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Lazio*Pietro Elisei*

Lazio is characterised by a distinct lack of territorial uniformity. There is a strong temptation to speak of a region-city when we analyse the territorial context of Lazio, but this definition is only partially true. While on the one hand it is clear that the urbanised area of the capital acts as a catalyst for flows of different kinds (people, goods, capital, information, etc.), it is also certain that the Lazio urban framework comprises other important urban and productive centres. There is a 'Lazio without Rome' which, although it does not feature the rhythm and numbers of the capital and its province, nevertheless boasts a respectable productive fabric and potential for development. The policies and initiatives linked to the investment of the Community Funds are concentrated above all on the valorisation of the 'Lazio without Rome' concept. In this sense the inspiring principle of the SPD has been strategic, in that it tended to strengthen a polycentric vision of development which was characterised on regional scale and which overlaid or integrated with the action on the territory induced by Rome and its metropolitan area. Despite this propositional approach, the gap between the Roman metropolitan area and its region remains great, especially in economic terms.

The SPD Lazio 2000-06 was shaped in a socioeconomic context, that of the late 90s, characterised by the implementation of a national policy of strict control of certain macroeconomic indicators (public deficit and inflation) connected with compliance with the criteria of Maastricht, and also by weak economic growth. After 1998 the Lazio region

went through a period of recovery up to the overtaking of the national average, in 2002 (the contribution of the Lazio economy to the growth of the national GDP in 1998 was over 10%).

The current programme for the Ob. 2, therefore, was mapped out within a context of low growth, and with the incognito of the Jubilee ahead of it. The programming conditions for the seven-year period 2007-13 appear to be just the opposite. A context of high growth and a future which will in all likelihood bring the GDP down to lower levels. The current Objective 2 proved to be too concentrated on precise infrastructural actions, and on rather nonstrategic aid to improbable enterprises. Moreover, what is surprising is the small investment in knowledge-based economies, considering the high concentration in Lazio of persons who have the capacity to trigger processes based on the knowledge economy (Rome is the leading city in Italy in terms of the 'creative class', representing 24.62% of the workforce). Finally, the attitude of the current SPD is curious, since it judges axis III (the valorisation of local systems), provided with a third of the admissible funding, as that which will have least impact on innovation and competitiveness. On the contrary, the boosting of the infrastructures and the rehabilitation of the urban centres should support competitiveness. In other words the SPD does not interpret the actions directed at local development in a competitive sense.

Pursuing competitiveness at regional level, setting the territories in the centre, especially those which are more promising in terms of development performance, demands policies that are connected with the idea of: promoting innovation in the

enterprises and the institutions, creating and investing in a qualified workforce, boosting accessibility, mobility, internal and external connectivity, promoting economic diversity, and the capacity to implement strategic decisions at urban and regional level.