

Stakeholder dialogue and integration between national and regional governments



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The Italian Government (State) is organised in Central Government, Regions, Provinces, Municipalities with different degrees of autonomy:
 Statute;
 Financial ;
 Organisational;

Subsidiarity principle



SR national and regional policies

In 2008 the national government (Ministry of Social Solidarity) organised round tables on the following issues:

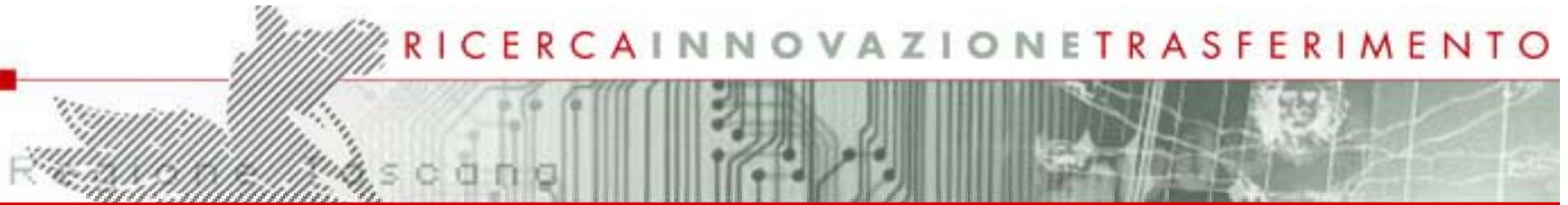
- Occupational health and safety;
- Credit and finance;
- Organisational governance;
- **Local initiatives;**
- Internationalisation and delocalisation;

All interested stakeholders were invited in taking part in these tables. Around **300 representatives** from regional and local authorities, NGOs, trade unions and business associations actively participated.



As coordinator of Local Initiatives Table, the Region of Tuscany had a perspective of the different approaches and priorities settled by the local actors:

- Grants/award for SMEs;
- Promoting public-private collaboration as a contribution to social policies (immigrants, disabled persons, long-term unemployed etc.);
- Equal opportunities – Positive actions;
- Marketing oriented initiatives (local labels, private standards...);
- Training courses and University initiatives;



The main results of the tables

- Expectation from the Local Authorities (public procurements, CSR specialists);
- Sensibilisation of consumers, collaboration with Universities, development of indicators, measuring performances;
- Working on the concept of a SR at territorial level (a kind of collective benefit);
- Red tape reduction;
- Social dialogue;
- Dialogue territory-enterprises;



- On the national level, the **Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Policies** has a role of “umbrella” for the different local (regional) public initiatives.
- Through:
 - direct participation in EU roundtables;
 - link with other national Ministries: Foreign Affairs, Economic Development, Environment etc.



The Tuscan approach: Fabbrica Ethica

Active since **2002** to develop a regional strategy aimed at **mainstreaming** CSR into economic system;

It provides:

economic aid to SMEs

support to economic and social actors

It develops:

specific initiatives (e.g. secondary school programmes)

tools to manage CSR

surveys

communication instruments

European projects (Interreg IV C, MED programme)

Partnership with all the relevant stakeholders:

Regional Ethical Committee





REC - Composition

- Business Associations: 12 (all economic sectors)
- Workers Unions: 3
- NPOs: 5 (2 environmental, 1 NGOs, 2 charities)
- Consumers: 1
- Local Authorities: 3
- Chamber of Commerce: 1
- Universities: 3
- Banks: 1
- Equal Opportunity authorities: 2
- Expert in health and safety: 1
- Social security and national insurance against work accidents: 2
- Ministry of Welfare: 1
- Regional experts: 3

- Chair: Regional Minister for Economic Activities



Stakeholder engagement: the origin

In 2003 some NGOs and trade unions asked for a **inclusive and transparent instrument of governance** of CSR process (certification in particular).

So REC was created having in mind the following functions:

- an **arena** in which the different points of view would have found a compromise;
- a **think-thank** where new ideas would have been developed and specific initiatives carried out;

Created by an administrative act, then it has been inserted in the Regional Law on CSR.



REC - Role

Overall objective: undertake effective CSR actions, based on a real and shared discussion.

- to make **proposals** to Regional Executive Committee on corporate social responsibility initiatives;
 - to **assess** the Tuscan entrepreneurial world;
 - to **suggest instruments** guaranteeing transparency / functionality of actions & involvement of the supply chains;
 - to ensure the **transparency and quality** of corporate certification and accountability processes



Plenary and working groups

- **Plenary meetings:** discuss and present general programmes, proposals or actions
- **Working groups:** develop specific programmes

Examples of working groups:

- integrated management in supply chains and districts (leather sector project)
- CSR in the economic-financial world (micro credit programme – SMOAT)
- Certification tools other than SA 8000 (guidelines / tool kit for SMEs)



REC – Strengths / Weaknesses

Strengths

- ensures a slow but effective mainstreaming of CSR – multiplier effect
- facilitates dialogue among different stakeholders (e.g. business ass. and NGOs)

Weaknesses:

- trade-off between innovative and conservative approaches
- difficulty in manage the mix between **generally promoting** CSR and have an **active role** in the development and implementation of CSR instruments;
- too many members, some of whom are not active in discussion



Next steps

- Strengthen activities in European and International Cooperation
- Dialogue with national authorities to coordinate regional and national strategies;
- Develop instruments and approaches specifically targeted to SMEs and the link with local community (guidelines for social report of SMEs);



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