



GUIDELINES & RECOMMENDATIONS MANUAL (Activity 2.5)

GUIDELINES & RECOMMENDATIONS

Work package 3 (“WP3”) – The Analysis

Guidelines

WP3 was the first work package of the content-related work packages of the SEE-IFA-Network project. In the beginning, the set-up of the methodological framework for the analysis related to relevant EU policies and structural funds support was foreseen: here the contents of the country analyses and good practice models were defined. A standardised template for country reports (*2.5 WP3 GUIDELINE_1_Country report (template)*) was designed and elaborated by the WP3-leader (incorporating input from the LP as well as other PPs), to ensure that relevant information regarding the respective innovation environments as well as programs, policies, instruments and funding within these environments would be collected.

A thorough need and gaps analysis in all ERDF and IPA countries of the SEE program area (14 countries) was then carried out (Member States and IPA countries were differentiated), with PPs producing country studies and analysing good practices using the country report template. Finally, the 14 country studies were collected, to be harmonised and, based on the foreseen structure of the synthesis report (*2.5 WP3 GUIDELINE_2 Table of content for synthesis of country studies*), processed further to result in the synthesis report. It has to be emphasised that the project collected country studies even for countries which are not members of the consortium; this was done in order to have a complete view on the innovation landscape at SEE-level. The synthesis report, designed to give an overview of SME and innovation support needs in the SEE region and thus forming a basis for WPs 4, 6 and 7, was eventually revised for publication and published on the project website.

Recommendations

The adopted methodology was good to obtain an overall picture of the innovation environments of the participating countries. However, it would have been more effective to involve the WP4-leader in the design of the WP3 methodology, in order to better fulfil the expectations regarding WP4 and to optimally provide the needed data and information for designing the instruments.

For similar (future) challenges, more comprehensive documents providing more precise information could be sent to PPs (e.g. exactly stating what is meant with “S”, “W”, “O”, “T”), in order to have the same understanding of all partners and facilitate the production of a synthesis.

Moreover, a “troika” made up of the WP-leader (in this case WP3-leader), the “next” WP-leader (in this case WP4-leader) and the LP is recommended, to optimise the process and make it more effective.

Attachments

- *2.5 WP3 GUIDELINE_1_Country report (template)*
- *2.5 WP3 GUIDELINE_2 Table of content for synthesis of country studies*



Work package 4 (“WP4”) – The Instruments

Guidelines

WP4 of the SEE-IFA project started with the identification of transferable financial instruments aimed at sustaining innovation in SMEs in the SEE area and the creation of a new financial instrument devoted to the same purpose. The activity started off from the panel of instruments described by the partners in WP3. The instruments, with the collaboration of all partners, were inserted in a double entry table (the assessment grid *2.5 WP4 GUIDELINE_1_Assessment grid (template)*), to display the main features of each instrument. Through this process it was possible to have a general look at all instruments and divide them into three different clusters which were of particular interest to the partnership: instruments for start-ups, instruments for mature companies, instruments for developing innovation networks.

The instruments were ranked on the basis of criteria agreed upon by the partnership. Each partner had the possibility of attributing, after meeting with the respective stakeholders, a specific score to the individual criteria. The same process was used for assessing country needs. Both the needs and the evaluation criteria's scoring tables can be seen in the assessment grid. Through the grid it was further possible to propose a match between the individual instruments and each country (*2.5 WP4 GUIDELINE_2_Country selection criteria for instruments*).

After each country confirmed that the selected instrument was in line with its expectations, a pre-feasibility study for each partner was prepared in order to evaluate the possible impacts of the application of the instrument in the country/region. The general structure of the pre-feasibility study (*2.5 WP4 GUIDELINE_3_Selection of instruments*) was based on:

- a description of the target country/region and its needs
- a description of the proposed instrument and some hypothesis regarding the possible implementation in the country
- a section with the results of the matching between the two above-mentioned sections
- a section with conclusion and recommendations.

Upon conclusion of the pre-feasibility study, various countries were selected for the implementation phase. The countries/regions were selected for this phase on the basis of the outcome of the pre-feasibility study and of a specific list of criteria (*2.5 WP4 GUIDELINE_4_Feasibility study structure (draft)*).

Recommendations

The overall goal of WP4 is the implementation of new financial instruments to support innovation programs regarding SMEs in SEE countries. This is a very ambitious goal where success depends on several factors, in some cases irrespective of the will and commitment of project partners. Therefore, regarding the realization of the final output of WP4, an important recommendation can be made: in order to reach the WP goal in the most efficient way, it is of key importance to strongly involve the regional/national stakeholders who have the power to make relevant decisions, in the project from the very beginning. Their involvement from the start of the project and during the whole process will constitute the necessary condition to be able to implement a financial instrument. “Key stakeholders” (with regard to the implementation of a financial instrument) refers to political authorities in charge of making decisions, especially for instruments which are not grants (which have the highest impact on the market) as well as the financial institutions that will be in charge of the management of the new instrument.

A second recommendation is the proposal of instrument suitable for the partner involved in the project. It is of utmost importance to propose instrument tailored to the target partner or target area rather than



for the efficiency of the instrument. Some of the instruments selected were rather complex and sophisticated, whilst some of the partners were not skilled enough for managing such products or the target area was too small to provide a good project pipeline for such instruments. The implementation phase becomes less complicated if the proposed instrument can be directly implemented in the target area (without enlarging it in order to achieve a critical mass) or managed directly by the partner (without the involvement of too many other external entities).

Attachments

- *2.5 WP4 GUIDELINE_1_Assessment grid (template)*
- *2.5 WP4 GUIDELINE_2_Country selection criteria for instruments*
- *2.5 WP4 GUIDELINE_3_Selection of instruments*
- *2.5 WP4 GUIDELINE_4_Feasibility study structure (draft)*

Work package 5 (“WP5”) – The Fund

Guidelines

The objective of WP5 was to elaborate on the feasibility of a cross-border patent fund for the SEE region. To a large extent, and independent from the other work packages, WP5 started with a desktop research (*2.5 WP5 GUIDELINE_1_Desktop research (template)*) that delivered a basic overview of status-quo policies in the area of intellectual property rights, with emphasis on technology transfer and related investment funds in the participating countries. In addition, more than 90 interviews were conducted in 7 countries by the means of a semi-standardised questionnaire (*2.5 WP5 GUIDELINE_2_Demand analysis_ Interview introduction & questionnaire*).

On that basis, the WP-Leader invited 3 IP-fund experts for a workshop, in order to work out an appropriate SEE.IP-fund concept (*2.5 WP5 GUIDELINE_4_IP fund concept*), which then was subsequently incorporated in the feasibility study (*2.5 WP5 GUIDELINE_3_Feasibility study structure & overview*). Consequently the fund concept was presented to public and private stakeholders, in order to assess the availability of funding for such a SEE.IP-fund (*2.5 WP5 GUIDELINE_5_Assessment of funds availability (template)*). As a final effort the partners involved in WP5 collected pilot technologies in their respective countries in order to have these assessed by an external technology expert (*2.5 WP5 GUIDELINE_6_Pilot studies_ Information brochure, 2.5 WP5 GUIDELINE_7_Pilot studies_ Selection criteria, 2.5 WP5 GUIDELINE_8_Pilot studies_ Project information collection template*). The main aim was to simulate the application and selection process of a fictitious fund, with the fund posing the question whether (or not) it would invest in a certain technology (*2.5 WP5 GUIDELINE_9_Overview of the assessment of the pilot studies*).

Recommendations

Dealing with IP-funds was quite a new issue for almost all partners involved in WP5. Therefore one of the main positive results was the significant growth in knowledge, in particular during the desktop research, the interviews and the expert workshop. The SEE.IP-fund concept itself was properly elaborated with the help of IP-fund experts and basically the concept chosen – a technology development fund – can be deemed to be the appropriate model for the SEE region. However, when it came to the assessment of the availability of funds, two main obstacles appeared. First of all, the impact of the financial crisis made it difficult to go into deeper discussion with stakeholders with regard to new approaches, in particular when they are proposing financial instruments based on IP. Second of all, a feasibility concept appeared not to be entirely the appropriate format for approaching potential investors. It is therefore recommended to future similar initiatives to elaborate an investment prospectus (which definitely went beyond the scope of the SEE-IFA project). Finally, the technology

assessments were seen as an exercise with real added value, not only for the participating partners but also for the supplying companies. Obviously in this respect WP5 has touched a vital need of the SMEs and could be considered for future projects. In general there is an ongoing discussion on IP-funds all over Europe (e.g. within the EIF) to which WP5 has been contributing relevant knowledge.

Attachments

- *2.5 WP5 GUIDELINE_1_Desktop research (template)*
- *2.5 WP5 GUIDELINE_2_Demand analysis_Interview introduction & questionnaire*
- *2.5 WP5 GUIDELINE_3_Feasibility study structure & overview*
- *2.5 WP5 GUIDELINE_4_IP fund concept*
- *2.5 WP5 GUIDELINE_5_Assessment of funds availability (template)*
- *2.5 WP5 GUIDELINE_6_Pilot studies_Information brochure*
- *2.5 WP5 GUIDELINE_7_Pilot studies_Selection criteria*
- *2.5 WP5 GUIDELINE_8_Pilot studies_Project information collection template*
- *2.5 WP5 GUIDELINE_9_Overview of the assesment of the pilot studies*

Work package 6 (“WP6”) – The Agency

Guidelines

WP6 dealt with the provision of concrete insights into the process of setting up new innovation & finance agencies (“IFAs”) and included different activities, ranging from the assessment of countries’ needs to the description of models and definition of portfolios.

In order to assess the PPs’ (IPA PPs’) needs, as a first step the country studies developed in WP3 were taken into account. With the aim to enrich the available information and obtain feedback from the relevant players, a questionnaire (*2.5 WP6 GUIDELINE_1_Interview guide*) was then set up and distributed to the PPs. Meetings or telephone interviews were then arranged by the PPs in order to fill the questionnaires.

In addition, specific workshops were organised by the IPA PPs, with the LP and the WP6-leader attending together with relevant local innovation actors. The workshops were organised as interactive sessions during which the project goals as well as the WP6 methodology were presented, and a moderated discussion was stimulated in order to collect points of view, experiences and expectations. This enabled the preparation of a structured document (*2.5 WP6 GUIDELINE_2_Structure needs assessment*) that was used as a guide for the following discussions.

A detailed profile of major IFA models was prepared and discussed with PPs, leading to a suitable framework being defined for the individual IPA countries on the basis of the current local situations, the specific needs highlighted and the feedback from local stakeholders gathered during the workshops.

The final task entailed exploring and defining the portfolio of services the new agencies should incorporate and provide.

In one country, some further steps were taken in order to upgrade the role of the already established agency; support was provided to help in the setting up a marketing strategy for the agency. In this way, a detailed document could then be prepared (*2.5 WP6 GUIDELINE_3_NCDIEL business plan structure*), describing the business plan for the further development of the agency.

Recommendations

The main challenge of WP6 was to adapt possible solutions to the different local conditions of the involved IPA PPs. Moreover, the setting up of a new IFA today is generally a demanding task due to changing conditions and varying economic structures. For this reason, the endeavour was first to involve the local stakeholders in setting the scene, and then to deepen the subject with the local PPs who were the most interested in having the process continue and attain valuable results.

The following recommendations can furthermore be made regarding the WP6 process as a whole:

- information collected needs to be focused on the specific topic “supporting research and innovation”
- the main stakeholders should be involved from the very beginning of the process and regularly updated with regard to following phases/steps;
- the IFA model need not be unique/fully new: the solution implemented might include the integration of existing service providers, the setting up of platforms linking local stakeholders, as well as the upgrading of existing organisations rather than creating new institutions from scratch;
- it is a tedious process: it takes a lot of time and the necessary political support is crucial to reach the final objectives.

Attachments

- *2.5 WP6 GUIDELINE_1_Interview guide*
- *2.5 WP6 GUIDELINE_2_Structure needs assessment*
- *2.5 WP6 GUIDELINE_3_NCDIEL business plan structure*

Work package 7 (“WP7”) – The Training

Guidelines

WP7 started parallel to WP3, with the analysis of training needs derived from the country reports in WP3. A training concept was then developed by the LP, in cooperation with the PPs (*2.5 WP7 GUIDELINE_1_Training concept*). Moreover, a matrix with specific fields of financial and non-financial (legal, institutional, risk-related, etc.) general topics was developed by the LP, where the (IPA) PPs filled in concrete needs and suggestions (*2.5 WP7 GUIDELINE_2_Training demand matrix*) especially with respect to the programs of the Intensive Training Courses (“ITC”s).

The 1st training event, the ITC for Patent & Licence Management (“PLM”), took place in Vienna in May 2010, in accordance with the program *2.5 WP7 GUIDELINE_3_Training program ITC (example PLM)*. Soon after, in June 2010, the first Train-the-Trainer (“TTT”) seminar was carried out in Skopje. The program (*2.5 WP7 GUIDELINE_4_Training program TTT (example F.Y.R.O.M.)*) was developed together with the Macedonian PP (as it was also done together with the local PP for the other TTTs in Zrenjanin and Varazdin) and contained international, general and local topics of innovation finance, support and development. The latter was provided by local trainers, recommended by the local PP and selected together with the LP (based on the CVs and costs). All trainings were evaluated by an evaluation questionnaire in order to find out to what extent the needs and expectations were met (*2.5 WP7 GUIDELINE_5_Evaluation questionnaire*).

The programs of the Study visits in Vienna (June 2010) and in Milan and Venice (October 2010) were based on the training concept and also involved external trainers, institutions and excursions to provide a broad view on the methods and possibilities of innovation support in the most-developed PPs countries Austria and Italy (e.g. Italian schedule: *2.5 WP7 GUIDELINE_6_Schedule Study visit (example ITALY)*).

In July 2010 the first internship (at the LP) commenced, with the first trainee coming from the Croatian development agency AZRA. The trainees from Serbia and F.Y.R.O.M. also had their internships at the LP. For each of the trainees a training concept was developed, based on the needs of the respective PP and the planned further involvement of the trainee (*2.5 WP7 GUIDELINE_7_Training concept internship (example trainee from F.Y.R.O.M.)*). The trainees wrote monthly reviews on what they done/worked, as well as a final report on their internship at the end of the respective period.

Recommendations

It was important to have the training demand matrix in addition to the country reports, since this allowed to follow concrete needs and wishes of the (IPA) PPs. Also the development of the TTT programs together with the local PPs and local trainers was an advantage, since it made the trainings more comprehensive from the point of view of international collaboration and experience. However, it would have been good to have a more constant attendance of trainees (many of the external trainees stayed for just half a day, depending on their availability), which would have allowed for the chance to conclude and discuss the contents as a whole.

Concerning the ITC on Project Assessment, the experience was that there was some overlapping and redundancy with regard to the Study visit in Vienna concerning participants and topics. Therefore it can be recommended to either combine the two trainings, restrict participants to just one of the events, or not to provide both training types.

For the internship it can be recommended to offer language courses parallel to the internship and to have periodical follow-up with trainees and institutions after the training has ended, in order to use the good contacts and especially the knowledge about instruments and institutional specialities for further collaboration.

Attachments

- *2.5 WP7 GUIDELINE_1_Training concept*
 - *2.5 WP7 GUIDELINE_2_Training demand matrix*
 - *2.5 WP7 GUIDELINE_3_Training program ITC (example PLM)*
 - *2.5 WP7 GUIDELINE_4_Training program TTT (example F.Y.R.O.M.)*
 - *2.5 WP7 GUIDELINE_5_Evaluation questionnaire*
 - *2.5 WP7 GUIDELINE_6_Schedule Study visit (example ITALY)*
 - *2.5 WP7 GUIDELINE_7_Training concept internship (example trainee from F.Y.R.O.M.)*
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