

The Regional Policy for Research and Innovation: Innovation Clusters

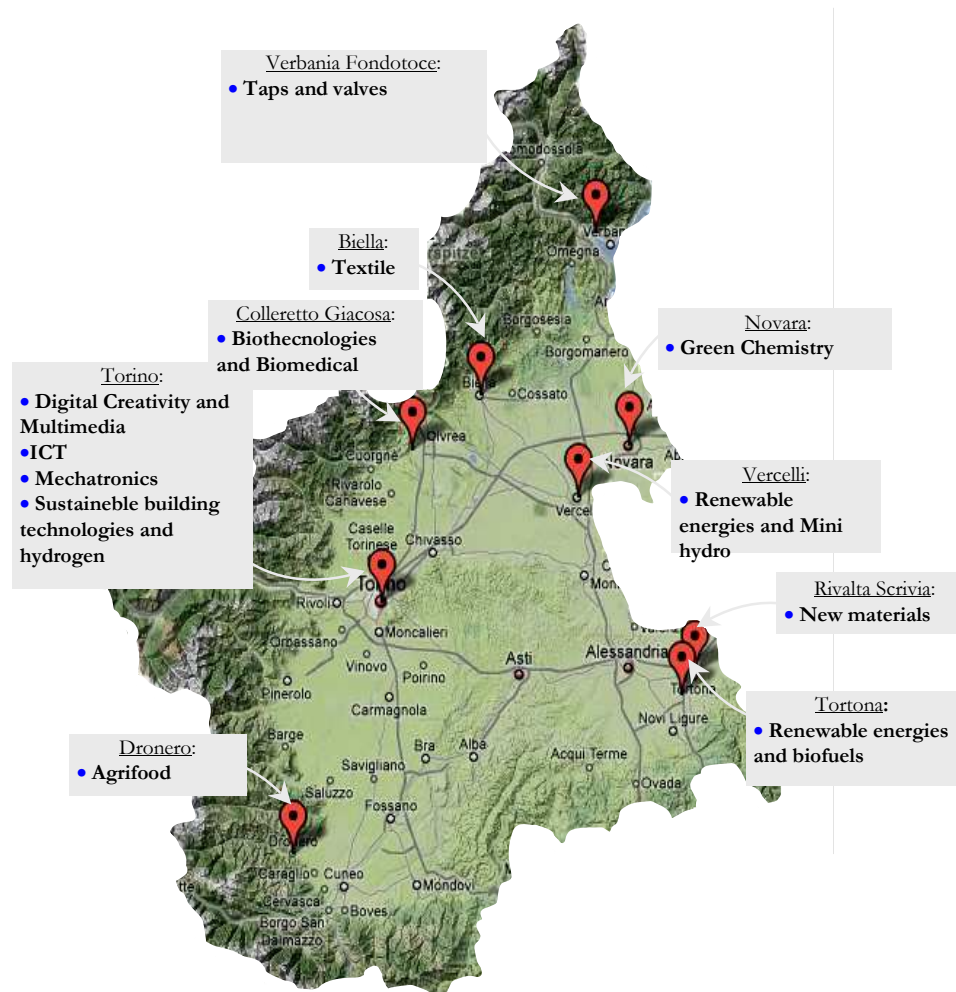
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Directorate of Industry and Productive Activities

Technological areas and key elements

- In 2009 Regione Piemonte created 12 Innovation Clusters in 12 different technological areas.
- Technological areas have been identified with the aim to promote and develop strategic sector within regional economic system and to promote and sustain traditional sectors in order to refocus the industrial competences.
- Each cluster is located in a specific geographical area on the basis of traditional vocations of territories, however each cluster operates at regional scale.
- A manager organisation (managing authority) for each cluster has been identified by Regione Piemonte through the submission of an action plan covering a time horizon of 5 years and in line with the refocusing strategy of Regional Technological and Scientific Parks.
- A cluster can be established as a consortium or as a ATS (temporary association) and it involves companies (small, medium and large), research organisations and centres, incubators and others actors of regional research and innovation system.
- Managing authorities are responsible to carry out the action plan and to pursue the policy's objectives, under regional guidelines.

Technological areas and key elements



KEY INNOVATIVES ELEMENTS OF INNOVATION CLUSTERS

- policy mainly focused on SMEs;
- central role of cluster managing authorities on marketing and animation activities;
- construction of new production chains, new processes and models, new technological/business opportunities, in order to promote a territorial refocusing;
- Strict linkage between Regional authorities and cluster managers; flexibility of funding procedures;
- Ongoing and ex post evaluation system: strong selection mechanism and funds allocation based on assessment of clusters activities;

Innovation Clusters are part of a wider regional policy aiming to enhance competitiveness and attractiveness of regional economic system through increasing of R&D activity. This objective is pursued through the following activity that clusters have to implement:

- Boosting cooperation and interaction between companies and exchange of knowledge, experiences and information among companies, research organisations and other actors of research and innovation system;
- Sharing of laboratories, infrastructures for research and intangibles assets;
- Interpreting and identifying companies technological needs in order to drive regional policy to support research and innovation;
- Catalyze public and private funds for new products or services development;
- Increase intersectorial technological knowledge transfer;
- Increase the attraction of productive investments;
- Favouring internationalisation process;
- Promoting entrepreneurship and business;
- Promoting exchange of qualified employee between companies and research organisation;
- Providing facilities and services with high added value;
- Identifying companies training needs;
- Promoting the participation of regional enterprises to European, National and Regional programs to support research and innovation;

Funding procedures

Piedmont Region supports Clusters both at management authority and companies level.

Since 2009 Clusters Managers have been financed within P.O.R. F.E.S.R. 2007/2013. 9 Million of Euro have been allocated to supporting investments in research infrastructures, animation and marketing activities, knowledge transfer programmes.

At companies level: more than 330 R&D and innovation cooperation projects have been financed on the basis of the following funding procedure:

- Entreprises associated to clusters submit project proposals to respective cluster managers on the basis of regional guidelines;
- Clusters managers prepare the “Annual programme for projects and services” structured in programmatic trajectories and development lines;
- Evaluation is made by technical experts and Finpiemonte S.p.A (RP development Agency) at 3 levels: overall strategy, programmatic trajectories and development lines, single projects

Regional Guidelines for “Annual program for projects and services”

The Annual Program is elaborated under the following main guidelines:

- selection process follows an application driven approach (proposals have to be market oriented and foresee a rapid transfer and direct application, also with an inter sectorial approach);
- small-medium size R&D projects, promoted by a partnership composed by an adequate number of SMEs, research organisations and other actors:
- fostering of inter-cluster initiatives;
- annual programs have to reach a significant critical mass in the long term, catalyzing territorial competences and capacities and identifying new bussines opportunities.

Technological area and Cluster denomination	Cluster Managing Authorities	Geographical area	Number of companies and research centres	Total Budget for Cluster 2009-2012 [ME]	R&D projects financed
Agrifood	Tecnogranda Spa	astigiano e cuneese	376	9,90	44
Sustainable building technologies and hydrogen - Polight	Environment Park Spa	torinese	152	13,28	43
Biotechnologies and Biomedical - Biopmed	Bioindustry Park – Silvano Fumero Spa	canavese e vercellese	80	7,30	29
Green Chemistry	Consorzio IBIS	novarese	27	5,92	12
Digital Creativity and Multimedia	Virtual Reality and Multimedia Park Spa	torinese	62	4,24	19
Renewable energies and biofuels - Polibre	Parco Scientifico e tecnologico della Valle Scrivia - PST	tortonese	54	9,38	20
Renewable energies e Mini hydro - Enermhy	Consorzio UN.I.VER	vercellese	118	9,83	26
ICT	Fondazione Torino Wireless	torinese e canavese	149	13,14	41
Components and system for renewable energies	Tecnoparco del Lago Maggiore Spa	verbano-cusio-ossola	58	3,74	13
Meccatronics - Mesap	Centro Servizi Industrie srl	torinese	170	21,45	36
New Materials - Innomat	Consorzio Proplast	alessandrino	115	8,24	38
Textile - Po.In.Tex	Città Studi Spa	biellese	66	4,82	11
TOTAL			1427	111	332

Focus on clean technologies

- 5 Clusters specifically dedicated to clean technologies (renewables, green building, green chemistry);
- Topic largely covered in technological trajectories and development lines of annual programs;
- More than 130 R&D projects financed;

Challenges and opportunities

- Reinforcing Regional Technological and Scientific Parks strategy avoiding inefficiencies of Cluster Managing Authorities and maintaining their strong key role;
- Identifying and promoting excellences;
- Rationalise existing Innovation Clusters to avoid overlapping of activities and to better allocate funding to research and innovation

CONTACTS

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