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The RBM Biomedical Research Institute in Colletterto Giacosa (Torino) was founded in 1969 by Silvia Olivetti; it is one of the most important research centres of the German pharmaceutical giant Merck Serono.

The Institute provides preclinical development and support to clinical development. The RBM Biomedical Research Institute has a long history in preclinical development, focusing in particular on regulatory activities (Good Laboratory Practices - GLP and Good Manufacturing Practices - GMP). It was initially a foundation, but later became a contract R&D centre, also working with hospitals in the field of genetic diseases. From 2004 to 2007 it was the research centre of the Italian Serono company, which then merged with the German Merck group.

Web site: www.merckserono.it

What are the main advantages of investing in Piemonte?

Seeing things through the eyes of our German investors, I would say that the group has continued to believe in us over the years, since Merck bought the Italian company Serono, which RBM was a part of, back in 2007.

The German company has continued to invest in our research centre since then, and every day we try to convince them to stay by demonstrating our value in terms of quality and skill. The advantages certainly include the cost of labour, which is lower than in Germany. Both the vicinity of the "Silvano Fumero" Bioindustry Park and the presence of a biotechnologies cluster have a positive impact.

Another important element is the Faculty of Biotechnologies of Torino University, where many of our top-notch researchers have studied. Nor can we overlook the fact that Piemonte is a lovely place to live, and it is safe.

What problems have you encountered?

Logistic problems, certainly: a company in the Canavese is not easy to reach and rail connections are poor.

That makes it difficult to attract new human resources who are not either local or from Torino. My second criticism is more of a dream: it would be a great help if the institutions had a less "inspective" attitude and one of greater trust in companies. I realise that this attitude is the result of behaviour that was widespread in the past, by which companies tried to get round regulations and not to respect them, but it would be better for everyone if a climate of greater trust could be established between the institutions and companies, based on respect, esteem, openness and transparency.