
Enabling Private Sector Development in the Western Balkans 2008-2010

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SME Agencies, Governments, Universities, Business Support Organisations and SPARK

Regional cooperation is one of the key prerequisites for the stabilisation and EU association processes to move forward in the Western Balkans. The implementing partner institutions in this project will focus on shared challenges in the field of Private Sector Development. It will build their capacity to jointly tackle these challenges on a regional level. This initiative builds on achievements over the last 3 years in the Private Sector Development Network 2006-2008.

The main project objective is to foster the regionalisation of existing economic development oriented institutions and their activities and the development of new regional economic initiatives. This will be achieved through following:

SME Agencies, Trade Fairs and EU Days

Representatives of the South East Europe SME Agencies all agreed to form a regional SME Association to structure cooperation that has existed informally between them under the PSD network over the last three years. Two of the main activities the agencies will be implementing together are the regionalisation of their existing EU Days and Trade Fairs. The SME Agency in Belgrade is lead implementation partner.

Serbian SME Development Agency and SPARK signed the MoU ([Read more...](#))

Preparatory meeting among SME Development Agencies from Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo and Serbia was held on 17th November 2009 in Podgorica. During the meeting representatives from the SME Development Agencies actively discussed about the Establishment of SEE SME Association and future Statute of the Association. The Association will be focused on formalization of already existing informal network among 4 SME development agencies, and creation of a legal basis for regional economic cooperation, support to SME development, strengthening of the cooperation between SMEs and project development. The Association will be voluntary, nongovernmental, non for profit organization. Membership will be open for any other organization from the Western Balkans, SEE region and further active in the field of SME, entrepreneurship and private sector development.

EU Day Conference in Skopje, was organised from 6 till 8 May 2009 by European Business Association, Government of Macedonia, City of Skopje, University of St. Cyril and Methodius and many other local and national organisations and agencies ([Read more...](#))

Training Business Champions Conference was organized in Skopje, Macedonia on 11 and 12 May 2010. Conference was part of Macedonian celebration of EU SME week which lasted from 07 until 18 May 2010. ([Read more](#)).

Global Entrepreneurship Day in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Within the World Global Entrepreneurship Day celebration in Bosnia and Herzegovina 16 April 2010, SPARK supported the Entrepreneurship Development Center (University of Tuzla) in organization of the Round table “The importance of entrepreneurship in overcoming the economic crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina”. The Round table provided the room for discussion between policy

makers, University academics, economic analysts and researchers from B&H, Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Croatia, in order to determine the level of entrepreneurship development as well as its impact in overcoming the economic crisis. Conclusions made during the discussions will be sent to policy makers in Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to foster the economic recovery of the country. In addition, the Round table aims to raise awareness on importance of entrepreneurship development as a tool for alleviating the economic crisis effects. (Read more)

EU SME week in Kosovo, 14 May 2010- Celebration of EU SME Week in Kosovo was labeled with the Conference "Development of SME’s in the Western Balkan region” held on 14 May 2010. Development of SME’s in the Western Balkan region conference gather organizations and stakeholders involved and responsible for SME and entrepreneurship development and provided ample opportunities for the speakers and audience in three panels to discuss on following: 1) development of Kosovo SME’s; 2) regional development and economic cooperation and 3) regional economic cooperation between Western Balkans and EU. During the conference B2B meetings were held between local and international businesses as well.

University of Novi Sad was host of third International Conference on Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Regional Development from 27-29 May 2010. ICEIRD conference was addressed at national and regional government representatives in all countries of South-East Europe, who are involved in the process of policy making in the area of Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Regional Development. Special target group were enterprises, as well as non-governmental organizations active in conference topics. (Read more)

Regional MA Programme and Bachelor Course in Entrepreneurship

The establishment of the Regional Master program and Bachelor course in Entrepreneurship is designed to build upon the results of the previous programme in stimulating entrepreneurial education and making these results sustainable by institutionalising them in formal educational programmes. Importantly, it will institutionalise progress made in business education and the role of internships to date. As agreed by partners, the University of Novi Sad - the UNESCO Chair for Entrepreneurial Studies will host the Regional MA Programme in Entrepreneurship and take a leading role in developing the BA courses.

Development of training materials and design of the regional MA programme in Entrepreneurship started with the first workshop organised by the UNESCO Chair for Entrepreneurial Studies of University of Novi Sad, 20-23 March 2009 (Read more).

Regional Master Course on Entrepreneurship started on 30th October at the University of Novi Sad. The MA course attends 27 students from the Southeast Europe region. The opening lectures were focused on Entrepreneurial Finances and provided insight to: Corporate governance in SME; Financial reports; Capital budgeting; Long term financing; Short term financing; Risk management ; Banks and START UP financing. Second module will be focused on Human Resources.

Development of BA course in Entrepreneurship at partner Universities (read more).

Institutional Capacity Building

All the partner institutions that will be implementing the project are facing one common daunting challenge: building up the capacity of their institutions to meet the growing challenges and expectations placed before them. All local partners have indicated the need in building the capacity of their staff to face up to these challenges and therefore, a capacity building component is designed to directly contribute to the main aim of this proposal: to make results attained to date sustainable and strongly embedded in implementing local institutions.

First regional capacity training for project participating staff was organised in Ohrid on "EU project development and funding opportunities under IPA".

Under institutional capacity building component Universities of Zenica, Tuzla, Skopje, Bitola and Novi Sad agreed to join capacities and submit joint TEMPUS project proposal.

Project proposal "Advanced Master Course in Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management" was submitted under TEMPUS IV, III Call for proposals in a joint consortium of University of Novi Sad, University of Tuzla, University of Zenica, University of Bitola and University of Skopje, together with the University of Nis. International partners are Nyenrode University (NL); University Paderborn (D); Politehnica University of Bucharest (RO) and SPARK (NL). The project leader is University of Novi Sad - UNESCO Chair on Entrepreneurship Education.

Visit [Transparency](#) to see the financial information for this project.