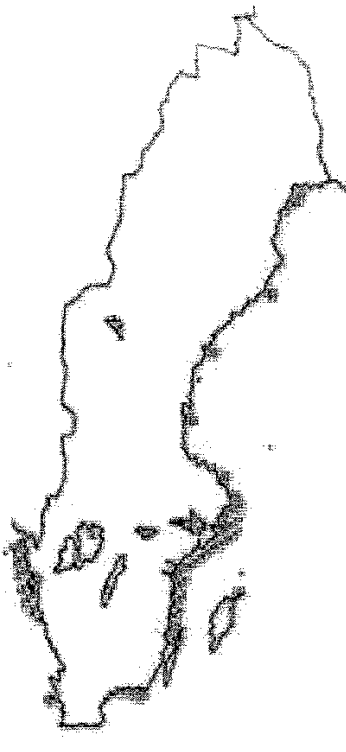


Italy

There are 29 inhabited Italian small islands, all represented in Associazione Nazionale Comuni Isole Minori, ANCIM. Most of them are municipalities of their own. In total the islands have about 180 000 inhabitants, ranging from 17 to 57 000. ANCIM is a cooperation organisation for the island municipalities.



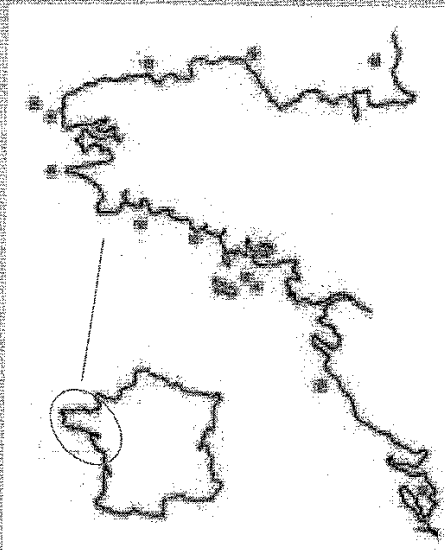
Sweden

There are 576 inhabited small islands with a total of about 32 000 inhabitants, ranging from 1 to about 5000. 46 of the islands, with 2 200 inhabitants, are located in lakes. Skärgårdarnas Riksförbund, www.skargardarnasriksforbund.se, founded in 1982, is a national organisation promoting economic, cultural and social issues in the archipelago areas.



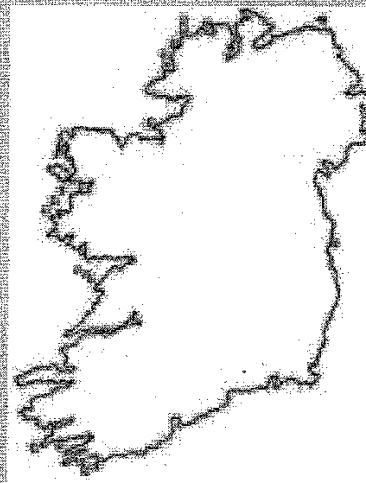
Scotland

There are 89 inhabited islands in Scotland with around 90 000 inhabitants, ranging from one to 20 000. Among these, 12 islands have a population of 300 or more and 24 less than 300. Shetland, Orkney and the Western Isles with 55 islands between them, have regional status, whilst the other 34 islands are governed from three mainland based municipalities. The Scottish Islands Federation, www.scottish-islands-federation.co.uk was established in 2007 to continue the work of the Scottish Islands Network (set up in 2001) in promoting, publicising and advancing the interests of all islands of Scotland.



France

In France, 15 small islands on the Atlantic coast have in total about 15 000 inhabitants, ranging from 186 to 4834. Since its establishment in 1971, L'Association des Iles du Ponant, www.iles-du-ponant.com, promotes economic, social and cultural development for island inhabitants.



Ireland

In Ireland 33 inhabited small islands have a combined total population of just under 3 000, ranging from 1 to 824. Founded in 1993, Comhdháil Oileáin na hÉireann, (Irish Islands Federation,) www.oileain.ie is the representative organisation for the inhabited offshore islands of Ireland.

Aims

ESIN will work to promote positive development throughout the small islands of Europe. We want small islands to be sustainable all-year communities

There are two objectives of the federation of small islands. The first is to circulate information between the different organisations on island issues. In this way we can compare how different countries handle problems and give support to each other through the sharing of knowledge and ideas.

The other is to inform relevant EU institutions and influence EU policies and rules by increasing awareness and understanding of the conditions on small islands.

ESIN will also play a role in helping to strengthen the cultural identity of the islands.

ESIN is the platform for small European islands platform when it comes to being heard especially by the European Union. ESIN will be the small islands_ voice at European level and will find ways to influence EU policies, rules and structural funds.

The small islands need to be recognized as a specific region with particular needs to be acknowledged and addressed.

Future development of small islands

During 2004 to 2006 ESIN carried out an Inter Island Exchange project with a study of a number of important themes. The results were published in the booklet "Meeting the Challenges of small Islands" and presented at a conference on Islay, Scotland, in November 2006.

The conclusions are:

- Islanders have the will, expertise and vision to sustain and develop island communities. With appropriate acknowledgement and support, sustainable communities will thrive on the small islands into the future.
- Small islands suffer from multiple disadvantages. Lack of access to opportunities is a crucial factor in the decline of populations in the islands.
- Islanders are central to the sustainability of their environment and to the guardianship of their islands. Environmental policies should create opportunities for islanders and not threaten their survival.
- Specific policy tools are sometimes needed to protect indigenous populations from development driven by forces outside their control.
- Development plans need to be based on island specific values of heritage, identity and culture and have a socio-economic approach.
- Directives and policies at national and European level should be cognisant of the fact that small islands are micro communities with valuable cultural and social capital. Regulations should be subject to a proofing procedure to ensure that they do not impact adversely on the sustainability of these extremely fragile communities.
- ESIN should be recognised by the European Union as natural partners in the development process relating to small islands.

Further information

www.europeansmallislands.net

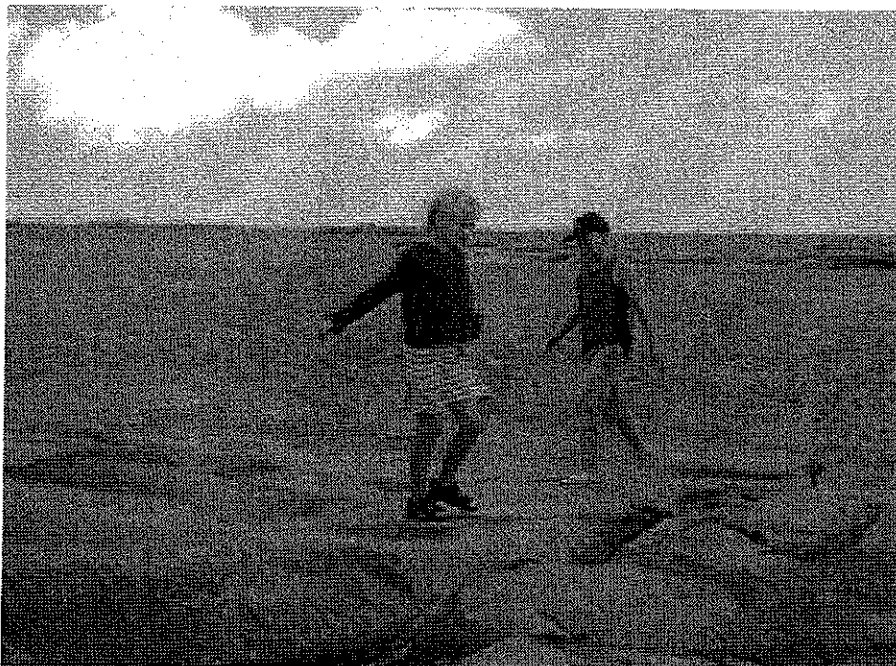


Photo on this side: Sankt Anna archipelago, Sweden
Front cover photo: Belle-Île-en-Mer, France

