



Rethinking Regional Attractiveness in the Italian Region of Liguria



REGIONE
LIGURIA



Co-funded by
the European Union

ABOUT THE OECD

The OECD is a multi-disciplinary inter-governmental organisation of 38 member countries which engages in its work an increasing number of non-members from all regions of the world. The Organisation's core mission today is to help governments work together towards a stronger, cleaner, fairer global economy. Through its network of 250 specialised committees and working groups, the OECD provides a setting where governments compare policy experiences, seek answers to common problems, identify good practice, and co-ordinate domestic and international policies. More information available: www.oecd.org.

ABOUT THE CENTRE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP, SMEs, REGIONS AND CITIES

The Centre helps local, regional and national governments unleash the potential of entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises, promote inclusive and sustainable regions and cities, boost local job creation and implement sound tourism policies. More information: www.oecd.org/cfe/

This document, as well as any data and map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

© OECD 2023

This document is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries. The document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area. The use of this work, whether digital or print, is governed by the Terms and Conditions to be found at <https://www.oecd.org/termsandconditions>.

Rethinking Regional Attractiveness in the Italian Region of Liguria

2023

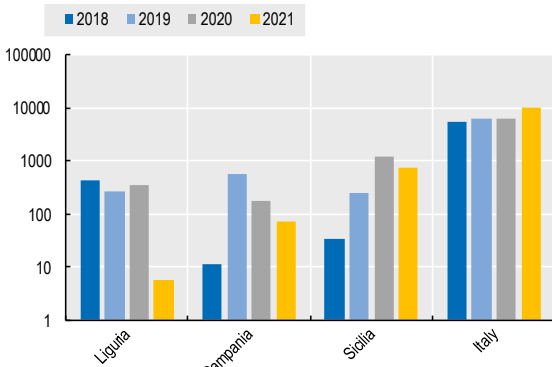


The impact of the COVID-19 crisis, compounded by the consequences of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and existing megatrends (e.g. climate change, globalisation, digitalisation and demographic change), continue to produce asymmetric effects within and between countries and regions, with the scope and scale depending on their unique characteristics.

The OECD's work on rethinking regional attractiveness policies in the new global environment, is undertaken with the support of the European Commission (DG REGIO) and is a priority activity of the Regional Development Policy Committee (RDPC). Working closely with 15 regions in 5 OECD member countries (Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Sweden), it aims to help regional and national policy-makers to better understand the position of regions in an evolving global context, including emerging challenges and opportunities, and identify the policy levers at their disposal to enhance the attractiveness of regions to the key international target groups of investors (including exporters), talent, and visitors. In doing so, it seeks to support regions transition towards new territorial development policies that promote inclusive, sustainable, and resilient development, while enhancing regional attractiveness.

A snapshot of Liguria in the world

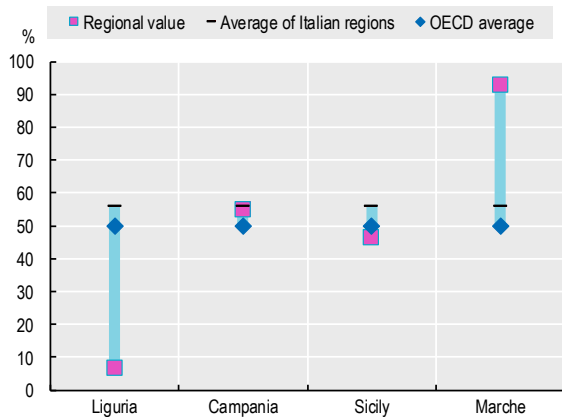
Greenfield FDI Inwards by region, expenditure in US millions



Note: fDI market database includes declared greenfield inward investments only.
Source: OECD calculations based on fDI market database, 2022.

Liguria’s inward greenfield FDI dropped by 40% between 2018 and 2019, before rising by 30% in 2020, a performance that defied global (-30%), OECD (-50%), and EU (-70%) trends, where (Greenfield) FDI inflows fell significantly. However, in 2021, the region recorded a very sharp reduction (98%), which on this occasion significantly underperformed national trends, where a steep increase in FDI (60%) was recorded between 2020 and 2021. As a result, in 2021 Ligurian greenfield inward FDI was negligible, relative to the national total, after representing around 8% in 2018. Disruptions in GVCs and rising energy prices could be possible obstacles to the attraction of foreign investments for new projects, but their impacts on greenfield FDI vary significantly across Italian regions.

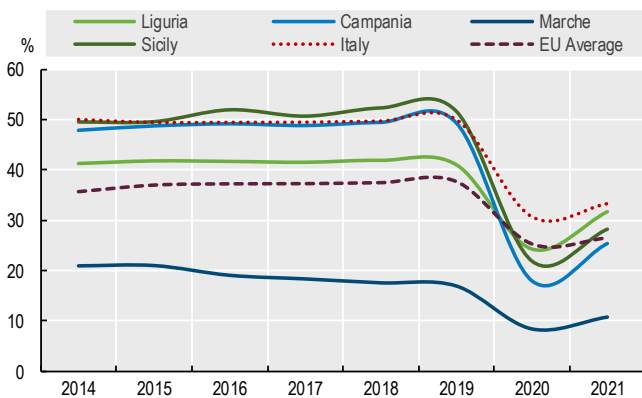
Share of renewables in electricity generation, 2019



Source: OECD Regional database (2022); OECD regions (TL2)

On the clean electricity production front, Liguria’s share of renewables in electricity generation (6.8%), is significantly below the average for regions in the OECD (50.2%) and Italy (56%). Indeed, in 2020 it was the Italian region with the lowest share of renewable energy produced for electricity and it represented 0.5% of the total renewable energy produced in Italy.¹ Almost half of the green energy produced in Liguria is generated by hydroelectric sources, followed by wind and photovoltaic. An increase in the use of renewable energy has multiple benefits for society, such as mitigating climate change, reducing the emission of air pollutants and improving energy security. Moreover, a vibrant renewable energy sector can lead to positive spill-over effects for economic growth and job creation, while providing regions with a pull factor to attract international firms that want to green their production.

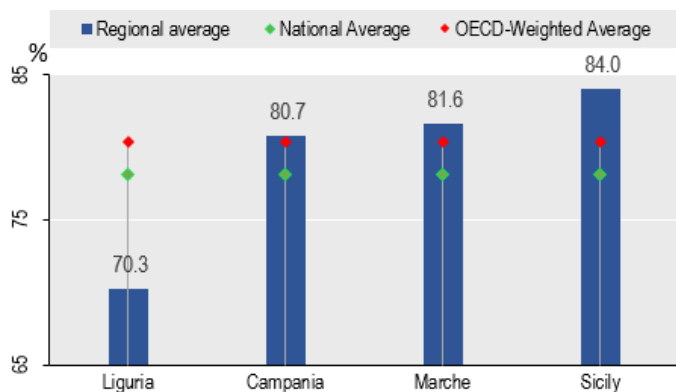
Share of nights spent by foreign tourists in accommodation establishments



Source: OECD calculations based on I.stat database (2021)

The tourism sector plays a key role for the regional economy, in 2019 representing 6.5% of regional GDP². The share of nights spent by foreign visitors (41%) prior to the COVID-19 pandemic was less than the national average (50%). Following the restrictions to international travel during the pandemic, the regional share dropped by 16p.p. (to 25%) in 2020, less than for other Italian regions. In 2021 Liguria’s share rose to 32%, nearly on par with the national average (33%). As a result, between 2019 and 2021 Liguria moved from the 12th to the 7th position in absolute terms of foreign tourists’ nights and from the 12th to the 9th position in terms of total nights³. This reflects the impacts experienced in many other countries, where regions more dependent on international tourists were more heavily impacted than those with a larger proportion of domestic visitors.

Share of population satisfied with opportunities to meet people and make friends

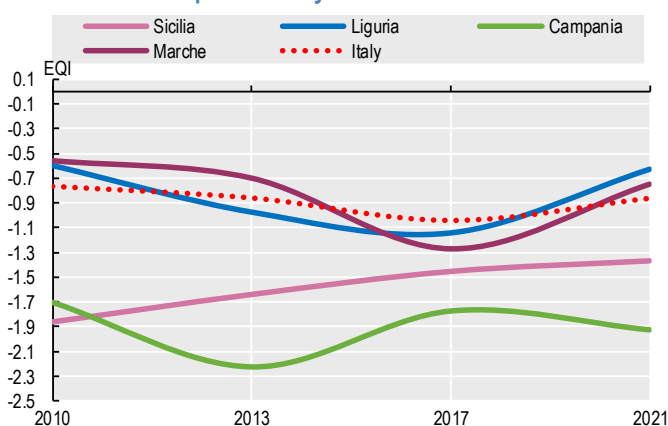


Note: Average on the 2016-2020 years

Source: Gallup World Poll

Indicators that capture participation in social activities can help to measure regional social capital and can illustrate an important relationship between higher levels of social well-being and regional economic growth. In Liguria, the share of the population satisfied with opportunities to connect with others and make friends (70.3%) is well below both the national (80.4%) and OECD-weighted (78.1%) averages. This result indicates that there is a need to implement policies to enhance the diversity of social life opportunities and boost the well-being and sense of belonging for residents, which will also help to improve the region's attractiveness as a place to invest, live and visit.

European Quality of Government Index



Note : The EU average is represented by the horizontal axis (zero line).

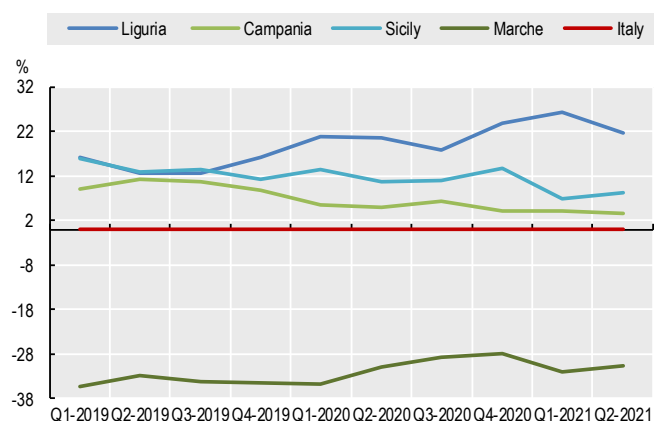
Negative values mean that the regional Government Quality Index is below the EU average.

Source: University of Gothenburg

Perceived quality of government can have serious implications for the attractiveness of territories, and in particular influence the decisions of potential investors and talent when choosing a preferred destination to set up a business or raise a family. European Quality of Government Index (EQI) captures, at the regional level, citizens' perceptions, and experiences in relation to corruption, quality, and impartiality of three essential public services – health, education, and policing. After a steady decline to -1.15 in 2017, Liguria's score increased to -0.63 in 2021. While below the EU average value (0), and well below what the index categorises as a 'top-performing region' (score greater than 1.1), this is slightly better than Italian average (-0.9), which remains among the lowest in Europe.

Download speed at the regional level

Download speed as a percentage deviation from national average



Source: OECD calculations based on Ookla database ; 2021 ; OECD TL2 regions

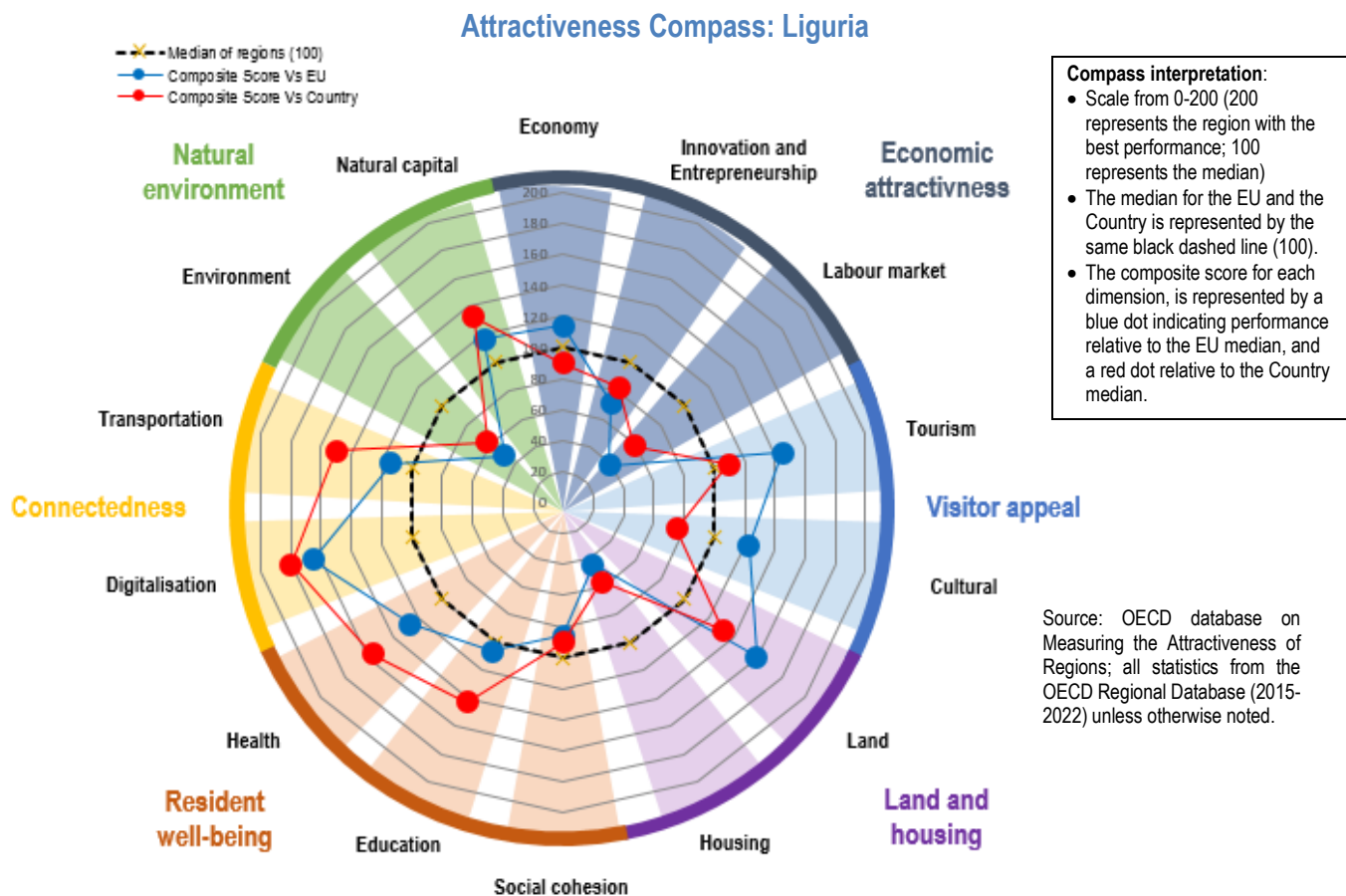
Broadband download speeds in Liguria have consistently remained above the national average in recent years (22% above in Q2 2021). Not surprisingly, the region also performs well in relation to the share of households with access to broadband (89%), which is higher than the EU (85%) and OECD (75%) averages. Nonetheless, the index of access to internet of businesses with more than 10 employees (81.5%) is below the national average (98.7%)⁴. The regional average can conceal significant disparities in internet access between coastal and interior municipalities where the download speeds are significantly slower. In response, the region is investing in SMEs digitalisation⁵, as well as increasing broadband coverage, with the aim of giving equal opportunities to all areas and making geographically remote areas more attractive to not only current residents and businesses but also investors, talent (including remote workers), and visitors.

Attractiveness profile: Liguria

Liguria is one of the main hubs for international trade in Northern Italy thanks to its strategic position as a border region, neighbour to industrial champion region in Italy (Lombardy and its capital, Milano), and being home to several major ports. According to *Assoport* statistics, in 2021 the port of Genoa ranked 1st among Italian ports for various goods¹ handled La Spezia 5th and in terms of added value, transport, and warehousing activity in the region, more than double that for the country (according to ISTAT's Territorial Economic Accounts, in 2019 11.8% in Liguria; 5.5% in Italy)⁶.

Before considering the policy levers available to enhance the attractiveness of a region to international target groups (investors, talent, visitors), it is important to first understand the region's position in the world. To do so, the OECD considers four families of international connections: business, human, knowledge, and infrastructure. In the case of Liguria, on the business front, the region shows a *trade openness rate* - a measure of the region's imports and exports as a share of regional GDP, of 32%, which is below EU (47.4%) and national average (38%), as the region serves more as a transport hub for other regions, than a direct producer and exporter of goods itself. In terms of infrastructure, the region stands out for the *accessibility of flights for residents*: in 2016 (last available data) on average, people in the region could access more passenger flights within 90 minutes by car (323) than the EU (321) and national averages (287). When it comes to human connections, and in particular in relation to visitors the region shows a higher *number of nights spent per sq. km* (1582) than in most EU (1125) and Italian regions (784) in 2021. Finally, in terms of knowledge connections, the *number of international scientific co-publications* (2023) in 2021 was higher than EU and national average (1531 and 1557 respectively). This important measure of participation in the global research ecosystem rose 44% from 2016.

The OECD's innovative and multidimensional approach to assessing **regional attractiveness** considers global engagement beyond international connections and purely economic factors. In total, the methodology considers more than 50 indicators to develop regional attractiveness profiles, covering 14 dimensions of attractiveness, across six domains (Economic attraction, Connectedness, Visitor appeal, Natural environment, Resident well-being, Land-use and housing).



¹ In line with the classification used by Assoport, miscellaneous goods in this box include all goods categories other than bulk.

Economic Attractiveness: In terms of economic attractiveness the region generally performs below the majority of EU and Italian regions, particularly concerning innovation and entrepreneurship, and the labour market. However, in terms of economic indicators, the region fares well when compared to EU and Italian regions, especially in terms of GVA per worker (USD 80,470), GDP per capita (USD 38,930) and R&D employment share (2.0%). However, when considering indicators such as employer firm creation rate (7.2%) and the share of people thinking their region is a good place to start new businesses (30%), Liguria performs well below the averages for both EU and Italian regions. Concerning innovation, the region reports contrasting results. While it ranks second in Italy in terms of high-tech added value to total manufacturing, it is third-last for the number of innovative start-ups per million inhabitants. About 30% of the R&D staff are foreign-born, while 20% are Italians who have returned from abroad⁷. Liguria is a reference point worldwide in the field of maritime research and training, and it is also becoming a national leader in the field of high-tech and robotics thanks to the presence of the Research Laboratories of the Italian Institute of Technology (ITT) in Genoa. The ITT plays a key role in the international R&D landscape, especially in research fields, such as robotics, nanomaterials, computational science, and life science, and is a partner of Harvard and MIT in the USA.

Visitor Appeal: In terms of visitor appeal, Liguria generally performs well compared to EU and Italian regions. For example, the number of UNESCO cultural and heritage sites (2) and the share of employment in cultural and creative industries (1.12%) are both in line with EU averages. Moreover, Liguria reports good results in terms of tourism, with the number of available tourist accommodation beds (100 per 1000 inhabitants) being higher than the majority of EU and Italian regions. Looking at the overall number of nights spent by tourists, Liguria ranked 9th out of 21 Italian regions, and 7th in terms of nights spent by foreign tourists⁸. The port of Genoa also ranked 2nd in terms of cruise passenger numbers in 2021⁹.

Connectedness: In terms of connectedness (digitalisation and transport), Liguria performs extremely well relative to other EU and Italian regions. Liguria reports a higher share of population with access to broadband (89%), fibre optic coverage (85%) and average broadband download speeds. The region is a hub for international trade connections, taking advantage of its strategic position as a border and maritime region, and it performs quite well in terms of transport availability and accessibility. In addition to airport accessibility, the rail performance of the region (6.1), a measure of rail accessibility and proximity, also outpaces the EU average (4.3). However, the region scores far below what the Commission considers a well-functioning system (30)¹⁰, reflecting more limited access in hinterland areas. The same can be said on the road performance measure¹¹. As such it is perhaps not surprising that residents tend not to be satisfied with public transport (45.3%), which is below the EU average by about 15%, but is in line with other Italian regions (41.1%). Indeed, even though Liguria ranks 5th in Italy for the public transport density (place/km per habitant), it ranks only 17th for convenient access to public transportation, and 12th for the satisfaction concerning railway transport¹².

Land and Housing: The share of land converted to artificial surfaces between 2004-2019 (0.7%) is just above that for the EU (0.64%), but below the average for Italian regions (0.86%), suggesting the region has focused on repurposing existing infrastructure or relied more on brownfield rather than greenfield sites for projects and investments. Land prices (measured in EUR per hectare) are more than double the EU average (at EUR 45,000 vs. EUR 20,000) which may require the region to promote non-pecuniary advantages such as the quality and preservation of the natural environment and the opportunities to retrofit or make use of existing infrastructure. While overall satisfaction with housing affordability (at 42.7%) is low relative to other EU and Italian regions, housing expenses as a share of household income (32.2% - 7p.p. higher than the EU average) and the share of population who feel they don't have enough money for housing (9.8%) are not particular areas of strength.

Resident Well-being: In relation to health and education in particular, Liguria performs strongly compared to other EU and Italian regions. For example, in terms of education, the region has a higher share of international students in higher education (9.43), although student accessibility to primary and secondary education establishments (in terms of distance), is generally on par with the EU regions. When considering health quality, it is notable that Liguria has the oldest population of Italy, with a mean age of 48.7. According to the Meridiano Sanità ranking (2021), the regional health system ranks 6th in Italy for effectiveness, efficiency, and adequacy of response, while the number of doctors per 1000 inhabitants (4.6) in 2019 was above the EU average (4). Nonetheless, the share of population satisfied with the availability or quality of health care (58.7%) is below EU average (65.5%) Concerning social cohesion, the share of the population in Liguria satisfied with social life

opportunities (70.2%) falls below EU average (81.2%), while the poverty rate after tax and transfers² is (13.2%) is below EU (17.2%) and national averages (18.3%).

Natural Environment: Liguria has important natural capital thanks to its high share of protected areas (27.2%) and of tree coverage (77%). Moreover, it ranks 1st amongst regions in Italy for the number of beaches with “blue flag” certification, an indicator of water quality. Nonetheless, the share of residents satisfied with efforts to preserve environment (26.9%) is about half the EU average. The region shows also very low results in renewables, ranking last in terms of renewable energy production share (less than 1%), as well in terms of share of municipal waste recycled (53%), which is well below EU (64%) and national average (61%). In addition, Genoa is among the 10 Italian cities exceeding the maximum level of fine particles established by the World Health Organisation, due in part to pollution from ships stationary in port. Land-related disasters such as landslides, mudslides and flooding are frequent in Liguria partly due to the high rate of unmaintained forests.

From recovery to resilience

Liguria is a key region of transit for goods in Northern Italy thanks to its strategic ports. Indeed, the regional economy is mainly dependent on the mobility of goods and people (transport, logistics and tourism). It leads in the field of sea economy at the national level, ranked 1st for Italian regions in terms of tons of goods embarked and disembarked – with many Northern Italian regions dependent on Ligurian ports for trade – whilst also being the largest exporter of shipbuilding. Concerning the business environment, the region is characterised by a high share of micro and small enterprises, struggling to attract capital and to export and/or innovate, which is an issue concerning many Italian regions. From an environmental perspective, the region benefits from significant natural capital, however, the unique combination of steep slopes and heavy rainfall, exacerbated by significant abandonment of terraced slopes in the 20th century, has led to ongoing maintenance challenges, with negative effects on the stability of steep slopes, hydrogeological risk, and forest fires¹³¹⁴.

The harsh demographic decline of the city of Genoa in recent years (including an ageing population) shows that the port alone is not enough to sustain the local economy, as the urban area experienced a significant deindustrialisation in the last two decades, significantly affecting job opportunities in the city and wider region. Liguria’s hinterland and rural areas did not escape this transformation, and benefits even less from the flow of goods and people coming from the sea, due mainly to the lack of connections, which increase interregional disparities between coastal and inner areas. These acknowledgements are particularly important, as between now and June 2026, the National Recovery Plan (NRP) will bring EUR 7.13 billion in public investments to Liguria, which could generate another EUR 59 billion in private investments according to the estimation of the European House – Ambrosetti.¹⁵ As a significant component would target infrastructure, including railway connections between the port system, Northern Italian regions and bordering EU countries, the region has the opportunity to ensure that NRP investments are spread across its whole territory, for the benefit of all Ligurians and the regional economy as a whole.

In Liguria, the *Finanziaria Ligure per lo Sviluppo Economico* - F.I.L.S.E. S.p.A. - is the in-house society providing technical support in the field of regional economic development, internationalisation, and capital attraction. Among obstacles to investment attraction, are the amount of ‘red tape’ or bureaucracy and the fragmentation of the business ecosystem, which is composed of 97% of small businesses and some big companies standing out at international level. In the aftermath of the collapse of the Morandi Bridge, which has heavily affected the region, the national government created a Simplified Logistic Zone (SLZ) in 2018¹⁶. This included the port of Genoa and back-port sites in Liguria and also in Piedmont, Lombardy, and Emilia Romagna, with the aim of creating favourable conditions to attract new investment in the area through custom and tax facilitations. In addition, the Ligurian railway system will benefit from several interventions for the development of the European Rail Transport Management System (ERTMS), while the Third Apennine Pass, which, when completed in 2024, will enable the regional port system to be linked to the main railway lines in Northern Italy and the rest of Europe. These projects will make it possible to transfer significant shares of freight traffic from road to railway.

The region is suffering from ageing population and deindustrialisation not only in its rural areas, but even in the main city of Genoa. Despite Genoa University showing good results in attracting foreign students – ranking 4th among Italian universities in terms of the percentage of foreign students and 5th among the large Italian state universities in terms of internationalisation¹⁷ – it continues to face difficulties retaining students after the completion of their studies. In response the region is taking active steps to attract and retain talent, with a focus on the high-

² national poverty line equivalent to 60% of national median income

tech sector, which it considers as a strategic tool to support the evolution of traditional industries and create job opportunities for young talent. For example, the region invests in robotics through its regional Business Innovation Centre, managed by FILSE, and it is collaborating with *Cassa Depositi e Prestiti* (CDP) for the creation of the first National Centre for Technological Transfer in Robotics hosted by the Italian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Genoa (see Box .1).

In addition, the NRP will finance innovation and research projects in the region, such as the flagship project for the “Centre for Computational and Technological Medicine”. Due to its proximity to France, cross-border and interregional cooperation projects promoted by EU through INTERREG are also important levers for innovation and talent attractiveness. For example, FRI_START2¹⁸ (in the wake of FRI_START) has been implemented with the aim of fostering the creation and development of innovative cross-border start-ups and networks of incubators in priority sectors, such as shipbuilding, tourism, biotechnology, and renewable energies.

Box .1. RoboIT, the first National Pole for Technology Transfer in Robotics

The *Cassa Depositi e Prestiti* Venture Capital, through the Technology Transfer Fund (with an endowment of EUR 275 million), will invest in the entire technology transfer chain through the creation of national centres distributed throughout the country. RoboIT is the first national centre to be established and was set up in collaboration with the Italian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Genoa. The ITT involves: 3 universities (the University of Naples Federico II, the University of Verona, and the Scuola Superiore Sant’Anna in Pisa), an investment holding (Pariter Partners), a multinational company (Leonardo), and two Venture Capital Funds (Eureka! Fund I - Technology Transfer and Cysero EuVECA). The region, with 3 million shares in the operations of the “Technology Transfer Fund” aims at exploiting the results of scientific and technological research. The Region, also through F.I.L.S.E., will support the growth of the Pole by ensuring incubation, acceleration, and development policies for innovative start-ups.

Source: [RoboIT - The First National Technology Transfer Hub for Robotics](#)

In an effort to promote “four-season tourism” and enhance the attractiveness of the region to visitors, a range of initiatives have been implemented, including the Tourism Jobs Pact in 2018, through which the region provides a hiring bonus to encourage tourism businesses to open for longer periods of time, thanks to funds coming from the European Social Fund. Nonetheless, the sector is experiencing significant difficulties in hiring qualified staff, which have been even exacerbated by the COVID crisis in many European regions. In the tourism sector, European cross-border cooperation plays a key role, as showed by the Integrated Thematic Plan Integrated Models for Outdoor Tourism (PITEM MITO)¹⁹, financed by the EU programme INTERREG V - ALCOTRA 2014-2020, which brings together French and Italian regions. Moreover, Liguria collaborates with the private sector through a network of non-profit consortiums gathering private and public entities involved in tourism, and even municipalities. “Liguria Together”²⁰, possibly the most important regional example, buys exhibition space, with the financial support of the region, in international fairs to promote the region as a tourist destination. Finally, along with only Tuscany, the region implements an effective monitoring system of sectoral trends that replicates the national tourism observatory approach at the regional level²¹.

Enhancing multi-level governance and coordination mechanisms

One of the main challenges shared across all Italian regions is the division of powers and the coordination between levels of government, along with often the limited capacity of subnational public administrations³. Considering EU funds management, the Italian Recovery Plan has been primarily managed by central administration, which has transferred significant amount of funds to municipalities, while regions play the most important operation role in the management of the EU Structural and Investments funds. To support public administration, the “Capacity Italy” programme has been implemented to provide specialised expertise and technical assistance to public entities at all stages of the implementation of NRP-related investments, as well as the “Capacity for Cohesion”

³ [Studi economici dell'OCSE: Italia 2021 | READ online \(oecd-ilibrary.org\)](#)

programme, including a recruitment plan, for helping public administrations to manage EU structural funds.

In Liguria, the implementation of the first Simplified Logistic Zone (SLZ) on its territory, would benefit from the nomination of a “Commissario Straordinario” by the national government, which has been awaited since the establishment of SLZ in 2018²². The final board is currently being defined and will include port system authorities, representatives of the regions, two ministries and municipalities, however it will not include private sector. The role of “Commissario Straordinario”, who is typically appointed by the national government for post-disaster situations or for Special Economic Zones, has at times been a source of discontent for regional governments which felt excluded from the governance of such important programmes on their territory. However, in the case of the Morandi bridge reconstruction, the national government chose to appoint a local resident (the former Genoa mayor) which proved to be an effective choice. The SLZ is quite challenging in terms of governance as they require coordination with the three other involved regions (Piedmont, Lombardy, and Emilia Romagna).

Concerning the tourism sector, Liguria lacks a common direction for the promotion of the territory and stakeholders indicated the need for a system of representation of the municipalities that can interact with the Regional Agency for Tourism Promotion. The region is also working on a common brand, while highlighting the importance of keeping some local brands in areas characterized by a strong identity, such as the *Riviera dei Fiori* or *Cinque Terre*.

Box .2. Centro’s Programme for the Economic Enhancement of Endogenous Resources (PROVERE)

The PROVERE programme is a regional economic development strategy launched in 2009 which specifically targets less populated municipalities of the Region. It aims to strengthen Centro’s competitiveness through the promotion of innovative economic activities based on endogenous resources targeting investment, export and visitors.

During the 2019-2021 cycle, 4 PROVERE strategies were in place:

1. *Network of Historical Villages of Portugal*: contributes to the sustainable development of 12 historical villages located in the hinterland. One of the main objectives of this initiative is to attract talent and create a business environment conducive to entrepreneurship.
2. *Enhancing the value of thermal spas in Centro*: aims to reinforce the region’s thermal offer, enabling greater interaction between operators and further dissemination of the *Termas Centro* brand.
3. *Schist Villages Network*: enhances the cultural landscape of the Schist villages through the creation of a territorial brand and establishes a platform for inter-municipal cooperation, fostering effective communication between public and private entities.
4. *Nature - Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas*: promotes green tourism in regional parks and protected areas and facilitates the creation of employment and new business opportunities.

A total of EUR 10 million has been allocated to the strategy, supported by the Centro 2020 Operational Programme. The evaluation of the 2016-2018 PROVERE programme enabled decisions to be taken on which projects should continue in the following 2019-2021 cycle. Most of the results of this evaluation underlined the positive impact of this policy: to provide innovative ideas to promote new activities in the region, contribute to strengthening human connections and encourage business creation. All of which are essential to fight depopulation in rural areas by implementing attractiveness strategies.

Source: CENTRO 2020 (2021), “[PROVERE: Programa de Valorização Económica dos Recursos Endógenos](#)”, [PROVERE: Programme for the Economic Enhancement of Endogenous Resources], (accessed 19 July 2022).

More generally, Liguria is characterised by a large gap between coastal and hinterland areas in terms of economy, demography, and tourism. Inner Areas⁴ municipalities represent 102 out of a regional total of 234, and 132,188 residents out of a regional total of 1,534,407²³. Through the National Strategy of Inner Areas, some of these areas have been selected to implement projects with the aim of improving public services and boosting economic development. In Liguria 4 areas with 34 municipalities were selected for the 2014-2020 EU funds programming period, and four new areas have been added for the 2021-27 period, with a total of 53 municipalities²⁴. Thus, regional governance should also focus on including all the Inner Areas municipalities in the decision-making process and explore their unlocked potential to achieve a more balanced development of the region. For example, Liguria could follow the example of the Centro region in Portugal (Box .2), which implemented a program, aiming to enhance endogenous resources of less populated areas through a wide range of measures, such as the creation of a favourable business environment, the development of new forms of green tourism and branding, and the establishment of a platform for inter-municipal cooperation.

Policy considerations

The following policy considerations are intended to help policy makers to enhance the impact of attractiveness strategies of the Liguria region vis-à-vis investors, talent, and visitors, and provide guidance to improve multi-level governance frameworks and coordination mechanisms.

- **Develop a sound strategy for talent attraction and retention**, by providing benefits to foreign or returning employees, ranging from healthcare conventions to facilities for child-care during working hours. This could be applied to sectors in demand of skilled labour and technology-intensive sectors, with a particular focus on young workers to tackle demographic decline. Even though some measures would depend on national government, it would be interesting to explore the possible actions that the region could intake (e.g. partnerships with companies) to improve in this field.
- **Encourage and promote migrant integration as a lever to tackle demographic decline in inner areas as well as in urban centres**. In some municipalities the arrival of foreign families working as caregivers for the elderly has made significantly decreased the negative demographic trend and kept schools open, maintaining headmasters - thanks to the presence of children, as in the case of the municipality of Rovegno in the Province of Genoa - and to recover ancient and traditional activities that are fundamental to the economies of these territories. Considering the demographic decline experienced in the region's capital, Genoa, this approach should also be adapted to urban centres and the variety of unfilled job offers (manufacturing and service sectors). For example, while the unemployment rate in Italy is around 10%, there is also around 300,000 to 350,000 unfilled positions, with tourism one of the sectors hardest hit²⁵.
- **Improve hinterland connectedness through investments in roads, public transport, and broadband**. This would be beneficial for existing residents and businesses in remote areas, while increasing the attractiveness of the region to investors, talents, and visitors. These measures should be based on a local consensus, through the development of a more inclusive governance, involving inner areas administrations, residents and SMEs in the definition of regional policies for a widespread social and economic development.
- **Institute a representative mechanism for municipalities** which would improve interactions and cooperation with the regional agency for tourism promotion (InLiguria), but also between municipalities themselves to promote the share of best practices and help to ensure that the benefits of the tourism economy are more evenly distributed across the region.
- **Seize the opportunities provided by the green transition**, particularly catching up in the area of renewables, which would achieve the multiple objectives of improving environmental quality, creating job opportunities for youth in a thriving sector, and attracting businesses that want to "green" their production.
- **Take steps to reduce the risk of potential natural disasters** such as landslides, mudslides and flooding, by improving the management of forests, terraced slopes, and rivers, thus promoting more balanced development between the hinterland and the coast, with increased job opportunities and quality of life for residents.

⁴ Municipalities are defined as part of inner Areas if they are at more than 20 minutes of travel from centres providing at least secondary school supply, one hospital with a first DEA level (a functional aggregation of operational units in addition to the Emergency Department) and at least one small or medium railway station [Sommario \(miur.gov.it\)](https://www.miur.gov.it)

Notes

The data on which these graphs are based comes from several different sources covering the period 2015-2022. Most of it is extracted from the OECD database and EUROSTAT ensuring the same source is used for as many countries and regions as possible. Where and when data is missing, it is extracted from databases available through national statistical offices. For some dimensions, the data comes from specific databases, such as the Ookla database for indicators linked to digitalisation. The data are selected using the most robust, available, and frequently collected data at the adequate geographic level (TL2 or TL3). With certain indicators, calculations are done in order to present the indicator at the most relevant and comparable unit of analysis.

References

- ¹ GSE, Statistic Report 2020: Energy from renewable sources in Italy Rapporto Statistico GSE - FER 2020.pdf
- ² Regional Tourism Observatory of Liguria (2020) , The added value of tourism 200922 Valore aggiunto 2019 v2_dopo rev Regdef (bizjournal.it)
- ³ Statistics | Eurostat (europa.eu)
- ⁴ <https://opencoessione.gov.it/it/dati-istat-di-contesto/>
- ⁵ giunta - Sviluppo economico, al via la nuova edizione del bando digitalizzazione - Regione Liguria
- ⁶ Bank of Italy (2022), The economy of Liguria- Annual report, Regional economies 2207-liguria.pdf (bancaditalia.it)
- ⁷ About us - IIT
- ⁸ Statistics | Eurostat (europa.eu)
- ⁹Port System Authority, Annual port movements of 2021, updated on 24 April
2022adsp_movimenti_portuali_annuale_2021.pdf (assoporti.it)
- ¹⁰ European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, Brons, M., Poelman, H., Ackermans, L., et al., Passenger rail performance in Europe : regional and territorial accessibility indicators for passenger rail, Publications Office of the European Union, 2022, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2776/576280>
- ¹¹ European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, Dijkstra, L., Poelman, H., Ackermans, L., Road transport performance in Europe: introducing a new accessibility framework, Publications Office, 2020, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2776/046835>
- ¹² The European House-Ambrosetti (2021), Strategic Report Liguria 2030, Fifth edition. crea_wmark.php (ambrosetti.eu)
- ¹³ Santoro, A.; Venturi, M.; Piras, F.; Fiore, B.; Corrieri, F.; Agnoletti, M. Forest Area Changes in Cinque Terre National Park in the Last 80 Years. Consequences on Landslides and Forest Fire Risks. Land 2021, 10, 293. <https://doi.org/10.3390/land10030293>
- ¹⁴ Martina Cignetti, Danilo Godone & Daniele Giordan (2019) Shallow landslide susceptibility, Rupinaro catchment, Liguria (northwestern Italy), Journal of Maps, 15:2, 333-345, DOI: [10.1080/17445647.2019.1593252](https://doi.org/10.1080/17445647.2019.1593252)
- ¹⁵ Pnrr, Ambrosetti: in Liguria 7,13 miliardi, volano per altri 59 da investimenti privati | Liguria Business Journal (bizjournal.it)
- ¹⁶ Law 109 - Urgent provisions for the city of Genoa - Art. 7 Legge "Genova" Interventi a sostegno dell'intermodalità - Confindustria, 5 dicembre 2018 - Confindustria Genova (readkong.com)
- ¹⁷ CENSIS (2021-22) Italian University Ranking
- ¹⁸ Il Progetto – FRISTART
- ¹⁹ PITem Mito2 (asrivlig.it)
- ²⁰ Liguria Together
- ²¹ turismo - osservatorio turistico regionale - Regione Liguria
- ²² Genova, zona logistica al palo «Ora la nomina del commissario» - Il Sole 24 ORE
- ²³ Strategia Nazionale Aree Interne - Agenzia per la coesione territoriale (agenziacoessione.gov.it)
- ²⁴ Entroterra: 53 nuovi comuni liguri entrano nella Strategia nazionale aree interne | Liguria Business Journal (bizjournal.it)
- ²⁵ Mancanza di personale nel turismo, Garavaglia: «Anche decreto flussi per soluzioni-tampone» | Liguria Business Journal (bizjournal.it)

Discover more at

regions@oecd.org

www.oecd.org/regional/globalisation

More information:
www.oecd.org/cfe

Follow us on



@OECD_local | #OECDregions |



/company/oecd-local/

WP: oecdcoqito.blog/



Co-funded by
the European Union