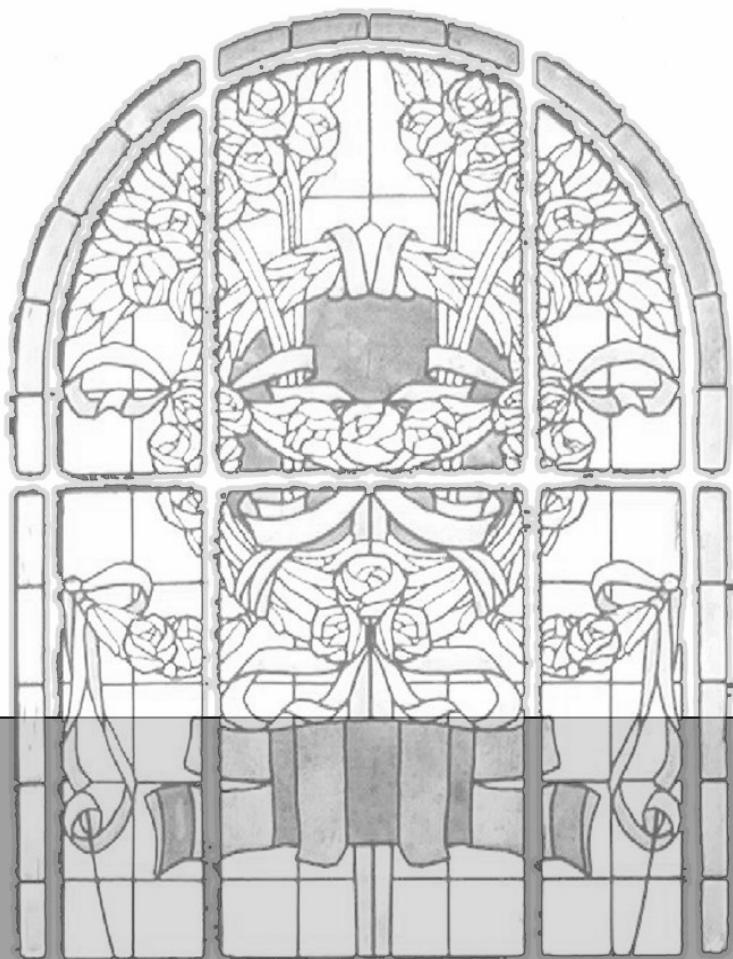


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REVEALED ITP AND PERCEIVED ITP: AN EX POST EVALUATION OF THE SULMONA - ALTO SANGRO INTEGRATED TERRITORIAL PROJECT

L. Murrau and M. Volpe



Ministero dello Sviluppo Economico
Dipartimento per lo Sviluppo e la Coesione Economica
Unità di Valutazione degli Investimenti Pubblici



The Public Investment Evaluation Unit (UVAL – *Unità di valutazione degli investimenti pubblici*) provides technical support to government bodies by preparing and disseminating methods for evaluating public investment programs and projects before, during and after the projects themselves, in part to optimize the use of EU Structural Funds. The unit is a part of the network of central and regional evaluation teams.

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*Revealed ITP and perceived ITP:
an ex post evaluation of the Sulmona - Alto Sangro
Integrated Territorial Project*

Abstract

One of the most important features of the CSF 2000-2006 was the realization of a significant part of its interventions through Integrated Territorial Projects (ITPs). Ten years later from the start of this experience it appears extremely useful to investigate the achievements of the interventions and the capacity of a local integrated policy to enhance positive effects on the territory. Even in Center-North regions integrated projects were spread extensively on the territories, while the methods of implementation were quite heterogeneous. It is in this context that the evaluation analysis of the ITP Sulmona - Alto Sangro of the Abruzzo region is embedded. The evaluation method adopted was based, on the one side, on a limited available documentation, on the other, on the information directly collected from local stakeholders involved in the implementation process. All the evaluation demands were answered by looking at the “*revealed ITP*”, namely the ITP reconstructed on the bases of all formal and institutional available information or, especially, observing the “*perceived ITP*”, namely the ITP reenacted from elements of self-evaluation directly collected from the people that actively participated in that experience. The ITP “limited freedom” negatively affected the definition strategy and operability of subjects during the construction phase. Although the scarce integration achieved, either the “*objective*” and “*subjective*” evaluation reveal a significant impact of the interventions on the territory, making this work an appreciable evaluation exercise from which to draft important lessons for public policies.

*PIT rivelato e PIT percepito:
una valutazione ex post del Progetto Integrato Terroriale
Sulmona - Alto Sangro 2000-2006*

Sommario

Una delle scelte forti del Quadro Comunitario di Sostegno 2000-2006 (QCS) è stata quella di realizzare una parte rilevante degli investimenti attraverso Progetti Integrati Territoriali (PIT). A dieci anni di distanza dall'avvio di quella esperienza è utile interrogarsi sul grado di raggiungimento degli obiettivi e sulla capacità di una politica di sviluppo locale integrata di generare effetti nel territorio. Anche nelle regioni del Centro-Nord la progettazione integrata ha assunto il carattere di fenomeno molto esteso, pur essendo alquanto eterogenee le modalità di attuazione. È in questo contesto che va inserita l'analisi valutativa del PIT Sulmona – Alto Sangro della regione Abruzzo. La modalità di valutazione adottata si è fondata, da un lato, sulla non sempre completa documentazione disponibile e, dall'altro, sulla interlocuzione diretta con i soggetti locali coinvolti nell'attuazione del PIT. A tutte le domande valutative si è cercato di rispondere sia attraverso “il PIT *rivelato*”, ovvero il PIT ricostruibile su base documentale sia, soprattutto, attraverso il “PIT *percepito*”, ossia il PIT ricostruibile attraverso elementi di autovalutazione raccolti dai soggetti che hanno partecipato a quell'esperienza. La “libertà limitata” del PIT ha inciso significativamente sulla definizione della strategia di intervento, condizionando l'operatività degli attori e la direzione delle risorse trasferite. Tuttavia, nonostante la modestia dell'integrazione conseguita, sia la valutazione “oggettiva” che quella “soggettiva” segnalano un elevato impatto degli interventi sul territorio, rendendo questo lavoro un esercizio di valutazione nel quale rintracciare significative lezioni a supporto delle politiche pubbliche.

This study introduces a series of Materiali UVAL dedicated to the evaluation of Territorial Integrated Projects' (ITP) results in the programming period 2000-2006, already concluded or near to their conclusion.

The published research inserts in the line "Impact evaluation of some ITP of the programming period 2000-2006 and of its determinants" as part of the Evaluation Plan of the regional policy 2007-2013, referred itself to the National Strategic Framework 2007-2013, and are conducted within the Evaluation unit for public investments (UVAL) of the Department for development and cohesion policy (DPS).

Nevertheless the integrated projects are often considered as sole innovative tool, the relevance of the project dimension and amount of resources involved by each ITP, make extremely worthy to dedicate to each ITP a unique evaluation, independent with respect the methods and results, assessing the achievement of their economic and social transformations goals. For each ITP an attempt to shed light on their results is made taking into account territorial specificities, human capital factors, institutional assets and constraints, failures of previous experience of development and public investments at local level, and other specificities belonging to each case.

The evaluation researches to be published on Materiali UVAL are, alongside the ITP Sulmona Alto Sangro (DOCUP Abruzzo), the ITP Salentino-Leccese (POR Puglia), the ITP Città di Napoli (POR Campania) end the ITP Alto Belice Corleonese (POR Sicilia).

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Introduction

One of the key decisions of the 2000-2006 CSF was to pursue the general objective and its specific objectives by implementing a substantial part of the investments through integrated projects, defined as “a set of highly consistent and connected intersectoral actions aimed at a common territorial development objective that justify a unitary approach to implementation”.

The underlying objectives and the preconditions were designed to ensure that the Integrated Territorial Project (ITP) did not become an unnecessary complication of the ordinary procedure.

Pursuing integration meant, for example, ensuring that the selected projects:

- were highly synergistic, generating economies of scope;
- were high quality;
- ensured compliance with the principles of integration and concentration, being based on an overarching concept of development that has been elucidated and agreed with the various actors of the local development;
- served to help understand the territory, i.e. to extract information from local players and identify the needs and priorities of the area;
- served to re-establish the relationship between the regional government and local authorities, clarifying and respecting their respective roles, which consist of programming, coordination and policy-setting on the one hand and management and development of needs and demand on the other.

Ten years on, it is useful to assess the degree to which the objectives have been achieved and the capacity of integrated local development policy to generate an impact on the territory. With this purpose, UVAL planned a number of evaluation studies of the integrated planning experiences in the Objective 1 Regions¹.

ITPs were also used extensively in the Objective 2 Regions, although approaches to implementation varied considerably with respect the Objective 1 Regions.

More specifically, in the regions of the Centre and North, the development and implementation of the ITPs were implemented autonomously, tough influenced by the

¹ The studies assessed the Salentino-Lecce ITP (ITP no. 9 of the Region of Puglia); the Città di Napoli ITP (Region of Campania); and the Alto Belice Corleonese ITP (ITP no. 19 Region of Sicily). See the bibliography in this report.

models adopted in the Southern regions but also by specific local experience, generating a wealth of diversity².

It was thought helpful to accompany the evaluation of the Objective 1 ITPs with the evaluation of an ITP in the Objective 2 area, which led to the selection of the Sulmona-Alto Sangro ITP (Region of Abruzzo).

The evaluation approach adopted was based on the limited documentation available (monitoring data, strategic plan of the ITP, regional planning documents, structural information on the area involved) and on direct interactions with a number of local actors and stakeholders involved in implementing the ITP.

The decision to draft a short report designed to answer the major questions that guided the analysis produced a streamlined research report organized by major evaluation questions:

- What is the real Sulmona Alto Sangro ITP? What objectives did it seek to achieve?
- Have the intervention measures, the resources allocated and the organizational approaches been appropriated to the purposes and objectives of the project?
- Has the ITP been an effective tool for developing consensus and identifying the needs of the territory? Has the existing partnership consolidated?
- Has the intervention effective? There have been significant impacts on the local economy?

We sought to answer all of the evaluation questions both through what was called the “revealed ITP”, namely the ITP that could be reconstructed on the basis of the “documentation”, i.e. all of the formal and institutional information available, and, above all, of what we called the “perceived ITP”, i.e. the ITP that could be reconstructed through the self-evaluations provided directly by the parties that participated in the project and the qualitative and quantitative information on the implementation of the project in the territory.

In many cases there was considerable divergence between the two reconstructions, and it was precisely on the basis of these differences that we sought to develop independent assessments, which are reported in the conclusions.

Chapter 1 seeks to reconstruct contextual information and respond to the evaluation questions that steered the analysis, taking the existing documentation as its starting point. Chapter 2 attempts to respond to the same evaluation questions by reconstructing

² FORMEZ, *Sostegno alla progettazione integrata nelle Regioni del Centro Nord*, 2005.

the territorial diagnosis and the intervention strategy adopted according to the “subjective” vision of the local actors.

In addition to summarising the main findings, the conclusions highlight the discrepancies between the two reconstructions for each theme and attempt to provide, with the support (where possible) of quali-quantitative analyses, an independent assessment of the project.

I. The Sulmona - Alto Sangro Integrated Territorial Project: the revealed ITP

I.1 Contents of the ITP: setting, mission and objectives

The territories of the ITP were identified by the Region of Abruzzo on the basis of the territorial zones provided for in the Regional Reference Framework and the perimeters identified in previous local development efforts. The eight zones involved all of the regional Objective 2 areas, which were aggregated on both a provincial (Pescara and Teramo) and sub-provincial (the others) basis.

In February 2003 the 8 ITPs were approved:

- in the Province of Chieti: Chieti Zone ITP, Lanciano Zone ITP, Vasto S. Salvo Zone ITP;
- in the Province of L'Aquila: Avezzano Zone ITP, L'Aquila Zone ITP, Sulmona - Alto Sangro Zone ITP;
- in the Province of Pescara: Pescara Zone ITP;
- in the Province of Teramo: Teramo Zone ITP.

The ITP for the Sulmona Alto Sangro zone is a project framework involving thirty municipalities (see Figure I.1)³. As regards the resident population, the largest towns are Sulmona (25,327 inhabitants), Pratola Peligna (7,959), and Castel di Sangro (5,905). There are a further 11 small towns (between one and three thousand inhabitants) and no fewer than 14 very small towns (fewer than one thousand inhabitants).

Over the last 15-20 years the territory saw its population decline, although the downward trend in fact reversed during the period in which the ITP was being implemented: the resident population fell from 67,663 inhabitants in 1991 to 66,161 in 2001, before beginning to rise in 2006 with 66,676 which became 66,954 in 2008 (see Table I.9). The depopulation of the area is an especially negative development if one considers the fact most of this emigration represents a brain drain on the territory: the primary emigrants are young people with a high level of educational attainment seeking better professional opportunities in the more advanced areas of the country. Depopulation is accompanied by a low average population density, which in the area covered by the ITP is 52.47 inhabitants per km², compared with 156.6 for the Province of L'Aquila, 124.44 for the Region of Abruzzo and 200.85 for Italy as a whole.

³ Alfedena, Ateleta, Barrea, Castel di Sangro, Civitella Alfedena, Opi, Pescasseroli, Pescocostanzo, Rivilondoli, Rocca Pia, Roccaraso, Scontrone, Villetta Barrea, Anversa degli Abruzzi, Bugnara, Campo di Giove, Cansano, Cocullo, Corfinio, Introdacqua, Pacentro, Pettorano, Pratola Peligna, Prezza, Raiano, Roccacasale, Scanno, Sulmona, Villalago and Vittorito.

Figure I.1 - Sulmona Alto Sangro Zone ITP



Source: FORMEZ, *Sostegno alla progettazione integrata nelle Regioni del Centro Nord*, 2005

In the province involved (in this case the Province of L'Aquila), the Region identified the entity responsible for the ITP. Although the territory had been involved in previous territorial development initiatives , including the Valle Peligna Pact (which involved the mountain community of Peligna and the municipality of Sulmona) and various projects of Community interest (PCI), the ITP was in fact the sole source of funding for the development of the area during the period.

The mission identified by the municipalities involved in the ITP can be summed up in the following general objective: “The provision of incentives and support for the creation of aggregate area supply of goods and services on the basis of the specific territorial, environmental, cultural and productive features of the area”. More specifically, it seeks to develop the classic local products of the various sectors in which it is possible to create critical mass and the segments in which territories of varying size within the reference area have specialised, such as: sustainable tourism in line with the European Charter; cultural heritage: traditions, recovery of idiosyncratic resources, cultural events; local products and traditional trades; craft and industrial production”⁴. It underscores the attention that the policy focuses on the specific features of the territory and appears to clearly identify three areas of intervention: sustainable tourism, integrated development of cultural and identity resources, and craft and industrial products.

⁴ Amministrazione Provinciale dell'Aquila, *Documento Strategico Sulmona Alto Sangro ITP 2000-2006*.

As regards the first two areas of intervention, the policy reflects the characteristics of the territory covered by the ITP, which has abundant natural and cultural resources. In fact, 21 of the 30 towns in the ITP are located between the National Park of Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise and the Majella National Park; 28 of the 30 towns are in Sites of Community Importance (SCIs); and 19 of the 30 are in Special Protection Areas (SPAs). In addition, there are three Nature Reserves located outside parks. The large proportion of natural land and protected areas is indicated as one of the strengths of the ITP programming document. Other strong points of greatest importance for the implementation strategy of the ITP are the presence of ski infrastructure and schools, which gradually fostered winter sports tourism, supported by the installation of snow making equipment; the substantial supply of accommodation (number of beds) and the quality of the tourism/hotel system; easy access from major cities (Rome, Pescara, Naples); an excellent level of artistic and cultural heritage; a long tradition of craft industry (workshops in historic town centres) and traditional food preparation (local salami and other sausage products, dairy products, sweets and breads); and well educated young people.

These strengths are offset by weaknesses, represented by breakdowns that the ITP seeks to impact in order to reduce a phenomenon, remove an obstacle, halt or reverse a trend. The various weak points identified in the programme document include the demographic decline affecting the internal areas and the significant aging of the population and farmers in particular. The area is also affected by organisational shortcomings in its cultural resources (a lack of service companies and/or cooperatives, an absence of tour operators or other intermediaries, low promotional capacity outside the territory); inadequate internal links between towns; a lack of material and social infrastructure; a low propensity for cooperation among enterprises and local government, which limits the area's capacity to develop a vision of community, so essential to developing public goods.

I.2 Were analysis and strategy consistent? The intervention measures for the ITP and resources allocated

The first analytical objective of this study was to determine the degree of consistency between the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the ITP area, the development of the strategy and the implementation of interventions. These are three phases that take place at distinct moments in time but call for a high degree of interdependence and consistency in order for the ITP approach to generate appreciable impacts on the territory.

The Sulmona Alto Sangro ITP pursued its strategy through three priority axes and seven specific measures, organised as reported in Table I.1:

Table I.1 - Description of axes and measures under the ITP

AXIS 1: Reinforcing the context
<i>Measure 1.2 – Improvement of the infrastructural endowment</i>
AXIS 2: Innovation and expansion of the productive base
<i>Measure 2.1 – Modernisation, consolidation and expansion of the productive system;</i>
<i>Measure 2.2 – Acquisition of real services by SMEs;</i>
<i>Measure 2.3 – Research and development;</i>
AXIS 3: Valorisation of the territory
<i>Measure 3.2 – Initiatives to safeguard and develop environmental resources;</i>
<i>Measure 3.3 – Support for entrepreneurial projects to develop the environmental and historical-cultural heritage;</i>
<i>Measure 3.4 – Initiatives to safeguard and develop cultural resources.</i>

Even at this stage it is necessary to formulate a number of observations concerning the structure of the ITP. The determination of the ITP's strategy was not so much the result of a true programming exercise but is instead a corollary of the regional unified programming document (DOCUP). More specifically, the axes, measures and actions underpinning the ITP strategy are in fact a derivation of the corresponding axes, measures and actions of the DOCUP of the Region of Abruzzo.

This fact influenced the action of the partnership, offering little room for manoeuvre during the construction of the ITP, and impacted the definition of the ITP's strategy itself, which was not fully consistent with the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the territory and, moreover, is not supported by the identification of measurable indicators of the impact of the ITP actions.

It was, in other words, a “limited freedom” ITP, in which the sectors of intervention, actors and management of the resources transferred were influenced *ex ante*.

On the financial front, the total resources available to the Sulmona Alto Sangro ITP amounted to about €18 million for 2000-2006, of which about 38 per cent from the EU (European Regional Development Fund), about 44 per cent from national funds and about 19 per cent from regional funds, as shown in Table I.2, which also classifies the financial weight of each axis and measure in the ITP.

The strategic axes of the ITP that received the most financial support were Axes 2 and 3, with €8,787 million and €5,670 million respectively, appropriated for “innovation and expansion of the productive base” and “developing the territory”. Within Axis 2, Measure 2.1 (*modernisation, consolidation and expansion of the productive system*) received half of the resources available for the axis, while Measures 2.2 (*acquisition of real services by SMEs*) and 2.3 (*research and development*) received equal support. Within Axis 3, about 60 per cent of the resources went to Measure 3.3 for *support for entrepreneurial projects to develop the environmental*

and historical-cultural heritage. The remaining funds were divided among *initiatives to safeguard and develop environmental resources* (Measure 3.2) and *cultural resources* (Measure 3.4). Axis 1, devoted to “reinforcing the context”, received €3,389 million, which were deployed in a single measure for *infrastructure development initiatives* (Measure 1.1).

Table I.2 - Financial plan of the 2000-2006 ITP (in euros)

MEASURE	E.U.		State		Region		Total
	euro	%	euro	%	euro	%	
Axis 1	1,302,927.3	38.4	1,460,539.4	43.1	626,042.3	18.5	3,389,509.0
Measure 1.1	1,302,927.3	38.4	1,460,539.4	43.1	626,042.3	18.5	3,389,509.0
Axis 2	2,890,364.7	32.9	4,128,590.2	47.0	1,769,019.2	20.1	8,787,974.0
Measure 2.1	1,445,591.5	32.9	2,064,879.5	47.0	884,760.0	20.1	4,395,231.0
Measure 2.2	722,550.2	32.9	1,032,089.1	47.0	442,229.7	20.1	2,196,869.0
Measure 2.3	722,223.0	32.9	1,031,621.6	47.0	442,029.4	20.1	2,195,874.0
Axis 3	2,576,028.3	45.4	2,166,247.5	38.2	928,420.2	16.4	5,670,696.0
Measure 3.2	1,038,844.2	60.8	468,026.3	27.4	200,631.5	11.8	1,707,502.0
Measure 3.3	1,140,435.2	35.1	1,476,067.5	45.4	632,600.4	19.5	3,249,103.0
Measure 3.4	396,749.0	55.6	222,153.7	31.1	95,188.3	13.3	714,091.0
Total ITP (excepted Axis 4)	6,769,320.2	37.9	7,755,377.1	43.5	3,323,481.7	18.6	17,848,179.0

Source: Documento strategico Sulmona Alto Sangro ITP

The fact that about half of the total resources of the ITP (49.3 per cent) were devoted to Axis 2 lends the ITP a markedly entrepreneurial character. Essentially, Axis 2 involves measures to support local enterprises (state aid), all of which implemented on a *de minimis* basis, and thus with no intervention exceeding €100 thousand. In addition, out of the total resources for Axis 3, no less than 57 per cent were deployed in the form of state aid (specifically, the resources appropriated for Measure 3.3).

Net of state aid resources, the proportion of funds devoted to safeguarding and developing the cultural and environmental heritage and improving the context is modest. This also appears to conflict with the analysis of the context, which identifies the wealth of cultural and environmental assets as one of the greatest potential resources for the development of tourism in the area. At the same time, these resources also suffer from a major deficit of material and service infrastructure.

The evaluation report draws on the list of interventions financed by the ITP as at 30 June 2010. This detailed breakdown of individual initiatives enables us to delineate an *ex post* view of the state of implementation of the territorial project, especially as regards the number and type of interventions, the stage of completion and the characterisation of the ITP.

As regards the number and type of interventions undertaken, 11 are classified as redevelopment and infrastructure projects for industrial and craft industry areas (of which 3 run by the Industrial Consortium of Sulmona and 5 run by municipalities), 8 are

classified as renovation projects for historic centres, service structures and urban furniture (of which 2 run by the Peligna Mountain Community and 6 run by municipalities), and 6 are classified as restoration and transformation projects for museum facilities (all operated by individual municipalities). Finally, there are 300 enterprise support projects (state aid).

The average size of the infrastructure projects (which total 25) is €280 thousand⁵, ranging from the largest at €878 thousand⁶ to the smallest at €77 thousand⁷. This suggests that the ITP sought to increase the number of interventions rather than trying to concentrate them.

As regards the state of progress of the ITP, all of the interventions (both infrastructure and aid to enterprises) were completed.⁸ Out of the total of some €18 million in funds available to the Sulmona Alto Sangro ITP, 95.83 per cent was actually spent.

Focusing on initiatives associated with Actions 1.2.1, 3.2.1, 3.2.2 and 3.4.1 (i.e. excluding subsidies supported with state aid), and considering the role of the entities managing the interventions, the Industrial Consortium of Sulmona and the Peligna Mountain Community accounted for the largest share of resources. The Industrial Consortium of Sulmona alone managed 25.41 per cent of total ITP resources for such interventions, while the Peligna Mountain Community managed 14.15 per cent. The large proportion of funds managed by these two entities gave them a major role during the implementation phase of the ITP.

In the ranking of managing entities, shown in Table 1.3, the next largest recipients of funds were the municipalities of Castel di Sangro (7.93 per cent of the total), Raiano (7.74 per cent) and Pratola Peligna (6.63 per cent), while the other entities that ran ITP interventions did not exceed 4 per cent of total resources.

All of the entities involved were able to spend a very high percentage of the financing available with respect to the total cost admitted for each intervention. The proportion exceeded 90 per cent (in 4 cases it came to 100 per cent), with the exception of the interventions managed by the municipalities of Introdacqua, Roccacasale, Cocollo, Scontrone and Pescocostanzo.⁹

⁵ The average size is calculated using the total cost admitted for each project.

⁶ The project provides for the construction of water networks and refurbishment of storage basins (Industrial Consortium of Sulmona).

⁷ Infrastructure works for the installation of fibre optic cable ducting (Industrial Consortium of Sulmona).

⁸ The sole exception is an upgrading project involving Palazzo Colecchi in the town of Pescocostanzo, which was suspended for logistical reasons.

⁹ See Note 8.

Table I.3 - Resources managed, resources spent and stage of completion by managing entity

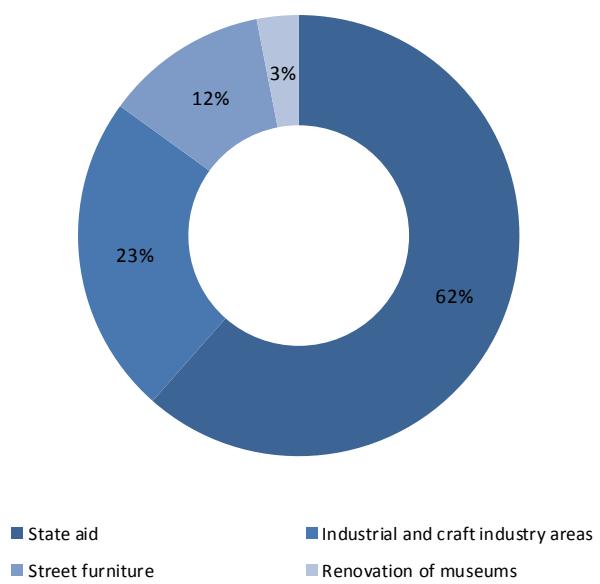
Managing entity	Resources managed		Resources spent euro	Stage of completion %
	euro	%		
Industrial Consortium of Sulmona	1,781,467.7	25.4	1,617,724.0	90.8
Mountain Community of Peligna	991,828.7	14.1	991,321.8	99.9
Municipality of Castel di Sangro	556,250.0	7.9	556,250.0	100.0
Municipality of Raiano	543,000.0	7.7	527,216.6	97.1
Municipality of Pratola Peligna	465,000.0	6.6	448,846.8	96.5
Municipality of Sulmona	270,728.5	3.9	270,726.9	100.0
Municipality of Introdacqua	264,291.9	3.8	234,387.6	88.7
Municipality of Pescasseroli	225,000.0	3.2	216,119.2	96.1
Municipality of Barrea	203,070.0	2.9	201,833.2	99.4
Municipality of Villetta Barrea	175,000.0	2.5	165,898.4	94.8
Municipality of Rocca Pia	163,685.5	2.3	158,109.2	96.6
Municipality of Opi	150,000.0	2.1	141,889.5	94.6
Municipality of Alfedena	147,025.0	2.1	147,025.0	100.0
Municipality of Roccaraso	145,000.0	2.1	143,336.0	98.9
Municipality of Rivisondoli	137,500.0	2.0	137,194.8	99.8
Municipality of Pacentro	121,993.1	1.7	121,993.1	100.0
Municipality of Roccacasale	112,300.0	1.6	90,007.0	80.1
Municipality of Scanno	112,300.0	1.6	111,085.7	98.9
Municipality of Cocollo	112,270.8	1.6	71,699.6	63.9
Municipality of Villalago	111,554.7	1.6	102,404.0	91.8
Municipality of Scontrone	111,111.0	1.6	91,174.7	82.1
Municipality of Pesco Costanzo	111,111.0	1.6	36,918.2	33.2
TOTAL	7,011,487.9	100.0	6,583,161.2	93.9

Source: based on ITP monitoring data

Of total expenditure by the ITP, interventions classified as state aid schemes accounted for 62 per cent, projects for industrial and craft industry areas 23 per cent, urban furniture projects 12 per cent, and museum restoration projects 3 per cent (as shown in Figure I.2).

There is a large prevalence of state aid, i.e. direct support of individual enterprises in the ITP. Paradoxically, even the industrial infrastructure (generally horizontal) implemented tended to benefit only some specific companies (for example, see the infrastructure interventions in the industrial and craft industry area of Pratola Peligna and the industrial area of Sulmona). In general, this pattern translated into a strong propensity for the integrated project to strengthen local private goods, squeezing or eliminating the production of pure public goods.

Figure I.2 - Percentage weight of ITP interventions by type



Source: based on ITP monitoring data

If we examine the individual interventions implemented under the ITP, turning first to infrastructure projects (see Table I.4), one notes that of the 11 redevelopment and infrastructure projects for industrial and craft industry areas, 3 involved the area of the Industrial Development Consortium of Sulmona. Two of these interventions, both involving the construction of works to improve the industrial zone of Sulmona, of which one for the construction of water networks and refurbishment of storage reservoirs, are the largest projects financed under the ITP (more than €800 thousand). The third intervention – far smaller at just €77 thousand – involved ducting works for fibre optic cables.

These two large projects are followed by the projects for the redevelopment and completion of industrial and craft industry areas in the municipalities of Castel di Sangro (€556 thousand), Raiano (€543 thousand), Pratola Peligna (€465 thousand), Introdacqua (€264 thousand), Pescasseroli (€225 thousand), Villetta Barrea (€175 thousand), Alfedena (€147 thousand) and Villalago (€111 thousand).

As regards renovation projects for historic centres, service structures and urban furniture (see Table I.5), the two largest initiatives were located in the territory of the Peligna Mountain Community (both amounting to about €496 thousand) and involved urban furniture installation, the first of which was intended to bring the infrastructure up to the standard imposed by the Club of the Most Beautiful Villages in Italy (this

project involved the towns of Pettorano sul Gizio, Anversa degli Abruzzi, Bugnara, and Campo di Giove). Ranked by size, the other urban furniture and historic centre renovation projects were located in the towns of Sulmona (about €271 thousand), Barrea (€203 thousand), Opi (€150 thousand) and Rivisondoli (€137 thousand). Projects also included one to create a service centre for “mountain trails” in the town of Rocca Pia, worth €163 thousand.

To conclude, there were 6 museum projects (see Table I.6), which consist in the completion and renovation of existing museums or transforming other facilities into museums. The projects are in six different towns (Cocullo, Roccacasale, Scanno, Pacentro, Scontrone and Pescocostanzo) and did not exceed €122 thousand.

Table I.4 - Infrastructure projects under Measure 1.2 Sulmona Alto Sangro ITP at 30/06/2010

Docup Measure	Docup Action	Tipology of intervention	Project title	Municipality	Total cost admitted	Public expence	EU	State	Region	Other	Commitment		Payments		Physical Indicators	
											30 june 2010	30 june 2010	Conclusion	Value realized	Number of intervention	
1.2	1.2.1	Equipped area	Construction of water networks and refurbishment of storage reservoirs	Industrial Consortium of Sulmona	877,923.5	698,428.3	261,910.6	305,562.4	130,955.3	179,495.2	738,473.6	734,301.1	22 february 2007	150.000 (MQ)	1	
1.2	1.2.1	Equipped area	Construction works for the improvement of the industrial zone of Sulmona	Industrial Consortium of Sulmona	826,330.2	657,375.4	253,418.2	282,802.9	121,154.3	168,954.8	815,745.9	813,537.2	06 october 2006	100.000 (MQ)	1	
1.2	1.2.1	Equipped area	Redevelopment and completion of industrial and craft industry areas	Municipality of Castel di Sangro	556,250.0	445,000.0	171,547.5	191,439.0	82,013.5	111,250.0	556,250.0	556,250.0	15 november 2006	15.750 (MQ)	1	
1.2	1.2.1	Equipped area	Improvement of the industrial area	Municipality of Raiano	543,000.0	434,400.0	162,900.0	190,050.0	81,450.0	108,600.0	542,816.7	527,216.6	31 july 2006	35.000 (MQ)	1	
1.2	1.2.1	Equipped area	Completion of infrastructural and urbanisation works of the industrial area of Tratturo	Municipality of Pratola Pergina	465,000.0	372,000.0	139,500.0	162,750.0	69,750.0	93,000.0	465,000.0	448,846.8	21 dicember 2006	197.228,8 (MQ)	1	
1.2	1.2.1	Equipped area	Completion works of the craft industry area	Municipality of Introdacqua	264,291.9	191,089.1	73,664.8	82,206.5	35,217.7	73,202.9	245,654.3	234,387.6	30 october 2008	80.000 (MQ)	1	
1.2	1.2.1	Equipped area	Redevelopment and completion of industrial and craft industry areas	Municipality of Pescasseroli	225,000.0	180,000.0	69,390.0	77,436.0	33,174.0	45,000.0	225,000.0	216,119.2	30 october 2008	26.492 (MQ)	1	
1.2	1.2.1	Equipped area	Urbanisation works for the craft industry area	Municipality of Villetta Barrea	175,000.0	140,000.0	52,500.0	61,250.0	26,250.0	35,000.0	175,000.0	165,898.4	24 aprile 2007	7.000 (MQ)	1	
1.2	1.2.1	Equipped area	Primary urbanisation and street furnitures	Municipality of Alfedena	147,025.0	104,932.0	40,451.3	45,141.7	19,339.0	42,093.0	147,025.0	147,025.0	29 june 2007	10.000 (MQ)	1	
1.2	1.2.1	Equipped area	Urbanisation works for the craft industry area	Municipality of Villalago	111,554.7	89,243.7	34,403.5	38,392.7	16,447.6	22,311.0	111,554.7	102,404.0	14 october 2006	810 (MQ)	1	
1.2	1.2.1	Equipped area	Ducting works for fibre optic cables	Industrial Consortium of Sulmona	77,214.0	64,345.0	24,734.2	27,726.3	11,884.5	12,869.0	68,925.8	69,885.8	14 dicember 2006	100.000 (MQ)	1	

Source: based on ITP monitoring data

Table I.5 - Infrastructure projects under Measure 3.2 Sulmona Alto Sangro ITP at 30/06/2010

Docup Measure	Docup Action	Tipology of intervention	Project title	Municipality	Total cost admitted	Public expence	EU	State	Region	Other	Commitme nt		Payments		Conclusion	Physical Indicators	
											30 june 2010	30 june 2010	30 june 2010	Value realized	Number of intervention		
3.2	3.2.2	Street furniture	Renovation projects for historic centres (Club of the Most Beautiful Villages in Italy) Pettorano sul gizio, Anversa degli Abruzzi, Bugnara, Campo di Giove	Mountain Community of Peligna	495,914.4	396,731.5	241,371.4	108,744.1	46,616.0	99,182.9	495,914.4	495,914.4	30 august 2006	-	1		
3.2	3.2.2	Street furniture	Street furniture-Cansano, Corfinio Prezza, Vittorito	Mountain Community of Peligna	495,914.4	396,731.5	241,371.4	108,744.1	46,616.0	99,182.9	495,407.4	495,407.4	05 june 2006	-	1		
3.2	3.2.2	Street furniture	Renovation of the sewage system and paving of the historic centre	Municipality of Sulmona	270,728.5	216,582.8	131,769.0	59,365.3	25,448.5	54,145.7	270,728.5	270,726.9	14 october 2005	Surface subject to intervention 2.551,4	1		
3.2	3.2.2	Street furniture	Renovation projects for the historic centre	Municipality of Barrea	203,070.0	162,456.0	98,838.2	44,529.2	19,088.6	40,614.0	203,070.0	201,833.2	12 july 2005	-	1		
3.2	3.2.1	Information point	Service centre for "mountain trails"	Municipality of Rocca Pia	163,685.5	130,948.4	79,669.0	35,893.0	15,386.4	32,737.1	163,685.5	158,109.2	28 october 2005	Capacity (seats) structures/spaces 16	1		
3.2	3.2.2	Street furniture	Street furniture and renovation of the urban centre	Municipality of Opi	150,000.0	120,000.0	73,008.0	32,892.0	14,100.0	30,000.0	137,764.4	141,889.5	13 august 2006	Surface subject to intervention 374,0	1		
3.2	3.2.2	Street furniture	Renovation projects for historic centres (Pietrasanti Area - Borgonovo Square)	Municipality of Roccaraso	145,000.0	100,000.0	60,840.0	27,410.0	11,750.0	45,000.0	145,000.0	143,336.0	28 june 2005	-	1		
3.2	3.2.2	Structures and socio cultural spaces	Intervention on the existing construction assets	Municipality of Rivisondoli	137,500.0	109,950.0	66,893.6	30,137.3	12,919.1	27,550.0	137,493.0	137,194.8	Ongoing*	-	-		

Source: based on ITP monitoring data

Table I.6 - Infrastructure projects under Measure 3.4 Sulmona Alto Sangro ITP at 30/06/2010

Docup Measure	Docup Action	Tipology of intervention	Project title	Municipality	Total cost admitted	Public expence	EU	State	Region	Other	Commitment		Payments		Conclusion	Physical Indicators	
											30 june 2010	30 june 2010	30 june 2010	Value realized	Number of intervention		
3.4	3.4.1	Completion and renovation of existing museums or transforming other facilities into museums	Refunctionalisation of some structures of the municipality	Municipality of Paentro	121,993.1	109,793.8	61,001.4	34,156.8	14,635.5	12,199.3	121,993.1	121,993.1	11 october 2005	-	3		
3.4	3.4.1	Completion and renovation of existing museums or transforming other facilities into museums	Renovation of an antique castle and transformation of other facilities into a museum	Municipality of Roccasale	112,300.0	101,070.0	56,154.5	31,442.9	13,472.6	11,230.0	112,266.8	90,007.0	Ongoing*	-	-		
3.4	3.4.1	Completion and renovation of existing museums or transforming other facilities into museums	Transformation of a school in a museum for the costumes	Municipality of Scanno	112,300.0	101,070.0	56,154.5	31,442.9	13,472.6	11,230.0	112,300.0	111,085.7	7 march 2006	-	1		
3.4	3.4.1	Completion and renovation of existing museums or transforming other facilities into museums	Completion of the ethnographic museum	Municipality of Coaulo	112,270.8	101,043.7	56,139.9	31,434.7	13,469.1	11,227.1	73,956.6	71,699.6	15 november 2005	-	1		
3.4	3.4.1	Completion and renovation of existing museums or transforming other facilities into museums	Setting up of the museum centre for documentation	Municipality of Scontrone	111,111.0	100,000.0	55,560.0	31,110.0	13,330.0	11,111.1	111,111.0	91,174.7	15 november 2005	-	1		
3.4	3.4.1	Completion and renovation of existing museums or transforming other facilities into museums	Refunctionalisation of Palazzo Colechi	Municipality of Pescocostanzo	111,111.0	100,000.0	55,560.0	31,110.0	13,330.0	11,111.0	88,888.9	36,918.2	Ongoing**	-	-		

Source: based on ITP monitoring data

The situation with regard to projects implemented using state aid mechanisms was highly varied in terms of the type of aid granted and was characterised, as noted earlier, by 300 micro-interventions carried out on a *de minimis* basis.

More specifically, no fewer than 145 interventions regarded aid for SMEs to acquire tangible and intangible assets, while 24 regarded support for the take-up of information technology in enterprises. Given the large number of projects involved, as shown in Table 1.7, measure 2.1 accounts for 54 per cent of total state aid resources.

Table I.7 - Interventions financed with state aid

Axis	Measure	Action	Tipology of aid	Number of firms beneficiary	Payments
2	2.1	2.1.1	Material and non material values	145	5,990,072.0
			Information Technology	24	428,276.8
				169	6,418,348.8
2	2.2	2.2.1	Certification of factory system	16	104,303.9
			Safety on work and product certification	2	9,855.5
		2.2.2	Consortium services	2	60,004.0
				20	174,163.4
2	2.3	2.3.1	Research projects	13	792,098.2
			Technological dissemination	2	46,750.0
				15	838,848.2
3	3.3	3.3.1	Tourism	3	163,014.7
		3.3.2	Nature reserve	93	3,703,905.1
				96	3,866,919.8

Key: Axis 2 – Competitiveness of enterprises

Action 2.1.1 – Aid to support investments by SMEs in tangible and intangible assets and IT support

Action 2.2.1 – Aid to support SMEs in the acquisition of real services

Action 2.2.2 – Aid to support collective demand for real services by consortiums of SMEs

Action 2.3.1 – Aid to support aggregated demand of SMEs for research, innovation and technology transfer programmes

Axis 3 – Safeguarding and developing environmental and cultural resources

Action 3.3.1 – Aid to support SMEs in the tourism sector, tourism services and sport

Action 3.3.2 – Aid to support microbusinesses in the protected areas

Source: based on ITP monitoring data

A second type of aid was directed at supporting companies in acquiring certifications of company systems and products (18 interventions), while 2 other initiatives regarded support for the acquisition of consortium services. The financial resources devoted to this category of aid were residual, accounting for less than 2 per cent of total expenditures.

Fifteen other projects supported research and technology transfer among companies, but they accounted for just 8 per cent of total aid. The number of interventions was

quite small if the goal of this category of support was to enhance the competitiveness of Italian enterprises in national and international markets.

Finally, 96 projects were directed at supporting micro-businesses in the development of environmental resources for tourism. This category accounted for 37 per cent of total aid expenditure.

I.3 Management responsibilities of the ITP: the role of the Province and the partnership

I.3.1 The role of the Province

The governance arrangements for the ITPs of Abruzzo assign responsibility for the ITPs to the provincial government. In the specific case of the Sulmona Alto Sangro ITP, the Region – with resolution 272/2001 – designated the Province of L’Aquila as the local entity responsible for the ITP. Subsequently, the Region – with resolution 520/2001 – established the functions and activities connected with that role.

Generally speaking, the Province of L’Aquila is the institutional sponsor of the ITP and is the sole entity:

- a. authorised to prepare, approve and submit the related ITP proposal to the Region;
- b. responsible for coordinating the formation of the ITP in the territory for which it is competent;
- c. delegated to implement the interventions in the designated territory.

More specifically, the guidelines for the preparation of the ITP, contained in regional government resolution 520/2001 cited earlier, assign the Province the following functions and responsibilities:

- drafting of an initial information document;
- preparing the advertising initiatives to solicit projects to be included in the ITP;
- acquisition and recognition in the accounts of the projects and the definition of the list of individual actions/measures;
- preparation of the initial ITP proposal;
- establishment of the partnership and approval of the definitive version of the ITP;

- establishment of the Monitoring Committee chaired by the President of the Province;
- implementation of the ITP, monitoring and surveillance.

The Province is also the entity responsible for the technical and financial management of the local technical assistance project and for assigning responsibility for the activities necessary for the success of the project.

In order to ensure the performance of those activities and functions, the Province was asked to find the resources and tools necessary to meet certain conditions:

- administrative capacity;
- capacity to mobilise the territory;
- capacity to support the sponsors of innovative projects;
- improvement of the quality of the information to be used to ensure the success of the ITP.

I.3.2 The role of the local partnership

As the entity responsible for implementing the ITP, the Province of L’Aquila established the Partnership Council, whose members comprise public entities (municipalities, mountain communities, chamber of commerce, park service, etc.), “intermediate” institutions (representatives of unions and employer associations), and actors representing local economic interests. The provincial government first undertook an information and mobilisation campaign (organising meetings and workshops) in order to inform local actors about the project and enable the formation of the partnership. For example, one activity involved the distribution of questionnaires and modular dossiers to the mayors of the 30 towns covered by the ITP. The shared assessment of the results of this activity, together with other information developed in the technical/thematic panels, enabled the partnership to obtain helpful indications concerning the content, objectives and actions of the ITP and its underlying incentive criteria.

On the basis of the recommendations set out in the DOCUP and the Programme Complement, the Council drafted its operational rules and established technical/thematic panels, whose activity culminated in the definition of the strategy of the ITP. More specifically, three working groups were established:

- a technical panel;
- a public entity panel;
- a private sector panel.

The work of the partnership led to the definition of the criteria for selecting public projects financed by the ITP and the additional criteria for the assessment of private-sector projects. As regards the assessment of public projects, the partnership created a negotiating procedure for the identification of appropriate projects, followed by approval by the partnership. It established two types of selection criteria, set out in Table I.8.

Table I.8 - Selection criteria for the assessment of public projects

Limitation of cofinancing for each project, detailed for Measures
<i>Measure 1.2.1 - limitation of 1,5 millions of euro of cofinancing for project</i>
<i>Measure 3.2.1 - limitation of 500 mila euro of cofinancing for project</i>
<i>Measure 3.2.2 - limitation of 500 mila euro of cofinancing for project</i>
<i>Measure 3.4.1 - limitation of 200 mila euro of cofinancing for project</i>
<i>Measure 3.4.2 - no limitation</i>
Priority criteria for the collection of projects
<i>- one point for each beneficiary financially involved in the same project</i>
<i>- two points in the case of private participation in a public project with a minimum of ten per cent of the entire investment guaranteed by bank insurance</i>

Source: based on the Sulmona Alto Sangro ITP Strategy Document

The additional criteria developed by the partnership for private-sector initiatives concerning the measures of the ITP implemented with state aid are set out in Table I.9.

Table I.9 - Additional criteria for the assessment of private-sector projects

Action of the ITP	Additional criteria	Score
2.1.1. a	Activities involved in the production of typical products or in providing services to typical productions	
	Activities in municipalities located in nature reserve	0.29
	Consortium and consortium associations among firms	
	Activities certified ISO 9000 or Vision 2000 or ISO 14000	
2.1.1. b	No additional criteria other than the regional ones	
2.2.1. a	No additional criteria other than the regional ones	
2.2.1. b	No additional criteria other than the regional ones	
2.2.2. a	No additional criteria other than the regional ones	
2.2.2. b	Consortium located in the area of the ITP Sulmona - Alto Sangro	1.5
2.3.1	No additional criteria other than the regional ones	
3.3.1	No additional criteria other than the regional ones	
3.3.2	Innovation of new products or services	20

Source: based on the Sulmona Alto Sangro ITP Strategy Document

I.4 Has the intervention been effective? There have been significant impacts on the local economy?

I.4.1 Constraints on measurement

The primary purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of ITP interventions and actions in the territory involved. However, in “measuring” effectiveness we have to take account of the constraints – in some degree common to all studies that analyse very narrow segments of the territory – associated on the one hand with the lack of sufficiently detailed quantitative information at the lowest municipal level and, on the other, with methodological issues (notably the difficulty in constructing counterfactual scenarios).

Another source of uncertainty is linked to the time variable. More specifically, the period of time required for policy interventions to have measurable impacts on the territory is not clear. The closing of the accounts on projects does not necessarily coincide with their potential economic, social and institutional impacts. It is possible that certain impacts will only be felt after many years, or that certain impacts are or will be registered in contexts other than those of the ITP. Therefore, the evaluation also suffers from uncertainty over the politically- and socially-necessary time required to complete the process.

These restrictions, which also affected this work, prompted us to place greater emphasis on gathering qualitative information enabling us to develop an assessment of the effectiveness of the ITP and its impact on the territory.

In evaluating the effectiveness of the ITP based on *quantitative* variables, we limited the scope of our investigation to observing the small amount of data available (essentially related to population and tourism/accommodation facilities indicators), based on which it was possible to develop hypotheses the existence of cause-and-effect relationships for specific ITP actions.

We also evaluated enterprise performance using a sample of local businesses that benefited from aid schemes under the ITP, the results of which are discussed further on.

Because the necessary data is lacking, the accounts provided by the actors, in some places enhanced some by our suggestions and additional information obtained directly at the local level, play a particularly important role (see Section II.5).

I.4.2 Selected territorial indicators

As noted in the introduction to the Report, over the last 15-20 years the 30 municipalities covered by the ITP have experienced heavy emigration, producing a decline in the resident population (the ITP territory’s population fell by 2 per cent between the 1991 and 2001 censuses). However, during 2006, the period of the highest rate of implementation of the ITP, when many projects were at the completion stage, there was an reversal in the

downward population trend. As can be seen in Table 1.9, between 2001 and 2006 the resident population rose by 0.8 per cent, an increase that continued in 2008, when it grew by 0.4 per cent over 2006. Although for the reasons noted above it is difficult to isolate the impact of the ITP on contextual variables, we can however reasonably hypothesize that the implementation of the ITP and its numerous interventions, in acting upon local enterprise, acted as a “magnet” for certain segments of the resident population in these areas, raising their expectations and stemming the demographic exodus.

The breakdown of the resident population by age group also provides a significant indicator for working age segments: between 2001 and 2006, area residents aged 15 to 65 rose by 0.28 per cent (see Table I.10).

Table I.10 - Resident population of municipalities covered by the ITP

Municipalities of the ITP area	1991	2001	2006	2008	Var. % 2001/1991	Var. % 2006/2001	Var. % 2008/2006
Alfedena	741	728	800	802	-1.8	9.9	0.2
Anversa degli Abruzzi	439	432	400	406	-1.6	-7.4	1.5
Ateleta	1,371	1,237	1,203	1,203	-9.8	-2.7	0.0
Barrea	864	776	769	769	-10.2	-0.9	0.0
Bugnara	1,161	1,034	1,072	1,072	-10.9	3.7	0.0
Campo di Giove	926	922	896	886	-0.4	-2.8	-1.1
Cansano	357	260	268	271	-27.2	3.1	1.1
Castel di Sangro	5,475	5,642	5,819	5,905	3.1	3.1	1.5
Civitella Alfedena	299	280	316	311	-6.4	12.9	-1.6
Cocullo	416	315	282	278	-24.3	-10.5	-1.4
Corfinio	968	998	1,030	1,032	3.1	3.2	0.2
Introdacqua	1,675	1,829	2,053	2,080	9.2	12.2	1.3
Opi	534	461	469	470	-13.7	1.7	0.2
Pacentro	1,405	1,260	1,269	1,294	-10.3	0.7	2.0
Pescasseroli	2,207	2,116	2,204	2,227	-4.1	4.2	1.0
Pescocostanzo	1,285	1,210	1,196	1,187	-5.8	-1.2	-0.8
Pettorano sul Gizio	1,293	1,252	1,320	1,323	-3.2	5.4	0.2
Pratola Peligna	7,939	7,813	7,879	7,959	-1.6	0.8	1.0
Prezza	1,231	1,090	1,060	1,038	-11.5	-2.8	-2.1
Raiano	2,726	2,973	2,969	2,991	9.1	-0.1	0.7
Rivisondoli	792	686	717	707	-13.4	4.5	-1.4
Rocca Pia	253	189	183	184	-25.3	-3.2	0.5
Roccacasale	768	760	713	720	-1.0	-6.2	1.0
Roccaraso	1,668	1,605	1,672	1,660	-3.8	4.2	-0.7
Scanno	2,352	2,128	2,048	2,034	-9.5	-3.8	-0.7
Sontrone	561	598	605	597	6.6	1.2	-1.3
Sulmona	25,454	25,330	25,238	25,327	-0.5	-0.4	0.4
Villalago	738	637	619	614	-13.7	-2.8	-0.8
Villetta Barrea	623	592	647	657	-5.0	9.3	1.5
Vittorito	1,142	1,008	960	950	-11.7	-4.8	-1.0
Total for the ITP area	67,663	66,161	66,676	66,954	-2.2	0.8	0.4

Source: based on ISTAT data

Tourism is one segment on the ITP actions focused. In fact, as the ITP area boasts a wealth of natural and cultural resources and policies aimed at expanding and improving the territory's integrated supply of cultural resources, it could have a significant impact in attracting more tourism to the area. More specifically, the entire Axis 3 of the ITP sought to leverage the area's cultural assets and provide support for local enterprises operating in cultural activities and tourist accommodation.

The action of Axis 3 was deployed on two fronts: one, by enhancing and leveraging the territory's offering of environmental and cultural resources (through structural interventions under measures 3.2 and 3.4); and two, through interventions aimed at expanding the territory's accommodation facilities (through aid schemes for tourism enterprises – measure 3.3).

The lack of information on the volume of tourism at the municipal level makes it impossible to determine whether the ITP actually led to a greater influx of tourists (the demand side), but we can verify – thanks to a number of indices pertaining to hotels and agritourism establishments – whether the ITP generated improvements on the supply side.

The ITP did in fact generate the expected improvements in expanding tourist accommodation in the territory, both under aid schemes, which financed many enterprises operating in the tourism/hotel sector, and interventions to leverage the cultural attractors that by expanding tourist demand indirectly enhance the attractiveness of the area for investment by new enterprises.

Table I.11 shows that between 2000 and 2006, in the ITP area as a whole, the number of hotels rose (from 118 to 136), as did the number of beds (from 6,660 to 7,578) and the number of rooms (from 3,387 to 3,749).

The supply of agritourism facilities also grew, with Table I.12 showing that the number of licensed agritourism enterprises in the municipalities included within the ITP rose from 24 in 2004 to 32 in 2006. The members of this group that are also licensed to provide lodging increased from 19 to 22 during the same period. It is curious to note that the number of beds offered by agritourism enterprises actually fell, but this was due to the closing of two large agritourism operations in the municipality of Anversa degli Abruzzi.

Table I.11 - Resident population by age group in the ITP municipalities

Municipalities of the ITP area	Resident classified by age (2001)			Resident classified by age (2006)			Var. % resident classified by age (2006/2001)		
	0-14	15-65	65+	0-14	15-65	65+	0-14	15-65	65+
Alfedena	99	444	185	117	496	187	18.2	11.7	1.1
Anversa degli Abruzzi	48	221	163	48	208	144	0.0	-5.9	-11.7
Ateleta	158	711	368	157	687	359	-0.6	-3.4	-2.4
Barrea	81	482	213	78	459	232	-3.7	-4.8	8.9
Bugnara	125	672	237	107	676	289	-14.4	0.6	21.9
Campo di Giove	117	598	207	79	582	235	-32.5	-2.7	13.5
Cansano	15	161	84	20	167	81	33.3	3.7	-3.6
Castel di Sangro	790	3,777	1,075	728	3,939	1,152	-7.8	4.3	7.2
Civitella Alfedena	35	183	62	30	205	81	-14.3	12.0	30.6
Cocullo	15	149	151	16	137	129	6.7	-8.1	-14.6
Corfinio	130	637	231	114	681	235	-12.3	6.9	1.7
Introdacqua	258	1,164	407	297	1,326	430	15.1	13.9	5.7
Opi	61	290	110	44	311	114	-27.9	7.2	3.6
Pacentro	160	781	319	146	794	329	-8.8	1.7	3.1
Pescasseroli	302	1,374	440	292	1,429	483	-3.3	4.0	9.8
Pescocostanzo	168	724	318	125	732	339	-25.6	1.1	6.6
Pettorano sul Gizio	153	751	348	167	811	342	9.2	8.0	-1.7
Pratola Peligna	1,074	5,151	1,588	1,022	5,086	1,771	-4.8	-1.3	11.5
Prezza	98	636	356	101	612	347	3.1	-3.8	-2.5
Raiano	377	1,858	738	348	1,896	725	-7.7	2.0	-1.8
Rivisondoli	58	417	211	56	451	210	-3.4	8.2	-0.5
Rocca Pia	6	95	88	9	98	76	50.0	3.2	-13.6
Roccacasale	110	457	193	80	432	201	-27.3	-5.5	4.1
Roccaraso	207	1,088	310	193	1,140	339	-6.8	4.8	9.4
Scanno	271	1,193	664	222	1,167	659	-18.1	-2.2	-0.8
Scostrone	67	392	139	64	399	142	-4.5	1.8	2.2
Sulmona	3,131	17,304	4,895	2,990	16,917	5,331	-4.5	-2.2	8.9
Villalago	51	325	261	51	322	246	0.0	-0.9	-5.7
Villetta Barrea	74	366	152	80	402	165	8.1	9.8	8.6
Vittorito	77	598	333	82	559	319	6.5	-6.5	-4.2
Total for the ITP area	8,316	42,999	14,846	7,863	43,121	15,692	-5.4	0.3	5.7

Source: based on ISTAT data

Table I.12 - Indices of hotel facilities in the ITP municipalities (2000-2006)

Municipalities of the ITP area	2000			2006		
	N. of hotels	N. of beds in hotels	N. of rooms in hotels	N. of hotels	N. of beds in hotels	N. of rooms in hotels
Alfedena	2	72	38	2	72	38
Anversa degli Abruzzi	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ateleta	1	36	18	1	36	18
Barrea	2	93	48	4	122	62
Bugnara	-	-	-	1	63	31
Campo di Giove	6	361	184	4	189	96
Cansano	-	-	-	1	25	16
Castel di Sangro	4	172	102	6	355	151
Civitella Alfedena	4	210	99	4	235	108
Cocullo	-	-	-	-	-	-
Corfinio	1	22	12	1	22	12
Introdacqua	1	32	16	1	32	16
Opi	2	47	25	2	47	25
Pacentro	1	22	11	1	22	11
Pescasseroli	26	1,272	615	32	1,473	716
Pescocostanzo	4	208	104	6	276	127
Pettorano	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pratola Peligna	1	34	18	1	21	12
Prezza	-	-	-	-	-	-
Raiano	1	90	45	-	-	-
Rivisondoli	8	770	394	8	730	370
Rocca Pia	2	80	40	3	71	34
Roccacasale	-	-	-	1	50	23
Roccaraso	21	1,540	786	25	1,836	915
Scanno	18	784	420	18	842	445
Scostrone	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sulmona	7	471	239	7	615	304
Villalago	2	180	91	2	180	91
Villetta Barrea	4	164	82	5	264	128
Vittorito	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total for the ITP area	118	6,660	3,387	136	7,578	3,749
Total for the Province of L'Aquila excepted the ITP area	100	5,359	2,815	102	5,610	2,908

Source: based on ISTAT data

Table I.13 - Indices of agritourism facilities in the ITP municipalities (2004-2006)

Municipalities of the ITP area	2004			2006		
	N. of farms holidays licensed	N. of farms holidays licensed for housing	N. of beds in farms holidays	N. of farms holidays licensed	N. of farms holidays licensed for housing	N. of beds in farms holidays
Alfedena						
Anversa degli Abruzzi	3	3	90	1	1	30
Ateleta						
Barrea						
Bugnara						
Campo di Giove						
Cansano	3	3	32	3	3	32
Castel di Sangro				2	2	20
Civitella Alfedena				1	0	0
Coullo	1	1	20	2	2	30
Corfinio	1	0	0	1	0	0
Introdacqua						
Opi						
Pacentro	2	1	19	2	1	19
Pescasseroli	1	0	0	2	0	0
Pescocostanzo	3	3	32	4	4	44
Pettorano	1	1	0	1	1	0
Pratola Peligna	1	1	0	1	1	0
Prezza						
Raiano						
Rivisondoli	1	0	0	1	0	0
Rocca Pia						
Roccasale				1	1	0
Roccaraso	2	2	39	2	2	39
Scanno	2	2	15	4	2	15
Sorronne						
Sulmona	1	0	0	2	0	0
Villalago						
Villetta Barrea	2	2	2	2	2	0
Vittorio						
Total for the ITP area	24	19	249	32	22	229
Total for the Province of L'Aquila excepted the ITP area	64	59	650	95	80	897

Source: based on ISTAT data

The increase in the number of bed and breakfast establishments in the area stands out in particular. As can be seen in Table I.14, the number of B&Bs more than doubled between 2004 and 2006, from 22 to 54, and the number of beds rose from 164 to 362. Half of these were located in the municipality of Sulmona, which also saw the greatest increase in B&Bs (from 5 to 11, with the number of beds doubled).

Table I.14 – Bed and breakfast establishments in ITP municipalities

Municipalities of the ITP area	2004		2006	
	number	beds	number	beds
Alfedena	-	-	-	-
Anversa degli Abruzzi	-	-	-	-
Ateleta	-	-	-	-
Barrea	-	-	1	4
Bugnara	-	-	-	-
Campo di Giove	-	-	-	-
Cansano	-	-	-	-
Castel di Sangro	-	-	3	24
Civitella Alfedena	3	28	5	44
Couullo	-	-	-	-
Corfinio	-	-	1	5
Introdacqua	-	-	1	9
Opi	4	30	4	30
Pacentro	1	6	2	12
Pescasseroli	1	10	4	28
Pesco-costanzo	1	10	2	13
Pettorano	-	-	1	1
Pratola Peligna	-	-	-	-
Prezza	-	-	-	-
Raiano	-	-	-	-
Rivisondoli	-	-	-	-
Rocca Pia	-	-	-	-
Roccacasale	-	-	-	-
Roccaraso	-	-	2	9
Scanno	2	16	5	41
Scontrone	2	9	5	30
Sulmona	5	31	11	63
Villalago	-	-	-	-
Villetta Barrea	3	24	6	45
Vittorito	-	-	1	4
Total for the ITP area	22	164	54	362
Total for the Province of L'Aquila excepted the ITP area	31	215	148	968

Source: based on ISTAT data

I.4.3 Enterprises performance

The sizable role played by state aid in the overall management of the ITP (more than 60 per cent of the total ITP), prompted us to investigate the performance of the enterprises that received subsidies under the ITP in order to determine whether the investments made by these individual enterprises helped boost their profitability.

We started by selecting aid beneficiaries that received a subsidy of more than €30 thousand. This threshold was chosen arbitrarily, but based on the hypothesis that very low levels of financial aid also diminishes the potential impact that aid has on an enterprise's ability to generate profits.

The sample chosen does not include sole proprietorships, since most of these fall below the above threshold and because the law does not require them to publish financial statements.

We extracted from the Telemaco¹⁰ database the financial statements of 20 enterprises operating in the ITP area¹¹ that received state aid and analysed their revenues from sales

¹⁰ The Telemaco database holds the financial statements of all Italian companies registered with the Chambers of Commerce.

and services for two time periods: one corresponding to the start of the ITP and the second to that following the moment the enterprise received the aid. Basically, these two periods coincide with the year 2000, when the enterprises were first observed, and 2007, when the second observation was conducted, since all the projects receiving state aid were completed in 2006.

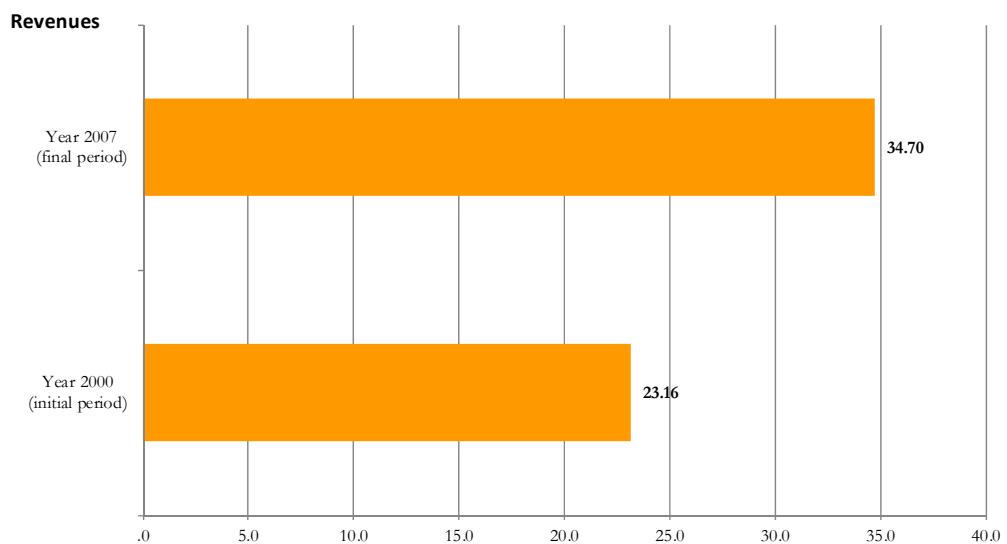
These enterprises operate in a wide variety of sectors: transportation, construction, wholesale and retail trade, recycling and environmental services, engineering and food products. This led us to conclude that aid was not awarded on the basis of a strategy aimed at strengthening a specific industry already present in the area or stimulating the creation of new sectors. Aid to enterprises in the ITP area was basically granted using an undifferentiated approach, with no competitive mechanisms.

Although the overall performance of enterprises is dependent upon a variety of factors, such as, for example, the skill of management or the overall performance of their sector or larger economic trends, it is reasonable to conclude that the aid granted under the ITP, by injecting fresh, stable financial resources into the area's economic system, allowed local enterprises to make new investments (purchases of new equipment, construction of new production facilities, etc.), thereby stimulating an expansion in their productive capacity and boosting additional revenues, improving overall business performance.

In fact, we found that aggregate sales revenues of the ITP aid recipients rose by 50 per cent between the two periods observed, from €23 million in 2000 to about €35 million in 2007 (see Figure I.3). This translated into an overall increase in revenue for the area.

¹¹ For reasons of privacy, we have shown an aggregate figure for the sample enterprises, omitting figures from the financial statements of individual enterprises.

Figure I.3 - Performance of the enterprises in the ITP area



Source: based on the financial statements filed by enterprises

II. The Sulmona – Alto Sangro Integrated Territorial Project: the *perceived ITP*

II.1 The actors' account

As we mentioned in the Introduction, we chose to look separately at the “revealed ITP”, namely the ITP that could be reconstructed on the basis of the formal and institutional “documentation” (monitoring data, the ITP strategy document, evaluation reports, regional programming documents), and the “perceived ITP”, i.e. the ITP that could be reconstructed through the self-evaluations provided directly by the parties that participated in the project.

In this Chapter, the local actors (the Peligna Mountain Community, Industrial Consortium, mayors, experts, etc.), who enjoyed a high degree of autonomy during the ITP design and management phase, are the main protagonists. This enabled us to reconstruct the diagnosis of the territory's needs, the intervention strategy and, above all, its effectiveness, which does not always match the reconstruction generated on the basis of the documentation alone.

This part of the Report is especially important since the accounts given by the actors, although influenced by our evaluations and quantitative support, provide information for evaluation that is frequently richer than that produced by pure analysis based on “cold” data, which, as emphasized in Section 1, are few and are almost never available on an adequate scale.

It should be borne in mind that the story of the ITP recounted by each actor is never truly complete, but is always limited in scope to that part of the ITP with which each is familiar, i.e. the part that each designed and managed. Therefore, in their analysis, there seem to be different ITPs for furnished areas, for small infrastructure interventions, or for museum restoration and fitting-out projects, sometimes conflicting with one another. The obligation and responsibility for breaking it down into categories and making general evaluations, especially in the Conclusions, therefore falls fully on our shoulders.

This Chapter is organised around the same evaluation questions posed in the first. The various interviews were therefore reorganised and repositioned on this basis, taking care to indicate (in the footnotes) who was interviewed and when. In certain sections (Sections II.5.2; II.5.3; and II.5.4), the relevant local actor's evaluation was expanded upon with inspections of the interventions performed (Industrial Consortium of Sulmona and the Pratola Peligna Industrial Area) and visits to a number of completed micro-projects open to the public (Cocullo Ethnographic Museum and the “A. Di Nola” Research Centre).

II.2 The local partnership: which opportunities from the ITP?

As defined by the Region, which identified it as a factor in success, the ITP for Abruzzo was performed on a partnership basis so that the ITP could effectively respond to local needs and take advantage of opportunities in the territory.

Operating rules for local partnerships were not established at the regional level. As a result, they were organised differently in the various areas, with each selecting the most appropriate strategy for their territory, although they follow the general structure set out in the DOCUP.

The local actors involved in developing the Sulmona Alto Sangro ITP broadly agree that it was not an ITP in the traditional sense of the term, particularly since it lacked its own overarching concept, but was instead a way to implement the DOCUP. This explains its genesis and its structure.

All of the Abruzzo ITPs should therefore be treated as Area Plans, identified uniformly at the territorial level.¹² At the provincial level, resources were allocated among the ITPs based on population and then distributed proportionately among the axes and measures. Integration was sought at the individual project level, which were to be consistent overall with the state of local needs, following the narrow route consisting of the DOCUP and the decisions taken by the partnership.

However, it did present “one of the few opportunities to allocate resources to this territory”¹³, eliminating from the outset any form of harmful regional competition.¹⁴ The area covered by the ITP was, in fact, sharply penalised by the exit of Abruzzo from the Objective 1 regions. The economic parameters that led to that change were heavily influenced by coastal area performance, while that of the mountain area was essentially unchanged, although it was forced to share in the misfortune of seeing its access to resources contract substantially compared with the previous period.

The ITP resources were viewed by local institutions and the partnership as stable, safe resources. The problem that had to be faced, given the relatively stringent constraints, was that of using the resources according to timetable in order to generate significant results.

Only certain DOCUP measures and actions were dedicated to the ITP (1.2.1, 2.1.1, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.3.1, 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 3.4.1), narrowing the range of possible interventions (industrial areas, aid, natural and environmental assets).

¹² Palmiero Susi – Deputy Mayor of Sulmona and President of the Province during the years of development of the ITP (meeting of 15 July 2009).

¹³ Antonio Carrara – President of the Peligna Mountain Community (meeting of 14 July 2009).

¹⁴ Numerous examples were cited of being excluded from tenders due to the weakness of the territory.

Another “mandatory and appropriate” constraint was the need for cofinancing.

Local decisions were therefore restricted by the measures and resources available.

This led to a reversal of the normal process: once the constraints were determined (i.e. once the measures and the resources were identified), the interventions were selected and the thematic objective was developed *ex post*, more “as a community ritual and to draft a mandatory document for its utility”.

II.3 Have the intervention measures and the resources been appropriated to the purposes and objectives of the project?

From a financial standpoint, the ITP was an extremely important resource for the area¹⁵, and in the case of aid schemes was virtually the only source.

Thus, considerable value was placed upon the ITP has a vehicle for delivering specific resources for a specific use. It acted as a catalyst for activating other public and private resources available in the local area thanks to the cofinancing requirement.

It is clear that developing an assessment of the adequacy of the resources available is a highly complex undertaking, especially in light of the extreme weakness of the area’s economy. Nevertheless, the general opinion shared by local actors is that “within this context and given the constraints” the ITP resources were appropriate. A very high proportion of the resources (95 per cent of the overall total and in many cases 100 per cent) was used.

We should not underestimate the fact that the construction of the ITP enabled an approach based on consensus and grassroots development. The historical experience of the territory had long been one of top-down control of policy that was often in conflict with local needs (e.g., building new industrial areas rather than improving existing ones).

The large number of interventions and their small size was a conscious choice on the part of the area, following a lengthy, animated debate over the course of the entire planning of the ITP, especially within the partnership, concerning the relationship between major projects and small interventions.

The starting point of the debate was that the Abruzzo regional programmers lacked faith in large projects, which were often announced but almost never carried out due to a variety of constraints (Manoppello Interport – €80 million; Intermodal Mobility in the Alto Sangro area – €20 million), not to mention the desire to avoid forms of competition from which the territories often emerged as losers.

¹⁵ Other funding channels: special laws, GAL Leader PLUS, FUA Programme Agreements, regional transfers to public entities.

Obviously, some also argued¹⁶ that the resources, which were certainly not small for the area, could have had a greater indirect impact if they had been focused on one large intervention guided by an effective overarching objective, while the “a little bit for each” approach would lead to the excessive fragmentation of interventions, diminishing their effectiveness.

Consideration was also given to the possibility of using the area’s ITP resources for one large project (broadband, fibre optics), but the funds were not sufficient to cover the entire ITP area and the challenges posed by its subsequent operation were deemed to be too great, both as regards the risk of not being able to guarantee sufficient current ordinary resources and the risk of not being able to manage overall governance costs.

In any case, there was very room for manoeuvre because of the restrictions imposed by the DOCUP, which set out the entire process to be followed for infrastructure projects, urban furniture projects and museum development projects.

In the end, those interviewed shared the view that the ITP, as it was designed, was not an appropriate structure for large projects, which would have required greater freedom of action at the programming and implementation stages than allowed under the DOCUP, as has been done in the same territory for other initiatives. For example, in the case of waste management (non-ITP resources), a unified platform with the participation of the entire territory was easily found, implementing a single project and allocating (out of the €5 million total appropriated) €3 million to the Sulmona waste treatment facility and €2 million to the Castel di Sangro waste treatment facility.

Some members of the partnership¹⁷ concurred with the self-criticism that a different *ex ante* distribution among the axes and measures at the provincial level¹⁸ could have made better use of the territories’ individual vocations and ensured the possibility of larger projects or enhanced their subsequent management and governance, including through the explicit appropriation of resources for subsequent management.

II.4 Has the ITP been an effective tool for building consensus and identifying the needs of the territory? Has the existing partnership consolidated?

Most of the local actors are firmly convinced of the ITP’s role as a tool for consensus building and creating awareness of the needs of the territory, as well as a means for strengthening the existing partnership.

¹⁶ Franco Iezzi – Director of the Industrial Consortium of Sulmona (meeting of 13 July 2009).

¹⁷ Antonio Carrara – President of the Peligna Mountain Community (meeting of 7 October 2010).

¹⁸ At the provincial level, resources are divided among the ITPs based on population, then split proportionately among axes and measures.

During the first phase, a single panel was formed with representatives from public entities and private groups. Later, a more restricted group was formed (2 mountain communities, the Town of Sulmona, the Industrial Consortium, 2 park authorities, and unions), which considerably enhanced its associative coherence.

These actors contributed to the *ex ante* programming. The SWOT analysis was developed using the “door-to-door” approach model¹⁹. All the actors were prepared when the calls for proposals were published.

There was no selection of projects strictly speaking. The agreement was entirely a partnership effort for the public projects,²⁰ in keeping with the underlying desire to hold the territory together and preserve the value of the partnership.

By contrast, for projects submitted by private actors – very limited in number – evaluation criteria beyond those applied in the Programme Complement were used.²¹

The only dissenting voice was that of the local actors that preferred selecting large projects (the Industrial Consortium) and, in part, of the first ITP Manager.²² In their view, the partnership was not capable of generating strategic ideas, but rather reflected individual and sectoral requests. If the financing had been managed on a more unified basis, it would have had greater multiplicative effects.

In reality, the decision to step away from managing large projects can also be seen in the case of infrastructure projects. Measure 1.2 allocated 40 per cent²³ to the Industrial Consortium of Sulmona for one big project (doubling the aqueduct between Pettorano and the industrial area). Although deemed effective afterwards, the project did in fact become three projects rather than one (see Section II.5.2).

Finally, although management of the ITP bears the hallmarks of micro-programming and micro-interventions aimed at individual actors, it paradoxically reinforced the perception of the territory as a community.

In all cases in which greater freedom in programming and implementation was possible, unified projects for the entire area were carried out (including in programming parallel or subsequent to the ITP), such as in the waste management project mentioned above.

¹⁹ Palmiero Susi – Deputy Mayor of Sulmona and President of the Province during the years of development of the ITP (meeting of 15 July 2009).

²⁰ Lucia Romano – Second ITP Manager (interview of 21 May 2009). For the selection criteria for public projects, see Section I.3.2.

²¹ Lucia Romano – Second ITP Manager (interview of 21 May 2009); Antonio Carrara – President of the Peligna Mountain Community (meeting of 14 July 2009).

²² Gianfranco Iorio – First ITP Manager (interview of 7 July 2009).

²³ This was appropriated with Regional Council Resolution 575/2002: Approval of the calls for proposals relating to Abruzzo DOCUP Actions aimed at the Integrated Territorial Project of the Province of L’Aquila. *Bollettino Ufficiale della Regione Abruzzo* (9 August 2002).

Another important example of the ITP stimulating a more programming-oriented and collective approach is that of the municipalities of Valle del Sagittario,²⁴ who under the 2000- 2006 ITP were the targets of micro-interventions (albeit designed to enable inclusion in the Club of the Most Beautiful Villages in Italy), which as part of the 2007-2013 Sulmona Alto Sangro ITP agreed to undertake a joint integrated development programme for the area.

Each town contributed to defining the general plan, identifying its own area of activity consistent with its own features and building on its own cultural and environmental identity²⁵.

However, the final goal was to enhance the value of the entire Gole del Sagittario area, one of the most important nature and environmental sites in the Region of Abruzzo, which is also a “Site of Community Importance” (SCI), by achieving the following through the interventions:

- a unified structure for the sale of tourist packages. The association of the municipalities involved will be transformed into a promotional structure for the sale of all tourist and cultural offerings, undertaking joint actions and initiatives at the national and regional level;
- a single information portal. The Council of Mayors will establish the procedures for creating a single platform, with one web address, for the websites of all the public entities and all the private operators involved.

II.5 Has the intervention been effective? There have been significant impacts on the local economy?

II.5.1 *The effects on the area and small projects*

The local actors' opinion of the effects at the territorial level was extremely positive.

At the macro level we found²⁶:

²⁴ Anversa degli Abruzzi, Introdacqua, Bugnara, Cocullo, Scanno and Villalago.

²⁵ Anversa: eco-cultural nature park; Bugnara: re-purposing of existing residential buildings to create an Advanced School for Tourism Management; Cocullo: IT and information centre for providing reception services for visitors to parks in Abruzzo and existing attractions; Introdacqua: high-tech multi-purpose centre for providing basic music training and the development of cultural and music associations; Scanno: expanding the offering of cultural events, conferences and musical performances by restoring and re-purposing the local cinema/theatre; Villalago: permanent multi-purpose centre for developing and marketing local products from the mountain area and internal zones of Abruzzo.

²⁶ Palmiero Susi - Deputy Mayor of Sulmona and President of the Province during the years of development of the ITP (meeting of 15 July 2009).

- 1) that there was a considerable effect in terms of capacity building. The strong participation in the grassroots process (“door-to-door”) produced a shared culture, strong social cohesion, the dissemination of a European culture, the sharing of rules and participatory procedures;
- 2) a major catalytic effect on the use of other public resources, activated by the requirement for cofinancing. Resources that often lie dormant because they are insufficient on their own were leveraged by the impulse of the ITP (see, for example, the cofinancing provided by the municipalities of Pratola Peligna and Raiano equal to 20 per cent of the total cost approved for projects relating to the industrial area – Section II.5.3).
- 3) an increased incentive to get things done and a better ability to make even little things bear fruit. A series of micro-projects provided that marginal improvement (the missing link) needed to make a series of activities effective or to gain entry into certain circuits.

The final result was the creation of clearly superior tourism, cultural and infrastructure resources than before the interventions.

At the micro level a very positive evaluation was given of a) small projects involving urban furniture and local works; b) medium-scale urban projects; c) three infrastructure projects carried out by the Industrial Development Consortium of Sulmona; and d) infrastructure projects managed directly by the municipalities.

All of the micro-projects pertaining to local works sprang from complete adherence to the spirit of the DOCUP and within its financial and procedural constraints; this explains their size and nature.

These had a considerable impact on the territory’s economy, achieving multiple objectives²⁷, albeit through a process of heterogeneity of ends (see the Conclusions), since the results achieved were not always consistent with the original goals of the ITP:

- 1) many micro-projects (buildings, hostels, camping facilities) financed with a variety of resources (even some under Law 64/1986 governing extraordinary intervention in Southern Italy) were completed, missing only the final step to make them functional and operational: Roccacasale (restoration of an ancient castle for use as a museum); Cocollo (completion of the ethnographic museum); completion of the existing industrial areas in Introdacqua and Villalago;
- 2) a series of micro-interventions were carried out with the goal of helping certain towns gain admission to the ANCI Club of the “Most Beautiful Villages in

²⁷ Antonio Carrara – President of the Peligna Mountain Community (meeting of 14 July 2009).

Italy”²⁸ (upgrading the public lighting system in Anversa; upgrading signage in Campo di Giove; renovation of entrance into Bugnara; repairing public squares in the historical town centres of Corfinio and Vittorito);

- 3) the vocations of the towns were respected;
- 4) “Neither grand cathedrals nor country churches were built”. This means that the importance of the often ordinary interventions rests in the fact that they made it possible to enhance usability or gain admission to clubs/circuits, with a considerable impact on area growth.

Even in the case of a medium-scale project (€280 thousand) managed by the municipality of Sulmona involving the renovation of the sewer system and paving the historical town centre, the assessment of the effectiveness of this intervention was highly positive²⁹. The intervention involved the enhancement of a poor district, an area not integrated with the rest of the old centre, where the following was performed: a) renovation of the sewer system, which dated back to the start of the 20th century and suffered from blockages and leaks, and b) paving the area with porphyry, like the rest of the historical district.

This intervention also produced considerable benefits in terms of overall efficiency. A significant amount of water was saved and the mixed wastewater system has largely been eliminated by separating greywater from blackwater.

Overall the appearance and liveability of the area has improved, in addition to its accommodation facilities. Many private actors were inspired to improve their own homes, while B&Bs expanded considerably, with a doubling of structures and available beds (see Section I.4.2).

Of no less importance was the fact that the objective was achieved on schedule.

²⁸ The Club of the Most Beautiful Villages in Italy was created in March 2001 at the initiative of the Tourism Council of the National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI). It is an important tool for promoting local tourism, aimed at enhancing the immense treasure of history, art, culture, environment and traditions in small Italian towns that fall outside of the major tourism routes and therefore are in danger of missing out on the flow of visitors and tourists. To gain admission, a municipality must meet the requirements set out in the Quality Charter (standards for buildings, signage, street lighting, etc.). A Guide to the Most Beautiful Villages is published annually.

²⁹ Pietro Tontodonato – Public Works Director for the Municipality of Sulmona – and various heads of technical services (meeting of 15 July 2009).

II.5.2 Three infrastructure projects run by the Industrial Consortium of Sulmona³⁰

The three infrastructure projects run by the Industrial Consortium of Sulmona – all completed – involved works covering a wide range of municipalities and, therefore, the spillover effects were quite extensive.

The first intervention “Developed areas – construction of water supply networks and repair of storage reservoirs” (eligible costs of €877,923.46; 150,000 m² built) sought to exploit the high-quality water drawn from the Gizio river in order to attract investment. Sulmona is historically known for its ample water supply and special characteristics.

As a result of the intervention, the water storage reservoirs for industrial use (having a capacity of 26,000 m³) were made usable, making around 500 litres/second of industrial water available to the Consortium, enough to meet the needs of the area’s water-reliant firms. Basically, water is drawn directly from the source and is stored in the reservoirs, located in a hilly area situated above the industrial area.

The intervention helped reduce water use (industrial and drinking water), but its greatest benefit has been that it has increased the amount of water than can be used by multiple firms simultaneously. In fact, previously these businesses were forced to draw water on an alternating basis so that all the area’s companies would have a chance to use water. It operates autonomously from the Optimal Service Area Authority.

The intervention benefited at least three major companies in particular, ones that base their processes on intensive water use: industrial food production, represented by Crodo (which, however, is now in the process of selling its processing and bottling plants to another company); and two facilities that make more strictly industrial use of the water, namely the Magneti Marelli plant and the British Gas Power cogeneration plant, which thanks to the ITP intervention will double its output.

Private actors were not involved in implementing the works and, as the Consortium states, the availability of resources offered by the ITP was a decisive factor since it could not have otherwise carried out the project.

The intervention left a surplus of around €35 thousand. The Region imposed specific reporting deadlines that did not permit the issue of a new call for proposals. The resources were therefore retained by the Region.

³⁰ This section was written based on information obtained directly from the Industrial Consortium of Sulmona and an inspection of the completed interventions. An initial interview was conducted with Franco Iezzi (the Consortium’s Director) on 13 July 2009 and a follow-up interview was carried out with Franco Iezzi and Arturo Cepparulo on 17 December 2010.

The second intervention “Developed areas – works to improve the land in the Sulmona industrial area” (eligible costs of €826,330.20; 80,000 m² of reclaimed space) involving the reclamation of land located within the industrial area, land that had previously been unusable. The reclamation works also involved the establishment of rights of way for infrastructure works (water supply, sewer system, data transmission network, etc.). New lots totalling around 40 thousand m² were created.

The reclaimed areas were assigned to companies operating within the industrial area to allow them to expand their operations through new investments.

The intervention enabled investments by three enterprises. The first was Finbox-Elisem, which operates in the helicopter industry,³¹ to which the Industrial Consortium of Sulmona allocated new plots, with connections to the electric grid, and performed works to bury structures to facilitate helicopter landings. The helicopter landing area is also used as a heliport for special transport (emergency medical services, emergencies related to fires and earthquakes) and for private tourism.

Finbox-Elisem was able to expand its operations as a result of the reclamation of the plot assigned it.

Figure II.1 - Finbox facility and heliport



Source: our photograph

The second company that benefited from the new plots is Bikman – a major exporter to the rest of Italy and, until a few years ago, other European markets – a manufacturer of plastic

³¹ More specifically, Finbox-Elisem's business involves training pilots, repairing helicopters, selling helicopters and installing special equipment. Finbox-Elisem also signed agreements with the Region of Abruzzo, including one related to fire-fighting services for the Majella National Park. The company, through its business activities, also supports a small industry for supplying oil and grease for helicopters.

shopping bags and quality packaging. Thanks to the additional land, Bikman was able to build a new plant and acquire new machinery to increase output.

Finally, the third plot was assigned to PQL Meccanica, a precision engineering firm. It used the additional space to build a new plant (although it is not yet operational).

The third intervention “Developed areas – infrastructure works for a fibre optic network” (eligible costs of €77,214.00; 100,000 m² built) involved building the ducting infrastructure for fibre optic cable connecting the city with external backbones. It was viewed as “an enormously useful and innovative project”.

Figure II.2 - Inside the Bikman plant



Source: our photograph

Figure II.3 - New machinery in operation at the Bikman plant



Source: our photograph

The laying of fibre optic cables throughout the city was financed with ordinary regional resources (€5 million)³² and European funds (€880 thousand). However, the lack of connections with external backbones essentially left the city closed within itself.

The ITP resources permitted the installation of cable ducting infrastructure from the Industrial Consortium of Sulmona to the Pratola tollbooth, linking the entire city's cable network and connecting it with the external backbones.

The ITP intervention basically made it possible to "light up" the fibre optic cables, carrying out those small technical projects needed to get the unused network in operation.

Figure II.4 - Fibre optic exchange located within the Industrial Consortium of Sulmona



Source: our photograph

II.5.3 Infrastructure interventions managed by the municipalities of Pratola Peligna³³ and Raiano³⁴

The other two infrastructure projects relating to developed areas managed directly by individual municipalities are found in Pratola Peligna and Raiano.

The first of the two was entitled "**Completion of urbanisation and infrastructure works in the Tratturo industrial zone**", for total eligible costs of €465 thousand. The intervention was co-financed by the municipality of Pratola Peligna in the amount of 20

³² Task Force Funds – Interventions for the Valle Peligna-Alto Sangro Area (Reg. Law no. 7/02, Art. 24).

³³ Antonio De Crescentis (Mayor of Pratola) and Marco Galante. (meeting of 17 December 2010).

³⁴ Specifications provided by Enio Mastrangioli, Mayor of Raiano during the period the ITP was launched.

per cent of total eligible costs (€93 thousand), with the remaining 80 per cent (€372 thousand) provided by the Region (ITP resources).

The intervention involved improvement works (sewage system, water supply network, public street lighting, repairing existing roads) in the Tratturo industrial (and craft industry) area, located west of Pratola Peligna, where a variety of businesses are located.

The industrial and craft industry area enjoys the advantages of being located close to the road and motorway network. In fact, the provincial road linking Pratola Peligna to Prezza is south of the intervention area, and the A25 motorway is visible from the area.

According to the mayor, the ITP enabled a considerable improvement in the overall functionality of the industrial area for businesses, particularly with regard to accessibility, which has previously been limited to just a few access points.

Operating within the area are businesses that are important for the Pratola economy, although some of them are struggling due to the crisis and have made ample use of the wage supplementation scheme, such as Roceit SpA (which operates a foundry and makes cast-iron products). Other companies located within the industrial zone operate in a variety of sectors: ironworks (Omda), marble production and processing (Idea Marmi) and freight transport (Di Nino Trasporti).

The second intervention was entitled “**Improvement of the industrial area (Arcone and Quaglia access gates)**”, for a total eligible cost borne by the ITP of €543 thousand. The intervention was cofinanced by the municipality of Raiano (20 per cent of the total cost). Resources from the 2002 Regional Budget were also used, in the amount of €773 thousand.

The aim of the intervention was to build primary infrastructure for the new industrial zone,³⁵ in order to provide adequate service to existing establishments and permit the construction of other establishments that otherwise would have been impossible,

³⁵ The Raiano Industrial and Craft Industry Zone began to take shape towards the end of the 1970s and was officially created with the 1981 general zoning plan as an area designated to support local craft firms. The area developed quickly, so much so that it had to be expanded with a 1983 variance to the general zoning plan and a special Economic Activities Plan issued in 1984.

The productive area was further expanded with the 1991 general zoning plan with the formation of two areas (T/PA1 and T/PA2) to respond to and develop the characteristics that had evolved over time thanks to the establishment of purely industrial activities, which had a positive impact on local employment and on other areas.

After the first location (T/PA1) became saturated, in 1998 the town government prepared and approved a new plan for productive establishments to meet new demand from firms and companies.

The new zone covers over 30 hectares and comprises around 50 plots of various sizes, with total forecast employment of 1,500.

The new zone already contains a variety of businesses, all located opposite the “old” zone, with the provincial road of Valle Arcione becoming the axis separating the established part from that yet to be occupied.

considering the deficient road network, water supply and sewer system and public street lighting.

A portion of the resources was used to modernise and upgrade the existing urbanised and occupied area, where over 50 businesses or craft firms are located, employing over 500 people.

Along with these interventions, several entry gates were built where the main access roads intersect with the state highway (SS5 Dir). The purpose was to improve the image of and access to the Industrial and Craft Industry Zone, in part considering that a major national freight transport firm has facilities within the area.

After these interventions were performed, plots equal to 50 per cent of the available surface area were assigned and a dozen establishments were set up and abandoned warehouses renovated in the area.

The local actors therefore believe that it was important to make these funds available to internal areas and small towns, which acted as a flywheel in launching a new stage of development that the towns would never have had the independent resources to pursue.

Thanks to the infrastructure projects, the Town of Raiano can offer developed areas served by essential utilities, which are also being promoted effectively.³⁶

II.5.4 Interventions managed by small municipalities

While in the case of works designed and managed by a supra-municipal entity (reclamation consortium, mountain community – Sections. II.5.1 and II.5.2) or medium-sized municipalities (Sulmona, Pratola), the works are all in operation and generating significant positive spillover effects, the status of works managed by small municipalities – not many but significant all the same given the nature of the interventions (museum restoration, renovation and fitting out; creation of info centres) and their potential impact on the local economy – appears more problematic.

The works are all completed and inspected, but are not all in operation and have rarely had a material impact on the local economy.

In this case, the greatest constraint appears to have been a lack of adequate resources earmarked for operations or a shortage of resources from the budgets of the municipalities themselves, all of which are small or very small.

³⁶ See Raiano, *Un supporto per l'impresa. Investire a Raiano conviene*, an information brochure for entrepreneurs, companies and businesses.

An example of these issues is the project for a “Mountain trail service centre” managed by the municipality of Roccapia,³⁷ which seemed to address one of the most serious obstacles for users of the Abruzzo mountains, i.e. the lack of signs marking trails and the availability of adequate services. The goal was to create a structure to provide directions and information and satisfying demand for new trails in areas not regularly visited by tourists, while at the same time encouraging the creation of small-scale support activities (mountain trekking, horseback riding on trails), the revival of native forestry and pastoral activities, the marketing of local products and the creation of a low-cost micro-accommodation facilities.

The intervention was duly certified in August 2006 and the building owned by the municipality was renovated for these purposes, providing 16 beds in 6 rooms. The intervention was cofinanced by a private-sector party that was also supposed to operate the structure.

However, the facility’s operation was hampered by the municipality’s failure to build urbanisation works, specifically a connection to drinking water service and planning and repairing the access road, which the municipality was not able to guarantee.

A similar situation arose with regard to a project for the transformation of a school building into a museum managed by the municipality of Scanno. In this case, too, the objective of unifying two school buildings to create one multi-purpose building with the construction of an audiovisual centre, a library and a conference centre was formally reached and the centre was certified in 2006.

However, it has not been opened due to the lack of adequate ordinary resources. In this case, the intervention’s ineffectiveness seems to have been worsened by the fact that many of those interviewed were unaware of its existence, displaying a sort of loss of memory and, therefore, an avoidance of responsibility.

One exception to this trend is the project for the completion of the Ethnographic and Multimedia Museum of Cocollo, which among the small-scale museum restoration projects offers an example of best practice.³⁸

The objective of the project was to create a museum collection and centre conserving and studying materials and histories on the cult of St. Dominic, the snake handling ritual of Cocollo³⁹ and its spread throughout Abruzzo and other regions beyond Europe, as

³⁷ Specifications provided by the Town of Roccapia.

³⁸ As in the case of infrastructure projects, in this case, too, the evaluation of the local actors was supplemented with a visit to the intervention performed, i.e. to the Ethnographic Museum and the “A. Di Nola” Research Centre.

³⁹ The ritual has been thoroughly studied by anthropologists (notably A. Di Nola, for whom the research centre is named) and is currently being studied by biologists who are looking at the snakes as a protected species that performs functions important to the area’s ecosystem.

well as create an archive easily accessible to the public and scholars on the religious rituals and folklore of the entire Region of Abruzzo.

The construction of a history museum that would stabilise and institutionalise the festival of St. Dominic, enjoying ample support from sponsors and cultural and scientific experts,⁴⁰ was part of a tourism network connected to the world of scientific and university research. It therefore took the form of a multi-purpose structure for services catering to tourism, culture and research.

The work has been completed and the centre is operating well, with a constant flow of visitors, especially during the summer months (around 900 paying visitors, with as many non-paying visitors consisting of scholars and the elderly). At other times during the year, the flow is less regular, but nevertheless exists.

The museum includes a documentary exhibit on the village of Cocollo, its history and, more specifically, its snake handler cult, describing its features and its anthropological, mythological and religious aspects through a display using multimedia technologies that is both informative and educational; the very interesting photography centre was built around the constant contrast between old and new, offering a symmetrical display of sites, behaviours and religious rites as they are today and over the course of the years and centuries.

The museum is complemented by the Research Centre, named after the Neapolitan anthropologist A. Di Nola,⁴¹ who for many years studied local traditions and the origins of the feast of St. Dominic. It focuses heavily on historical documentation and includes a library-archive with networked computer terminals, a database accessible from the terminals and Internet connections on the traditions, history, culture, rituals and customs of the inhabitants of Abruzzo and Molise throughout history.

The snake handlers date back to the time of the Marsi “reknowned handlers and charmers of venomous snakes, familiar with herbs and panacea, magical formulas and spells for curing poisonous snake bites....In the country, ravaged by wars and migration, the people, the first Thursday of May, continue to handle and exhibit snakes, no longer venomous. Memory has been transformed, a shift in symbols has occurred, with the vipers being replaced by harmless grass snakes, wrenched from hibernation, to commemorate mythical events, sometimes attributed to the Marsi, sometimes to the miracles of St. Dominic who represents the triumph of man over a hostile nature, embodied in the snakes” (from Alfonso M. Di Nola, *Cocullo e il suo rituale*).

⁴⁰ Responsibility for the cultural and scientific aspects of the museum and the centre were entrusted to the “Alfonso Di Nola” Research Centre, formed with Town Council Resolution no. 31 of 6 October 1998, in which the following entities, in addition to the Town of Cocullo, take part:

- University of Rome “La Sapienza” – Department of philosophy and epistemology;
- University of Bari – Department of history, social sciences and ethnology;
- University of Florence – Social studies department;
- “G. D’Annunzio” University of Chieti – Department of medieval and modern studies;
- “G. D’Annunzio” University of Teramo– Institute of sociology and anthropology;
- Ernesto De Martino Institute (Florence).

⁴¹ See Note 37.

This achievement can be attributed to the fact that the ITP ensured the completion of a work that had already been started. According to the town's mayor,⁴² this was the key factor, in view of the long-standing shortage of funds available to small and very small towns in the area, which are virtually never able to add to the ITP resources.

Nevertheless, the project, despite the importance of the intervention and its effectiveness, encountered a considerable obstacle in the very weak local economy. The village has experienced substantial depopulation, falling from around 1,000 inhabitants a few decades ago, to 300 now, of which 165 are over 65 years of age. The problem of the total lack of accommodation and restaurants is particularly severe.

The impact of the museum and the festival on the local economy must be measured on a broader scale since visitors are forced to find lodging and meals in nearby towns.

The experience of the municipal government is interesting. In its desperate search for additional sources of funds and all possible solutions to stem the flow of people, particularly young people, out of the region, it uses the proceeds of a small wind-power plant to form a services cooperative – all of whose employees are residents – to which it outsourced a series of services ranging from student transport to maintenance, the management of the Di Nola Centre and the provision of home assistance for the elderly, who, representing more than half of the population, are well cared for.

The proceeds from the plant also make it possible to keep taxes at a minimum, provide text books for the village's few middle school students and aides to accompany the few resident children to after-school activities, including swimming.

Again according to the mayor, it's always very difficult to find funding specifically for cultural activities and ordinary museum improvement. Various attempts had been made to obtain regional funds. The municipality is currently awaiting the call for proposals related to the Cultural Axis of the 2007-2013 ROP, which has not yet been issued, although the procedure for gaining access to Community funds is viewed as real barrier to access for a small municipality.

42 Nicola Risio, Mayor of Cocollo. Interview of 8 October 2010.

III. Conclusions

As we have already seen, as reflected by the entire Report, the discrepancy between the analysis based on existing documentation, on the one hand, and territorial diagnosis and the intervention strategy from the “subjective” standpoint of the local actors, on the other, is often considerable on many aspects.

In consideration of these divergent evaluations, in these conclusions we seek to reconstruct an independent assessment, highlighting, for each theme, the differences between the two reconstructions and, where possible, supporting the evaluation with quantitative or qualitative analysis.

At the same time, we resume the main results, thereby making this section a summary of the entire work.

A “limited freedom” ITP with heterogenesis of ends. Neither the documentary analysis nor the assessment of local players shed any doubt on the fact that the Sulmona Alto Sangro ITP was in a certain sense a “limited freedom” project, in which the sectors of intervention, the actors and the destination of the transferred resources are already restricted to the ones defined in the regional planning documents.

The ITP’s strategy was more a corollary of the regional DOCUP than the result of a real programming exercise: the axes, measures and actions underlying the ITP strategy were a *de facto* derivation of the corresponding axes, measures and actions of the DOCUP of the Region of Abruzzo.

On the one hand, this circumstance influenced the action of the partnership, offering little room for manoeuvre during the construction of the ITP, while on the other it affected the definition of the strategy of ITP, which was not fully consistent with the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the territory.

As the aim of intervention had been well defined at a higher level – i.e. in the DOCUP – the local actors were not forced to focus on “what to do”. This fostered a choice for dispersion of the ITP financial resources in many and small projects rather than its concentration on what could, in theory, be considered the best projects for the area.

The local actors were keenly aware of this and were firmly convinced that in the presence of different circumstances - greater freedom of action in the programming and implementation phases - the choices made would have been radically different.

Nevertheless, despite the modest level of integration achieved and the fact that, on the whole, the intervention can be considered more as an injection of financial resources into the area rather than an integrated project, both the “objective” and “subjective” evaluations indicate that the interventions had a significant impact in the territory.

Many of the results achieved, such as the completion of works that would have otherwise remained stalled, meeting requirements for access to various clubs or circuits, increasing enterprise profitability or stemming emigration from the area (see Sections I.4 and II.5), are important on their own, even if they were not always or exclusively associated with the objectives of the original ITP.

Resources. The ITP channelled funds of about €18 million to the area (€266 per capita), a not insignificant amount if compared with the average resources of other Objective 2 ITPs.⁴³

The financial scale of the ITP represents one of the main discrepancies among the evaluations and between the objective reconstruction and the subjective assessment of the local actors.

The funds appropriated for the ITP were either not sufficient to generate a significant economic impact, as the ITP Manager appears to argue, or they were quite substantial for the area, representing a real injection of financial resources into the territory, as stated by most of the local actors involved in the project (see Section II.3).

This is a crucial issue, one that in this case represents a true evaluation question, of significance in explaining other results as well.

It is clear that in order to have a measurable impact on the local economy, the amount of resources dedicated to the ITP must be significant in relation to the total resources earmarked for the territory.

An attempt was made to estimate at least the orders of magnitude of resources involved, making it possible to answer the question with greater “objectivity”. More specifically, the Regional Public Accounts database has been used to reconstruct a local consolidated account, assuming a relationship between the total public financial resources of the Abruzzo Region and disposable income, calculated as at 2003, and assuming that relationship to be unchanged for the area covered by the ITP.⁴⁴ The financial weight of the ITP has been determined in relation to the amount so estimated.

⁴³ In Emilia Romagna, per capita expenditure under the integrated project for the Modena Appennino area – which had similar characteristics to the territory covered by the Sulmona Alto Sangro ITP – was €236, while that for the Forlì-Cesena project was €286. Per capita expenditure for integrated projects around major urban areas was appreciably higher (the Ferrara integrated project had per capita expenditure of €310, while the Parma project had expenditure of €355 and that for Piacenza amounted to €397).

⁴⁴ The Regional Public Accounts database (<http://www.dps.tesoro.it/cpt-eng/cpt.asp>) enables the reconstruction, at the regional level, of all expenditure and revenues, on both current and capital account, for the broader public sector. The universe comprises a much wider aggregate than that normally used in public accounting, which extends the more traditional concept of general government to include non-general-government public entities, comprising national public enterprises and local public enterprises.

While due caution must be exercised in proceeding on the basis of an estimation, the results seem to easily confirm the importance of the ITP and its role as a major resource for the area. The relative weight of the ITP in total resources available to the area varies in a range from 29 per cent to more than 36 per cent, depending on whether the reference aggregate is the public sector, and therefore including public enterprises, or the more traditional general government aggregate. The very small number of local public enterprises in the area (11 out of the 161 such enterprises in Abruzzo) would suggest that general government is the most appropriate aggregate for the area economy, thereby bringing the financial weight of the overall ITP to more than 36 per cent a year.

Expenditure capacity. The degree to which the resources were used was considerable, underscoring the need for the interventions and the response to the requirements of the territory.

All of the interventions (both infrastructure and state aid schemes) were completed by the end of 2006.⁴⁵ Of the approximately €18 million allocated to the Sulmona Alto Sangro ITP, 95.83 per cent of the funds were spent.

The Industrial Consortium of Sulmona and the Peligna Mountain Community were the two entities responsible for the financial management of the most important interventions. Alone, the Industrial Consortium of Sulmona handled 25.41 per cent of the total ITP resources, spending 90.81 per cent of those funds, while the Peligna Mountain Community managed 14.15 per cent of the total, spending 99.95 per cent of the allocated resources. The large proportion of the resources handled by these two entities gave them a major role in the implementation of the ITP.

These two were followed in order by the municipalities of Castel di Sangro (7.93 per cent of total resources managed, 100 per cent of allocation spent), Raiano (7.74 per cent of resources managed, 97.09 per cent of allocation spent) and Pratola Peligna (6.63 per cent of resources managed, 96.53 per cent of allocation spent), while the other entities involved in managing of ITP interventions did not exceed 4 per cent of total resources.

The data on disposable income at the municipal level were provided by CRESA (the Regional Centre for Socio-Economic Research).

The percentage is given by the ratio of the value of the ITP and that of a hypothetical public sector comprising the 30 municipalities in the ITP, which has been reconstructed from the RPA consolidated accounts for the Abruzzo Region and assuming a relationship between the total public financial resources of the Abruzzo Region and disposable income and considering that relationship to be unchanged for the reference area covered by the ITP.

⁴⁵ The sole exception was the museum reorganisation of Palazzo Colecchi in the town of Pescocostanzo, which was suspended for logistical reasons.

All of the entities involved spent a very high percentage of the resources at their disposal compared with the total eligible costs of the individual interventions, generally above 90 per cent and in 4 cases reaching 100 per cent (see Section I.2 and Table I.3).

The fragmentation of interventions. Our documentary analysis clearly reveals the fragmentation of interventions rather than a focus on major systemic projects, demonstrating the weakness of the area in expressing integrated demand.

However, the evaluation of local actors complicates this picture considerably. The large number of interventions and their small size is presented as a conscious choice on the part of the area, following a lengthy, animated debate over the course of the entire planning of the ITP, especially within the partnership, concerning the relationship between major projects and small interventions.

Reckoning with the bias against large projects – often announced but, in the experience of Abruzzo’s regional planning, almost never implemented as a result of a variety of constraints – and the intention to avoid forms of competition that have often proved to be a failure, emerge an awareness of the constraints of the ITP and the needs of the territory to be discussed.

We fully concur with the assessment that the ITP as designed was not an adequate structure for the implementation of major projects. This would have required greater freedom of action at the planning and implementation stages than allowed under the DOCUP, as had previously occurred with other initiatives in the same territory.

The space for taking actions available to the participants was restricted given the constraints of the DOCUP, which set out “quite a narrow path”, with regard to infrastructure and urban furniture projects and those intended to enhance museum resources.

In all cases where greater room for manoeuvre was available in planning and implementation, a strong sense of community emerged and unitary projects covering the entire area were developed, such as in the waste management sector (see Section II.3) and the experience of the towns in the Valle del Sagittario, who under the 2000-2006 ITP were the targets of micro-interventions (albeit designed to enable inclusion in the Club of the Most Beautiful Villages in Italy), which as part of the 2007-2013 Sulmona Alto Sangro ITP agreed to undertake a joint integrated development programme for the area (see Section II.4).

The great effectiveness of those microprojects (see Section II.5.1) leads to the conclusion that the needs of the territory were highly varied. The concentration of small interventions, including urban furniture projects (piazzas, sidewalks, lighting), in some areas can undeniably generate process benefits. In this case, they represented the marginal

contribution (the missing link) needed to render a series of activities effective or to gain access to certain clubs or circuits. The final result was the creation of clearly superior tourism, cultural and infrastructure resources than before the interventions, as indicated both in the perception of those involved and in the figures on the increase in the territory's accommodation resources (see Section I.4.2 and Tables I.11, I.12 and I.13).

It is likely that the highly fragmented nature of the interventions meant that the local community did not clearly perceive the ITP as an integrated whole. This appears to explain the low significance of an indicator of administrative continuity.

We did in fact attempt to verify the existence of a positive relationship between the degree of ownership of the results of the ITP by the officials of the towns involved in managing interventions and electoral results during or after the completion of the ITP planning experience, with re-election or defeat as the case may be.

The excessive fragmentation of the interventions across the territory on a one-to-one basis – i.e. one intervention, one territory – leads us to conclude that the community's perception of the presence of the ITP in the area was too low to impact its evaluation of the effectiveness of local officials.

The shortage of ordinary resources. While in the case of projects designed and managed by a supra-municipal entity (reclamation consortium, mountain community) or medium-sized municipalities (Sulmona, Pratola), the results' activities are all in operation and generating significant spillover effects, the status of the projects managed by small municipalities – not many but significant given the nature of the interventions (museum restoration, renovation and fitting out; creation of info centres) and their potential impact on the local economy – appears more problematic (see section II.5.4).

The works are all completed and inspected, but are not all in operation and have rarely had a material impact on the local economy

In this case, the greatest constraint appears to have been a lack of adequate resources earmarked for operations or a shortage of resources from the budgets of the municipalities themselves, all of which are small or very small.

The only successful case of a small-scale project involved the completion of the Ethnographic and Multimedia Museum of Cocollo. In this instance, the full operation of the project can be attributed to the fact that the ITP ensured the completion of a work that had already been started. According to the town's mayor,⁴⁶ this was the key factor, in view of the long-standing shortage of funds available to small and very small towns in the area, which are virtually never able to add to the ITP resources and for which the

⁴⁶ Nicola Risio, Mayor of Cocollo. Interview of 8 October 2010.

complexity of tapping other sources of funds (for example, the Structural Funds) represents a real barrier to access.

The effectiveness of the intervention. The substantial constraints imposed by the shortage of quantitative information and a number of methodological issues (especially as regards the difficulty of constructing counterfactuals) prompted the decision to focus on qualitative information that would enable the formation of an assessment of the effectiveness of the ITP and its impact on the territory. Nevertheless, both the “objective” and “subjective” evaluations find that the ITP had a major impact. The local actors involved had an entirely positive assessment of the effects (see Section II.5). They felt that the ITP funds for internal areas and small towns acted as a flywheel in launching a new stage of development that the towns would never have had the independent resources to pursue.

Other public and private resources, activated by the requirement for cofinancing, also played a significant role. Resources that often lie dormant because they are insufficient on their own were leveraged by the impulse of the ITP.

Many micro-projects whose final stage was still missing were all brought to completion, finally rendering the works operational. While these were very small and often ordinary interventions, they had an important impact in making the works usable, with a substantial impact on local growth.

A number of micro-interventions were undertaken that also served to enable several towns to meet the requirements for inclusion among the ANCI Club’s “Most Beautiful Villages in Italy”.

The overall liveability of the area was improved and its tourist accommodation resources expanded. No less important is the fact that all of the objectives were achieved on schedule.

Other infrastructure projects concerning developed areas – all completed – involved works covering a broad aggregate of municipalities, thus generating considerable positive spillovers. The availability of the ITP resources was a key factor for the Industrial Consortium of Sulmona, which would not have otherwise been able to carry out a range of projects and expand activity. Here, too, certain initiatives represented the “missing link” in a broader project, such as the case of the wiring of the entire city with the laying of a fibre optic network, financed with ordinary regional funds and European funds, but where the lack of connections with external backbones essentially left the city closed within itself.

The interventions under the ITP enabled the Pratola industrial area to improve its overall functionality considerably, especially as regards accessibility, previously restricted to a small

number of access points. Thanks to the infrastructure projects, the Town of Raiano can offer developed areas served by essential utilities, which are also being promoted effectively.

Even the few data available appear to point to a number of significant structural changes, although it is difficult to isolate the impact of the ITP on the contextual variables.

Between 2001 and 2006 the resident population rose by 0.8 per cent, with the increase continuing in 2008, when the population had expanded by 0.4 per cent compared with 2006 (see Table I.9). We can reasonably hypothesize that the implementation of the ITP and its numerous interventions, in acting upon local enterprise, acted as a “magnet” for certain segments of the resident population in these areas, stemming the demographic exodus.

The breakdown of the resident population by age group also provides a significant indicator for working age segments: between 2001 and 2006, area residents aged 15 to 65 increased by 0.28 per cent (see Table I.10).

The ITP also generated the expected improvements in expanding tourism facilities in the territory, both under state aid mechanisms, which financed many enterprises operating in the tourism/hotel sector, and interventions to leverage the cultural attractors that by expanding tourist demand indirectly enhance the attractiveness of the area for investment by new firms. Between 2000 and 2006, within the overall ITP area there was an increase in the number of hotels, the number of beds and the number rooms, as well as an expansion in agritourism facilities (see Tables I.11, I.12 and I.13).

The ITP also made a significant contribution to improving business profitability while indirectly creating wealth in the area: the aggregate sales revenues of the enterprises surveyed, which were the beneficiaries of state aid, increased by 50 per cent between the two periods considered, rising from €23 million in 2000 to about €35 million in 2007.

Although aids to enterprises in the ITP area were granted using an undifferentiated approach, with no competitive mechanisms, the availability of fresh resources considered “stable” by local businesses fostered the expansion of their productive capacity with new investments (purchases of new machinery, construction of new production facilities, etc.) and boosted additional revenues, improving overall business performance.

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