

The Family Business in the Fishing District of Mazara del Vallo. Critical issues and Dynamics

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The Family Business in the Fishing District of Mazara del Vallo. Critical issues and Dynamics. Authors: Authors: Salvatore Tomaselli (Unipa); Gioacchino Fazio (Unipa); Gianna Agrò (Unipa); Vitalba Ponte (Unipa Graduate); Abstract This work-in-progress paper presents the early results of a survey aiming to understand the relationship between family firms and regional development in contemporary economic, by examining the negative effects of “family inertia” on the acquisition of dynamic capabilities necessary to enhance competitiveness and establish inter-firm cooperation strategies in family businesses in the context of an industrial district. Family firms are acknowledged for playing an important role in the creation, organization, and allocation of regional resources and in regional processes. Industrial districts are recognized as fertile fields for the development of inter-firm interrelations that may produce positive effects on both the economic development of the region and on the performance of the individual businesses in the area. On the other hand, in small family business, inertia can prevent the creation of those dynamic capabilities necessary to establish cooperation strategies to enhance competitiveness, frustrating the potential advantages offered by the participation in a district. The family businesses in the District Fisheries of Mazara del Vallo (Sicily, Italy), have been analyzed, to detect their structural and cultural characteristics and their implications on the longevity of firms and on the survival of the district system. At the present stage, the paper describes the characteristics of the area, presents the method followed for the empirical survey and reports initial comments to the findings.