

Structural Funds: Commission contributes € 3 million to a programme of innovative actions in the region of Calabria, Italy

The European Commission has approved € 3 million for a regional programme of innovative actions for the Calabria region in Italy. During the period 2002-2003, the European funding will attract € 0.75 million in further investment from the public sector, and € 0.73 million from the private sector, creating total resources of € 4.48 million. The programme includes the introduction of new methods for innovating local development in the region in the field of regional identity and sustainable development.

Announcing the decision, Michel Barnier, Member of the Commission responsible for regional policy, said: *“Through the regional programmes of innovative actions we aim to improve the quality of the mainstream programmes of the regional development fund in regions which are lagging behind or suffering from structural change. The actors should view the innovative actions as a laboratory for experimentation in order to find answers for the new challenges in regional development. I am convinced that this programme will strengthen the capacity of innovation in Calabria and contribute positively to its development strategy.”*

The innovative actions programme ‘ILSRE’ aims at promoting and testing innovative methodologies and practices for local development.

Three major action fields are planned:

- **Networking of institutions and operational organisation of the region** - This measure will consist of three actions: approval of programming instruments and management of assistance in local systems; promotion of and experimentation with networks for institutional co-operation between local authorities; integration and development of the roles and responsibilities of local development agents.
- **System-based actions for local development** - This measure is composed of three actions: methodologies and tools for learning and change in local communities; innovative financial instruments for local development initiatives; instruments for transparency in local communities.
- **Regional services, small enterprises and networks of innovative enterprises for local development** - This measure is composed of three actions: i) regional services; ii) innovative enterprise projects; iii) networks of enterprises within local systems.

After an analysis of the region’s situation a limited number of pilot projects will be launched. The proposed programme represents a laboratory for experimentation with Integrated Territorial Projects (*Progetti Integrati Territoriali* – PITs) for the region of Calabria and the results could be used in the broader scope of the regional development programme.

Background

The innovative actions funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) aim to create a laboratory for experimentation on regional development in Europe, focusing on actions, which are genuinely innovative. They will be implemented by partnerships in each region comprising the public and private sectors and relevant regional actors.

On this basis, after consultation in the region concerned, the competent authorities in the region are invited to submit an application for a Regional Programme of Innovative Actions to the EU before 31 May each year in the period 2000-05 focusing on one or more of the following three themes:

- Regional economies based on knowledge and technological innovation: helping the regions to raise their technological level
- e-EuropeRegio: the information society at the service of regional development
- Regional identity and sustainable development: promoting regional cohesion and competitiveness through an integrated approach to economic, environmental, cultural and social activities

The response from the regions in the first year 2001, has exceeded expectations: 103 of the 156 eligible regions – more than two-thirds – submitted an application. In addition, 3 specific Network Programmes were also submitted to the Commission.

The total budget available for ERDF Innovative actions over the entire period is approximately € 400 million. Each successful application will receive a minimum of € 0.3 million up to a maximum of € 3 million from the ERDF for a maximum duration of two years. The ERDF co-finances the costs of the programmes of up to 80% in objective 1 regions¹ and up to 50% in objective 2 regions² (or 60% in exceptional cases).

The management authority

The management authority for the programme is the region Calabria.

Regione Calabria
Ricerca, Innovazione e Società dell'Informazione
Dr. Carmelo Luciano Mallamaci, Program Manager
Via Massara 2
I-88100 Catanzaro
E-mail: l.mallamaci@regcal.it

For more information:

You may find other relevant information about innovative actions on the following web site:

¹ Objective 1 of the structural funds: "Development and structural adjustment of regions lagging behind", defined by a GDP per head of below 75% of the EU average.

² Objective 2 of the structural funds: "Supporting the economic and social conversion of areas facing structural difficulties". These are industrial, rural and urban areas or those dependent on fisheries with structural difficulties such as, e.g. a high level of unemployment.

http://inforegio.cec.eu.int/innovating/index_en.htm

Contact: Pierre-Jérôme Henin

Phone: +32 2 296 20 50

E-mail: pierre-jerome.henin@cec.eu.int