

On Thursday July 23rd Regione Puglia with the collaboration of the University of Bari 'Aldo Moro' organized an online round table titled "International cooperation and post-COVID-19 regional development policies".

The first session was devoted to the presentation of results and best practices arisen during the implementation of three projects, funded by two EU programs supporting cross-border cooperation, carried out in the Apulian territory and dealing with economic development and enhancement of the services provided by PA to manufacturing and business sector. Moreover, very interesting inputs derived from the analysis of some papers submitted to the scientific committee set up within the project egov\_INNO.

During the second session, prof. Lopalco confirmed that 'epoch-making' events like the pandemic that is shocking the entire planet, always bring to light new challenges, problems and opportunities impossible to ignore and that the only way to tackle this global change is to find new solutions avoiding the fascinating but not rewarding attempt to apply old approaches to new and different contexts.

The regional counsellor Cosimo Borraccino reaffirmed his will to collect and carefully analyse the regional needs and work in close collaboration with the academic and business entities as well as representatives of the civil society to fulfill the EU goals.

The head of the Competitiveness and Research of the Productive System Unit of Regione Puglia, Gianna Elisa Berlingiero, representing also the regional Department for Economic Development, underlined how Regione Puglia has always made great efforts to create new tools to bring innovation in the entrepreneurial and training sector, leading to relevant and successful results.

The coordinator of the Interreg Greece-Italy Joint Secretariat Gianfranco Gadaleta expressed great enthusiasm for attending a joint event organized by three EU funded projects and confirmed the crucial role that these projects can play in facilitating the elaboration of shared policies at international level and the uptake of synergic initiatives in specific macro-areas, starting from the preventive measures against COVID-19.

The academic world, represented by prof. Pirlo and Albino, shed light on the virtuous aspects emerged during the pandemic, providing as an example the strength and motivation showed by the staff of the University during the emergency, although remote working made collaboration harder and slower. They also claimed that there is a strong need for innovation and that new and effective measures have to be taken timely.

Annamaria Ricci, regional manager of Legacoop, stated that the cooperative system must re-think its mission, since COVID-19 changes the priorities in several sectors, and use the necessary enabling technologies to reach their target beneficiaries better and timely. To do so, a synergic public-private action is desirable.

The speech of prof. Di Guardo, pro-rector of the University of Cagliari and spokesperson for the Contamination Lab network, promoted by the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research was equally exciting. She highlighted the crucial role of university as an intermediate entity between the training and labour market and as an incubator of talents and skills.

The event was very well-attended, also through the live streaming on social media. This means that there is a strong need for information and discussion around these topics at regional level and all panelists shared their interest and will to organize similar initiatives in the future.

We thank you very much for attending the event and invite you to submit any other question, feedback or proposal to the following address: