A Comparative Study of the Intermediate Structures of Four Occidental Mediterranean Regions: the cases of Algarve, Andalucía, Sicily and Umbria.

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ABSTRACT

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have a very important role in European economies, particularly in Mediterranean countries. They are important for job creation, for economic growth and development and for bringing innovations to market.

This aspect of technological innovation and the introduction of innovation in the markets is particularly relevant in today's' economies.

With the intent of studying the intermediate structures that contribute to the creation of new companies and to research and development, a study was made about four Mediterranean regions: Algarve, Andalucía, Sicilia and Umbria.

The four regions are compared in terms of the existence of these intermediate structures, like business incubators, technological parks and venture capital companies.

Comparisons are also made in what concerns the economical activities in all regions and the level of innovativeness these regions have registered in the last years.

The strategic intentions of the four regions are also compared, in what concerns the industries they want to see developed.

Conclusions are drawn, based on the objectives declared in the questionnaires and on the comparison between the four regions.

This communication is based on an INTERREG III project, named Technopolis, supported by the EU, through the MEDOCC line.

INTRODUCTION

Everyone agrees which it is necessary to develop the areas, to support the creation of new companies and to support "entrepreneurship" (Allen and Weinberg, 1988, Reynolds, Storey and Westhead, 1994, Palich and Bagby, 1995, Shane and Venkataraman, 2000, Gartner, 2001, Reynolds et al., 2002 et Gaspar, 2007).

The problem it is that one really does not know how to do it (Sociedade Portuguesa de Inovação, 2001 e Gaspar, 2006).

This subject is relatively new in management literature and measures to encourage entrepreneurship and the creation of the new companies are being developed.

It is known that the structures of technological interface (the incubators, the risk capital companies, the universities, the technological parks and others), can have a very important role within this framework (Gaspar, 2006).

We also know that, since the Second World war and until now, three generations of structures of technological interface (SITs) were born, namely: - the generation of the techno poles, years 50-70 of the last century; - the generation of the ecosystems of innovation, the years 80-90; - and the technopolis generation or of the poles of competitiveness, which continues in the actuality (Dias, 2007).

This communication is the first "product" of a vaster research task which is in hand and which accompanies the participation by its authors in Project MEDOCC Technopolis - an INTEREREG III-B MEDOCC project which is about the launching of a network of SITs of the type "technopolis" in vast areas of the Mediterranean. We started with 4 areas MEDOCC - Algarve, Andalusia, Sicily and Umbria - but the objective is, then, with Project MED Technopolis, to widen the network with other areas of the Mediterranean zone, including the European and African areas which surround the Mediterranean.

For the moment, we have the results of the 1st phase of an questionnaire (EIEE – Enquête aux Institutions, Entreprises et Entrepreneurs) which is used as an element of collection of information about the reality of the areas and of their SITs, having in sight the organization of the network "technopolis" (see the document of Appendix I).

To improve our knowledge of the reality of the structures of interface of the various areas of the Western Mediterranean and, to the future, to better help them develop the entrepreneurship, we will study and compare their present realities.

It is necessary, of course, to study and also to characterize the regions and the public policies adopted in each area.

COLLECTION OF INFORMATION

To do that, a questionnaire was distributed by all the participants of the Technopolis project.

The 1st phase of the EIEE was directed to the top executives of the organizations which take part in Project MEDOCC Technopolis, namely:

- le PTA – Parc Technologique de l'Andalousie, who represents the project in the area of Andalusia (Spain) ;

- le PSTS – Parc Scientifique et Technologique de Sicile, which (with its several poles to various small and middle cities) represents in the project all the area of Sicily (Italy) ;

- la Sviluppumbria – Société de Développement de la Région de l'Ombrie, who represents in the project this area of the center of Italy;

- les Municipalités de Lagos et Tavira, which (with the support of the University of Algarve) represent in the project the area of Algarve (Portugal) ;

It should be stressed that the choice of these partners for Project MEDOCC Technopolis was not made randomly. The intention of the promoters was to put in network organizations and areas euro-Mediterranean with various experiences and quite representative of the several generations of SITs which emerged in Europe after the Second World war.

Indeed, we have, first of all, two technological parks which represent well the first two generations of SITs. The PTA - being the most important park of Spain - is a "techno pole" of the traditional type, built with public investment and according to standards' of the years 50-70. The PSTS is a structure of interface rather in the style of the ecosystems of innovation of the years 80-90 (second generation), being lighter in size and multi polar; moreover, it was created by the initiative of the University of Catania in partnership with the companies and the local authorities of several towns of the Sicilian region.

We have, then, a company of regional development from the center of Italy - Sviluppumbria -, which is anchored in an area of highly developed economy and where PMEs are organized almost spontaneously in "clusters" and "ecosystems" dedicated to export. The ambition of its leaders, now, is to transform some of these ecosystems (the famous Italian "industrial districts") into "technological districts" - a typically Italian model of the structures of interface of the type "technopolis".

Lastly, we have two municipalities of Algarve - Lagos and Tavira - which do not have former experience in the field of SITs. They try to create ex novo a last generation SIT – Algarve Technopolis -, in a multi polar structure, and which will

be dedicated, in particular, to the development of renewable energies and the exploration of the resources of the sea.

In short, given the heterogeneous character of the partners and of the regions in question, it had to be created a 1st phase in the research project where the objective would be to contribute for the creation of a bank of common ideas among the participants in the project, with regard to the question of SITs and of their function as tools for regional development.

Under these conditions, the questions and answers of the 1st phase of the research are rather qualitative. They try to mobilize people who are constituting the "hard core" of network MED Technopolis, for the construction of a common strategic vision on the importance of SITs and the promotion of "entrepreneurship" in the development of their regions.

RESULTS

These questionnaires gave us very important answers to characterize the four regions, in terms of development policy.

1. Principal economic activities of the regions

We started by characterizing the principal economic activities in each region and we started with agriculture. As can be seen in Table 1, there is not much in common.

Table 1 - principal economic activities in each area - Agriculture

Andalucia	Umbria	Sicilia
•Textile sector •Agro-alimentary sector •Andalusia is the first olive oil producer on a worldwide scale	•Culture of the olive-tree •Culture of the vine •Breeding of porcine and bovines •Culture of the tobacco	•Horticulture and biological and conventional fruiticulture, in full field and under greenhouse •Vine growing •Zootechnic and dairy productions - cheese-making •cereal Culture •Culture of Olives •Fishing

Next we have compared the industries of the four regions (Table 2) and have concluded for the same level of diversity.

Table 2 - principal economic activities in each region - Industry

• Algarve	Andalucia	Umbria	Sicilia
•Construction •*Construction and habitat* •*Food industry* •*Photovoltaic energies*	•Telecommunications and development •Sector of Bioinnovation and Biotechnologie •Photovoltaic, Renewable, Wind energies... •Sector of creativity	•Metallurgy and iron and steel industry •Textile clothes industry (cashmere and hosiery high range) •Advanced and mecatronic mechanics •Chemistry •Agroalimentary (oil, wine, meat, cheeses, truffles, pastes, pastry making, bread, provende for livestock •Paper, paper mill, edition	•Energy-generating products (oil, electric power...)

Finally, we have compared the economic activities in services (Table 3) and tourism is the activity more common, but there is great diversity.

Table 3 - principal economic activities in each region - Services

Algarve	Andalucia	Umbria	Sicilia
•Tourism (housing) •Trade •Restoration •Real estate sector	•Services directed To the Tics •Bioinnovation and Biotechnologie •Energy renewable, photovoltaic, wind... •Creativity •Tourism •Transport infrastructures	•Tourism •Logistics and Transport •Advanced services with the companies •University, research and high formation	•Trade •Tourism •Telecommunications •Transport •Mail service and banking

The dominating feature in these tables is the existence of a sector common to all the areas - tourism - and the variety of the other sectors which accompany tourism. It should be added, in any case, that it is only in Algarve that tourism (more the real estate) has place of a principal or almost single sector. The other regional economies are diversified and, especially, they accommodate ancillary

activities and tertiary sectors more advanced and more powerful on the international markets.

2. Economy of knowledge in the areas

The second topic of the EIEE was the economy of knowledge. It was requested to executives of the participating organizations what was the meaning, for them, of the expression "knowledge economy". The answers are summarized in Table 4 below.

Table 4 - What means for you the expression “knowledge economy"

New phase of the economic history which, according to certain economists, we entered since the end of last century	0
The knowledge economy sets up the knowledge, either like a factor of production, but like a production on its own, which makes innovation, not a stage in the accumulation of a stock of values, but like a continuous process determining the competitive development	Algarve
Dynamics of the knowledge, knowledge management, collective intelligence… Three concepts which translate the increasing importance of the immaterial in the production of the richness and the economy of knowledge	Algarve Andalucía Umbria Sicilia
Other: All that relates to the technology transfer like Technological Parks, public administrations, universities, technological companies, centers… the called networks of knowledge acquire also a great importance.	Andalucía

The majority answer is clearly the third. I.e.: that which associates the knowledge economy with “three concepts (dynamics of the knowledge, knowledge management, collective intelligence) which translate the increasing

share of immaterial in the production of the richness". One can say that it is about a relatively advanced vision of the concept in question, which besides could be sophisticated with recovered elements of the other alternatives…

Then, one invited people to use the concept of "economy of knowledge" to identify the activities which were created in their area, at the last years. Tables 5, 6 and 7 summarize the answers obtained.

Then, the same people were invited to use the concept of "knowledge economy" to identify the activities which were created in their area, in the last years. Tables 5, 6 and 7 summarize the answers obtained.

Table 5 - Which are the principal activities, of knowledge economy, which were create in your region in the last years? – Agriculture

Andalucia	Umbria	Sicilia
•Modernization of the traditional sectors •Various companies of the traditional sectors, work in close cooperation with the university	•Modes of treatment of the residues of oil •New knowledge in the sector of the provende and optimization of the conditions of breeding •Studies for the characterization of the properties of the olive oil virgin extra and its effects on health of the man •Studies for the use of energy cultures •Recovery and conservation of vegetable bio-diversity •Characterization of the minor components of the wines and study on the health of the man	•Biological products •Products of niche •Typical products •Productions of quality •Production of agricultural and forest biomass

This difference in directions of development it is even more obvious with industry (Table 6).

Table 6 - Which are the principal activities, knowledge economy, which were create in your area in the last years? – Industry

Andalucia	Umbria	Sicilia
•Technology transfer •Financing of l´I+D •Financing the creation of entreprises •Organization of employers' meetings	•Iron and steel activities: innovations of process and product of the stainless steels, the means and large forged for the energy production, of titanium (sheets, coils and tubes) •Development of the vertical activities: production of stainless steel tubes, production of catalytic pots •Agroalimentary industry (oil, wine, meats, frormages, truffles, pastes, pastry making, bread, provende for livestock) •Chemistry: development of the plastics bio- dégradables, development of the plastics recycled for the production of biocarburant •Chemistry: pole integrated for the production and the work of the propylene (node, wire, film) •Mechanical engineering industry in connection with the sector of aeronautics and the aerospace one •Mechanical engineering industry in connection with the sector of the car and the production of components.	•Electronics •Microphone and nano systems •Agro-alimentary

We have also compared the principal activities of the economy of knowledge in the four regions (Table 7). There too, the differences are large between the regions. There is almost nothing in common.

Table 7 - Which are the principal activities, of economy of knowledge, which were create in your region in the last years? – Services

Algarve	Andalucia	Umbria	Sicilia
• Tavira DIGITAL (implementacion of the tecnologies of public communication and information to the services)	•Relationship to l university •Systems of pre incubation •Systems d incubation •Internationalization of the companies •Encouraging the development of companies collaboration •close connections between the university and the world of business	•Consultation and assistance in the innovation of process and product; •Consultation and assistance for the support of process of internationalization •Consultation and assistance in the selection and the staff training •Development of logistics and the infrastructures	•Telecommunications •Foreign trade

The comment "imposed" by these results is that a clear difference exists between Umbria and the other 3 areas, with regard to the level of general economic development and the dissemination of the knowledge economy, in particular. This conclusion is reinforced by the answers to the questions 3 and 4 which come next.

3. The activities which were modernized in the regions

Tables 8, 9 and 10 present the answers on the activities which were modernized in the 4 regions, to the last years.

The activities which were modernized at the last years (Table 8) are also very different.

Table 8 - Which are the activities which were modernized in the last years, in your region? – Agriculture

Andalucia	Umbria	Sicilia
•Modernization of the food sectors •Modernization of the textile sectors	•Modes of harvest of the tobacco •Modes of harvest of the grape •Modes of harvest of olive •Process of the working methods of olives with oil •Irrigable systems •Techniques of care of the tobacco •Monitoring of phenology •Techniques of the management of the ground	•Vine growing •Culture des Olives

The same thing occurs to industry (Table 9).

Table 9 - Which are the activities which were modernized in the last years, in your region? – Industry

Algarve	Andalucia	Umbria	Sicilia
•Construction	•Development software •Biotechnological development •Medical Bio development •Help the potential of telecommunications companies in the region •telecommunications infrastructures	•Iron and steel activities: innovations of process and product of the stainless steels, the means and large forged for the energy production, of titanium (sheets, coils and tubes) •Development of the vertical activities: production of stainless steel tubes, production of catalytic pots •Agroalimentary industry (oil, wine, meats, frormages, truffles, pastes, pastry making, bread, provende for livestock) •Chemistry: development of the plastics bio-dégradables, development of the plastics recycled for the production of biocarburant •Chemistry: pole integrated for the production and the work of the propylene (node, wire, film) •Mechanical engineering industry in connection with the sector of aeronautics and the aerospace one •Mechanical engineering industry in connection with the sector of the car and the production of components.	•Agro-alimentary products •Artisanal products •Manufacturing products

Finally have has also register the same divergence in the sectors which are modernized with the services (Table 10).

Table 10 - Which are the activities which were modernized at the last years, in your region? – Services

Algarve	Andalucia	Umbria	Sicilia
•Tourism/Hoteles •Municipal Public Services	•Services d innovation •Financing with l´I+D •Help with the financing of company creation •Access to international market	•Consultation and assistance in the innovation of process and product; •Consultation and assistance for the support of process of internationalization •Consultation and assistance in the selection and the staff training •Development of logistics and the infrastructures	•Tourism (Agritourisme, Rural Tourism, gastronomical Tourism) •Trade electronic •Transport

It is clear that there is a region - Umbria -, which presents a dynamics of modernization which is typical advanced economies. And there are the other three less advanced regions, mixing the modernization of the traditional Mediterranean activities with the creation of « advanced » activities… In any case, as will be shown in the following point, these activities do not have yet sufficient “critical mass” …

4. The creation of new or « advanced » activities

Tables 11, 12 and 13 present basic information on the new or « advanced » activities which were created, recently, in the three traditional economic sectors of the regions in question. With agriculture (Table 11), the answers told us that the regions have created entirely different new activities.

Table 11 - Which are the new activities which were created at the last years, in your region? – Agriculture

Andalucia	Umbria	Sicilia
•Promotion of Mediterranean l alimentation •Promotion on an international scale of companies of the primary sector	•Creation of energy dies •Introduction of the culture of the flax •Creation of short dies in the agroalimentary one and animal husbandry •Development of rural tourism •Culture of varieties autochtones in process of extinction •Network between local and foreign companies	•Productions of quality •Typical productions •Productions of niche •Biological productions •Production of agricultural and forest biomass

The same thing occurs in industry (Table 12) and in services (Table 13).

Table 12 - Which are the new activities which were create in the last years, in your region? – Industry

Andalucia	Umbria	Sicilia
•Photovoltaic sector •Sector of Bioinnovation •Renewable sector d´énergie •Telecommunication, wifi, wireless, wimax	•Electromagnetism applied to the diagnostic apparatuses •Plastic panels with special film for mural preparing and floors •Rooms for simulation of the ambient conditions, apparatuses for the cold applied to research in the laboratories of biology, universities and hospitals •Production of biodegradable plastics to start from vegetable components •Technologies of photovoltaic and thermodynamic solar energy •Production of long titanium products •Sector of the electronic and electromechanical installation •Mechanical components for the aircraft industry and aerospace •Technologies and services for mobile telecommunications. Production of apparatuses for mobile telephony and contents multimédiaux sector telephony and televised sector	•Agro-alimentary •Advanced biology •Renewable energies

Table 13 - Which are the new activities which were create in the last years, in your region? – Services

Algarve	Andalucia	Umbria	Sicilia
•Energies renoubables	•Development and services of the intelligent hearths •Creation of support for financing of innovation •Help in potential of the basic companies technological	•Center European for the nanotechnologies •Research center for the cells staminales •Research center on technologies of the car	•Cultural goods •Transport •Communication and Information technologies

To supplement our evaluation on the "critical mass" in the regions considered, we asked for information about the connection with R & D activities that are carried out. In tables 14 and 15, the participants classified the sectors on the research made in the region as weak (F), strong (F) or very strong (TF).

Conclusion is that there are great differences between the regions (Table 14).

Table 14 - Research carried out in this sector with the area

Andalucia	Umbria	Sicilia
•TF - TICs •TF - bio-innovation •TF - renewable energy , photovoltaic, wind	•F - iron and steel industry •F - chemistry •F - Pastry making and food industry •F - Textile industry •F - Mechanical engineering industry	•F - Agriculture •F - Industry •F - Services

The same thing was concluded when they were asked whether there are companies in the sectors where the research is made (Table 15).

Table 15 - Companies which work in this sector and can use the results of research

Andalucia	Umbria	Sicilia
•TF - TICs •TF - bio-innovation •TF - renewable energy, photovoltaic, wind	•F - iron and steel industry •F - chemistry •F - Pastry making and food industry •F - Textile industry •F - Mechanical engineering industry	•F - Agriculture •F - Industry •F - Services

5. The regions and their future projects

To finish, have asked the partners of Technopolis which are the sectors which the authorities want to develop.

Answers (Table 16) show that there is not too much in common between the four regions.

Table 16 – Which are the sectors which the public authorities want to develop more

Algarve	Andalucia	Umbria	Sicilia
•Industry (Creation of an industrial polygon) •Renewable energies •Exploration of the resources of the sea •Creation of a multipolar technological park •Cultural and medical quality equipments	•Telecommunications •Projects of R&D, Multisector •Contribute to the creation of technology based companies •Encouragement of R&D	•cultural and éco-bearable tourism •Search and development for new materials •Sector of precision mechanics and mecatroniks •Strengthening of the points of excellence of traditional industry (iron and steel industry, mechanics, textile, food)	•Human resources, Research, Innovation and Technology transfer, Energy and environment •Social services, territorial attractivity, natural resources and cultural, mobility •Productive systems and employment, urban systems, investments attraction, governance

The last question wanted to quantify how many interface structures exist in each area, in this case, risk capital companies and incubators (Table 17).

The figures in this case are not too different between the four regions.

Table 17 – Interface Structures

Regions	Risk Capital	Incubators
Algarve	4	4
Andalucía	6	4
Umbria	1	2
Sicilia	1	4

The projects of the four regions are not so different from each other. Moreover, SITs which already exist are in a similar number… Except for the case of Umbria, which believes more in the model of the "technological districts", typically Italian, more than in the "standard" models in other European regions.

DISCUSSION ET CONCLUSION

This study was the first of the three phases of the EIEE. The information obtained on current reality and on the emergent tendencies in all the areas participating with Project MEDOCC Technopolis, is preliminary.

In the following phases, there will be a work of testing and consolidating this information, on the basis of direct consults with the "living forces" of each region, by using suitable statistical samples.

For the moment, it is possible to show that these four MEDOCC areas have very diverse characteristics, in the level of their economic and social fabric. In any case, cleavage between Umbria and the others the areas is clear, just as its Mediterranean features are less clear.

With regard to the knowledge economy and its future development in the four regions, the ideas are much closer. Moreover, the interface structures which already exist in the areas are quite similar…

Obviously, the exception of Umbria always remains. It opposes its model of the "technological districts" to the solutions tried by the other countries and European regions. In any case, this opposition is more apparent than real, since the rising generation of "technopolis" is sufficiently large to include imaginative and valid solutions, like those of the Italians.

One of the ambitions of Project MED Technopolis is, precisely, to be used as an experimental basis for the consolidation of the ideas and models of this rising generation of interface structures of the "technopolis" type or the "poles of competitiveness".

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ANNEX I

- Présentation synthétique du projet :

Le projet « MEDOCC TECNOPOLIS » (ou MEDOCC-TECH) vise, pour l'essentiel, le lancement d'une nouvelle génération de technopôles - les « technopolis » - dans les vastes régions de la Méditerranée Occidentale.

Les caractéristiques essentielles de ce nouveau type de technopôles sont les suivantes : - il s'agit d'un ensemble de structures d'interface technologique (« pépinière » pour des entreprises de haute technologie, unités de recherche, centre de formation avancée, centre de télécommunications, services commerciaux et financiers, etc) très insérées dans la maille urbaine, notamment dans une zone de la ville avec un urbanisme de qualité que sera appelée « zone technopolis » ;

- dans une région comme l'Algarve, où le tissu économique et social se distribue par un certain nombre de PMVs (villes de petite et moyenne taille) très dynamiques, le nouveau type de technopôle peut avoir 2 ou 3 pôles, situés en villes différentes, et liés par un réseau informationnel ;

- ce caractère multipolaire facilite aussi la liaison avec des campus universitaires, situés parfois en zones isolées ou périphériques ;

- un technopôle multipolaire peut fonctionner comme « système nerveux » technologique de toute une région comme l'Algarve ;

- les « technopolis » de l'Algarve ont besoin d'être connectés, via Net, avec d'autres technopôles et d'autres villes, notamment celles où se situent les clients et les fournisseurs potentiels de ses entreprises et organisations et de la région de l'Algarve, en général.

Justement, au début, les Mairies de Lagos et Tavira avaient décidé de créer un « technopolis » multipolaire en Algarve – appelé « Algarve Tecnopolis » -, avec l'appui d'un autre partenaire plus technique – l'Université de l'Algarve -. Maintenant, avec l'opportunité ouverte par le Programme INTERREG III-B MEDOCC, ces entités portugaises veulent faire démarrer tout ce processus non seulement en Algarve mais, aussi, à d'autres régions de la Méditerranée Occidentale, en misant sur l' « effet de réseau », c'est-à-dire, sur les avantages de la coopération internationale et du développement régional « en réseau ».

Donc, l'objectif principal du projet MEDOCC-TECH consiste à établir la connexion entre l' « Algarve Tecnopolis » et d'autres pôles et PMVs du MEDOCC qui sont intéressés, au moins, à discuter et à tester l'expérience

portugaise et, éventuellement, à suivre la même voie, en formant le « noyau dur » d'un futur réseau de « technopolis » euro-méditerranéens.

Bref, le projet comprend les actions suivantes :

(a) Faire démarrer le noyau initial du « technopolis » multipolaire de Lagos et Tavira ;

(b) Tester son bon fonctionnement à travers le petit réseau MEDOCC-TECH, qui établira la connexion entre plusieurs PMVs (petites et moyennes villes) appartenant à 4 régions du MEDOCC différentes ; ce teste comprendra la mise en œuvre d'un projet pilote de divulgation et de discussion autour du concept de « technopolis » et du développement régional « en réseau », à chaque région partenaire ;

(c) Créer les conditions de base pour l'élargissement du réseau de « technopolis » à d'autres PMVs et à d'autres pays da la Méditerranée, en partant du « noyau dur » formé par les partenaires du projet MEDOCC-TECH.

En somme, notre projet sera encadré dans l'axe 2, mesure 2.1 du Programme INTERREG III-B MEDOCC , ayant comme objectif spécifique : « Développement des relations entre les villes, (…), afin de favoriser une articulation territoriale équilibrée et polycentrique ».

- Motivation et contexte dans lequel s'inscrit le projet :

« Algarve Tecnopolis » est un nouvel outil de développement régional qui est né, en 2004/05, dans le contexte du processus d'élaboration du « PROTAL » - plan régional d'aménagement du territoire de l'Algarve – et du PELA – plan stratégique de développement de la ville de Lagos et des territoires limitrophes.

Il vise appliquer, à la réalité de la région de l' Algarve, les orientations plus récentes de l'IASP (International Association of Science Parks), en ce qui concerne « le lancement d'une nouvelle génération de technopôles, plus adaptés aux conditions de l'ère de l'information et de l'économie de la connaissance » (voir « Actes » du Congrès Mondial de l'IASP, en Estoril, Portugal, juin 2003).

Cela signifie, notamment : - des unités de petite et moyenne taille, disposant les éléments de base des technopôles (connexion à la Net en bande large, unités de formation et de recherche avancée, pépinières de microentreprises, notamment les « start-up high-tech », services commerciaux et financiers, etc.) ; - des unités bien implantées dans la maille urbaine des PMVs et faisant la liaison entre plusieurs PMVs (et plusieurs « campus» universitaires) d'une région, à travers leurs pôles multiples et interconnectés; - surtout, des unités disposant de bonnes connexions au marché global et ayant une gestion moderne, entrepreneuriale, notamment au niveau des services avancés (marketing international, services financiers, capital de risque, etc.) aux entreprises résidentes ou associées.

Avec le projet MEDOCC-TECH, nous avons la possibilité de mettre en oeuvre le concept de « technopolis », en ensemble avec d'autres villes et régions de caractéristiques économiques et culturelles semblables à celles de l'Algarve, en essayant d'appliquer, dès le début, l'idée de « société en réseau » ou de « développement en réseau » dont parlait l'éminent sociologue Manuel Castells au Congrès Mondial de l'IASP de Bilbao (2001). En plus, cette démarche aura la participation du technopôle le plus moderne d'Espagne (le PTA - Parc Technologique d'Andalousie) et l'accompagnement technique du Secrétariat International de l'IASP (siégé au PTA). Il ne faut pas oublier aussi l'importance de la participation des « districts industriels » de la région d'Ombrie, Italie, et de leur expertise en matière de gestion de technopôles et d' « entrepreneurship ».