

## SEE IFA Network

### 3rd Thematic Seminar (WP5)

12.11.2010 | Vienna

---

#### Participants

- LP – aws
  - ERDF PP - EPF
  - ERDF PP – Finlombarda
  - ERDF PP - GEORAMA
  - ERDF PP – TETALAP
  - ERDF PP – Regione Veneto
  - ERDF PP – AMCSIT / UEFISCDI
  - ERDF PP – SID Bank
  - IPA PP - UKIM FME
  - 10%PP - AZRA
  - 10%PP - RDA Banat
- 

#### 1. Welcome and Introductions

- Roswitha Mosburger welcomed all participants and gave a short overview of the project status.
- The problems related to reporting and FLC structures and also cofinancing could finally be solved in all PP countries.
- The current timeplan until end Jan 2011 was approved by all PPs.

#### 2. Financials / Reporting / Project changes (WP1) (aws)

- It was pointed out that the Progress Report No. 3.2, due on 1. December 2011, was the last chance for PPs to submit expenditure claims for WP0, periods 1 and 2, and that all PPs should send their Declarations on Validation of Expenditures to aws until 19<sup>th</sup> November 2010.
- Looking at the statistics of the amounts reported by the PPs with the first three Progress Reports (No. 1, 2, 3.1.), the claims fall clearly short of the spending forecasts. The reasons for this are a late start and delays of the project activities as well as the FLC problems of some PPs, which have been solved only very recently.
- If a project prolongation will be needed, the application needs to be submitted in autumn 2011 (Oct. 2011) at the latest. Currently, it is estimated that a prolongation of 2-3 months will probably be necessary.
- Marius Mitroi explained that despite the change of the Romanian PP institution from AMCSIT into UEFISCDI (“The Unit”), the purpose of the new organization remains the same as before, but it is now operating in a wider scope. The Unit is – like AMCSIT was - linked to the Romanian Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation. The core team in charge of SEE IFA will largely remain the same. Currently, aws is clarifying with the JTS the necessary formal requirements related to this change, however despite several reminders, a definitive reply on behalf of JTS could not be obtained so far.
- With regard to a possible modification of the project budget, aws has collected all the ERDF PPs’ needs, but the consolidation of all needs showed that the 20% reallocation limit of the ERDF budget was not exceeded. It was clarified that the 20% reallocation limit has to be applied on the basis of the whole ERDF-project budget and not, as previously assumed, on a PPs’ basis. If the cumulative shifts exceed 20% of a WP or budget line in the total ERDF budget, only then a formal budget modification involving a MC (Monitoring Committee) decision is needed. For shifts below that limit, only the LP needs to be informed by the respective PP and the approval of JTS needs to be obtained on a rather informal basis (email).
- The PPs were informed that aws prepared the concept for the coming mid-term evaluation together with an in-house evaluation expert, but that the realization of the evaluation would be

outsourced to an external expert, which still had to be selected. Concerning the timing, Francesco Cannatelli asked to take into consideration that the results of the WP4-Prefeasibility Studies for Serbia, Croatia and FYROM would be available for evaluation at the end of January.

### **3. Status of WP2 / WP3 (AMCSIT)**

- Marius Mitroi explained that the number of hits on the SEE IFA Website doesn't correspond to the number of hosts who visit the website – it refers to the number of clicks that are made.
- He compared the SEE IFA website to homepages of similar organizations and noted that comparable institutions have approx. 10 times more hits on their websites. Therefore, all PPs were asked to be more active in dissemination and communication activities.

### **4. Presentation of WP7 (aws)**

- Roswitha Mosburger presented the training activities that have been carried out: Training plan completed, ITC Patent and License Management (PLM) in Vienna, Train-the-trainer (TTT) seminars in FYROM and Serbia, Study visits in Austria and Italy. The first two internships are currently running in aws (for the Croatian and for the Serbian trainee).
- The following capacity building activities are still pending: TTT in Croatia (spring 2011), ITC on Project Assessment in Vienna (June 2011), third internship for Macedonian trainee in aws (from summer 2011). Concerning the ITC, the needs of the PPs will be collected, but generally, the focus will be on new instruments (and the patent fund, as far as not already covered by the ITC on PLM in Vienna).
- Francesco Cannatelli said that Finlombarda – although they are not participating in WP5 and therefore didn't take part in the ITC on PLM – would also be interested in patent and license management issues and the outcomes and results of WP5.

### **5. Presentation of WP4 (Finlombarda)**

- It was agreed that Technical Meetings should be held with the respective PPs for each of the three instruments (Seed Fund, Innovation Support Programme, Metadistretti). The locations of the meetings will be decided according to who shall be invited (stakeholders) and whether there should be given more detailed information about the instruments by the IFA, which is already experienced in using and providing the instrument. The purpose of these meetings furthermore is to decide on the countries and timing of the road shows.
- Roswitha Mosburger made clear that max. 3 regions should implement a new instrument in the framework of the project. Finlombarda was asked to develop clear criteria for the selection of these regions, such as availability of funding or commitment of stakeholders and relevant actors. The criteria should reflect the actual possibility of implementing the new instruments within the timeframe of the project. Thereby, where it makes sense, it is of course possible to modify the existing instruments according to the specific needs of a country or region. It was agreed that Francesco Cannatelli will send out the criteria to all PPs in order to check their fulfillment. The timeframe for that will be approximately beginning of 2011.
- A question was raised on the purpose and functioning of the roadshows. Francesco Cannatelli explained that the goal was to raise funds for the new instruments. Therefore, it will be important to provide information that allows the potential investors / stakeholders to make their funding decisions. Moreover, through the roadshows, support for the implementation of the new instruments should also be gained and / or strengthened on a political level. Roswitha Mosburger added that it is also important to involve commercial banks in the roadshows.

### **6. Presentation of WP6 (Regione Veneto / Veneto Innovazione)**

- Ivan Boesso reported that the questionnaires for the detailed assessment of the IPA countries' needs for new institutions have been finalized. Initial considerations imply that in Croatia (Varazdin county), currently no direct need for a new institution was observed, since existing structures could be used to support innovation in SMEs. In FYROM, the situation is different since the national innovation strategy needs to be enforced, but the required institutions are (partly) not in place or missing at all. In Serbia (Vojvodina province), a new institution is not urgently needed, however the possibility and the interest in setting up a new department focusing on innovation in one of the existing SME support institutions do exist. Roswitha Mosburger pointed out that – if this new department should also be involved with the handling of the Seed Fund (as selected by RDA



Programme co-funded by the  
EUROPEAN UNION



Banat within WP4) – it would need to have a banking license. She highlighted that the agency with the strongest focus on innovation should be supported and that these needs should be discussed at the upcoming meetings.

- After that, Ivan Boesso explained the next steps within the WP: On the basis of the needs assessment and the decision where the new institution will be implemented, the legal and operational framework of the new institution as well as the portfolio of instruments will be drafted by Veneto Innovazione. The marketing activities will go in parallel.
- Ljupka Mitrinavska said that the National Center for Development of Innovation and National Learning (NCDIEL) in FYROM was established in 2009, and could still be used as a basis for the new institution within SEE IFA. NCDIEL has already a cooperation basis with the Macedonian Development Bank, which could serve as operating institution in the case of the adoption of the ISP, which was chosen as a new instrument by the FYROM PP.
- It was also argued that some PP countries might be faced with changes in their political environment, due to upcoming elections (eg Croatia, Bulgaria) and / or an instable political situation in general (eg. FYROM). These factors should also be taken into consideration, since public funding decisions might be affected.

### **7. Next steps & time plan**

- The timeplan for the coming months was discussed and modified. It will be sent out to all PPs together with the minutes.
- Concerning the ITC on project assessment to be carried out in June 2011 for IFA staff in Vienna, the contents will be planned according to the new instruments and institutions. In general, the main focus will be on innovation and on risk assessment, eg for the Seed Fund, the Innovation Support Programme / guarantees. It will also involve management issues, state aid and monitoring of institutions and programmes. Other general topics would include procedures and processes, legal requirements, and collaboration with the EC. The duration will be approx. 4 days. A questionnaire to assess the needs for the ITC will be sent out by aws to all PPs with sufficient anticipation to obtain their input for the design of the training programme. The questionnaire should be drafted by aws together with Finlombarda and Veneto Innovazione. Ljupka Mitrinavska proposed to split into smaller groups for the instrument specific training. Zoran Eremic suggested to include marketing into the training programme. It was highlighted that the training will be open to all PPs, not only to those who will implement a new instrument within the framework of the project.

### **8. Activities & Results and Validation Workshop WP5 (aws)**

- After the lunch break, Arina Tkacheva presented the activities and results of WP5 and moderated a very active validation workshop. The flipchart records will be delivered along with the minutes as separate pdf-file.
- Viorel Vulturescu asked if the patent fund could be backed by a guarantee fund. Arina Tkacheva and Roswitha Mosburger answered that this could be considered, however further clarification would be needed.
- Dr. Burian congratulated to the feasibility study and noted that such a fund is really needed.