

## **"GO NETWORK" PROJECT**

### **WORK PACKAGE 3 - 1<sup>ST</sup> GENERAL MEETING**

December 22nd, 2004  
Vienna

Meeting Room- 5th Floor  
Austria Wirtschaftsservice GmbH  
Ungargasse 37 – 1030 Vienna

### **MINUTES**

#### **LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

<b>PROJECT PARTNERS</b>	
<b>Austria Wirtschaftsservice - AWS (A)</b>	Roswitha Mosburger
	Doris Benedicter
<b>Veneto Region (IT)</b>	Cleofe Di Maggio
	Antonio Ferrari
<b>Interconfidi Nord Est (IT)</b>	Nicola Trevisan
<b>Finest (IT)</b>	Alessandor Morelli
<b>Istrian Development Agency (HR)</b>	Boris Miletic
<b>National Association of Small and Medium-sized Business (BG)</b>	Eleonora Negulova-Alexova
	Plamen Patchev
<b>MISSING PARTNERS (WP)</b>	
<b>Umbria Region (IT) – GEPAFIN</b>	
<b>Abruzzo Region (IT)</b>	
<b>Marshal'office of the Podlaskie Voivodship (PL)</b>	
<b>GUESTS</b>	
<b>FINSYS Consulting Company (BG)</b>	Nikola Hristovich
	Ivanka Hristovich

### **MEETING's OBJECTIVES**

The aim of this first WP3 General Meeting is to open the Work Package 3 by

- Selecting the target country for the implementation of the Pilot Project (action 3.1) and to
- Discuss the next steps to be taken in the work package with the partners involved

### **MEETING's RESULTS**

After a brief welcome to the participants of the meeting Doris Benedicter of AWS, WP3 Leader, summarised the meeting's agenda and invited the partners representing the 3 countries that have already been short listed for the implementation of a pilot project, namely Serbia, Croatia and Bulgaria, to give a short summary of the facts of the country reports.

**Mr. Morelli** from Finest gave a short presentation of the situation in **Serbia and Montenegro**, concluding that

- there would be a strong demand for a functioning CGO
- that there are many different initiatives on provincial and local level
- the legal environment is in general very difficult and virtually no regulations for CGOs exist
- the economic situation in general in Serbia is still very difficult.

**Mr. Miletic** from IDA gave a short summary on the status quo in **Croatia**, were

- 1 Credit Guarantee Organisation on the national level exists but is not functioning very well
- therefore a new initiative on the regional level, promoted by IDA, is planned to start business in 2005 but would need support, especially know how from existing CGOs
- the general conditions in Croatia would be very favourable for the realisation of the pilot project (strong growth of economy, growth of need for SME financing, functioning legal framework).

**Mr. Patchev** speaking for the National Association of Small and Medium-sized Business gave a presentation of the **Bulgarian** situation, stating that

- the SME sector plays an important role in Bulgaria and that there is high demand for SME financing means
- there would be strong institutional support for the implementation of a pilot CGO as the one national guarantee fund is currently not working
- with a view to the envisaged accession of Bulgaria to the EU the legal system has already been reformed and is constantly aligned to EU standards
- with the National Association of Small and Medium-sized Business a possible local partner is already identified and financial means for the guarantee funds would be available.

The summaries of the situation in the three short listed countries are discussed by the project partners present at the meeting:

**Mrs. Mosburger** states that in her opinion the initial situation for the realisation of a pilot project in Serbia and Montenegro is the least favourable. On the one hand the legal situation is not clear.

What is even more important is, that in this country it would be necessary to identify first of all a possible partner for the realisation of the pilot project, as there are many different initiatives existing. This additional selection process, which was not foreseen in the project proposal, would exceed the limited resources of the project.

**Mr. Morelli** says that all three countries presented offer advantages and disadvantages for the realisation of a pilot project and that it should be discussed first of all how the term pilot project has to be interpreted. An important question would be, if the pilot project should be implemented on a national or a local level. Mr. Morelli states that a pilot project on a local level in Serbia could have high impact in the situation of the whole country, as it might be used as a blue print for other CGOs.

**Mrs. Mosburger** says that the pilot project has been defined in the project proposal and that in WP 3 no additional selection process was foreseen.

**Mr. Trevisan** agrees that time and resources are limited and that therefore the realisation of a pilot project in Serbia would not be possible during the time table foreseen in the project proposal as it would be necessary to select the most appropriate partner institution for a co-operation first of all, which would consume additional time. Mr. Trevisan also calls the attention of the project partners to training facilities that will be provided in WP1 and that will be used for CADSES countries that are not selected for the pilot project but can be supported by means of know how transfer and training.

**Mr. Patchev** stresses again that as concerns Bulgaria a partner for the realisation of the pilot project as well as the necessary infrastructure is already available.

**Mr. Miletic** explains that IDA would be very interested in the co-operation but can not promise that the implementation of the pilot project will also have effect on the national level in Croatia as this will depend on the willingness of the national guarantee organisation.

**Mr. Trevisan** summarises that at the beginning of the meeting 3 countries were short listed. Although all three countries offer different advantages and disadvantages for the realisation of the pilot project, Serbia and Montenegro is clearly not at the same level than the other two candidates. The next step should therefore be to assess more closely the situation in the two other countries, namely Croatia and Bulgaria.

The other partners agree to this suggestion. **Mrs. Mosburger** asks the representatives of the two countries to prepare a short summary (1 to 2 pages) of the specific needs of the two countries that should be met with the implementation of the pilot project by the end of January. The local capacities and resources of the eligible countries will then be assessed in the course of a visit of the WP3 lead partner to these countries.

**Mrs. Benedicter** summarises the next steps to be taken according to the work package plan. The WP partners Umbria Region Abbruzzo Region and Poland did not answer to the communication for the First WP 3 Meeting and it must thus be clarified, if these partners will work for the work package or if their tasks have to be allocated to other project partners or a subcontractor.

**Mr. Trevisan** states that he will get in contact with the partners in question and get in touch with AWS about the possible re-allocation of the resources as soon as possible.

The next steps for work package 3 will be:

- 3.1.1 Completion of the selection process for the implementation of the pilot project
- 3.1.2. Assessment of the competences and resources in the target country
- 3.1.3. Definition of the detailed work plan