



REGIONE PUGLIA

Area Politiche per lo Sviluppo, il Lavoro e l'Innovazione
Servizio Ricerca Industriale e Innovazione

Institutional profile of the Apulia region

Apulia (in Italian: Puglia) is a region in south-eastern Italy bordering the Adriatic Sea in the east, the Ionian Sea to the southeast, and the Strait of Otranto and Gulf of Taranto in the south. Its southern portion known as Salento, a peninsula, forms a high heel on the "boot" of Italy. The region comprises 19.345 km² (7.469 square miles), and its population is about 4 million. It is bordered by the other Italian regions of Molise to the north, Campania to the west, and Basilicata to the southwest. It neighbours Greece and Albania, across the Ionian and Adriatic Seas, respectively.

Apulia is one of the twenty Regions of Italy which, together with the municipal and provincial government bodies, constitute the administrative infrastructure of the nation. Established in 1970 as part of a new system of de-centralized government, the regional administrations have acquired an increasing level of autonomy over the years and have effectively become local governments with extensive regulatory powers in a great number of areas. The 2001 reform of the Italian Constitutional Law increased multi-level governance, granting to councils all the administrative functions that are not otherwise reserved to higher levels of governance. Regional administrations are now responsible for policy making in the area of scientific and technological research and support to innovation for industrial sectors but have to observe some fundamental principles set by national law.

Following the 2001 reform of the Constitutional Law, Italian regions started reorganising their institutions in order to carry out the new legislative tasks imposed by the reform. Apulia's regional administration is divided into 8 main Departments for the coordination of integrated policies, each of which is responsible for a specific branch of the administration's activities. The principal authority in charge of economic development and innovation policies is the "Area Politiche per lo sviluppo economico, lavoro e innovazione" – Regione Puglia.

The main focus of activities for the **Department of Economic Development, Employment and Innovation** is to sustain the conditions for growth, competitiveness, innovation and international development of regional businesses, whilst enhancing and promoting the distinctive strengths and factors of attraction of the local economy.

The Department's main operations include the development and provision of:



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- incentives for local businesses with a view to encouraging the formation of business cluster, facilitating access to credit and supporting business start-ups by female entrepreneurs
- incentives to support business investments for the start-up of small and medium sized enterprises and the industrial development of large companies
- business promotion support services and initiatives, aimed to foster international market expansion by local companies
- programmes of support and assistance aimed at boosting local development, employment and business competitiveness
- local marketing initiatives to attract business investments to the regional incentives and support for business research, innovation and technology transfer
- support for improving the infrastructure of industrial estates.

Since the reform of the constitutional law the regional administration in Puglia has invested in improving co-ordination between different government levels. Horizontal co-ordination mechanisms have been adopted to improve coordination between regional actors. The two most important mechanisms are the Progetto Gaia (the **Gaia Project**) and the mentioned inter-departmental working group created for the Piano Straordinario per il Lavoro 2011 (**Extraordinary Employment Plan 2011**).

The 'Progetto Gaia' was introduced in 2008 (regional law n. 161/2008, 22nd February) and reformed completely the internal organisation of regional departments. Before the implementation of the project the regional governance system was organised in offices dealing with specific economic sectors (agriculture, craftsmanship, etc.). The project introduced 'super-managers' that supervise 8 general directorates promoting the horizontal integration of common issues across different economic sectors. This reform greatly improved the understanding of common needs and the integration between different policy initiatives.

With a view to governing R&D and technology transfer activities in Apulia more efficiently, in 2004, the regional administration set up the **Regional Agency for Technology and Innovation (ARTI)** with the aim of promoting and consolidating the regional system of innovation and supporting the implementation of regional strategies



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for innovation and business competitiveness.. ARTI collects statistical data and carries out evaluations that are used in regional policy design in Puglia.

Other relevant stakeholders in innovation policy are **InnovaPuglia** and **PugliaSviluppo**. InnovaPuglia is an intermediate body that was created in 2008 from the merger between the science and technology park Tecnopolis Scrl and FinPuglia SpA, the regional financial agency. InnovaPuglia provides technical support to the regional administration in the implementation of regional technological investment programmes and is the public agency for ICT. PugliaSviluppo is another intermediate body that provides support to the regional administration in defining and implementing initiatives in support of innovation and internalization of local productive systems.

Economic profile of the Apulia region

The region's contribution to Italy's gross value added was around 4,6% in 2000, while its population was 7% of the total. The per capita GDP is about the 66% of the national average and represents about 72% of the EU27 average. Apulia is a Convergence region and manages for the period 2007-2013 about 2,7 M€ of the FESR programme and 640 K€ of the FSE programme plus other funds coming from interregional and national programmes.

Among the strengths of the regional productive system is the relatively high productivity of the agricultural sector, a number of sectors (agro-food, sofas, chemicals, non-metallic minerals) which are oriented towards non-local markets, a strong local private entrepreneurial climate (97% of firms are privately owned), and the tourism sector. On the other hand, the region also faces a number of challenges including poorly developed business services, a low rate of development of intermediate industry, the predominance of family-owned small enterprises (95% of firms have less than 20 employees), low rates of exporting firms, and a low level of integration of the agro-food chain. Sectors experiencing difficulties include basic engineering, construction, steel, chemical and textiles.

In comparison with the country as a whole, the economy of Apulia is characterised by a greater emphasis on agriculture and services and a smaller part played by industry. The



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share of gross value added generated by the agricultural and services sectors in the total gross value added of the region is in fact above the national average, whereas the share of industry is below.

Agriculture in Apulia is largely modern and intensive, allowing the region to be at the first places in Italy for the production of many products, like "hard" grain and tomatoes in the Foggia province, besides table grapes and oil, with around 50 millions olive trees. Also important is the production of salad, artichokes, fennel, cabbage, celery and oats. The old primacy for almond production has on the contrary been lost. In specific areas fruit cultivation is also relevant, like peaches and kiwi.

In the last 20 years the industrial base of the region's economy has changed radically. Alongside highly capital-intensive large-scale plants - such as ILVA (steel-making) in Taranto and Eni (petrochemicals) in Brindisi and Manfredonia - a network of small and medium-sized firms has gradually expanded, and these now provide approximately 70% of the jobs in the region. The majority of such firms are financed by local capital.

As a result, highly specialised areas have developed, producing on a scale not only of domestic but also of international significance: food processing and vehicles in the province of Foggia; footwear, textiles, wood and furniture in the Barletta area north of Bari; wood and furniture in the Murge area to the west; engineering, rubber, wood and furniture and computer software around Bari itself; textiles and clothing at Monopoli-Putignano to the south; and footwear and textiles in the Casarano area. In certain of these sectors - especially textiles, clothing, footwear, vehicles and food products - the region has attained a significant degree of competitiveness with foreign producers, even if the competition from emerging countries and the recent financial crisis represent a concrete risk.

Among the regions located in South Italy, Apulian economy showed the best performance in recent years. Regional GDP growth scored a +1,8%, compared to +1,5% for Italy and +0,7% for South Italy, mainly because of the service sector growth (+2,9%) and industry growth (+0,7%), while agriculture showed a noticeable drop (-8,8%). GDP per capita at market prices showed a +3,9% growth, compared to +3,0% national and +2,6% South Italy.



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The relatively wide availability of incentives for investments and the deployment of regional policies specifically targeted to innovation helped the growth of the local production system and the attraction of more than 40 international industrial groups operating in the fields of aerospace, automotive, chemistry and ICT.

The regional innovation system includes five universities and about 25 public research centers, enrolling about 103.000 university students and employing more than 5.000 researchers. R&D employees grown of 24% in the period 2000-2005, while in the same period the average growth rate in Italy was only 9%. The intermediary network is also well developed, including 7 interregional Centres of Competence, 3 Enterprise Incubators, 1 EIC, 1 BIC, 2 Science Parks, 7 Industrial Liaison Offices and 4 Technological Districts (ICT, Energy, Mechatronics, Agro-food).

Apulia Region ROP Overview

The Regional Strategic Document

The **Regional Strategic Document** (DSR) 2007-2013 was compiled following the guidelines and deadlines set at EU level as well as those guidelines and intervention procedures identified at central level with regards to the definition of the National Strategic Framework (QSN) and the Strategic Reference Document for the Mezzogiorno (DSM). The Regional Strategic Document (DSR) outlines objectives, priorities and forms of financial and planning integration to make use of EU and national funds (FAS resources) in the period 2007- 2013.

The regional unitary Programme is based on some key principles: conducting ("concertazione" in Italian), concentration, integration and participated programming. Conducting means an active involvement of institutional and social economic bodies in the planning and implementation stages. Concentration foresees a focusing of interventions on strategic priorities, avoiding their dispersion. The integration of policies, financial sources, interventions and planning is another principle that should characterized programmes. At last, participated programming means that inhabitants are invited to take part in the programming process, thus promoting forms of active citizenship.



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The preparation process of the DSR began on the 28 September 2005 when the Regional Council approved the Communication by the Budget and Planning Councillor entitled "Definition of the strategic document for the Apulia Region for the period 2007-2013 - Introductory document" and the "Directives to initiate the planning process for use of European Structural Funds 2007-2013". The aim of this communication was to illustrate the new EU and national trends with regard to the new planning period 2007-2013 and, on the other hand, to begin a definition of a first appraisal of strengths and criticisms that have characterised at regional level the EU and national programming procedures 2000-2006.

The regional Council identified nine thematic priorities with regards to which it organised, from November 2005, the involvement and participation of institutional and social economic bodies:

1. Sustainable urban development
2. Research, innovation and aid to businesses
3. Training for the skilled labour market
4. Environment Energy and risk prevention
5. Local tourist systems
6. Health and Social services
7. Information Society
8. Transport and infrastructure
9. Rural Development

The Regional Strategic Document (DSR) draw the vision that should attend programming process, making at first Apulia Region a more open, innovative, competitive and inclusive region with new and better employment opportunities and combining the sustainability and competitiveness objectives with those of cohesion and the standard and quality of life. According to this vision, in the DSR are defined the following general objectives¹:

- Strengthen the main local attractions through improving accessibility, guaranteeing high quality services and safeguarding environmental protection
- Promote innovation, entrepreneurial activity and development of the economy, also through optimising use of skilled work and productive districts;

¹ According to the transversal objectives: environment, equal opportunities, territorial aspect of the development, cross-border, transnational and interregional and proximity cooperation, development of participation and contribution to the building of a new public ethos



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- Foster conditions of employability, cohesion and social inclusion

The Regional Strategy for Research and Innovation

More specifically, for what concerns the research and innovation policies, Apulia Region decided to establish a specific Strategy, which is periodically updated. The main characteristic of the Strategy is a systemic vision of innovation which aims at the construction of regional system of innovation integrating the offer of research and high-level education with the demand of innovation and the participation to international networks.

From a critical assessment of the past experience, the document highlights the following programmatic items:

- To be able to catch the product/market innovation needs of a growing number of regional companies, starting from those that are more exposed to international competition and that faced in recent years deep reorganization and repositioning processes, both in traditional and high knowledge content sectors.
- To strongly support cooperation networks based on the innovation demand coming from SMEs and from those large enterprises that can act as flywheel for new value-added specialisations, exploiting the opportunities coming from the birth of productive districts² and from the presence of technological districts³ and poles, as well as from cooperative research initiatives involving companies and universities or research centers.
- To promote the aggregation among SMEs in traditional and advanced sectors, in order to qualify and diffuse competences and support the growth of social capital.
- To optimise the different cooperation networks at national and European level, also through twinning with more developed territories and regions, in order to strengthen the European research space and to support a wider mobility of people and ideas.

² A "Productive District" is an aggregation of companies in the same production sector or chain, not necessarily close in space, that share a common effort of increasing their competitiveness, cooperating with the local universities and research centers, the trade unions and the associations. A specific Regional Law individuates the regional productive districts

³ A "Technological District" is a body that foster the integration between the knowledge resources of universities and research centers and the innovation needs of companies in specific technological areas. They have been formally created in some Italian regions, including Apulia, thanks to a State-Regions agreement.



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The strategy aims at the growth of innovation demand, productivity, technological content of products and associated services, production chains internationalisation, looking at two main directions:

- The strategic and competitive repositioning of the regional offer in traditional manufacturing sectors (textiles and garments, shoes, agro-food, upholstered furniture, mechanics, etc.), with a chain approach.
- The development of sectors characterized by higher knowledge intensity and added value, like aeronautics, energy, biotechnologies, sensors, mechatronics, ICT and nanotechnologies.

The identified priority sectors are the following:

- Biotechnologies and life sciences
- Agro-food
- Technologies for energy and environment
- Aerospace
- Mechanics and mechatronics
- New materials and nanotechnologies
- ICT
- Logistics and production systems technologies

In these sectors the Regional Strategy aims to build wide networks of scientific, technological and application competences, with the needed critical mass for competing at international level for what concerns the scientific production, the technological development and the attraction of investments. These networks should promote competitiveness and innovation both in traditional and advanced sectors and in this perspective it is very important the regional strategy for integrating the R&I demand and offer through the promotion and funding of Technological Districts in the sectors of ICT, nanotechnologies, agro-food and mechatronics, aerospace and energy.

The described objectives are pursued by individuating 4 Intervention Axes structured in lines:



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AXE 1 – Supporting the innovation demand of regional companies
Line 1.1 – Diffusing entrepreneurship and innovation culture
Actions for promoting the scientific, technological and entrepreneurial culture; excellence training in science, technology and economy; company start-up in highly competitive sectors; support to organisational and technological change in regional companies.
Line 1.2 – Supporting industrial research
Incentives to SMEs for industrial research and pre-competitive development project, technical feasibility studies, patenting and other IPR; support to industrial projects of medium and large companies; support to technological audits and non-technological consultancy services.
Line 1.3 – Integrated innovation projects
Support to initiatives integrating production investments and R&I (PIA); support to industrial innovation projects (PII).
AXE 2 – Empowering the technological offer of the regional public research system
Line 2.1 – Empowering the strategic scientific-technological areas
Incentives to universities and public research centers for feasibility studies and strategic projects in regionally strategic ST sectors (aerospace and aeronautics, agro-food, health, biotechnology and medical technologies, renewable energy and rational use of energy).
Line 2.2 – Strengthening the scientific research centres
Funding for the empowerment of public and private research labs, supporting the further extension of the regional Laboratory Network ⁴ .
AXE 3 – Qualifying the innovation demand-offer match
Line 3.1 – High technology Districts
Further development of the already set up Technological Districts, also through international benchmarking of the regional economies, training actions, support to networking and monitoring.
Line 3.2 – Public-private laboratories networks
Reinforcement of Laboratory Network through promotion and coordination actions.
Line 3.3 – Regional network of Industrial Liaison Offices
Extension of the already existing Industrial Liaison Offices regional network to public research centers operating in the region (CNR, ENEA) and strengthening of its integration with other regional initiatives aimed at supporting industry-research cooperation (Laboratory Network, R&D, districts, etc.).
Line 3.4 – Innovation Poles
Support to the creation of innovation poles made up by groups of enterprises, research bodies and a managing body. These poles will be lead by the companies.
Line 3.5 – North-South exchange initiatives
Valorisation of good practices for the promotion and diffusion of innovation established in competitiveness and convergence regions.
AXE 4 – Improving human capital in research and innovation
Line 4.1 – Qualifying human resources
Post-diploma and post-degree education; post-degree and research scholarships; support to researchers mobility to companies; excellence training.

⁴ The “Laboratory Network” is an initiative promoted by Apulia Region inside the State-Regions Framework Program Agreement for Research and supports the strengthening of public research centers technological offer in specific high technology sectors of regional interest.



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The lines of intervention defined in the Regional Strategy for Research and Innovation are implemented through the actions envisaged in the unified regional programming, with particular reference to NOP Research and Competitiveness (of super-regional nature), ROP ERDF, ROP ESF and PAR FAS.

The ERDF 2007-2013 in Puglia

The ROP ERDF is organized in 8 Priority Axes, 15 Specific Objectives, 38 Operational Objectives and 30 Lines of Intervention which together implement three main strategic priority policies:

1. Context policies

- Improving the infrastructural supply
- Offering a minimum set of basic collective services
- Regenerating the environment
- Improving the quality of urban life
- Integrating local development

2. Innovation and research policies

- Supporting businesses' path in technological innovation, dimensional growth and internationalisation
- Attracting new investments

3. Social inclusion policies (employment, training and welfare)

- Training (initial training for skilled work, higher and further education, active policies of employment and continuous training)
- Social inclusion and health (social and health infrastructure, to improve access to services, investments for the growth of care services to individuals and families)

Puglia ERDF ROP Structure	
AXE I	Promotion, distribution and optimising use of research and innovation for competitiveness purposes
AXE II	Sustainable and efficient use of environmental and energetic resources for development purposes
AXE III	Social inclusion and services to improve the quality of life and enhance territorial attractiveness
AXE IV	Optimising use of natural and cultural resources for enhancement and development purposes
AXE V	Networks and links to promote mobility
AXE VI	Competitiveness of productive and employment systems



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AXE VII	Competitiveness and enhancement of cities and urban systems
AXE VIII	Governance, institutional capacity and competitive and effective markets

The following table represents the financial plan for the implementation of ERDF ROP, highlighting for each Priority Axes the European funding and the national funding. It refers to total public expenditure amount and thus it does not include private co-funding, pursuant European Regulation 1828/06, Annex XVI/2.

Axis of reference	EU Contribution	National Funding	Total Funding	EU Funding rate
Axe I	290.500.000	290.500.000	581.000.000	50%
Axe II	454.000.000	454.000.000	908.000.000	50%
Axe III	285.000.000	285.000.000	570.000.000	50%
Axe IV	196.000.000	196.000.000	392.000.000	50%
Axe V	525.000.000	525.000.000	1.050.000.000	50%
Axe VI	551.000.000	551.000.000	1.102.000.000	50%
Axe VII	260.000.000	260.000.000	520.000.000	50%
Axe VIII	57.521.978	57.521.978	115.043.956	50%
TOTAL	2.619.021.978	2.619.021.978	5.238.043.956	50%

Priority Axes II, IV, V and VII implement the Context policies, Priority Axes I, VI implement the Innovation Policies and Priority Axe III implements the Welfare Policies. The Priority Axe VIII deals with governance and covers those technical activities that ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of the programme, also including evaluation strategy. A very short description of the Axes dealing with innovation follows.



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AXIS	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	OPERATIVE OBJECTIVES	LINES OF INTERVENTION
Axis I - Promotion, optimising use and distribution of research and innovation for competitiveness purposes	1 To promote research activities in business	1a) Increase the demand and inclination of businesses to invest in Research	1.1 To support business research activities
			1.2 To strengthen the scientific technological potential of the region to meet the demand of businesses
	1b) To develop contents, applications and advanced digital services.	2a) Boost the technological infrastructures of Digital Communication	1.3 To promote the expansion of digital infrastructure
		2b) Increase the use of innovative digital services in the PMI	1.4 To increase the use of TIC in the PMI
		2c) Support the promotion of public innovative digital services	1.5 To boost the development of public digital services
Axis VI - Competitiveness of productive systems and employment	To rise the competitiveness of productive systems, starting from the evolution of the competitive and technologic context that need strategies based upon an increased supply of qualified resources at territorial level and their high productive and technological specialisation.	a) To boost the growth of the productive fabric through integrated milieu projects promoted also by the Productive Districts, in order to support the innovation, logistics and integration of the production and marketing stages	6.1 Intervention to improve competitiveness of businesses
		b) To enlarge the supply of innovative financial instruments for the entrepreneurial regional system, to improve the level of capitalisation through the increase in risk capital (it refers to the macro-activity "access to microcredit")	
		c) To consolidate and extend the internationalisation processes of the Puglian productive system, through initiatives supporting regional or local development strategies for the internationalisation of SMEs, favouring the enlargement and upgrading of the workforce, as well as sustainable development	6.3 Intervention for territorial marketing and internationalisation of businesses and productive systems
		d) To improve the settlement conditions for Puglian businesses	6.2 Initiatives for infrastructures to productive settlements
Axis VIII - Governance, institutional capacity and competitive and effective markets	The objective of this axis is to help increase the capacity of public administrations to programme and manage the ERDF Operational Programme, especially for the reinforcement and participation of the economic and social partnership.	a) To develop the participation during the OP implementation and evaluation phases	8.1 Interventions to support participation during the implementation phase of the OP
		b) To support efficient and effective implementation of the OP	8.2 Technical assistance in the implementation of the OP
		c) To develop the information and publicity activities of the OP	8.1 Interventions to support participation in the implementation of the OP



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The ESF 2007-2013 in Puglia

The general objective of policies financed with ESF is that of achieving better conditions of employability, cohesion and social inclusion at regional and local level through:

1. Improving access to the labour market
2. Improving the adaptability of the workforce and businesses
3. Increasing investment in training

The ROP ESF is organized in 7 Priority Axes and 15 Specific Objectives

Puglia ESF ROP Structure	
AXE I	Adaptability
AXE II	Employability
AXE III	Social inclusion
AXE IV	Human capital
AXE V	Transnationality and interregionality
AXE VI	Technical assistance
AXE VII	Institutional capacity

The following table represents the financial plan for the implementation of ERDF ROP, highlighting for each Priority Axis the European funding and the national funding.

Axis of reference	EU Contribution	National Funding	Total Funding	EU Funding rate
Axe I	51.168.000	51.168.000	102.336.000	50%
Axe II	284.622.000	284.622.000	569.244.000	50%
Axe III	38.376.000	38.376.000	76.752.000	50%
Axe IV	204.672.000	204.672.000	409.344.000	50%
Axe V	12.792.000	12.792.000	25.584.000	50%
Axe VI	25.584.000	25.584.000	51.168.000	50%
Axe VII	22.386.000	22.386.000	44.772.000	50%
TOTAL	639.600.0000	639.600.0000	1.279.200.000	

The Axes I, IV, V are those dealing with innovation:

The Axe I - Adaptability is strictly related to the main characteristic of regional productive system: the high presence of small enterprises, which meet serious difficulties to facing the requalification of employees and to draw own professional needs connected to entrepreneurial purposes. Thus there is the need to joint in a systematic



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way the interventions about education with the requirements of the firms and productive systems, according to the different economic fields, productive chains and districts.

The general objective of Axe IV - Human capital – is improving the skill level of regional human capital, through the spreading and differentiation of the educational offer and, on the other hand, by increasing its quality, in order to achieve regional objectives of innovation and competitiveness.

The purpose of the Axe V - Transnationality and interregionality – is promoting the setting up and development of initiatives and networks at interregional and transnational level, with particular regard to the exchange of good practices.

A short description of the specific objectives related to each axe follows.

AXES	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES
AXE I – ADAPTABILITY	To develop continuous training systems and support worker adaptability
	To favour innovation and productivity through improved organisation and quality of work.
	To develop policies and services to foresee and manage changes, to promote competitiveness and entrepreneurship
AXE IV – HUMAN CAPITAL	Drawing up, introduction to and implementation of reforms in the education, training and work systems, in order to improve their integration and increase employability, with particular regard to vocational guidance.
	To increase participation in continuous training, also through provisions aimed at reducing the number of school drop-outs and gender disparity in some subjects
	To increase access to education, initial training, vocational and university training and to improve its quality
	To set up networks between universities, research & technological centres, the productive and institutional environment, with particular regard to the promotion of research and innovation
AXE V - TRANSNATIONALITY and INTERREGIONALITY	To promote the setting up and development of initiatives and networks at interregional and transnational level, with particular regard to the exchange of good practices.
AXE VII - INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY	To improve policies, planning, monitoring and evaluation at national, regional and local level in order to raise the level of governance of the territory
	To reinforce the institutional capacity and implementation systems of policies and programmes.