



Newsletter

2/2017

Let microfinance make the change!

Microfinance is not only a financial instrument, but a complex tool which can contribute to a high level of sustainable employment, encourage new businesses, self-employment and stimulate economic growth on local level. Therefore, it is in the public interest that microfinance schemes should be available and easily accessible for the target groups. Many European countries dedicate public funds to finance microcredit programmes; and such schemes have already proved their efficiency and sustainability.

Why should governments allocate public funds for microfinance programmes?

What are the benefits of microfinance to the target groups?

What are the differences between non-profit microfinance and bank loans?

The project “ATM for SMEs” is aiming at giving comprehensible answers to these questions and also showing the ways how decision makers can exploit the potential of non-profit microfinance schemes.

The 2 most important outputs of the project: Project film and Study

Project film

– featuring real clients and showing the benefits of microfinance

The aim of the film is to show the experiences of the project to the decision makers, in a comprehensive way.

The film follows 3 main topics:

- Basic knowledge on microfinance to understand the message that we want to transfer
- Good practices, relevant experiences and recommendations shared during the project implementation
- Real client stories, showing the benefits of microfinance from the clients’ point of view, in an emotional way



During the video recordings of the “Basic knowledge on microfinance” part



The movie is being shot using the latest technology and is following a professional scenario, with regard to the following:

- The length of the project movie is between 30 and 60 minutes, depending on the length of the interviews
- The interviews were recorded in local language to outline the transnational feature of the project. The final version will be English speaking, with subtitles where relevant.



Click on the picture to play the work videos of the video recordings in Offenbach and Oslo

The project video follows the important events of the “ATM for SMEs” project. It contains interviews of project partners and real clients who tell how microfinance helped them moving forward. The video clearly demonstrates that microcredit is the only way out from the financial exclusion and can literally change the life of the entrepreneurs who run small businesses.

Release date: September 2018

Study

– Utilization of public funds in microfinance



The comparative study will analyse the legal framework of microfinancing in the participating regions, the utilization of public funds in microfinance programmes and the implementation of the European provisions towards microfinance and the so-called “Roman directives” (common recommendations for non-profit microcredit providers). The study will also formulate proposals towards decision makers on how to run microfinance schemes. (committee)

Release date: December 2017

Project background

The “ATM for SMEs” project is implemented in the framework of the INTERREG EUROPE programme. The aim of the project is to prevent the lack of access to credit and financial exclusion, which represents a serious obstacle to business creation, through the exchange of local policies, innovative solutions and good practices.

The "ATM for SME"s consortium is lead by Fejér Enterprise Agency (HU), and is characterized by a balanced proportion of managing authorities and microfinance institutions, and a European level advisory partner.

Project information

Number of partners: 10

Countries involved: Hungary, Germany, Poland, Italy, Spain, Norway, Croatia, Belgium

Main outputs: 9 regional action plans, 6 study trips, 9 improved policies, 6 new projects generated

Project duration: 4/2016 – 3/2021

ERDF funding: 1.341.720 €



Recently happened: study trip in Cagliari

The meeting was hosted by project partner Autonomous Region of Sardinia - Regional Department for Planning in Cagliari, Italy. The 3-day meeting included a policy exchange seminar, exchange of good practices and a steering group meeting.

The study trip started with a welcome speech by Mr. **Franco Ventroni (Coordinator of the Territorial Cooperation Group, Sardinia Region)**, followed by an introduction by **Mr. Raffaele Paci (Vice President, Sardinia Region)** who stressed the relevance of the project for the social and economic development of the territory, in particular with reference to those groups with major difficulties in accessing credit. He also recalled the other initiatives the Sardinia region has promoted in the field, wishing new opportunities to arise from the ATM for SMEs project.



The event focused on the partners' Good Practices referring to the topic "Social outreach of microfinance and mitigating negative effects of financial exclusion" and an afternoon session dedicated to valuable experiences in Sardinia from the ATM Local Stakeholders Group.

Local events

**Stakeholder meeting in Székesfehérvár, Hungary
organized by Fejér Enterprise Agency on 09/03/2017**



The stakeholder partners learned a lot about the different good practices which were presented by the project partners in Offenbach. Péter Vonnák (Business Development Manager of FEA) introduced good practices from KIZ SINNOVA and CEEI-Burgos. The key learning of the meeting was that the micro-finance programs need public support in order to reach the higher social impact.

**Stakeholder meeting in Székesfehérvár, Hungary
organized by Fejér Enterprise Agency on 11/09/2017**



The purpose of the event was the presentation of the Oslo Study Trip. The main topic was the "Social and technological innovation in microfinance (contributing to the implementation of Digital Agenda For Europe)." The stakeholder members got to know the Credinfo, that is a complex microcredit information system which serves both the clients and the MFIs. The most important functions of the Credinfo are: on-line loan application and credit assessment modules.

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