



Regione Puglia
Segreteria Generale della Giunta Regionale

Draft Law No 120 of 29 May 2025

Measures for the attraction, enhancement, circular mobility and permanence of talents in Puglia

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REGIONE PUGLIA

DEPARTMENT FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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SUBJECT: Measures for the attraction, enhancement, circular mobility and permanence of talents in Puglia

This draft law intends to submit to the Regional Council a legislative proposal on the attraction, enhancement, circular mobility and permanence of talents, in implementation of Regional Executive Decision No 1989/2023 and in line with the #mareAsinistra strategy. The measure will be subject to public consultation through the Puglia Partecipativa portal, in implementation of Regional Law 28/2017 on participation. The results of the participatory process will also be shared as part of Pillar 1 of the European Commission's *Harnessing Talent Platform*, which supports regions in defining measures to attract, develop and retain talent.

Explanatory technical report to the draft law

“Measures for the attraction, enhancement, circular mobility and permanence of talents in Puglia”

1. Introduction

This draft law (hereinafter SDL) stems from the need to address the challenges linked to the enhancement of human capital, which is considered a strategic resource for the economic, social and cultural development of the Apulia Region. The legislative intervention is placed in a context that sees Puglia at the center of a series of transformations, with particular attention to the opportunities offered by European, national and regional strategies for sustainable growth, technological innovation and social inclusion and intends to provide a concrete response to the challenges of intellectual emigration, global competition for qualified human resources and the need to make the territory more attractive, inclusive and competitive at a global level.

The objective is to position the Region as a leader in the field of human capital, creating an environment conducive to the establishment and growth of highly qualified professionals, innovative companies and new professional figures, through targeted policies of attraction and enhancement. With integrated and innovative measures, it is intended not only to enhance the talents already present in the territory, attract new ones and encourage the return of those who have left the region, but also to promote circular mobility paths for talents. This model of circulation, contamination and exchange of skills is based on opportunities for mutual growth, which benefits both those who move and the territories of origin and destination, with the aim of stimulating continuous enrichment between individuals and organisations.

This SDL aims to achieve this through a number of policy interventions:

- empowering and involving local actors, such as businesses, universities, research institutes and public administrations, in joint action to attract talent and promote opportunities for professional and personal development;
- facilitating the matching of demand and supply of qualified skills, through the strengthening of digital tools and platforms dedicated to work and training, able to put talents in direct relationship with the production and research system;
- promoting incentive policies, which make the Apulian territory competitive with other European and global regions;
- encouraging the emergence of collaborative ecosystems, which enhance human capital through advanced training, incubation and acceleration of companies, and strengthening the network between universities, research centers and innovative companies;
- investing in quality of life and social cohesion, promoting interventions aimed at improving public services, mobility, environmental sustainability and social infrastructure, which are key elements for attracting and retaining qualified talent;
- enhancing the artistic, cultural and landscape resources of the territory, to position Puglia as an attractive destination not only for professional development, but also for personal well-being.

In particular, the legislative text provides for the creation of meeting and discussion venues, including through the enhancement of nodes already present as territorial hubs for innovation and talent, capable of generating co-creation processes between public and private actors, including start-ups, university hubs, research organisations and citizens. Examples include Galactica (the network of public spaces dedicated to youth policies), Digital Facilitation Points, Local Social Plans, Employment Centres, etc.: These spaces can become engines for the experimentation of innovative policies that stimulate the growth of human and social capital.

Complementing these actions, the creation of a multilingual portal is proposed, including through updating or integration into existing or developing platforms, such as, for example, the Open Innovation and Open Data platform, for the sharing of initiatives, measures, calls, promotion of collaborations and partnerships. Through this SDL, the Puglia Region intends to address the challenges of global innovation and position itself as a reference laboratory for policies geared to the centrality of talent, inclusive growth and sustainable development.

2. Regional legislative competence

This SDL is based on the regional legislative competence provided for in Article 117 of the Italian Constitution. In particular, the subject matter of this SDL falls within the areas of shared competence of the Regions, being

attributable both to 'innovation support for production sectors' and to 'professional professions' and 'vocational training' as referred to in Article 117(3) of the Constitution.

As regards scientific research, it should be pointed out that, according to a well-established guideline of the Constitutional Court (see, by way of mere example, judgments No 423/2004, No 31/2005, No 133/2006), it must be considered not only as a 'matter', but as a 'value' protected by the Constitution, irrespective of strictly delimited areas of competence. The State therefore retains competence to regulate scientific research: a) with regard to the carrying out of research at university facilities, pursuant to the reservation of state law in the regulation of the limits of university autonomy (Article 33 of the last paragraph of the Constitution); where the research is related to the exercise of competence in matters falling within the exclusive competence of the State; whenever the research is of unified interest of a national nature (based on the principle of subsidiarity).

At the same time, some of the measures provided for in this SDL fall within the residual legislative power of the Regions, in particular the promotion of social welfare, the enhancement of human capital and support for local development, in accordance with Article 117(4) of the Constitution.

In the light of the above, this SDL forms part of a clearly identified and fully legitimised framework of regional legislative competence, in compliance with the prerogatives of the State and the objectives shared with the State in the field of development, innovation and enhancement of human capital.

3. Scope of reference

According to the Svimez 2024 Report, Puglia recorded GDP growth of +6.1% in the period 2019-2023, confirming itself as the **most dynamic Italian region** of this period. This result, significantly higher than the national average (+3.5%) and that of the Mezzogiorno (+3.7%), highlights the excellent economic performance of the region, which stands out among the main Italian areas and consolidates its competitiveness also at European level, thanks to targeted and structured development and economic attraction policies.

In the first quarter of 2024, employment increased significantly by 17,000, a tangible sign of the **continued expansion of the regional labour market**. This growth has affected not only traditional sectors, but also innovative sectors such as the automotive sector, the blue economy and renewable energies, which continue to be the real drivers of economic expansion in Apulia.

The ISTAT Report of 28 January 2025 confirmed this positive trend, showing an **increase in regional GDP of 1.1%** for 2023, higher than the national average growth of 0.7%. Thanks to an increase of about 949 million euros, Apulian GDP reached 87,046 billion euros. 2022 was a record year, with growth of +5.4%, a symbol of a strong post-pandemic recovery. At the same time, disposable income per inhabitant increased, reaching €17,148 in 2023, compared to €16,472 in 2022, indicating an improvement in households' economic conditions and spending capacity.

In 2024, Apulia reached a significant milestone with 1.304 million **people employed**, the highest number of workers since 2018. Compared to 2023, 11,000 more people were employed, with the employment rate rising to 51.2%. Particularly noteworthy is the sharp fall in the unemployment rate, which for the first time in the region's economic history fell below the double-digit threshold to 9.3%. This figure marks a further step forward in the solidity of the Apulian labour market, with performances that place Bari (5.1%) in a position comparable to that of Milan (5%), underlining the growing competitiveness of the region at national level.

However, in addition to these positive results, there are also some **challenges**: Puglia is confronted with a demographic, social and economic context in continuous evolution, which requires integrated and forward-looking policy responses.

According to the **Permanent Population Census (2023)**, the region recorded 3,890,661 residents, a reduction of 0.4% compared to the previous year. This demographic decline is driven by a negative natural and internal migration balance, although partially offset by a positive external migration balance. More than half of the population is concentrated in the provinces of Bari and Lecce (51.1%), while the average age has risen to 46.4 years. The birth rate reached a new all-time low with 25,591 births (-710 compared to 2022), while mortality decreased slightly, from 11.4 to 11.1 per thousand. The female population, which represents 51.2% of the population, exceeds the male population by about 95,000, reflecting greater longevity.

Gender **inequality** in the labour market remains significant, but the Region has made progress in promoting female employment in line with the objectives of the Regional Gender Agenda. In fact, in the four-year period

2020-2024, Apulia recorded positive signs on the female employment front. The unemployment rate decreased from 17.2% in 2020 to 15.5% in 2024, while the employment rate increased from 32.4% to 37% over the same period. At the same time, the inactivity rate among women fell from 61% to 57%, confirming a higher participation of women in the labour market.

On the migration front, according to the 2024 Report of the Migrants Foundation, based on data from AIRE (Italian Register of Residents Abroad) and Istat Puglia is the seventh Italian region for the number of emigrants residing abroad, with 384,738 citizens registered with AIRE, of which 42.5% are women. In addition, 3,732 new departures were recorded in the last year, indicating a persistent talent and resource drain.

The **regional economic fabric** is based on three main pillars: agriculture, with a fruit and vegetable sector generating €648 million in exports in 2022; industry, concentrated in the centres of Bari, Brindisi and Taranto, active in mechanics, steel, petrochemicals, pharmaceuticals and plastics; and tourism, which suffers from seasonality and a significant incidence of irregular work. According to the Unioncamere report, in 2023, 41% of companies had difficulties finding workers, particularly in the hospitality, mechanics, construction and transport sectors. The most requested figures include plant and machinery operators (40.5% of recruitment difficulties), specialized technicians (49.4%) and highly qualified professionals (49.8%). In addition, there is a strong mismatch between skills supply and demand, with a shortage of STEM, health and economics graduates, while there is an excess of humanities and social sciences graduates.

Even the **inland areas** (Monti Dauni, Alta Murgia, Sud e Alto Salento, Gargano) suffer from depopulation, lack of services and marginalization. This is where demographic, employment and educational challenges intertwine, making strategic intervention to attract and retain talent urgent.

Approved by Executive Decision No 1989 of 28 December 2023, the **#mareAsinistra** strategy represents the Region's response to these challenges. The objective of #mareAsinistra is to attract creative and technological talents at international level – with particular attention also to those who already reside in the territory – such as students, start-uppers, artists and digital nomads. The initiative aims not only to counter emigration, but also to attract new residents, creating an ecosystem that can support the development of innovative ideas, start-ups, and cutting-edge technologies.

In line with the growing dynamism of the region, as evidenced by the economic results, the #mareAsinistra strategy is structured around five areas of intervention that respond directly to the challenges that have emerged and developed thanks to a permanent public consultation process:

1. [LINEA] People: This line focuses on creating an environment conducive to quality of life by improving access to key services such as health, transport and housing. It is a response to the demographic decline and the need to attract talent, including digital nomads, who seek a work-life balance, and a good quality of services.
2. [LINEA] Enterprises: The strategy aims to develop an enabling environment for start-ups by stimulating innovation, research and technological development. This encourages the creation of new job opportunities in sectors with high added value. A crucial part of this plan is also to stimulate the internationalisation of skills, allowing local businesses access to new markets and new skilled human resources.
3. [LINEA] Brand: the strengthening of the regional brand is a fundamental component to promote Puglia as a hub of innovation and talents. This area aims to promote the region nationally and internationally, through cultural events, trade exchanges and "businessdiplomacy" initiatives. Such activities are essential to attract international attention and build a global reputation.
4. [STAFF] Networking: Networking between talents and businesses is vital to facilitate the matching of labour supply and demand, as well as to stimulate collaboration between different actors in the regional ecosystem. The strategy envisages the creation of matchmaking platforms, incubators and talent communities, which will become the engine of growth and development of human capital.
5. [STAFF] Management: Effective governance of the strategy is essential to ensure the effectiveness of the actions taken. The Puglia Region intends to monitor the progress of the strategy through the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) model, to ensure that the objectives are achieved efficiently and sustainably over time.

In the same Regional Executive Decision, *the Councillor for Economic Development is responsible for presenting a draft regional law on attracting talent, either autonomously or in connection with other similar*

issues, which identifies objectives, tools and resources, and sets out mechanisms for monitoring, communication and periodic review. To this end, following the approval of the strategy paper, significant legislative measures were introduced:

- Regional Law No 4 of 4 April 2025 'Promotion measures in the field of open innovation and artificial intelligence', aimed at strengthening the culture of open innovation within the Apulian business fabric, encouraging cooperation between large companies and SMEs, as well as between companies in the same sector, to generate synergies capable of accelerating and optimising production processes. A specific objective is also to foster the development of artificial intelligence applications in micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and to disseminate technological and digital knowledge.
- The reform of ARTI (Regional Agency for Technology, Technology Transfer and Innovation). By Regional Law No 29 of 21 November 2024 'Establishment of the Regional Agency for Technology, Technology Transfer and Innovation', the Regional Council approved the reform of ARTI, assigning it, in addition to its previous powers, also those of coordination of technology transfer activities. The new ARTI will work in support of policies for economic development, education, training and work, with the aim of facilitating the transfer of research results to the market, promoting innovation and supporting startups.
- The Youth Policy Bill. On 24 February 2023, the Regional Executive approved Draft Law No 33 on youth policies, marking a significant step in the promotion of talent, active participation and youth protagonism in Puglia. This measure aims to define a regional regulatory framework for youth policies, promoting spaces for participation and introducing innovative measures to actively involve young people in the social, cultural and economic development of the region. With a unanimous vote in the contact point, the bill was approved by the VI Commission.

These legislative instruments operate in a broad regulatory environment, including:

- The National Strategy for Internal Areas (SNAI), focused on territories such as Alta Murgia, Monti Dauni, Alto Salento, Sud Salento and Gargano, represents a significant step to promote territorial cohesion and sustainable growth in areas suffering from depopulation and difficulties in accessing essential services. This approach allows for more targeted programming, with concrete actions to foster the attraction and rooting of talent, thus fostering a recovery and strengthening of local economies.
- Regional Law no. 19 of 10 July 2006, focused on the integrated system of social services, has a direct impact in promoting the dignity and well-being of people, with an inclusive vision and oriented to equal opportunities. Social policies in Puglia, therefore, not only support vulnerable groups but also create an environment of greater equity and access to citizenship rights, helping to combat marginalization and social inequality.

The #mareAsinistra strategy is the cornerstone of a new paradigm for the Mezzogiorno: a strategy based on the centrality of the Mediterranean, on the hybridisation of culture, the environment, work and participation. This vision translates into concrete actions, many of which are already underway.

Some of the tools activated include:

- Incentives for attracting talent: the Region has introduced a 5% bonus in calls for tenders for companies that attract talent from outside the region.
- Recruiting Week project: an innovative formula devised by the Regional Agency for Active Labour Policies (ARPAL) to strengthen the service of matching supply and demand, responding to the needs of companies looking for staff and encouraging the return to Puglia of the professionals required. In addition to face-to-face interviews, online interviews are activated for candidates residing outside the region, encouraging their return or transfer to Puglia.
- Collaboration Agreement between ARTI and the Special Structure for Institutional Communication of the Puglia Region: This agreement aims to promote the opportunities offered by the Puglia ERDF - ESF+ 2021/2027 regional programme for companies with a high level of innovation, with particular reference to the #mareAsinistra strategy, through communication services and support for participation in regional and extra-regional events and fairs.

- Project of "Territorial Pacts for Higher Education for Enterprises": The project involves the five Apulian universities, public and private, with the aim of expanding the educational offer, with a focus on STEM subjects integrated with other humanities and social disciplines. The 'Pact' aims to promote the interdisciplinarity of study courses and the formation of highly specialised profiles to meet the needs of the world of work and production chains, where discrepancies between labour supply and demand have emerged."

It is worth highlighting, in this context, the strategic participation of the Region in numerous European and international programmes includes, among others:

- **SKILLS – Smart and Skilled South Adriatic (Interreg IPA)**: promotes new skills and educational paths in the blue economy sector, creating training chains in line with the needs of the South Adriatic labour market.
- **GOVERNANCE (Interreg IPA)**: focuses on administrative simplification and digital strengthening of public institutions, improving the efficiency of public administration in Apulia, Albania and Montenegro.
- **CREATIVITY (Interreg IPA)**: enhances cultural heritage and creative industries, promoting sustainable and integrated tourism models from a green and digital perspective.
- **CONNECTIVITY (Interreg IPA)**: develop infrastructure solutions for resilient and intermodal mobility along the Adriatic corridor, enhancing accessibility and integration with the TEN-T network.
- **YOUNGSPACE (Interreg Europe)**: promotes youth leadership through the creation of multifunctional civic and cultural spaces, where young people and communities co-design new forms of social participation and urban innovation.
- **ENERGIES and ENERT (Interreg Greece-Italy and JTF)**: The aim of these projects is to regenerate marginal and coastal areas, such as Brindisi and Taranto, transforming them into ecological transition laboratories with the involvement of young international talents and local stakeholders.
- **STARTUP4GREEN (AICS cooperation with Egypt)**: supports female and youth entrepreneurship in the green economy and promotes the fight against climate change in the vulnerable region of the Sohag Governorate.
- **NET4GREEN (Interreg IPA)**: strengthens the cross-border dimension of eco-innovation and creates an international master's degree with CIHEAM Bari, LUM and the University of Tirana, positioning Puglia as a hub of knowledge and advanced training in the Mediterranean green and blue economy.

These projects are not isolated pieces, but integral components of a regional strategic design that combines cooperation, sustainability, territorial justice and the protagonism of the territory.

In the light of this complex strategic, regulatory and programmatic framework, which has seen the Puglia Region equip itself with innovative and targeted tools to address demographic, employment and training challenges, it has become necessary to draw up a unified and integrated legislative framework that could coordinate and strengthen the various initiatives in place.

In the light of the above, and in implementation of the provisions of Regional Executive Decision No 1989/2023, a draft law has been drawn up to promote integrated policies for attracting, enhancing, circular mobility and retaining talent. The measure, in line with the aims and provisions outlined in the Regional Executive Decision, aims to support the growth of an innovative and competitive regional ecosystem, creating favourable conditions for individual and collective development. With it, the Region also intends to encourage collaboration between the various actors of the territory and strengthen the connections between them, thus responding to the need for continuous improvement of human capital in the region.

This approach responds to the challenges posed by rapid economic, social and technological changes, both at global and local level, and complements the legislative initiatives already launched, such as Regional Law No 4 of 4 April 2025 and Regional Law No 29 of 21 November 2024, approved following the #mareaAsinistra strategy, to create a favourable and dynamic environment for attracting talent.

It should also be noted that, in the light of the significant interests at stake, this SDL will be subject to public consultation, given that Regional Law No 28 of 13 July 2017 on participation promotes **participation** as a fundamental principle of the Apulia Region, making it a real compass for the government programme and its action in all areas of interest. For this reason, it is necessary to ensure the full involvement of the territories,

starting a **process of public consultation** of the preliminary document of the draft law, in order to acquire further and broader contributions and amendments, through the portal Puglia Partecipativa, accessible at the following link: <https://partecipazione.regione.puglia.it>.

The results of the participatory process will also be shared with the Technical Assistance pathway under Pillar 1 of the *Harnessing Talent Platform*, an initiative of the European Commission aimed at supporting regions in addressing demographic challenges and promoting economic growth. The platform provides tools and resources to help regions develop policies and measures to attract, develop and retain talent.

4. Summary of the structure of the draft law and indications on the financial coverage

This draft law is divided into ten articles, the operative part of which is summarised below.

Article 1 defines the fundamental principles of the law, underlining the importance of valuing talents for the economic, cultural and social growth of Apulia. The actions are part of a strategic framework that aims at territorial attractiveness, sustainable progress and the elimination of inequalities, with a particular focus on gender equality. Article 1 does not have a financial impact, as a rule of principle.

Article 2 defines the subjective and objective scope of the law. The term "talents" encompasses a wide range of professional figures and specializations, from students to workers, from researchers to digital nomads, to artists and startupper. The Regional Executive has the task of integrating these definitions according to the needs for certain interventions or sectoral areas. Article 2 does not have a financial impact, as it identifies the scope of the standard.

Article 3 defines the objectives and lines of action of the law, aiming to promote the attraction, mobility and enhancement of talent in the regional context. The Region intends to strengthen cooperation with national and international networks and actors, support the inclusion of specialised figures in the production system, encourage the birth and growth of innovative companies, create a welcoming environment with dedicated services and incentives, encourage networking and integration into the local socio-economic fabric and take care of communication through multilingual and accessible tools. To this end, partnerships, mobility programmes, digital matchmaking services, protocols to facilitate the entry of foreign talent, and initiatives for the involvement of businesses and local actors are promoted. Article 3 does not have a financial impact, since it merely sets out the objectives and lines of intervention on which regional programming will have to be based, complementing and rationalising existing regional interventions activated on different financial sources, such as the Bonded Budget, the Puglia 2021-2027 RP, the Interreg programmes already launched, the JTF.

Article 4 provides for the three-year Strategic Agenda, a programming tool approved by the Regional Executive to define priority areas, objectives, actions and resources to attract and enhance talent. The Agenda, drawn up with the support of the stakeholders involved, also includes monitoring tools. It is coordinated with the main EU, national and regional strategies, such as the #mareAsinistra Strategy, the National Strategy for Internal Areas, and regional laws, including those relating to innovation and technology transfer. Article 4 does not have a financial impact, since it merely sets out the objectives and lines of action on which regional programming should be based by identifying areas for action. For each area, it sets specific objectives, targets, actions and resources, integrating and streamlining existing regional interventions activated on different financial sources, such as the Binded Budget, the 2021-2027 Puglia RP, the already launched Interreg programmes and the JTF.

Article 5 provides for the establishment of the Regional Technical Unit, coordinated by the Councillor for Economic Development, to support, propose and monitor policies for attracting and enhancing talent. Composed of representatives of regional structures and related bodies, the Unit draws up the Strategic Agenda, coordinates the activities of the law, monitors the results and contributes to communication. Article 5 does not impose any financial burdens, since these are institutional activities carried out *ratione officii*.

Article 6 governs the establishment, by decision of the Regional Executive, of the *Alliance for the Development of Talents*, composed of public and private entities, with the aim of promoting dialogue and collaboration between the players in the regional ecosystem. The Alliance fosters collaboration and knowledge sharing among members by putting forward proposals that feed into the Agenda. It also acts as an Observatory to collect data on talent mobility and monitors the implementation of the Agenda. Article 6 does not have a financial impact, as it aims to strengthen territorial cooperation and exploit existing synergies.

Article 7 commits the Region to approve, by decision of the Board, a Communication Plan to promote initiatives linked to the attraction and enhancement of talent, providing transparent and accessible information, involving stakeholders and using various communication tools. The information will be

disseminated through networks and territorial contact points, established or hosted in existing public spaces and through the network of Apulian Associations worldwide registered in the Regional Register referred to in Regional Law 2.23/2000. Article 7 finds financial coverage in the resources existing under current legislation, with particular reference to the resources allocated to the Special Structure for Institutional Communication of the Apulia Region, under Action 11.1 'Accompanying measures and technical assistance' PR Puglia 2021–2027 (as established and quantified by DGR 1677/2024 for an amount of EUR 400 000 under the Cooperation Agreement between the Apulia Region and the Regional Agency for Technology, Technology Transfer and Innovation).

Article 8 introduces an evaluation clause, entrusting the Regional Council with the task of monitoring the implementation of the law and verifying the results obtained, including through an annual report submitted by the Executive.

Article 9 contains the financial invariance clause, specifying that no new or increased burdens on the regional budget arise from the adoption of the law. The planned interventions are implemented with resources available under current legislation, coming from the Binded Budget, the Apulia 2021–2027 RP, the Interreg programmes already launched, JTF. The draft law therefore proposes to set out the principles on which regional planning in this area should be based.

Article 10 provides for the immediate entry into force of the legislative measure on the day following its publication in the Official Gazette of the Apulia Region.

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Articulated
**Measures for attraction, enhancement, circular mobility
and the permanence of talents in Puglia**

Article 1 – Principles and objectives

1. The Puglia Region works in such a way as to enhance the talents present on the regional territory, attract new skills from other territories, encourage the return of talents who have left Puglia and stimulate the circular mobility of talents, as a dynamic model of growth and contamination of skills that favors the exchange and mutual enrichment between individuals and territories.
2. In line with the relevant EU, national and regional strategies, including the Regional Smart Specialisation Strategy, the Apulia Region 2030 Agenda Strategy for Sustainable Development and the #mareAsinistra Talent Attraction and Enhancement Strategy, the Apulia Region aims to develop and strengthen high skills in the field of research and innovation, industry and technology, science and the arts, in order to contribute to the progress and growth of the regional territory and to increase its attractiveness, innovation, quality and sustainable development.
3. The Region undertakes to ensure full gender equality and to remove other forms of inequality in access to services and measures governed by this law.

Article 2 – Definition and scope

1. For the purposes of this law, <<talenti>> means people (students, workers employed or looking for work, artists, digital nomads, startupper) who possess high skills and specializations or who intend to obtain them in strategic sectors for economic, social, cultural development and who intend to establish their own study, work or life project in Puglia, temporarily or permanently.
2. The Regional Executive, after consulting the Regional Technical Unit referred to in Article 5 below, shall, by its decision, identify the definition of talents on the basis of additional requirements concerning the possession of specific educational qualifications or the achievement of particular professional experience for certain interventions or sectoral areas, taking into account the Regional Strategy for Intelligent Specialisation, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the #mareAsinistra Strategy.
3. This law applies to all talents present in the regional territory as well as to those residing in Italy or abroad who express interest in moving or establishing their study, work, business, research or to develop life projects in the Puglia region.

Article 3 – Objectives and lines of action

1. The Region aims to:
 - a) promote the attraction and mobility of talents, promoting their valorisation in the regional context;
 - b) strengthening connections with European and international networks, promoting cooperation in the fields of research and innovation;
 - c) supporting the production and research system, encouraging the inclusion of highly specialised professionals;
 - d) create an environment conducive to the growth of talent through incentives, reception services and support for businesses and local authorities;
 - e) stimulate the creation, acceleration and growth of innovative companies through dedicated support and collaborations with institutions and investors;
 - f) strengthen the synergy between talents and the production system, including through digital tools and matchmaking initiatives;
 - g) promote the circular mobility of talent and integration with the local socio-economic fabric;
 - h) promote the creation of a regional talent community, facilitating its connection and participation in activities and opportunities;
 - i) ensure communication and promote maximum dissemination and information on opportunities, resources and tools for talent.
2. In order to achieve these objectives, the Region may, within the framework of the programming instruments adopted:

- a) promote partnerships and agreements with other regions and national, European and international institutions, as well as with local authorities, third sector bodies, districts, business associations, trade unions, universities, research centres, institutes for higher artistic, musical and choreographic training, higher technical institutes and other actors in the regional research, training, innovation and business system with the aim of developing projects to attract and promote the mobility of talent, enhance their careers in the regional context and contribute to the economic, social, cultural and scientific development of the territory;
- b) encourage participation in European and international *networks* aimed at developing projects and collaborations with other actors on the supply chains of the regional smart specialisation strategy;
- c) support the productive systems of work, research, higher education and vocational training, supporting their participation in regional, national, European and international programmes aimed at enhancing and attracting specialised and highly skilled figures;
- d) promoting the internationalisation of the provision of public and private education, school, university and training services, as well as cultural, recreational and leisure services;
- e) support, including through special incentives and in conjunction with regional facilitation instruments, reception services for talents and their families, facilitating access to primary local services, health, local public transport and housing; it also provides support for inclusion in educational, training and work programmes and for the use of the cultural and academic offer;
- f) promote participation in associations and third sector activities, fostering integration into the local community;
- g) promote information and training actions to strengthen the ability to attract, welcome and enhance talents; these initiatives target businesses, local authorities, business representative associations, trade unions, vocational training centres, accredited employment services, universities, research centres and other actors in the research, innovation and enterprise ecosystem;
- h) promote collaboration protocols with the administrations responsible for immigration and visa issues, in order to facilitate the entry of talents into the regional territory;
- i) encourage measures to encourage the recruitment of talent, in synergy with regional planning and policies for the development and enhancement of human resources by companies;
- j) encouraging the matching of labour supply and demand, including through the involvement of its own instrumental bodies;
- k) promote programmes for professional and entrepreneurial mobility in Europe, in cooperation with the EURES network and the Erasmus+ programme for young entrepreneurs;
- l) promote and support, in line with state aid rules, also in collaboration with other regional, national, EU and international actors, services, spaces and events aimed at:
 - i. create and accelerate innovative start-ups, involving investment funds, *business angels* and incubators;
 - ii. strengthen laboratories and research infrastructures to promote the connection with the production system;
 - iii. facilitate the matching of talents and companies with *matchmaking* platforms and job opportunities;
 - iv. promote *networking* and competitions to stimulate the local business ecosystem;
 - v. attracting specialised talent with advanced digital tools;
 - vi. implement information systems for anticipating and analysing skills needs, actively involving local businesses and players in the regional research and innovation ecosystem;
 - vii. promote, in line with the principles of open innovation, the interaction between *start-ups*, investors, businesses of all sizes, local institutions and resources through events, competitions and *networking* activities. These initiatives aim to foster an

open and collaborative business ecosystem, fostering the exchange of knowledge, widespread innovation and sustainable growth of the territory.

Article 4 – Three-year strategic agenda

1. On the proposal of the Councillor responsible for economic development, the Regional Executive approves the three-year Regional Strategic Agenda (hereinafter the Agenda) and any annual updates, including through other instruments and programming documents.
2. The Agenda, drawn up in collaboration with the entities referred to in Articles 5 and 6 below:
 - a) analyses and identifies the areas and priorities for action to encourage the attraction, enhancement, circular mobility and permanence of talent in the regional territory;
 - b) defines the specific objectives to be achieved for each policy area;
 - c) highlights, for each specific objective, the *targets*, actions and financial resources required under the programming instruments adopted;
 - d) identify regional measures to promote and support talent, also with a view to rationalising and optimising the financial resources available;
 - e) It includes tools for analysing and monitoring the implementation of the Agenda.
3. The Agenda shall be approved within 120 days of the date of entry into force of this law by decision of the Regional Executive, on a proposal from the Councillor responsible for economic development.
4. By 31 March each year, the Councillor responsible for economic development reports to the Regional Executive on the state of implementation of the Agenda and in particular:
 - a) actions taken to attract talent;
 - b) the facilities provided, the effectiveness of the interventions and their impact on the territory;
 - c) on any critical issues encountered in the implementation of the law.
5. The report referred to in paragraph 4, which takes into account the activities carried out by the Alliance for the Development of Talents referred to in Article 6, shall be communicated annually to the competent regional council committee.
6. In order to ensure coherence, synergy and greater effectiveness of interventions, the activities set out in the Agenda are coordinated with the main regional legislative and policy measures. In particular, account shall be taken of:
 - a) updating the MareAsinistra Regional Talent Attraction and Enhancement Strategy, in line with the indications of the European Commission's *Harnessing Talent Platform – Pillar 1 – Technical Assistance*;
 - b) the implementation of the National Strategy for Internal Areas, with interventions aimed at combating depopulation and strengthening services in fragile areas identified on the Apulian territory;
 - c) initiatives to support open innovation and artificial intelligence, involving businesses, universities and research centres (Regional Law No 4 of 14 April 2025 on 'Promotion measures for open innovation and artificial intelligence');
 - d) the process of technology transfer, from the research system to the market, which includes, inter alia, the identification of new technologies and their industrial application (Regional Law No 29 of 21 November 2024 'Establishment of the Regional Agency for Technology, Technology Transfer and Innovation');
 - e) instruments for the pursuit of youth policies.

Article 5 – Regional Technical Unit

1. By decision of the Regional Executive, the Regional Technical Unit is set up, coordinated by the Councillor responsible for economic development, as a consultative and driving body with support and monitoring functions on policies to promote attraction, circular mobility, permanence and the enhancement of talent in Puglia.
2. The Technical Nucleus is attended by the Directors of the Regional Departments, the Strategic Agencies and the other Entities and Companies controlled and / or participated by the region.
3. The Technical Unit performs the following tasks:
 - a) draw up the three-year strategic agenda referred to in Article 4 and its updates;
 - b) support and coordinate the initiatives, activities and proposals provided for in this law and in the Talent Development Alliance referred to in Article 6;

- c) monitor the implementation of this law and evaluate its results;
 - d) contribute to the formulation of the contents of the Communication Plan referred to in Article 7.
4. Participation in the Technical Unit referred to in paragraph 1 is free of charge to the regional budget and does not entitle you to compensation or reimbursement of expenses.

Art. 6 – Talent Development Alliance

1. By decision of the Regional Executive, the Alliance for the Development of Talents is established, made up of public and private entities that express their interest in the enhancement, attraction, circular mobility and permanence of talents.
2. The Alliance acts as a forum for ‘peer-to-peer’ interaction, aimed at sharing knowledge, comparing and collaborating with its members.
3. Each member of the Alliance may submit proposals for the development of policies on attraction, circular mobility, permanence and talent valorisation. The exempted proposals for which the Regional Technical Unit verifies and ascertains consistency with the strategic objectives and compliance with the evaluation criteria shall be included in the Agenda referred to in Article 4, for the drafting and updating of which the Alliance shall cooperate with the Regional Technical Unit.
4. The Alliance performs, also in collaboration with other already established regional observatories, Observatory functions with the purpose of collecting data and analysing the phenomena of mobility and circulation of talent.
5. The Alliance also has the following functions:
 - a) elaboration, analysis and updating of data on growth opportunities, mobility and circulation of talent, employment dynamics and training needs;
 - b) monitoring the progress and monitoring of the objectives set out in the Agenda;
 - c) promotion of meetings, studies and debates.

Article 7 – Communication plan for attracting and enhancing talent: Territorial Desks and Talent Communities

1. In order to ensure full accessibility to the measures and initiatives referred to in this law, the Communication Plan aimed at:
 - a) strengthen information actions on objectives, strategies and results;
 - b) involve stakeholders on the opportunities and detailed planning of the planned activities and on the results to ensure timely, correct and transparent information, based on the ability to network, inclusive and taking into account the different types of recipients;
 - c) provide widespread information to the recipients referred to in Article 2 above through tools that allow a wide dissemination of the message, using traditional methods and more innovative solutions, aimed at increasing the interest and interactivity of the public. Priority will be given to *tools differentiated by target*, which adopt simplification of language and systems of assistance to beneficiaries. The communication material and portals will be accessible to people with disabilities, according to the most up-to-date technologies;
 - d) develop the specific lines of action defined in the Agenda.
2. The communication of measures and initiatives shall also be implemented by:
 - a) through networks and territorial contact points, established or hosted in existing public spaces;
 - b) through the network of Apulian associations around the world, registered in the regional register pursuant to Regional Law No 23 of 11 December 2000, as additional points of contact and dissemination of information, including to Apulian communities abroad. The aforementioned associations may promote specific projects in line with the Communication Plan referred to in paragraph 1.
3. The counters referred to in paragraph 2 shall perform the following functions:
 - a) act as a ‘one-stop-shop’ to strengthen and simplify the *mentoring* and *mentoring* system for talents who decide to move to the regional territory and for foreign companies wishing to invest in Puglia;
 - b) provide useful information about the regional ecosystem.
4. The Region promotes the establishment of regional talent communities, also through a dedicated multilingual portal aimed at:

- a) attracting talent from abroad, promoting professional opportunities supported by incentives, favourable ecosystems and strategic *networks*;
 - b) fostering the circulation of talents, activating measures for circular mobility, skills development and contamination;
 - c) map regional experiences, census initiatives and projects in terms of attraction, enhancement, circular mobility and permanence of talents;
 - d) create meeting spaces and encourage the inclusion of talent in the world of work through events, *networking* and collaborations with companies and institutions;
 - e) promote regional excellence, spreading the knowledge of important industrial, scientific, artistic and technological realities to attract talents;
 - f) monitor progress, assessing the impact of the initiatives and the level of awareness of the programmes activated;
 - g) Publish calls and notices, making regional opportunities available for talent attraction, valorisation and mobility.
5. The activities referred to in this Article shall also be implemented through programming tools and documents activated as part of the initiatives referred to in Article 4(6).

Article 8 – Assessment clause

- 1. The Regional Council exercises control over the implementation of this law and evaluates the results obtained. To this end, three years after the entry into force of this law, the Regional Council shall submit an annual report to the Regional Council by March on the state of implementation and effectiveness of this law.
- 2. The competent structures of the Legislative Assembly and the Regional Executive shall use connecting forms for the best assessment of this law.

Article 9 – Financial provision

- 1. No new or increased fiscal burden shall arise from the implementation of this Article. The administrations concerned shall carry out the activities provided for in this Article with the human, instrumental and financial resources available under the legislation in force.

Article 10 – Entry into force

- 1. This law shall enter into force on the day following its publication in the Official Bulletin of the Region of Puglia.