

ECONOMIC AND LOCAL PROMOTION SECTOR

1. Management of financial tools to support corporate investments

One of the most important local attractiveness and competitiveness factors is the possibility of providing enterprises with manufacturing investments support tools. The Ferrara area is characterised by a complex system of Community, national and local tools that are likely to fully meet all investment needs that companies might have.

SIPRO manages a few tools to support corporate investments, to foster the settlement and strengthening of enterprises within the local district, in close co-operation with local authorities.

Accomplished Projects

- **Regional Agreement for Ferrara**
Proponent: Provincial Authority of Ferrara, in its capacity as promoter
Duration: 1998-2008
Summary:
The Regional Agreement for Ferrara has been subscribed by different local stakeholders (enterprises, Local authorities, industrial and trade associations, etc.) to identify shared development goals, by means of integrated manufacturing and infrastructural action programmes.
It is a tool to support private and public investments, made by SME's settled within the Objective 2 area and by Local authorities.
SIPRO is responsible for the management of this tool. It establishes relationships between enterprises and the Ministry of Industry and Trade, and it monitors and adjusts the implementation procedures.
The second call for proposal phase is about to be concluded. As many as 25 projects have been funded, including 4 infrastructural projects, for a total of 48.21 million euro of investments, 14.11 million euro of investment grants and 264 new jobs, with the involvement of 18 enterprises.
- **F.R.I.S. Fund (Revolving Fund for Innovation and Development Fund)**
Proponent: Provincial Authority of Ferrara as promoter
Duration: 2004 - 2006
Summary:

FRIS is a tool developed by SIPRO, the Provincial Authority of Ferrara and Cassa di Risparmio, which is intended to create synergies between local stakeholders and to support local enterprises to access soft loans for innovative investments. Companies receive contributions toward interest payments on loans, up to 80 percent of the investment, at much lower interest rates than those applied on the market, that are made available in a very short time.

- Info Desk
Duration: since 2001
Summary:
SIPRO informs enterprises that intend to make investments about the possible available funds in the Provincial Authority of Ferrara, by means of two InfoDesks located in Ferrara and Copparo and of an on-line database.
The Infodesks are managed by skilled staff that supports and guides enterprises to select the best financial tools for the investments to be made and to deal with all the necessary application forms and formalities.

2. European Partnerships for the local development of Ferrara

Sustainable development is one of the main goals underlying the policies pursued by the European Union, the Emilia-Romagna Regional Authority and the Provincial Authority of Ferrara.

Securing energy supplies, transport sustainability, environmental protection, sustainable management of natural resources and the interactions of these elements with human activities are the main aims pursued by this partnership, against the above-mentioned background.

SIPRO is actively engaged in achieving these goals, through the identification of actions aimed at balancing environmental protection and local social and economic development needs.

Implemented Projects

- EcoIAND (An Ecological Approach for the Next Decades)
Proponent: Community Initiative Programme (CIP) Interreg 3c
Duration: April 2003 – March 2006
Summary
Based on the needs expressed by the local social and business community, SIPRO has designed and led the project by creating an international partner network, including the Provincial Authority of Ferrara, other Italian, Irish, Spanish and Hungarian development agencies and Spanish local authorities.
EcoIAND envisages the implementation of a pilot project for the innovative management of an already existing industrial area. The project has allowed to draft a manual of shared best practices that might be transferred also to other areas. It has also allowed to develop multimedia environmentally-friendly criteria.
- TRATOKI (Transregional Toolkit for Micro Enterprises):
Programme: Interreg IIIc
Duration: 1/1/04-31/12/06
Summary
SIPRO is a partner of a project for the exchange, transfer and joint development of financial instruments and supporting measures for micro enterprises and start-ups, promoting job creation and entrepreneurship in the 9 participating regions and beyond. The product of this co-operation is the TRATOKI Toolkit Support and Finance for Small Enterprises.

- ENERGY'REGIO , sub project ESME (Energy Efficiency in SMEs)
Programme: Interreg 3c
Duration: September 2005- September 2007
Summary
The project aims to develop a model to increase SME's awareness about the high importance of how energy use affects both costs and environment. ESME is also thought to develop, test and evaluate models in order to achieve cost-savings and environmental protection.

3. Technological Innovation

Implemented Projects

- A Protocol entered with the Faculty of Economics Spin-off Centre of the University of Ferrara.
Summary
This protocol is intended to apply university scientific research to high-technology business solutions.
SIPRO has developed this tool to support and coach researchers in starting up their own business initiatives and to give them priority in allowing them to settle down within the business incubator network.
- Protocol for innovation with the University of Ferrara, the Provincial Authority of Ferrara and CNA (National Confederation for the Craft Sector)
Summary
This protocol is devoted to supporting the promotion of local SME's innovation and to fostering the collaboration between the business world, the public administration, Universities and research centres. The initiative is promoted by CNA (National Confederation for the Craft Sector) of Ferrara in collaboration with Ecipar (a training association), the Faculty of Economics of the University of Ferrara and SIPRO.
- FIDA Fund
SIPRO manages the FIDA fund in the framework of the Lower Ferrara District Area Programme Conference to support Municipalities in their investments for the development of business and manufacturing activities.

4. Attracting investments and promoting local development

SIPRO is the agency that allows the local business community to integrate three specific processes to be implemented in the framework of local development projects, namely:

1. the specific knowledge of the social and economic mechanisms that regulate local development;
2. the ability to manage and monitor the whole project cycle (with special reference to European and local partnership projects);
3. the ability to identify the local system internal and external resources (European, national and regional funds) enabling the implementation of the local development programme and the related management tools.

Implemented Projects

- Investinferrara: territorial marketing initiative
Proponent: Provincial Authority of Ferrara, Objective 2funds
Duration: 2001 – 2007

Summary

This initiative is aimed at attracting investments to the local area by means of a set of tools to be shared by all the local stakeholders (brochures, web site, press campaign) providing prospective investors with a comprehensive information about the local business settlement opportunities (available industrial sites, research centres, incentives, etc...)

- Social–economic studies and analyses

Proponent: Municipality of Argenta – Local Agreement for Argenta

Duration: 2002-2006

Summary

This study has allowed to outline a strategic plan shared by the local stakeholders to identify the guidelines towards a premium quality development process within the Argenta territory.

Our partners in Italy

SIPRO has been fully operational for more than thirty years. During this long period of time, it has established a network of relations with institutional partners at a local, national and international level. It is an asset that is made available to all its partners to design and implement development projects.

SIPRO is ready to co-operate with all its network partners to develop projects.

Its main partners are:

- AISLO
- Aster
- Ervet
- Nomisma
- EuroBic Toscana Sud
- AIDA (National Development Agency Network)
- Promo (Development agency of Modena)
- Soprip (Development agency of Parma)
- Sapro (Development agency of Forlì Cesena)
- Stepra (Development agency of Ravenna)
- Provincial Authority of Venice
- EuroBic Toscana Sud
- National Observatory of the Chemical Sector (c/o MAP)
- Informest
- University of Ferrara
- ENEA-CNR
- COsecon

Our partners abroad

In view of the new Structural Funds reform, following the membership of new member states to the European Union, SIPRO has started developing a new international network, also including the new member states.

A few partners are:

- State of Santa Catarina (Brazil)
- Giurgiu County (Romania)
- LDA London Development Agency (United Kingdom)
- Karlsruhe Land (Germany)
- Oxfordshire – Oxford Innovation Center (United Kingdom)
- Rhône-Alpes Genopole of Grenoble (France)
- Jonkoping Region (Sweden)
- Kaliningrad
- Jetro Japanese Trade Organisation (Japan)
- Udaras na Gaeltachta Development Agency (Ireland)
- Ajuntament de Granollers (Spain)
- Ayuntamiento de Ciudad Real (Spain)
- Diputacion de Granada (Spain)
- Fundacion Ferrol Metropol Development Agency (Spain)
- Dél-Dunántuli Regionális Fejlesztési Ugyvokség Kht (Hungary)
- Investitionsbank Berlin (Germany)
- Vienna Business Agency (Austria)
- Business Innovation Center of Spisska Nova Ves (Slovakia)
- CPEM Center for the Promotion of Employment in Micro Enterprises (France)
- Zala County Foundation for Enterprises Promotion (Hungary)
- Malopolska School of Public Administration (Poland)
- Development Agency of Bisadoa Region (Spain)

- Yorkshire Enterprise Limited Venture Capital (United Kingdom)
- Regional Development Center Koper Development Agency (Slovenia)
- Industrial Development Agency Pola Development Agency (Croatia)
- Nottingham Region (United Kingdom)
- Local Futures Group (London)
- Region of Macedonia (Greece)
- Regional Centre for SME and development (Serbia)
- Regional Agency for the development of SMEs ALMA MONS (Serbia)
- CEA Croatian Employers Association (Croatia)
- TEULEDA Local Economic Development Agency (Albania)
- NERDA Development Association (Bosnia)

Acknowledgements and awards

SIPRO experience has been acknowledged as a best practice in different contexts:

2007

QUALITY AWARD FOR THE PROJECT SUBMITTED IN THE **SFIDE 2007** COMPETITION. The challenge: building the foundations to define a new "Agreement for the relaunch of the Argenta territory, by enhancing the quality of its industrial sites, through actions aimed at supporting new enterprises in the innovation and knowledge economy sectors and through the creation of business opportunities starting from local resources.

The Committee in charge of selecting projects for the **OPEN DAYS on Local development 2007**, organised within the framework of the Public Function Department Empowerment Programme, has included the InvestInFerrara project among the most innovative economic development actions designed by national and local Development Agencies. The Committee has recognised SIPRO to be an efficient development agency specialized in attracting investments by means of farsighted, high-quality and effective projects, capable of providing the local business community with services aimed at enhancing its competitiveness and attractiveness.

2006

SIPRO received an award for the innovativeness and quality of its "Investinferrara" web site during the **World Investment Forum**, held in France, in La Baule, (with the participation of the major European industrial promotion agencies)

SIPRO took part in **SFIDE 2006**, a competition promoted by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, whose central theme was local innovation policies as a prerequisite for the creation of "social capital". The project that received the award during the Public Administration Forum concerned the promotion and enhancement of the incubator network.

2005

SIPRO received an award for the best territorial marketing project promoted by the Polytechnic of Milan during the first "**Expo Italia Real Estate**" edition.

SIPRO received an award from the Department for Local Economic Development and the PA Forum during the **SFIDE 2005** event for the Investinferrara project. The challenge was devoted to "innovative territorial marketing actions" by means of a work-in-progress assessment and best practices promotion process aimed at identifying, collecting, and disseminating successful local development initiatives.