



Application form
European Entrepreneurial Region (EER) Label

EER 2014

1. Contact details

Applicant region	Marche Region
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2. Presentation of the political vision

The 'Marche' model

The Marche Region is one of the Italian areas where entrepreneurship has been the key element for economic and social development. In fact, the region has a strong entrepreneurial culture and its development model – the „Marche Model“ – has caught the eye of economists, sociologists and policy makers who have recognised it as a factor of success in regard to economic opportunities and social cohesion.

The „Marche Model“ is primarily based on an industrial structure dominated by strongly interconnected small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in 27 specialised clusters. It has guaranteed the region a high and solid development path, which has made it possible for its initially rural and sluggish economy to become an industrial system characterised by a combination of creativity and entrepreneurial skill, often provided by the „share-croppers“ who transformed themselves into craftsmen and, subsequently, into small business owners. The model specialised into four main sectors: mechanics, footwear and fashion, wood and furniture and agro-industry. Overall, the contribution of the manufacturing sector accounts

for 40% of employment compared to 30% nationally. The region also has a strong propensity for trade supported by a positive and stable trade balance. The region shows a good export capacity together with a positive trade balance. Export makes up one third of Marche's GDP or 2.6% of overall Italian exports. Its export capacity is above the Italian average and, despite the crisis, it is the third growing exporters among the Italian regions with an export growth of 6.4% in the last year.

The challenges of globalisation and the economic crisis

Despite its dynamic export sector and high specialisation, since 2007 the 'Marche model' has suffered from increased global competition. The crisis has caused the industrial fabric and relations to deteriorate. The consequence has been an increasing loss of employment and wealth. Besides the external 'shock', there are underlying structural issues related to the credit sector, infrastructure and relations with Public Administration (PA) and universities. Moreover, enterprises tend not to invest in R&D and the traditional sector needs high quality production to compete against growing economies. As a matter of fact, since 2008 the regional SMEs have lost an increasing percentage of international market share.

Although the crisis is hitting the area dramatically, the SME system still shows that it has the capacity to regenerate itself and to become competitive again. The issue is to find a new common path to renovate the 'Marche Model'. The following table provides a brief SWOT analysis of entrepreneurship in the Marche region:

The Marche Model: SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High business density (one active firm for every 10 inhabitants vs. 1:15 in Italy and 1:25 in the European Union (EU)) • One of the top 15 to 25 industrialised regions in the EU • Highly diverse economy, with 27 industrial clusters • Four universities • Unemployment rate lower than Italian & EU average • Life expectancy of 80, the highest in Italy • Propensity to trade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legacy of traditional sector-based economic development model • Dependence on firms created 30-40 years ago and a predominance of family firms • Relatively few hi-tech / innovative start-ups and low level of innovation by existing firms • Weak business support infrastructure • High dependence on traditional energy resources and imported resources • Not very responsive PA • Low level of cooperation between universities and SMEs
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong entrepreneurial spirit • Diversity of skills and knowledge of human capital • Higher than average percentage of graduates • High level of migrants in tertiary education • Geographic location at the crossroads of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitiveness of emerging economies • Possibility of de-industrialisation taking root • Growing credit scarcity • Continuing reduction in exports and in profitability • High mortality rate of established

<p>Adriatic Corridor and a gateway to southern and eastern Europe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 37% of the population is active (25-50 year olds) • Service sector potential, e.g. tourism 	<p>enterprises as owners approach retirement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing youth unemployment and long-term unemployment due to recession and loss of competitiveness
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A 'new deal'

To reverse the crisis and restore entrepreneurship as the key actor in the development pattern, it is necessary to build a 'new deal' between SMEs and the region, intended as the territorial system that involves not only PA but also universities and other organisations. This 'new deal' supports a political vision, which is mainly based on two strategic pillars and is detailed in six specific objectives:

I. An SME-friendly region

Specific objectives:

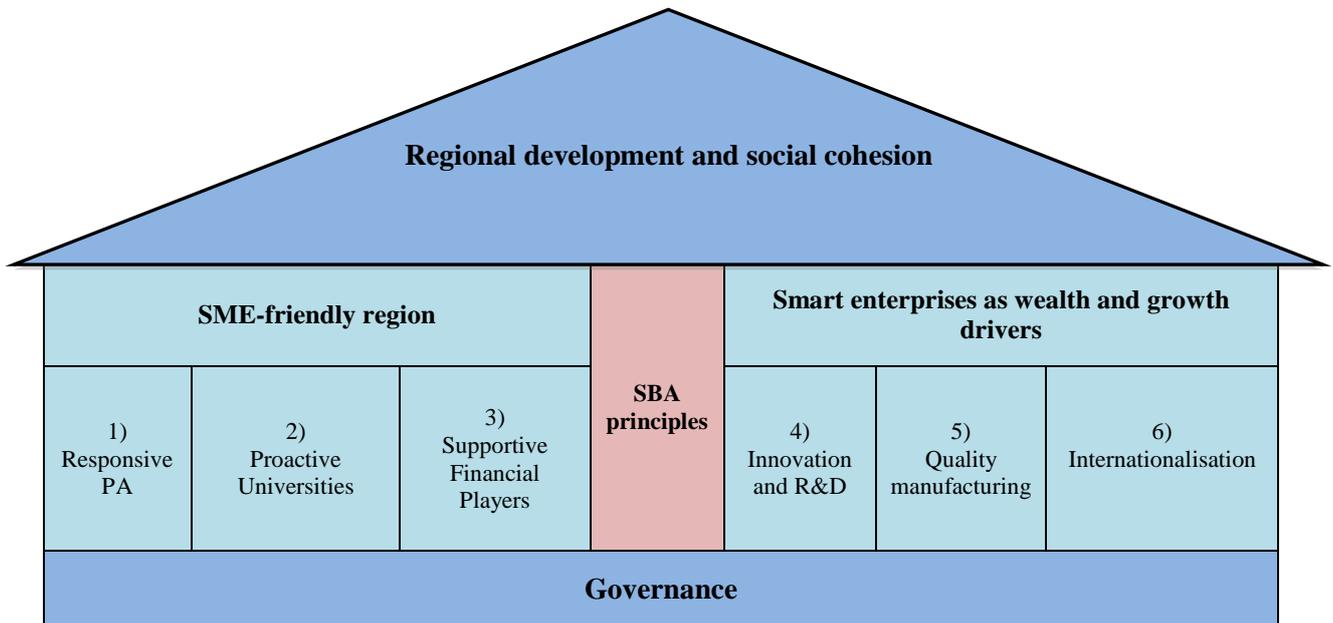
- 1) responsive PA: closer to SMEs' needs, effective in reducing the administrative burden, easily adaptable to needs
- 2) a pro-active, educational university system: capable of producing skilled people and to spin research.
- 3) Supportive financial players: efficient in meeting specific SME needs through identifying specific actions and innovative solutions

II. Smart enterprises as wealth and growth drivers

Specific objectives:

- 4) Smart specialisation for R&D-driven innovation: SMEs will be capable of making use of new technologies and networks with the universities in new and promising sectors such as domotic, ambient assistant living and new materials.
- 5) Smart specialisation for quality manufacturing: existing 'specialisations' should evolve into quality clusters through cross-fertilisation and the support of creative industries such as culture and design.
- 6) Holistic support for internationalisation including tailored assistance to SMEs in targeted growing markets.

Fig 1: The ‘new deal’ and the Strategic Vision



The vision also is based on a system of governance with three phases:

- a) **Participation** The Regional authorities have a number of ‘**permanent work tables**’ with SME associations, as well as financial and educational systems. In addition, the Region will establish Mr. PMI (SME) who will be the reference point for all stakeholders.
- b) **Measuring Performance and Results** The results of the strategy will be measured by a **set of indicators** (see the next chapter) and analysed by the joint regional evaluation system (independent evaluators from the European Reconstruction and Development Fund (ERDF) + European Structural Fund (ESF) Regional Occupational/Operational Programme[is this Regional Operative Plan? If so please put acronym (ROP) here and remove the reference on page 7]). In addition a ‘peer reviewing’ system with other Italian regions (as well as with EER regions) will be set up to monitor the achievement linked to Small Business Act (SBA) principles.
- c) **Communication** The Marche region will make use of the WEB 2.0 tools. The result of the system will be publicised on a daily basis on ‘IMPRESA MARCHE’ (www.marcheimpresa.net). All achievements in terms of ‘innovation’ will be published on the ‘MARCHE INNOVAZIONE’ blog (www.marcheinnovazione.it). More details are in the

‘Communication’ section below.

The two pillars and specific objectives aim to tackle the endemic weaknesses and turn threats into growth and development opportunities. Moreover, this vision recognises the crucial role of the SBA in adopting a holistic approach towards restoring the central position of SMEs at the heart of regional development. The following table contains an explanation of links between weakness/ threats → specific objectives → SBA Principles.

PILLARS	WEAKNESSES AND THREATS	→	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	→	SBA PRINCIPLES AND EER AREAS OF INTERVENTION
I. A FRIENDLY REGION FOR SMEs	Difficulty accessing tenders and incentives, high administrative burden and low response from PA	→	A friendly PA	→	IV. Make public administrations responsive to SME needs V. Adapt public policy tools to SME needs: facilitate SME participation in public procurement <i>Mainstreaming the ten principles of the EU's revised SBA by adopting smart regulation to enable SMEs to concentrate on core business</i>
	Difficulty in maintaining relationships with universities and 'brain drain'	→	Proactive Educational and Research system	→	I. Create an environment in which entrepreneurs and family businesses can thrive VIII. Promote the upgrading of skills in SMEs and all forms of innovation <i>Education in Entrepreneurship: projected measures to introduce and encourage entrepreneurship</i> <i>Demonstrate support for closer cooperation, especially between higher education and businesses.</i>
	Difficulty in credit supply for SMEs	→	Responsive financial institutions	→	VI. Facilitate SME access to finance <i>Mainstreaming the ten principles of the EU's revised SBA by improving access to finance and growth</i>
II. SMART ENTERPRISES AS WEALTH AND GROWTH DRIVERS	Relatively few hi-tech / innovative start-ups and low level of innovation by existing firms	→	Smart specialisation for R&D-driven innovation	→	VIII. Promote the upgrading of skills in SMEs and all forms of innovation <i>Presenting a forward-looking strategy to increase the innovation potential of small enterprises</i>
	Legacy of traditional sector-based economic development model based on firms created 30-40 years ago and a predominance of family firms	→	Smart specialisation for high-quality manufacturing	→	VIII. Promote the upgrading of skills in SMEs and all forms of innovation <i>Promoting innovative and creative policy initiatives</i>
	Growing competitiveness of emerging countries and a reduction in exports and profitability	→	Holistic approach toward international business	→	X. Encourage and support SMEs to benefit from market growth <i>Promoting the region internationally and offering support for the internationalisation of regional SMEs</i>

3. Action plan

The Action Plan promotes a pragmatic and selective approach, focusing on areas and sectors where concrete objectives can be achieved, using the institutional and legal powers of the region. Therefore, the Action Plan will contribute to Europe 2020 in regard to the objective of smart and inclusive growth.

Moreover, in preparation for 2013, the Action Plan is based on actions already in place under the Regional Joint Plan for Labour and Enterprises, which is funded by the ESF and ERDF Regional Operative Plan (ROP) 2007-2013. For future measures, the Action Plan will be supported by two regional documents:

- Regional SBA Plan (for the first Pillar)
- Regional Innovation Plan for smart specialisation (for the second Pillar)

These two plans are being drafted and will be delivered in 2013. Furthermore, in the same period the two ROP (ESF – ERDF) programmes will be explained in greater detail.

For this reason, the EER experience can be very important for the Marche region in terms of inspiration and insights, which explains the full commitment of regional authorities in the EER candidature. The action plan contains the following items:

- **Specific Objectives** represent the explanation of the Strategic Vision. There are six specific Objectives, three for the first pillar ‘SME-Friendly Region’ and three for ‘Smart SMEs’.

- **Measures** are the actions from different regional Plans and Programmes focusing on mainstreaming **the ten principles of the EU-revised SBA** and in fostering **Entrepreneurship**. The Action Plan will indicate which measures are already ongoing and which regional plan to start during the 2012-2015 period.

- **Budget** is the total financial resources allocated to the measure. If the measure is implemented in the ROP 2014-2020 (ERDF or ESF), the figure is not available but it will be updated once the Programme is drafted.

- **Outputs** are target indicators in 2015 for each specific measure. If the budget is not available (see ‘Budget’), the target will be updated once the ROP 2014-2020 is drafted.

- **Results** are the quantitative goals or the changes in behaviour to be achieved by 2015. If the budget is not available, the estimate will be made once the ROP is finalised (see ‘Output’ and ‘Budget’).

- **EU Dimension** is the description of the role of structural funds and other EU funding in regard to financial contribution, types of incentives, governance and technical assistance.

- **Regional Integration** is the description of different stakeholders in the Regional partnership and their involvement in implementation of the measures.

- **Successful Implementation** is the mode for analysing the results and outputs. In particular, detailing who is going to evaluate, the type of resources and the timing. Communication strategy is described in section 4.

For each specific objective, a specific key project and ‘other’ important initiatives are shown. The projects are selected because of their innovative nature and because they provide a concrete picture of the changes in Regional policy attitude.

In the tables below, the six specific objectives for the two pillars are illustrated with their measures, budget, output, results, the role of structural funds, regional partnership, and evaluation.

PILLAR I: A FRIENDLY REGION FOR SMEs							
Strategic objectives	Measures	Budget	Output	Result	Regional Integration	EU dimension	Successful Implementation
1) Create a responsive administration for SMEs	The Marche Region is drafting a plan for application of the SBA principles – the SBA regional Plan (to be finalised by the end of 2012). Moreover the Region will introduce an ‘SME test’ in its legislative process to apply the ‘think small first’ principle to the regional decision-making process.	N.A.	The identification of 10 regional procedures (grant schemes and procurement) to reduce the administrative burden. SME test methodology in place for 2013 (end)	Reduction of 25% in administrative burden for regional applications (schemes and procurement)	SME associations are consulted in the process of drafting the SBA Regional Plan	The SBA regional Plan will be applied for the implementation of the ROPs (ESF – ERDF and European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EARDF))	The implementation of the SBA Regional Plan will be evaluated through a peer review carried out by a group of Italian regions
<p>Project: The TEO (Tender Opportunities) Project supports SMEs deciding to participate in public procurement tenders, by consolidating a platform of software service providers in order to assist local administrations in promoting a more efficient and integrated way to approach public procurement opportunities.</p> <p>Other initiatives: The SIGFRIDO project (Sistema Informativo Fondi Regionali Integrati Documentale Organizzativo) is an informative system created by Pegaso 2000 and RA Computer, whose aim is to support SMEs during the entire life cycle of the European Funds (ERDF and ESF) by reducing administrative burden for firms and helping them in monitoring and managing the funds. Another initiative is the creation of the SUT (Sportelli Unici del Territorio) in order to reduce administrative burden and make public administrations more responsive to SMEs’ needs, by digitising all application forms and related attachments. Specifically for artisans, the region has created the CRAI (Centri Regionali di Assistenza alle Imprese), which are centres that assist in simplifying the relationship between public administration and artisan firms.</p>							
2) Proactive Educational and Research system	There are measures aimed at placing researchers and Ph.D. students in SMEs in order to encourage more skilled workers into the business sector and to reduce ‘brain drain’ from the Region.	3.900.000 (2013)	- 277 grants delivered /to build the relationship with Ph.D. students and researchers with SMEs.	- 200 long-term contracts for young researchers / Ph.D.s - 250	Trade unions and universities are actively engaged in the Programme.	The incentive is funded by the ROP ESF.	Independent Evaluation of the ESF ROP 2007-2013 on the basis of the regional monitoring system

	Furthermore, the region supports young people in pursuing masters degrees and Ph.D courses with specific scholarships.		- 280 scholarships delivered	students with MA degree and Ph.D.			(SIGFRIDO).
<p>Project: The regional universities are changing their attitude toward SMEs and they are trying to be more proactive. An example is the Industrial Liaison Office of Marche Polytechnic University - Service Innovation and Technology Transfer –which was established in May 2005 as part of measures aimed at strengthening cooperation between research facilities and production system planning, making use of the research programmes of the University, characterised by a high degree of innovation through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving the quantity and quality of technology; • strengthening services offered to researchers and companies; • developing closer cooperation between academia and enterprises, including through the identification of technology clusters; • greater visibility and support for new business initiatives originating from the University’s research. 							
<p>Other initiatives: A useful portal is marcheinnovazione.it, which represents one of the final results of the project V.A.S.T.O. (Virtual Approach to the System of Technology Offer) implemented by the Marche Region with the help of the Engineering Faculty of Marche Polytechnic University, Department of Informatics (DIIGA). The website has two main objectives. First, it analyses the regional system of technology offers and transfers with special emphasis on local researchers and centres and their activities. Second, it acts as a portal to project and implement a system of indicators to monitor regional activity in terms of R&D. The portal is continuing to monitor R&D activity in the region in order to define innovation sources and the innovation process of SMEs in the region.</p>							
3) Responsive financial institutions	The region supports SMEs accessing credit through guaranteeing credit payments and supporting SMEs affected by debts. In the next programming period, the Region hopes to introduce innovative financial tools such as: - an ‘inter generational’ leasing to allow the capitalisation of family firms. -reverse factoring to increase the liquidity of SMEs.	6.000.000 (2015)	3.200 SMEs assisted by guaranteed funds	150 million euro of investments supported	SME associations are actively engaged in the Financial Engineering interventions of the Region. In fact, they represent the main shareholders of the SRGM (see the project below)	The ERDF ROP is the main source of financing for the financial engineering interventions of the Region. Furthermore the Region works together with the European Investment Bank (EIB) to increase the availability of resources for SMEs (see below)	Independent Evaluation of the ESF ROP 2007-2013 on the basis of the regional monitoring system (SIGFRIDO)
<p>Project: The SRGM (Società Regionale di Garanzia Marche) is a cooperative company with limited liability that acts as a guarantor in contracts for its</p>							

members (SMEs) to obtain mid- –and long-term financing from banks. The company, adequately capitalised, acts as an intermediary between SMEs and banks and operates in many different sectors of the regional economy.

Other initiatives: The region has recently transformed the **Fondo regionale di garanzia** from an anti-crisis measure to a permanent instrument to sustain SMEs in accessing credit and renewing credit lines. **Provvista BEI** is financed by the EIB and managed by Banca Popolare di Ancona SpA to finance different projects in technology innovation, energy resources, know-how, R&D, health and security in workplaces. Another important initiative is the **Reverse Factoring** project that represents an innovative and guaranteed model of credit payment to suppliers by public administration. This system regularises payment schedules and increases transparency in the relationship by creating the right conditions to reduce purchasing costs.

PILLAR II: SMART ENTERPRISES AS WEALTH AND GROWTH DRIVERS

Strategic objectives	Budget	Measures	Output	Results	Regional Integration	EU dimension	Successful Implementation
4) Smart specialisation for R&D–driven innovation	9.808.2 21,97 (2012)	The Region supports SMEs networking (min. 3 businesses) with Universities and Research Centres. The network will develop industrial research/ experimental development in the field of ‘ambient assisted living’ and ‘green smart homes’. In the next programming period the main tool for regional innovation will be ‘the Plan for innovation and smart specialisation’ which will identify and concentrate resources in the more promising innovative sectors and explore the adoption of pre – commercial procurement.	50 SMEs and 15 Research centres/ University-funded	12 innovative clusters established	The University and SME associations are consulted in the definition of the different tools.	Incentives are funded by the ERDF ROP. Moreover, the future Plan for innovation is drafted in the Regional Innovative Strategies 3 (RIS3) framework, to accomplish ex ante conditionality	Final / ex post evaluation of the ERDF POR on the basis of the regional monitoring system SIGFRIDO

Project: The Marche Region is active in building the national smart cluster related to the ‘**Ambient Assisted Living**’ and ‘**Flexible and Sustainable Factory**’. In the context of ‘Smart Cities and Communities and Social Innovation,’ a national tender worth 670 million euro, Marche takes the lead in proposals linked to the application of ICT products and new materials for health and aging.

Other initiatives: The Marche Region is a partner in the Increasing Knowledge Transfer and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (**IKTIMED**) project in the framework of MED (Mediterraneo) Transnational cooperation program. The Iktimed project wants to anticipate the formulation of RIS3 regional strategy for the 2014-2020 period. In particular it aims to improve coordination and synergies between the EU and regional/ national levels. The specific objectives are:

- 1) To set up an open and efficient collaboration system for regional authorities to sustain innovation through a trans-national certified system of innovation supply.

2) To develop joint collaboration schemes between the public sector, research centres and the private sector, promoting a business model based on a public-private regional economic development partnership, focused on setting up trans-national knowledge communities;

The main activities are:

- guidelines for an innovation providers quality accreditation system;

analysis of existing public-private mechanisms of cooperation to fund innovation as pre-commercial procurement of R&D services in which companies develop new solutions for public sector needs, due to the current lack of a commercially stable solution.

Furthermore the Region is an active partner in the **Smart Innovation Platform** established by the European Commission to provide professional advice to EU Member States and regions for the design of their innovation strategies for smart specialisation. The Marche Region will present its Innovation Plan for Smart Specialisation for peer review in February 2013.

<p>5) High-quality manufacturing</p>	<p>The Region is promoting a shift from traditional manufacturing towards high quality production by promoting innovative clusters along the supply chain for: industrial design, eco-design, new materials, joint labels, ICT platform, empowerment of human resources, common strategy for internationalisation and marketing</p> <p>In the framework of the 'Innovation Plan for Smart Specialisation', the Region will develop grant schemes aiming to encourage SMEs from different sectors to network (cross fertilisation) and in the creative industry in order to foster quality in traditional production. The traditional cluster will also</p>	<p>3.600.000</p>	<p>100 SMEs assisted</p>	<p>36 quality cluster established</p>	<p>The measure to develop 'quality manufacturing' will involve artisans, micro enterprise associations and the creative world (cultural specialists, designers, artists) in the preparation phase.</p>	<p>The ERDF is supporting the measures for encouraging quality cluster. The ESF and ERDF ROP 2014-2020 will be the main tools to develop these measures.</p>	<p>Final / ex post evaluation of the ERDF POR on the basis of the regional monitoring system SIGFRIDO</p>
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	be supported by innovative intermodal and ICT infrastructure.						
<p>Project: The region has introduced the Figura del Maestro Artigiano (Master Craftsman) to give value to high-quality artistic craftsmanship, to preserve and re-launch prestigious professions and, at the same time, to offer job opportunities to young workers who want to discover ancient cultural and artistic jobs. The region has created a local register which collects craftsmen with proven professional experience combined with a high aptitude for teaching to hold courses and local workshops (<i>bottega-scuola</i>) where students can learn the techniques and working methods from master craftsmen. These ‘working-schools’ are recognised by the region as proper educational organisations with higher teaching standards.</p>							
<p>Other initiatives: the Micro Green Logistic project, promoted by the Confederazione Nazionale dell’Artigianato (CNA) and the Italian brand Manas aims to promote the ‘smart car sharing’ among SMEs for goods transportation in order to reduce transport costs, contribute to CO2 emission reduction and increase competitiveness of the districts. In the first three months of 2012, 40 SMEs in the footwear sector, which took part of the project, reduced transport costs by 11,000 km, saved 38% in fuel and dropped CO2 emission by 43% in the Macerata/Fermo area. The project is based on an innovative logistic platform led by TWS, Trasporti e Logistica, which collects and delivers semi-finished goods based on the information provided by software written by the University of Camerino. The system details the orders to optimise timing and routes. By using this platform, each SME has saved between 9,000 and 15,000 euro in three months. The project will be extended to other firms in the district; it has been calculated that if just 30% of SMEs in the footwear district take part in the project, every year there will be 21 million km less road travel, 2,413 CO2 tons reduced, 3 million euro of fuel saved and more than 1,000 vehicles will disappear from the roads.</p>							
<p>6) Implement a holistic approach to international business</p>	<p>The Region has developed a holistic approach to assist SMEs in internationalisation. This approach is: 1) to provide individual financial consulting 2) promote a country focused strategy with target events (in India, China, Brazil) 3) create an ‘image’ of the Region (cultural and green) which embraces the territory and SMEs (see the Dustin Hoffman ad http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y9WT7rzAy6M)</p>	11.800.000	4000 SMEs assisted	N.A.	<p>The Chamber of Commerce and SME associations are actively involved in the definition of target markets and actions</p>	<p>The internationalisation process is also developed by European Projects funded by MED, SEE (South-East Europe Programme) and IPA-Adriatico (Instrument of Pre-Accession Assistance-Adriatic)</p>	<p>The Regional internationalisation department has a system of M&E (Measurement and Evaluation) which measures: 1) the number of SMEs helped 2) the level of satisfaction 3) the number of SMEs which gain new business after Regional assistance.</p>
<p>Project: In 2011 the Italian government initiated the Cabina di Regia per la Promozione e Internazionalizzazione delle Imprese, a steering committee with the role of specifying strategic guidelines to support and promote the internationalization of SMEs. Together with the committee, the Italian government has also created the Agenzia per la promozione all’estero e l’internazionalizzazione delle imprese italiane, an agency to internationally promote Italian firms.</p>							

The Marche region, as a leader of the **Commissione per le Attività Produttive – Internazionalizzazione** and which is actively involved in the committee, has a key role of monitoring trade activities of the regions. It defines with the other regions a common strategy to consolidate the so-called ‘Sistema Italia’ in international markets, optimising intervention by combining regional and national financial resources, identifying the focus countries in which to promote Italian products and the related sectors, and using the agency to organise international events and exhibitions to publicise Italian firms.

Other initiatives: The WIDE project (**groWing of SMEs: organizational Innovation and Development in the mEd area**) aims to increase the competitiveness and organisational capacity of SMEs through strategic cooperation between private and public bodies in the Mediterranean area in order to contribute to the development process of the area and face international competitiveness. The project intends to define a common methodology to evaluate SME performance and needs, in order to designate specific solution to reinforce the process of organisational innovation through pilot actions. Moreover, to support SMEs in the internationalisation process, the region together with its agency for development (Agenzia di Sviluppo Svim SpA) has created a web portal, **SprintMarche (Sportello Regionale per l’Internazionalizzazione)**, which represents a network between local authorities and those organisations, public and private that assist local firms, such as Ministero dello Sviluppo Economico, Unioncamere Marche, Ice, Simest, Sace, Svim SpA e le Aziende Speciali delle Camere di Commercio provinciali: Marchet di Ancona, Aspin 2000 di Pesaro, Exit di Macerata, Piceno Promozione di Ascoli Piceno e Fermo Promuove di Fermo. The main objective of the project is to ensure a constant and direct dialogue between institutions and local SMEs in order to have an exhaustive understanding of entrepreneurial needs during the process of internationalisation. Finally, the region has designed with the Chamber of Commerce and universities (in particular ISTAO-Istituto Adriano Olivetti, an institute for post graduate courses) a long-term training plan to support courses and student training in order to create new professionals who can help businesses with the process of internationalisation.

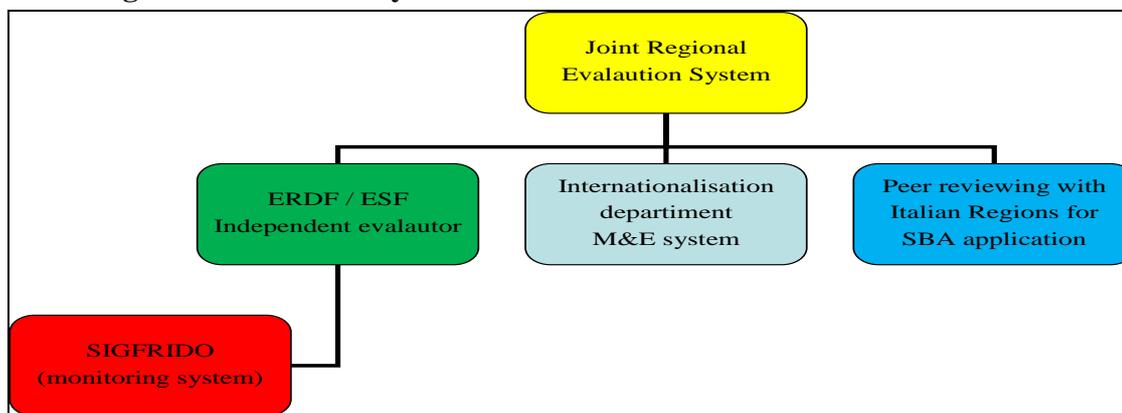
4. EER activities and communication.

If Marche is chosen as an European Entrepreneurial Region, the award will be integrated into all communication activities regarding SME policy. The communication activities will have three different phases:

- **Rising awareness:** The Region promotes already the solid relationship between Educational Institutions and entrepreneurs beyond the formal academic patterns, in particular with the organisation of post-graduate courses, e.g. ISTAO (Istituto Adriano Olivetti) to prepare young students to enter into the business world. An important joint initiative promoted by Banks and the Regional School Bureau is the “ financial tour”: experts from the Banca delle Marche organise lectures in the secondary school raising awareness on the importance of business and financial knowledge involving more than 1.000 of students in 137 classes. The EER experience will provide the inspiration to enlarge the scope of these activities in terms of populations and topic taking inspiration from other EER Regions (for example, the initiatives in schools implemented by County Kerry, such as the Young Entrepreneur Programme).
- **Consultation and preparation of the measures.** In order to reinforce the process of collaboration and coordination among different regional stakeholders, the region has established permanent round tables for consultation in particular with:
 - Representative of craftsmen
 - Representative of Industrial firms
 - Representative of Universities and educational Institutions
 - Trade Unions

Beside this institutional consultations, the Region has established a number of direct focus group with significant actors from the academic and business world to establish a “direct” contact with them. Moreover, the same stakeholders, mainly Universities and business associations, are joining up and feeding the debate on the future of the region. The EER will be an additional opportunity to organise events involving the regional partnership (such as the initiatives promoted, for example, by Catalonia and Styria)

Joint Regional Evaluation System



- **Provide monitoring and accountability:** the performance measurement system will be based on the existing system of monitoring and the Regional Joint Evaluation System which will exploit the different evaluation systems already in place (see the figure above). Since the action plan is articulated in a clear strategy (2 pillars and 6 specific objectives) with a set of measurable outputs and results, the stakeholders will be able to understand the performance of the measures implemented. The EER award is an important turning point since it will allow the comparison in terms of the results achieved by Marche and the other regions.

Regional authorities also aim to maximise the efficiency of different tools using a combination of modes of communication such as:

1. **the web**, the Marche Region will be permanently in touch with the stakeholders by the web 2.0 facilities of the existing websites:
 - a. www.marcheimpresa.net for the issues related to incentives/financial engineering
 - b. www.marcheinnovazione.it for the topic of innovation/R&D
 - c. www.sprint.it for internationalisation
 - d. ww.istruzioneformazione lavoro.marche.it for human resources and vocational training
2. seminars and workshops
3. media.

The cross-matching communication phases and tools

	Rising Awareness	Consultation	Accountability
- WEB			
- Seminar			
- Work shop / Focus group			
- Media			

If the application is successful, the Region will organise an annual workshop on the application of SBA principles at regional level. In this context, the Region will invite all the EER regions and other key players such as entrepreneurs, academics and international institutions, e.g. OECD and the Commission. Moreover, all means of communication in Marche (audiovisual, written and on-line), which are already in tune with the situation of SMEs, will be involved to explain and underline the importance of the EER award and SBA related policies.