a high value-added component. On the other hand, industrial-scale fishing is becoming increasingly efficient but with little compatibility with the renewal of natural resources. Aquaculture, finally, is often seen as an alternative to fishing.

The Community fleet currently comprises 97 000 vessels of varying sizes; however, capacity has been reduced in recent years in order to adapt to the natural renewal cycle of fish stocks. Fishing and aquaculture are essential to food production and provide jobs for people living on islands and coastal areas. The fishing industry contributes 0.2% to the European Union's GDP and accounts for only 0.4% of EU jobs. However, it is essential to the survival of some coastal areas suffering from a peripheral location, a high rate of unemployment and a limited labour market. While the number of fishermen is falling, the fishing industry gives rise to many secondary activities: processing, packaging, transport, sales, shipbuilding and port facilities, maintenance services, etc.

Space also is a major issue in these areas, with potential conflicts between fishing, aquaculture and other activities. Some of these, such as sailing and angling and the development of tourist installations, can conflict with inshore fishing, either because they cause a reduction in accessible areas and marine habitats or because they involve a deterioration in the quality of the water and the marine environment.

Aquaculture is mainly confined to waters close to shore, in constant interaction with other coastal activities such as agriculture and tourism. This is a typical problem which can effectively be solved by Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM). Although the positive aspects of aquaculture are familiar (such as the need for quality water and supply tourists with fish and seafood), its interactions with other activities are not always seen in a positive light. It competes with others for space, both ashore and at sea.

Integrated Coastal Zone Management

In order to help fight the degradation of coastal regions, the Commission is proposing a Community strategy for management planning in these areas. The primary aim is to solve fundamental problems facing our coasts: lack of information, insufficient involvement of the population in projects undertaken in coastal areas and the lack of coordination among the various parties responsible for regional development planning.

Aware that there is no simple legislative solution to these complex problems, the Commission gives priority to a flexible strategy focusing on actual problems identified on the ground. This is an integrated approach, locally based and participatory, chosen to guarantee the ecological viability of the management of Europe's coastlines as well as its cohesion and social equity.

The Commission is inviting Member States to work out their own strategy of integrated coastal management, to begin with a study of how these areas are used and managed. These national strategies should include measures to encourage the coordination of the rules and regulations applying to these areas, to stimulate involvement of local actors and to allow for effective controls.

For its part, the Commission pledges to:

- bring Union policies in line with adequate and coordinated management of coastal regions;
- set up a network of services available to people in charge of managing coastal areas;
- encourage research and information concerning coastal areas;
- finance innovative actions for the management of coastal areas;
- encourage initiatives at all administrative levels.

The ICZM strategy was proposed by the European Commission in September 2000. It marks a new phase three years after the launch of a demonstration programme which gave rise to 35 pilot projects and, in its final stages, to a wide-ranging consultation of all the interested parties.

These 35 pilot projects were principally selected for funding under the LIFE-Environment and Terra programmes. The projects were located throughout the territory of the Union and reflected the great diversity of ecological, economic and social conditions in coastal areas. Although primarily the responsibility of local or regional authorities, projects with a transnational dimension were also covered by the Community Initiative Interreg II C. In fact, a number of programmes adopted under Interreg II already included the problem of integrated management of coastal areas.

For more information, please visit the following website: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/liczm/home.htm>

Ports as centres of multiple activities

Industry on the coast has always been linked to ports. As the territory's point of entry and exit, ports tend to concentrate on activities connected with fishing, trade, tourism and transport. More than three quarters of world trade is shipped via the sea and inland waterways. Besides freight, the sea transportation of passengers also generates considerable economic, tourism and commercial activity in some port cities. The contribution of ports to the economy of a region is even more important if they are properly connected to local road, rail and air access points and to the trans-European transport networks. The concentration of ships and transport activities in an area often presupposes the presence of shipbuilding yards, fabrication facilities and other heavy industries. Although these industries are in decline in Europe, they still represent major sources of direct and indirect jobs.

All in all, ports have seen a marked expansion in recent years owing to changes in maritime transport and cargo-handling technologies. Handling is becoming more and more automated, reducing the number of dock workers needed.

Operating maritime transport also involves concentrations of energy storage, treatment and distribution plants. Finally, because of the freight flows that they generate, large port cities attract major agri-foodstuff manufacturers, metallurgic and petrochemical industries to their industrial zones.

Wind in the sails of tourism

Seaside holidays, diving, sea angling, cruises, eco-tourism: coastal areas exert an inexorable attraction on people looking for rest and recreation. Many island and coastal economies are strongly dependent on income from coastal tourism.

Europe has 12 of the world's top 40 holiday destinations, with coastal areas leading the way. The levels of tourism within and between Community countries are considerable. Most Europeans travel within their own country or go to another Member State for holiday. Sixty-three percent of Europeans prefer the beaches along the Mediterranean coast.

Islands and coastal areas are sometimes beset by conflicts between tourism and aquaculture. The former wants the coast for leisure activities while the latter needs sea water for producing or extracting foodstuffs. Pressure from tourism has risen gradually, slowing down the development of facilities required by the fishing industry and especially aquaculture. Fishing and aquaculture facilities usually bear the brunt of it. On the other hand,

tourism has contributed immensely to the development of local economies and to job creation. It has encouraged new means of communication and has reduced the isolation of some islands and coastal regions. It provides fishermen and fish farmers with additional sources of income and helps them to sell their produce locally.

In terms of turnover, tourism is the biggest economic sector in the world. In the European Union, the industry employs 9 million people directly and account for up to 5.5% of Community GDP.





A delicate environment

Coastal areas contain a large number of ecosystems which are among the most complex from a biological point of view as well as the most productive on the planet and also serve as a buffer zone between land and sea. Coastal ecosystems are important for biodiversity, climatic regulation and combatting erosion. However, the ecological balance of coastal areas is particularly vulnerable as a result of the mutual influences of the marine and land environments.

The decline in unused coastal spaces, the rise of sea levels and coastal erosion are increasing the pressure on the remaining natural areas. Apart from cases of accidental pollution, coastal waters suffer from long-term contamination from maritime traffic, waste generated by urban, industrial and agricultural activities and river systems which drain polluted water from the interior into the sea.

The rising number of pleasure craft is increasing the pollution of water and the marine environment. Property developments, major industrial complexes, coastal defence works and bad waste management are all causing a spiralling deterioration of the coastal environment. Industrial-scale fishing, both offshore and inshore, if not strictly controlled, is jeopardising the reproductive capacity of fishing stocks. Even aquaculture, when it is over-intensive, can disturb the balance of the marine environment. If these activities fail to adapt to their environment, they are in danger of disappearing in the long term from some regions altogether.

Finally, the coast is where major energy production is concentrated. Tidal and wave motion is used as a source of power, and seawater is used to cool conventional and nuclear power stations as well as to disperse waste. All these interactions cannot remain without effect on the environmental balance.

II - Regional policy on the ground

The vulnerability of coasts and islands and their lag in development justify the attention paid to them by Community policy on economic and social cohesion. The Structural Funds contribute to these regions in a variety of ways.

Assistance from the European Union

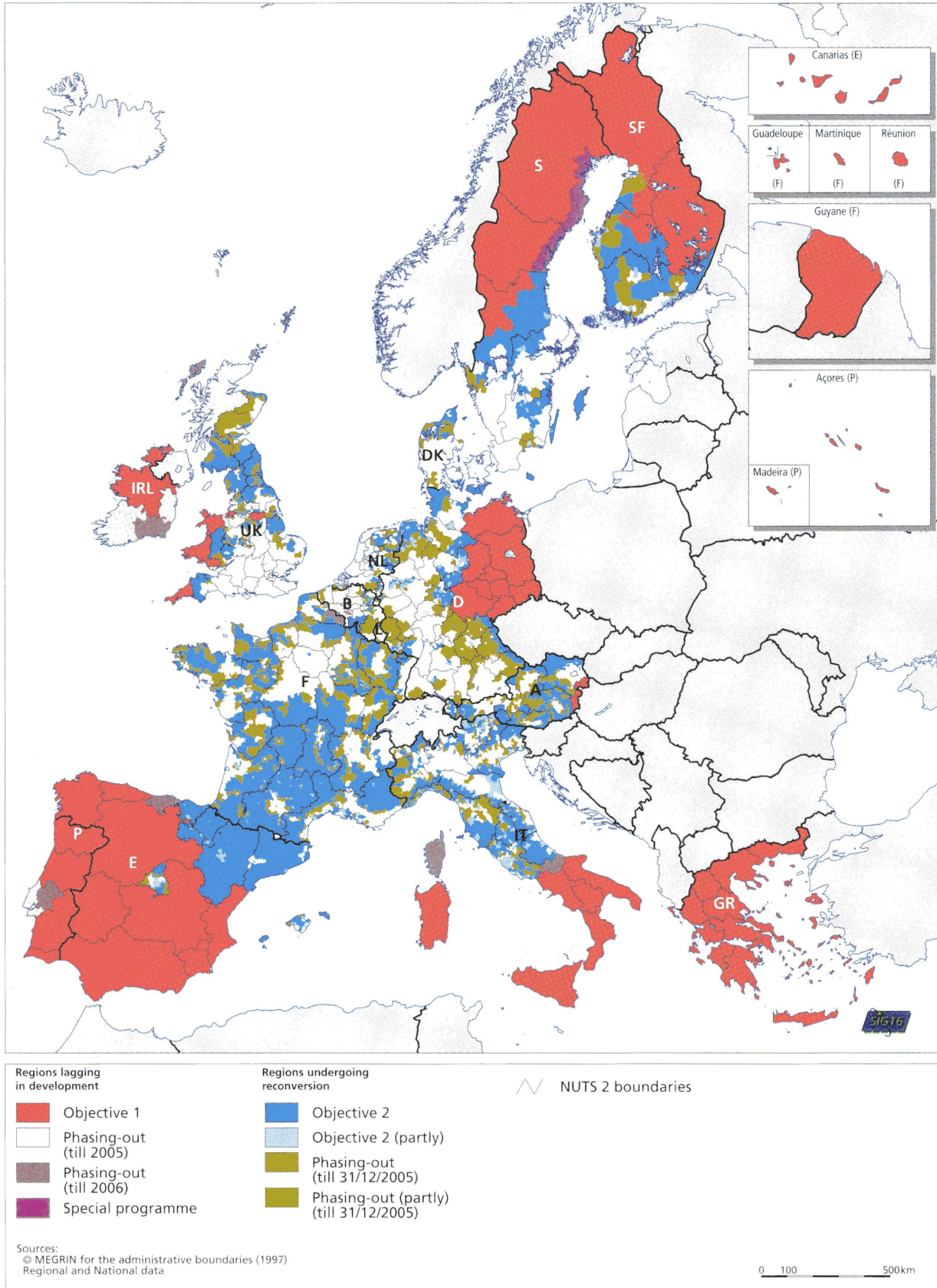
Objective 1 under the Structural Funds covers regions lagging in development, defined as those whose per capita GDP does not exceed 75% of the Community average or which have a low population density. This includes the whole of Portugal, Greece, Sardinia, Sicily and Ireland as well as most of Spain, several regions in the west of the United Kingdom, the North of Finland, North-East Germany and the south of Italy. The outermost regions (the Azores, Madeira, the Canary Islands and the French overseas departments) also qualify for Objective 1 in the 2000-2006 programming period. Corsica and the Highlands & Islands are no longer eligible for Objective 1 but do receive transitional support, while the northern coastal areas of Sweden have their own special seven-year programme. Under Objective 1, the eligible islands and coastal regions receive assistance from four Funds: the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG), the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) in the case of rural development schemes.

Other coastal areas which are better developed but are also encountering major difficulties can also count on support from the Structural Funds. Under Objective 2, money is available for economic and social restructuring of areas in difficulty, especially those dependent on fishing.

Outside the Objective 1 regions, the FIFG operates across the whole territory of the Union to provide targeted support for activities linked to the fishing industry. Meanwhile, the Cohesion Fund is helping Spain, Greece, Portugal and Ireland to fund the development of transport infrastructure and measures of environmental protection.

A Community Initiative known as Pesca was funded by the European Union between 1994 and 1999 to support economic and social diversification in the fishing industry. It has not been renewed for 2000-2006, but most schemes (collaborative projects, diversification, training) have been incorporated into the new Regulation governing the FIFG.

Areas receiving regional assistance from the European Union



1. Fishing adapts to changing times

Fishing and aquaculture may account for less than 1% of the GDP of the European Union, but they have a significant impact on employment in areas where there are few alternative activities. Although the number of fishermen tends to shrink, their trade generates many associated jobs in the fishing industry (processing, packaging, transport and marketing) and in the services sector (shipyards, manufacturing workshops, logistics and management).

The fisheries sector must do its best to achieve a smooth conversion and restructuring. Intensive fishing reduces the volume of natural resources and, consequently, potential income. Increased competition is another challenge which must be met. Through structural aid, the European Union is supporting the fishing industry in its restructuring process by assisting the modernisation of the fleet, encouraging aquaculture and aiding the processing industries.

“Fishtown” on the crest of the wave

Bremerhaven owes its nickname of “Fishtown” – and its reputation – mainly to the quality of its facilities geared to the needs of fishing on the high seas and deep-sea fishing. This reputation was very nearly tarnished when deep-sea fishing went through a serious crisis in the 1980s. However, the city authorities were quick off the mark in launching a restructuring scheme. Funds were injected into the rebuilding and modernisation of covered market halls, the construction of roads and hydraulic systems and the setting-up of new offices for quality control and marketing operations.

The most spectacular change has occurred in the old port area, which was entirely renovated and reorganised with EU support. Thanks to the “Fishing port showcase” project, nearly 800 000 people visit the restored area each year to do some shopping or view the many attractions, such as the former fish freight terminal. Having been entirely demolished and rebuilt, this station now houses the

Atlanticum, an educational centre which deals with such subjects as sea formation, Arctic fauna, fishing techniques, but also the history of the fishing port, the

unloading of fishing vessels, the fish auction market and everyday life in the port. Its jewel is an aquarium given over to North Sea and Atlantic fauna.

The tourist side of the “showcase” project is complemented by a training centre designed to ease access to the labour market for the unemployed by encouraging, for example, specialisation in the selling of fish. It also offers advanced training programmes to workers in the food and catering industry.

Other new facilities in the old fishing port, which provides a total of 8 200 jobs, include an auditorium for staging cultural events, a conference centre and an adjoining hotel.

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Total cost of the “Showcase” redevelopment project: EUR 12.17 million

European Union contribution: EUR 3,7 million



The old port area in Bremerhaven has been entirely renovated. One of its attractions is an aquarium.



Peniche, a port constantly adapting to change

Peniche, as Portugal's second most important port, has displayed a wealth of imagination in its bid to keep afloat an economy based entirely on the fishing industry. While employment has remained stable in the processing industry, the same cannot be said of the seagoing workforce. The number of fishermen fell from 2 300 in 1996 to 1 800 in 1999. The fleet is also steadily diminishing and some natural species are becoming extinct. In order to reverse this trend, local players, municipal authorities and trade associations have focussed on diversifying activities and strengthening infrastructure.

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Total budget: EUR 513 762

European Union contribution (FIFG): EUR 256 881.

The initiatives launched to adapt Peniche to the changes in the fishing industry have been channelled through two local producer organisations, Opcentro and Fenacoopesca. Over 100 projects, costing a total of EUR 5 million, have benefited from Structural Fund assistance under the Pesca Initiative. Most are geared towards modernising the fleet by fitting communications and fish-locating equipment. To make the port more competitive, the fisheries processing industries have been modernised and wholesale storage facilities and ice production plants have been built. The Peniche shipyard has also been improved to a remarkable extent, thereby facilitating renewal of the local fleet. Its ambition is to become the country's leading shipyard.

The life of a vessel is not confined to fishing. As part of the fishing industry's restructuring, some boats have been converted into tourist crafts. Boat trips and deep-sea diving offer a second lease of life to these vessels, giving a fresh impetus to the Peniche tourist industry.

A millennium of fishing warrants a museum

Formerly an island in the Zuyder Zee, Urk in the Dutch province of Flevoland was linked to the mainland in 1939 as a result of extensive land reclamation and infrastructure works. The town now accommodates the Netherlands' largest fish auction market. To avoid putting all its eggs in one basket, the town also invests in cultural tourism.

The old wooden boats have been replaced by a fleet of 150 ultra-modern trawlers specialising in fishing for high value-added products. The thousand year old port district has also developed a successful processing industry which, together with fishing, accounts for 80% of the jobs in the town.

While keeping its sights firmly fixed on the future, Urk has not turned its back on its past. A museum dedicated entirely to the town's history and fishing tradition has been set up in the former town hall. The building was restored in 1998 using the techniques of the period. An annex was specially designed to house the reconstruction of an old fisherman's house, with furniture and other items from the region.

Through the exhibits in the Urk museum, visitors can go back in time and discover the different fishing practices formerly used on the island. They can also sample the atmosphere of past centuries by passing through a grocer's shop, the cabin of a trawler or the engine room of one of the island's first motorised vessels. Temporary exhibitions

are also staged in its galleries every winter: the theme for 2000 was "Urk throughout the 20th century". The museum, which constitutes a link between Urk's past and present, is the centrepiece of the economic diversification strategy launched by the municipality in the tourist sector.

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Total budget: EUR 320 000

European Union contribution (PESCA): EUR 150 000



The Urk museum was restored using the techniques of the period.

Aquaculture in Greece: Explosion followed by diversification

For 20 years, production of sea bream and bass has grown in Greece, from 100 tonnes to around an estimated 56 000 tonnes for 2000. This impressive leap is evidence to the vitality of a sector which has enabled many Greek fish farms to expand. However, adaptation is now the order of the day. The potential of the market has increased competition, thereby pulling prices downwards. Moreover, increased diversification requirements are inciting producers to seek new approaches to development.

In the early 1980s, aquaculture in Greece was dominated by small producers. In the following two decades, national and Community assistance coupled with an injection of private capital, enabled small producers to expand their activities and many fishermen to take up a new trade. Aquaculture has, therefore, not become the prerogative of the giants of the food industry, as demonstrated by the path followed by Kastellorizo.

Founded in 1985 by former fishermen, this aquaculture company established itself by making use of a network of specialist restaurants patiently built up by its founders. The company currently produces 2 000 tonnes of bass and sea bream. It has also achieved the vertical integration of its production system, managing its production from the processing to the marketing stage and, following the example of other companies in the industry, is preparing to be traded on the stock market.

Greece has become the leading Mediterranean aquacultural producer of bass and sea bream, employing a workforce of 2 500. Developments on the market require producers to diversify. Approaches currently being pursued include ready meals and the transfer of technology to third countries, which should ultimately create new outlets. Finally, some producers have opted to rear new species, while others are refining more efficient marketing techniques.

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Total budget for aquaculture in Greece:
EUR 112 million

European Union contribution (1994-99):
EUR 38.36 million



Greece is the leading Mediterranean aquacultural producer of bass and sea bream.

2. Transport focuses on multimodality

An efficient transport system is essential to the competitiveness of the European Union and, in particular, to the growth of outlying areas. European goods transport has increased by 70% since 1970 and will continue to expand on account of the growth of international trade and the enlargement of the Union to the Central and East European countries and the Mediterranean countries.

However, the development of transport cannot and must not be borne by road transport alone. All types of transport must be integrated. Ports are the links between the sea and the mainland. They can become genuine communication hubs interconnecting maritime, river, air and road transport routes. Port towns can also accommodate multimodal goods-handling platforms, providing the necessary logistics and ensuring the transfer of goods from one form of transport to another without any waste of time.

The mingling of transport systems

Portugal is a key transit area for the European economy. Its ports, open to the Atlantic and West Africa, have always formed a link between maritime and land transport. Serving as an interface between the sea, rivers, roads and, later, railways, the harbour towns became genuine communication hubs. As in most countries with a seaboard, the efficiency of Portugal's domestic network, its inland and international links and the development of connections combining different modes of transport are vital to the growth of its economy and trade.

Portugal and western Spain are participating in a vast scheme to create a European transport network aimed at promoting the development of this part of the Iberian peninsula. As part of this scheme, the rail and road networks, as well as maritime and air links, are being reinforced and improved. In addition, the "interoperability" of networks is being guaranteed through the creation of interfaces connecting the different modes of transport, linking in such a manner the ports of Sines, Setubal, Lisbon, Aveiro and Leixos with the country's border areas, airports and principal urban centres. Access to these towns by sea and road is also constantly being improved. In addition, redevelopment work has begun at the port of Setubal, while the port of Sines has been equipped with new command and control systems permitting remote monitoring of port operations.

Finally, to complete the interconnections within the Portuguese network, the airports of Oporto and Faro have been extended and the region of Ota will be host to the future Lisbon airport, which should be completed in 2002. This building project will provide 4 000 jobs in the region. The capacity of the new infrastructure is estimated at 14 million passengers in its initial phase with a long-term objective of 30 million, three times the number of passengers at Lisbon's existing Portela airport.

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Budget for Portugal's trans-European transport network: EUR 2 billion

European Union contribution (ERDF and Cohesion Fund): EUR 1.22 billion



Sines has become a multimodal communications hub.

Railway and canals for the port of Chioggia



A few miles from Venice, the port of Chioggia benefits from a strategic location.

Since the days of Venetian splendour, Chioggia has stood out as a key Italian port. Due to its privileged location on the Adriatic, it is only a few knots away from the city of Venice. In addition, it is situated at the mouth of a network of rivers and canals, including the Po,

the Brenta and the Adige. During the first phase of ERDF assistance (December 1996-December 1998), the Val de Rio site acquired a second terminal measuring 28 000 m², with 517 m of multimodal quays, 2 km of rail links, a warehousing area of 3 000 m² and 2 km of canals of 5 m deep. The second phase, which was completed at the end of 2000, pursued the process, providing a further warehousing area of 8 000 m² with 1.5 km of rail links. When it is completed in 2002, the new port of Chioggia will be equipped with the most advanced multimodal systems.

However, in the early 1980s, Chioggia was declining slowly but surely. The financial resources needed to adapt the Port of Isola's infrastructure to the requirements of multimodal transport were lacking.

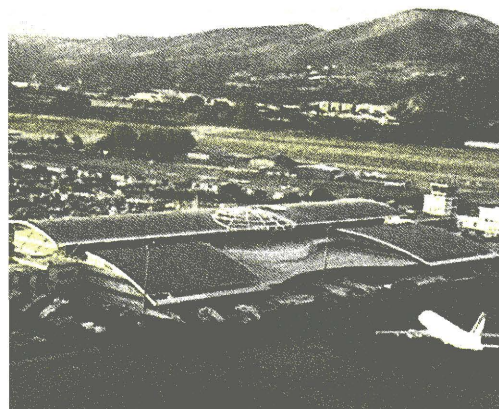
At the end of the 1980s, the Italian Minister for Public Works opted to build a new port on the Val de Rio site. Trading activities were to be located there, while the old port would be confined to fishing and tourism. After the first terminal was built in 1993, the new port project received financial support from the ERDF. Chioggia put on a fresh spurt.

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Total cost of phase 1 (1994-96): EUR 9 649 021
European Union contribution (ERDF): EUR 6 848 140

Total cost of phase 2 (1997-99): EUR 9 975 000
European Union contribution (ERDF): EUR 2 975 000

Less congestion in the air



Campo Dell'Oro Airport, Ajaccio.

Corsica's power to attract tourists is nothing new, and so are the risks of saturation at Ajaccio's airport.

As far back as 1990, the guardians of the airways sounded an alarm bell. The 800 000 annual passengers at that time were bringing the airport up to saturation point, and the growth

forecasts for 2005 provided grounds for fearing the worst.

An ambitious extension plan was necessary in order to double the capacity of the passenger facilities. Implementation began in 1994. When the last brick was laid in the summer of 1999, the airport of Ajaccio-Campo Dell'Oro had a covered area of 16 700 m² and an open area of 2 600 m², spread over four levels, including a lower ground floor and a ground floor area of 8 500 m². From an aesthetic point of view, integrating the airport's

installations into the surrounding countryside was a priority.

In their plan, the selected architects, Ducrocq and Puccinelli, worked on the basis of an hourly passenger throughput of 1 086 (at peak times) and an average annual throughput of 1.6 million. In 1999, the number of passengers passed the 1 million mark and the upward trend looked set to continue in 2000. Given that the distinctive feature of the airport of Ajaccio-Campo Dell'Oro is that over 50% of its traffic is concentrated on the three summer months, and especially on weekends during this period, the possibility of brief peaks of saturation still cannot be ruled out.

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Total cost: EUR 17 million

European Union contribution (ERDF): EUR 7.9 million

“Speedy Roland”

The Rassende Roland (“Speedy Roland”) steam railway has been operating on the island of Rügen for over a century. The “express” celebrated its hundredth anniversary in 1995 and owes its nickname to the comfortable, slow pace at which it carries passengers and tourists along. The oldest steam engine, in service since 1914, is also renowned for its dining car dating from 1910. The Roland is a valuable tourist attraction for the region, attracting thousands of enthusiasts every year.

Before the 1960s, the train went as far as the port of Wittow. The line from Putbus to Wittow was then done away with as the transport of goods transport was transferred to roads. Today, however, the Roland still runs from Putbus to Ghoren and even goes as far as the port of Lauterbach. In 1998 and 1999, the 750 mm-gauge Putbus-Lauterbach section of the line was entirely renovated and a third rail was added. This makes it possible to combine tourist/cultural interests with economic interests.

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Total cost: EUR 1.4 million

European Union contribution: EUR 1.05 million

The 750 mm gauge of the track in fact prevents modern trains from running on the line. The port of Lauterbach was not, therefore, linked to the other towns on the island by a railway line capable of transporting goods.

Today, as a result of the work carried out, the journey from Lauterbach to Berlin takes 3h10 and Rassende Roland continues to amble over the island. Putbus station has also been renovated, while Lauterbach station has acquired new platforms.

Russia’s Finnish springboard

Situated in the Gulf of Bothnia, in the West of Finland, the port of Kokkola acts as a springboard for goods from neighbouring Russia. The compatibility of the two countries’ rail networks – the rail gauge is identical – partly accounts for the rapid growth of traffic from Russia in recent years. In ten years, the volume has increased from 2.2 to 3.2 million tonnes a year. Once they arrive in Kokkola by rail, goods are shipped onward by sea to the rest of Europe, America, Japan and Australia.

The port, built in 1825, has benefited from ambitious infrastructure investments over the past twelve years. A new deep-water port, capable of accommodating larger cargo ships, has been built close to the old port. Subsequent investments between 1995 and 1997 have helped maintain trade at a dynamic level.

The surface area of the deep port has gradually quadrupled in size. The access route to the port of Kokkola has also been dredged. The quays, warehouses, cranes and railway lines comply with the most modern standards and

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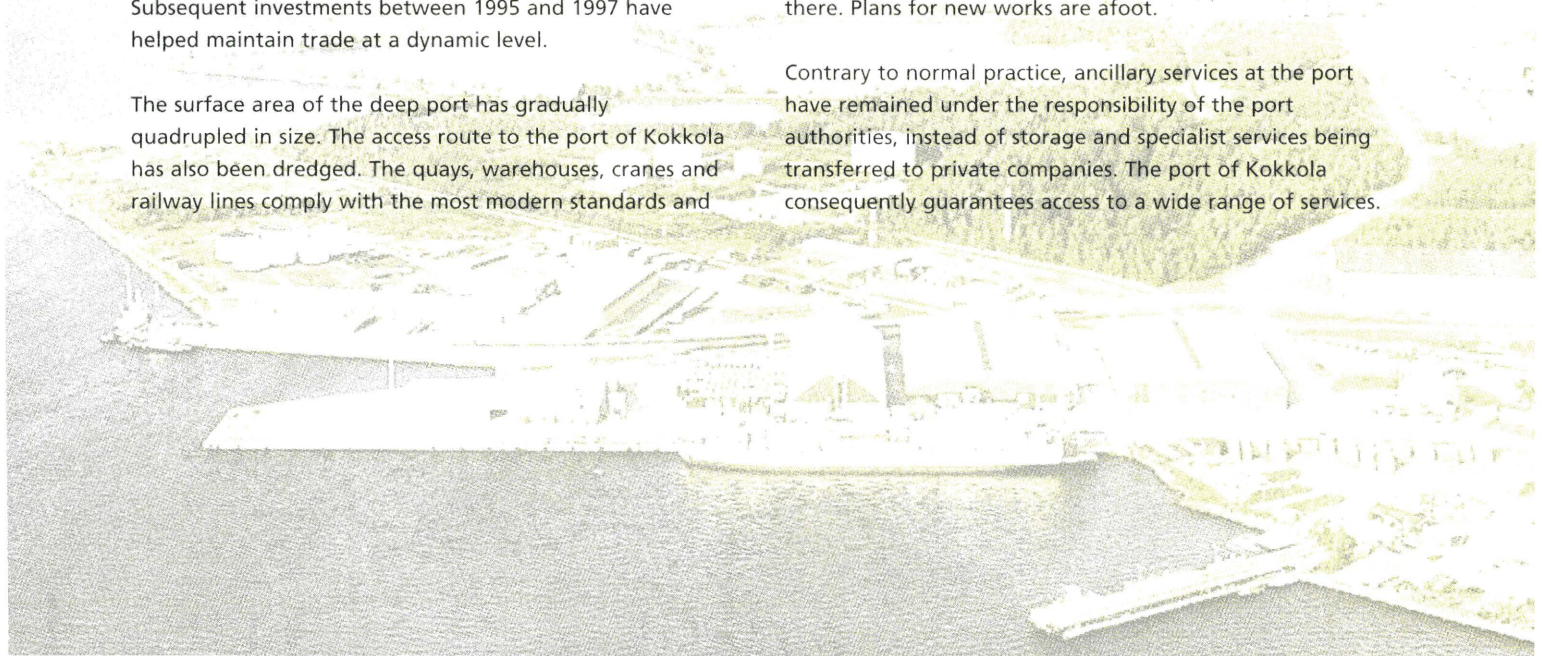
Total cost: EUR 7.12 million

European Union contribution: EUR 2.89 million

Total investment over 10 years: EUR 45 million

the capacity of the port has increased to 65 000 tonnes of freight. Its expansion, moreover, is not expected to stop there. Plans for new works are afoot.

Contrary to normal practice, ancillary services at the port have remained under the responsibility of the port authorities, instead of storage and specialist services being transferred to private companies. The port of Kokkola consequently guarantees access to a wide range of services.



A bridge between two butterfly wings

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Total budget: EUR 76.7 million

European Union contribution (ERDF):
 EUR 19.5 million

Guadeloupe, the largest island in the Lesser Antilles, looks out to the Atlantic Ocean in the East and the Caribbean in the West. The island, in the shape of a butterfly with spread wings, comprises Basse-Terre and Grande-Terre. These two wings are separated by a strip of sea,

the Rivière Salée ("Salt River"), which was previously spanned by only one bridge, the Gabarre bridge, in the South.

Since 1998, the Alliance bridge has formed a second link between the two parts of the island. This infrastructure was indispensable in order to keep traffic flowing freely – an essential factor in the island's economy. The income of the island's 481 632 inhabitants in fact depends mainly on tourism and agriculture, two activities for which an efficient transport system is a sine qua non.

Guadeloupe's road network was developed mainly in the 1960s. The island has no railway, and maritime transport is extremely limited, except for links to the islands in the vicinity. Consequently, people and goods travel essentially by road.

In offering a second route across the Rivière Salée, the new 485 metre long Alliance bridge has brought considerable savings in terms of both time and money. During peak periods, 55 000 vehicles use this road section every day. Motorists were previously obliged to drive across the whole island to the Gabarre bridge, causing serious traffic jams and paralysing much of the network. The Alliance bridge also makes it much easier to transport goods between the port of Jarry and Raizet airport and encourages new activities in this area.

A crossing point to mainland Europe

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Total cost: EUR 40 million

European Union contribution (Interreg): EUR 18 million

Located at the southern tip of Ireland is Rosslare, the nearest port to mainland Europe. Over the past decade, this port, which is now known as Rosslare Europort, has become one of Europe's finest roll-on roll-off car-ferry ports. This transformation owes much to the implementation of a balanced infrastructure development strategy, which was partly financed by the

European Union.

Since 1989, projects part-financed by the CIE (national transport company) and the European Union have made it possible to adapt existing facilities and create a port of international standing. As a first stage, the berths were dredged, new docking areas were created and a new 50 metre extension was added to the mooring area. During the second stage (1991-93), the quay wall was reconstructed and realigned, providing more extensive

parking and pavement areas. More recently, between 1996 and 2000, with the aid of the Interreg programme, Berth 3 was dredged, the berthing equipment for ro-ro car-ferris was launched into the new century and a lorry park and brand new passenger information system were inaugurated.

Four major shipping companies operate from Rosslare Europort: Stena Line, Irish Ferries, P&O Pandoro and UECC/Euroshipping. The connections to five strategic UK and French ports have ensured steady commercial growth since the infrastructure was improved. Investments by the shipping companies have added to those made by the port. In 1998, 40% of travellers arriving in Ireland (1.5 million passengers and 350 000 passenger vehicles) made use of Rosslare.

Lanzarote doubles its airport capacity

Lanzarote is a small island (813 km²), but it has many protected areas (350 km²). Any measures taken in tourism – a key development sector – must incorporate respect for the environment, the island’s principal asset.

An outstanding example of this attempt at sustainable development is the airport, which is one of the ten largest in Spain and has been growing steadily since 1992. Practically every two years, the airport facilities, which catered for 4.6 million travellers in 1999, have undergone extension work. The increased pressure on the environment is offset by equivalent countermeasures to protect the surrounding area.

The modernisation of the airport has doubled its capacity. It can now cope with 6 million passengers. The alterations include the extension of the runway, which can accommodate 22 parked aircraft, and the new passenger terminal, whose useful surface area has tripled in size and whose capacity has risen to 4 400 passengers an hour.

“This is a completely new building, which has been fitted out with the most modern equipment, such as a substation for air-conditioning. Moreover, its design blends in with the natural environment”, explains José Luis Solano, Head of the European Funds Coordination Department at AENA (Spanish Airports and Civil Aviation Authority).

The airport, which is situated 5 kilometres south-west of Arrecife, the capital of the island, registered an 11% increase in passenger numbers in 1998. Air traffic followed a similar trend, with nearly 45 000 flights in 1999.

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Budget for extending the runway:
EUR 2.828 million

European Union contribution (ERDF):
EUR 1.838 million



Lanzarote is one of Spain's ten largest airports.

A port at la Pointe

The port of Fort-de-France, in Martinique, handles almost 96% of the island’s external trade. In 1999, no less than 2.8 million tonnes of goods passed through the port, while container traffic registered a substantial increase. In that same year, 340 calls (700,000 passengers) were made by cruise ships put at the port. Passenger transport between the islands in the Antilles arc has also grown over to over 250 000 in the past 10 years.

This growth, however, is hampered by port traffic congestion resulting from the saturation of the service

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Total budget: EUR 113 million

European Union contribution: EUR 43 million

area and the lack of space allocated to cruise ships. To ensure that Fort-de-France remains France’s third most important container port and its leading port of call for cruise ships in terms of passenger numbers, the port authorities have decided to equip it with an efficient infrastructure for handling containers, make new mooring areas available for liners and reorganise general traffic.

By extending the Pointe des Grives, 16 hectares will be reclaimed from the sea for constructing new quays. The main quay will be 460 metres long. It will, therefore, be able to accommodate two container ships at any one time and will be backed up by a secondary quay measuring 150 metres. Work began in October 2000. The container terminal at the Pointe des Grives should come into service at the end of 2001. This building site, the largest currently under way at a French port, provides 150 permanent jobs.

3. Local development, contemplating the future

Local development rests on local people getting together to envision the future of their area. The inhabitants of a town or village strive to improve local living conditions, mainly by targeting economic development and employment. Projects resulting from local initiatives are more in keeping with the characteristics of the locality and are, therefore, particularly useful in island and coastal areas.

The European Union shares this approach. Operating on a human scale at local level and in partnership with local actors, the Structural Funds assist projects aimed at restoring declining districts, developing local tourism, modernising infrastructure and exploiting the potential of the area's cultural heritage.

The Lagan riverbanks regeneration programme

Belfast is at a watershed. Bruised and battered by thirty years of civil disturbance and industrial decline, today the city is getting back on its feet, reaping the dividends of the peace process and the raft of urban regeneration schemes which are making great strides in restoring the social and economic fabric.

The city takes its name from the Gaelic "Beal Feirste", meaning "river delta". The wasteland areas on the banks of this river, the Lagan, are currently being redeveloped as part of an ambitious regeneration programme coordinated by the Laganside Corporation, a local public body.

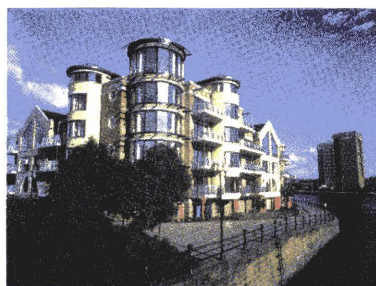
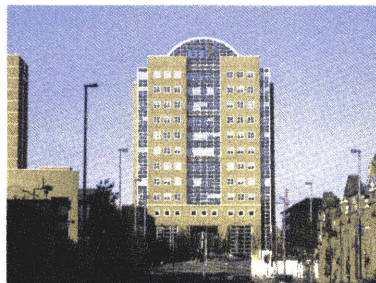
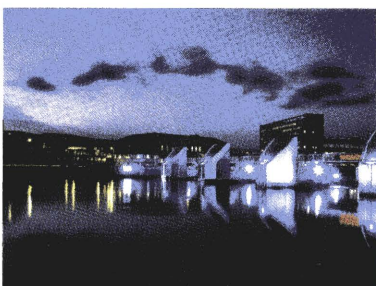
Working closely with local communities, the Laganside Corporation has mainly targeted six sites, mostly along the riverbanks, covering a total surface area of 200 hectares.

As well as restoring Clarendon Dock, Lanyon Place, Abercorn Dock, Gregg Quay and the area around the cathedral, one of the Laganside projects centres on regenerating the site of the old gasworks, which is ideally located between the town centre and the river. As the owner of the nine-hectare site, Belfast City Council has been at the forefront of efforts to preserve these historical monuments, set aside public spaces and restore buildings for commercial and private use. The site has been decorated with sculptures that depict Belfast's industrial past.

The schemes, running for the last ten years, to regenerate these sites and decontaminate the soil and the river water have transformed the city and the areas along Lagan area. Previously run-down wasteland areas, the sites along the Lagan river are appealing and attractive.



A new life for Belfast's river



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Total cost: EUR 182 million

European Union contribution:
EUR 52 million

Escal 'Atlantic - a virtual visit to the Age of the Liners

Like something out of 'Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea', an old German submarine base stands in the middle of the French port of Saint-Nazaire. The role of this vast concrete bunker is radically different from its original one. It has been transformed into a museum where visitors can take virtual tours on board ocean-going liners of old. Instead of destroying this sombre relic from the Second World War, the town of Saint-Nazaire decided to convert it into a 3 500 m² exhibition hall, and in so doing rekindling the memories of the transatlantic ocean liner for which this town became famous.

The brainchild of two architect-scenographers, the



converted base now fulfils a multifaceted role as a function venue, museum, theatre, cinema and forum for audio-visual presentations. Visitors enter the complex via the hull of an old liner, passing on into the bowels of the vessel. A visit to Escal' Atlantic transports

you back to the pre-war era of such great liners as the Normandie, the Liberté and the Great Eastern. Making their way through the complex on gangways, led by guides in period costume, visitors pass through a range of different settings from the engine room to the bridge, sauntering through bunkers and the holds, and ascending to the decks where they are treated to colourful shows. Visitors can also learn about the working of the helm, sextant and compass.

Opened on 23 April 2000, Escal 'Atlantic is the centrepiece of the Saint-Nazaire "Ville-port" project, designed to educate local people about the town's maritime past. The submarine base conversion should also stimulate the creation of extra tourism facilities in the port and lead to the creation of new jobs.

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Total budget: EUR 7.927 million

European Union contribution: EUR 3.963 million

The 3500m² exhibition hall recalls the transatlantic liners of the past

A marine reserve and its castle

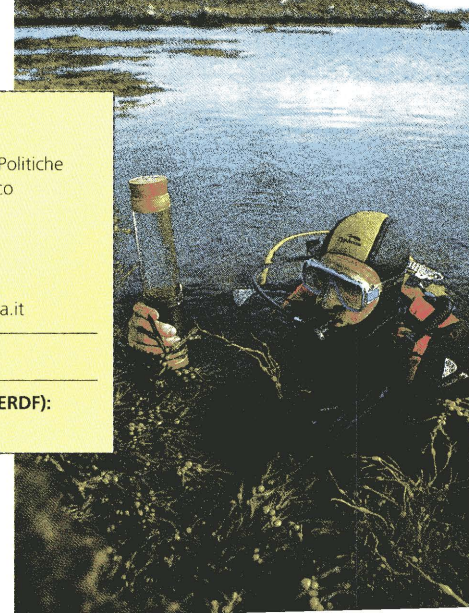
The island of Di Capo Rizzuto, in Calabria, on the isolated Ionian coast, is the site of the first marine wildlife reserve in Italy. It is home to a rich natural heritage that boasts impressive limestone formations and numerous southward-sloping terraces. This is a particularly favourable environment for different biological habitats with a unique concentration of rare and varied marine species. Extending over 14 343 hectares, the reserve also contains a number of archaeological remains from the Graeco-Roman era. It is not hard to see, then, why the area attracts thousands of tourists, divers and archaeologists each year.

Above the waves towers La Castella, a sixteenth-century fortress built by the Aragonese to defend against raids from pirates. The castle foundations, however, date from antiquity – this was once the site of one of Hannibal's residences. Built on a peninsula, the fort is a monument to the region's exceptional history and the myths and legends that surround it.

To develop the marine reserve, preserve the Castella and bring out the mutual strengths of these two sites, the

regional and local authorities have organised a major project to restore and renovate the castle. Eventually it will house the marine reserve's Management and Information Centre, together with exhibition rooms and a library. The external improvements on the castle have been completed, but refitting work continues within, slowed by the need to respect fresh archaeological discoveries made during the reinforcement of the foundations.

The marine reserve at Isola di Capo Rizzuto is a magnet for divers.



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Total budget: EUR 3 million

European Union contribution (ERDF):
EUR 1.5 million

A backbone for the Dodecanese

A quick glance at the economic figures for the islands of the Dodecanese – GDP, population, unemployment, productivity and capital investment – confirms one of the recurring problems of the archipelago, namely that for decades this area has been lagging behind mainland Greece in terms of development. The islands' deficiencies are structural in nature, primarily a lack of large-scale infrastructure and services.

The low population density on the islands increases running costs for public and private services, but the scattered pattern of habitation makes it essential to create a minimum level of services and infrastructure on each island. To encourage growth in these islands and reduce the gap with mainland Europe, a number of major projects have been launched locally with the help of funding from the ERDF – for example, the general hospital in Rhodes and the modernisation of Kos airport.

The refitting work at Kos airport was completed in 1997 in record time, enabling the airport to be reopened for the tourist season. The terminal was extended and some 35 000 m² of new landing runway built, doubling the

airport's capacity. In addition, the take-off runway was lengthened by 2 400 metres and three new passenger buses acquired.

More recently, in 2000, the general hospital in Rhodes was opened. With a surface area approaching 42 000 m² and 330 beds, this is the biggest hospital in the Dodecanese. Equipped with state-of-the-art technology, the hospital contains three major departments (laboratories, a surgical unit and wards) and around a dozen specialised services. It also offers outpatient services and physiotherapy care.

Kos airport

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Total budget: EUR 1.5 million

European Union contribution (ERDF): EUR 1.12 million

Rhodes general hospital

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Total budget: EUR 29 million

European Union contribution (ERDF): EUR 22.2 million

They lived on an island, far from everything ...

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Total budget: EUR 478 642

European Union contribution:
EUR 143 593

Up to a few months ago, the only link between the Swedish islands of Sainte-Anne, Gryt and Tjust and the mainland was provided by a single ferryboat.

The inhabitants of these islands depended on this, their only means of communication with the mainland, for postal services, health care, schooling and employment. When accidents happened, help was slow in coming.

This affected those living near the ports and even more so those living further inland. To remedy this isolation, the regional authorities opted for an original solution.

They purchased a fleet of six hovercrafts, light, fast and eco-friendly to provide the 600 island inhabitants with regular and flexible transport services. They were chosen for their adaptability to local weather conditions and rapid-reaction capability in the event of a medical emergency. Each one is run by a different private company, and together they are coordinated by the coastguard. By working closely together, these carriers have maximised the supply of transport services to the islands. The island residents are no longer a day-long boat trip away from the mainland but simply "on the other side of the water".

Six light hovercrafts connect the 600 inhabitants of the Islands of Saint-Anne, Gryt and Tjust with mainland Sweden.

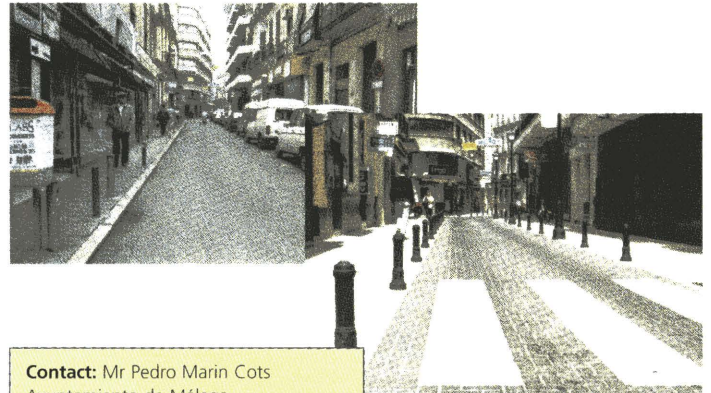
The need to manage success

The city of Malaga, a heady blend of Arabic/Andalusian tradition and unfettered tourist hedonism, grew at a spectacular rate between 1960 and 1980, with its population doubling, and swelling even more in the summer. The new housing built during this period, at times with few if any controls, have not been accompanied by a corresponding increase in urban infrastructure and municipal services. In short order, the very attractiveness of this seaside town had become its main drawback. Urgent action was called for.

In 1995, work started on giving a facelift to Malaga's historical centre, with projects to develop parks and green areas, refurbish dilapidated buildings and cultivate the town's historical heritage. Houses in the town centre were restored in their original style – baroque, eccentric, contemporary, modern – and sewage and waste-treatment systems were created, extended and modernised, with three new green areas laid out and two others restored, covering a total area of more than 1 million m² and giving the city a much-needed breath of fresh air.

To better inform and advise foreign visitors and tourists, about a hundred officers were selected for special training in foreign languages. Some 85 local shops and businesses were given subsidies to improve their signs and increase

safety provisions and customer service. In the process, 75 new jobs were created. Malaga's social services were given special attention, they were relocated to a fully refurbished office and the number of staff was increased to improve service.



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Total budget: EUR 31 million

European Union contribution:
EUR 15.7 million

To cope with the surge of visitors, Malaga has gotten a major facelift.

The diesel generators fall silent

Life has changed dramatically for the 1 500 inhabitants of the Aran Islands, off Galway in Ireland. The old diesel generators which used to supply their power have been replaced with a connection to the Irish national grid on the mainland.

The islanders have often been portrayed as "stoical", "easy-going" and "close to nature". Such a disposition must indeed have been essential for enduring the caprices of the local power system that turned simple jobs such as washing clothes or boiling milk into a lottery.

Economic progress on the islands has now been freed from the shackles of a power supply sufficient only for domestic consumption. The islanders are no longer barred from using computers, agricultural equipment and industrial machines and the tourist sector can now be developed thanks to the Irish Rural Energy Programme, Measure I, part-financed by the ERDF.

The islands of Inis Mor, Inis Meain and Inis Oirr are now connected to the national grid by a 40-km underwater cable, protected against damage from ships' anchors and

fishing gear. It was laid by a specialised vessel using satellite navigation techniques.

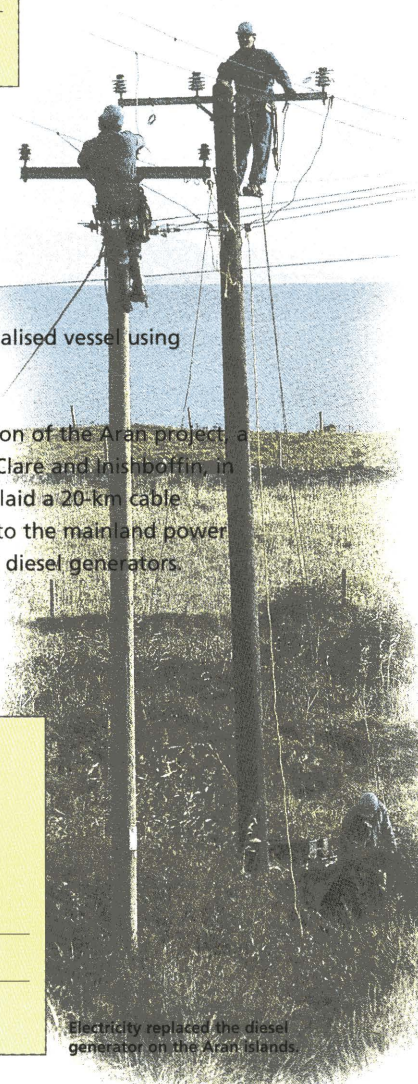
Following the successful completion of the Aran project, a similar scheme for the islands of Clare and Inishboffin, in the waters off County Mayo, has laid a 20-km cable connecting a further 350 people to the mainland power grid, and silenced forever the old diesel generators.

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Total budget: EUR 6 453 656

European Union contribution:
EUR 3 038 563

Electricity replaced the diesel generator on the Aran Islands.



Managing floods of tourists

The faster pace on the island of Bornholm was seen as a challenge and an opportunity. Ideally located at equal distances from Sweden, Poland, Germany and Denmark, this natural sanctuary of major beauty has seen the number of visitors explode during the past decade. The record was in 1997, when more than half a million people came. The year 2000 should largely exceed this level.

Two main factors came into play: the bridge across the strait between Denmark and Sweden, and the rapid ferry line between Ystad in Sweden and Roenne on Bornholm. Thanks to these people can now travel from Copenhagen to the island in less than three hours instead of more than six in the past.

However, it was the tourist information centre, a first-class institution created with the support of the Chamber of Commerce of Bornholm, which perceived the importance of the growing tourist interest for the island and made it possible to handle this new demand. The new reception centre replaced the old facilities, which could only cope with a limited number of persons.

The four permanent employees are supported by six seasonal workers during the high tourist season in summer. They meet all the very strict criteria

regulating Danish tourist offices. The staff speaks three languages and can give information about Denmark and Sweden. The active participation of the Chamber of Commerce in the management of the centre makes it possible to deal with commercial and economic queries.

With the improvement of the access to the island, a new kind of tourism has emerged. The accent is now on short stays and extended weekends. This new flexibility would never have been possible without the construction of this new professional tourist centre.

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Total cost: EUR 820 170

European Union contribution:
EUR 328 068



The Balka beach on the island of Bornholm.

Öland stands up for its past

When the Swedish Government proposed selling the Skäftekärr estate in 1996, the inhabitants of the north of Öland reacted immediately. The association "Vision Skäftekärr" was created. It has some 600 members and is seeking to ensure that the sale of the estate does not deprive the population of one of the flowers of its historical heritage. The dream is on course and the assistance from the European Union will help to fulfil it.

The main building, built in 1860 to house a forestry school, now contains a museum, an exhibition hall, a room for functions and a cafeteria. The buildings currently available also house vocational training schemes to stimulate the local economy. And walkers continue to enjoy a park with some 140 tree species over 100 years old.

The paths crisscrossing the park reveal numerous vestiges of dwellings built between the 3rd and the 8th century. These remains have been used as reference points for

historical reconstructions around the park. Traditional tool and utensil making methods are on display in various workshops and the public (more than 40 000 have already visited the estate) can wander through the past in the form of "live scenes" with actors in the costume of the 5th century.

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Total budget: EUR 1.2 million

European Union contribution: EUR 220 000

Celtic Voyager takes the pulse of the Irish Sea

Improving the economic potential of the sea through advanced underwater exploration – Ireland has taken the plunge by buying, with the aid of the ERDF, a multifunctional scientific research ship.

The vessel is equipped with electronic instruments and laboratories, submersible and air-based, which will help Irish and international scientists, as well as private companies and official agencies, to carry out research and training programmes.

The scientists in charge of the sustainable development of the sea need detailed and accurate underwater data. They study, for example, the location and size of shoals of fish as well as their reproduction rates. They also calculate the catch levels which will not threaten the survival of fishery resources.

The exploration for minerals, is concentrated on the quality of sand, gravel, coral and other sediments providing worthy information. Such studies also involve monitoring pollution in coastal waters, among the marine flora and fauna.

The Celtic Voyager has not been docked much since its launch. Major programmes have already been carried out to measure radioactivity in the Irish Sea, study the eggs of mackerel and herring and observe coastal maritime currents.

Students, scientists responsible for monitoring the marine environment, experts in geology... the Celtic Voyager, a victim of her own success, cannot cope with all the demand. Only tight scheduling of her sea trips is keeping her above water!



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Total cost: EUR 2.684 million

European Union contribution: EUR 2.013 million

The Celtic Voyager, a 31.4 metre long ship launched in 1997, is designed to deal with heavy weather conditions.

4. The Information Society – spurring development

Exploiting the cultural and environmental heritage of the coastal regions is hugely important because of the positive effect it has on incomes and jobs. Given their historical, architectural and cultural riches, the islands and coastal areas have much to gain from cultural tourism. The local inhabitants too have a stake in the local heritage and for this reason it must be protected and commercially developed in partnership with them.

Inherited knowledge and its transmission from one generation to the next is also crucial for the development of these areas. This takes on a particular dimension in remote areas where there are fewer educational facilities than in central areas. To overcome this problem, the islands and coastal regions are pinning their hopes on the boom in the information society, a cutting-edge industry whose effects are being felt at all levels.

Buses in space!

How often have you found yourself stuck in a traffic jam right in the city centre? Traffic congestion is frustrating and adversely affects air quality, yet we continue to drive our cars rather than we take public transportation. All too often public transport is inefficient or inadequate and there is no incentive to leave the car at home.

A project implemented in Palermo as part of the Urban programme is bringing new technology to transport. The result is an integrated public transport management system, known as "Saturn" (Satellite Application for Transport in Urban Nodes) which, as its name suggests, uses geostationary satellites. It records the exact position of each vehicle on the bus route and displays its precise time of arrival on electronic display units installed at each stop. Users know exactly how long they will have to wait and can plan accordingly.

Palermo is participating in other projects to increase the energy supply. A new electricity generating plant using natural gas is currently being built. It will supply air conditioning and electricity to two classified buildings which have been restored to house local municipal services. The plant will reduce the cost and environmental impact of energy production.



The SATURN satellite radionavigation program allows for the integrated management of public transport in Palermo.

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Total cost of the URBAN Palermo programme:
EUR 21 420 million

European Union contribution (ERDF, ESF):
EUR 10 038 million

From home to work in a second

Just as a brain drain can be worrisome for some economies, the geographic isolation of specialists can hamper the development of some regions. The Hebrides islands, off the north-west coast of Scotland, have the highest ratio of graduates in the UK. Yet their peripheral location and isolation from the main centres of population severely limit job opportunities.

The regional authorities have decided to put this highly qualified workforce in contact with potential – and sometimes very distant – clients. How are they doing this? Through teleworking. As the islands are equipped with sophisticated telecommunications infrastructure, this was the logical answer.

A register of “teleworkers” was established in 1994. The skills of 160 individuals already living or who wanted to live on the islands were registered. A company acting as the link between the employees and contractors was established. Once the register was up and running, the first contacts were not long in coming. At the end of 1994 a big American publishing house placed orders for the indexing and on-line publishing of its commercial and economic publications. Other clients then showed an interest and the

requests multiplied: document abstracts and digests, on-line publishing of the publications of the Home Office’s forensic science department, the transfer to electronic media of Oxford University texts, etc.

In less than three years the project resulted in the creation of 120 jobs and 150 more by 2001, turning classic work patterns on their head. Thanks to digital connections, the distance between employees and their office is no longer calculated in kilometres but in seconds.

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Total budget (1998-2001): EUR 575 000

European Union contribution: EUR 373 750

Aveiro: the digital city

The port of Aveiro (pop. 70 000) is cruising between tradition and modernity. Lying 80 km south of Oporto, over the centuries Aveiro has developed substantial fishing and commercial activities. It is also home to the headquarters of Portugal Telecom’s research department and is emerging as Portugal’s first digital city.

A project now under way in close collaboration between the local authorities, the University of Aveiro and Portugal Telecom aim to provide cheap, user-friendly Internet access to as many people as possible. In recent months, interactive terminals were installed in municipal buildings,

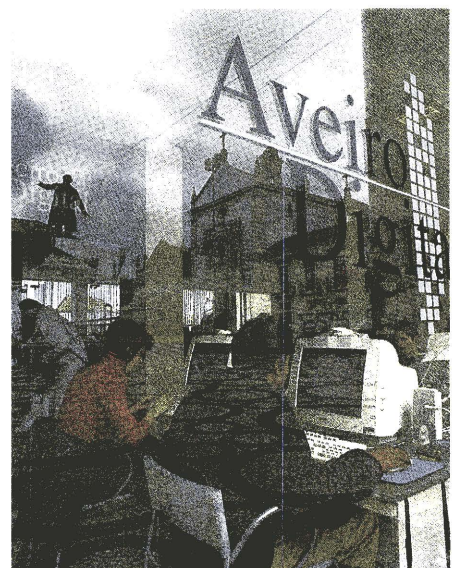
public places, social centres and shops. Installation of these public connections was not confined to the city centre; they were also installed in suburbs and nearby villages.

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Total cost: EUR 6 million

European Union contribution (ERDF):
EUR 3.75 million

The Digital City project has also promoted multimedia learning in schools and has encouraged experiments in distance learning in the rural areas.



The “Digital City” project brings the information society closer to the individual.

A sea in a single research facility

The University of Cadiz wanted to regroup all its courses relating to the sea in one facility. The result was the Centro Andaluz Superior de Estudios Marinos (CASEM). Since 1992 the modern, helix-shaped building at Puerto Real, five kilometres from Cadiz, hosts three separate centres: the Faculty of Nautical Sciences, the School of Naval Engineering and the Faculty of Marine Sciences.

CASEM has some 300 teachers and 3 000 students from all parts of the country. As Diego Sales, Dean of the Faculty of Marine Sciences points out: "This is now one of the University of Cadiz's most high-profile departments, both academically and scientifically". It is the only complex of its kind in Spain and it trains not only young people who want to take university courses but also workers or industry professionals wishing to specialise or upgrade their skills.



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Total cost: EUR 22.3 million

European Union contribution (ERDF):
EUR 12.7 million



The University of Cádiz's marine-related courses are in a centre where teaching and research activities co-exist under the same roof.

Caught in the nets of knowledge

The sea guards her secrets jealously from those who have not learned her ways. Such lore has been familiar for centuries at Thyborøn, on the coast of Jutland in north-western Denmark, and the groundwork has been laid to pass this and other knowledge on to future generations.

A decisive step forward was taken in 1993 when the Thyborøn fisheries school introduced a course on safety at sea, a subject that had never been taught before in an educational setting. However, its very success among apprentice fishermen and long-standing seamen looking to perfect their skills only served to highlight the lack of teaching facilities for the fishing industry. The infrastructure and teaching equipment was not able to meet the demand. So the local authorities decided to build a new school with ERDF assistance and to equip it with the appropriate equipment. Future seamen now had the use of a training vessel, an element that was sadly lacking up to then.

The school became operational in 1995. Its location, close to a working port, facilitates the crossover between theory and practice. Before becoming fully operational, the new school chose to cooperate for a time with the old fisheries school to take advantage of the accumulated knowledge.

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Total cost: EUR 1 835 000

European Union contribution: EUR 917 500

Rotterdam, a port moored in culture

Rotterdam, the greatest commercial port in the world, is also one of the main points of entry into the European Union. This city of 600 000 people is the Netherlands' foremost industrial centre, providing work for some 450 000 people. The main employers are the port, the chemical industries and the transport and distribution sectors. The city is lacking in tourist attractions, however, and also finds it hard to keep families from moving to the suburbs.

To create an attractive atmosphere pleasing to locals and tourists alike, the municipality has focused on the city's architectural gems, its exceptional port facilities and its varied cultural life. Significant investment has been earmarked to give this hard-working town a more welcoming feel.

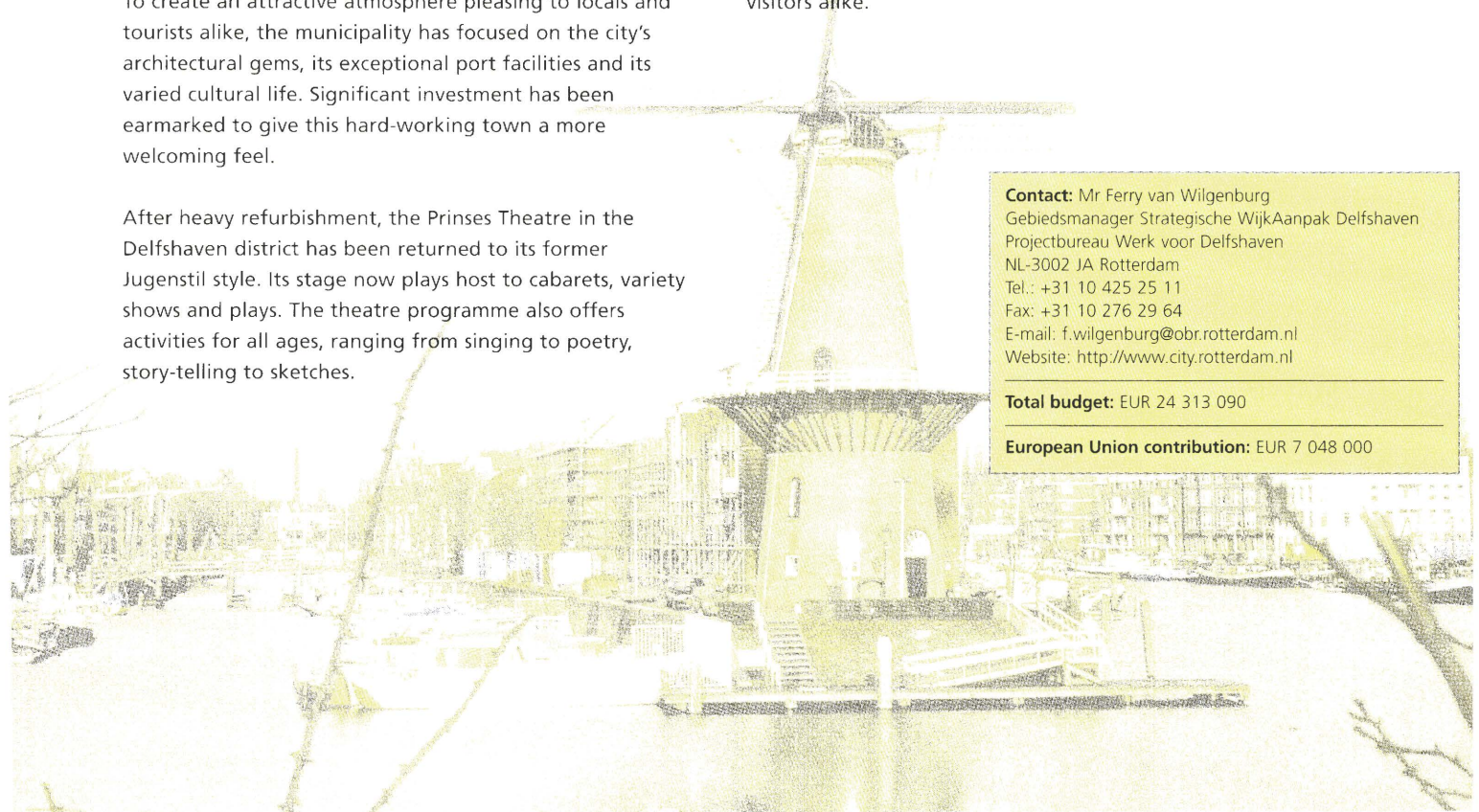
After heavy refurbishment, the Prinses Theatre in the Delfshaven district has been returned to its former Jugendstil style. Its stage now plays host to cabarets, variety shows and plays. The theatre programme also offers activities for all ages, ranging from singing to poetry, story-telling to sketches.

The shopping streets have also had a makeover. As part of an integrated project they have been repaved, equipped with attractive public lighting and decorated with a view to becoming vibrant public arteries, enhancing the city's attractiveness. With the refurbishment of the theatre, the redevelopment of the old port of Delft, the many museums and the growing variety of tourist services, culture has become a growth industry in Rotterdam. The selection of the city as the European City of Culture in 2002 will strengthen this trend, to the benefit of locals and visitors alike.

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Total budget: EUR 24 313 090

European Union contribution: EUR 7 048 000



On-line fish auctions

The industrial and fishing port of Zeebrugge lies on the Belgian coast, between Blankenberge and Knokke. An electronic auction system was recently launched, bringing new technology to the selling of fish and lobsters. The former auction buildings now host Seafront, an entertainment and learning centre with the sea as its central theme, where imagination and experimentation combine.

At the heart of the European Fisheries Centre, the Zeebrugge fish market has abandoned its former premises and has invested in a brand new building, built to the latest hygiene and safety standards. This huge building welcomes traditional wholesalers in an environment tailored to the latest technology. Sixty warehouses are connected to the auction hall by refrigerated corridors, to maintain the cold chain. The auction market itself is equipped with powerful computers, making it possible to make purchases from a distance.

The auction hall is the place where fish products are sold, where supply meets demand, either physically or virtually. Fish wholesalers used to check fish quality by eye. Nowadays, thanks to technological developments and the need for a pan-European auction network, sales are done in real time over the Internet and on secure connections.

The port of Zeebrugge decided to introduce this technological innovation in 1998. A large digital screen inside the auction market gives buyers all the information they need: the lot numbers, types of product, weights, prices, etc. When connected to the system, wholesalers can input their purchase orders from the comfort of their offices or, if they prefer to be physically present at the sale, from a room equipped with terminals. The success of the Zeebrugge fish market is such that it attracts many vessels and buyers of all nationalities.

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Total cost: EUR 1 901 227

European Union contribution: EUR 342 221

20 000 m² square metres of sea-borne adventure!

In addition to an information space on the common fisheries policy, an interactive exhibition traces the history of the North Sea and Bruges, recounts the story of the port of Zeebrugge and gives visitors an insight into the fishing techniques of the early 19th century.

A spring gurgles in the shade of some trees. Recreated at the Seafront centre, it slowly winds its way to the North Sea. Further along, a tunnel juts out into the waves. This underwater passage then turns into a gallery showing the sea's early history and that of its denizens. Move a little further along, and you hear the liveliness of a long-gone fish auction where sound effects and tales of old seafarers mingle.

From recalling the sea to exploring the real thing, two retired vessels open their hatchways to visitors. The first is an old Russian navy submarine. Within this 100 metres of steel plating and machinery, the public can relive what it was like for the 75-man crew, setting off to spend long months on patrol in the depths of the oceans. Returning to the surface, we find the West-hinder, a lightship which guided vessels off Nieuwpoort up until a few short years ago.

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Total budget: EUR 573 557

European Union contribution: EUR 143 390

5. An environment under pressure

Since time immemorial, man has had a close relationship with the oceans. They were essential sources of food for the first inhabitants of coastal areas and, as technology has developed, the exploitation of their immense reserves of marine resources has grown considerably.

Seas and coastal areas, and particularly the habitats and ecosystems they support, are coming under more and more pressure these days. Demographic growth, energy production, urbanisation, industry, agriculture, fishing, aquaculture, transport and leisure activities increasingly weigh upon the coastal environment. However, the well being of this environment is vital to all activities connected with the sea. The Structural Funds are therefore providing significant support for the sustainable development of these areas and environmental measures in them.

Sun for the marshy isle

Lying off the coast of Schleswig-Holstein, the island of Föhr seems tailor-made for a pilot project on renewable energy. The island is slightly less than 83 km², two thirds of which are covered by marshland. The population is no greater than 8 700 souls, half of whom live in Wyk, the main entry port. Except for construction, there is practically no industry, and there are only about 70 farmers left, mainly involved in milk production.

As an integral part of the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park, a major part of the island's income is from tourism and, in the high season, the population can reach 30 000. With this in mind, safeguarding the ecological of heritage was identified as one of the key elements of the island's development.

Emphasis was put on promoting renewable energy. The islanders took the initiative in 1994 to form a think tank ("Sun for Föhr"). The issue was taken up by "Fering Natüür", the body responsible for safeguarding the island's environment, and resulted in an initial project part-financed by the ERDF.

During the three-year project, implemented from 1996 to 1998, 24 solar power stations were built. The project was backed up by an intense public awareness campaign aimed at the local population with the objective to increase the use of new forms of energy, involving, among other activities, educational visits to power stations. Today, solar power supplies 24% of the island's energy requirements.

Föhr does not intend to rest on its laurels. It has set 2015 as the target date for achieving 100% renewable-energy use. The introduction of biogas (energy production from dung) on farms is currently under study. The ERDF should again be involved.

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Cost of the solar energy project: EUR 353 000

European Union contribution (Leader II): EUR 122 000



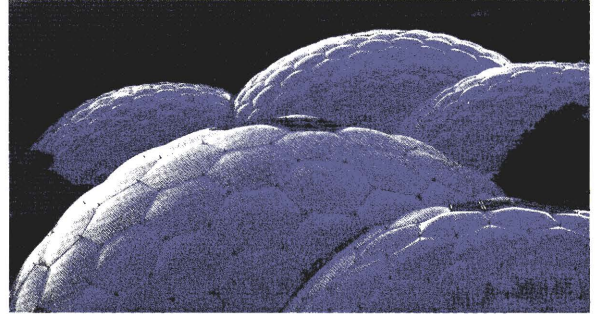
Eden on earth

To turn a clay pit into the world's largest greenhouse, that is the gamble Tim Smit is about to achieving with the Eden Project in Cornwall (United Kingdom). He aims to gather together the largest number of plant species anywhere on the planet at the kilometre-long site that rises to a height of 60 metres over St Austell Bay.

The worked-out clay pit is now home to two domes artificially reproducing various climatic conditions. There is also a temperate zone and a visitor centre. The Eden Project is not only a significant tourist attraction but also an important centre for study and experimentation. The Eden Botanical Institute maintains close links with other specialised centres and undertakes research on agricultural products, with the aim in particular of developing sustainable agriculture.

The type of research that can be carried out justifies the size of the project. Individual specimens can be studied in small greenhouses, but not whole plant populations. The two biospheres permit the observation of large assemblages of plants for research into sustainable development and biodiversity.

Eden will be completely finished in 2001 and aims eventually to attract 750 000 visitors a year. The unique site created in this immense clay basin has already revitalised the region's economy.



The glass domes of the Eden project.

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Total budget: EUR 77 million

European Union contribution (ERDF): EUR 11 million

Majorca - seawater on tap

The residents of Palma de Majorca are now drinking seawater. The opening in 1999 of a desalination plant provided homes in La Palma, Calvía and Andraix with a new source of drinking water and at the same time relieved the pressure on the Balearic Islands' aquifers, exhausted by years of drought.

The desalination process chosen involves placing seawater under higher than osmotic pressure. The water, drawn from a depth of one hundred metres, passes through sand filters to remove suspended particles. After further filtering, the seawater is treated with chemical agents and injected through semi-permeable membranes that allow water to pass while filtering out most of the dissolved saline particles, organic matter and all the fine colloidal particles.

From this process come drinking water, with a saline concentration of 400 mg/l, compared with 38 000 mg/l for seawater, and brine, which is discharged into the sea. The drinking water is mixed with ground water, with a much lower salinity, and is then piped into the Palma Bay

distribution network, serving some 345 000 inhabitants plus large numbers of tourists during the summer months.

As the drought has continued, the plant's six production lines have been operating at maximum capacity and a seventh line has been brought into operation (August 2000). Total production has increased from 42 000 m³ to 54 000 m³. Two new lines should be operational by summer 2001.

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Total cost: EUR 38 million

European Union contribution (Cohesion Fund):
EUR 32.5 million

Water - one step ahead in Ajaccio

The drinking-water needs of Ajaccio are covered until 2015. The city authorities foresaw the possibility of shortages and decided, at the beginning of the 1990s, to increase the city's water-treatment capacity under a three-phase plan supported by the ERDF.

Ajaccio's drinking water initially came from three sources: the Salario plant, treating water from the Ocana reservoir on the River Prunelli; boreholes down to the Prunelli aquifer; and the Baleone well drawing alluvial groundwater from the Gravona aquifer. These three sources provided 28 000 m³ of water per day, slightly more than needs at the time. The new treatment plant, brought into operation in the summer of 1999, has brought capacity up to 40 000 m³.

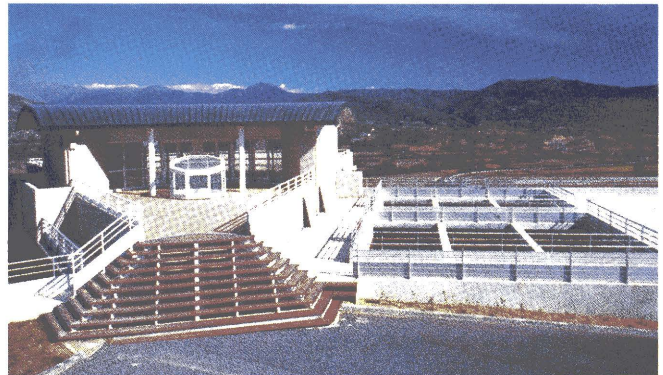
All stages of treatment are fully automated and there is an alternative power supply in case of blackouts. Quality control is ensured by fixed analysers and more detailed analyses carried out by an on-site laboratory. A real-time biological sensor has also been installed to prevent any risk of micro-pollution.

Having ensured its future with regard to water treatment, Ajaccio now aims to improve the distribution network. Specific measures will be adopted to improve supplies to outlying areas so as to provide a first-rate distribution system throughout the region.

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Total cost: EUR 18.3 million

European Union contribution: EUR 5.5 million



The water-treatment plant, brought into operation in 1999, has a capacity of 40 000m³/day.

In search of blue gold

Most islands can only rely on themselves for water supplies. Healthy and sustainable water management is essential for both the survival of the local population and the development of the economy and tourism. At the same time, there are great opportunities for saving water and therefore permit land management that is less dependent on natural resources.

This is the reason for the creation, more than 10 years ago now, of B7, bringing together seven large insular regions of the Baltic Sea, with a total population of 300 000: Bornholm (Denmark), Gotland and Öland (Sweden), Hiiumaa and Saaremaa (Estonia), Rügen (Germany) and the Åland islands (Finland). One of the B7 working parties, with special responsibility for environmental matters, set up the SUSWAT project for the sustainable management of water resources.

In addition to ensuring a permanent exchange of information between the islands in the association, SUSWAT has produced six catalogues containing the best ideas on

sustainable management of water supplies. It also provides funding for pilot projects to carry out full-scale tests on these ideas. For example, artificial infiltration is being used at Köpingsvik on the Island of Öland to overcome a shortage of drinking water. Enormous quantities of water are reintroduced into the ground to feed the aquifers. The water is brought by channels and passes through six metres of sand before entering the ground to reach underground pockets. Six months later, purified water can be pumped, treated and distributed to the local population. Up to 1.2 million cubic meters of water a year can be treated in this way in the Köpingsvik basin.

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Total cost: EUR 594 000

European Union contribution (Interreg IIC): EUR 392 000

The cleanup of the Santander Bay

"When completed, the new Santander Bay sewage system will remove residues from wastewater and restore damaged habitats", says Jesús Bedoya, the Head of the Department for the Management of Community Funds and Planning at the Government of Cantabria.

Implementation of the project began in 1997, when sewer collectors were installed along the whole of the Bay. "The collectors cover some 250 000 inhabitants, or around half of the population of Cantabria", explains Jesús Bedoya.

The second phase, currently underway, involves installing pumps to carry water to the treatment plant and constructing an underwater outfall. This pipe, 2 500 m long, will allow the treated water to be discharged into the open sea.

"Up until now, waste has been discharged into Santander Bay, causing serious damage to the marine environment, although the tides have helped reduce the effects", explains Jesús Bedoya.

In a third phase, a new treatment plant will be built in Santa Cruz de Bezana to replace the existing plant, which will have insufficient capacity to cope with the new sewage system. The contract has been awarded and the plant should be in operation in 2002. The Santander Bay wastewater disposal system will then be running at full capacity.

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Total cost of first phase: EUR 27.9 million

European Union contribution (ERDF):
EUR 19.5 million (1994-99 Programme)

Total cost of second phase: EUR 28.5 million

European Union contribution (Cohesion Fund):
EUR 22.8 million (1994-99 Programme)

Cost of third phase (provisional figure): EUR 27.9 million

The Santander Bay sewage project will help remove residues from wastewater and restore damaged habitats.



6. Great oaks from little acorns

The authorities and inhabitants of islands and coastal areas are more aware than others of the weaknesses of such regions and the measures required to overcome them. However, they are not always capable of resolving these problems on their own. Regional authorities of other maritime areas often face similar constraints; a remote geographical location and the decline of traditional maritime activities.

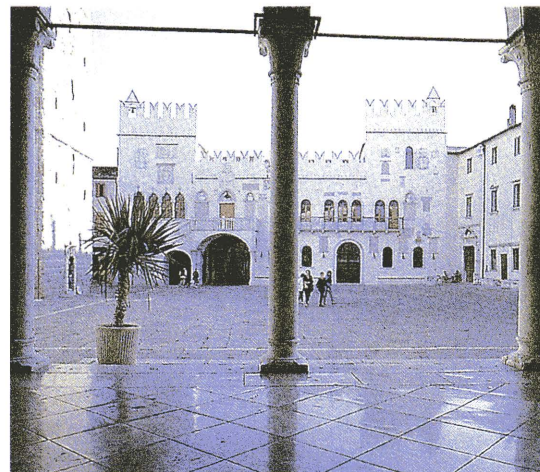
By working together, authorities are able to find solutions more easily and support each other in implementing measures. The Interreg Programme encourages this type of cooperation in Europe by funding projects as varied as the creation of networks, innovative modes of transport and training. But that is not all. Jointly with the Phare programme, Interreg also supports cooperation with applicant countries of Central and Eastern Europe, which have a lot of ground to make up on infrastructure capacity and environmental protection before their accession to the European Union.

A touch of Italy in Slovenia

The Port of Koper in Slovenia still has an Italian feel. Behind the 'Muda' Gate lies the old town with its Venetian gothic architecture, the two most beautiful examples of which are the 'Loggia' and the Governor's Palace. The Palace, surrounded by other buildings in the same style, dominates the centre of Koper, making it a major tourist attraction.

The Palace, ravaged by time, required urgent restoration work. The Slovenian authorities had begun to restore the building but, because of a lack of funds, the work was proceeding extremely slowly. In 1994, the work was granted part-financing from the European Union under the Community Phare CBC programme. Thanks to this financial support and to the help of Italian specialists in Venetian architecture, the palace has been given a new lease of life.

Today, the Governor's Palace has become a conference centre, promoting cross-border cooperation. It also provides a window on the city, retracing its history through regular exhibitions. The palace is a symbol of the city's dual objective of restoring its historical buildings and using them intelligently to develop tourism.



The Governor's Palace has been converted into a conference centre.

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Total budget: EUR 17 000

European Union contribution (PHARE CBC): EUR 10 000

The enterprising Archipelagos

The archipelagos of Stockholm, Åboland (off the southwest coast of Finland) and Åland (at the entrance to the Gulf of Bothnia) are faced with the same problem: the number and small size of the islands prevent the creation of large industrial centres or universities and encourage a drain of human resources.

From the mid-1980s, think tanks were set up to develop strategies to stem this flow. From these emerged, in 1997, the "Enterprising Archipelago". This project, part-financed by the ERDF, aims to encourage the creation of stable jobs suited to the islands' geographical situation, such as, jobs connected with taxi-boats, scuba diving, tourism, construction, household services, etc.

Those running "Enterprising Archipelago" carry out constant activities to explain the project to people and organise seminars on a whole range of subjects, such as navigation (in order to increase transport possibilities), sea rescue or safety-at-sea days. As requested, they have organised courses on information technology, accounting, sales techniques, Internet for business, insurance and business start-up, etc. Proof of the project's success are that 46 jobs were created or maintained and a further 90 jobs still planned (compared to the 33 jobs initially planned).



The "Enterprising Archipelago" team is always on the move, explaining the project to people.

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Total budget: EUR 672 000

European Union contribution (Interreg IIA): EUR 320 000



Rives-Manche: A bridge across the Channel

Despite being separated by the English Channel, the County of Sussex and the French Departments of the Somme and Seine-Maritime have a common heritage. The three regions decided, through a cross-border cooperation programme, to turn the barrier that was the Channel into a major means of communication. The result was the Rives-Manche Association, bringing the regions together around a series of projects.

The contacts maintained by the three regions since 1994 have enabled, amongst other things, the creation of a joint economic observatory by the Universities of Sussex and Upper-Normandy; language training; two tourist tours, in Dieppe and Brighton; an air- and water-quality study centre involving the Universities of Brighton and Picardy; and, the creation of a coastal service (a kind of environmental brigade), etc.

In the field of the arts, the École supérieure d'art et de design in Amiens and the Brighton School of Design organise educational exchanges and meetings of teachers. Students take training courses at the other school, studying

the landscapes of "the other side of the sea", and compare the results at joint exhibitions, organised at regular intervals in the large towns of the Somme and Sussex.

Through the Rives-Manche project, the inhabitants of these three regions are showing their commitment to European integration, concretising it via exchanges, culture and human relations.

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Total budget: EUR 80.769 million

European Union contribution (of which 87% from the ERDF):
EUR 34.061 million

Controlling pollution in the Baltic

The make-up of the Baltic Sea makes it particularly vulnerable to pollution. By ratifying the 1980 Helsinki Convention, Poland committed itself to setting up a service to combat environmental damage in its territorial waters and to help the other signatory countries when so requested.

The service also has the task of monitoring and protecting the marine environment off the heavily urbanised areas of the coast. For example, the urban centre of the Three Cities (Gdansk, Gdynia and Sopot) have around 1.5 million inhabitants and are directly exposed to the pollution of consecutive maritime accidents.

In addition, the bay of the Three Cities is rich in offshore fishery resources and its beaches attract thousands of tourists every year. Pollution of the water or the beaches could have a very serious impact on the incomes of a large part of the local population.

With subsidies under the Phare programme, a vessel, the Kapitan POINC, has been fitted with ultramodern equipment; a remote-controlled device with measuring, control and recording equipment; a sonar system; an

underwater positioning system; overpack protection containers; a pollutant-dispersal system; storage boxes for chemicals, etc.

The equipment was used for the first time during the international pollution-control tests in the Baltic, Balex Delta 98, in which ships and observers from all Baltic countries took part. It was also used during summer 2000 to monitor oil drilling in the Polish economic zone. It has also been used several times in the area close to the Western border.



The Kapitan POINC, a multipurpose vessel

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Total cost: EUR 1 032 750

European Union contribution (Phare): EUR 600 000

Greece joins electrical Europe

Laying 154 kilometres of terrestrial cable and 163 kilometres of underwater cable between the Galatina substation in the south of Italy and the Arachthos substation in Epirus – this is the scope of a huge operation, part-financed by the ERDF, which will break Greece's isolation in the field of electricity supply.

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Total cost: EUR 205 million

ERDF contribution: EUR 82 million

The idea for this interregional cooperation project was born at the end of the 1980s. There was a double incentive: Italy, with its limited production capacity, was looking for external sources of supply and Greece, cut off from the European Union by Yugoslavia, was examining the possibility of producing electricity from its lignite resources.

The solution was the sea, or more precisely, the Otranto Channel (which connects the Adriatic and Ionian Seas). Ten years later, the Italy-Greece link is actually being built.

In addition to land-sea-land cabling, two converter substations are needed, one at Galatina and the other at Arachthos. The cable's physical properties (its length and its underwater location) prevent the use of alternating current and the substations will therefore transform the 380 kV, 50 Hz alternating current of the Italian network into the 400 kV direct current used for the link.

When it enters service in August 2001, the link will have a total capacity of 1000 MW, equal to the output of a large nuclear power station.

Greece's connection to the network will allow further liberalisation of the electricity market. It will also encourage flexibility by enabling Member States to reduce their spare capacity (built up to cover breaks in supply) and therefore reduce the cost price of electricity.

Dolphins are disappearing from the Adriatic

Only 220 bottlenose dolphins still live in the Adriatic, in other words the species is threatened with extinction. Environmental damage is the main culprit for the drastic reduction in the numbers of marine mammals in the area. In order to preserve the remaining representatives of the species, the authorities of the Slovenian and Italian coastal areas, working together within the Association "Adriatic Project", decided to draw up a strategy to protect the natural environment and biodiversity in the Bay of Trieste.

They first of all carried out underwater acoustic research to look at the effect of noise on the migration of the remaining dolphins. Working closely together, Italian and Slovenian scientists succeeded in setting up a system to permit constant measuring of noise pollution on both sides of the border.

The Association bought the equipment required for acoustic research and the scientists of both countries shared their expertise. The operations undertaken on the ground and interpretation of the results were carried out jointly and led to the first study on the migration of

marine mammals in the Bay of Trieste. The research established a direct link between noise pollution and the disappearance of dolphins from the area: noise strongly reduces the capacity of these mammals to communicate with each other. The Association has published a large range of brochures in order to raise public awareness of the problem and has received wide support in the media.

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Total budget: EUR 46 380

European Union contribution (Phare CBC): EUR 10 000

A coastal network

Covering almost 3 271 hectares, the Municipality of Carnac lies on the Bay of Quiberon on the Atlantic coast of southern Brittany. The city has been classified as a climatic station since 1934 and defies the region's reputation for rain with its particularly mild climate on the Atlantic coast. Carnac is also internationally famous for its standing rocks, which dot the countryside as far as the eye can see.

Nevertheless, despite its unique character, Carnac has since megalithic times shared a culture common to the coastal regions of Western Europe. On the strength of its prehistory and the similarities of the outlying regions – incomes varying according to the seasons, dependence on tourism and fisheries and remoteness from the country's centre – the Carnac association *Tourisme littoral européen* (European Coastal Tourism), created in 1998, took the initiative in establishing a network of several European coastal towns. "Atlantic Coast" encourages the exchange of information between Carnac, Llanes and Santander in Spain, Shannon and County Clare in Ireland and Alta and Finmark in Norway. The network enables the participating towns to share their tourist, environmental and cultural know-how. The aim is to develop off-season tourism based on the experience of the network's members.

Among the very tangible results of the work of *Tourisme littoral européen* are four interactive terminals that have been installed in Carnac. These give details in five languages of archaeological sites in four of the participating towns: Alta, Altamira, Carnac and Llanes. Plans for the extension of the network of terminals to allow Irish towns to share the story behind their archaeological heritage is already planned. Finally, a major event, "Megaliths in Europe", is planned for October 2001.

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Total budget: EUR 40 195

European Union contribution: EUR 26 713



The megaliths of Carnac, remains of ages past

Glossary

Aquaculture is the farming of aquatic animals. In the European Union it takes three major forms, sea fish farming, crustaceans and molluscs farming in seawater and freshwater fish farming. Four species, trout, salmon, mussels and oysters, account for the bulk of Community production, which has grown steadily over recent years. However, those active in the industry have acquired greater experience in identifying demand for farmed fish and, taking advantage of technological progress, have, over the last ten years, diversified to include other species such as sea bass, bream and, more recently, turbot.

Coastal area: A coastal area is normally defined as a strip of land and sea, the width of which depends on the nature of the environment and of human activity related to aquatic resources. Taking into account these two factors, the size of these areas may extend beyond the sea coast to stretch far inland.

Community Initiatives: The European Union traditionally sets aside part of the budget of the Structural Funds for "Community Initiatives" to solve problems which cannot be resolved at the national level.

Ecos-Ouverture began in 1991 with a budget of EUR 55 million. Since then, it has financed 350 inter-regional cooperation projects involving 1 250 local and regional authorities in the European Union, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEEC), the newly independent states (NIS) and the Mediterranean basin (MED). In 1997 a second generation of 40 projects was launched with a budget of EUR 17 million from the ERDF (under Article 10) and EUR 7 million from the Phare programme.

ESDP: The aim of the European Spatial Development Perspective, adopted in May 1999 by the Ministers of the 15 Member States responsible for regional planning is to improve the coordination of national policies in this field. It is based on three key principles: the development of a balanced and polycentric urban system and a fresh relationship between cities and the countryside; the assurance of equal access to knowledge infrastructures; and the sustainable development, intelligent management and conservation of nature and cultural assets.

Innovative Actions: Alongside its traditional regional and sectoral programmes, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) has a limited amount of funding for innovative actions to investigate new approaches to economic and social development. The three themes proposed for 2000-2006 are: a regional economy based on knowledge and technological innovation; 'e-Europe Regio', the information society at the service of regional development; and regional identity and sustainable development. The ESF and FIFG also finance innovative measures.

Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM): To combat the deterioration of coastal areas, in September 2000 the Commission proposed a European strategy for the integrated management of these areas. The main aim of the proposal was to resolve the basic problems facing the coastline: the lack of information; inadequate local participation in projects being carried out in coastal areas; and, poor coordination among those responsible for spatial planning. As part of this strategy, which requires the participation of the Member States and all those concerned, the Commission undertook to bring Community policies into line with appropriate and coordinated management of coastal areas; to provide a network of services accessible to those responsible for management of the coast; to promote research into and promotion of coastal areas; and, to encourage initiatives at all administrative levels.

Interreg: The new Interreg III Initiative will cover three types of cooperation: cross-border, transnational and interregional. Two texts with guidelines will specify the features of the operations eligible for part-financing. In 1994-99, the Union financed the Recite Initiative concerning interregional cooperation involving at least three Member States of the European Union.

ISPA (Instrument for Structural Programmes for pre-Accession). Like the Cohesion Fund, this instrument provides the countries which have applied for accession with part-financing for transport infrastructure projects to interconnect their networks and link with the trans-European network, as well as for environmental protection projects. It has funds amounting to EUR 1 040 million per year for the period from 2000 to the date of accession of each applicant country.

Outermost regions: Some of the Union's island and coastal areas enjoy the special status of outermost regions specifically recognised by Article 299(2) of the Amsterdam Treaty. They include the four French overseas departments (Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana and Réunion), the Canary Islands (Spain) and the Azores and Madeira (Portugal). All these regions are very remote from the continent of Europe, which complicates their integration into the European single market. Their GDP is well below the Community average (59%), unemployment is usually high and their economies rely on a small number of sectors. In terms of labour costs, they face very stiff competition from their neighbours.

Pesca: The Community Initiatives provide financial assistance for the achievement of very specific goals. One Initiative, Pesca, operated from 1994 to 1999 to solve serious structural problems in areas heavily dependent on fisheries. Pesca part-financed specific measures to reduce this dependency and to improve the industry (promotion and marketing of products, training, etc.). It will not be continued in 2000-2006. Measures to promote economic and social diversification previously covered by Pesca now receive assistance under the new Objectives 1 and 2 and the new assistance granted by the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG).

Phare is the main instrument for technical and financial cooperation between the Union and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEEC). It was set up in 1989 and had a budget of EUR 6 693 million for the period 1995-1999. Between 2000 and the date of accession, it will have EUR 1.5 billion per year to part-finance many measures similar to those under the Structural Funds.

Priority Objectives: In 2000-2006 the Union's structural policy will concentrate on three priority Objectives for development:

- Objective 1 provides structural assistance to regions lagging in development and to the outermost and Arctic regions (former Objective 6).

- Objective 2 concerns the economic and social conversion of areas facing structural difficulties, whether industrial, rural (former Objective 5(b)), urban or dependent on fisheries.

- Objective 3 concerns the adaptation and modernisation of policies on employment, education and training (former Objectives 3 and 4). Assistance under this Objective is provided outside the regions covered by Objective 1.

Regional development programmes: Each Member State prepares with the Commission agreements known as operational programmes (OPs) or single programming documents (SPDs). These agreements cover several years and are implemented by the national or regional authorities designated by the Member State. These authorities select the projects to be financed. Together the Commission and the national authorities monitor the implementation of each programme.

Spatial planning: A strand of the Interreg Community Initiative (II C in 1997-99 and III B for 2000-2006) concerns projects for transnational cooperation on spatial planning. It was introduced in 1996 to meet the increasing needs for an instrument for operational cooperation in this area.

Structural Funds: These are the Community Funds which finance the Union's "structural" measures, those which are designed to reduce the disparities in development between regions. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) is the main financial instrument for regional and sectoral programmes. Where necessary, finance from this Fund is supplemented by the European Social Fund (ESF) in the case of measures to encourage training and combat unemployment and by the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) for rural development measures. Since 1994, all the financial instruments concerning fisheries have been grouped under the FIFG (Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance), which assists in coastal areas.

Subsidiarity: The Treaty on European Union introduced the notion of subsidiarity under which the Union acts only if the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved out by the Member States and can therefore, by reason of its scale or effects, be better achieved by the Community.

The Cohesion Fund was set up in 1993 to help the four least developed countries - Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain - by financing projects of two types: transport infrastructure and projects concerned with the environment.

Urban: This is one of the four Community Initiatives which will operate in 2000-2006. Its work focuses on the economic and social regeneration of towns and urban areas in difficulty to promote sustainable urban development. Its funding for 2000-2006 will total EUR 700 million. The other three Initiatives are Leader+ (rural development), Equal (equal opportunities) and Interreg (cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation).

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