

Adoption of seven Community Initiative programmes

On 28 March 1995, the European Commission approved funding for seven new programmes implementing the Community Initiatives Interreg II, Regis II, Rechar II, Resider II, Urban and SMEs.

The **Interreg II natural gas programme for Spain and Portugal** is a continuation of the Regen programmes for 1989-93 and will involve financing the last of the interconnection systems and gas reception and transport facilities between the two countries.
Total volume: ECU 548.1 million
Structural Fund contribution: ECU 220 million

The **Interreg II programme for Greece is also concerned with energy** and will contribute to financing both the necessary infrastructure for transporting Russian gas from the border with Bulgaria to Athens and other facilities for receiving, treating and transporting liquefied gas from Algeria.
Total volume: ECU 450 million
Structural Fund contribution: ECU 180 million

The **Regis II programme for Portugal** is designed to assist with economic and social development and to tackle the handicaps of the autonomous regions of Madeira and the Azores because of their extreme remoteness.
Total volume: ECU 156.813 million
Structural Fund contribution: ECU 124 million

The **Rechar II programme for Portugal** will concentrate on the area of Castelo de Paiva

(North region, Tamega district), which has been affected by the closure of its coal mines.
Total volume: ECU 1.147 million
Structural Fund contribution: ECU 0.86 million

The **Resider II programme for IJmond, Netherlands**, is based on an overall conversion strategy drawn up by the Dutch authorities for this area, which has a population of 165.000 and has been hard hit by the rundown of the Hoogovens steelworks.
Total volume: ECU 51.5 million
Structural Fund contribution: ECU 18.1 million

The **Urban programme for Greece** will concentrate on six innovative and demonstration projects as part of a long-term urban development strategy: they concern Drapetsona-Keratsini, Peristeri-Attikis, Nealonia-Volos, Southwest Patras, Western Thessaloniki and Ermoupolis-Syros.
Total volume: ECU 67.166 million
Structural Fund contribution: ECU 45.2 million

The **SME ('small business') programme for Northern Ireland (UK)** is designed to help small and medium-sized businesses in the region to analyse their needs and modernise their telecommunications equipment, to participate in regional, national and international calls for tender and to develop cooperative ventures, in particular market studies and risk-reduction in international trade.
Total volume: ECU 11.102 million
Structural Fund contribution: ECU 6.2 million

Final Objective 5(b) programmes

In February and March, the European Commission approved funding for the last programmes for fragile rural areas (Objective 5(b)), with the exception of a technical assistance programme for France and the programmes of the new Member States. These final 18 single programming documents come on top of the 51 SPDs already described in Inforegio News

No 13. The two French SPDs in the present batch are concerned with problems specific to the two mountain areas of the Massif Central and the Pyrenees.

For further information, contact the Directorate-General for Agriculture (DG VI/FI/3), fax: +32-2-296.59.92.

Regions/fields	Total volume million ecu	Contribution of the SF million ecu	Regions/fields	Total volume million ecu	Contribution of the SF million ecu
B Meetjesland	34.2	10.3	Marche	429.8	76.2
Wallonie	135.4	41.4	Piemonte	438.2	83.5
Westhoek	96.6	26.4	UK Borders	82.1	30.0
D Baden-Württemberg	450.8	74.9	Dumfries & Galloway	114.0	47.0
Nordrhein-Westfalen	117.9	46.8	Lincolnshire	133.6	53.7
Saarland	108.0	24.1	Marches	90.8	40.6
F Massif Central	27.4	12.7	Midland Uplands	33.3	12.2
Massif des Pyrénées	17.2	8.6	North & West Gramplan	96.2	39.5
I Liguria	189.6	35.8	Rural Stirling & Upland Tayside	64.0	25.4

Enlargement and cohesion

Programming of the assistance from the Structural Funds for the three new Member States is continuing. The designation of eligible regions is just being completed for Sweden, while Finland has already presented its regional development plans.

On 22 March the Commission adopted the eligible areas for Objective 2 (economic and social conversion of industrial regions in decline) and Objective 5(b) (diversification of fragile rural areas) in Sweden.

The Objective 2 eligible areas cover a population of 1 013 000, which is 11.6% of the national population. The Objective 5(b) areas cover 757 000 inhabitants or 8.7% of the national population.

Together, the Objective 2 and 5(b) areas in Sweden will receive a contribution from the Structural Funds of ECU 398 million in 1995-99. In view of the relatively small number of areas put forward by Sweden for Objective 5(b), the Commission has decided to transfer ECU 50 million originally earmarked for them to regions under the new Objective 6 (development of regions with low population density).

At the end of February/beginning of March, the Finnish Government sent the Commission its development plans for Objectives 2, 3, 4 and 5(b). After negotiation and adoption by the Commission, these plans will be turned into single programming documents which will form the framework agreements governing Structural Fund aid for Finland.

In brief

Europartenariat in North Rhine Westphalia

On 20 and 21 March, 371 firms from different parts of North Rhine Westphalia (Germany) came to Dortmund to meet representatives of 2000 businesses looking for cooperation partners in the fields of commerce, technology and finance. In all, about 12.000 contacts were made during the two days. The next Europartenariat event is scheduled for 24 and 25 November in Lisbon (Portugal). For information: fax +32-2-296.33.15.

Regional development awards

The European Urban Regional Planning Awards for 1994 were handed out on 23 March in Brussels. From the 300 projects submitted, 30 were chosen by a jury made up of international experts. The urban development prize went to Matera in Italy. The regional development prize was awarded jointly to Lyon (France) and Lancashire (UK). There was a special mention for the trans-border regions of Maastricht / Heerlen / Aachen / Liège / Hasselt / Genk (Netherlands, Germany, Belgium).



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Directorate-General for Regional Policies

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