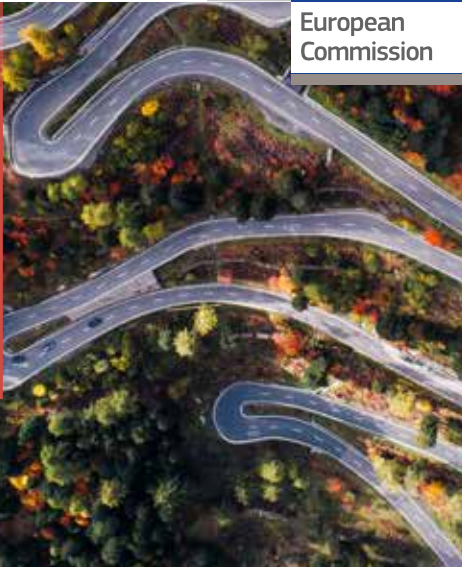




European
Commission



HOW THE EU HELPS MOUNTAIN AREAS

Europe's mountain communities can be remote and difficult to reach, creating challenges such as limited access to resources, services and markets. Balancing tourism and environmental protection can also be difficult. EU support can help turn these hurdles into opportunities to create jobs, boost local economies and improve lives. The EU-funded Construction of a Digestive Endoscopy Area project is one such example.

Easier access to endoscopies in northern Spain

An EU-funded project has resulted in a high-tech endoscopy unit at a hospital in the northern Spanish region of Cantabria, boosting access to potentially life-saving procedures crucial to detecting digestive disorders such as colorectal cancer.

Featuring both mountains and coastline, the autonomous community of Cantabria is one of Spain's smallest and least-populated regions. The local Sierrallana hospital in the city of Torrelavega provides medical care for people living in parts of this region that are characterised by health inequalities and an ageing population.

In a bid to tackle these challenges and provide better and more efficient services, the EU-funded **Construction of a Digestive Endoscopy Area** project supported the development of a modern endoscopy unit at the hospital, which is part of Cantabria's public health service.

Its aim was also to promote screenings for colorectal cancer in line with a regional programme focused on early detection of the disease, which can significantly improve a patient's prognosis.

With the new unit carrying out more than 7 000 procedures in 2015 alone, the project has had a big impact on regional care.



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'The Construction of a Digestive Endoscopy Area project was part of a wider effort aimed at expanding and improving Cantabria's public health infrastructure to ensure that the local population, in particular vulnerable groups, have equal access to quality medical care.'

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Serving people admitted to the hospital and outpatients, the new unit boasts an array of high-tech endoscopy equipment – such as a high-definition therapeutic video gastroscope – that was also co-financed by the EU.

Furthermore, the launch of the unit – intended to contribute to national, regional and local development – resulted in several new staff being hired at the Sierrallana hospital.



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Project full name: Construction of a digestive endoscopy area

Sectors: Access to public services, Health

Project website: <http://www.scsalud.es/web/scs/feder-estructuras>

Total cost: EUR 1 009 443

EU CONTRIBUTION: EUR 504 722

Fund: European Regional Development Fund

PROGRAMME: Cantabria ERDF 2014-2020 Operational Programme

Project start/end: 2014 to 2015