



# inforegio | news

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## Italy - Objective 1 Commission gives the go-ahead

### Information about public sector incentives in the regions to encourage innovation

To promote the spread of innovation throughout Europe, the Commission is currently developing a database which catalogues and describes the regional public sector incentives to encourage innovation in manufacturing across the European Union's regions. This database, called RINNO, is designed to collect and disseminate information on a permanent basis about developing, promoting and managing innovation strategies and schemes. The data collected, aimed primarily at regional authorities and innovation agencies, should also make it possible to better identify the needs of small and medium-sized businesses and offer regional and local authorities various ways of accompanying or reinforcing innovative projects.

If you want to add to this database or simply consult it, you will find more information at the RINNO website: [www.rinno.com](http://www.rinno.com)

If you want to contact the RINNO team, you can do so by e-mail at [rinno@sqw.co.uk](mailto:rinno@sqw.co.uk), by telephone on +44-1954-231.931 and by fax on +44-1954-231.767

On 14 April, the Commission adopted a decision in principle approving the Community support framework (CSF) for the southern regions of Italy in 2000-06. This development strategy will benefit from EUR 23 959 million from the four Structural Funds. The region of Molise is no longer eligible under Objective 1 but will benefit from degressive Community assistance.

The regions in the Mezzogiorno still suffer from low growth and high unemployment.

Six major priorities for assistance have been identified to meet the needs of the eligible regions:

- developing natural and environmental resources;
- developing cultural and historical resources;
- improving the level of skills in the labour force;
- developing the business sector and boosting growth;
- improving the quality of life in towns and cities;
- strengthening transport networks, the information society and public safety.

The Community support framework will be implemented through fourteen operational programmes which still have to be approved in separate decisions by the Commission: seven regional programmes accounting for 70% of the funds available (in Molise, Campania, Apulia, Basilicata, Calabria, Sicily and Sardinia) and seven national programmes (local development, transport, research, education, fisheries, public safety, technical assistance).

A summary of the CSF is available in Italian, French, English and German on the Inforegio website: <http://inforegio.cec.eu.int/news> or on request by fax from: +32-2-296.60.03

## Interreg III and Urban II: guidelines finalised

On 11 May in Brussels, Michel Barnier presented the final texts of the Interreg III and Urban II guidelines adopted on 28 April to representatives of the regions. These final versions are the result of a process of consultation on the draft guidelines tabled by the Commission in October last year; the Member States, the European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions and the Economic and Social Committee have all been able to contribute their views.

On Interreg, the guidelines specify the areas where projects can be funded under Strand A (cross-border cooperation) and Strand B (transnational coop-

eration); all regions of the Union are covered by Strand C (interregional cooperation).

In the case of Urban, it is up to the Member States to select the areas to be covered, which should generally have a population of at least 20 000.

Proposals for programmes under these two Initiatives must be submitted to the Commission within six months from the publication of the guidelines in the Official Journal, see <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/>. The texts can also be consulted on the Inforegio website at <http://inforegio.cec.eu.int/interreg3> or [urban2](http://inforegio.cec.eu.int/urban2) or obtained on request by fax to +32-2-296.60.03.

# The outermost regions: evaluation and guidelines

**The Commission recently sent the Council and Parliament a report drawing the lessons from the help given by the European Union to its most remote regions since 1989; the report also sets out a new sustainable development strategy for these regions. This strategy is based on the new resources allocated to the Structural Funds in the 2000-06 programming period and takes account of the provisions in the Treaty of Amsterdam recognising the specific character of the outermost regions. One of the possibilities considered is to exempt these regions from certain general rules (on taxation, state aid schemes, agriculture, fisheries, etc) in order to encourage their proper integration into the Union territory.**

Between 1989 and 1999, the support from the Structural Funds for the seven most remote regions, i.e. the four French overseas departments, the Canary Islands (E), and the Azores and Madeira (P), came to EUR 7.2 billion. The measures carried out in the fields of agriculture, fisheries, small businesses and craft industries have boosted the GDP of these regions by 8.5% on average. Despite the progress achieved, the unemployment rate remains twice as high as the average in the Union. In addition, not all the potential offered by regional cooperation has been exploited.

For the future, the Commission intends to pursue the aims of developing their economies and creating jobs. It proposes an overall strategy of sustainable development based on both support for traditional activities (agriculture and fishing) and economic diversification, taking full advantage of a coordination of the Structural Funds with other instruments such as state aid

schemes, lending facilities, taxation, etc. All the outermost regions are eligible under Objective 1 in 2000-06 and they are also covered by three particular programmes under the Community Initiative Interreg III B.

The report is available in 11 languages on the Europa server at the following address:  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat\\_general/sgb/rup/en/index.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat_general/sgb/rup/en/index.htm).



*New airport terminal at Pointe-à-Pitre (Guadeloupe), financed by the European Regional Development Fund.*

## Publications on the Internet

### The Urban Audit, assessing the quality of life of Europe's cities:

#### 58 cities under the microscope

As a continuation of the Community framework for action on "sustainable urban development" and with a view to improving knowledge about Europe's cities, this report compares living conditions in 58 major urban centres of the Union.

Using a series of indicators, the Urban Audit looks more particularly at socio-economic aspects, involvement in the life of the city, education and training, culture, leisure and the quality of the environment. The results are intended to help local actors, other experts and everyone wanting information on our major conurbations. They are also meant to serve as a basis for developing Community urban policy.

The map of cities analysed can be consulted on the Inforegio

website at: <http://inforegio.cec.eu.int/urban/audit/src/links.html>.

The texts of the three volumes of the Urban Audit and the results can be downloaded from the following address:  
<http://inforegio.cec.eu.int/urban/audit/>.

### Conclusions from 'Terra'

The final report on the innovative scheme known as "Terra", entitled "Terra, An experimental laboratory in spatial planning", has just been put on-line on the Inforegio website. This document reviews the implementation of the initiative launched by the Commission in 1997 to help local authorities to try out new forms of cooperation in spatial planning.

The text can be downloaded in most of the official languages from the following web address: <http://inforegio.cec.eu.int/terra>.

The printed version with illustrations, available only in French and English, can be ordered by fax (+32-2-296.60.03) or electronic mail ([regio-info@cec.eu.int](mailto:regio-info@cec.eu.int)).



**European Commission**  
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