



## **ABRUZZO TOWARDS 2030: ON THE WINGS OF L'AQUILA**

Project co-financed by Comitato Abruzzo - Business Association and Unions (Fondo di intervento a favore della popolazione abruzzese) and by the Department for Development and Economic Cohesion in the Ministry of Economic Development (National Operational Program "Governance and Technical Assistance ERDS 2007 – 2013)

### **Firms' networks, skills and competences:**

#### **Linkages between universities, research centres and the business community**

5 July 2012 - 15.30-18.30

Università degli Studi dell'Aquila, via Giovanni Falcone 25 - Coppito, 67100 L'AQUILA  
Auditorium

*Based on the OECD-University of Groningen analysis and the discussion at the Assergi Forum of 17 March 2012, this workshop aims at discussing conditions, actors and instruments for a long-term economic development strategy in Abruzzo.*

*The following themes and issues for discussion will be introduced by the OECD-University of Groningen team; a discussion will follow among all the invited stakeholders.*

#### **1. Building on existing regional competitive advantages**

This session will discuss the coherence between the industrial and innovation policy framework, as set by the recently approved Law for Regional Development, and the most recent policy approaches to local economic development, in particular integrated regional policy platforms. Some of the key issues are: is there a unified vision on the role of Abruzzo Sviluppo with reference to the coordination of the Innovation Poles in Abruzzo? What actions can provide an effective connection among the poles and with the rest of the economy? What are the selection criteria of policy tools for each sector of the regional economy? An outstanding issue is how to improve the coordination between the different institutional levels (regional, national, European).

#### **2. Linkages between universities, research centres and the business community**

As the biggest firms/MNEs have strong and consolidated research collaborations with the University – particularly with the Faculties of Engineering and Science – what would be the possible strategy for SMEs' involvement (beyond the Innovation Poles)? One of the roles of the University and other Higher



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Education Institutions could be the training of specific profiles of innovation brokers, able to help the technological and organisational upgrading of firms in traditional sectors. Are there any initiatives in this sense and any good practice in the region? Do the instruments in use to improve the matching of skill supply and demand support the overall strategy of innovation upgrading of traditional sectors? How can universities and other institutions facilitate matching between supply and demand of specific skills (e.g. through web portals, placement offices, internships) both advanced and, particularly, intermediate?

#### **3. Skills and competences**

What are the needs for human resources in local firms – in particular SMEs – operating in advanced as well as traditional sectors? Beyond the need for graduates, there is an urgent necessity for secondary and vocational qualifications. Have the Region, other local administrations, secondary and vocational education institutes, and the whole regional education system envisaged coordinated lines of actions? The new regional policy framework should include training programs for the provision of intermediate and more specific/targeted skills: how to ensure their coherence with the demand from firms?

#### **4. The University's role in the development of the area hit by the earthquake and of the region**

Beyond training and research, universities play a key role in creating knowledge to the benefit of the social, cultural and economic development of our society. The main functions which may be performed by the University, research centres and other institutions in the reconstruction and development of L'Aquila and the region after the earthquake include:

- improving the "residential" role of the University, linked to the socio-economic and cultural fabric of the region;
- carrying out long-term lines of research to support the local reconstruction and development process, including experimentation and innovation in the quality and delivery of services;



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- providing research-based evidence for local policy design, progress monitoring and evaluation.
- facilitating local competence and capacity building , in particular in the public administration.

What are the feasibility, long-term sustainability and timeline of these opportunities?