



DEPARTMENT OF THE PRESIDENCY
AND RELATIONS WITH EUROPE
LIAISON ACTIVITIES WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION
BRUSSELS
F. A. Q.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. THE ABRUZZO REGION'S OFFICE IN BRUSSELS

2. "SOCIAL" COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

3. ASSISTANCE TO THE STRUCTURES OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL AND REGIONAL BOARD

4. ASSISTANCE TO OTHER LOCAL/REGIONAL ADMINISTRATIONS AND BODIES

5. TRAINING INITIATIVES FOR LOCAL/REGIONAL ADMINISTRATIONS AND BODIES

6. USE OF THE ABRUZZO REGION'S HEADQUARTERS FOR EUROPEAN INITIATIVES AND EVENTS

7. EUROPEAN FUNDINGS FOR INDIVIDUALS

8. EUROPEAN FUNDINGS FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR

9. WORKING IN THE ABRUZZO REGION'S OFFICE IN BRUSSELS

10. INTERNSHIPS IN THE ABRUZZO REGION'S OFFICE IN BRUSSELS

11. INTERNSHIPS IN THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS (COMMISSION, COUNCIL, PARLIAMENT AND COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS/ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE)

12. SECONDED NATIONAL EXPERTS IN THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS



DEPARTMENT OF THE PRESIDENCY
AND RELATIONS WITH EUROPE
LIAISON ACTIVITIES WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION
BRUSSELS
F. A. Q.
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1. THE ABRUZZO REGION'S OFFICE IN BRUSSELS

What does the Abruzzo Region's Office in Brussels do?

The office in Brussels essentially takes care of:

- The support to regional interests and the participation to the decision-making circuit (especially during the preparatory phases to the development and implementation of the Regional Operational Programs);
- The promotion of the Abruzzo Region's reality not only from an institutional point of view, but also from a productive, touristic and cultural point of view;
- The institutional information and communication, particularly through the websites "[Abruzzo-Europa](#)" (IT/EN/FR) and Cordis' "[Abruzzo Regional Gateway](#)" (IT/EN/FR), but also through the [Facebook/Twitter](#) pages;
- The participation of the "Direct Funding" to European calls (not to be confused with those of the "Indirect Funding) which are automatically managed within the Territory by the Regional Operational Programs);
- The relations with other regions and Italian and European regional networks;
- The assistance to *Abruzzesi* communities in Belgium;
- The functioning of the headquarters in Brussels.

A detailed overview of those activities is available on the "[Abruzzo-Europa](#)" website, in the "[News from Brussels](#)" section.

Below, you will find the main information products freely available to everyone through the same website:

- "[Periodic Newsletter, News \(/n\), Events \(/e\) and Partnerships Research \(/p\) Section](#)", on a bi-weekly basis;
- "[Periodic Newsletter, Call for proposals Section \(/c\)](#)", reserved for the calls and the financial opportunities recently published (on a bi-weekly basis);
- "[Monthly summary](#)" of the active calls and financial opportunities, classified according to the topic;
- [Monthly "calendar" of the active calls and financial opportunities, classified according to the deadlines](#);
- "[Special Issues](#)", on in-depth thematic questions;
- "[Normative Monitoring Center - European directives and regulations of regional interests \(IT\)](#)", on a quarterly basis.

More recently, two special issues about the NEW DIRECT FUNDING PROGRAMS 2014/2020 have been added:

- 1) [Depending on the area of intervention](#)
- 2) [Depending on the program's name and type](#)

All of these products of information are sent to a long list of e-mail addresses including the Directors, the Officers, the officials and the administrators of the regional body, as well as all the country's bodies and



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AND RELATIONS WITH EUROPE
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BRUSSELS
F. A. Q.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

institutions (Municipalities, Provinces, Chambers of commerce and other public bodies of territorial importance).

The service is then extended to businesses, to associations and to all the citizens, through the "[Abruzzo-Europa](#)" website, but also through the [Facebook/Twitter](#) pages (you can find below full information about the *social* communication channels for the benefit of Citizens and Businesses).

How much does it cost?

In 2014, the operating cost (heating, telephone, Internet, electricity, water and cleaning, as well as property local taxes) of the Brussels' office was 32,918.72 € for the full year. This does not include the costs associated with the staff employed (two workforces, non-executive qualified staff), regulated by the sector's National Collective Agreements and other applicable provisions of national law.

Still on the subject of the staff costs, it should be recalled that, since July 2009, the institutional staff abolished the office Head's position, which previously had "*intuitu personae*" responsibilities, resulting in a reduction by half of the in-service staff costs. The office's coordination is ensured by M. Giovanni Savini as Director of the Department of the Presidency and Relations with Europe, without any additional cost increases as far as the regional budget is concerned.

Do the headquarters generate income for the region?

Yes, in addition to the opportunities and the benefits related to the institutional *task*, the headquarters of Brussels generate income in favor of the regional budget, amounting to 20,000 € per year and corresponding to the contribution paid by the [European Federation of Agencies and Regions for Energy and the Environment \(FEDARENE\)](#), the most influential independent network for competence, with 65 members representing 17 countries.

As a result, the Abruzzo Region plays a major role, offering high visibility and great partnership opportunities to all of its territories.

Where are the headquarters located?

The Abruzzo Region's office in Brussels has been in existence since 1999 and celebrated therefore in 2014 its first fifteen years of operation. At first, the region was hiring an office in the common headquarters of the regions of Central Italy (Tuscany, Lazio, Marche, Abruzzo, and Umbria) situated at n°6 of the Schuman roundabout, but since 2014, it has its own [headquarters at n°210 on the Avenue Louise](#), located 3.2 km away from the previous office.

When and how can I visit it?

The Brussels' office is open in the afternoon on business days, except on Friday, according to the following schedule: from 09:00 a.m. to 02:00 p.m. and from 03:00 p.m. to 05:45 p.m. and on Friday from 09:00 a.m. to 02:00 p.m.

Although it is not technically a "schedule open to public", the office is freely accessible during the working schedule for those who wish it.



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F. A. Q.
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At the Abruzzo Region's office in Brussels, we speak five languages fluently: not only Italian, but also French, English, Spanish and Dutch (Flemish).

Premises are secured by a video surveillance system. An automatic system for detecting the presence of employees is thus in place.

2. "SOCIAL" COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

For many years, staff and trainees (interns and volunteers) from the Brussels' office dedicate themselves to a series of initiatives that seek to fully promote and ensure recognition of the activities carried out. In addition to the "[Abruzzo-Europa](#)" website and the other traditional communication channels, the region also uses social networks as an instrument of promotion, information and transparency for the region and its territories. They are the region's new "[Facebook](#)" and "[Twitter](#)" accounts, created after a meeting promoted by the representation of Italy to the European Union to promote the use of social networks in the institutional communication in Brussels. In parallel, the Brussels' office could disseminate its new brand "abruZZelles", which was registered by the Abruzzo Region in order to "familiarize" the citizens with the "Abruzzo Region's activities in Europe".

The new services turn out to be complementary to the traditional communication channels, offering an increased visibility to the Abruzzo Region and increasing cooperation and institutional partnerships opportunities beyond national borders.

Because their use is linked to a functional and administrative structure and not directly to the political leaders or their institutional spokespersons, it is governed by the [Code of Conduct adopted by the European Commission for European officials](#) that use the social networks to perform the office's tasks.

3. ASSISTANCE TO THE STRUCTURES OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL AND REGIONAL BOARD

We are a regional Office/Structure. What form of assistance can we receive from the Brussels' office?

One of the prerequisites of the renewal and recovery plan of the Liaison Activities with the European Union (EU) of the Abruzzo Region in Brussels, proposed by the administration of President D'Alfonso, is the implementation of a constant and continuous flow of relations with the different regional Offices and Structures that cover topics related to the European decision-making circuit. This method enables to contribute effectively to the support of regional initiatives, measures and proposals in Europe.

To this end, it has been suggested that each Ministry and/or Department identifies one or more contacts responsible for manager the relations with Brussels' office. This mode of operation offers the possibility of reaching immediately the contact and it guarantees an operational immediate response, best suited to the deadlines (usually very tight) of the European dynamics.

In other words, the aim is to promote the creation of a dynamic "space for consultation", able to serve as a "catalyst" of proposals and interventions, putting forward every moment of complementary skills and different areas.

The Brussels' regional office, which can be contacted at the following telephone numbers: Tel. 0032(2)6262850 - Fax 0032(2)6262859, and at the following e-mail address:



DEPARTMENT OF THE PRESIDENCY
AND RELATIONS WITH EUROPE
LIAISON ACTIVITIES WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION
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F. A. Q.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

rp.bruxelles@regione.abruzzo.it, is at your disposal for any further information.

4. ASSISTANCE TO OTHER LOCAL/REGIONAL ADMINISTRATIONS AND BODIES

I am the Administrator/Officer of a local territorial body in the Abruzzo Region. How can the Brussels' office help me?

One of the prerequisites of the renewal and recovery plan of the Liaison Activities with the European Union (EU) of the Abruzzo Region in Brussels, proposed by the administration of President D'Alfonso, is the implementation of a constant and continuous flow of relations with all the public Bodies, Institutions and Administrations of the Abruzzo Region. This enables to contribute effectively to the regional system of the Abruzzo Region as a whole.

To this end, every local body in the region was asked to provide the names and e-mail addresses of the regional Administration's contacts. These people were included in the distribution list of products of information made by the structure, and they can interact with the Brussels' office as far as the concrete activities and initiatives are concerned.

The Brussels' regional office, which can be contacted at the following telephone numbers: Tel. 0032(2)6262850 - Fax 0032(2)6262859, and at the following e-mail address: rp.bruxelles@regione.abruzzo.it, is at your disposal for any further information.

5. TRAINING INITIATIVES FOR LOCAL/REGIONAL ADMINISTRATIONS AND BODIES

We are a public regional Administration/Body and we would like to develop an educational training program on European politics in favor of our staff. How can the Brussels' office help us?

The training initiatives intended for Administrators, Managers and Officers of public Bodies are also part of the activities carried out by the Brussels' office in favor of public regional Structures and Bodies.

They are training initiatives, entirely free, concerning the revision programs of pre-existing regulations that seek to provide public Administrators, Managers and Officers with the opportunity to take knowledge of the main novelties introduced in the reference sector. Besides, specific programs and requirements can be taken into consideration. Generally speaking, reports are made by European institutions officials. The identification of the participants is left to the different interested Bodies/Administrations. The expenses incurred by participation (mission allowance, food and accommodation in Brussels) will be charged to the interested Bodies/Administrations, to the extent of their available resources.

According to the *modus procedendi*, the interested Bodies/Administrations make a formal request to the Director General, Mrs Cristina Gerardis, and to the Secretariat of the President of the Abruzzo Region. Mr. Luciano D'Alfonso (also by e-mail to the following addresses: rp.bruxelles@regione.abruzzo.it/sabrina.saccomandi@regione.abruzzo.it), including all available information, as well as the references to the proposed event/activity. Following results, the Director General lays down appropriate provisions.



DEPARTMENT OF THE PRESIDENCY
AND RELATIONS WITH EUROPE
LIAISON ACTIVITIES WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION
BRUSSELS
F. A. Q.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

6. USE OF THE ABRUZZO REGION'S HEADQUARTERS FOR EUROPEAN INITIATIVES AND EVENTS

We are a Body/Agency and we would like to hold a workshop/a dissemination event in Brussels, within the framework of a European program/event participation. Can we use the Abruzzo Region's headquarters? Moreover, if possible, can we receive extra help or support?

The Abruzzo Region's headquarters in Brussels is available to all the public Bodies, Institutions and Administrations for dissemination initiatives concerning European projects and/or other important activities with a European dimension.

The "Abruzzo-Europa" website, whose homepage contains the "News from Brussels" section, and the social networks (Facebook/Twitter) are available to all the public Bodies, Institutions and Administrations that wish to give higher visibility to the activities and initiatives related to the participation of the regional dimension to the European processes.

In particular, as far as the headquarters are concerned, its use – for a period limited to several days – is granted:

- for free, in favor of all the public Bodies, Institutions and Administrations that request it;
- in exchange for remuneration – exclusively as a contribution to the costs – to adapt according to the nature and the period of the event, in favor of all the other private organisms, associations and/or organizations. This contribution can also be paid in a manner equivalent, through a contribution of capital goods useful for the good use of the headquarters (for example, materials for the conference room, laptops and/or other computing supports) that will be formally part of the regional heritage (register Inventories of movable goods).

In other cases, the nature, the contents and the reciprocal duties can be subject to a specific written agreement, between the parties.

The use of the headquarters is, in all cases, excluded for direct profit-making initiatives and/or activities, from the users.

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7. EUROPEAN FUNDINGS FOR INDIVIDUALS

I carry on an economic activity. Can I receive Community financing?

The direct European calls for proposals (the "Direct Funding"), not to be confused with those of the "Indirect Funding" which are automatically managed within the Territory by the Regional Operational Programs, would never fund a specific activity and/or territory, but rather a group of activities and a series of territories with a Pan-European dimension, about predetermined requirements and objectives based on the annual and multiannual sector-specific programming carried out by the European Commission.



DEPARTMENT OF THE PRESIDENCY
AND RELATIONS WITH EUROPE
LIAISON ACTIVITIES WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION
BRUSSELS
F. A. Q.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

For the “Direct Funding” calls for proposals, the Abruzzo Region’s office in Brussels provided three specific products of information:

- [“Periodic Newsletter, Call for proposals Section \(/c\)”](#), reserved for the calls and the financial opportunities recently published (on a bi-weekly basis);
- [“Monthly summary” of the active calls and financial opportunities, classified according to the topic;](#)
- [Monthly “calendar” of the active calls and financial opportunities, classified according to the deadlines;](#)

More recently, two special issues about the NEW DIRECT FUNDING PROGRAMS 2014/2020 have been added:

- 1) [Depending on the area of intervention](#)
- 2) [Depending on the program’s name and type](#)

All of these products of information made by the Brussels’ office are freely available online, through the [“Abruzzo-Europa”](#) website, but also through the social networks [“Facebook”](#) and [“Twitter”](#)

As far as the project development and the documents to be presented are concerned, all the necessary references are available in the data sheets of every call for proposals published, including the links to the guides for proposers, as well as the associated work programs.

8. EUROPEAN FUNDINGS FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR

I am the Administrator/Officer of a local territorial body in the Abruzzo Region. Is it possible to obtain Community financing to build infrastructures?

Infrastructures are never subject to opportunities offered by the “Direct Funding” (not to be confused with those of the “Indirect Funding” which are automatically managed within the Territory by the Regional Operational Programs). On the other hand, these calls for proposals never fund a specific activity and/or territory, but rather a group of activities and a series of territories with a Pan-European dimension, about predetermined requirements and objectives based on the annual and multiannual sector-specific programming carried out by the European Commission

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AND RELATIONS WITH EUROPE
LIAISON ACTIVITIES WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION
BRUSSELS
F. A. Q.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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9. WORKING IN THE ABRUZZO REGION’S OFFICE IN BRUSSELS

I am looking for a job and I am an expert in European affairs. Can work in the Brussels’ office?

The Abruzzo Region’s office in Brussels, organizational unit being fully part of the administrative and institutional regional plan, is subject to the same (national) rules established for all the other organizational regional units: to access this public career, it is necessary to pass a public competition open to anybody, based on qualifications and tests, or only based on tests, depending on what is written in the call for proposals.

10. INTERNSHIPS IN THE ABRUZZO REGION’S OFFICE IN BRUSSELS

I would like to complete an internship in the Abruzzo Region’s office in Brussels. Is it possible? Under what conditions?

The Abruzzo Region is committed to actively creating “non-formal” training opportunities for young people in the Brussels’ office. Indeed, beyond the field of professional skills, the headquarters of the Abruzzo Region in Brussels can offer an international and multicultural context rather unique, which has recently been enriched by the arrival of important European networks, including the colleagues of the [European Federation of Agencies and Regions for Energy and the Environment \(FEDARENE\)](#).

However, it must in no circumstances be a direct and/or individual call, because the Abruzzo Region, as most of the other Italian regions present in Brussels, does not consider it necessary to adopt a specific public regulation to recruit interns. Therefore, the selection is assessed by the Universities/Higher learning institutions with which the Abruzzo Region has agreements to this effect. On the other hand, if the mutual willingness is recognized, no University/Higher learning institution will be excluded from this opportunity if they request it. The only condition, apart from the desire to teach to interested young people, is to respect the internships’ programming that aims to avoid, as much as possible, the overlapping and/or continuity solutions between the different internships during the different periods. Remuneration from the region is excluded in all cases - in whatever capacity.

In last four years, the Abruzzo Region’s office in Brussels has welcomed twenty young people from different Italian Universities, such as the Universities of Teramo, L’Aquila, Rome, Padua, Bologna, Forlì, and Florence, as well as some of the best Belgian Universities (Mons, Brussels, and Louvain), within the framework of the “Erasmus-Placement” for a period of three to four months.



DEPARTMENT OF THE PRESIDENCY
AND RELATIONS WITH EUROPE
LIAISON ACTIVITIES WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION
BRUSSELS
F. A. Q.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

In addition to the opportunities offered in collaboration with Universities, a specific regional project has been recently created: “[Youth and Brussels based Regions](#)”, co-financed by the European Commission within the framework of the “Youth in Action” Program.

It is a new initiative, promoted by the Abruzzo Region, as the coordinator of an interregional partnership including also the Dubrovnik-Neretva County (Croatia), the Lubuskie Province (Poland), and the Presov Region (Slovakia). The goal of this project is to send, within two years, 80 young people (22 for the Abruzzo Region), aged 18-30, in the partner regions’ offices in Brussels. The conditions and the duration vary depending on the programs: the European voluntary service program lasts for 13 weeks and the transnational exchanges program last for 2 weeks. Food and accommodation expenses are covered, as well as the travel costs. As far as the European voluntary service program is concerned, the candidates selected will also receive a monthly pocket money. The people who will benefit from that exceptional offer will be selected among unemployed young people (aged 18-30) as far as the European voluntary service program is concerned, and among young workers and unemployed young people aged 18-25 as far as the transnational exchanges program is concerned.

Information:

- As far as the academic internships are concerned, it is necessary to contact the Economic Development Department, Labour Policy, Research and University of Pescara (Contact person: . Saula Gambacorta, Viale Bovio n 425, Pescara / Tel. 0039 085 7672089 / email address: saula.gambacorta@regione.abruzzo.it);
- As far as the “Youth and Brussels based Regions” project is concerned, the expressions of interest to participate will be presented, on the deadlines programmed, on the [official website of the project](#).

11. INTERNSHIPS IN THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS (COMMISSION, COUNCIL, PARLIAMENT AND COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS/ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE)

I would like to complete an internship in the European institutions. Is it possible? Under what conditions?

The Parliament, the Commission, the Council and the Committee of the Regions/Economic and Social Committee regularly welcome interns. Information that is more precise is also available on the [website of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#).

12. SECONDED NATIONAL EXPERTS IN THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

I am a public official and I have heard about the possibility to work for a certain period in the European Institutions as a Secoded National Expert. Is it true? Under what conditions?

The Parliament, the Commission, the Council, the Committee of the Regions/Economic and Social Committee, and other European organizations regularly welcome Italian Secoded National Experts (S.N.E.) and Vocational Training National Experts (V.T.N.E). Information that is more precise is also available on the [website of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#). The Abruzzo Region has also recently implemented a specific “END Space”.