

newsletter

QUARTERLY INFORMATION REPORT FOR THE PRAI LIGURIA
REGIONAL PROGRAM OF INNOVATIVE ACTIONS

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PRAI LIGURIA
Programma
Regionale
di Azioni
Innovative



editorial

The Regional Program of Innovative Actions

by Filippo Grassia

A year after the launch of the Projects supported by the PRAI FESR-Liguria program, we can already see significant developments which will also be able to positively influence the competitiveness of some products, processes or services with foreseeable financial return to benefit businesses in the partnership of the Program. It will also bring a positive impact on the issue of qualified workforce.

The residual funds, of which the second batch is expected to be released by the end of October, will continue to be utilized by the Active participants throughout the year 2007, until the funds granted by PRAI FESR are totally accounted for.

At the end of this year, however, the training activities and the subsequent employment of young graduates in the execution of the 26 projects or the innovative initiatives will come to an end.

The active participants who, in several occasions, have confirmed the positive experience in the implementation and in the articulate management of the current Program, will be unable to financially support a large portion of the human resources assigned to the projects.

The Liguria region is close to its budget-planning deadline for 2007 and it seems to be able to include a significant funding for innovation, professional training and research.

The region has received solicitations from various sides to continue co-financing, within the short-term, those projects which, following attentive evaluation, are in need of additional contributions in order not to compromise the expected returns.

first page



PRAI Liguria: The project and the protagonists

To invest on innovative capability and on entrepreneurial culture so that regional policies may adjust to the new challenges presented by technological processes and globalization of the economy.

This is the new global strategy devised by the European Union which has lead to the conceiving of innovative actions-communitarian financial instruments funded by the European Fund for Regional Development (FESR)-used as innovative processes to implement regional policies on the basis of three strategic themes:

- Regional economy based on knowledge and technological innovation;
- e-Europa: the information entity dedicated to regional development;
- Regional identity and long-term development.

The Liguria Region has developed its own Regional Program of Innovative Actions (PRAI), within the FESR, focusing on the theme "Regional economy based on knowledge and technological innovation" with two specific objectives:

- Define and implement new regional policies, promoting the financial growth and competitiveness among businesses, by increasing their innovative ability intended as the establishment of their net worth starting from knowledge.
- Establish two advanced high-tech centers concentrated on the energy, environment and sustainable development issues in Savona and on the materials and technologies for the marine field, and naval-mechanics in La Spezia.

The implementation of the Regional Program of Innovative Actions involves, in addition to the Liguria Region, The National Research Council (operations manager) and the University of Genoa. It has been granted 7,9 million euros, 6 of which of public funding (3 millions from the European Union, 2.1 from the Ministry of the Productive Activities and 900 thousand from the Region) and almost 2 millions from the active members.



In the first phase of the realization of the Program, 26 projects were chosen and funded. These involve the participation of 29 businesses and 61 researchers, selected through specific procedures of publicly held contests.

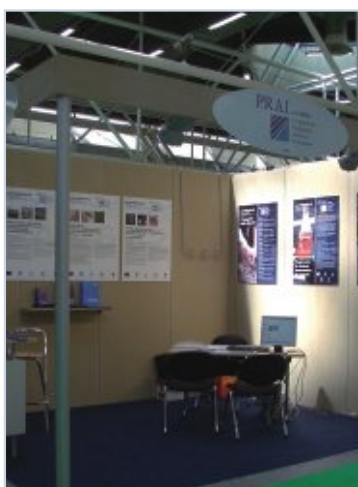
The active beneficiaries will, in the second phase, operate for the development and maintenance of the two centers of La Spezia and Savona, with the objective to promote the innovative sectors mentioned above, the creation of a collaboration network between businesses, Universities and Research centers.

agenda

**May 11-12, 2006
 Bologna**

Prai-Liguria at Research to Business 2006.

Research renews the business, show on the innovation and industrial research.



The one of a kind event on the financial spectrum in Italy and on an international level, RtoB 2006 represents the second appointment of a manifestation born stimulate the interaction among qualified research centers and the world of businesses that might present opportunities for collaboration and sharing of technologies for the development of new products and processes.

RtoB has seen the involvement of universities, private and public research institutes, scientific associations, businesses and R&D laboratories, centers and networks for innovation and sharing of technology. All these active in the fields of high-tech mechanics, of biotechnologies, of the energy, the environment, of new materials and Nano-technologies. In the two days the 206 exhibitors presented over 300 research projects and the event counted over 2000 visitors.



The Center of La Spezia Innovation on marine technologies

The technological center in La Spezia has as its final objective that of becoming a leading international center in the development of materials and technologies for marine and naval-mechanics use. The location for such a type of facility in the capital city of the province of La Spezia was decided because of the particularity of the areahome to basically every type of activity tied to the sea and the relative infrastructure; next to the historical military vocation we find, in fact, on a civilian level a strong activity linked to shipbuilding, fishing, aqua farming and quality tourism, all activities that can significantly benefit from the activity of transferring of competences typical in technological districts.

The center in La Spezia, presents yet another peculiarity: it is not the "physical" aspect of it but it is a facility able to organize competences and structures, laboratories from the private industry, universities and research entities, in a configuration that is extremely efficient and dynamic in which it will be easier to express the binomial world of research-world of business.

The main office is located Research Center of the Marine Environment

S.Teresa of the ENEA (National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and the Environment), in Pozzuolo di Lerici (locality south of La Spezia).

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The 13 projects financed by the Regional Program of Innovative Actions, within the circle of La Spezia, count the involvement of 31 active participants in the development of activities strongly oriented towards innovation and the small/medium businesses and towards the rising Industrial parks.



agenda (continua)

Prai-Liguria at Research to Business 2006.

Research renews the business, show on the innovation and industrial research.

The event in Bologna has represented a very important international window able to open many doors to the innovative Ligurian project, to its coordinators and to its participants; with its participation, Prai-Liguria has proved itself to be as worthy as of other initiatives oriented in the research field. It has gained, also from an image point of view, respect from the opinion-makers in the sector.

In addition, during the workshop held on May 11 at the "Ready to Market Corner-Gallery Hall" visitors, exhibitors and the media were presented with the objects of the Prai-Liguria project, the partners, the available resources, the two centers of Savona and La Spezia and the relative projects developed in each.

R2B
 RESEARCH TO BUSINESS

The Research to Business event was sponsored by Bologna Fiere (Organization that organizes shows and conventions) in collaboration with the local authority of Productive Activities, the Agency for the Technological Development for the Emilia-Romagna region (ASTER), the ministry of Productive Activities, the National Institute of Foreign Trade (ICE) and the Regional Service for the Internationalization of businesses (SPRINT).



The Center of Savona: A lab for the innovation of businesses

The technological center of Savona intends to be the advanced center for the development on the research on dynamic-numeral simulations of complex systems, with their specific application in the fields of energy, environment and sustainable development.

The presence of the power plant of Vado Ligure, the stretches of forests, the necessities tied to the development of the port of Savona, make it necessary to sustain innovative initiatives mostly tied to plants of energy conversion, to the study and optimal employment of the chain forest-wood-energy, to logistics systems.

The objective to be attained, in place of the physical prototype, is to, for example, optimize planning in the pre-realization phase of setting up the establishments and management costs. The various laboratories, located at the University of Savona research center, will also facilitate the creation of virtual realities that are organized in a structure that is one of just a few kind in Italy. Benefiting from this structure will be the project executors present on the Savona territory as well as the national productive and scientific communities.

The Program of Innovative Actions for the Liguria region finances, in the Savona district, a total number of 13 projects, whose realization has been entrusted to 17 project executors.



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The main office of the center has been established at the University of Genoa-Center of Savona.

interview

Liguria and the issue of technological innovation

Interview with Renzo Guccinelli - Regione Liguria
 by Marco Castagna



Renzo Guccinelli, is Town Councilor for the development of the economy, industry, trade, fair and supportive trade, craftsmanship, consumers' protection. For many years, he dedicated himself with efforts and passion to public administration. Stepped up in the City Council in Sarzana in 1975, held office as the City Councilor in different sectors. He was elected Mayor of Sarzana in 1994.

Councilor Guccinelli, how should the issue of technological innovation be approached in our region?

Liguria is a very traditional region from the innovation point of view; however, it will have to make more efforts if it wants to be a leader not only on a national level but particularly on the European and Mediterranean basin front.

To promote this tendency we therefore deemed necessary to define and implement new regional policies, promoting the financial growth and competitiveness among businesses, by increasing their innovative ability intended as the establishment of their net worth starting from knowledge, the true strategic asset for businesses of the third millennium.

Why betting on two realities so different such as Savona and La Spezia?

So to concentrate resources in two districts worthy of consideration with regards to both sustaining innovation, in specific sectors, and to the know employment necessities.

Genoa holds a strong position on the innovation issues. It was, therefore, necessary that other areas of the region be put in a position to develop their potential on the high-technological front. First to favor a growth process that is homogeneous in the territory, but especially to build a system on a regional level and position themselves as authorities on the scenarios I mentioned earlier. Other areas of the region would be in a position to develop their own potentials on the high-tech front.

Two different realities for two different models of advanced centers...

In fact, we wanted to realize two different models of advanced development facilities: in Savona in the energy, environment and sustainable development fields, a center located at the university, that has its "center of gravity" in a simulator of virtual reality organized in a structure that will be accessible by the project executors present on the territory as well as the national productive and scientific communities.

In La Spezia at the Enea on innovative materials and technologies for marine and naval-mechanics use, the center is constituted by a facility able to organize competences and structures, laboratories from the private industry, institutions, universities and research entities, in a network configuration that is extremely efficient and dynamic.

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