



★ PEOPLE ★ PLANET ★ PROFIT ★

## Five European High Growth regions and one common goal: to achieve balanced, sustainable and economic growth

GROW brings together five European regions: South East England (UK), Emilia-Romagna (Italy), Noord-Brabant (Netherlands), Malopolska (Poland) and Andalucía (Spain). All are experiencing rapid growth and share a vision of “smart growth” rather than growth at all costs.

With a budget of €7.5 million, GROW has supported 16 international projects. Eighty organisations are involved in the joint implementation of the EU’s Lisbon and Gothenburg Agenda, providing more jobs, better jobs and improved social cohesion and protecting the environment.

The GROW programme was initiated by the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) in collaboration with the South East England Regional Assembly and the Environment Agency. After just one year in operation, GROW was selected as a best practice example and presented to the EU Member States and the European Commission in July 2006.

GROW has succeeded in catalysing changes and bringing together organisations with different expectations from social, business and environmental backgrounds, all joining forces to deliver high-impact projects to improve the lives of millions of people.

*“GROW is a tangible delivery mechanism for national and regional sustainable development policies,” said Kathy Vuillaume, GROW Programme Manager.*

### Grow Projects

Grow supports pilot projects and initiatives where the outcomes can influence policy makers faced with the dilemma of balancing social, environmental and economic constraints to achieve stable growth.

The project is composed of three main pillars: Green Growth, Business Growth and Inclusive Growth. The 3P Model – People, Planet, Profit – illustrates the sustainable principles behind the programme.

# Green Growth Projects

## Sustainable Construction

### SusPurPol: A Blueprint for Sustainable Construction

#### *Sustainable construction for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*

With construction booming in high-growth areas of EU Member States, it is vital to achieve a common approach between public sector bodies and the private sector to ensure that sustainable development principles are applied in new developments. These approaches and policies need to be readily transferable from one country to another based on best practice for environmental sustainability.



SusPurPol was designed to meet this need as part of the Green Growth pillar of the INTERREG IIIC GROW programme, creating a blueprint for sustainability in planning, construction and related purchasing of goods and services. It shows that sustainable development policies can be translated into actual legislation and accepted into development and planning policies in many different areas.

SusPurPol is led by the Environment Centre (UK), working with other partners in the UK, Spain and Poland. The project's target groups are local authorities and business communities with the aim of upgrading spatial and environmental policy in the three countries. The partners use the skills and experience of politicians, academics, planners, architects, construction analysts and researchers to create awareness and share knowledge in order to influence local governments to adopt sustainable development best practice.

A major result of the project is the successful delivery in the UK of the South Hampshire Sustainable Development Policy ('SH14'), which has been taken up by 11 local authorities in the South Hampshire area. The policy influences how sustainable construction goals for renewable energy use, water saving and re-use of waste construction materials will



be applied in building at least 80,000 homes, including in the social rented sector.

In Spain, the effectiveness of recycling of construction waste in Andalucía was evaluated and demonstrated, with a formal control process administered by the regional authority. The project also resulted in the transfer of research and development best practice in sustainable design for the 21st century between Malopolska (PL), Andalucía (ES) and South East England (UK).

*“One of the great things about this project was the genuine willingness to cooperate and share ideas across all three partner countries,” said project manager Dr Richard Williams of the Environment Centre. “The fact that each partner was able to contribute different and relevant aspects to the outcomes of the project meant they all ‘owned’ the results and are committed to their continued use and adoption after the project ends.”*



SusPurPol will have a vigorous life even after the project is formally wound up. The ‘SH14’ policy delivered in South East England has a 20-year lifetime, running until 2026. Andalucía’s construction waste recycling scheme has the capacity to be rolled out to other Spanish regions in the near future and potentially to the UK and Poland in the medium term. The project has also created a new knowledge base for young architects and designers that will help them to incorporate new techniques of sustainable development into the mainstream for all types of new construction.

*“The project shows that sustainable development policies can be translated into actual legislation and accepted into development and planning policies.”*

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# Sustainable construction

## Building for the Future – Sustainable Construction for Professionals

### *Teachers and builders for sustainability*



There is a shortage of sustainable construction skills in the workplace. The Building for the Future project targets FE colleges in particular to raise awareness of the need for sustainability in construction amongst architectural and engineering schools, building companies, trade unions, professional bodies and institutions. FE colleges are both providers of training in construction skills and construction clients themselves, spending £1.7 billion (about €2.4 billion) on new builds in the next five years.

Building for the Future is part of the GROW programme's Green Growth pillar, seeking to lower the carbon footprint of the built environment by promoting sustainable construction (SusCon) skills through use of innovative technology, particularly relating to water and energy saving in college buildings.

The Association of South East Colleges (AOSEC) (UK) is the lead partner, working with 3 partners from the UK and another from Spain. The project undertook a review of construction curricula in vocational colleges and has identified opportunities to include social and environmental considerations. It commissioned expert knowledge for dissemination between partners, staged seminars and joint events to raise awareness, and brought together construction clients and their design teams to challenge them on the approach to sustainable construction.





Among the project's varied outcomes are case studies and examples of good practice, all shared with partners and target bodies; five reports and one sustainable construction index. Its most significant 'product' is its direct engagement with FE colleges and their design teams. It sets a Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) standard of 'very good' as the minimum for new college builds and gives construction tutors and students experience of the benefits of teaching SusCon.

"Interregional dialogue about SusCon has had a huge impact on the attitude of the construction industry and how it meets the increased expectations of its clients," said Owen Barfield, project manager at AOSEC.

Project partners believe they are leaving a highly positive legacy for the future. Sustainability built colleges will have a lifespan of at least 40 years and a construction student may enjoy a working life of similar length. The level of interregional dialogue and knowledge sharing developed by Building for the Future and the connection and empathy created with the estate management of FE colleges seem sure to have a lasting impact.



*"The project brought together construction clients and their design teams to challenge them on the approach to sustainable construction."*

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## A Pilot Project for Sustainable Construction

### *Building for a better life*

European policymakers are well aware of the need to promote sustainable economic growth. The facts speak for themselves: burning fossil fuels will increase atmospheric greenhouse gases by 50 per cent within 15 years, while waste volumes have consistently grown faster than GDP.

Sustainable construction can play a large role in this drive, because energy from non-renewable sources that are consumed in building services accounts for a large proportion of Europe's CO2 emissions.

The Pilot Project for Sustainable Construction (PPSC) project has addressed the urgent need to promote sustainable construction across Europe by developing services, techniques and processes to support the construction sector and improve the energy efficiency of buildings.



As part of the Green Growth pillar of the GROW programme, PPSC supports a range of strategic EU goals through its focus on waste management and minimisation, material resource efficiency, energy efficiency, renewable and water conservation. In practical terms it has broad implications for improving the quality of life of European citizens by reducing pollution and consequent health problems, cutting energy costs and slowing climate change.

PPSC is led by the South East Centre for the Built Environment (SECBE) (UK), working with the Diputación de Huelva (Spain). Its main activities involve awareness raising through media and events for the public and private sector, influencing strategy and policy through consultation and encouraging the integration of energy, water and waste saving measures into building developments.

Awareness raising and specific training delivered through the project has increased industry knowledge on sustainable construction methods and implementation. PPSC has stimulated an increase in renewable energy and energy efficiency techniques. Case studies are used to share best practice between regions. The project has contributed to a reduction in construction waste, an increase in renewable energy, and a rise in the use of reusable materials in building.

There has been a remarkable increase in the understanding of issues relating to sustainable construction since the start of the project. More than 580 people have received training on sustainable policies, techniques and processes in order to reduce waste going into landfill and to increase use of renewable energy.



“Our project has intensified action required to meet the sustainability agenda. It has influenced policy and strategy across both Andalucía and the South East of England,” said Laura Bramley of SECBE.

Some of the activities developed in this project will continue and be developed to provide a comprehensive resource now and in the future. A fast track to Environmental Management Systems has been developed to create a chargeable, self-sustaining product that will continue after PPSC has been completed.

*“The Pilot Project has implications for the quality of life of European citizens, reducing pollution and consequent health problems, cutting energy costs and slowing down climate change.”*

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# Brownfield Regeneration

## RELECOM – Reclaiming Land Empowering Communities

*Giving new life to landfill sites*



Former landfill and Brownfield sites in EU Member States can be enormously valuable both socially and economically if they are redeveloped in a sustainable way, and they can play a key role in urban and rural regeneration. This process needs detailed research into local social needs and the economic potential of such sites. The RELECOM project was devised to design a process through which sites in four partner countries can be developed in a sustainable way.



RELECOM is a Green Growth project within the GROW programme. Its support for the sustainable redevelopment of potentially valuable land coincides with EU objectives for urban and rural regeneration as a driver of sustainable economic growth throughout the Union.

The project is led by the Brabant Environment Foundation, working with eight partners from the Netherlands, the UK, Poland and Italy. Six sites in the UK were selected as possible candidates for redevelopment, while Poland and Italy selected one site each. Sites included landfills, a former coalfield and a semi-urban former industrial site.

RELECOM's key objectives are to develop an overview of former landfill and Brownfield sites in each partner region and provide insight into political, financial and public support for the re-use of sites with high potential. It is producing design concepts for sites in partner regions and investigating different ways of developing land for long-term profitability. The work of the project is divided into four packages, each being led by one of the four partners: theoretical



framework and criteria for sustainability (Netherlands), community consultation and communicative design (Italy), master planning and site development (UK) and dissemination and communication (Poland).

The project has staged workshops for planners and regeneration specialists and visits to selected sites. For the general public, the project's website is its principal tool to raise awareness about land revitalization and explain its potential benefits for European citizens. A quarterly newsletter is distributed by e-mail to interested partners and the wider community including local and regional authorities, government departments and potential investors.



“The different ways the different regions have to look at Brownfield regeneration processes is the real richness of this project,” said project manager Mark van den Hoven. “The combination of these different focuses will be the real additional output of the project.”

RELECOM partners believe the dialogue developed between local and regional authorities, experts, planners and the general public on the techniques and benefits of regenerating former Brownfield sites will have a lasting effect on all three elements of the GROW programme – People, Profit and Planet.

*“Sustainable redevelopment of potentially valuable land supports EU objectives for urban and rural regeneration as a driver of sustainable economic growth throughout the Union.”*

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# Flood risk management

## FLORISPRE – Citizens' Flood Risk Prevention

### *Raising awareness on the effects of floods*

Flooding is an unfortunate, recurring feature of life in many parts of Europe, and one which is likely to become an even greater risk because of climate change. In the high-growth regions of INTERREG IIIC's GROW programme, the need for more and more housing is putting more pressure on developing flood plains. The FLORISPRE project was devised to inform citizens about what they can do to reduce the potential physical, economic, social and emotional impact of flooding.



FLORISPRE is an innovative project with a community-based approach to educating people about flood risk, prevention and management, using multimedia to raise awareness. It is part of GROW's Green Growth element and its objectives are closely linked to EU policies of promoting sustainability.



The project is led by the Environmental Management Company of Andalucía (EGMASA) and includes two partners from the UK and Italy. It has developed materials within each region to raise awareness of flood risk, and then disseminated them through workshops, seminars and travelling exhibitions. Transregional conferences also play an important part in the project. Conferences in Spain, Italy and Brussels helped to expand a network of flood risk specialists, promote debate and raise the profile of flood risk.

The most important output of FLORISPRE is the development of a methodology and supporting tool kit that can be applied to raise awareness of flood risk within regions. For regions not actively participating in the project, a best practice guide and DVD have been produced that highlight knowledge and experience gained during FLORISPRE. The project website is open to all.



On the ground, the project has increased collaboration between public bodies such as civil protection agencies and local administrations, enabling them to work together to produce consistent messages and advice for citizens. It has brought together flood risk management specialists from each partner region, raised the profile of their invaluable work, and made the regions more receptive to the new EU Floods Directive.

“By increasing people’s awareness and preparedness the impact of floods in the future should be lessened both economically and personally. Lives and livelihoods can be saved by a quick, educated response to flooding,” said Melanie Andrews of the UK’s Environment Agency.

Within the partner regions the work started by FLORISPRE is still gathering momentum and the tools developed will continue to be used to combat flood risk. Outside the partner regions, the project’s DVD and best practice guide are available to any interested organisation and will be made generally accessible through the website.



*“The project increased collaboration between public bodies such as civil protection agencies and local administrations, enabling them to work together to produce consistent messages and advice for citizens.”*

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# Resource management

## RAMEA – Regionalised NAMEA-type matrix

### *Analysing links between economy and environment*

We all know deep down that the economic decisions of nations and regions can affect the environment. But planners don't always make these connections. It is essential to forge a clear link between economy and environment so that we can measure these effects and learn how to develop economically and socially without causing environmental harm. The RAMEA project was created to build a NAMEA (National Accounting Matrix)-style system at regional level to analyse pressures put on the environment by economic decisions and households, and to support policy decision-making.

RAMEA is a resource management project within the GROW programme, working across four EU regions – South East England (UK), Malopolska (PL), Emilia-Romagna (IT) and Noord-Brabant (NL). It is closely linked with the EU goals of achieving a sustainable development strategy throughout the bloc.



Led by Italian institution ARPA, the project includes one partner from each of the four regions. It stages workshops and meetings, which have resulted in excellent team-building, and screens economic and environmental data available in each region. It has developed four matrices and set in motion a continuing process of analysing results.

The major outcome of the project is the construction of four RAMEA matrices providing coherent and comparable benchmarking between regions' economic and environmental performance. Four case studies are also being produced along with a construction manual and a user manual.

Linking environmental pressures, such as air emissions, to what is happening in the economy and households has made it possible to see which sectors of society and industry are responsible for impacts on the environment. Policy and decision-makers are better informed and see the implications of their decisions for both the economy and the environment, and the general public have access to simpler environmental information.

“The work of our excellent project team has given great support to those whose job it is to work out sustainable development strategies and also evaluate the effect of their policies,” said Michele Sansoni of lead partner ARPA.

Analysis of results, benchmarking of regional performances, production of case studies,



and creation of manuals is still ongoing. The team are convinced their RAMEA matrices will be a valuable tool for the four partner regions that can also be made available to others. Homogeneous regional statistics will in turn lead to stronger national statistics.

*“Policy and decision-makers are better informed and see the implications of their decisions for both the economy and the environment.”*

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## GROW Enterprise

*Helping businesses to get started and grow*



Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are vital for the growth of the economies of EU Member States. Across Europe's regions, SMEs are leaders in innovation, job creation and job security. But many such small companies find it hard to get started and to develop their business to its full potential. The aim of GROW Enterprise is to support and help young entrepreneurs and small, mainly technology-based companies to grow significantly and have an international impact.

GROW Enterprise is part of the Business Growth pillar of the GROW programme, with special reference to the creation and development of high technology companies, a key plank in the EU's drive to become the world's most dynamic economic bloc. It sets out not only to give direct support to new businesses and SMEs but also to build contact networks, increase awareness of sources of help, and create a continuing programme of mentoring for selected companies.



The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) leads the project, working with partners in Spain, Poland and the Netherlands. The project's activity is based on events and workshops aimed at sharing best practice, networking between regions and match-making between companies where business or trade opportunities seemed ripe for exploitation. Workshops have

been held in Guildford and Southampton (UK), Den Bosch (NL) and Krakow (PL). The creation of the mentoring programme is another key element in the project's success.



The most significant result of the project has been the establishment of a network of contacts between businesses, business support organisations, business incubators and local authorities in each partner region. Promising start-up companies get what they need most – knowledge, business opportunities and access to clients. The clients in turn get cost-efficient, high quality products and services from start-ups they otherwise would not have known about.

In Poland, SMEs in the Malopolska region have signed contracts with bigger companies or business support organisations and got their first big chance to show off the quality of their products. Other Polish companies have received individual mentoring and are preparing business development plans targeted at foreign markets with mentors from the British Polish Chamber of Commerce.

In the UK at least three companies have benefited from local area knowledge and expertise in contacts with chambers of commerce in Spain and Poland. Following a visit by a UK partner to the Netherlands, the local council of Aylesbury Vale has approved a sum of £150,000 (about €215,000) to revitalise redundant properties for use by entrepreneurs.

In the Netherlands and Spain companies have developed business contacts within and beyond their own region and project mentors are supporting six companies with potential international impact.

*“The project has made us realise through our partnership that Europe is now one big country where different people and groups can cooperate without obstacles to deliver the highest quality services and products,” said Krzysztof Jaszczuk of Polish partner BPCC.*

Project partners hope that funding through INTERREG IVC will enable a new edition of GROW Enterprise to be launched next year. All are confident that the techniques and knowledge gained by many businesses through the project will enable them to continue to grow and strengthen.

*“Promising start-up companies got what they needed most – knowledge, business opportunities and access to clients.”*

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# Trading

## Growing Trade and Innovation

### Boosting trade by small businesses



Many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) find it hard to trade internationally because of barriers of language, culture, process and time. These businesses often lack the know-how or the resources to find a solution to these problems. For the EU to be as competitive as the USA and Japan, ways have to be found to help small businesses to trade successfully and seek out new innovations. That is what the Growing Trade and Innovation project was created to do.

Growing Trade and Innovation (GTI) belongs to the Business Growth pillar of the GROW programme, focusing on interregional trading and integration of the supply chain. With an emphasis on job and wealth creation and innovation, it works directly in support of the EU Lisbon objective to become the world's most dynamic and competitive economy.

The project is led by UK Trade and Investment (UKTI), working with nine UK partners, one from Poland and one from the Netherlands, with EUnite as observers. GTI has run three big match-making events in the regions involved,

where small businesses were encouraged to speak to companies from other regions, with support from the project team in the process. In total more than 200 companies benefited from the expertise available at these events.

As a result, many companies are now leaving the comfort of their home region to trade in other parts of the EU and beyond. Some companies have already won contracts in new markets and are continuing to work on these.



Some concrete examples: A doctor from Kent (UK) is selling his innovative product to a Polish hospital in Krakow; a Dutch company signed a multi-million pound deal with a pharmaceutical company in Poland; a one-man operation from Hampshire (UK) closed a marketing deal with four Polish companies.



“We are proud of our success in persuading small businesses to travel to completely different regions and engage with like-minded businesses

there with a view to cooperation and trade,” said Richard Hall of the European Information Centre (UK).

The outlook for the future impact of the project looks bright. The many partnerships forged during GTI’s lifetime are already working together on new EU projects. Many of the companies who made their first introduction at a GTI event are now working together.

*“Many companies are now leaving the comfort of their home region to trade in other parts of the EU and beyond. Some have already won contracts in new markets.”*

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# Technology Transfer

## BBaS – Bridging Business and Science

### *Linking academia and industry for innovation*



The transfer of knowledge across sectors of society and cultures is something all governments need to foster. But the methods used to transfer skills differ in different countries and the levels of success are varied. The BBaS project was devised to address problems of knowledge transfer (KT) between universities and industry to accelerate entrepreneurship and innovation in the participating regions. By bringing together institutions from five EU regions it aims to find best practice and a coherent approach to knowledge transfer across Europe.

BBaS is part of the Business Growth arm of the GROW programme. The project is led by the University of Surrey (UK), working with partners from Poland, Spain and the Netherlands and an observer from Italy. It brings together academics, industry representatives and KT professionals in support of the EU goals of innovation, entrepreneurship and sustainable economic development.



Universities and industry represent distinct organisational cultures, and academics and business people interact too little. BBaS creates a bridge between these two cultures and gathers more than 140 people from both sides of the bridge to plan collaborative, multinational research and innovation projects in biotechnology and health, environment, IT and new materials.

Activities have been based on 'study tours' at universities in four towns – Guildford (UK), Eindhoven (NL), Cordoba (ES) and Krakow (PL). At each event 12 academics and 12 representatives of industry, mainly SMEs and young entrepreneurs, were guided by KT professionals in planning collaborative research leading to innovation in their business.



The results are impressive. Five SMEs (two from South East England (UK), two from Nord-Brabant (NL) and one from Andalucía (ES)) have started collaboration with researchers from Eindhoven, Krakow, Brighton and Surrey.

Four proposals involving SMEs and academics from all the partner regions were submitted in spring 2007 to the first calls from

the FP7 EC research funding programme. Many new networks have been created across regions between SMEs and academics.

Young entrepreneurs from Krakow have expressed amazement at the innovation and knowledge transfer work being done in Surrey and Eindhoven and are now prepared to press ahead with

their own ideas. Some SME directors who had previously seen universities as 'ivory towers' have had their eyes opened to the level of innovative, practical work being carried out there.

"It is exciting to see barriers being broken down between people from different professional environments and to show them how they can benefit from working together," said Dr Sophie Stoss from the University of Surrey.

Looking ahead, Eindhoven is to introduce its entrepreneurship teaching programme at the University of Cordoba in Andalucía. Dr Stoss said the project partners would try to get more funding to continue the project and build on the experience gained. Projects already started will be continuously supported by relevant KT managers from the participating universities.

*'Ronald Verberne from Ingenia, a Dutch SME, went to a GROW BBaS meeting in Guildford in June 2006 and met there Prof. Diego Luna from the University of Cordoba. I have a close cooperation with Ingenia about bio-energy projects and Ronald understood from Prof. Luna that it was interesting to meet each other in Cordoba to talk about biodiesel project we were both working in.*

*In October last year I went to Cordoba together with Alwin Hoogendoorn from Ingenia in order to speak to Prof. Luna during the next BBaS meeting. We discussed the interesting R&D Luna was carrying out in relation to biodiesel. It appeared that he found a way to produce glycerol free biodiesel production from used vegetable oils. Ingenia and I decided to investigate this opportunity more closely and applied for a grant in the Netherlands to carry out a feasibility study entitled: 'Glycerol free biodiesel production with enzymes'. Besides this also a possible cooperation of Prof. Luna in a bio-ethanol project was discussed and Luna decided to join a European consortium applying for an EU grant entitled: SYN2NOL (FP7-ENERGY-2007-1-RTD) Production of Bioethanol from Syngas Fermentation. Partners are: VTT-Finland, Cordoba University, JRC Europe, TU/e, Ingenia and Wageningen University Netherlands.*

*Without the BBaS meetings we would never have met and not be inspired by the ideas of each other because we are working in different expertise fields ( Luna in catalysis and immobilization and TU/e and Ingenia in process engineering).' Han van Kasteren of Telos*

*"Young entrepreneurs from Krakow expressed amazement at the innovation and knowledge transfer work being done in Surrey and Eindhoven and are now prepared to press ahead with their own ideas."*

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# Cluster

## GROW Health

### *Mapping health technology clusters*

The regions of South East England and Emilia Romagna in Italy are home to vibrant clusters of innovation in the health technology industry. However, they have had too little data about these clusters to inform public sector development strategies in the area. This lack of information also has made it hard for businesses and universities working on health technology to form partnerships and develop supply chains between the regions. The GROW Health project was created to fill this gap, developing databases and cluster maps of the two regions' health technology sites.



The project is part of the Business Growth pillar of the GROW programme, working on mechanisms to support the development and internationalisation of clusters. Cluster maps provide a basis for understanding a region's store of expertise, business, competitiveness and innovation potential.



GROW Health is led by SEHTA (South East Health Technologies Alliance) in the UK, with three partners in the UK and Italy. Its aim is to develop cluster maps for the two regions and to open the way for companies and universities to forge links and create business opportunities. It brings together existing databases and reports and updates them, filling in gaps to produce regional and European cluster maps. Partners also work with industry and academics to identify emerging health technologies and highlight future possible clusters of international significance.

The single most important output of the project is the new cluster maps. In the UK the maps will inform the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) regional policy on support for the sector, including potential investment.



Apart from the maps, the project has spurred a wealth of contacts between UK and Italian partners. Links between UK companies and Italian firms and universities in Bologna, fostered by a partnering conference organised by Emilia Romagna, should lead to increased competitiveness and innovation.

Five UK companies gave presentations at the conference. Lead partner SEHTA has created a new business unit and developed a new Business Intelligence Team (BIT), both as a result of its links with the University of Surrey. The team recently secured a commercial contract with Pfizer.



“We are proud of the quality of the cluster maps being produced and pleased with the interest that has been expressed in them. The project has been a great boost for transregional cooperation,” said David Parry of SEHTA.

The partnership will look for ways to maintain contacts after the end of the project. The SEHTA team will try to find resources to create cluster maps annually for the regions and the SEHTA BIT team will look to develop new business through contacts made during the project.

**“Cluster maps provide a basis for understanding a region’s store of expertise, business, competitiveness and innovation potential.”**

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# Culture of Entrepreneurship

## Enterprise Exchange Academy

### *Teaching the entrepreneurs of the future*



The European Union needs new entrepreneurs for its economy and its society to thrive. Young business people need to be encouraged, developed and supported, and the sooner an interest in enterprise can be awakened the better. The Enterprise Exchange Academy project was devised to start that process in schools, seeking to enhance the teaching of enterprise in regions of the UK and Poland to students in the 14-15 and 16-18 age groups. The project is seen as a catalyst and springboard for the continuing development of enterprise teaching in the UK and Polish education systems.

Enterprise Exchange Academy is a Business Growth element in the INTERREG IIIC GROW programme, dealing with the culture of entrepreneurship. It supports wider EU goals of developing sustainable economic activity through education and innovation, while also contributing building blocks for greater social inclusion.

The project comprises five partners from the UK and Poland, and is led by Business Link Solutions (UK). Its key activities are teacher enterprise workshops and student enterprise



workshops for the two age groups in each country. The workshops are run in schools in the Thames Valley region of the UK and the Krakow area of Poland for two groups of young people, aged 14-15 and 16-17. These test out materials designed to teach young people potentially interested in creating new businesses to understand better the skills and processes involved. They are also taught to recognise their own attributes and how these could best be developed.

The key result is that 120 young people have been given the opportunity to improve their enterprise knowledge and skills. The learning materials used in the project are available for delivery to all schools, providing a unique resource to allow more youngsters to benefit.

A critical part of the workshops for the younger age group is the teaching of techniques to encourage creativity, which results in students producing innovative ideas with the potential to develop. Both sets of workshops include training on how to develop an idea through market analysis and financial profiling and on articulating an idea effectively to an audience.



*“We are delighted that when the young people completed evaluation sheets after each workshop their comments were positive,” said Anthony Inga of Business Link Solutions. “The feedback indicated that what the project had been trying to achieve for the participants had been achieved.”*

Looking ahead, the project’s workshop materials will be made available to all schools in the Thames Valley and will be promoted through the National Education business Partnership Network to other areas of the UK. Learning from the pilot will guide further projects to improve start-up training and support for young people in the partner region.



*“The key result is that 120 young people have been given the opportunity to improve their enterprise knowledge and skills.”*

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## SOCIAL ON BUSINESS

### *Business opportunities for the socially excluded*

Even in the most thriving European regions social exclusion is a persistent problem. Too many people live and earn well below their potential, suffering economically and through a lack of self-esteem. The Social on Business project was created to help generate business and entrepreneurial opportunities for the socially excluded, bringing them into the mainstream of society, improving their sense of well-being and contributing to the welfare of society at large.

Social on Business is a unit of the Inclusive Growth pillar of the GROW programme, working with disadvantaged groups to develop enterprises and create a model of entrepreneurship for the socially excluded. Social enterprise complements broad EU goals by reducing people's reliance on state benefit payments, contributing to the development of local communities and helping individuals and families improve their social and economic status.

The project is led by Spain's Fundación Red Andalucía Emprende, in partnership with Polish, Italian and UK organisations. It works with local authorities and branches of the public sector, NGOs and socially responsible companies in the private sector to promote social integration and assistance. The partners have carried out a comprehensive analysis of the social, territorial





and labour environment in their regions, determining the factors that lead to social exclusion and encouraging exchanges of best practice and experience to counter it.

The development of a training and awareness programme for advisers and stakeholders is a key feature of the project, with the team encouraging and guiding people at risk of social exclusion to take up entrepreneurial activity. In Andalucía, Social on Business has become a focal point for the regional Department of Social Economy and Entrepreneurship as it represents a way to learn from foreign expertise and experience.

Four seminars have been held in the UK, Spain, Italy and Poland aimed at raising awareness of the problems that disadvantaged people face when setting up their own businesses. Following a common structure proposed by the Polish partner, each partner condensed their regional reports into a 10-page document for publication. A number of social enterprises have been started up across partner regions.

*“We have seen five business start-ups, four inside deprived areas, and a host of business plans,” said Rafael González of Fundación Red Andalucía Emprende. “The cooperation we have established with local authorities and organisations has been very fruitful.”*

Project partners are convinced that the research and activities of the project, and the contacts made with local authorities and NGOs, will positively influence future public and private sector policy-making in the area of social enterprise and social welfare in general.

*“Social enterprise complements broad EU goals...contributing to the development of local communities and helping individuals and families improve their social and economic status.”*

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Partners: MARR S.A. (PL), Enham (UK), FORMART (IT)

## Social enterprise to help deprived areas

Many deprived areas in EU Member States need social enterprises to help them escape from poverty and neglect. Most businesses are concerned largely with making money for themselves and their shareholders, and have limited interest in helping to develop the areas or the communities in which they operate. In contrast, social enterprises focus primarily on social objectives and reinvest their profits into the business or the community. Such companies are vital to create a more inclusive society in which the needs of the disadvantaged are given rightful importance.

ECOSOCIAL is part of the Inclusive Growth arm of INTERREG IIIC's GROW programme. It is aimed at the development of social enterprises dedicated first and foremost to delivering social and environmental benefits. It also plays its part in supporting the EU objectives of increasing competitiveness combined with sustainability, by helping to make social enterprises themselves more competitive.

The project is led by the Province of Piacenza in Italy's Emilia Romagna region, working with a partner in the southern Spanish region of Andalucía. It sets out to develop tools for social economy enterprises that would widen the knowledge base of these companies, with particular attention to organisational and management instruments, franchising opportunities, spin-offs, consortia and joint ventures. It also aims to boost the international profile of social enterprises.



The partners have staged study visits and conducted comparative research on social enterprises in the two regions, extracting from this research the five best practice elements that could most readily be replicated between the regions. Existing social enterprises have exchanged best practice and experience to increase their own performance.

ECOSOCIAL has created a website to share knowledge and experience and a handbook of best practice. It has produced two models of support and advice for social enterprises and rolled them out in both regions.

**cepes**

PROVINCIA  
DI PIACENZA

# ECOSOCIAL

**Growing together: social economy and local development. Policies, practices and tools fostering social enterprises in Italy and in Spain**

Crescere insieme: economia sociale e sviluppo locale. Politiche, percorsi e strumenti di sviluppo per le imprese sociali in Italia e in Spagna

**Kick-off seminar 30 Gennaio 2007  
[ 9.00 - 13.00 ]**

Auditorium della FONDAZIONE DI PIACENZA E VIGEVANO  
via Sant' Eufemia, 12 Piacenza

*“We are happy that we managed to achieve all the outputs and carry out all the activities planned for the project,” said Anna Pirillo of Piacenza province. “We believe it will help to develop the social economy of our deprived areas.”*

The results of the project’s research and activities will be available to all EU regions through the website and the handbook is being distributed throughout partner regions and beyond.

*“Social enterprises are vital to create a more inclusive society in which the needs of the disadvantaged are given rightful importance.”*

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## Learning Reps – Learning Representatives in Brabant and Andalucía

### *Encouraging “learning throughout life”*

As companies expand and increase their use of technology, investing in specialised equipment and machinery, they need staff who are trained to keep pace with change and willing to adopt new methods. This project recognises that many employees with lower skill levels or educational qualifications could be helped to meet the specific needs of their employers by fresh training, and could also help to train others and refresh their interest in “learning throughout life”.



Learning Reps falls within the Inclusive Growth area of the GROW programme, focusing on models and best practices in human resources management. It contributes to the EU goal of becoming the world’s most competitive and dynamic knowledge-driven economy, creating sustainable economic growth and greater social cohesion.

Its key objectives are to promote a new view of employer-employee relationships so that workplaces maintain facilities for employees to continue to be trained, and to encourage

a “learning throughout life” environment for those employees who, due to a lack of education, are at risk of exclusion.

The project is led and carried out by Spain’s Fundación Esculapio, with the Province of Noord-Brabant (NL) and Konig Willem 1 College (NL) as observers. Its aim is to increase the abilities of less skilled workers and also to use volunteer workers to help train their colleagues. The training is organised by arrangement with Lipasam, the public cleaning company of the city of Seville. Several courses have been run, focused on basic computer skills, literacy, numeracy and social skills.

The project has designed and produced leaflets, posters and stickers to explain the aims of the training to employees. Volunteers are recruited among workers keen to help with the training and encourage colleagues to look for learning opportunities. Training of the volunteers themselves is seen as essential to the success of the project, as they need leadership qualities and social skills as well as motivation and communication abilities to reach out to other employees. Volunteers are given a “Wijsmakers Toolkit”, a package containing folders, leaflets, syllabus, posters, pens and notebooks – all the materials they need to do their work.



Workers who had lost the learning habit and who completed the course say they are happy with the training and are encouraged to take up more learning opportunities. The company, Lipasam, also says it is encouraged by the way the project has gone and is willing to continue offering courses to its workers according to their needs and using the methodology developed by Learning Reps.

*“They are encouraged to continue learning throughout life”*

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# FEW! – Funding Enterprising Women

## *Breaking Down Barriers for Women in Business*

Historically, women have had a hard time starting and developing their own businesses. This has often been because they lack capital and are reluctant to approach the market for finance. Women often claim not to understand the language of business and may not appreciate the growth potential of their ideas. FEW! sets out to break down these barriers, to demystify the business world for women and to make finance a tool rather than a hurdle.

FEW! forms part of the Inclusive Growth pillar of the GROW programme, helping to give women recognition as business people in their own right and introducing previously hidden innovators to the business world. It supports the objectives of the EU Lisbon agenda to provide “more jobs, better jobs and improved social cohesion”, addressing issues of competitiveness and innovation, creation and development of new businesses and employment.

The project brings together six partners from the United Kingdom, Spain, Poland, and the Netherlands and is led by Finance South East (UK). Their aim is to help women become familiar and confident with the language of business and with business planning, and guide them in how to approach different bodies to seek finance. The methods used are workshops and seminars, intensive one-on-one support for selected businesses and research into availability of finance for women in each partner country.



FEW! entered an environment in which some women’s businesses were struggling or even collapsing due to insufficient funding. Opportunities were being missed in the market place because good ideas were not being promoted or exploited well enough. Women were on social security when they could instead have been in business and contributing to the wealth and welfare of all. Many were suffering from lack of self-esteem and even depression.

As the project moves towards its end, FEW! Has seen 15 new businesses started in Spain, 13 in Poland and 12 in the UK. It generated €229,300 in new investment for 11 female-run businesses, one in the UK and 10 in Poland. As an indirect result of the project, a micro-credit fund has been established in the South East England region for women to borrow up to €7,500. FEW! has made 278 women in four countries more au fait with the world of finance and brought about a change of mindset in one UK fund, which is now lending money to two women-owned companies (total lent: €667,300).

“It makes us really proud to see businesses run by women thriving and succeeding, and to feel that we were able to give them a hand up, not a hand out,” said Anne Minter of Finance South East.

Looking to the future, project partners see one of their key successes as achieving a change of attitude among providers of funding to women in business. In practical terms, the micro-credit in South East England remains on tap and an extra £15,000 has been made available in the region for work with more women through the current financial year (April 07/April 08).



In The Netherlands (Brabant) and Poland regional policy-makers are building support of female businesses into their three-year regional plans.

Project partners also feel the shared experience of working together in FEW! means that links will remain and ensure strong future cooperation.

*“Break down barriers, demystify the world of business for women, give them a hand up, not a hand out.”*

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# Championing Neighbourhoods

## *Social transformation to fight deprivation*

Many regions of Europe still suffer from high levels of deprivation. It takes many forms, ranging from unemployment and lack of education to health and environmental problems or lack of personal safety. The project Championing Neighbourhoods was launched on the premise that residents of deprived areas are the people best able to promote social change. Governments and local authorities cannot solve everything, but it is hard to get people involved as a grassroots driving force for social transformation, often because they themselves do not believe they can do it. This project aims to enable and develop local people to become community champions.

Championing Neighbourhoods is part of the Inclusive Growth pillar of the GROW programme, seeking to promote urban renaissance. The essence of the project is the search for sustainable development of the community, delivering transformation, respecting the environment, looking for economic growth, working for social improvement and trying to defeat inequality.

The lead partner is Hope in the Community (UK), working with three partners from the UK, Poland and Spain. The project has staged conferences and study visits in each of the three regions which facilitate exchange of knowledge and experience and make it possible to see at first hand examples of successful social intervention. The project maps out training needs and pathways, looking for a potential common approach across regions. Its major products include case studies highlighting problems in different regions and offering examples of best practice for solving them.



The Championing Neighbourhoods website and a handbook are other key elements in charting the progress of the project, passing on knowledge and displaying examples of best practice.

On the ground, a Community Forum of NGOs has been formed in the Krzeszowice region (PL), based on a model introduced by the North Kent Community Forum (UK). In Andalucía, a pilot project has been designed, again based on an English model, to give support, guidance and training to local people to help them get involved in community work.

*“Social changes are possible but need time to come true,” said Vincent Jasper of lead partner Hope in the Community. “We hope that the enduring legacy of our project will be simply that those people, organisations, authorities and NGOs with whom we came into contact will remember the experience and go on to make the changes needed in their environment.”*

The project partners feel that their work is really only just beginning and there are many initiatives and collaboration proposals still to be realised in many fields. They have established an effective working method that should endure into the future.

*“Residents of deprived areas are the people best able to promote social change. Governments and local authorities cannot solve everything.”*

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# Grow Programme Highlights

## **GROW as a 'delivery mechanism' for national and regional policy commitments**

The results contribute to 'improved effectiveness of regional development strategies and instruments', in line with the overall goals of the European funding programme and the needs of the participating regions. The projects are well-focused on the core INTERREG IIC activities.

## **Contribution of GROW to EU policy goals**

GROW partners are in a good position to demonstrate that regions can deliver joined-up strategies for implementing the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas. Using the '3P' approach of 'People, Planet, Profit', GROW is helping its partner regions to achieve sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs, greater social cohesion and a reduced impact on the environment.

## **GROW as a model for interregional cooperation**

The GROW programme has developed an effective online project management tool that was included in the INTERREG IIC *Good Practice Survey* for its innovative approach. Project managers can complete their claims and activity reports online, which enables the GROW secretariat to monitor the project budget and outputs closely. This system considerably reduces paperwork and enables project managers to dedicate more time to their project's success. The current INTERREG IIC West programme secretariat has shown a great interest in the tool and would be interested in using it on future programmes.

## **Interregional partnership a success: GROW projects able to work across cultures**

Fifty-eight percent of project partners had not been involved in an INTERREG project before – GROW has succeeded in attracting newcomers to the European agenda. Working in partnership on specific objectives and targets has led participants to create, develop or reinforce networks of experts that will continue beyond the end of the projects. These informal networks and linkages add significant value and will be used in the future.

## **Looking to the future: 100% of partners want to continue under GROW 2**

All partners in all GROW projects wish to continue their work after December 2007. Some are already taking action; most are looking to leadership from SEEDA to develop a GROW 2 programme. GROW has certainly gained a reputation of excellence in the participating regions and also in other European regions, which should help to position GROW 2 well. The partner regions intend to establish a strategic long-term partnership, which will continue beyond the INTERREG IIC funding, opening new avenues for sustainable development in high-growth regions.



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