Fifteen years of EFRD in Piedmont
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1. European regional policy

The issue of overcoming regional differences within Europe was already dealt with in the 1957 Treaty setting up the European Economic Community, but individual member states were, in any event, placed in charge of implementing the policies designed for such purpose.

The European Social Fund, already contemplated under the Treaty, was not intended as a regional policy tool, but as a solution to the need to facilitate the free movement of workers within the common market, and in particular, “to the needs of the strong economies of the EEC that counted on migratory fluxes to meet their labour requirements”.

Even the idea underlying the European Fund for Regional Development (EFRD), expressed for the first time in 1972 at the European Council of Paris, was based on the need for a counterweight to the predominance of the common agricultural policy within the community budget. The Fund made additional resources from the community budget available to national development programmes, thus continuing to serve as an intervention tool in support of state policies. In fact, during this first phase, the distribution of the fund’s financial resources was based on a quota system, under which each member state received a fixed quota to be spent on activities directed at establishing regional balance at the national level. It was only in the period 1979-84 that the Fund’s activities started becoming dissociated from national policies, thanks to the introduction of a percentage (5%), independent of the quota system, that could be used directly by the Commission in dealing with the regional problems of the Community as a whole.

The launching, in 1985, of Integrated Mediterranean Programmes (IMPs) targeted at Greece and the Mediterranean regions of France and Italy, was then accompanied by the introduction, in the context of the use of structural funds, the principle of *planning* that would be increasingly consolidated in subsequent periods, as well as the concepts of *valuation* and *partnership*.

It was only with the Single European Act, however, that the European Community formally adopted cohesion as a community policy goal, side by side with the aim, pursued until then, of establishing the common market. The new articles introduced into the Treaty required the efficient coordination and streamlining of Structural Fund activities, and in the wake of these developments, the Commissions put forward a proposal for the reform of the funds, based not only on the new principles but also on the availability of more abundant resources. EEC Regulation no. 2052/88 that inaugurated the first planning period 1989-1993, introduced the

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1 Title II, Article 33(2) of the Treaty establishing the European Community.
classification of priority objectives – five at the time\(^2\), for the attainment of which, all the structural funds could be involved (EFRD, ESF and EFAOG, orientation section). In particular, if objectives 3, 4 and 5-a pertained to the entire community as a whole and were therefore called horizontal, objectives 1, 2 and 5-b were specifically local in nature, affecting only what are now known as eligible areas.

The 1999 reforms, studied in the context of the signing of the Maastricht treaty, were less innovative than the previous reforms: apart from the establishment of the Cohesion Fund and the introduction of the new regional objective no. 6 focusing on regions with very low population density, no changes were brought to the 1988 principles (concentration, partnership, planning, additionality) and the pursuit of the five priority objectives was largely left unchanged, in terms of eligible areas and functions.

With the 1999 reforms, on the other hand, in a bid to concentrate structural intervention, the priority objectives were reduced to three: development and structural upgrading of the backward regions, economic and social conversion of areas with structural problems, advancement and updating of education, training and employment-related policies and systems. The most interesting novelty involved the incorporation of objective 5-b into the new Objective 2, and the introduction of transitional support for regions or areas covered under the regional objectives in the period 1994-1999, but that are no longer covered in the new period. Decreasing transitional aid is aimed at avoiding a sudden interruption in community aid in these regions, and therefore at consolidating the results of previous structural intervention. Transitional support is particularly important for regions, that pursued objectives 2 and 5-b during the previous period, as in the case of Piedmont.

The 1999 reforms further introduce amongst the rules for the new planning period (2000-2006), the extension of the principle of partnership amongst all the economic and social players involved in regional policy, and the concept of valuation of the efficiency of intervention. Apart from prior, intermediate and subsequent valuation, and the automatic disengagement rule, the so-called \(n+2\), the reforms introduced the principle of the effectiveness and efficiency reserve, under which a bonus is awarded to operating programmes or single planning documents that, on the basis of a limited number of supervision indicators, have proven to be particularly efficient and effective halfway through the programme.

\(^2\) 1) development and structural adjustment of the underdeveloped regions; 2) conversion of the regions, border regions or parts of regions seriously affected by industrial decline; 3) struggle against long term unemployment; 4) professional insertion of young people; 5)a – upgrading of agricultural structures, b – development of rural areas.
1.1 The EFRD and Objective 2

As contemplated in Regulation no. 1260/99 that governs Structural Funds in the period 2000-2006, the EFRD contributes to the pursuit of objectives 1 and 2, as well as the economic and social regeneration of cities and suburbs in crisis, within the framework of community initiatives, and supports innovative intervention at the community level, and technical assistance measures. In practice, the EFRD finances a whole series of initiatives targeted at the following sectors: the production sector, especially for developing competitiveness and long term investments by companies, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as for boosting the attractiveness of regions, specifically by enhancing their infrastructure; research and technological development, with a view to furthering the implementation of new technologies and innovation or to enhancing the research and technological development capabilities that contribute towards regional development and the development of the information society; the development of tourism and cultural investments, including the protection of the cultural and natural heritage, provided that the same create long term employment; the protection and improvement of the environment, especially in keeping with the principles of precaution and preventive action in support of economic development, the clean and efficient use of energy and the development of renewable energy sources; parity between men and women in the field of employment, particularly through the setting of companies and through infrastructure or services that allow for greater conciliation between family life and professional activities; trans-national, cross-border and interregional cooperation in field of long term regional and local development.

On the basis of the principles of partnership and additionality, the EFRD does not finance intervention on its own, but contributes towards the financing of the same in concert with national resources.

Regulation 1260/99 lays down the maximum limits of the participation of the Funds, in function of the objectives pursued and the type of investments eligible for funding. Piedmont fell under Objectives 2 and 5-b during the first two planning periods and has been confirmed under Objective 2 for the current period. The regions covered by Objective 2 are, in fact, those “with structural problems whose socio-economic conversion is to be supported [...] They shall include

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3 Regulation 1783/99, Article 2(2)
in particular areas undergoing socio-economic change in the industrial and service sectors, declining rural areas, urban areas in difficulty[...]'

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4 Regulation 1260/99, Article 4(1)
2. Fifteen years of EFRD in Piedmont

2.1 The 1989-1993 and 1994-1999 planning periods

The first Planning Document of the Piedmont Region, co-financed by the Structural Funds, dates back to 1989. On the basis of the principle of the concentration of intervention, laid down under EEC Regulation 2052/88, first the Operating Programme (OP) and then the Multi-Fund Operating Programme (MFOP), forebears of the Single Planning Document (SPD), focused intervention on the so-called Objective 2 regions, and in particular, on the Province of Turin and the Verbano-Cusio-Ossola area. During the following planning period, the eligible area under Objective 2 was extended to include 4 circumscriptions and certain districts of the Municipality of Turin and the Valle Scrivia area. 1,900,000 inhabitants or just under half the entire Piedmontese population, were included in the eligible area.

In those years, Piedmont was undergoing a crisis due to both real and financial causes: the drop in consumer spending caused by the economic climate was aggravated by recourse to indebtedness precisely at a time when capital was in short supply and real interest rates were therefore high. Against this very negative backdrop for industry, the effects of technological progress that promoted innovative labour-saving processes, led to the structural exuberance of labour in the industrial sector. In 1993, the gross domestic product of the region, thus fell by almost 4% in real terms when compared to 1992, a year already characterised by deep recession. Following improvements in the international economic climate and the devaluation of the Italian lira, the first signs of a positive change in direction, emerged. At the same time, the Piedmontese economy started undergoing significant changes in areas that were typical to it until then: specialisation in the manufacturing sector was reduced, together with the mean size of businesses and production units. The service sector grew at a higher rate than the national mean, especially in terms of computerised R&D activities and other services for businesses.

It is in this context that one must read the two single planning documents (SPDs) for 1994-96 and 1997-98, that focus – in keeping with community guidelines – precisely on the system of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and aim at creating a climate capable of nurturing a new model of industrial development, concentrating on forms of specialisation featuring a higher level of innovative content and quality and the development of specialist services that constitute an independent driving force for the region. All the SPDs are divided into priority axes that represent
the strategic priorities identified in light of community guidelines and on the basis of an analysis of local strengths and weaknesses.

In particular, the 1994-96 SPD that entailed disbursements to final beneficiaries of 359 million euro, including 294 million from public funds, and generated investments of 987 million euro, focused on: the development of small and medium-sized enterprises operating in the sectors of tourism, research and innovation, environmental protection, and local development and recovery. Spending was therefore spread over five priority axes, excluding technical assistance.

The first axis, “Development and reinforcement of the fabric of SMEs” covered various types of measures, all targeted at small and medium-sized enterprises, and focused on investment aid, the acquisition of consulting services or the creation and development of equipped areas.

The second axis, on the other hand, aimed at promoting tourism offerings, both from the standpoint of infrastructure and in terms of boosting demand; in particular, measure 2.4 introduced the principle of integrated project design and planning.

Measure 3.1, however, is of particular importance, since it marked the starting point for the establishment of the network of Technology parks. The Piedmontese network of Technology parks now constitutes the benchmark of excellence for intervention aimed at regional economic development. The Parks are, in fact, placed in charge of facilitating the diffusion of innovation amongst local SMEs, promoting the setting up of new businesses and attracting new investments at the local level. The project for a network of Parks was conceived in the mid-1990s at the initiative of the Region and with coordination by Finpiemonte S.p.A.; implementation involved know-how and resources from both public and private entities. The project introduced in Piedmont, the “technology park” model as a type of intervention capable of facilitating the transfer of technology resulting from research, to industry, along the lines of similar programmes in Europe and the United States.

Axis 3 also included measures for the promotion of investments in the field of research and innovation, while axis 4 focused on financing investments targeted at the conversion of derelict industrial sites, the setting up of plant for the storage, disposal and recycling of industrial concerns and craftsmen’s workshops and more in general, investments aimed at environmental protection.

Lastly, axis 5 included a measure covering Integrated Development Poles, introduced precisely under the 1994-96 SPD. Integrated Development Poles consist of large equipped industrial areas, measuring between 300,000 and 1 million square metres, incorporating primary and
secondary town planning works and endowed with shared infrastructure. The concept of Integrated Development Poles derives from a proposal, submitted by the Industrial Union of Turin and trades unions, for the promotion of new opportunities for setting up industrial sites, in addition to the normal needs of local restructuring. The Poles include Service Centres set up to meet the management and operating needs of the businesses housed within each Pole. Service Centres cover both services for persons (hotels, restaurants, bars, conference halls, meeting rooms, offices and shops) and production-oriented services (infrastructure for goods in transit, the cogeneration of electric power, warehousing and the collection of industrial waste).

The 1997-99 SPD was based on 7 priority axes (excluding technical assistance):

- the development and reinforcement of the SME fabric;
- tourism and the enhancement of the cultural heritage;
- the promotion and diffusion of technological innovation and the information society;
- sustainable development and environmental protection;
- urban and local restructuring;
- comprehensive projects for economic development;
- the enhancement of human resources.

Among the measures targeted at SMEs, measure 1.5 pertaining to financial services to companies, is particularly worth of note, since it includes the “merchant bank” project that entailed the setting up of a fund that provided venture capital to businesses against the acquisition of a temporary shareholding in the latter. The shareholdings, to be acquired in financially stable corporations featuring high growth prospects and innovative and expansion-oriented investment plans, could not be less than 20% or more than 49% (the threshold of corporate control) of the share capital of the said corporations, and had to be liquidated in the medium term. The project prioritised companies with a high technological content as well as businesses with ambitious internationalisation plans or intent on launching merger and acquisition transactions. Another strength of the project is that it was not terminated upon the expiry of the three-year period of the plan, but continued thereafter, at the same conditions and in respect of the same type of counterparty.

On the other hand, the second line “Participating loans”, re-proposed under the current SPD involved the setting up of a rotating fund for granting participating loans to financially stable SMEs with investment plans or projects for production development and job creation. The mechanism of
the rotating fund was also used in support of investments in innovation and environmental protection by SMEs (measure 3.2). The axis focusing on urban and local restructuring included measure 5.4 “Agency for the international promotion of Turin and Piedmont”, aimed at attracting outside investors from Italy and abroad, to the Objective 2 areas of the Piedmont and at providing them with adequate assistance and advice. The measure has had some amount of success (25 companies attracted – including 19 from abroad and 6 from Italy – resulting in over 1,800 jobs at full regime) and has resulted in the launching of intervention aimed at the internationalisation of the Piedmontese economic system. The measure has been re-proposed in the 2000-2006 SPD. The 1997-1999 SPD focuses on and further develops the issue of integrated planning and project design: the measures 2.2-b (“Comprehensive Area Projects”) and 6.1 (“Comprehensive projects for local economic basins, system areas and districts”) re-propose the intervention already included in the previous plan (measure 2.4 of the Single Planning Document for 1994-99), inserting the same within the context of Local Agreements. As pointed out below, the current SPD includes a measure targeted at Comprehensive Area Projects.

The measures in favour of the tourist sector include the inauguration of the project for the restoration of the Venaria Reale Palace, that, in terms of earmarked funds and the level of project design, remains unparalleled in Europe.

On the overall, the 1997-99 SPD, taking into account only the portion pertaining to the EFRD, generated investments in the amount of 1,764 million euro, against a total cost of 910.28 million euro, including nearly 800 million euro from the public coffer.

2.2 The current planning period (2000-2006)

The Single Planning Document for 2000-2006 includes the intervention that resulted in significantly positive effects in the previous planning period, such as, measures aimed at the internationalisation of the Piedmontese economy, the setting up of rotating funds to grant loans to SMEs, Comprehensive Area Projects and lastly, the project for the restoration of the Venaria Reale Palace.

With the unification of the previous objectives 2 and 5-b, and the introduction of transitional support, the population covered under Objective 2 amounts to 1,343,402 inhabitants, or nearly half the population covered during the previous period, while Phasing Out involves 1,219,627
inhabitants and shall be concluded one year prior to the Objective 2 period, that is to say, by the end of 2005.

The total cost for both, the Objective 2 areas and the Phasing Out, amounts to 1,288.9 million euro, including 509.8 million euro from the EFRD. The remaining 737.2 million euro is covered under co-financing using Italian public funds (from the central government, the Regions and other Local Bodies). Including private resources not reflected in government accounts, total investments amount to 2,713.4 million euro.

The 2000-2006 SPD is based on four Axes. The first, dedicated to internationalisation, responds to the need to invest the regional economic system with a pre-eminently international role. This involves affording Piedmontese companies access to European networks and facilitating the setting up of permanent partnerships for the promotion of products and services, on the one hand, and attracting outside investment as well as promoting the business opportunities offered by the Region, on the other. Apart from the measures targeted at companies and Chambers of Commerce, trade associations, etc. this axis includes the measure managed by ITP (Invest in Turin and Piedmont) on behalf of the Region of Piedmont, aimed at sustaining and attracting foreign investment in Piedmont through specific initiatives. The measure is a re-proposal of the one already financed under the 97-99 SPD. Also noteworthy is measure 1.1-a “Piemonte nel mondo” (Piedmont in the world) that entails the setting up of a favourable climate for the implementation of policies aimed at attracting tourists and foreign investment to Piedmont. This line also finances a project for the advertising and promotion of the Winter Olympics.

The Axis System Qualification and Support is aimed at completing the conversion process of the Piedmontese economic system. Towards this end, the axis includes support to businesses, including through incentives for improving performance in terms of environmental protection as a factor of competitiveness, and initiatives targeted at enhancing the cultural heritage (this axis covers the continuation of the large-scale project for the restoration of the Venaria Reale Palace) as well as local tourism and natural resources. In particular, the goal is to accelerate the enhancement of the
service sector at the European level, by promoting the development and diffusion of innovative models and competencies, and by organising opportunities for accessing and exchanging technologies. This axis also include line 2.4-b-2 (development of a communications platform between the Public Administration and the business community) that funds the RUPAR2 or WI-PIE project aimed at setting up a broadband network through the Region.

The third Axis, dedicated to **Local Development and Territorial Enhancement** responds to the need to promote the harmonious and sustainable development of areas that are uniform in morphological, economic or social terms. Two types of intervention are included: on the one hand, action aimed at safeguarding and securing polluted areas, the recovery of derelict sites and the protection of environmental resources; on the other, initiatives targeted at enhancing and restructuring the economic, cultural and social fabric. This axis includes measure 3.1-a for the funding of Comprehensive Area Projects, re-proposing similar measures already covered under previous SPDs. Also noteworthy is measure 3.4, recently introduced as part of financial restructuring, since it entails the implementation of strategic projects capable of generating positive results over vast areas by enhancing specific local features, highlighting strengths, making the most of opportunities and developing natural resources.

Axis 4, Social Cohesion, is aimed at promoting the involvement of all individuals in processes of social integration and employment, so as to combat social alienation and unemployment. Towards this end, it seems imperative to promote a favourable environment through urban restructuring and support to businesses. No less important, lastly, is the promotion of opportunities for setting up businesses and intervention aimed at nurturing the development of business initiatives.

### 2.3 The results of fifteen years of EFRD in Piedmont

All the Single Planning Documents pursue “diversified restructuring”, safeguarding the central role of SMEs. All the regional programmes are therefore designed to reinforce the fabric of small and medium-sized businesses within an industrial policy framework aimed at promoting and spreading innovation, qualifying products and services and facilitating access to credit. At the same time, the SPDs implement strategies for the enhancement of infrastructure and services, channelling investments in production to specific sites. All the initiatives entail constant monitoring of environmental protection and enhancement through clean-up projects, improvements in the
use of natural resources and the recovery of derelict sites that are converted to serve a wide range of functions, with the gradual expansion of the potential for alternative uses. Another strength of all the single planning documents is the enhancement of tourist areas that allowed for long-awaited diversification within the Piedmontese economy.

From 1989 to 2004, Piedmont was granted over 2 billion euro in contributions that, on the overall, allowed for the funding of over 28,000 projects by public and private entities, involving investments of about 5 billion euro. The funding served to promote economic conversion as indicated in the goals of the Structural Funds: the contribution in favour of the development of SMEs played a particularly important role, although the funds earmarked for the development of the construction sector, also had a significant impact.

Given the variety of the initiatives funded and the sectors supported, as well as the methods of funding and tools used for the implementation of the various projects, the initiatives have been grouped together under the three broad categories indicated below, in order to provide a better idea of the entire experience of structural funds in Piedmont from 1989 to date:

- Local development and territorial enhancement;
- Development and competitiveness of the economic system;
- Environmental protection.
Local development and territorial enhancement

The international promotion of Piedmont

Focusing on the enhancement of the regional image and promoting Piedmontese products abroad is one of the challenges launched first in the 1997-99 SPD and developed in depth in the current SPD that for the first time includes a complex series of measures in support of the internationalisation of the Piedmontese economic system. The initiative is promotional in nature, but while the measure “Piemonte nel mondo” (Piedmont in the World), managed and implemented directly by the Piedmont Region is aimed at representing the current resources and attractions of the region, especially on the occasion of events linked to the Winter Olympics, the measure “International Promotion for Economic Sectors and Geographical Areas” is targeted, on the other hand, at Chambers of Commerce, Italian Provinces, trade associations, Regional Tourism Agencies (ATRs) and the Overseas Trade Centre of the Chambers of Commerce and entails the organisation of promotional events abroad, as well as workshops, seminars, etc. With the same goal in mind, but with SMEs as the final beneficiaries, the measure “International Promotion of Businesses” supports the internationalisation plans of individual companies, reinforcing their presence on world markets. Already included in the 1997-99 and re-proposed, once again, the measure “Support for Foreign Investment in Piedmont” is managed by ITP, Italy’s leading agency in the field of attracting foreign investment. Thanks to ITP, a large number of companies operating in a broad range of sectors have set up shop in Piedmont: examples include Motorola that chose Turin as the site for its R&D centre, especially in light of the encouraging “climatic” conditions and the fact that the city houses the Polytechnic that provides the “talent” required for Motorola’s laboratories.

The enhancement of tourist areas is one of the strengths of all the regional programmes financed through the Structural Funds from 1989 to date. On the other hand, the Objective 2 areas in Piedmont include some of the Region’s most attractive tourist areas, such as the sites to be used for the coming Winter Olympics and the area around Lago Maggiore. The contribution of the Structural Funds converged on three points: the setting up of tourist infrastructure, the implementation of incentives to tourism sector operators and the development of promotional activities.
From 1989 to 1999, funding was provided for the implementation of about 300 initiatives involving so-called tourist infrastructure, that is to say, structures in support of tourism outside the hospitality sector. This involves construction, refurbishment and upgrading of sports infrastructure (bowling alleys, swimming pools, football fields both small and large, tennis courts, skating rinks, ski slopes, etc.), as well as recreation infrastructure, such as theme parks and picnic and pedestrian areas. This category includes: projects for the restructuring of holiday homes, alpine refuges and youth hostels; the setting up of multifunctional centres for cultural activities and conferences, including tourism-oriented infrastructure; and the installation of various types of equipment (under small urban restructuring and landscaping projects), designed to render the cultural and environmental heritage more attractive to tourists.

In the same period, about 14 million euro was disbursed by way of incentives for expanding and improving the hospitality infrastructure in the areas concerned. These incentives led to investments of 95 million euro by tourism-sector SMEs. 214 projects were implemented, involving the construction, expansion, upgrading and restructuring of hotels, residences, motels, farm holiday concerns and camping sites, but also bars, restaurants, cafés and fast-food joints. The two project lines mentioned above were accompanied by a third group of initiatives aimed at supporting the advertising of the capabilities and offerings of centres and businesses specialising in the promotion of tourism. Between 1989 and 1999, about 2000 promotional and advertising campaigns were launched, at the cost of approximately 8 million euro, entirely financed through public funds.
In light of the results already obtained and with a view to improving the quality and impact of the initiatives, in the mid-1990s, the Region started experimenting complex projects targeted at the development of local tourism, focusing on well-defined areas and including investments in infrastructure and advertising, especially from private sources: this marked the launching of the so-called Comprehensive Local Tourism Development Projects. The main feature of these projects is that they are densely concentrated and involve the intertwining of all the three types of intervention contemplated, with the result that they in fact constitute a “tourist system” which incorporates all their potential and attractiveness in terms of sports infrastructure, environmental resources and the historical and cultural heritage.

The Objective 2 areas in Piedmont were divided into four broad groups featuring “tourist basins”: the Valle di Susa, the Canavese area, the Lago Maggiore and the Cusio Mottarone area (1994-95 SPD). In the 1997-99 SPD, other broad areas were identified (such as the Chisone and Germanasca valleys, the Pinerolese area, the Bassa Val Susa and Val Cenischia, the Alta Valle Susa, the Orco and Soana valleys, the Lanzo valleys, the Val Pellice, Novi Ligure, the Lago d’Orta, etc.) and covered under 14 comprehensive projects, each focusing on a specific area. Between 1994 and 1999, 18 comprehensive projects were implemented involving: 209 infrastructural initiatives, 17 advertising and promotional campaigns and 90 investment projects by corporations, entailing investments totalling to about 110 million euro, 65% of which was covered by public funds. While there is no doubt that the re-construction or restructuring of various types of hospitality infrastructure in both the private and public sectors (these projects are often implemented by mixed public-private sector companies) has played a very positive role, the significant impact, over the years, of works for the recovery of the architectural and cultural heritage, aimed mainly at attracting tourism, cannot be denied. The former Rivalta Mill, the Chiosso Ranch in Lieni, the Roland Farm in Villafocchiardo and the Bernocchi Villa in Permeno have all been converted into multifunctional centres. The Laval Mill in the Natural Reserve Park of Val Troncea has been turned into a refuge. The La Maddalena Ranch in Chiomonte has been transformed to house the Chiomonte Architectural Museum as well as the the Clareia Co-operative Society that, thanks to the “Progetto Vigne” (Vineyard Project) funded by the European Union, has made a major contribution to the promotion and wide-spread appreciation of Alta Valle wines. This initiative is part of a broader project for the Mountain Community, aimed at enhancing...
the La Maddalena Archaeological Park, one of the largest Neolithic villages in Europe. The Vogogna Castle now houses a multimedia centre while the Villa Miaoni in Verbania has been turned into a city park that incorporates the new Arena used for concerts and shows in the summer. Museums play an equally important role in these projects. The Eco-territorial Museum of Iron has been set up in Valchiusella and the Cycling Museum in Novi Ligure, Coppi’s hometown; the restructuring of the castle at Cassano Spinola ought to lead to the setting up of a Park-Museum, while the refurbished Villa Caffarena in Serravella Scrivia now houses the Museum of the Roman city of Libarna that includes, within a very interesting archaeological site, one of the best-preserved Roman amphitheatres in northern Italy. The Casa Aschieri in Bussoleno – a splendid example of medieval architecture, used as a model for the reconstruction of a typical dwelling in the Borgo Medioevale (the Medieval Township) in Turin’s Valentino Park – has been turned into an eco-museum endowed with expanded exhibition space. With a view to developing and supplementing the comprehensive projects, the regional plan for 2000-2006 also includes initiatives in support of projects to be implemented by local bodies and Non-profit Associations interested in enhancing the local tourism potential, especially with regard to thermal baths. The 96 projects that qualified for contributions, often entail the continuation of previous initiatives initially promoted and implemented by local bodies. Other Objective 2 area projects include the setting up of the Museum of Time and Meridians at Bellino in the upper reaches of Val Varaita, and the enhancement of the hospitality infrastructure in the municipality of Agliano Terme, with a view to turning the local thermal baths into a full-fledged tourist attraction.

THE RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE VENARIA REALE PALACE

The setting up of a “circuit of Savoy residences” is an ambitious project on which the Piedmont Region and the local bodies involved, have been working for several years. The project for the restoration and enhancement of the Venaria Reale Palace was launched in 1997. It represents the most breathtaking initiative among all the architectural and park projects contemplated so far, as constitutes the “crown of delights” of the whole complex of royal residences and hunting lodges around Turin.

The restoration of this extraordinary complex represents one of the largest European projects for the restoration and enhancement of cultural heritage launched so far, in respect of which the Piedmont Region, the Italian Ministry of the Cultural Heritage as well as the European Community
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have assumed financial commitments in the amount of about 140 million euro, in light of an overall investment in excess of 314 million euro. Apart from the restoration of the Palace itself, the project includes the recovery of the Castle-Township of Mandria as well as the gardens and the Rubbianetta ranch: a huge worksite measuring 950 thousand square metres (150 thousand square metres of built-up area and the rest covered by gardens), that employs close to 1,000 workers per day, selected from amongst the most skilled craftsmen in Italy. First and foremost, the project provides for the recovery of immense environmental and architectural heritage, one of its kind, but stagnating in a condition of such degradation that it could be irremediably lost, and secondly, marks a bold step towards the launching of the “Circuit of Savoy Residences” for which the Venaria Reale Palace will serve as a “gateway”. Lastly, the project supports the restructuring of a vast area northwest of Turin, marked by industrial decline and severe unemployment.

Significant progress has been achieved in all three directions, starting from the Venaria Reale Palace. The enormous size of the site and the complex intervention required, resulted in the division of the works into lots that were subcontracted under tender procedures, at different times. The restoration of the church of St. Hubert, designed by Juvarra, has been completed, while works for the restoration of the Galleria Grande (the so-called Gallery of Diana) are in their final stages. The Gallery links the two Torrioni (or towers) designed by Michelangelo Garove towards the end of the 17th century, the first, on the southeast, adjacent to the Church of St. Hubert, and the other, to the west, flanking the Palace itself. With the award of the tender contract for the works on Lot B, operations commenced for the restoration of the second pavilion (south-eastern Tower) and the tunnels leading to the Juvarra stables, that date back to Benedetto Alfieri who took over responsibility for the design of the works in 1739 (the “Belvedere Manica”, the “Alfieri Tower”, the Piccola Galleria Alfieri [Small Alfieri Gallery], and the “Sottocentrale Alfieri” [sub-central Alfieri passage]).

The Palace of Diana within the complex, originally designed by Amedeo di Castellamonte, involves one of the most delicate phases of the entire project and required long-debated restoration decisions that were sometimes reneged upon, in light of functional requirements. The works in question entailed the restoration of works of art at the very highest levels of artistic sophistication, involving the cleaning and consolidation of decorative elements dating back partly to the 17th and partly to the 18th centuries. These restoration works will give rise to a very significant museum providing a reconstruction of life at the courts of the Savoy kings. The entire exhibition will focus on the life at the court, ranging from religious sentiment through to
ceremonial protocol, from military uniforms through to hunting parties and the refined taste reflected in items designed for day-to-day use, such as the extraordinary machines employed during festivities.

Another series of works that is close to completion and that will soon constitute the second itinerary for visitors, involves the historical gardens. The Palace of Diana is, in fact, nestled in the midst of park covering about 800 thousand square metres; the original features of the park have been almost obliterated by two centuries of neglect and misuse that rendered most of the half-cultivated land a fallow plain. The works, therefore, involved the re-establishment of the close links that, in earlier centuries, linked the architectural complex and its gardens, following both the original methods of using the available resources as well as the inherent geometry of the land.

The imposing works required to restore the historical Palace gardens to their original splendour, entail the recovery of the 17th century Parco Basso (Lower Park) and the 18th century Parco Alto (Upper Park) as well as the re-establishment of the initial links between the two areas.

The embankment designed by Amedeo di Castellamonte for the parterre in the Lower Park that commences at the foot of the Royal Palace, facing the Large Fishpond, has already been reconstructed, together with the Teatro Verde and the enhancement of the archaeological remains of the Fountain of Hercules and the “Allea” of Hercules with the new canal that leads to the Hall of Diana which has been completely excavated. The embankment designed by Amedeo di Castellamonte now houses various curios and “plaisirs” such as the Teatro di Verzura (the “Verzura Theatre”), the Giardino delle Grotte (the “Grotto Garden”), the Giardino delle Bulbose (the “Bulb Garden”) and the Giardino delle Pergole (the “Pergola Garden”). Although no one knows whether or not it was built during his lifetime, the large Fishpond certainly represents the fulfilment of Amedeo di Castellamonte’s “architectural dream”. Inaugurated in the spring of 2004, it will, in the future, include dancing fountains and serve as the stage for water shows. Water for the fishpond is supplied by a canal that links the Fountain of Hercules and the Hall of Diana. This water course will be navigated by a copy of the royal “peota”, a gala boat, belonging to the house of Savoy, the original of which, found elsewhere, will soon be exhibited to the public in an area specifically designed for such purpose in the Scuderia Grande (Large Stables). The fountain is named after a statue of Hercules, current conserved at Palazzo Madama, that will be returned to Venaria and placed in the statuary room of the Royal Palace. The statues representing the Four Seasons, by Simone Martinez, transferred by Napoleon to the gardens of the Royal Palace, will also be re-housed in the so-called “Alfieri” Belvedere.
The Parco Alto (Upper Park) that can be seen from the windows of the Hall and Gallery of Diana, reconstructs the historical layout that represented the prestige and hunting traditions of the court: the jardins à fleurs, the cabinets de verzure, the jardins à l’anglais and the parterres de broderies. This park houses the Flower Garden, a patchwork of flowerbeds designed to represent hunting horns as well as the English Garden. The Flower Garden includes the so-called “Meridiana acustica”, a sophisticated device equipped with an in-built sound system, that, triggered by the midday sun, modulates the sound of the hunting horn.

Side by side with these extraordinary works, progress has also been made with regard to other elements of the Venaria Reale complex. The recovery and restructuring of the Alfieri Stables will provide for prestigious offices for the new Conservation and Restoration Centre that will offer training courses at the high school as well as university levels. Works already completed include the setting up of state-of-the-art laboratories as well as the construction of the “argentea nave” (silver ship), first conceived by the architect Pietro de Rossi, to house the Main Hall of the Centre: two walls in steel enclose the space, generating an almost elliptic form with an open ceiling to allow for the spectacle of ancient vaults. The structures, designed for use as offices, halls, laboratories and libraries, on the other hand, are extremely light, efficient and discrete, so as to make place for the full use of the open spaces designed by Alfieri. The Citrus Greenhouse will be used to exhibit floral essences that can only be grown under controlled conditions (jardin d’hiver), with a portion being dedicated to a Cafeteria that, according to the designers, ought to blend perfectly into the surroundings.

The other important set of works involves the two small complexes of the Borgo Castello and the Rubbianetta de La Mandria ranch. The Borgo Castello that in times past housed the stables and carriages, will now incorporate a “hotel de tradition” as well as the Nature and Landscape Centre (Centro Natura e Paesaggio) set up to organise a series of exhibitions focusing on the concept of the landscape and the role than mankind plays in shaping the landscape. The main building and the Neo-Gothic portions of the Borgo, where recovery works stand at an advanced stage, will house reception services and shopping areas. The Rubbianetta ranch, on the other hand, will be converted to house the “Centro del Cavallo” (Horse Centre) equipped with a covered riding area.

In the near future, after the completion of the works, the Venaria Reale Palace complex will become a European cultural reference point that will also serve as benchmark at the international level. The large exhibition areas within the complex of the former stables, will be transformed into a UNESCO scientific park for the enhancement and protection of monuments.
acknowledged as part of the world heritage. The site could be used by UNESCO for archiving purposes and as a training centre for staff in charge of looking after world heritage sites, especially through a specific graduate degree course offered by the Conservation and Restoration Centre which was set up in March 2005 as a foundation with the joint participation of the Italian Ministry of the Cultural Heritage and Related Activities, the Piedmont Region, the University of Turin, the “Fondazione per l’Arte della Compagnia di San Paolo” and the “Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Torino” and was named the “Fondazione Centro per la Conservazione ed il Restauro dei Beni Culturali La Venaria Reale” – Venaria Reale (Turin). The Centre houses laboratories that specialise in the restoration, analysis, research and diagnostics involving the preservation of the cultural heritage. The Centre will soon include a university-level school offering a graduate degree in conservation and restoration.

The Landscape Centre set up within the Borgo Castello, on the other hand, resulted in expressions of interest by National Geographic, based in Washington. The imposing worksite at the Palace grounds have already started to exert positive effects on the surrounding area, in keeping with the goals of the regional project. The village of Venaria has started to blend with the Palace, as in times past: the historical town centre, that is already barred to vehicular traffic and is subjected to upgrading works, has once again become the primary gateway to the palatial Savoy complex, while plans are still underway for organising comprehensive visits inclusive of both the Royal Palace and the Gardens.

**INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE PRODUCTION SYSTEM**

The creation and development of infrastructure aimed at encouraging the setting up of small and medium-sized enterprises (in particular Equipped Areas, Integrated Development Poles, Intermodal Centres and Shared Service Centres), is deeply rooted in the industrial policy of the Piedmont Region. These laws were primarily aimed at promoting the decongestion of metropolitan areas and a more rational distribution of industrial sites, with a view to attracting new companies and to nurturing those already in operation, as well as revitalising industrially backward areas and converting industrial systems in crisis.
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For these same reasons, ever since the early 1990s the establishment and development of production sites have always been part of the regional plans co-funded through the Structural Funds. Contributions from Europe have played a major role towards significantly extending regional intervention in this field, as well as towards setting up grass-roots infrastructure throughout the Region, both directly and indirectly through the driving force generated by the SPDs in areas that do not fall within the scope of Objective 2. In fact, most of the publicly held companies in which the Region holds a minority stake and which were set up to manage the real estate transactions co-financed by Structural Funds, were not extinguished upon the expiry of the projects under which they were set up, but still serve as vital reference points for the further development of the areas in which they operate. All the companies involved in intervention, and set up by the Region through Finpiemonte since the 1980s to date, are still members of the “Association for the Coordination of Economic and Production Sites in Piedmont” (Associazione per il Coordinamento degli Insediamenti Economici e Produttivi in Piemonte – ACIEP), tasked with improving local action plans and promoting suitable policies in favour of local businesses. ACIEP supports its Members through research and development of intervention opportunities, the drawing up of a common and comprehensive marketing policy at the local level with a view to affording local companies access to broader domestic and international markets, the identification and use of the private and public funds required as well as the diffusion of know-how regarding
the technical-town planning, administrative, regulatory and taxation provisions. The know-how acquired and results attained by the association members, lend added credence to ACIEP and therefore to the entire Piedmont system, with the result that the Association could serve as reference point for the Public Administrations of the countries that are now members of the so-called new Europe, as well as Mediterranean neighbours, and as an expert partner in dealing with the technical and managerial problems connected with setting up industrial areas and poles and bringing together public and private resources in a joint effort towards such end.

Technologically and Environmentally Equipped Areas (TEEAs)

The setting up of new equipped areas and the extension or refurbishment of those already in place, has been incorporated into regional intervention since the very first programme for the management of Structural Funds. As other sectors of the regional economy, once again in this field, the European Funds proved to be a dynamo of the opportunities opened under Regional Law no. 9/80, since this source of financing boosted the expense budgets of local bodies and
allowed for the development of a culture in which planning is key. In fact, Structural Funds played a decisive role in the launching of intervention covered under one third of the applications for funding that were approved in the period from 1994 to 1999. This is due to the fact that Regional Law no. 9/80 provides for funding by way of a loan covering up to 80% (and in some cases 100%) of the implementation costs but the loan is, in any event, repayable, while funding granted under SPDs covers, in the mean, about 60% (and up to 70%) of the said costs but no repayment is expected.

From 1989 to 2004, 133 projects for the setting up, extension and upgrading of equipped areas falling under Objective 2, were approved, involving investments of about 190 million euro, 60% of which was funded under SPDs (see Table 1, attached). About 70 new technologically equipped areas were set up for industry and the crafts covering, on the overall, a surface area of 530 hectares. A further 30 projects were implemented for the completion, expansion or restructuring of already existing equipped areas. Conventional equipped areas measure 90 thousand square metres, on the average, subdivided into a variable number of plots. These structures generally house small and medium-sized enterprises, with up to 30 employees each. The number of services these enterprises offer to other businesses has gradually grown, while greater attention has been paid, in recent years, to improving access to the equipped areas and finding solutions to environmental problems.

During the current planning period, focus will be placed on launching the so-called Environmentally Equipped Areas (EEAs) endowed with specific technical plant for environmental data collection, waste management, the collection and purification of waste waters and the generation and distribution of energy. All these equipped areas also feature a coordinated system of links to networks and infrastructure set up specifically to take comprehensive action to prevent atmospheric, water and soil pollution.

**Intermodal Centres**

At present, Piedmont is served by two large inter-port centres: one located at the outskirts of Novara, and the other in the Province of Turin. Established by the Piedmont Region in concert with the Municipalities of Turin, Rivalta, Orbassano, Grugliasco and Rivoli, the Turin Inter-port is one of the largest projects for the streamlining of the transport system, partially co-funded through the Structural Funds. The project, launched during the 1997-99 planning period with the primary
town planning works in the Municipality of Rivalta, involves, in the current planning period, the completion of the infrastructural works falling within the Municipality of Orbassano. The railway terminus covers a total of 2,800 hectares, 75 thousand square metres of thoroughfares, about 7 km of equipped track and nearly 25 thousand square metres of interlinked warehouses. Production infrastructure currently covers 650 hectares that house 200 companies that, on the overall, have created about 3,000 jobs. Works are currently underway for the laying of a further 4.4 km of track as well as for the construction of warehouses, office buildings, thoroughfares, service areas, roads and green areas, covering an additional 950 hectares, on the whole.

**Comprehensive Development Poles**

Belonging to the latest generation of industrial equipped areas, Comprehensive Development Poles are large areas (measuring between 300 thousand and 1 million square metres) endowed with logistical, environmental, organisational and electronic services. Based on a proposal submitted by the Industrial Union of Turin and trades unions, Comprehensive Development Areas are located in the first and second suburban belts around Turin. The first to be set up was the Avigliana Pole, in the mid-1990s. All the others were established in subsequent years (1997-99) at Chivasso, Moncalieri, Pinerolo, Settimo Torinese, and Turin Airport that more precisely involves the area of San Maurizio Canavese. The most recent (2000-2006) is the area of Trofarello, designed as an extension of the Moncalieri Pole. One of the features that most distinguishes Comprehensive Development Poles from Industrialised Equipped Areas is the presence of service centres, that is to say, structures aimed at meeting the management and operating needs of the companies housed at the poles. Comprehensive Development Poles are also equipped with advanced devices for checking environmental pollution and ensuring workplace safety. As a result of the their functional features, Comprehensive Development Poles attract companies operating in a wide variety of production sectors, from the most conventional through to high-technology and research, thanks especially to the advanced technological services the poles offer.

**THE COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT POLES OF AVIGLIANA** – Between 1994 and 2000, the Municipality of Avigliana set up two Comprehensive Development Poles. The first, located to the west of Moncenisio State Road 25 and the Turin-Modane railway line, covers 700 thousand
square metres in the municipalities of Avigliana and Sant'Ambrogio. Set up at the initiative of the Municipality of Avigliana in concert with a large number of private operators from 136 companies, the Pole allowed for the relocation of 12 corporations already operating in the area, boosting both modernisation and employment at the local level. The second Comprehensive Development Area that extends from the Moncenisio State Road 25, its connection to the Turin-Bardonecchia motorway and the Doria Riparia river, covering 158 thousand square metres, houses 22 corporations, including both new companies and businesses that already operated in the area, resulting in a significant expansion of production capabilities and employment (about 1500 employees). The pole’s Service Centre is currently under construction.

**THE COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT POLE OF CHIVASSO** – Located at 19 km from Turin, in a very industrial area adjacent to a stretch of the Turin-Milan motorway, just after the Chivasso Centro exit, this pole includes an Industrial Pole, made up of two production areas, that already offers companies constructible space covering 450 thousand square metres, as well as the Sant’Anna Service Centre, currently under construction, which will house support and consultancy services for the development of businesses, banking, financial and insurance services; a post office; restaurants, bars and self-service outlets; information-technology and telecommunications services; and a hospitality structure of the “Budgethotel” type with 100 rooms. This Comprehensive Development Pole currently houses 32 companies, allowing for the creation of just over 1,000 jobs.

**THE COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT POLE OF PINEROLO** – Located at 35 km from Turin at the end of the Turin-Pinerolo motorway and the junction of the state roads linking Pinerolo with the regional capital, and designed as a technological centre, this Pole features specific technical equipment for containing energy consumption and protecting the environment through checking emissions into the atmosphere and waste water treatment by a consortium. It is divided into five large lots, four of which are earmarked for production infrastructure for industry and the crafts (covering 190 thousand square metres), with the last dedicated to the tertiary sector and business services (covering 30 thousand square metres). The multipurpose Service Centre, currently under construction, will be capable of housing branches and representative offices of outside companies, exhibition areas, reception halls, services for individuals, services for production
activities, public services and branch offices of public bodies, as well as areas equipped for sports activities. The Pole currently houses 31 companies with a total of about 370 employees.

**The Comprehensive Development Pole of Settimo Torinese** – Located at the northwestern end of Settimo, at 12 km from Turin, this Pole is easily accessed from the Turin ring road and the motorway network. One of its main features is the presence of an on-site railway station for freight as well as a station of the inner-city network for passengers. The Pole covers 300 thousand square metres dedicated to production areas, and currently houses 10 companies with a total of about 370 employees. It will soon also be equipped with a BIC – Business Innovation Centre.

**The Comprehensive Development Pole at Turin Airport** – Sited on land falling within the municipalities of Caselle and San Maurizio Canavese, this pole, thanks to its location close to Turin’s Caselle airport, has developed very specific functional features. Its 105 thousand square metres of production infrastructure are especially designed for companies operating in the hi-tech, aeronautics, logistics and transport sectors. The production area includes a Cargo Village located close to the runway and linked to air freight services and an area for production activities divided into plots of various sizes, served by parking areas. A further area covering 2,600 square metres is dedicated to shared centres and services, including a modern business park that incorporates offices, a restaurant area, banking services and an information-technology centre. The Pole currently houses 7 companies with a total of about 300 employees. Current infrastructure as well as growth potential render this Pole an important element in support of the project for the internationalisation of Turin’s Caselle airport.

**The Comprehensive Development Pole of Moncalieri-Trofarello** – Located close to the centre of Turin and served by roads providing direct access to the Turin ring road, this Pole lies on land falling within the municipalities of Moncalieri and Trofarello. Since the space initially earmarked for the project in the Vadò area south of Moncalieri (covering 340 thousand square metres) proved insufficient in light of investments in production, a further area covering 220 thousand square metres is currently being prepared for inclusion in the pole, in the municipality of Trofarello. Designed as an area for production activities, technical assistance and R&D, the Pole is a state-of-the-art complex in terms infrastructure, especially in the information-technology
sector, and the quality of the architectural and environmental project designed by Giugiaro Design, one of the most famous firms housed at the Pole. Apart from the industrial area in the strict sense, the pole includes two Service Centres. Another building of about four thousand square metres is currently under construction and will house an office centre for companies operating with the corporations housed within the industrial area. The Pole currently houses 70 employees with a total number of about 1,800 employees.

Briefly put, the overall numbers are impressive: over 2.6 million square metres of surface area, 184 companies housed, 5,300 employees, total investments of about 76 million euro including a public contribution of 52 million euro. Designed as areas of excellence incorporating hi-tech, specialist production infrastructure as well as a comprehensive and complete network of services targeted at the companies hosted, the Comprehensive Development Poles are fruit of an ambitious choice, not only because of the significant financial and other project-specific resources they require, but also because they were set up at time with the local economy of the province of Turin was undergoing deep changes. The experience on the whole cannot but be judged as positive. Ten years on, all the regional Comprehensive Development Areas have been almost fully completed and have proven to be capable of foreseeing and anticipating space requirements and the types of production infrastructure needed. Moreover, they have been completed in time to meet growing demand in recent years, from the most modern and innovative companies. To date, the six Poles in place feature employment levels ranging from 50% to 100% of the available surface area.

Service Centres

These are structures located within the areas dedicated to production infrastructure and designed to meet the needs of modern businesses that, side by side with equipped space, must be provided with a broad range of services: banks and post offices, company canteens, bars, self-service outlets, restaurants, hot-food outlets and hotels, conference halls and meeting rooms, centres for technical and information-technology services for the companies housed in the area, office centres, general services (security, cleaning, etc.) and other specific infrastructure. The first projects co-funded through the Structural Funds date back to the mid-1990s. Side by side with the already cited Service Centres within the Comprehensive Development Poles at Chivasso (the
Sant'Anna Service Centre), Moncalieri (the Vadò Service Centre) and Turin Airport other important projects include: the business service centres within the equipped areas of Rivoli and Collegno, the areas dedicated to shared services within the SITO Turin Inter-Port and the Multipurpose Service Centre at Rivoli. In the current planning period, works are underway on a multipurpose service centre at Caresanablot (VC), a service centre for light woodworks at Isasca in Val Varaita; a service centre at Piossasco; the Technological Innovation and Business Service Centre at Dronero (see the section on Science and Technology Parks).

**LOCAL RESTRUCTURING**

The recovery of derelict or abandoned sites: from an environmental problem to development opportunities.

The presence of derelict or abandoned sites have a significant impact on the environment and the landscape of areas undergoing industrial decline such as Piedmont, a region that has seen repeated phases of heavy de-industrialisation and the reorganisation of production activities. At the end of the 1980s, the heavily industrialised Piedmontese areas featured a high density of abandoned industrial areas, that EU guidelines for environmental and local development have helped transform into new development opportunities. Some of the abandoned sites have, over time, been turned into open-air landfills, derelict structures and buildings could be injected with new life, housing new functions and uses aimed at serving and meeting the needs of the surrounding communities. This involves, first and foremost, large-scale cultural intervention, with high symbolic value: to recover industrial buildings means, first of all, re-igniting the memory of the place,
as well as renewing and enhancing the landscape marked by the processes that forged the identity of the local people. In the more densely populated areas, recovery projects were transformed into full-fledged urban restructuring operations. This is particularly true in Turin, a city whose development was strongly featured a deep-rooted interconnection between factories and the urban context. The large-scale real estate recovery programmes launched by the Region with contributions from Structural Funds, played a major role in endowing the Piedmontese capital with a new image that has slowly emerged since the mid-1990s at a pace that matches the city's progress towards developing an economy based on services. The large sites that once housed the FIAT factory in the Lingotto district, the Fergat plant in the San Paolo district, the Officine Savigliano workshops and the iron metallurgy facilities of the Finsider Group on Spina 3, as well as the Alenia and Concerie Italiane Riunite facilities have all been recovered and completely transformed. The most interesting architectural structures, those that, more than other, conserve the original design of a factory, have been restructured and, where necessary extended with the addition of new buildings designed to allow the initial structures to be put to new uses. These new uses are very varied and harmoniously integrated into the new face that the local administrations are intent on giving to entire districts of the Piedmontese capital. In fact, the intervention of the Structural Funds is not isolated but perfected integrated into a wider urban restructuring plan (Piano di riqualificazione urbana – PRIU) launched under urban recovery projects (Progetti di ricupero urbano – PRU) of the suburbs and the so-called Spine (1, 2, 3 and 4) that also entail the setting up of the Environment Park and the Virtual Reality and Multimedia Park – the latter on the former FERT site (see the section on Science and Technology Parks) – as well as the projects known as “The Gate” and “Mirafiori Nord” both of which are also financed under the URBAN I and II Community Initiative Programmes. In particular, the recovery of the former Military Arsenal in the centrally located Borgo Dora, completed during the 1997-99 planning period, represents the natural development of the URBAN project known as “The Gate” that led to the restructuring and socio-economic relaunching of the Porta Palazzo area. Some of these projects, such as Spina 3 or the recovery of Lingotto, are part of intervention launched in preparation for the Winter Olympics and are described in greater detail in the section focusing of that event.

**THE FORMER MILITARY ARSENAL – Borgo Dora** was the site of Turin's first industrial pole. The canals derived from the Dora river provided energy for the 16th century mills and early 18th century chemical factories. The area housed the very first industrial sites of the canning factory
established by Francesco Cirio; here, again, in the 15th century, the area between Piazza Borgo Dora and Via San Pietro in Vincoli, was a bustling industrial district, full of workshops that forged swords and daggers and specialised in the grinding of tools. Towards the end of the 16th century, one of these structures was transformed into a factory for the production of gunpowder that remained in operation for three centuries until, after it was destroyed by a serious explosion, the business was shifted to other premises. The site of this factory was then used for most of the processes carried out by the Military Arsenal of Turin, an avant-garde production structure in the Italian and European industrial context up to the end of World War II. This is the history of the complex, part of which is now municipal property. In the second half of the 1990s, the Municipality of Turin launched an EFRD co-funded restructuring project on this portion, that gravitates around the so-called Maglio Courtyard. Recovery operations allowed for the setting up of about 40 craftsmen’s workshops and retail outlets between the Piazza del Maglio and the adjacent “Piazzetta dei Ciliegi”. The recovery of the former Arsenal completes the Porta Palazzo Gate project promoted by the City of Turin and co-financed by the European Commission in 1997 under the URBAN community initiative programme. In this context, the recovery of the former Arsenal has contributed towards revitalising and re-launching the historical production and commercial functions of the area, the restructuring of which has also had a positive impact on the adjacent Balôn area that houses the historical flea market that in 1988 was twinned with the Porte de Vanves flea market in Paris.

THE FORMER CIR FACILITY – The headquarters of Concerie Italiane Riunite since 1905, a part of which was acquired by the Municipality of Turin in the 1980s. Works for putting the site to new uses, launched in 1997 and completed in 2000, involved the building originally designed to be used as a drying shed, constructed between 1916 and 1924. Thanks to the high degree of modular and functional flexibility as well as technological infrastructure and multimedia plant, the site was deemed the ideal location for the European Research and Development Centre of the Motorola company, a world leader in the cell phone sector. First launched as a post-graduate training and applied research project by the Turin Polytechnic and Motorola itself, in 1997, the Motorola Technology Centre was completed in 2000 and focuses on the development of new technologies for wireless communications and related software. The Centre employs 160 engineers who work on national and international projects such as the programme for the development of TETRA technology and the design of UMTS handsets. The restructured building
also houses a catalyst for companies specialising in the ICT and wireless technology sectors, jointly managed by the Polytechnic and the Turin Wireless Foundation as a national pilot programme aimed at boosting the development of ICT in the Turin area.

THE FORMER VITALI IRON METALLURGY WORKS – Once the site of the Finsider Group’s iron metallurgy works, the area houses buildings and shed abandoned since 1989. The project covers a part of the vast area of the so-called Spina 3 that has already been subjected to large-scale urban restructuring works as part of intervention for the Winter Olympics, dealt with in depth elsewhere in this document.

THE FORMER OFFICINE SAVIGLIANO WORKSHOPS – The Società Nazionale Officine di Savigliano (SNOS) corporation, founded in 1879, shifted to Turin in 1881 and was intensely involved in metalwork as well as the manufacturing of fixed infrastructure and rolling stock for railways. The corporation was known as SNOS until 1970 when it was acquired by FIAT and renamed FIAT Ferroviaria. Under an agreement with the City of Turin, and thanks to co-funding by the Structural Funds, SNOS is now involved in the recovery of the site of its former iron metallurgy workshops.
The project, currently underway, entails the construction of a Business Centre, a new pole of technological and innovative services targeted at businesses. The Centre will include 27 thousand square metres of office space for companies, spread over six buildings, as well as 12 thousand square metres of retail floor space, subdivided into two sections interlinked by a corridor derived from a historical workshop building, the last floor of which will also offer 3 thousand square metres of loft space. The area will also include 33 thousand square metres of parking space and a large park along which the Dora will flow once again, after being relegated underground for more than a century. The recovery of the Officine Savigliano workshops is also part of the wider project for the restructuring of Spina 3 and represents the natural continuation of the neighbouring Envipark and the Virtual Reality and Multimedia Park.

THE FORMER FERGAT PLANT – The former Fergat factory located in the San Paolo district, was set up as metalwork facility specialising in the pressing of sheet metal for automobile manufacturers. Abandoned at the end of the 1970s and acquired by the municipality of Turin at the end of the following decade, in the 1990s, it was revitalised thanks to two projects financed by the Structural Funds and managed by Sinatec S.p.A. Between 1994 and 1996, under the so-called Fergat I project, an area covering 13 thousand square metres was cleaned up and recovered, including 6 thousand square metres earmarked to house craftsmen’s workshops and business services targeted at SMEs. These works also involved the cultural enhancement of the site with the inclusion of artistic installations on the façades, completed in collaboration with the Albertine Academy for the Fine Arts (*Accademia Albertina delle Belle Arti*). The concrete and conceptual continuation of this project entailed the setting up of the Modern Art Centre of the Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation, completed between 1997 and 1999 under the so-called Fergat II project. In this case, under the architect Claudio Silvestrin, the building was totally constructed anew so as to include all the features required for avant-garde exhibition space for contemporary art. The structure, with a surface area of 3,500 square metres, takes the form of a longitudinal parallelepiped. The lower floor is open to the public and used for exhibitions in the strict sense, while the upper floor houses a restaurant and the Foundation’s offices. While new, the building is aesthetically designed to appear like an “industrial shed”, an architectural genre that – as in many other cases of restructuring in Piedmont – is well-suited to exhibition purposes.
THE FORMER ALENIA FACILITY – Other areas have been restructured for use by public institutions. A major project in this category is the recovery of Lingotto, described in greater detail in the section on intervention in preparation for the Winter Olympics to be held in Turin in 2006. On the other hand, works have also been carried out to safeguard and consolidate large industrial sites. Such is the case of the recovery of the former Alenia facility, thanks to which Piedmontese industry will be able to maintain an active role and meaningful presence within the global aeronautics and space sector. In the second half of the 1990s, the Icarus Consortium that includes the Piedmont Region, the Province and City of Turin, the Chamber of Commerce of Turin and Finmeccanica, launched an ambitious project for setting up a Multipurpose Space Centre to support and second activities undertaken in favour of the International Space Station. Thus, between 1997 and 1999, works were carried out on the site of the former Alenia facility in Corso Marche, to recover the building that now houses the new Centre managed by ALTEC (Advanced Logistics Technology Engineering Centre), a corporation set up by Alenia Spazio, the Italian Space Agency (ASI) and Icarus, with a view to transforming the Turin-based structure into the European Centre for support to International Space Station missions. The Centre was tasked with training European astronauts, which is why it is fully equipped with the tools required to simulate space missions, although the infrastructure in place allows it to provide services even in other sectors of space research. For instance, it will be able to house the database and input systems for scientific missions. It will also be in a position to supply specialist human resources as well as high quality systems and instruments. Its goals include making space familiar to even the very young through courses and simulations that give them a better understanding of space. But the recovery projects in Turin, while significant from the financial standpoint, are but a small part of the intervention completed in Piedmontese Objective 2 areas since the early 1990s (see Table 2, attached). The areas that have long benefited from the Structural Funds, that is to say, the province of Turin, parts of the province of Alessandra and the Verbano-Cusio-Ossola area, feature what are now considered “historical” intervention, such as the recovery of the Bona wool mill in Carignano, the Fantini textile mill in Chieri, the Renmert facility in Ciriè, the Montefibre factory in Ivrea, the OVR plant in Venaria Reale, the Possaccio paper mill in Verbano and the Ceretti site in Villadossola. In more recent years, works have been completed or are still underway for the recovery of the Cavorite plant in Avigliana, the Le Serre complex in Grugliasco, the Limone foundry in Moncalieri, the Ilva facility in Novi Ligure, Ferrero steel mill in Settimo Torinese, the Pietra steelworks in Omegna as well as the Delle Piane cotton mill and the Orsi
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facility in Tortona. The uses to which the sites in this new generation of works, have been put, has also been extended to include, theatres, areas for socio-cultural interaction, museums, cultural and artistic centres, infrastructure for trade fairs and exhibition areas, as well as the more conventional reuse of sites as modernised production facilities. In line with the European experience in the field of the restructuring and reuse of abandoned sites, projects covered under the current planning period (2000-2006) feature a wide variety in not only the types of site to be recovered but also the uses to which they are to be put. The Region itself has prepared several lines of intervention, having budgeted for the funding of initiatives for sites to be transformed into tourist attractions, cultural centres and museums or to house economic and production activities or even areas equipped to serve as exhibition space or as centres for trade fairs and conferences. As a result, the sites to be recovered include not only derelict industrial facilities, but also historical buildings such as the “Prince’s House” in San Sebastiano Curone, the “Vanni Residence” in Viganella, the Viscount’s Palace in Vogogna, the Conti Govone Castle in Isola d’Asti, the Castle of the Marquis of Saluzzo-La Castiglia in the town of the same name and the Masino Castle in Caravino. Plans are underway for the restructuring and conversion even of derelict public buildings, such as schools and crèches, deconsecrated churches and abandoned monasteries as well as former cinema halls and military barracks. Full-fledged industrial archaeological works have been completed in Avigliana for the recovery of the site of the Noble Dynamite Factory as well as the industrial plant in Cuorgnè, the Crumiere facility in Villarpellice and the Cruto workshop in Alpignano. Particularly in these municipalities, works for the recovery of industrial structures were aimed at conversion for housing not only service-sector enterprises, but also eco-museums that bear witness to the history of the derelict industrial sites that the key role they played in the socio-economic development of local communities. Some of the sites have a curious history; for instance, the “Le Serre” complex in Grugliasco housed the studios of the Italian-American film production company known as Photodrama Producing Company, in the early 1900s, at a time when Turin was the unrivalled capital of Italian cinema. Other restructured buildings are full-fledged architectural jewels, such as the former Rosso spinning mill in Caraglio, built in the second half of the 17th century. Splendid examples of art nouveau abound in the former OVR facility in Venaria, now transformed into municipal multipurpose centre and the former Rivoli slaughterhouse that has been converted into the “Maison Musique” designed by the architect Mollini. From 1989 to date, funding was provided for 168 projects for the restructuring of sites, involving an overall investment of about 400 million euro, 65% of which was state-funded.
As from the second planning period of 1992-93, private corporations were also invited to carry out restructuring and recovery works on derelict or abandoned sites with a view to converting the same to house modern production and service-sector infrastructure. Although the initiative was met with only limited success, given the high cost of site restructuring works and the fact that the related expenses sustained by private parties are covered to a very limited degree by state subsidies (up to 15% of eligible expenses, in the case of works carried out by small companies, and 7.5% for those undertaken by medium-sized enterprises), several corporations, especially medium-sized businesses, seized the opportunity to expand and restructure their premises at sites in need of refurbishment. Towards this end and in light of past experience in the field, during the current planning period, the Region intends to finance not only recovery works in the strict sense of the term, but also works targeted at cleaning up polluted industrial sites, increasing the threshold of state subsidies covering eligible expenditure, to up to 100%, albeit subject to certain terms and conditions. From 1992 to 2004, about five million euro in state subsidies was provided for a total number of 23 projects promoted by private parties, involving overall investments of about 32 million euro. The companies involved operate in a wide variety of sectors, ranging from mechanics to publishing, textiles to plastics, metal products to transport and services.

Local restructuring projects

The massive local restructuring effort launched through the recovery of derelict or abandoned sites and buildings, was accompanied, as from the 1997-99 planning period, by a series of measures for the socio-economic revitalisation of degraded city districts and town centres that had already been subjected to urban restructuring works. 53 such projects were completed between 1997 and 1999: 20 involving wholesale and retail sales outlets, 15 in the manufacturing industry, covering various types of products, a further 15 in the service sector, including for the setting up of recreational and cultural infrastructure, and 5 in the hospitality and restaurant sector. Overall investments amounted to 8.5 million euro, 50% of which was covered by state subsidies. The same Single Planning Document contemplated an extension of the rotating fund, that provided repayable loans for the purchase of innovative machinery and equipment and for the construction of buildings designed to house production infrastructure, craftsmen’s workshops, sales outlets and tertiary sector activities, including services for individuals, to cover funding for
projects prepared by local bodies and associations serving specific social purposes and operating in the same sectors that qualify for the loans granted through the rotating fund. In the preceding planning period, 21 projects submitted by voluntary-work, cultural and recreational associations, parishes and religious congregations and orders, as well as mountain communities and municipalities, were brought to completion. A further 47 projects have been financed in the current planning period. These projects include the setting up of multipurpose centres for social gatherings and interaction as well as cultural, recreational and leisure infrastructure targeted not only at youth but also senior citizens, the socially disadvantaged and the unemployed; homes for the aged and the disabled, including through the upgrading of existing structures; centres providing services targeted at toddlers and families. On the overall about 52 million euro has been invested from 1997 to date, 75% of which was funded by the public coffer.

Comprehensive Projects for Local Socio-Economic Development (Progetti integrati di sviluppo socio-economico d’Area – PIA)

These projects include a series of correlated measures aimed at developing and enhancing the peculiarities of entire local areas. They are known as “comprehensive” because they involve various types of projects aimed at improving local development through interaction between the public and private sectors. Three comprehensive projects were implemented between 1997 and 1999: the first focusing on the Toce Axis for the province of Verbania, the second involving the Canavese area for the province of Turin and the third focusing on Valle Scrivia for the province of Alessandria. 25 measures of intervention were implemented in these three economic basis, involving investments of 22.8 million euro, about 60% of which was covered by state funding. The following paragraphs provide a brief illustration of the main players and the measures completed, most of which involve infrastructure.

THE COMPREHENSIVE PROJECT FOR THE LOCAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOCE AXIS – Municipalities involved: Omegna, Baveno, Gravellona Toce, Mergozzo, Verbania, Vogogna, Pieve Vergonte, Casale Corte Cerro. Works completed: a building housing a professional training school, the Bassa Ossola Service Centre, an exhibition-museum area (currently at the design phase), an area equipped with state-of-the-art production infrastructure, a multipurpose structure as well as cycling circuits and lanes.
THE COMPREHENSIVE PROJECT FOR LOCAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE CANAVESE AREA – Municipalities involved: Chivasso, Ivrea, Traversella, Castellamonte, Caluso, Castagneto Po and Lauriano. Works completed: the conversion of the former military barracks into a Business Service Centre, the transformation of the former Olivetti plant into a university campus, and the setting up of the Agenzia della Pietra for the promotion of high-quality mining and quarry products, the Agency for the Development and Enhancement of Castellamonte Ceramics, the Museum of Modern Architecture, the Service Centre for Quality and the Development of SMEs, hospitality infrastructure to attract tourists to natural thermal baths and a multipurpose structure housing a farm holiday complex, as well as the implementation of a project for the diffusion of technological innovation through the Consortium for the Technological District of the Canavese Area.

THE COMPREHENSIVE PROJECT FOR LOCAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN VALLE SCRIVIA – Municipalities involved: Castelnuovo Scrivia, Villalvernia, Carezzano, Paderna, Spineto, Scrivia, Sant’Agata Fossili, Gavazzana, Basaluzzo, Tortona and Serravalle Scrivia. Works completed: the extension of an area housing production infrastructure, the setting up of an equipped area for craftsmen’s workshops, the extension of hospitality infrastructure, the recovery of buildings that could become tourist attractions, the construction of a multipurpose structure for use by SMEs, town planning and sewage works in industrial areas, intervention for the transfer of technology through interaction with the Local Development Pole of Tortona.

Once again in the 2000-2006 planning period, the Piedmont Region focused on the enhancement of these types of projects with a view to promoting intervention targeted at specific local needs in keeping with district-level policies, and approved after consultation with local players. The response of local players to consultation by the Region for the drawing up of local development projects, was very encouraging indeed. On the overall, the provincial authorities in charge of the areas included under Objective 2 or earmarked for Phasing Out, put forward proposals for a total of 18 Comprehensive Projects for Local Socio-economic Development (sometimes several for a single province), covering 487 sites, for the recovery of derelict buildings and the setting up of centres providing professional training, multipurpose halls, infrastructure for trade fairs and exhibitions and shared business service centres, as well as the enhancement of historical, natural
and cultural resources and primary and secondary town planning works. The Region has budgeted about 120 million euro by way of state subsidies for these projects that entail an overall investment of 182 million euro\textsuperscript{5}.

\textsuperscript{5} A very brief overview of the comprehensive projects for local socio-economic development (PIAs) underway is provided below:

**ALESSANDRIA**
- PIA for the revitalisation of the Lower Monferrato area (14 projects)
- PIA for the enhancement of the Upper Monferrato area (39 projects)
- PIA involving the promotion of culture in a context harmoniously integrated into the local economic fabric of the Apennine Valleys (25 projects)
- PIA for Valle Scrivia and the Alessandria plain (26 projects)

**ASTI**
- PIA “Colline in luce” (“Highlighted Hills”) (41 projects)

**BIELLA**
- PIA in Valsessera (6 projects)
- PIA known as “Pays-Sage” to be implemented in the Canavese and Biella area (10 projects)

**CUNEO**
- PIA in the valleys of the Occitan and Cuneo regions: The Occitan valleys, past, present and future: from a common history to a shared path towards growth (41 projects)
- PIA for the re-discovery of the Alpi-Marittime region: traces of history and natural landscapes covered under a comprehensive proposal aimed at attracting tourists to the Alpi-Marittime area (32 projects)
- PIA within the mountain community of Valli Gesso Vermenagna Pesio (4 projects)
- PIA known as “colline d’autore” (“inspirational hills”): a proposal aimed at integrating local tourism resources with the artistic, cultural, natural and gastronomic offerings of the homeland of Cesare Pavese and Beppe Fenoglio (22 projects)

**TURIN**
- PIA known as “Pays-Sage” to be implemented in the Canavese and Biella area (48 projects)
- PIA in the southern Turin area (19 projects)
- PIA in the area between the two rivers (16 projects)
- PIA in the western Turin area and Sangone: accompanying local development (26 projects)
- PIA in the Susa and Pinerolo valleys known as “Turin 2006” (32 projects)

**VERBANIA**
- PIA in the province of Verbano-Cusio-Ossola (51 projects)

**VERCELLI**
- PIA in the province of Vercelli (30 projects)
The Green Crown

The large-scale works for the urban restructuring of City of Turin include the “Green Crown System” project aimed at reconstructing the ecological network that characterises the Turin metropolitan area in terms of the environment and local landscape. The City of Turin is, in fact, surrounded by a natural belt made up of the river system of the Turin plain, the hill system of Turin Highlands, the Morenic hills of Rivoli dotted with the Avigliana lakes as well as the Vaude complex. A significant portion of this area is linked to the ancient “Crown of Delights”, that is to say, the network of Savoy royal residences, the gardens and parks of which form an important element of the Region’s protected Parks and Areas. Within this vast system of natural resources, the EU identified 13 areas known as Sites of Community Importance (SCIs), considered relevant to the preservation of the natural habitat (EEC Habitat directive 92/43). All these areas are covered under the Green Crown project together with a series of other environments, including
the smaller water system (fed by the Stura and Dora Riparia rivers and the Sangone, Chisola, Orco and Malone streams), as well as rural, urban, suburban and mountainous areas.

Before launching the project, the Piedmont Region commissioned a feasibility study that focused on local resources and problems while also identifying critical areas, recommending intervention and providing advice in respect of project design. The entire project is primarily aimed at setting up an ecological corridor interlinking historical sites and centres, royal residences, rural architecture with special emphasis on ancient aqueducts, as well as natural reserve parks with a view to developing an interactive network not only within the city but also between the city and its surrounding areas. This restructured green belt can also be used to attract tourism through the setting up of complementary infrastructure (cycling lanes, pedestrian areas, areas equipped for sports activities, restaurants and service centres).

Side by side with the works for the safeguard, recovery and cleaning-up of the land, special emphasis has been placed on initiatives involving public awareness, advertising and sensitisation aimed at enhancing public enthusiasm for the protection and preservation of the landscape, natural resources and the cultural heritage within the areas covered under the project. With this in mind, the Region intends to prioritise projects designed to implement sector-specific best practices and featuring highly innovative content, aimed at bringing about long-term transformations and at nurturing socio-economic development.

The projects, that may be proposed by local bodies and institutions in charge of Protected Areas, or even by the Piedmont Region itself, qualify for public funding to varying degrees, ranging from 60% to 100% of eligible expenditure. At the end of 2004, 27 projects had been submitted involving overall investments in the amount of 15.5 million euro, including 9 million euro from public funds. Apart from numerous municipalities around Turin, key players in the projects included the bodies in charge of managing the River Park of the Po river within the Turin area, the Stupinigi Natural Park, the Natural Park of the Avigliana Lakes, and the Natural Reserves and Parks of the Turin Highlands. Special attention was paid, within the framework of the projects, to the development and safeguard of riverbank areas (along the Sangone, Stura di Lanzo, Ceronda, Orco and Chisola streams as well as the Dora Riparia river), improvements in the use of the already existing infrastructure and agro-ecosystems (for instance, the Hortocampus projects in the “Le Vallere” area), the recovery and regulation of city parks and the restructuring of wooded areas, including the Bosc Grand that has been declared a Site of Community Importance. Intervention on the original “Crown of Delights” includes the upgrading of historical hunting trails.
of the hunting reserve once attached to the Stupinigi Castle, and the restructuring of the highlands around the Rivoli Castle. Other projects involving the setting up of the Green Crown include intervention for the renaturalisation of green areas in the province of Vercelli and the Verbania area, funded through further state subsidies amounting to 600,000 euro.
THE DEVELOPMENT AND COMPETITIVENESS OF THE PRODUCTION SYSTEM

STATE SUBSIDIES FOR COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES AND SMEs OPERATING IN INDUSTRIAL SECTORS AND THE CRAFTS

Support for development and the reinforcement of the production system through Regional government funding co-financed under European programmes, now occupies pride of place in the history of state subsidies in favour of SMEs. With the implementation of EEC regulation 2052/88 in the late 1980s, companies located in areas affected by industrial decline (Objective 2 areas) qualified, for the first time, for subsidies, managed by what was then the Ministry of Industry, Trade and the Crafts and later re-baptized the Ministry of Production Activities, and financed through contributions from community as well as central and regional government funds. These were the first steps implemented through the well-known Italian law no. 488/92, still in force at present, that was immediately preceded by the Ministerial Decree of 27 June 1991, promulgated precisely in light of the provisions governing contributions from the Structural Funds. The subsidies granted in aid of investments by businesses operating in the industrial, crafts, tourism and construction sectors, and co-financed under Italian law no. 488/92, have funded some of the most significant measures covered under the various Planning Documents submitted from 1989 to date. In the first decade of the Structural Funds, financing was provided for 1,288 projects involving subsidies just short of 190 million euro but entailing an overall investment of 1,200 million euro. In the current planning period (2000-2006), thirty million euro has been budgeted for subsidies covered under Italian Law no. 488/92, that, in fact, pursues a dual goal: the promotion of the conversion and development of corporations through the upgrading, extension and restructuring of existing infrastructure as well as through the construction of new plant, the revitalisation and centralisation of existing equipment; and incentives for improving production processes through the application of advanced technologies, especially with a view to reducing environmental impact. The subsidies cover up to 15% of the overall investments made by small companies and up to 7.5% of those made by medium-sized enterprises. Beneficiaries include businesses operating in all sectors, although most are small companies (which account for two-thirds of the total).
Side by side with the incentives made available through ministerial decrees, regional programmes include specific measures in support of investments in favour of craftsmen and cooperative societies operating in the manufacturing and service sectors, involving subsidies covering between 15% and 30% of the invested capital. In the period between 1992 and 1999, these subsidies contributed 47 million euro of public funds towards the financing of 1,132 projects that involved overall investments of 212 million euro. This opportunity was availed primarily by craftsmen intent on improving their production infrastructure through the implementation of the innovations required to boost the quality of their output and production processes. 70% of the investments were made to fund the purchase of innovative plant and machinery (such as computerised systems), while the remaining 30% was dedicated to the upgrading of workshops, or both types of expenditure. The impact in terms of job creation was very significant: estimates suggest that between 1992 and 1999, the human resources at the service of beneficiary companies leapt from 6,700 to 9,200 employees, reflecting an increase of about 36% supported by a mean rise in turnover of 30%. In the current planning period, the effects of tax federalism have been felt for the first time, even in respect of programmes using resources provided by the Structural Funds, insofar as this planning period includes the first ever co-funded programmes managed entirely by the Regions. This has been made possible under the so-called Saba tini law (Italian law no. 1329/65) and Italian law no. 598/94: the first facilitates the purchase of machine tools while the second focuses on incentives for investments by SMEs in innovation in terms of technology, organisation and marketing, as well as improvements in workplace safety and environmental protection. 915 such projects were launched in the period between the end of 2000 and beginning of 2004, involving state contributions of just over 14 million euro against overall investments estimated at about 211 million euro.

Financial engineering

Another “historical” sector of European contributions earmarked for industrial development, involves subsidies for companies granted loans by the ECSC (European Coal and Steel Community) and/or the EIB (European Investment Bank) and in later years, only by the EIB. Set up to meet the capital requirements of businesses and to offset the high interest rates prevailing on the money markets, facilitated ECSC-EIB loans represented one of the very first European experiments in financial engineering. Beneficiaries included companies intent on implementing
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investment programmes that were farther reaching and more sophisticated than those covered under “conventional” corporate finance. In support of these investments, the Piedmont Region offers subsidies of up to 15% of the capital invested by small businesses and 7.5% in the case of medium-sized corporations. In the period from 1989 to 2004, 421 projects were financed, involving overall investments of 478 million euro as against subsidies amounting to 52 million euro.

Over the years, the Region has experimented various forms of financing to promote and improve access to credit by SMEs operating in the industrial and crafts sectors, as well as to meet their venture capital needs. One of the most successful projects involved the setting up of funds that, quite apart from their specific characteristics, all featured the advantage of continuing beyond the planning period in which they were set up, remaining in operation even thereafter, thus ensuring the exponential growth of the initial resources made available to local players in areas affected by decline. Noteworthy programmes in this field include another “historical” initiative, launched in the first two phases of the implementation of the Structural Funds (1989-1993) and re-proposed under the current planning document, that involves the setting up of underwriting funds managed by a consortium set up to underwrite credit lines. In general, 70% of these facilities are covered by private funds, and the remaining 30% through state subsidies. The figures are impressive and highlight the success of the initiative: the four funds set up in the early 1990s, of a value of about 28 million euro (including 7.8 million euro covered by community contributions), aid was provided to over 4,000 companies for a total of 11,100 projects involving over 180 million euro in underwriting and about 575 million euro in subsidies. Under a provision approved in 2003, the number of companies managing the underwriting consortium was increased five, allowing for investments in the amount of 60 million euro.

The performance and payment bonds, to the extent of 50% of the loans granted, are issued in favour of companies intent on upgrading their production infrastructure, creating jobs, expanding business operations and implementing innovative technologies.

Between 1997 and 1999, the Piedmont Region launched a fund managed by Artigiancassa, with a view to helping craftsmen’s workshops operating in the fields of production and production-oriented services, meet their debt service obligations (covered under Italian law no. 949/52) and the rental payments arising under finance lease agreements (covered under Italian law no. 240/81). Once again, in this case, the figures attest to the success of the initiative: 2,654 projects were financed and investments amounting to about 305 million euro deployed, thanks to a little
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less than 17 million euro by way of contributions from public funds. To meet the capital requirements of SMEs and promote their expansion, in 1997 the Piedmont Region set up a fund to provide venture capital to enterprises for the implementation of investment plans aimed at expanding their production capabilities and installing innovative technologies. The fund for participating loans, financed to the extent of 70% from the state coffer, with the remaining 30% provided by banks, covers up to 50% of the share capital increases approved by companies, spread over a five-year period. So far, the fund, that has been presented for renewal in the current planning period, has contributed towards the completion of 178 projects, granting loans in the amount of nearly 35 million euro. Lastly, it must be pointed out that financial engineering projects include an initiative providing funding against the acquisition of a minority shareholding in SMEs (the so-called “merchant bank” initiative). This fund, amounting to about 24 million euro, has so far financed 9 projects submitted by companies operating mainly in the mechanical sector.

Aid targeted at affording SMEs operating in the sectors of industry and the crafts, access to specialist consulting services

This represents the third “historical” sector of intervention in favour of small and medium-sized enterprises. While widely consolidated at present, this measure represented a surprising innovation in the Region’s industrial policy at the time, especially in the form determined under Regulation 2081/93 on which the current measures are based, albeit with a few improvements. The most innovative aspect involves a subsidy (of up to 50% of eligible expenditure) for the acquisition of intangible services, such as consultancy for the introduction of quality systems and qualification for the resulting certification, the reduction of environmental impact, the improvement of working conditions and corporate organisation, the solution of logistical problems and strategic market analysis. In the last planning period, the Piedmont Region’s proposals included support to businesses for the access to strategic consulting services aimed at attaining certification and at boosting competitiveness, especially in view of M&A transactions, the setting up of joint ventures, etc. There is no doubt that the contributions from the Structural Funds played a key role, first and foremost, towards sensitising corporations to environmental, quality and safety issues, and then towards encouraging them to opt for increasingly specialist services. Even in this case, the figures speak for themselves: 2,519 projects financed from 1994 to date, involving overall investments of about 76 million euro, just over 35 million euro of which was funded from the
public coffer. In the first planning period (1989-91), this type of intervention was in the experimental phase during which the initiatives implemented were primarily designed for promotional purposes and involved services offered jointly by trade associations and public bodies. In later years, the initiative proved to be a driving force for the implementation of quality systems, improvements at the workplace, marketing activities and corporate restructuring.

The encouragement of new enterprise

A fourth, but nonetheless equally significant field of intervention, belonging to the latest generation of European programmes, involves direct initiatives in favour of the creation of new businesses and the launching of spin-offs. Again, in this case, the contents of the measures promoted by the Piedmont Region and the selected implementation methods, entail a quantum leap involving projects that are just at the pilot phase. Since 1997, the Piedmont Region has promoted a line of intervention aimed at supporting the setting up of tiny and small businesses by employed and unemployed persons, with special emphasis on initiatives implemented by women and young people. These initiatives involve the granting of loans towards debt service, inclusive of principal and interest, and have been set up strictly in keeping with the measures aimed at encouraging enterprise, included under the Objective 3 Regional Programme (European Social Fund) that contemplates “preliminary” activities providing orientation, consultancy as well as advisory services in favour of individuals interested in going into business.

Despite the complexity and difficulties in implementing programmes of this type, the figures seem to be very encouraging: in the period from 1997 to 2003, 521 projects were completed involving investments of 37.6 million euro as against 25.6 million euro by way of subsidies from the public treasury. Although all the main sectors of the Piedmontese economy have benefited from the programme, the highest number of beneficiaries are concentrated in the construction, retail and technical sectors. Again with the view to transforming critical and marginal situations into fertile development opportunities, the Piedmont Region’s latest plan for the use of contributions from the Structural Funds, includes a measure in support of investments in production infrastructure to be set up on derelict sites and in areas at socio-economic risk, such as the inner-city districts and town quarters already subjected to urban restructuring works, as well as backward highland areas and zones inhabited by remote mountain communities. So far, the programme that provides repayable loans for investments by SMEs, has proven to be a success, at least to a certain
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extent. At the end of 2004, 36 projects had been submitted, involving investments of 8.2 million euro against public contributions in the amount of 4.1 million euro.

RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

Infrastructure for innovation and technological development: Science and Technology Parks and Incubators

In keeping with trends in the most advanced and industrialised economies, the Piedmont Region, with contributions from the Structural Funds, has made Science and Technology Parks the central focus of ten years of regional policies in favour of innovation and technological development. From 1989 to date, regional programmes entailed the setting up of six Parks that make up a specialist network, capable of boosting local Piedmontese development and featuring as yet untapped potential acknowledged at the European level. The evolution of these Parks may be succinctly encapsulated in the slogan: “From complex real estate development to structures specialising in basic and applied research”. The setting of the network of Piedmontese Parks, in fact, traces the evolution of the implementation of the Structural Funds. Between 1989 and 1991 the Lago Maggiore Technology Park (Tecnopark) was set up in Verbania under the very first project.
In the second planning period (1992-93), works were commenced for the construction of the Bioindustry Park in Colleretto Giacosa. The period between 1994 and 1999 saw the launching of the Telecommunications Science Park (PST Valle Scrivia) in Tortona as well as the Environment Park (Envipark) and the Virtual Reality and Multimedia Park in Turin. At the same time, project design works were commenced for setting up a Centre of Excellence of Technologies for the Aged and the Disabled (Centro di Eccellenza delle Tecnologie per Anziani e Disabili – CETAD), that, initially housed within the Bioindustry Park, was shifted to a new premises in Envipark. All the park projects have been implemented over the years and ought to be fully completed by the end of 2006. To cite just a few of the overall figures, the Parks involve: 93 thousand square metres of gross floor space, total investments of 175 million euro, 70% of which was covered by public contributions, 118 companies, some newly set up and others moving in from older premises, were attracted, providing for a total of 976 jobs. Some of the park projects entail major restructuring works on derelict areas. This is especially true in the case of Envipark and the Virtual Reality and Multimedia Park that, sited in the inner-city, have contributed to the development of some of the largest urban restructuring projects launched in Turin in recent years.

THE ENVIRONMENT PARK – Located within the so-called Spina 3 area, the Park is part of a broader environmental clean-up and recovery project for the enhancement of the Dora riverbanks. Pursuant to an amendment to the Town Planning Regulations for the setting up of a “river park on the two banks”, Envipark was located within a green system, entailing an experiment in balancing green areas and built-up spaces, with a view to minimising impact on the natural landscape. Situated close to the Turin city centre, Envipark covers about 100 thousand square metres, a third of which are occupied by offices and laboratories that provide the companies hosted in the park with a wide range of hi-tech services and infrastructure featuring low environmental impact. Envipark is in fact an emblematic example of urban restructuring based on environmentally sound construction techniques and green architecture, involving the harmonious blending of gardens and built-up areas. The terraces of buildings have been transformed into ecological roof gardens. Offices are housed in low constructions that blend into the surrounding greenery. All the plant are designed to
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maximise energy efficiency and run on energy derived from renewal sources. Features include: the blue building system based on interactive façades and shining panels on the roofs of buildings; boilers fired by natural wood chips deriving from the twigs and branches that fall off the trees lining Turin’s avenues and boulevards, as well as a sophisticated water cycle management system. The park is designed to provide hosted companies with an incubator for the start-up phase, a service centre, research laboratories specialising in environmental protection and ICT, high quality, hi-tech telecommunications infrastructure thanks especially to the on-site presence of major telecommunications operators. The collaboration between corporations and research bodies led to the setting up of an R&D cluster and encouraged innovation in the field of environment-friendly technologies (primarily involving renewable energy sources, noise pollution abatement, bioremediation, environmental management, innovative production processes and environmentally sound chemicals), as well as ICT. To date, the park houses 64 companies, 43 of which specialise in the eco-efficiency sectors, 21 in ICT as well as 8 that provide consultancy services to businesses and associations.
CETAD – This project represents the first attempt in Europe to set up a Science and Technology Park devoted to the promotion, development and diffusion of innovative technologies and services for the rehabilitation and social integration of the aged and the disabled. Since 2002, it has been definitively housed within the Envipark that, thanks to its inner-city location, was conveniently sited for the population targeted by the Centre: the aged and the disabled. The Centre covers about 2 thousand square metres (Building B2) and includes an exhibition area/laboratory (“intelligent house”), a day clinic specialising in state-of-the-art rehabilitation techniques, lecture halls, offices, research laboratories specialising in bioengineering, biomechanics and information-technology applications in the field of social services and health care. The Centre specialises in R&D in certain niche sectors, such as domotics that involves the application of Information and Communications Technology to improve the care, comfort and convenience of the aged and disabled in their own homes (“intelligent house” and CO.S.MO project), thus helping them avoid institutionalisation. Initiatives in this field include the ADITech project focusing on remote monitoring and assistance services, the “The Aged at Home – Anziani a Domicilio” project commissioned by the Boella Higher Institute and the Interreg project, implemented in collaboration with the Mondovi Polytechnic and dedicated to the development of technologies for the care and assistance of the aged in their own homes. CETAD is very much involved in the professional rehabilitation of the disabled, sponsoring specific intervention in the sector and provided consultancy, orientation, training and tutoring services aimed at finding solutions to the needs of both employers and the disabled. Thanks to the “Pilot Project” and the Empowerment Projects I and II, currently underway, the Centre took charge of 66 disabled persons who were victims of workplace accidents; placements at companies were found for about one third of them. The Centre is also experimenting a service aimed at providing corporations advice and assistance for obtaining subsidies from INAIL (the Italian National Insurance Company covering Workplace Accidents and Occupational Diseases) for the removal of the architectural barriers that make it difficult for the disabled to access certain buildings and thoroughfares: so far, 600 companies have been selected, contacted and assisted.

THE VIRTUAL REALITY AND MULTIMEDIA PARK – This Park covers a large part of the 13 thousand square metre plot of municipal land bordered by Corso Lombardia, Via Forlì and Via Foligno, that the municipality of Turin has earmarked for restructuring after twenty years of neglect. Lying on the FERT area that formerly housed the film studios of the Turin-based production company
FioreEnricoRomaTorino that remained in business up to the late 1970s, the Park includes a built-up surface areas of about 8 thousand square metres, including fully-equipped studios, audio and video production and post-production halls, 2-D and 3-D computer graphics labs, as well as multimedia production labs, all incorporating state-of-the-art equipment.

The Park’s main goal is to promote the multimedia sector within the Turin area specifically with a view to developing an industrial district focusing on virtual reality and the use of communications networks, as part of the broader effort in support of the ICT sector in Turin. The Park is designed to serve as a centre of attraction for the development of applied research programmes, a production hub for prototypes and think tank, as well as an advanced training institution. With regard to this last aspect, mention must be made of the Advanced Training School, set up within the Park in collaboration with the Turin Polytechnic, Turin University and international professional training centres, that offers master’s courses and ongoing professional training based on innovative on-the-job teaching techniques. The Park focuses primarily on digital cinema, television, commercials using virtual sets, special effects, videogames as well as simulations and the development of simulators for applications in the scientific, industrial and local and town planning sectors. As a result of its peculiar features, the park has a very distinctive structure, quite unlike any of the other Piedmontese Technology Parks. While the School and R&D labs are directly managed by the Park, the development of practical applications of the technologies resulting from research findings, has been outsourced with a view to optimising the use of the Park’s avant-garde technical infrastructure. With a view to furthering R&D and the transfer of technology, the Park is currently setting up an incubator designed to allow operators in the audiovisual sector to liaise more closely with the fast-developing local cinema and ICT district.

Each Park has its own history. As already noted, some were set up with a view to restructuring derelict industrial sites, other as a result of local policies or thanks to popular demand from the local business community. The Bioindustry Park, for instance, originated as a local laboratory undertaking medical research outsourced by third parties (RBM of the Serono Group).

THE BIOINDUSTRY PARK – Located in Colleretto Giacosa close to Ivrea, this park covers 150 thousand square metres, including 21 thousand square metres housing laboratories, offices and the service centre, and 70 thousand square metres dedicated to production infrastructure. The Park serves as an incubator during the start-up phases of innovative businesses in the pharmaceutical, bio-tech, chemical, diagnostics, veterinary, agriculture and food-processing,
biomedical and bio-information-technology sectors. 1,300 square metres are dedicated to
university labs for chemical-physical characterisation and molecular modelling, offering
companies highly specialist know-how in the fields of proteomics, molecular biology and
chemistry. The labs include LIMA (Laboratorio Integrato di Metodologie Avanzate –
Comprehensive Advanced Methodology Laboratory) set up in collaboration with Turin University
and a National Research Centre (CNR)

institution specialising in proteomics that offers advanced scientific services to corporations
operating in the pharmaceutical, diagnostics, bio-technology, chemical and food-processing
sectors. The Park organises conferences and seminars, carries out check-ups and feasibility
studies and promotes the spread of innovation among, and the transfer of technology to SMEs. At
the same time, it offers businesses advice on administrative, legal, financial, safety,
environmental, quality and certification matters, and provides them assistance in dealing with
regulations and applying for national and community subsidies for research. One of the exclusive
services offered by the Bioindustry Park is the PIP (Patent Information Point) that, by accessing
patent databases, fine-tuning searches of vast databanks and resolving patent-related problems,
provides users with basic information to evaluate the technical aspects, expiry dates and legal status of patents. Thanks to agreements with local and national skill centres, the Park also focuses on the typical problems faced by operators in the electronics, mechanical and plastics sectors, especially with regard to technologies for finishing, non-destructive testing techniques and nanotechnologies. The park houses 24 organisations operating in all the sectors mentioned above. All the Parks were set up in response to stimuli from the local production fabric. Some of them, such as the Tecnopark embrace multi-disciplinary functions. Other focus on specific sectors, such as the environment, biotechnology or telecommunications, although local demand often leads them to broaden their scope. This is what happened, for instance, at the Valle Scrivia Telecommunications Science Park (PST Valle Scrivia).

THE LAGO MAGGIORE TECNOPARK – Located close to Verbania on the western bank of the Lago Maggiore, the Park is made up of 22 buildings covering about 30 thousand square metres, nestled in
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greenery extending over more than 180 thousand square metres. The built-up complex, designed by the architect Aldo Rossi, includes structures and laboratories of various sizes ranging from 135 to 1,680 square metres, as well as office blocks offering spaces measuring between 25 to 250 square metres. Tecnopark’s trump card is its incubator: a streamlined structure that houses small experimental labs and offices, offering opportunities for realising business dreams, particularly in the hi-tech sector, that would otherwise have most probably been trashed as wishful thinking. Here, small start-up companies find the ideal environment for growth and for facing the challenges of the difficult early years. Fledgling companies may later opt to shift to the park area reserved to partially consolidated enterprises intent on further expansion. Tecnopark offers consulting and assistance services to businesses in the fields of corporate management and organisation as well as for the drawing up of business plans and community-funded projects, and for applying for subsidies for the acquisition of equipment. The park is equipped with infrastructure for congresses as well as training and educational activities, such as a computer centre, meeting rooms and a new multimedia conference hall. One of the distinctive features of its mission involves putting enterprises into contact with university institutions and national and European research centres, as well as other companies operating in complementary fields. The Park liaises with the research and academic community through agreements with the Turin University and Polytechnic and other Piedmontese Science Parks. Tecnopark targets companies specialising in biotechnology for horticulture and floriculture, environmentally sound technologies, the experimentation of new materials, industrial automation, automation for buildings and industrial components. Tecnolab and Tecnoverde are the most noteworthy among the 19 companies housed within Tecnopark. Tecnolab is a skill centre that, apart from testing, offers upgrading and consultancy services focusing of national and international standards, with special emphasis on the mechanical, electromechanical and electronic sectors. Tecnoverde is an experimentation centre for plants typical of the Lago Maggiore area, set up to meet the needs of the local economy. Apart from supplying plants for re-cultivation, Tecnoverde offers services ranging from the testing of water and soil samples, through to biotechnological research and experimentation. Tecnopark’s projects underway include studies and experiments focusing on electromagnetic pollution in industrial environments, the reuse of the dust generated from stone processing, the recycling of the dust generated through the processing of aluminium and water-based paint treatments.
THE VALLE SCRIVIA TELECOMMUNICATIONS SCIENCE PARK (PST VALLE SCRIVIA) – Standing at the centre of the Tortona Industrial Equipped Area in Valle Scrivia, the Park includes 22,500 square metres of laboratory space dedicated to R&D activities, as well as 2,500 square metres of office space and shared infrastructure, located on a site measuring a total of 100 thousand square metres.

Initially set up to promote research and innovation primarily in the telecommunications sector, PST has ventured into other fields, some of which, such as plastics and materials science, are very relevant to the local context. One of the Park’s most salient features is that it provides technological services in a wide variety of fields ranging from chemistry to structural mechanics, information-technology and computer systems to optical electronics, the calibration of accelerometers to ergonomics and biomechanics. These services are supplied through six laboratories (ChimLab, MecLab, Ce.C.A.P. – the Centre for the Automatic Control of Processes, OptoLab Valle Scrivia, the Accelerometer Calibration Laboratory and the Biomechanics and Ergonomics Laboratory), set up under agreements with various departments of the Universities of Turin, Vercelli, Chieti, Pavia, Alessandria and Brescia. PST offers companies office space in lots
measuring between 250 and 2,250 square metres, equipped with advanced and innovative management and technological infrastructure. Lastly, the Park is also a BIC (Business Innovation Centre) part of the EBN circuit, a European network offering assistance to fledgling companies and promoting technological development. It is also a member of IBAN (Italian Business Angels Network) set up to bring together potential entrepreneurs and the so-called venture capitalists. The Park uses the services of the ALPSInnovation Relay Centre for the design of community projects as well as for finding international partners. PST currently houses 25 corporations.

Nearly all the Parks have focused on ICT companies, forming two clusters of businesses: on the one hand corporations that focus on the main theme of the park, and on the other, ICT companies that often “work” for the corporations falling in the first category. All the parks provide technological services through specialist laboratories. These include not only the laboratories managed by the Park and the research entities it houses, but also laboratories run by local companies, resulting the generation of a critical mass of business that could potentially exert a very significant impact on the local business community. All the parks also act as incubators, since their mission includes using their resources to encourage new enterprise in the hi-tech sector; equally crucial to this role, however, are the parks’ capabilities in terms of promoting and transferring the innovations resulting from research activities. The real challenge the Parks must face, seems to be the development of their role as technological interfaces between demand for innovation from industry and the pools of know-how and talent available at universities and public and private research centres. Another major initiative in this field is the new centre, currently under construction in Dronero.

THE CENTRE FOR TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AND BUSINESS SERVICES OF THE PROVINCE OF CUNEO –
This new hi-tech scientific research structure was promoted by Tecnogranda, a mixed-economy company set up in partnership among local bodies (Chamber of Commerce of Cuneo, the Valle Maira Mountain Community, the municipality of Dronero), institutional bodies of the province of Cuneo and the Piedmont Region, such as Fingranda and Finpiemonte, the Turin Polytechnic, trade associations (the Industrial Union of Cuneo, Confartigianato Cuneo, the Cuneo Trend Association), banks (Banca di Caraglio, del Cuneese e della Riviera dei Fiori) and about twenty local companies.
The new centre aims at encouraging new enterprise and promoting the transfer of technology by setting up skills centres endowed with the technological and human resources to assist fledgling companies. Towards this end, an area measuring ten thousand square metres has been set aside for the construction of five incubators and research laboratories specialising in the following sectors: production systems and mechanical technology, electromagnetic compatibility, materials science and chemistry, hydraulics, energy, microelectronics, microscopics, information-technology and electronic CAD. The new centre will offer businesses essential services, management consultancy as well as financial, commercial, technological and marketing tutoring services. Set up, first and foremost, to serve the need of the business community of the province of Cuneo, the Centre is open to requests not only from the rest of Italy, but also from abroad. Side by side with this intense activity in support of innovation and the transfer of technology, the Centre is currently setting up four incubators, expected to be completed in 2006: the first designed as an extension of the Bioindustry Park; the second, located in Turin, proposed directly by the University; the third in Garessio, proposed by the municipality and the fourth in Borgo Vercelli. Overall investments amount to 17.2 million euro, 77% of which will be covered by contributions from public funds.
13T — THE TURIN UNIVERSITY INCUBATOR — This project involves two separate sites, both located in Turin, one in Via Nizza (San Salvario) and the other in Strada del Drosso (Miraflori Sud). The Via Nizza site, focusing on biotechnology, will be organised as a think tank devoted to the development of innovative projects that, depending on their features, could lead to various outcomes: spin-offs, the acquisition of patents or the drawing up of proposals for collaboration with industry. The Strada del Drosso site, which will serve as an inter-departmental interface, will be dedicated to implementing an incubation procedure designed by Turin University and involving three phases: orientation, pre-incubation, setting up and start-up. This site will also house the University’s spin-off businesses. While acting as an incubator, the new structure will further serve as an Industrial Liaison Office. The structure will be managed by the “Consortium for the Turin University Incubator for Enterprise and Technological Transfer” (13T) set up in partnership among Turin University, the province and municipality of Turin and Finpiemonte.
THE VERCELLI BUSINESS CENTRE – The Business Centre is located on a site covering nearly 13 thousand square metres, close to the Vercelli Est exit of the Voltri-Gravellona Toce motorway. The new structure is designed to serve as an equipped pole for local promotion, primarily aimed at boosting economic development in a local context featuring structural weaknesses. The future business incubator will provide entrepreneurs with equipped spaces for setting up new businesses (temporary start-up office space), logistical services (meeting rooms, conference halls, equipped laboratories, computer systems, security services, etc.), secretarial and consultancy services (corporate check-ups, management oversight, business plans, market research, financial and banking advice, etc.), as well as training (business management courses open to both companies housed within the centre and local corporations).
Actions targeted at spreading and developing innovation

PROGETTO DIADI (DIADI PROJECT) – The spread of innovation among SMEs has been a recurring theme within Regional Structural Funding under the banner of the DIADI project, from 1996 to the current day. DIADI was set up, and is managed by, COREP (Consortium for Life-long Research and Education) in partnership with CSP, Canavese Technology Park (Distretto Tecnologico del Canavese) and Tecnorete, the Piedmont Science and Technology Park Network. Now in its third year, DIADI has spent a lot of time experimenting with, and consolidating, a number of tools expressly developed to improve the productivity and competitiveness of Piedmont businesses. DIADI can be best described as “offering small and medium sized enterprises opportunities to innovate by taking full advantage of the skills in the university and research sectors.” The project has witnessed the active involvement of the University and Polytechnic of Turin, together with the main research institutes in the region and Science and Technology Parks.

Actions and initiatives involving three main areas have been set underway; innovation requirements and monitoring, the promotion of research results, and innovation project implementation. The first group of actions involves working alongside associations in the sector to organise steering meetings together with entrepreneurs and business people who can help target the specific needs and requirements of small and medium sized businesses. Promoting research results includes a wide range of actions, ranging from publishing information and promotional activities through the Internet and the DIADI newsletter to supporting Innovation Centres by setting up suitable displays and exhibitions and activating specific events to raise public awareness. Such events might range from activities aimed at encouraging and promoting patents through to the organisation of tailor-made focused meetings (specially laid on with sector experts at the request of SMEs) or even the implementation of feasibility studies. The DIADI website allows businesses access to a wealth of information, not to mention a database, currently under construction, containing over 800 research data fact files from more than fifty departments at the Polytechnic of Turin, the University of Turin and West Piedmont, as well as a selection of CNR institutes.
One of the most innovative and key aspects of DIADI’s work involves the third area in which it is active; namely that of “innovation projects”, previously known as ‘demonstrator projects’. These are research projects targeted at businesses (chosen by means of public tender) in partnership with public research centres and financed for 50% of the total project cost.

Since 1996, forty research projects have been implemented. These have been innovative projects in the sphere of engineering, electrical engineering, electronics, chemistry/biochemistry, steel-working and information technology. The partnership between companies and research centres has seen the introduction of both innovative products and processes. However, other facts and figures bear witness to the financial and organisational efforts undertaken by the project. Between 1996 and 2000, with investments equivalent to € 9 million, of which € 6.4 million in contributions, the project has carried out 191 company check-ups, 54 feasibility studies, 134 seminars, and 58 interactive technology-based events involving more than 1,100 businesses - not to mention the setting up of an Internet website and database.

Investments amounting to € 28 million are forecast for 2004-2006, including € 20 million in DOCUP contributions. Furthermore, DIADI has played a key role in promoting activities carried out by Piedmont’s technology parks at SME premises by means of various events and eight integrated projects developed by the technology parks themselves, concerning the environment, biotechnology and material science.

OTHER ACTIVITIES – Among the wide range of projects financed between 1994 and 1999 as part of the innovation development programme were the following: the development of an electronic agenda to manage restaurant orders; the design of a prototype stove for the USA market; a digital accordion; research studies and experimentation into new electrical and electronic appliances as well as equipment for working plastic materials; the prototype design and experimentation of electrically-powered vehicles; research into electrical engines and research into innovative products developed through the use of alternative materials. Such programmes were able to provide as much as 50% in open funding to cover the admissible costs for research and development studies (feasibility, experimentation, prototype design and planning, etc.) carried out by groups of SMEs in partnership with state controlled research bodies. The list includes 279 such projects, spread between businesses in both local craftsmanship and industrial
sectors – although the majority of projects were represented by the latter – covering most sectors of the Piedmont regional economy. Overall investment amounted to approximately € 57 million, including almost € 22 million in contributions. The programme was re-proposed and is part of the extremely successful series of activities currently underway – all bearing witness to the admirable interest and ability demonstrated by local Piedmont small- and medium-sized enterprises. The tender has been running since early 2004 and has already financed more than 500 projects for a total of € 28 million in contributions, leading to a total investment amounting to € 94 million.

The marked interest shown by Structural Funds for innovative investments has also been clearly demonstrated by another ‘historic funding device. Since being set up in 1994, it has never failed to be present in regional project programming, thanks to its extreme flexibility and popularity among local businesses. We are, of course, referring to continuous funding for innovative environmental investments for SMEs in both industrial and local craftsmanship sectors. Financed projects aim to introduce technological innovations to improve the competitiveness of local businesses and reduce the environmental impact of their processes. The aid consists in offering reimbursable loans, with up to 50% of the investment tax-free and the remaining 50% repayable at normal market rates. Current funding programmes have also been extended to offer such advantages to businesses in the tourism industry for projects aimed at improving, enlarging and developing tourist-targeted facilities and accommodation.

The spread of the information-based companies
The development and spread of the Information Society played an increasingly important role in the plans the European Commission strongly recommended its member states to introduce into regional development programmes during the ‘90s. This was a significant stimulus behind the Piedmont regional administration’s decision to back several measures aimed at spreading the Information Society ‘culture’ among both private and public operators as from 1997. One of the most noteworthy promotional activities carried out in the sphere of ICT technology concerned the setting up of the IRISI project (Inter-Regional Information Society Initiative). The project was
promoted by the Regional Policy Head Offices of the European Commission and Piedmont moved quickly to take full advantage of the opportunity offered by implementing the project through CSP (Advanced Information Technology Research, Development and Experimentation Centre), in partnership with the Polytechnic of Turin and CSI Piemonte (Consortium for Regional Information Systems). The project was strengthened and implemented on an even greater scale by Docup between 1997 and 1999. Among other actions, an IRISI website (www.csp.it/irisi) was set up and seminars and congresses were run to allow public and private bodies the opportunity to see concrete examples of how new technology could be applied to meet company and organisational requirements. Experimentation of new technology and prototypes were carried out, and, in particular, a multimedia network prototype. Starting with activities involving ‘PiemontelnRete’, or ‘Piedmont On-line’ (which took Piedmont to the forefront in the ICT field), a network was planned and tested capable of carrying compatible multimedia-related data and integrating services and technological infrastructures in order to offer opportunities such as video-conferencing, online learning and training, teleworking, wireless transmission, IP telephony, etc. More than € 1 million was invested in the project, with Docup responsible for a contribution equivalent to 70%. Alongside the IRISI project, other initiatives for the development and application of IT-based services were set up through Docup activities during 1997-1999. OpeNNet was set up in Environment Park in 1998 with the mission to develop a range of local network services and stimulate demand for such services. The project also stimulated interest from telecommunications operators and providers throughout the Turin area to invest in fibre-optic cabling. The result was a focal point for the interconnection of several Internet networks along the lines of New York’s TELEHOUSE model (TELEPORTO project) and the setting up of a portal to promote both the territory and local business (entitled Spaziomprese®). OpeNNet was also responsible for setting up an open network made up of SMEs specialised in companies working online in sales, distribution and tourism in order to promote and enhance B-2-B and B-2-C activities. Within the Docup project 1997-1999, OpeNNet also managed activities targeted at spreading the use of IT-based services among SMEs. The programme consisted in financing 50% of the cost of introducing network-based multimedia workstations into the workplace as well as the initial implementation phase of Internet access. The project also involved, however, the development of promotional pages for both national and international websites. 655 separate actions – equivalent to roughly the same number of companies – were carried out for a total investment of € 14.5 million. Based on the experience gained from such activities, the Piedmont
regional administration went on to intensify its efforts in order to promote the ‘Information Society’ by funding both the range of available services and the infrastructures themselves.

Docup 2000-2006 has made available € 18 million in order to obtain total investments amounting to € 22.5 million. Above all, the programme looks to set up a “Permanent Net-economy Observatory” as a natural development of the IRISI project. CSP will be responsible for managing the project.

Another main activity involves the development of a “PA-2-Business-based communication platform” – also known as RUPAR2. RUPAR2 involves the development of a broadband network for the ‘Obiettivo 2’ (Target 2) area, thus permitting all users to access a range of services already available as well as a series of new applications available thanks to the new infrastructure.

A third area of activity is forecast for SMEs using ICT technology. This area concerns a series of significant measures aimed at supplying e-procurement and e-commerce services as well as other ICT-based services and technology. Companies can take advantage of high-specialised consultancy services in order to identify custom-made software and introduce innovative tools into company processes and procedures. Furthermore, 50% of the cost to the company is covered by funding.

SAFEGUARDING THE ENVIRONMENT

Right from the initial planning stages, the Regione Piemonte administration Docup programme showed a keen interest in environmental issues connected to the disposal of solid and liquid industrial waste. Since 1989, projects have been financed to deal with the refurbishment and modernisation of plants involved in the treatment and recovery of ‘special’ or ‘hazardous’ industrial waste. These include the Barricalla di Collegno plant, the LaFumet di Villastellone plant and the Consorzio Ovadese Valle Scrivia plant. Other activities include the centre for the recovery of plastic materials at Publirec di Collegno, Cons. Ser. V.C.O (a plant dealing in the sorting, shredding and packaging of bulky solid waste materials), and plants for composting, the breakdown of organic materials and other initiatives for household waste recovery in the province.
of Turin and Biella. All in all, 10 projects are involved involving € 28 million in investments, 55% of which state funded. Another 17 projects deal with plants for the treatment and distribution of recovered water in the provinces of Alessandria, Cuneo, Turin, Verbania and Vercelli. In this case, the projects involve € 48 million, of which 60% state funded.

As far as water management is concerned, 1994-1996 saw the development of an experimental environmental watercourse network monitoring project which dealt with a 50-kilometre stretch of the River Scrivia in Piedmont. The project was created by the relevant river authority, the ‘Consorzio di Bonifica del Bacino dello Scrivia’ and involved the setting up of 5 observation and data measurement stations as well as 7 weather/rainfall stations managed by a single central computerised laboratory which collected data from each of the locations.

1997-1999 projects also witnessed the Regional administration setting up another experimental initiative to carry out studies into the beneficial treatment of special waste, even hazardous, through recovery, stockage and processing schemes aimed at reducing potential pollution from waste produced by local SMEs. Studies were entrusted by the regional authorities into the hands of associations working in the relevant sectors. These associations were required to assess the special waste disposal requirements of businesses and to look for suitable systems to recycle, recover, treat and process such waste material categories, paying particular attention to specific types of waste materials and residues which the area found difficult to process due to a lack of adequate equipment and machinery. These included tyres, waste active carbons, paint, solvent and diluting agent cleansing waste materials for mechanical equipment, metal cleaning and stripping agents, waste materials from laundries, disposed automobiles and household appliances, mud residue from stone-working, and waste containing asbestos or dead matter. On the basis of such requirements, the associations in question identified nine areas of action to promote. These nine areas successively called for the involvement of 26 companies, which gained open funding in order to develop and introduce systems to deal with both liquid and solid special waste materials. Here we are dealing with companies involved directly in the micro-collection and recovery of waste materials or companies specialising in waste collection from third parties. Studies carried out by the associations representing the categories in question were financed for 70% of the total admissible costs, whilst the average contribution for the companies involved – which by and large chose the ‘de minimis’ option – amounted to 25%. Overall
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investment from the initiative reached € 9 million, against € 4 million in state contributions. In an overall context of integration between industrial and environmental policies and with a preventative approach towards environmental needs and requirements in mind, the regional administration fully intends to help finance environment-targeted investments made by small and medium sized companies – even during the current round of projects.

Docup 2000-2006 programming also forecasts reimbursable loans to purchase plants, machinery and equipment for energy-saving purposes as well as systems and technology aimed at reducing the environmental impact of the processes involved. The financing is organised in such a way as to allow 70% of the investment to be financed tax-free, up to a limit of € 500,000 per company. For the moment, the remaining 30% is available from recognized financial institutes and bodies subject to current market loan terms and conditions. The programme was introduced in 2004 and began to receive the first requests for financing. By the end of 2004, ten projects worth € 2.3 million had been presented by companies in the area for programmes mainly involving the purchase of innovative environmentally-friendly machinery.

“IL BARRICALLA” – The “Barricalla” is a highly-controlled plant, subject to rigorous ratification and control procedures, and unique in North Italy as far as the disposal of “special” or “hazardous” industrial waste products is concerned.

The plant became operational at the end of the 1980’s in Collegno, on the site of a former gravel quarry destined to fall into disuse after work activities stopped there. Structural Funds went towards setting up the first area of 100,000 cubic metres, which was completed in 1993. A second part of 246,000 cubic metres was finished in 2001, whilst the third part of 229,000 cubic metres is forecast to be finished in 2007. Once the plant is finished, the entire area will be recovered as a fully-equipped public park. Apart from waste disposal (mud waste from water treatment, ash from smoke breakdown, metalworking waste, asbestos, sludge, mud and dust from paints and varnishes, tank and container residues, land reclamation, chemical and engineering industry waste, spoiled containers, cloth material and paper), the plant also deals with environmental monitoring and safety.
Within the above-mentioned sphere of activity, the ‘Barricalla’ site took part in the EU “Life” Project between 1995 and 1997 with a research project entitled “Integrated monitoring of waste disposal activities at the R.S.I. facilities to assess overall effects on the atmosphere, soil and ground water resources”. Furthermore, the site is also part of a European research project with other Italian and European partners (including the University of Venice) into asbestos fibre leachate. The project is co-funded by the European FALL programme with the aim to set out the necessary premises upon which to base an EU document outlining asbestos leachate plant filtration requirements. Such achievements, placed alongside the GEAM technical-scientific award from the Polytechnic of Turin, is a clear acknowledgement of the important position Barricalla has attained in the area of research and transfer of know-how to the public and private sector working in environmental services.
### SUMMARY TABLES (PROJECTS NUMBER, PUBLIC AID, TOTAL INVESTMENTS)

#### THE INTERNATIONAL PROMOTION OF PIEDMONT

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<th>TOTAL INVESTMENTS (EUR Million)*</th>
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Latest data available at 06/30/2005  * for the period 2000-6 data refer to financial plan

#### PROMOZIONE E SVILUPPO DEL TURISMO

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<th>MEASURE</th>
<th>PROJECTS NUMBER</th>
<th>PUBLIC AID (EUR Million)*</th>
<th>TOTAL INVESTMENTS (EUR Million)*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creation of tourist infrastructures</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>158</td>
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<tr>
<td>Incentives to tourist enterprises</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>Promotional activities</td>
<td>62</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrated projects for tourist area</td>
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<td>development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Restoration of &quot;Residenze Sabaude&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>364</td>
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Latest data available at 06/30/2005  * for the period 2000-6 data refer to financial plan
### INFRASTRUTTURAZIONE PER IL SISTEMA PRODUTTIVO

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEASURE</th>
<th>PROJECTS NUMBER</th>
<th>PUBLIC AID (EUR Million)*</th>
<th>TOTAL INVESTMENTS (EUR Million)*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creation of Equipped Industrial and Craft Areas and Ecologically Equipped Areas and Intermodal Centres</td>
<td>102 14 158 22 37 333</td>
<td>13.8 6.4 11.5 33.9</td>
<td>107.3 230.2 134.1 395.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creation of PIS (Integrated Development Poles) and Completion of Science and Technology Parks (just for the period 2000-2006)</td>
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<td>Creation and Development of Service Centres</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>102 14 159 32 57 364</td>
<td>13.8 6.4 17.7 85.0 107.3 230.2 51.0 14.0 47.2 149.4 134.1 395.7</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

Latest data available at 06/30/2005 * for the period 2000-6 data refer to financial plan

### RIQUALIFICAZIONE DEL TERRITORIO

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<tr>
<th>MEASURE</th>
<th>PROJECTS NUMBER</th>
<th>PUBLIC AID (EUR Million)*</th>
<th>TOTAL INVESTMENTS (EUR Million)*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reclamation of degraded and abandoned sites by public beneficiaries</td>
<td>4 8 16 41 164 233</td>
<td>8.7 7.1 22.2 112.9 153.2</td>
<td>304.1 12.8 8.9 28.2 167.4 191.4 408.7</td>
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<td>Reclamation of degraded industrial sites by private beneficiaries</td>
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<td>Revolving funds for urban upgrading</td>
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<td>Upgrading of social structure</td>
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<td>22.9 35.4 19.8 78.1</td>
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<td>PIA - Integrated Projects for social and economic Area development</td>
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<td>68.8 125.4 194.2</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<td>15.3 8.9 49.6 218.0 322.4 615.2 12.8 11.4 32.0 216.5 502.1 762.3</td>
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Latest data available at 06/30/2005 * for the period 2000-6 data refer to financial plan
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<td>Revolving fund for grants of equity loans</td>
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Latest data available at 06/30/2005 * for the period 2000-6 data refer to financial plan
### RICERCA, INNOVAZIONE E TRASFERIMENTO TECNOLOGICO

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<td>Creation of incubators for enterprises</td>
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<td>Dissemination of opportunities for innovation with SMEs</td>
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*for the period 2000-6 data refer to financial plan*

### DIFFUSIONE DELLA SOCIETÀ DELL'INFORMAZIONE

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<td>Development and application of services related with telecommunications</td>
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<td>Support to computerization for SMEs</td>
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<td>Support to spread of e-commerce and ICT</td>
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### TUTELA DELL'AMBIENTE

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creation of plants for treatment, storage, removal and recycling of industrial waste</td>
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<td>Aid to environmental investments of SMEs</td>
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