

## GEOGRAPHICAL SITUATION

Cantabria is an autonomous region of Spain midway along Spain's northern seaboard and, as such, it forms part of the European Atlantic Arc. It is one of Spain's smaller autonomous regions with a total area of 5,290 sq. kilometres and frontiers totalling 600 kilometres, 200 of which give onto the Atlantic.

## CLIMATE

The climate is mild in both winter and summer. The average annual temperature is 15°C; summer temperatures rarely exceed 30°C and in winter they seldom drop below freezing.



Annual rainfall, as one would expect from Cantabria's position on the Atlantic coast of the north of Spain, is, however, relatively high and averages around 1,200 to 1,100 mm.

## POPULATION

Cantabria's population of 572.824 with an average of 107 inhabitants per sq. kilometre makes it one of the more densely populated regions of Spain. Approximately a third of the population is concentrated in Santander, the Region's economic and administrative capital, while the remaining two thirds live in small or medium-sized municipalities spread fairly evenly around the rest of the Region. Educational levels in Cantabria are high and the workforce skilled. Most employment is in service industries, incomes are above average for Spain and both labour and social relations are harmonious.



www.camaracantabria.com

**Cámara**  
Cantabria

### CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF CANTABRIA

Plaza de Velarde, 5 -39001  
Santander (Spain)  
Tel: + 34 942 31 80 00  
Fax: + 34 942 31 43 10  
e-mail: ccincantabria@camaracantabria.com  
web: www.camaracantabria.com

### How to get to Cantabria

**By road:** Toll-free motorway systems connect Cantabria with the French frontier and the rest of Spain.

**By rail:** Cantabria is part of Spain's national railway network.

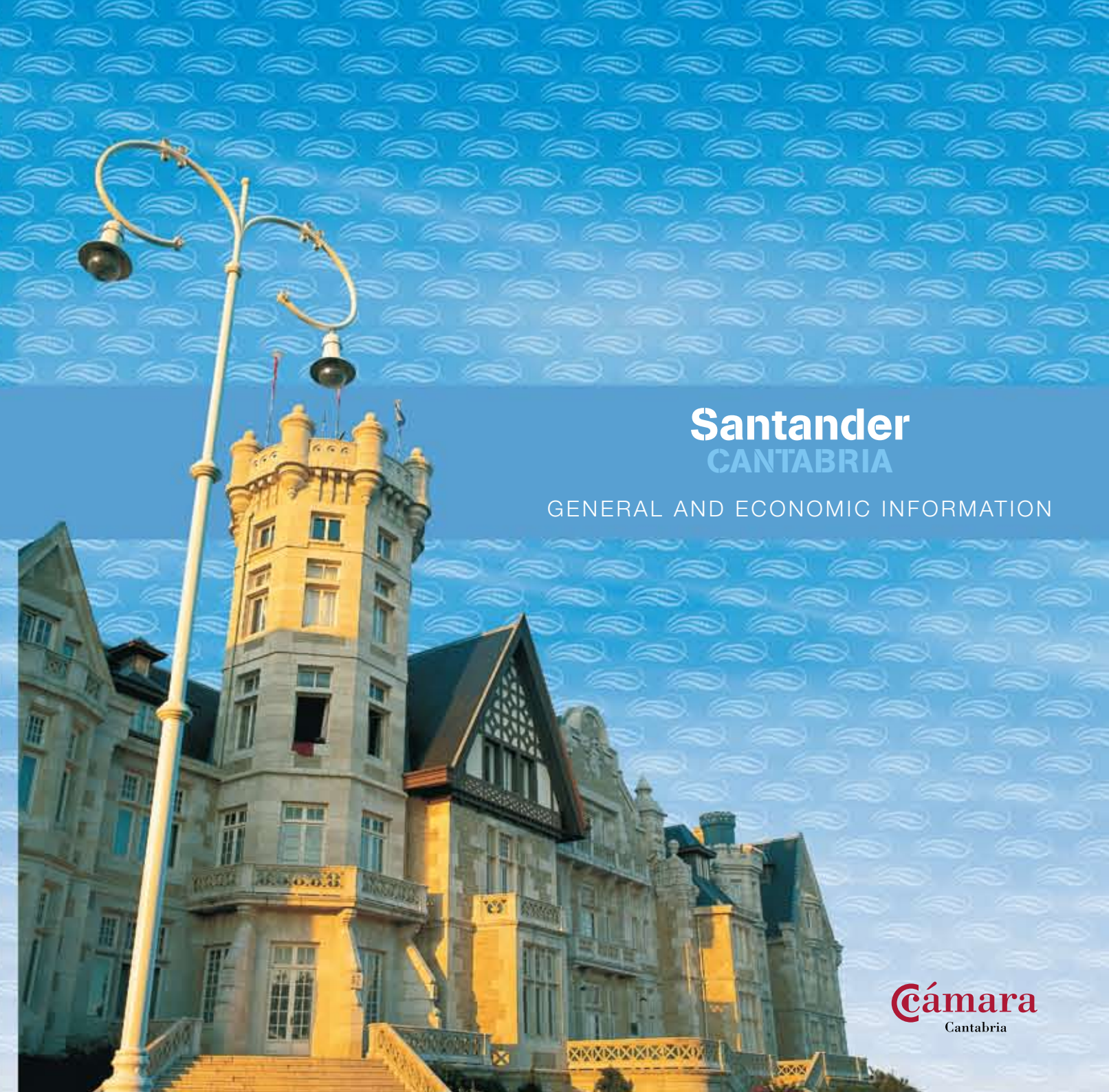
**By air:** The airport at Santander is 5 kilometres from the city centre with a good bus and taxi system. Daily flights link Santander to the rest of Spain and to international destinations such as London, Frankfurt, Rome, Dublin and Milan, with new routes opening every year. The airport at Bilbao is 50 minutes away by motorway.

**By sea:** Santander is an important commercial and cargo port. A regular passenger and Ro-Ro service operates between Santander and Plymouth in the UK.

**Santander**  
CANTABRIA

GENERAL AND ECONOMIC INFORMATION

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## COMMUNICATIONS

Cantabria is well connected with the rest of Spain and the rest of the world by sea, land and air. The Port of Santander ([www.puertasantander.com](http://www.puertasantander.com)) is one of the most modern Spanish ports, and an important nexus of national and international trade. The Port is directly connected to the Madrid motorway, which allows one to drive to the Spanish capital in less than four hours totally toll free. It is a multipurpose port with two brand new terminals for mineral and agricultural bulks. There are also specialized terminals for RoRo and passenger traffic. The traffic of the port is



for 70% solid bulk and 23% general cargo and the remaining 7% is liquid bulk. There are 17 regular lines and 1 regular Ferry line with the United Kingdom (passengers and freight). Infrastructure: with nearly 7,000 metres of docking facilities, and up to 13 metres draught capacity and

fully equipped with 4 RoRo ramps, and 18 cranes. The port has a total extension of nearly 3,000,000 square metres. Storage area in the Port is 995,432 square metres of which 121,500 square metres are covered.

The motorway system running from east to west along Spain's Atlantic coast passes through Cantabria and gives easy access to neighbouring north coast regions of Spain. Another motorway system, running south, connects the region to the interior, to Madrid and to the heartlands of Spain.

A standard gauge railway system also links Santander to Madrid. The opening of the high-speed train service Madrid-Valladolid has reduced the journey to approximately 4 hours and 30 minutes.

The region's airport, just outside Santander at Parayas, is one of the best in northern Spain owing both to meteorological conditions and its technical facilities. Access to the airport is by a 4-kilometre stretch of motorway and the Port of Santander and its railway station are within easy distance. Daily flights connect Santander with Spain's principal cities and with other European destinations. The airport at Bilbao, Sondika, is only 50 minutes away by motorway and from here flights connect with all airports in Spain and with most European capitals.



## REGIONAL ECONOMY

Cantabria's economy, with 55% of its GDP corresponding to the service sector, is one of the more advanced in Spain. In terms of economic volume, manufacturing, with 17% of the GDP, comes next and is followed by the construction industry at

13% and the primary sector at 3%.

The primary sector is dominated by the dairy industry and Cantabria, though being one of the country's smaller regions, comes fifth amongst Spanish autonomies as a producer of milk. Foodstuffs, automobile components, white goods, kitchen equipment, office equipment and the chemical industry constitute the principal products of the Region's manufacturing base. Cantabria is also home to a flourishing subcontracting industry which supplies and complements this sector of the Region's economy.

Land for industrial development is also readily available in Cantabria. There are numerous industrial estates with good infras-

tructure and easy accessibility distributed strategically around the region. These facilities make Cantabria an ideal location for new industries and for the subcontracting of ancillary production.

The tertiary sector in Cantabria, especially the tourist industry, is the one that has experienced the most growth in the Region in recent years. The unique combination of beaches and mountains and a sophisticated network of hotels have given rise to a booming tourist industry which plays an important part in the economy of Cantabria. The diverse range of cultural events on offer and the Region's natural beauty make it a particularly attractive destination for tourists.

In recent years, Cantabria has consciously opted for a combination of environmental protection and enhancement and for a model of industry geared to Research and Development in new fields. Our Region is a compendium of virtually all the major European environments from subalpine ecosystems, forests and estuaries to coastal dunes. Cantabria was among the first Spanish regions to promote strategies for involving the industrial sector in nature conservation (Cluster Foro Empresarial de Medio Ambiente since 1993). To date, investment in R+D+i has grown 90% (2006) and this is expected to continue until the Region meets the 2% GDP mark laid down at the Lisbon Conference.

As regards the foreign trade sector, a clear indicator of a region's competitiveness and dynamism, Cantabria's share in Spain's external trade matches its 1.2% in the national GAV. An indicator of the health of Cantabria's export sector is the fact that, over the last few years, the value of exports and imports to production has increased substantially and is now in line with the national average.

## EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES

The University of Cantabria was founded in 1972. Its growth since then has been vigorous and dynamic and its reputation now places it amongst the top-ranking Spanish universities. It offers a broad range of degrees in the Arts and Sciences and its postgraduate research teams are involved in work at the leading edge of their fields.

## CULTURAL LIFE

Cantabria hosts two of Spain's most important cultural institutions: the Menéndez Pelayo International University (UIMP) and the International Festival of Santander (FIS). The UIMP has its main campus in the Magdalena Palace, once a summer residence of the Spanish monarchs, and runs courses, seminars and nume-

rous cultural events throughout the year. The FIS is a member of the European Music Festivals Association and its programmes are held during the summer months. The FIS offers a wide range of musical and theatrical activities along with dance and ballet performances. It is one of Europe's leading summer festivals and enjoys great international prestige.

Cantabria, and more especially Santander, is also an excellent venue for congresses. Facilities for such events are first class: the Magdalena Palace, one such venue, has been recently refurbished and equipped with a full range of state-of-the-art technological facilities. Another venue of equal quality is the Palacio de Festivales y Congresos (Festival and Congress Hall) with its central location and its views over Santander's spectacular bay.

