Regional innovation policy to support SMEs clusters in Tuscany

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http://www.poliinnovazione.unimore.it/

New Cluster Policies and Tools to Support Emerging Industries and System Innovation
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Emily Wise on **Clusters in regional innovation systems**

It seems that clusters (or a certain segment of “mature platforms for collaboration”) are becoming a more stable part of the innovation support infrastructure in certain geographies.

– Is this type of long-term, collaborative platform and process management function **needed/desirable**?

– If so, **what implications may this have on existing cluster programmes** (and state aid rules)?

→ **evaluation issue**
Case study: 
Tuscany’s innovation policies (2000-2013)

goal
to strengthen the RIS, which included a large number of SMEs
that had relatively few connections with universities and
other regional research hubs

• 2000-2006: network policies
• 2011-2014: innovation poles
## Tuscany’s Innovation Network Policies 2000-06

### Partnership Composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Programmes</th>
<th>participation to other projects</th>
<th>constraints</th>
<th>no limits</th>
<th>1 project only</th>
<th>max 2 projects</th>
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### Funds per Wave

- 30.20%
- 27.21%
- 11.00%
- 7.77%
- 3.98%
- 4.21%
- 1.03%
- 0.04%
- 2002_ITT
- 2002_171
- 2002_172
- 2004_171
- 2004_171A
- 2005_171
- 2006_VIN
- 2007_171
- 2008_171

### Agents that participated in one funded project at least, per wave

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<th>Agents</th>
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Tuscany’s innovation network policies_2000-06

• *did they learn innovation networking?*
  
  Counterfactual analysis of the effects on beneficiaries:
  → positive effects

• *was networking by design (heterogeneity and size) efficient?*
  
  → not necessary

• *who were the intermediaries?*
  
  → not necessarily the ones appointed to that role

• *Detecting the dynamics of subnetworks...*
Tuscany’s innovation network policies_2000-06

- Detecting the dynamics of subnetworks_three methods

Each methodology made possible the detection of subnetworks with specific characterization: structure, processes, functions

→ Projects were too short to support innovation processes
Tuscany’s innovation poles_2011-2014

Tuscany’s regional government funded **twelve innovation poles** whose aim was

- to provide a range of **knowledge-intensive services**
  - including technology scouting,
  - support in the preparation of project proposals,
  - matchmaking

- to encourage **technology transfer** and stimulate the innovation capabilities of regional SMEs
Nodes & linkages: types

Nodes
- Innovation pole
- Other institutions/organizations
  - Personnel

Layer, ie. linkage type*
- Shareholding of a managing organization
- Leading the innovation pole consortium
- Managing the consortium
- Collaboration agreement
- Service provision
- Employee seconded to a managing organiz.
- Providing work services to pole
- Membership
Insights on evaluation

– Adequate set of system indicators
– Sector/technology differentiation
– Adequate data collection tools
– Short, medium, long run effects
How can be framed the evaluation of such policies?

→ Emphasize self-evaluation (ex ante):
  ask beneficiaries and innovation infrastructure to identify
  – what **system failures** they are addressing and
  – how they are confronting them
  – how they will evaluate their own performance

Different sectors / technologies may differ in terms of the system failures that need addressing, or in terms of their relative importance

→ Adopt a system of indicators and qualitative metrics
  that captures **direct and indirect outputs**
  as well as

**measurable performance outcomes** and **behavioural outcomes**
Hints on evaluation

For the purpose of performance-driven fund allocation:

→ a subset of output indicators could be used (direct outputs mainly), possibly differentiated by the objectives in terms of what system failures they intend to prioritize.

For the purpose of returning a comprehensive evaluation of the intermediaries’ performance:

→ all types of indicators should be used, encouraging the intermediaries to provide a detailed overview of their contribution to addressing system failures in the RIS in a short, medium and long-term perspective.