



*Issue 25 -2011*

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AS A  
BALANCING ACT: AN EX-POST  
EVALUATION OF THE 2000-2006  
“SALENTINO-LECCESE” INTEGRATED  
TERRITORIAL PROJECT**

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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.

UVAL operates within the Department for Development Policies of the Ministry for Economic Development, to which it was transferred by decree of the Prime Minister on 28 June 2007, as published in the *Gazzetta Ufficiale* on 19 September 2007. The unit received its current structure in 1998 as part of the reorganization of the development promotion functions, which were previously assigned to the Ministry for the Economy and Finance.

The unit determines whether investment programs and projects comply with economic policy guidelines, assesses the financial and economic feasibility of the initiatives, and determines whether they are compatible and appropriate as compared with other solutions, while also evaluating their social and economic impact in the areas concerned.

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## **Economic development as a balancing act: an ex-post evaluation of the 2000-2006 “Salentino-Leccese” Integrated Territorial Project**

### *Abstract*

The Integrated Territorial Project (ITP) No.9 approved by the 2000-2006 Regional Operational Programme (ROP) of Puglia aimed at reinforcing and diversifying the manufacturing sector in Southern Salento, an area affected by high unemployment rates also due to its dependency on some traditional sectors of the so-called “Made in Italy”. The planned interventions included financial aid for innovative enterprises, and intangible actions such as training, internationalisation, technology transfer, and new industry-supporting infrastructures. Our evaluation of the completed interventions highlighted how the investments made by the supported enterprises were considerably lower than expected, while some intangible actions did manage to meet the needs of the enterprises, particularly those concerning the funds that were granted to vocational schools in the community. On the other hand, the university master courses were not entirely coherent with the integrated project’s goals. The project was originally very cleverly conceived in that it combined ambitious and innovative interventions with other conventional measures designed to have a diffusive effects and to build consensus. The fact that the innovative measures encountered greater difficulties in their implementation could have been foreseen and does not necessarily imply that they should have been excluded from the project. The ITP had to face several obstacles often encountered by other local development projects, such as the limited correlation between the various interventions, and the different approaches adopted by the local and regional authorities. However, thanks to their technical skills and ability to mediate between diverging interests, the local managers were able to overcome some of these obstacles and partly accomplish the results initially envisaged by the project.

## **Equilibrismi a servizio del territorio: una valutazione ex-post del Progetto Integrato Territoriale Salentino-Leccese 2000-2006**

### *Sommario*

Il Progetto Integrato Territoriale n.9 approvato dal POR Puglia 2000-2006 si poneva l’obiettivo di rafforzare e diversificare il settore manifatturiero nel Sud Salento, un territorio colpito da crisi occupazionale anche a causa della sua dipendenza da alcuni comparti tradizionali del *Made in Italy*. Gli interventi previsti comprendevano sia aiuti all’investimento di imprese innovative, sia misure a carattere immateriale come formazione, internazionalizzazione e trasferimento tecnologico, sia la costruzione di infrastrutture di supporto all’industria. L’esame degli interventi avviati e conclusi mostra che gli investimenti di imprese indotti dagli aiuti sono stati sensibilmente inferiori alle attese, mentre tra gli interventi immateriali risultano essere particolarmente aderenti alle necessità di riqualificazione delle imprese i finanziamenti agli istituti professionali del territorio. I master universitari finanziati dal PIT, al contrario, sono stati attuati in modo poco coerente con le finalità del progetto integrato. Il progetto era originariamente ben concepito anche per il fatto di combinare ambiziosi interventi di rottura, con altri più convenzionali ed a carattere distributivo, miranti a creare consenso. Il fatto che i primi abbiano trovato maggiori difficoltà nella fase di attuazione era perciò prevedibile, e non significa che essi avrebbero dovuto essere esclusi dal progetto. L’attuazione del PIT si è scontrata con ostacoli ben noti alla progettazione di sviluppo locale come lo scarso collegamento fra diversi interventi settoriali, e le differenti logiche seguite fra livello locale e regionale. Il gruppo dirigente locale, tuttavia, ha saputo superare alcune di queste avversità e portare a casa una parte dei risultati previsti dal progetto mettendo in campo le proprie competenze di natura tecnica e nella mediazione di interessi locali.

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