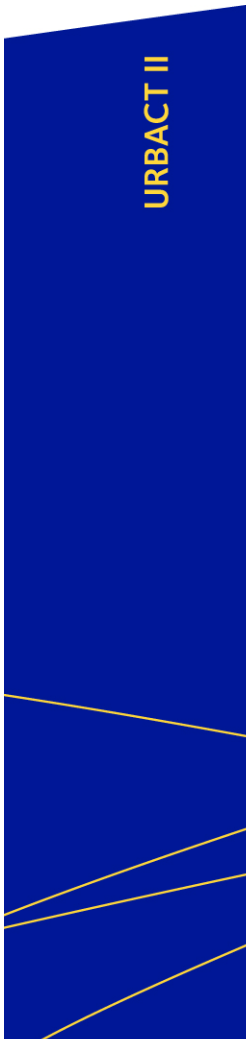




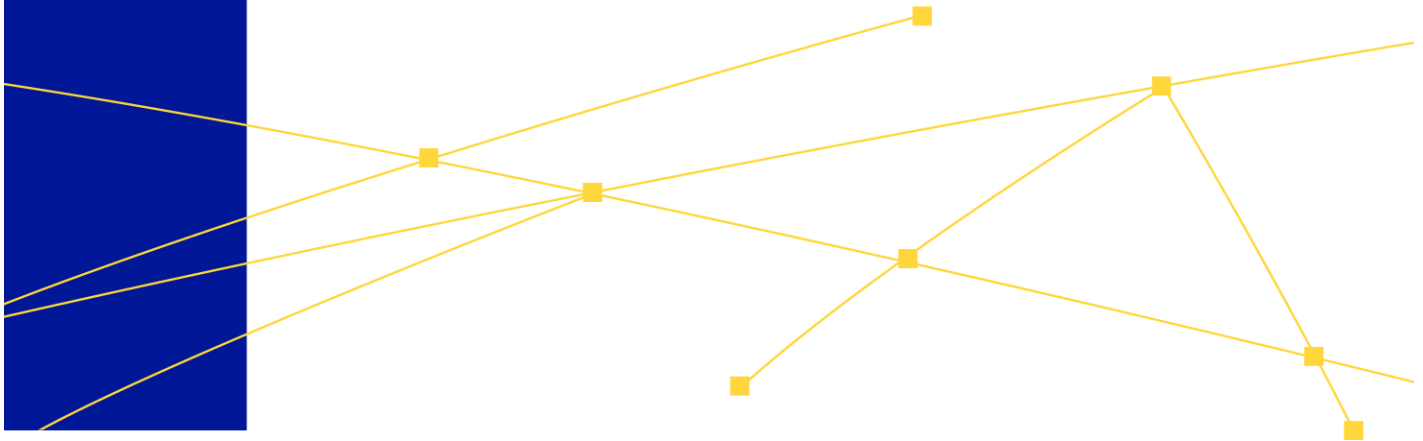
Regione Toscana
Diritti Valori Innovazione Sostenibilità



JESSICA 4 Cities

How cities can make the most from Urban Development Funds

Region of Tuscany contribution
August 2010



Connecting cities
Building successes



REGION OF TUSCANY CONTRIBUTION

1. The Tuscan experience in urban planning: PIUSS

1.1 Introduction

PIUSS is the Italian acronym for “Integrated Plans for Sustainable Urban Development” (IPSUD), which are funded under the Regional Operational Program co-financed by ERDF for the programming period 2007-2013.

Before describing their main features of the PIUSS, it is important to underline that the urban dimension in Tuscan 2007-2013 OP is not only related to the PIUSS plans. On the contrary, the urban issue is an element included in every priority axe of the program: first of all with regard to initiatives and projects for promoting research, development, technology transfer and innovation; secondly with regard to projects dealing with environmental sustainability and to projects concerning energy efficiency and development of renewable sources which certainly have an urban emphasis; thirdly with regard to those projects aimed at mitigating problems of material accessibility to the urban areas and of intangible accessibility related to the development of the information society.

The urban dimension is therefore a mainstreaming of the Tuscan 2007-2013 OP and the resources allocated to urban areas amount of 235.4 million Euro of ERDF (out of 338.4 million Euro ERDF co-financing at programme level) which represents the 70% of the total ERDF at programme level. The Tuscan operational programme co-financed by ERDF is composed of 5 axes (plus a sixth axe for technical assistance) and the PIUSS represent an instrument to carry out the economic and social development policies in urban areas as outlined in the 5th Axis of the Regional Operational Programme, in line with the provisions of the Regional Development Plan (RDP) and of the Territorial Action Plan (TAP). The resources available throughout the programming period are about 134 million Euros, about 45 of which allocated by the EU Funds (ERDF).

Priority Axes	Intensity of intervention in urban areas	Esteemed ERDF co-financing in urban areas (Meuro)
I – R&D, innovation, entrepreneurship	partially but predominantly	110.2
II – Environmental sustainability	partially	12.1
III - Competitiveness and sustainability of energy production	partially	7.9
IV - Transport services and accessibility	partially	60.4
V – Enhance sustainable territorial development	partially but predominantly	44.8
TOTAL (out of 338.4 Meuro ERDF co-financing at programme level)		235.4
% on TOTAL ERDF		69.6%

Source: Region of Tuscany

1.2 Definition and purposes of the PIUSS

The Tuscan “Integrated Plans for Sustainable Urban Development” are defined as a coordinated set of public and private interventions aimed at implementing – in terms of sustainability - objectives for socio-economic development through the improvement of urban and environmental quality and a rational use of urban spaces. They envisage an integrated approach including 5 types of interventions.

The focus is on the urban regeneration and therefore – according to the EU Regulations - they operate through recovery, upgrading, conversion and enhancement of existing urban heritage. No new interventions are allowed but in case of completion and integration of existing urban complexes.

1.3 PIUSS content

The Tuscan “Integrated Plans for Sustainable Urban Development” are provided with a set of rules approved by the regional government. According to them the PIUSS may only include infrastructural projects concerning 5 fields of interventions:

- infrastructure for economic development (i.e. businesses service centres, centres of competence for SMEs, infrastructure for manufacturing areas or high-tech service industry, etc.);

- tourism facilities (such as yachting, as significant for urban areas on the coast, conference and exhibition centres, spas, market areas, etc.);

- social infrastructure, a very qualifying kind of infrastructure including on the one hand those for the safeguarding of the rights of social citizenship (such as Day-care for at-risk people, centres carrying out activities providing support to disadvantaged people, hospitality centres aimed at fostering inter-culture, etc.) and on the other hand services for children younger than six (nursery schools, kindergartens);

- intervention aimed at promoting and enhancing the cultural heritage.

1.4 PIUSS criteria

The above mentioned set of rules concerning the Tuscan PIUSS envisage three different kinds of criteria, as synthetically listed below:

1. Eligibility criteria

- Municipalities with at least 20,000 inhabitants;
- Territorial contiguity of the areas included in the plan;
- Financial dimension between 20 and 50 million Euros and adequate stage of planning;
- Presence of operations from at least three different types of interventions;
- Convocation of a conference at Municipality level to concert the plan among the local stakeholders and drawing up and signing of a final agreement;
- Consistency with objectives and provisions for the implementation of the Tuscan 2007-2013 and the TAP (Territorial Action Plan)

Only Municipalities with a resident population over 20,000 inhabitants are eligible (that means 36 Municipalities out of 287 in the whole region). The areas included in one plan have to be contiguous/adjacent and can be a delimited territory of one single municipality or of two or more municipalities that are contiguous to each other. The plans have an agreed financial dimension, namely the minimum and the maximum dimension of the eligible public expenditure is between 20

and 50 million Euro. In order to ensure the integration, it is required that the plan has at least three different types of infrastructural operations among those listed before.

2. Selection criteria (as required by OP and approved by the Monitoring Committee)

For each eligible PIUSS proposal there are 100 points available, distributed as indicated below:

- Level of internal and external consistency (maximum 15 points)
- Level of integration with the OP's cross-strategies (max 30 points)
- Project quality (maximum 50 points), taking into account:
 - Functional integration of operations and their capacity to be related to other operations on the reference territory
 - Importance of the functions and services implemented with regard to the objectives of urban competitiveness and local welfare
 - Level of sustainability on financial, economic, employment and local welfare plane
 - Quality of the management tools of the plan and of its individual operations
- Level of the concertation process and quality of the participatory process (max 5 points)

The internal and external consistency is related to the integration at programming level since the plans have to be integrated not only with the rest of the regional programming but also with the programming documents at local level.

The integration with cross-sectoral strategies of the OP is related to the environmental sustainability, equal opportunities and non-discrimination which have been the principles for the implementation of structural funds for years.

Half of the points are for the project quality, subdivided among 4 elements:

First of all a functional integration of the operations is required because the projects included in an integrated plan must be integrated with each other.

As second factor the project quality is assessed in relation to the relevance of functions and services generated with regard to the objectives of urban competitiveness and local welfare (i.e. the regional body wants the project to implement services that provide value added to the welfare of local population).

The third aspect is very qualifying and necessary, and it concerns the financial and economic sustainability (that is the sustainability on a financial, economic, employment and local well-being level).

The fourth element is more related to the following stage of implementation of the projects, namely the life of the project (management, quality of the managing tools at plan level and for each single project). Finally the last 5 points are given taking into account the level of participation of the various stakeholders (the effectiveness of the participatory process).

3. Rewarding criteria

- Technical feasibility of each PIUSS and of its single operations: stage of the town-planning, chrono-program for the implementation;
- Public and private funding available at local level on the total cost of the project:
 - Co-financing required (funds already available on the total amount of the overall public expenditure)
 - Co-financing rate from private bodies that participate in the Implementation of the PIUSS

These incentive criteria are expected to add score to the plans that have the following features: firstly those with a higher level of technical feasibility. The minimum level strictly required by the call for proposals is the preliminary project. Those projects presenting a more advanced planning level can be rewarded with an additional score. Secondly, an additional score will be given to those plans already provided with public and private funding available locally.

1.5 Participation, governance and planning

The whole procedure of the PIUSS planning was characterised by a bottom-up approach. It is essential to convene a conference to concert the plan ensuring the broadest participation of stakeholders and partnership. The Municipalities involve all the stakeholders of their areas (public bodies, economic categories, social associations, etc.) and inform citizens of the opportunities offered by the European OP for the funding of important projects that can have a strong impact on the city life. The expected output of the conference is the drawing up of an agreement of cooperation. At the end all plans have to present another level of integration, as they must be consistent with the objectives and provisions for the implementation not only of the ERDF operational programme, but also of the territorial action plan and the regional programming in general.

The participation and the governance of the plans are very important and qualifying. There is a local coordination (as said before) and a regional coordination with different roles.

At regional level the first step was the drawing up of the call for proposal which was launched on the 13th of June 2008. After the submitting of the proposals (deadline 9th March 2009) the regional administration coordinated the procedures to certify the formal eligibility and the evaluation of the applications. An Evaluation Committee was set up at regional level on March 2009. During the evaluation process (six months) it was possible to assess how many projects complied with the established rules and could be declared eligible, to define a ranking of the submitted plans, to determine which and how many projects could be funded in relation to their quality and to the available resources.

1.6 Some figures

The most significant figures to point out in order to give an idea of the quantitative output of the PIUSS call are to be found here below:

- > 21 Tuscan Municipalities involved
- > 280 eligible projects (out of 323 submitted projects), distributed as follows:
 - 100 projects for infrastructure for tourism and trade
 - 82 projects for infrastructure for culture
 - 26 projects for infrastructures for economic development
 - 56 projects for social infrastructure
 - 16 projects for infrastructure for childhood
- > 43 not eligible projects
- > 16 eligible PIUSS (out of 17 submitted proposals)
- > 548,6 mil.€: overall eligible cost
- > 304,4 mil.€: co-financing required
- > 133,6 mil.€: funds available under the Tuscan ERDF programme
- > 121 projects funded with the available resources

Together with the classification of the 16 PIUSS, the Evaluation Committee approved also a subdivision of the 280 projects into 2 groups. On the one hand 184 were declared as “key projects” (that is projects whose importance is crucial and strategic for carrying out the whole plans). On the other hand 96 were declared as “functional projects” (which are connected to the key projects but whose execution is subordinated to the them).

As regards the level of integration and the percentage impact per kind of infrastructure, the submitted projects are particularly concentrated on the measures for tourism/trade (30%) and for the regeneration of cultural heritage (40%), but it is important to point out a good presence of projects in the social field (16%) and for the economic development (14%).

2. Final remarks on PIUSS procedure

The quantitative outcome of the Tuscan PIUSS gives indirect evidence of the effort of the territory (primarily of the 21 Municipalities involved) in designing integrated plans. A positive and successful experience at local level, even more significant particularly if we think about the level of conditionality to access the financial support and the characteristics of the rather rigid call for proposals.

According to this perspective the actions envisaged by the plans can gain an even higher value than what originally expected. Such actions will be implemented in poor urban settings, to be revitalized and rehabilitated in physical terms and to be given back to a stable presence of residents and city users. Therefore, thanks to the “Integrated Plans for Sustainable Urban Development” city areas take on a new life, and neglected areas or outskirts become new urban centres; moreover, where the local conditions so allow, due to the presence of particular buildings and monumental or specially equipped structures, these are turned also into new “centres of attraction” in areas that generally go beyond the city’s borders. And thus does the polycentric city take shape, with a concrete proposal that is moulded at the Municipal level where solutions are provided to develop the territory and where strategies are devised for new forms of urban dynamism, within the scope of the potentialities of urbanised areas and without further ‘consuming’ the land.

The challenge now is not only to enhance this work and this urban planning experience, but at the same time to find a reasonable solution to reduce the distance that exists between the co-financing required and the resources available at OP level and possibly to find another way to use the available resources moving them from the traditional grant-giving approach to a repayable contribution system (revolving instruments).

3. JESSICA in the Region of Tuscany

The first EIB Evaluation Study for the Tuscan Region was launched on February 2008 with the aim of being the pilot project for the implementation of JESSICA in Centre-North Italy. The Study was concluded on February 2009 and produced as main results:

- the specification of the jessicability criteria
- the simulation of the jessicable criteria on closed and already funded projects (under the previous programming period 2000-2006).

The application of the above mentioned criteria at PIUSS level was not possible since the call for tender and the evaluation process were still open.

However, this first Study did not provide an analysis of the structure and of the working modality of UDFs, considering that it was one of the first Evaluation Study leaded by the EIB among Europe.

Considering the experiences in Porto and Andalucia, the Region of Tuscany decided to agree for a second phase of the Evaluation Study that started at the beginning of 2010. Three pilot projects have already been selected among the PIUSS projects. A comparative analysis and a feasibility study will be carried out on them in order to verify the convenience of a Jessica UDF and/or other alternative forms of co-financing and structuring with the banking system or with other private entities.