



REGIONAL ACTION PLAN



Part I – General information

Project: REBORN

Partner organisation: FILSE S.p.A.

Other partner organisations involved (if relevant): Liguria Region, Ligurcapital

Country: ITALY

NUTS2: LIGURIA

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Part II – Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Investment for Growth and Jobs programme |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | European Territorial Cooperation programme |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Other regional development policy instrument |

Name of the policy instrument addressed:

- **POR ERDF LIGURIA 2014-2020 TO3 - PROMOTING COMPETITIVENESS OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES**
- **REGIONAL LAW NO. 34 OF 27.12.2016 ART. 4 REGIONAL STRATEGIC FUND**
- **L. R. N. 48 / 1973, - ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LIGURIAN FINANCIAL HOLDING FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - FI.L.S.E. S.P.A.**

INTRODUCTION

The main objective of REBORN Project is to contribute to increase European competitiveness and accelerate regional economic growth through the improvement of policy instruments linked to entrepreneurship and support in creation/growth of startups, helping SMEs in all stages of its life cycle, including measures to avoid crisis and failures, knowing that the SME success is a success of the economy and the well-being of all Liguria region.

The economic impact of legal and administrative procedures for business transfer and the bankruptcy of entrepreneurship in the region is an important issue that must be addressed, as well as the promotion of an entrepreneurial spirit with high tolerance for failure. For this reason, REBORN acts to promote the idea that from crisis and failure it can born an opportunity for SMEs and for the Region development in general.

Through the implementation of the Action Plans and the application of the lesson learned during the interregional learning phase, REBORN will contribute to the Investment Programs for Growth and Employment and European Cohesion, by increasing the competitiveness of the SMEs in difficulties and improving the measures to overcome them as well as contributing to eliminate the "stigmatization" of honest entrepreneurs incurred in failure. Under this framework, the objective of this document is to define the Regional Action Plan for Liguria Region, working on actions that improve the policy instrument that we have taken as a reference: POR ERDF LIGURIA 2014-2020 TO3-PROMOTING COMPETITIVENESS OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES.

The Action Plan represents the final results of the collaboration between the main regional Public and Private stakeholders, FILSE and Liguria Region Government (POR ERDF policy instrument manager), that worked together in definition of new actions to support restart policies in our region, taking inspiration from the best practices studied during the project at international level, and adapting them to our context, our policy instruments and our legislation. The Public and Private stakeholders actively involved in the project work are:

- Liguria Region (POR ERDF policy instrument manager)
- ABI Liguria
- General Association of Italian Cooperatives Liguria
- Carige Bank
- Ethics Bank
- Unicredit Bank
- CNA Liguria - National Artisan confederation
- Confart Liguria - Consortium of Guarantee of the Liguria Region
- Confartigianato Liguria
- Confcooperative Liguria
- Confidi
- Confindustria Liguria
- Genoa Municipality
- Italian Business Angeles
- Ligurian Cooperative League
- LigurCapital – Public Venture Capital
- Manageritalia Liguria
- Order of Chartered Accountants Genoa
- School of Bankruptcy of Modena
- Social Hub Genoa
- Talent Garden Genoa
- University of Genoa
- Unioncamere Liguria – Chambers of commerce Association
- Wonder (investor).

As formulated in the project proposal, the policy instrument chosen in order to define the Regional Action Plan is POR ERDF 2014-2020, with particular attention focused on OT3 "Promoting the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises" as an axis aimed at supporting the economy of the region. With reference to POR ERDF policy instrument, the areas of action that could be affected and implement the "lesson learned" through the REBORN project, with the due attention mentioned above, are as follows:

1. Investment priority 3a - Promoting entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and promoting the creation of startups, also through business incubators.

1.1 Specific objective: establishment and consolidation of micro/small/medium enterprises (Ref. RA 3.5 AdP). The objective is to support the recovery of productive investments (including expansive investments) connected with the consolidation, diversification and aggregation of businesses in order to strengthen the regional productive base, its technological development, its competitiveness and employment in general.

1.2 Specific objective: dissemination and strengthening of economic activities with social content (Ref. RA 3.7 PA). The aim is to enhance the birth and growth of social enterprises as a lever for economic development, creating new production and employment opportunities. Investment projects must have a positive impact on disadvantaged people.

In particular, we think that the actions proposed in present Regional Action Plan can be linked to the following Actions of the OT3 objective of our POR ERDF:

- Action 3.5.1 Support interventions for the creation of start-ups, through: direct incentives, provision of services and micro-finance interventions. The proposed action is aimed to boost the entrepreneurship, in a period of severe crisis that is having negative repercussions on the investment capacity of companies and the development of start-ups with sustainable growth. The difficulties in emerging from the crisis are particularly accentuated in the regional productive context, structurally characterized by a high share of micro and craft enterprises, often undercapitalized, which need special support in the delicate start-up phase. To achieve this goal, the action provides for the implementation of interventions with fast impact, to encourage the creation of new enterprises, through the creation and strengthening of incubators, which ensure prospects for growth and integration with the territory, on its most significant environmental and landscape-architectural aspects, in a logic of strengthening the managerial skills necessary to make them competitive in domestic and foreign markets. Support will be given to new businesses, with particular attention to initiatives that have a positive impact on employment, particularly for young people and women.
- Action 3.7.1 Support for the start-up and strengthening of business activities with socially desirable effects. The objective of the action is to enhance the value of the enterprise as a lever for economic development, creating new productive-occupational opportunities in social services (personal services, health, education, tourism and culture, environmental protection, etc. ...). Support will be given to investment programmes that are able to provide concrete responses to the weakest sections of the population and, more generally, to the community. Investment projects must have a positive impact on disadvantaged people.

However, despite its specific focus on enterprises, the Policy Instrument even in compliance with European regulations, does not provide specific measure directly dedicated to SMEs in bankruptcy. For this reason, the interregional exchange of experience/good practices that took place in REBORN project could represent an opportunity for Liguria Region to improve its policy and include new key elements imported from some of the Good Practices of the project.

To date Regione Liguria and FILSE have already implemented indirect instruments aimed at helping bankruptcy and/or entrepreneurs in difficulty who still want to spread out also by developing new business initiatives. For example:

- "Start & Growth" and "SMARTcup Liguria", that are projects through which the public bodies seek to equip the entrepreneur with the necessary skills together with small financial resources useful to start a new business with the best conditions for growth and development.
- "OPERA", project financed by FRANCE ITALIAN MARITIME INTERREG PROGRAMME, that supports the creation of cooperatives through working buy out, recovering enterprises in crisis and giving them a second chance.

The positive impact that these projects have on the image and role of the entrepreneur in general and, therefore of those who want to get back into the game with a negative business experience behind them is also important.

In collaboration with the management Authority of the Regional Operational Plan of Liguria 2014-2020, the proposed Regional Action Plan aims to improve a policy change by design concrete actions to support potential entrepreneurs, entrepreneurs facing difficulties in their SMEs or already failed entrepreneurs. The main proposed actions are as following:

- **Action 1:** Creation of permanent working committee of stakeholders aimed to influence the policy instrument Management Authority (Liguria Region) on restart policies and action to be taken, inside the managing committees. This action born from the necessity to improve regional capacity to detect and design new measures regarding second chance and to eliminate the stigmatization of failure.
- **Action 2:** information and supporting services and training dedicate to capacity building for entrepreneurs incurred in bankruptcy or in crisis (at risk of failure). The action born from the necessity to inform and improve training process to prevent bankruptcy and support the honest entrepreneurs to restart.
- **Action 3:** organization conferences as "no fail no gain", avoiding of stigmatization of the

failed entrepreneurs and eliminating the negative perception of the failed entrepreneurs. The action born from the necessity to inform the people about the opportunities and to cancel the existent perception of failure.

These actions are based on the lesson learnt from the SWOT matrix of the regional context, reported in the "REBORN Recommendation Paper Document" and the Project's good practices (all the good practices can be viewed in full on the REBORN project website at the following link: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/reborn/good-practices>) with particular regard the following GPs studied and experimented during the study visit hold in Liege:

1. **BUSINESS FAILURE PREVENTION PROGRAMME (ES).** The goal of the GP is to reduce the number of company closures by establishing support and consulting mechanisms for SMEs in difficulty, working in parallel to reduce the stigma associated with business failure and saving the entrepreneurial spirit in those who come from a bankruptcy experience.
2. **RECOVERING CLUB & WORKSHOPS (BE).** This GPs proposes to failed entrepreneurs to follow a coaching program consisting of two main and specific components:
 - Personal reconstruction (human and psychological aspects);
 - Entrepreneurial skills and fully-formed project (including early warning instruments and crisis management tools, made available in particular through the "Business plan recovery" help mechanism).
3. **NO FAIL NO GAIN (BE).** The main purpose of the "No Fail No Gain Conferences" is to share and teach to the audience the famous phrase of Winston Churchill: "*Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm*".

In general, REBORN's exchange of experiences was essential for FILSE to understand policies and tools, already tested by other countries/subjects. The lessons learned and acquired skills have been reported to stakeholders and adapted to local contest in order to implement our policy instruments and support restarter in overcame barriers related with:

- **IMAGE:** to contribute to developing a new concept of honest or virtuous failed entrepreneur
- **FINANCIAL STATEMENT:** to define financial instruments useful for restarting
- **CAPACITY BUILDING:** to contribute to the development of paths for the enhancement of previous professional experiences in favour of new companies.

Part III – Details of the actions envisaged

ACTION 1

Creation of permanent working committee of stakeholders aimed to influence the policy instrument Management Authority (Liguria Region) on restart policies and action to be taken, inside the managing committees

1. The background

As already described, supporting action specifically dedicated for 2nd chance entrepreneurship are not directly included in the framework of the regional operational program 2014-2020. A change in management of the policy instrument is required in order to create a more favourable framework for supporting SMEs creation and development.

Furthermore, the implementation of the 1st phase of Reborn project increased the capacity building of FILSE staff involved on the specific restart issues, mainly resulting from the procedure and results of the exchange of experiences processes. The interregional exchange experience conducted and the best practice selected represent (**BUSINESS FAILURE PREVENTION PROGRAMME (ES)** / **RECOVERING CLUB & WORKSHOPS** / **NO FAIL NO GAIN CONFERENCE**) a valuable set of resources and tools for the improvement of the Policy Instrument. The overall objective of the practice is to promote entrepreneurship and the growth of SMEs throughout Liguria region. A key element is to create solid framework conditions for businesses in all sector that can help them address key challenges, including managing a crisis, dealing with bankruptcy and getting a second chance.

2. Action

We want to create a permanent committee that is able to:

- make a “lobbying action” to influence the effective changes of the policy instrument on new restart policies according the lessons learned from the best practices studied;
- become a reference point for detecting, design, provide support of 2nd chance entrepreneurship.

The committee starts from the existing REBORN stakeholders’ group and its possible actions are:

- to inform/update regularly Policy Instrument Monitoring Committee on REBORN project issues;
- to submit proposals to the Managing Authority on new opportunities/actions to be taken such as modification of coming calls test, application guidelines and selection criteria;
- to be responsible for maps SME’s and entrepreneurs in crisis needs;
- to provide personalized information support to entrepreneurs/restarter (see Action 2).

3. Players involved

- All existing Reborn stakeholders (ABI Liguria, General Association of Italian Cooperatives Liguria, Carige Bank, Ethics Bank, Unicredit Bank CNA Liguria - National Artisan confederation, Confart Liguria - Consortium of Guarantee of the Liguria Region, Confartigianato Liguria, Confcooperative Liguria, Confidi, Confindustria Liguria, Genoa Municipality, Italian Business Angeles, Ligurian Cooperative League, LigurCapital – Public Venture Capital, Manageritalia Liguria, Order of Chartered Accountants Genoa, School of Bankruptcy of Modena, Social Hub Genoa Talent Garden Genoa, University of Genoa, Unioncamere Liguria – Chambers of commerce Association, Wonder)
- Liguria Region (POR Managing Authority)
- POR Monitoring Commettes

4. Timeframe

2018/2019/2020

5. Costs

Human resources

6. Funding sources

Contribution in kind or other public financial sources to be determined

ACTION 2

Information and supporting services and training dedicate to capacity building for entrepreneurs incurred in bankruptcy or in crisis (at risk of failure)

1. The background

Action 2 have been designed after the lesson learned during the study visit in Liege, taking inspiration from the following Best Practices:

- **RECOVERING CLUB & WORKSHOPS (BE)**

This measure proposes to accompany the restarter entrepreneurs to reinforce and mature their business project and shape their financial needs. Another objective is to support them to mature their ideas and establish links with useful stakeholders to meet their financing needs. Failed entrepreneurs join a coaching program consisting in two main components:

- personal reconstruction (human and psychological aspect);
- commercial capacity and fully formed project (including early warning tools and crisis management tools made available, in particular through the help mechanism "Plan for recovery of companies").

- **BUSINESS FAILURE PREVENTION PROGRAMME (SP)**

Overall BUSINESS FAILURE PREVENTION PROGRAMME objective is to reduce the number of company closures by establishing support and advice mechanisms for SMEs in difficulty, working in parallel to reduce the stigma associated with business failure, and rescuing the entrepreneurial spirit in those who come from an experience of failure.

Specific objectives are:

- develop and implement tools for the prevention, detection and management of companies in difficulty,
- minimise the negative effects that closing a company can cause in its environment and for the entrepreneur him/herself,
- develop action plans to help improve the management and activity of companies in difficulty, ensuring their survival, if possible,
- advise non-viable companies to carry out an orderly liquidation, causing the least possible harm to their partners, employees, creditors and customers,
- design processes and methodologies to specifically support "restarters",
- identify "brilliant business failures" in a database of business experiences that serve as a warning for other entrepreneurs.

The programme reaches its objectives through two subprograms:

1. Business failure prevention programme:

This set of actions is intended to provide companies with advice and support mechanisms to identify the difficulties they face early, and to implement corrective measures to ensure their survival.

2. Restarter programme:

This programme tries to reduce the stigma associated with business failure and rescue the entrepreneurial spirit in those who come from an experience of failure.

2. Action

The idea is to create a permanent working group within the committee (action 1) composed by Reborn stakeholders, which though their experts is in charge to support entrepreneurs in crisis with advice and support mechanisms to identify the difficulties they face early and to implement corrective measures to ensure their survival. Along a path of personal, psychological and skill recovery, entrepreneurs will be able to get out of the crisis or in case to start over with a new business.

Taking into account the lesson learned and our regional context, we design the following supporting actions:

- a. **Information and Supporting Desk.**

We will create a permanent information desk at FILSE Enterprises incubator in Genova to inform all the entrepreneurs in phase of crisis and honest failed entrepreneurs about the new Italian law and other opportunities regarding restarting policies at local, national and international level.

- b. **Personalised support**

- Individual early warning training plan (with monitoring and prevention service)
- Organization of meeting between entrepreneurs/restarter and public/private stakeholders/investors
- Organization of coaching sections

c. Dissemination and Communication

Organization of workshop to inform entrepreneur and restarter entrepreneurs on the new bankruptcy Italian law opportunities. Following the bill n. 2681 of 2017 that on January 12, 2019, the Council of Ministers finally approved as a definitive examination (Legislative Decree 12 January 2019 n. 2014 in implementation of the law 19 October 2017 n.155) the new "Code of Business Crisis and Insolvency". Italian legislation is now adapted to the EU directive of 22 November 2016 n. 723. With regard to the issues addressed by REBORN, we point out that one of the fundamental points of the law is the disappearance, also in the penal provisions, of the concept of "failure" (with the related stigmatizing aura), replaced with that of "judicial liquidation".

- d. **Participation of FILSE staff to bankruptcy training courses or seminars** to keep up to date about new regulations and tools to support the entrepreneurs in phase of crisis or failure.

3. Players involved

- FILSE with its internal staff composed by experts in business planning and coaching
- Stakeholders and their sectorial experts
- Entrepreneurs and restarts

4. Timeframe

2019-2020

- Permanent activity of information desk and individual support if requested.
- FILSE staff will attend at least 1 course/seminarie organized by local stakeholders, for free or with FILSE resources each year.
- FILSE will organize at least 1 seminar to inform the participant about the new insolvency law working and other measures address to failed or in crisis entrepreneurs each year.

5. Costs (if relevant)

€20.000,00

- Our staff will participate at free courses or using FILSE resources planned in our working contract for personnel training courses.
- Regarding the workshop, we will organize them at our incubators with the support of stakeholders and expert of our working group and networks who will participate as speaker pro bono.

6. Funding sources

- Contribution in kind
- Pro bono activities of the stakeholders' group
- Other public sources to be determinated

ACTION 3

Organization conferences as "NO FAIL NO GAIN", avoiding of stigmatization of the failed entrepreneurs and eliminating the negative perception of the failed entrepreneurs

1. The background

Action 3 has been designed after the lesson learned during the study visit in Liege, taking inspiration from the Best Practice NOFAIL NO GAIN CONFERENCE.

The conference "NO FAIL NO GAIN" seeks to discuss failure, shares knowledge and experience with re-entrepreneurs in a friendly environment, where re-entrepreneurs present their experiences. The objective is to gradually change the negative connotation of failure among students and active professionals (entrepreneurs, employees, exc.). Therefore, the main purpose of the "No Fail No Gain" Conferences is to share and teach to the audience the famous phrase of Winston Churchill: *"Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm"*.

2. Action (please list and describe the actions to be implemented)

FILSE will organize each year a "NO FAIL NO GAIN" conference taking inspiration from the methodology learned in Belgium, supporting by our local stakeholders, in particular the School of failure of Modena (Italian best practices present in GP Reborn list, that participate in the international event organized by Reborn Project in Kozani), that is specialized in organization of "fuck off nights". For example, an hypothesis is to present the book "Elogio del fallimento", the true story of restart after failure written by Francesca Corrado, the manager and founder of School of failure of Modena, that is became a best seller in Italy, that can be a good example of restart.

The events will be organized at Genova incubator connected to regional and European projects in which FILSE or Liguria Region Body are partners, dedicates to startup, growth and support of enterprises.

3 Players involved

FILSE, Liguria Region Body, School of Failure of Modena, entrepreneurs, students, employees

4. Timeframe

2020

FILSE will organize 1 "NO FAIL NO GAIN" conference

5. Costs (if relevant)

Internal resources

6. Funding sources (if relevant):

Contribution in kind or other public sources to be determined

IV. OTHER ACTIVITIES FINANCED BY OTHERS LINES FINANCING DIFFERENT FROM ERDF

In addition to the main action described above, we has foreseen to carry out two more activities related to finance and image.

a. Financial instrument for entrepreneurs and restarters financed by Regional Law no. 34 of 27.12.2016 art. 4 REGIONAL STRATEGIC FUND aimed at promoting investment, growth and regional employment, it has been created at the end of 2017 by Liguria Region in application of the provisions of Article 10, paragraph 5, of the Regional Law n.1 of 16 February 2016 (Growth Act). Through a specific agreement, the management of the Regional Strategic Fund is assigned directly from Liguria Region to FILSE which implements proposals of financial instruments.

b. Creation of the annual prize for the best re-entrepreneur to improve the emage of restart and

eliminate the negative perception of failed entrepreneurs who attempt to start again with a second chance this initiative is activated from 2018 and became permanent. From 2018 edition of the Regional Business Plan Competition - SMARTcup Liguria, the special "REBORN Award" was established: it is an award dedicated to the best entrepreneurial idea born by entrepreneurs on their second attempt, with a failed entrepreneurial experience behind them. This award improves the better perception of restart, but also is an action that favours the capacity building, because the prize consists in providing the entrepreneur with a professionalizing course, financed with regional resources, to support the new entrepreneurial adventure. Considering the importance of the issue, Liguria Region Government, that finance the business plan competition managed by FILSE, has agreed to make "REBORN award" as structural to the SMARTcup, which takes place annually.

V. SUMMARY OF THE CALENDAR – GANTT

| Actions | 06/2018-12/2018 | 01/2019-06/2019 | 07-2019-12/2019 | 01/2020-06/2020 | 07/2020-12/2020 |
|------------------------------|-----------------|--|---|---|---|
| Lobby action | | | | | |
| Training | | Information desk and individual support to entrepreneurs | Information desk and individual support to entrepreneurs FILSE staff participates to training 1 course | Information desk and individual support to entrepreneurs FILSE staff participates to training 1 course FILSE organizes a workshop | Information desk and individual support to entrepreneurs FILSE staff participates to training 1 course FILSE organizes a workshop |
| "NO FAIL NO GAIN" conference | | | | | |
| Financial Found | | | | | |
| REBORN Award | | | | | |
| Stakeholders meetings | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Date: 20/09/2019

FILSE S.p.A.
 IL PRESIDENTE
 (Stro Codognato Perissinotto)



Signature: _____

Stamp of the organisation (if available): _____