

STOB regions Interreg Europe

STOB Regions Action Plan workshop & wrap-up meeting report

September 16th 2019, Palma de Mallorca, Spain

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8.11.2019

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Overview

The Action plan workshop and wrap-up meeting for phase I of the STOB regions project took place on 16th September 2019, in Palma de Mallorca, Spain. The workshop was dedicated to further **development and peer review of partners' action plan concepts and the RSS guidebook**. The event was attended by all project partners expect for one.

Brief from STOB regions' project application

The objective of semester 6 is to finalise the regional action plans, to discuss the draft with stakeholders and start the implementation phase. The partners will meet for the last time to wrap up and close phase I and prepare the activities for phase 2. The 6th Steering group meeting will take place back-to-back with the final conference.

Meeting Itinerary – Action plan review workshop 16th September 2019

Location: Melia Palma Bay, Calle Fuster 4, 07015 Palma de Mallorca

09.00 – 09.15 Registration

09.15 – 09.30 Welcome and brief introduction about the workshop

The workshop was opened by the advisory partner, Berlin School of Economics and Law, providing the agenda for the day and presenting the assessment framework for the development of successful regional action plans. Six key points were introduced to assess and benchmark each region for more effective regional action plans aimed at improving regional policies supporting business transfer and succession:

1. Improvable (policy improvement)
2. Advisable
3. Implementable
4. Additionality (learning transfer)
5. Convincing
6. Logical (linking the project to action plan)

In addition, the expectations of the JTS regarding the action plans; clarification process, time scales, requirements were explained to the partners. The objectives were reiterated:

- Improve the policy instruments that are addressed in each region
- actions can refer to other relevant policy instruments if needed
- find new or improved methods to support BT
- Actions have to be related to project activities, especially **interregional cooperation**:

- Good Practices¹
- SWOT analyses²
- Recommendations

Reminder of inclusion of the detailed planning of key activities within the action plan:

- Description of the activity
- Timeline
- People / institutions involved and their roles
- Responsibilities
- Resources / costs
- Funding source
- Expected impact and how to measure it

Preliminary action plan review sessions

Per session, 2x 40 minutes allocation: with 20 minutes reserved for in-depth presentation and 20 minutes discussion about the actions planned.

09:30 – 10.50 Presentation session 1: Denmark (PP3) and Finland (PP5)

PP3, Southern Denmark - Erhvervshus Sydjylland

The action plan of PP3 is based upon inputs from:

- Inception report
- STOB Workshops
- Interaction with STOB Partners
- Workshop held in South Denmark June 2018
- SWOT and peer review in Denmark
- COMB/CBS statistics and reports
- Stakeholder meetings
- Good Practices

Lessons learned as part of the STOB regions learning process during phase one and interregional benchmarking approach:

Differences between the Partners:

- Competencies and experience with business transfer
- Strong focus into family business compared to Denmark
- Level and sophistication of Financial support and financing

Similarities between the regions :

- Kind of taboo for the owner manager
- Lack of planning and preparation
- Lack of experience and owner manager qualifications at the next generation
- Gap between generations is increasing
- Especially micro companies (detail, service, handcraft, gastronomy etc.) are challenged
- Huge financial, social, job consequences by failure

¹ <https://www.interregeurope.eu/stobregions/good-practices/>

² <https://successionwiki.emfprojekt.de/>

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GP transfer, and relevance

1. The "succession-in-germany" information platform
2. Nachfolgefahrplan/Succession timetable
3. Andalusia Emprende, Support to Business Transfer
4. Vouchers for advisory service

Proposed Actions of PP3 Denmark

Action	Identity	Indicative Budget	Policy instrument	Funding source	Description Of activities
1	Raising awareness program	132 000 EUR	Strategi for decentral vækstfremme 2019. (Strategy for decentralized growth 2019)	ERDF, Decentral Business promotion fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transfer of Business (ToB) "top of mind" - Web information platform ("one stop shopping") - Information campaign - 1:1 meetings with local consultants - Succession timetable as dialogue tool - Consultants trained
2	Clarifying & qualifying program	215 000 EUR	Strategi for decentral vækstfremme 2019. (Strategy for decentralized growth 2019)	ERDF, Decentral Business promotion fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarify and prepare for succession - Cooperation between local public business services, regional business houses and private specialists - Recruits managers form action 1 + information campaign - Coaching and mentoring program over 12 months - Succession workshops - Specialists and experts involved when needed
3	Voucher for advisory service	256 000 EUR	Strategi for decentral vækstfremme 2019. (Strategy for decentralized growth 2019)	ERDF, Decentral Business promotion fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage the owner managers to use specialists for ToB (when relevant) - 50 % support up to 3.350 euro (net. 1.675) - Support for ex. valuation, transfer planning/ preparation, financing, taxation, law & documents, organisation/HR - Specialists and experts referred from the regional business houses

Expected impact of the actions

For actions 1, 2 and 3, per year

- ToB attention at owner managers
- One stop shop WEB information platform
- 2 x ToB conferences with up to 200 participants
- Up to 120 x 1:1 meetings
- Up to 120 x 5 coaching & mentoring sessions
- Up to 36 workshops x 8 sessions
- Up to 120 vouchers

Feedback and comments from the partnership:

A generalized comment on the presentation was a need to somehow simplify the actions – to be more coherent and specific. Secondly, opening up of the operations and practical considerations of the advisory vouchers.

PP5 Kajaani, Finland - Kainuun Etu Ltd

Aim of the Action plan

To establish an expert service for strengthening the competitiveness of businesses and renewing their innovativeness potential, as a tool towards better business attractiveness & selling price.

The services offered will include: awareness raising, business diagnostics including valuation services when needed (sometimes a business needs renewal so evidently that no valuation is really needed, the needs are obvious), renewal & growth business plan, help businesses find funding / financing for implementing the renewal business plan and linking to national and EU level data bases for finding equity / and or buyers.

Action plan Background

The background of the action plan is comprised of five inputs: 1) Region specific issues and challenges 2) SWOT from the inception report 3) SWOT from peer review 4) GP transfer and relevance to Kainuu and 5) Existing regional institutional support for generation shift.

Region specific issues and challenges

- 800 expected BT cases in next 10 years
- 50 cases per year (internal or external succession)
- 28% of the total companies in the region
-

= Providing significant impact on the regional economy

GP transfer .and relevance

Good Practice (GP)	Important aspects of the GP for the Kainuu BT	Transfer focus of the GP
Strategic Generation & Ownership Change programme	Comprehensive and strategic approach, combining BT and growth and renewal services. Re-aligning the regional BT network and linking to relevant national networks, namely to identify equity (buyers).	Adopt business improvement measures, for establishing permanent and specialised growth and renewal services.

Policy instrument addressed:

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Sustainable growth and jobs 2014 - 2020 - Finland's structural funds programme, Thematic Objective 3 (TO3) Competitiveness of SMEs (ERDF); Investment Priority 3a Promoting entrepreneurship.

Improvement needs: 1) Starting point in terms of strategic thinking, is the understanding that generation shift more so is linked to the business and product life cycle, rather than the age of the entrepreneur. 2) A transition is needed from a problem-based, in response to ageing effects of the region's population and subsequent impact on the regional economy, towards an objective-related approach, towards specialised and qualified business transfer and growth services offered in combination. 3) With this in mind, Critical improvement needs relate to finding targeting investors (buyers) providing equity for relevant business transfer in the region, to secure the continuity of the business and to provide an opportunity for growth through business improvement measures.

Proposed Actions of PP5

Action	Identity	Indicative Budget	Policy instrument	Funding source	Description Of activities	Timescale of implementation
Action 1	Policy integration	N/A		N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions with the stakeholders to finalise acceptance of the action plan, 1.6.2019 -31.12.2019 Ensuring policy alignment Concept added value Project-based (open call) implementation approach 	1.6.2019 - 31.12.2019
Action 2	Growth & Renewal business transfers service	250-300 000 EUR	Sustainable growth and jobs 2014 – 2020 TO3	ERDF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness raising Business diagnostics including valuation services when needed (sometimes a business needs renewal so evidently that no valuation is really needed, the needs are obvious), Renewal & growth business plan, Help businesses find funding / financing for implementing the renewal business plan Establishment of formal linkages to the national level Establishment of linkages to EU level data bases for finding equity / and or buyers. Assessment of qualification needs and participation in qualification options by the Growth & Renewal services staff. Regular steering meetings (1 per semester) assessing progress and recommending improvements. 	1.4.2020 - 30.6.2021

Action plan outputs

- (1) Establishment of a Growth & Renewal business transfers platform: MoU with regional and national actors
- (2) Growth and Renewal business transfers platform operating
- (3) 12 processed SMEs (diagnosis, valuation, renewal plans)
- (4) 1 large awareness raising event
- (5) 1 dissemination event
- (6) Information material and information web site
- (7) 3 regional steering meetings

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- (8) 1 qualification course for the platform staff
- (9) 1 evaluation report
- (10) Mainstreaming recommendations

Feedback and comments from the partnership:

More elaboration in the form of content, for each of the steps as part of the growth and renewal service.

11:05 – 12.25 Presentation session 2: Germany (PP1) and Slovenia (PP8)

PP1 lead partner, Brandenburg, Germany - IHK-Projektgesellschaft

Policy instrument addressed:

Operational Programme (OP) of the federal state Brandenburg for the European Social Fund (ESF) 2014 - 2020

Policy context: Enhancement of start-ups and company succession

- to create new and to secure existing jobs
- to contribute to innovation and economic growth in Brandenburg
- to keep skilled people in the region

Key finding of the interregional learning process

- Lack of awareness among entrepreneurs
- Insufficient preparation of senior-entrepreneurs
- Lack of qualification of the successors
- Insufficient abilities of advisors to guide through the transfer process
- Lack of cooperation between involved institutions and coordination of activities

Background for the actions are provided by

- SWOT analysis and peer review, discussions with RSG
- Good Practices:
 - Southwest Finland Regional Business Transfer Platform
 - Sowaccess Ecosystem for BT
 - Southern Denmark (Local Transfer Network)

Proposed Actions of PP1

Action	Identity	Indicative Budget	Policy instrument	Funding source	Description Of activities	Timescale for implementation
1	The Competence Centre for Business Transfer	200 000 EUR	Operational Programme (OP) of the federal state Brandenburg for the European Social Fund	ESF	See	01/2020 – 12/2021

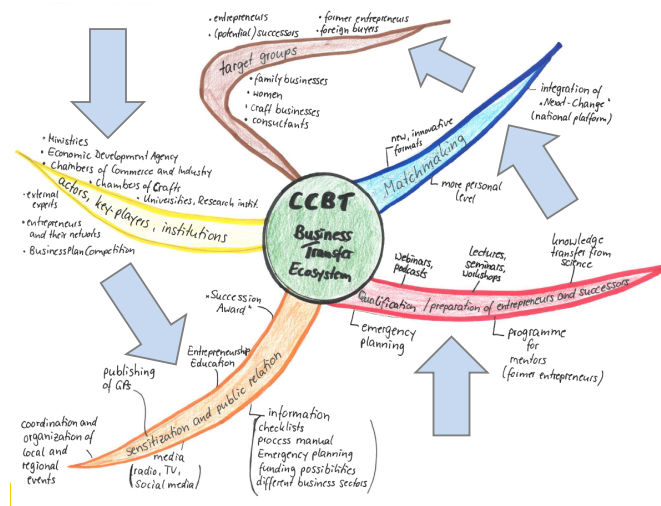
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			(ESF) 2014 - 2020		Figure 1	
2	Regional Successors' Clubs	100 000 EUR	Operational Programme (OP) of the federal state Brandenburg for the European Social Fund (ESF) 2014 - 2020	ESF	<p>Group of max. 8 future entrepreneurs (no competitors!) companies to take over are already set, transfer process has already started.</p> <p>Regular meetings (every two months). Every meeting is dedicated to one special topic or issue e.g. legal aspects, family constitution.</p> <p>External expert to facilitate the discussion and to maximize effectiveness. Share knowledge and (good and bad) experiences.</p> <p>At the end of the meeting period a meeting with the company owners is arranged. Moderator presents the results and gives advice for the next steps.</p>	01/2020 – 12/2021
3	Programme For The Sensitization Of Owners Of Smes - For The Early Consideration Of Their Transfer Arrangements	EUR 3.000.000	-	ERDF	<p>Target group: entrepreneurs aged 55 and older</p> <p>CCIs and Chambers of Crafts can apply for additional staff</p> <p>Sensitize actively (personal contacts)</p> <p>Organization of information events</p> <p>„Succession checks“</p> <p>Analysis of the entrepreneurial and personal situation</p> <p>Analysis of needs of advice and support</p> <p>Information about the time line and content of the transfer process</p> <p>Information about formal requirements</p> <p>Information about support and funding offers</p> <p>Conversation with potential successors (information about the opportunities and challenges of a takeover)</p>	06/2019 – 12/2020 (directive) 01/2020 – 06/2022 (implementation)

Figure 1 The Competence Centre for Business Transfer (action 1)



PP8 Slovenia, Kranj– Business Support Centre Ltd Kranj

Proposed actions of PP8:

Action	Identity	Indicative Budget	Policy instrument	Funding source	Description Of activities	Timescale for implementation
Action 1	Awareness raising				<p>1.1 Map of succession – online and printed version of document in Slovenian language, put in the context and Slovenian legislation Best practice transfer from Berlin School of Economics and Law</p> <p>1.2 Emergency planning Emergency planning document – basing on best practice from lead partner Online – open pdf document, which we are developing together with business consultants, legal expert and other business support organizations in region It will be developed for micro companies (more than 90 % in Slovenia) where most of managerial responsibility and knowledge is combined in one person Preparing for worst case scenario: sudden illness, accident or death of company owner</p>	
Action 2	Matchmaking				<p>2.1 Network of succession consultants Succession is often a complex process in which different types of expertise is needed Business, finance, legal, tax, but also psychology and therapeutic issues cannot be covered by a single person Consultancy is not regulated thus, everybody can call him/herself a consultant</p>	

					<p>Thus, there is a lot of room for misbehavior Transition process is a sensitive matter Provision of matchmaking services between the companies and consultants Opportunity for consultants of different professions to collaborate Minimum standard of consulting work defined Certification Permanent quality control</p> <p>2.2 Platform for buying and selling businesses</p> <p>Several businesses never manage to go on because there is no successor Several founders may be willing to sell but don't know how to get to buyers There is asymmetry on the market for small companies Platform offering match-making but also other services would be helpful Platform for buyers and sellers On-line data as teasers but only after pre-screening from the platform A simplified due-dilligence provided by the platform would help: Buyers: to be more trustworthy Sellers: to set up a realistic price Other services like legal, getting outside finance Linking to other similar platforms</p>	
Action 3	Pilot succession workshops				<p>10-weeks workshops were run in Kranj for family businesses with business succession challenges Objective: to assist families/businesses to write a succession plan with objectives, milestones and time-frame 12 families participated in teams (2 per family from older and younger generation) Interactive work with homework's Lessons learned on the side of participants: Just attending is not enough Problems do not solve alone Need for action which is often painful Lessons learned on the side of organizer: Too long – loses focus Should be more demanding for participants in terms of homeworks Combination with face-to-face consultation</p>	
Action 4	Financing				<p>Financial products for financing succession</p> <p>Succession often does not happen for financial reasons Founders may be reluctant to leave because their pensions may not be enough to sustain the life style</p>	

					<p>It is very common to pass on assets to successor without any compensation</p> <p>Successors may not have savings to pay for the stake in the company</p> <p>A scheme to support debt financing of succession</p> <p>Co-operation with commercial banks and an agency that already has experiences in subsidiary distribution</p> <p>A combination of subsidized interest rate and guarantee</p> <p>An opportunity for EU funding intervention-</p>	
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12:25 – 13.15 Lunch break

13:15 – 14.35 Presentation session 3: Romania (PP7) and Spain (PP9)

PP7 Romania – Ilfov County Council

Policy context:

The Operational Competitiveness Programme (Poc)

- supports investments aimed at meeting the needs and challenges related to the low level of economic competitiveness:
 - o insufficient support for research, development and innovation (RDI)
 - o underdeveloped ICT infrastructure by ICT and implicitly poorly developed services
- this policy instrument aim to generate horizontal interventions in the economy and society, which can lead to growth and sustainability
- investments dedicated to enhancing the research, technological development and innovation
- more oriented towards the involvement of the private sector in RDI activities
- stimulates the partnerships between public research system and private actors, market orientation and technology transfer
- total financial package for the operational program is set at 1.329.787.234 euro

Region specific issues and challenges

- Bucharest-Ilfov region is the only more developed region in Romania
- 29 years of free market – entrepreneurial culture still in formation
- Lack of the entrepreneurship culture:
 - o low-risk mentality of Romanians
 - o well-paid jobs in multinational companies
 - o lack of capital and financing mechanisms
- Low rate of SMEs survival compared to EU average: 75% of the start-ups close after 1st year, 60% don't survive after the second year
- 4% of the total enterprises at national level are companies with turnover more than 1 mil. Euro/year (the backbone of economy)
- Three stages of entrepreneurship development after communism falling:
 - o 90s generation, the pioneers, with no solid business background
 - o 2000-2007 – businesses established by former multinational employees
 - o after 2010 – successful young entrepreneurs in digital field or creative industries
- First change of generations – exit of generation of entrepreneurs formed during the 90s
- The backbone of economy, companies founded after 2005 – aged ownership (average 50 years old, 2/3 in the management)
- Most young entrepreneurs focused on founding new businesses:

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- lack of initial capital
- shaping the business according to their vision
- not aware about the advantages buying an established business

Proposed Actions of PP7

Action	Identity	Indicative Budget	Policy instrument	Funding source	Description Of activities	Timescale for implementation
Action 1	promote and raise awareness of the importance of BT				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - participating and organizing events for raising awareness – Ilfov Business Hub - launching and promoting the matchmaking web application to facilitate the business transfer (sale/purchase/advisory) – Ilfov County, Ilfov Business Hub - a contact point within Ilfov County to offer support and assistance related to business transfer – Ilfov County - a network of business support centers under Ilfov County coordination (Ilfov Business Hub, the 4 existing LAGs) 	
Action 2	Inclusion of specific measures for the business transfer within the existing operational programs				<p>Proposal to the competent authorities for the inclusion of specific measures for the business transfer within the existing operational programs (POC, POCU, POR, POIIMM, PNDR) or the creation of new programs exclusively for the transfer of business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "minimis" financial incentives for business transfer (POR, PNDR) based on the good practice example presented by Slovenia - stimulating the transfer of business for spinoffs in the research sector (POC, POIIMM) by developing programs that grant funding for business transfer cases - development of pilot programs (POCU, PNDR, POIMM) for training, advising and mentoring businesspeople who already manage a business and intend to use one of the forms of business transfer 	
Action 3	Improving of legal framework regarding BT				<p>Proposing measures to modify the legal framework regarding the business transfer by amending current laws:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ the inclusion of legislative provisions in the law no. 31/1991 and of the law no. 346/2004 for the pre- and post-transfer period (fiscal facilities, advice from OTIMMC, ONRC and ANAF, simplification of transfer procedures) ➤ creation of a common OTIMMC, ONRC and ANAF platform for business transfer management ➤ modification of the law of business incubators and the law of business-angels in order to statute and clarify the transfer of business in the case of start-ups and spin-offs, when investors include investment funds, business angels, VCs or other private investors 	

Discussion and peer review of Romanian AP concept:

- How are secured the financing of a business takeover? What kind of warranties are required? (Finland - Finvera, Germany - ERP start-up loan - StartMoney)
- What were the steps in creating and funding the business transfer platform nexxt-change.org? (Germany)
- How managed Andalucia regional government to create and fund Andalucia Emprende and what is the relation between Andalucia Emprende and the business centres (over 274)? How they manage to coordinate? There is central management? (Spain)
- Succession casting. How you identify suitable companies? How do you secure confidentiality? (Germany)

PP9 Seville, Spain - Chamber of Commerce Seville

Policy Context:

Andalucía has a complete and well developed business and entrepreneurship support services. The Andalucia ERDF OP 2014-2020 includes the support to business generational succession among the actions that will be implemented to help the consolidation of SMEs and business growth (IP 3.4). However, the public support to business transfer is in its initial stages.

Action plan objectvies:

The Action Plan aims to design and launch the framework and initial instruments to support the business succession in Andalucía and to foster business transfer, to avoid the loss of viable job-creating business.

It intends to:

- Raise the awareness of enterprise owners on the need of planning the business succession well in advance, to minimize the risk of business closure and job losses.
- Make entrepreneurs aware of the possibility of buying an existing business, as an alternative to starting it from scratch.
- Equip business advisory services with the information and basic technical material to assist micro-enterprises and self-employed in the preparation and planning of the succession process.
- Enhance the cooperation between the different stakeholders involved in business succession and transfer in the region, to facilitate the identification of potential sellers and buyers, boost the deal-flow and matchmaking and provide the appropriate support (advice, finance...).

Proposed actions :

The activities proposed in this Action Plan are going to be inserted into the existing entrepreneurship and business support ecosystem:

- Definition of an integrated framework to business succession and transfer
- Elaboration and dissemination of information, awareness-raising and technical support materials.
- Setting up basic advisory services in business transfer.
- Info-days and special advice to business transfer in rural areas.

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The implementation will be led by the Andalucía Emprrende Foundation, with the collaboration of other organisations, particularly the Chambers of Commerce and Local and Sectoral Business Associations

Proposed Actions of PP9:

Activity	Actions	Expected Results
Definition of an integrated approach to business succession and transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting information points Produce information materials Facilitate matchmaking Support (grants) for expert advice 	Consolidation of a consistent strategy for business succession and transfer in Andalusia
Elaboration and dissemination of information, awareness-raising and technical support materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brochure on the main business transfer regulatory and practical issues Microsite on business transfer 	Improve information and raise the awareness regarding. Increase of business on sale and of purchase demand.
Setting up basic advisory services in business transfer	Training programme	Improvement of advisory services Increase of the number of completed business transfer operations
Info-days and special advice to business transfer in rural areas	Info-days Tailored advisory services	Improvement of specialized advisory services Increase of the number of farms transferred

Good practice transfer, and relevance

Actions	Good Practices
Setting information & dealflow points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The "succession-in-germany" information platform (DE) The succession-wiki (DE) SOWACCESS (BE)
Produce tailored informative and technical materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The "succession-in-germany" information platform (DE) The succession-wiki (DE) SOWACCESS (BE) The Family Business Succession Guidebook (PL)
Facilitate matchmaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Transfer Network (DK) Business Mentoring Service (DE)
Support (grants) for expert advice to boost transfer agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SOWACCESS (BE) Vouchers for advisory services (PL)

14:35 – 14.50 coffee break

14:50 – 16.10 Presentation session 4: Bulgaria (PP6)

PP6 Plovdiv, Bulgaria - RDA BSC SME Plovdiv

Policy context

Territorial scope of the policy document: National

The Action Plan aims to impact: "Other regional development policy instrument" (NSSME - National Strategy for Small and Medium Enterprises 2014-2020) and/or the new one? Period: 2020 - 2021

Policy instrument addressed

The National Strategy for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises 2014-2020 has 11 priorities.

Under priority 2. NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR CORRECT ENTREPRENEURS the topic transfer of business is included.

Transfer of business: Measures aimed at smooth administration of the transfer of business: public campaigns, mentoring schemes of the process, creating a fund to Bulgarian Development Bank to finance the process of transfer of business.

Identified issues and challenges

According the Final Report of Overview of Family Business Relevant Issues, conducted on behalf of the European Commission, Enterprise and Industry Directorate-General, we identified some problems:

- No specific definition and survey of family business
- No specific support instruments for FB and ToB
- No support organizations for ToB

Good practice transfer, and relevance:

- DENMARK: Strategisk Generations- & Ejerskifte - Local network for next generation owner managers (successors).
- SPAIN: Andalusia Emprende is a network of more than 262 entrepreneurship centers supporting business transfer in Andalusia region"
- Source or inspiration from the project (initiative/activity or good practice that inspired this action)
- FINLAND: Southwest Finland Regional Business Transfer Platform
- POLAND: The Family Business Succession Guidebook
(www.sukcesja.org)
- Source or inspiration from the project (initiative/activity or good practice that inspired this action)
- POLAND: Vouchers for advisory services
- EC: Final Report, Overview of Family Business Relevant Issues, This study is conducted on behalf of the European Commission, Enterprise and Industry Directorate-General

Proposed Actions of PP4

Action	Identity	Budget	Policy instrument	Funding source	Description Of activities	Timescale for implementation
Action 1	Local Network for Owner-Managers (successors)	N/A		Operational programme "Innovation and Competitiveness" 2014 – 2020 (OPIC)	Relevance (how the action contributes to improve the policy instrument(s) addressed) Priority areas of the strategy are: Encouraging entrepreneurial activity; Providing appropriate regulatory and administrative framework for SMEs by applying the "Think Small First"; Improving conditions for SMEs to access foreign markets; For Entrepreneurship - Create and maintain an environment in which entrepreneurs can thrive and entrepreneurship is rewarded: care for future entrepreneurs, in particular by encouraging entrepreneurial interest and talent, particularly among students, young people and women by easing the conditions for starting a business; easing access to finance	-2021

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					through existing and new programs by priority start and more; Transfer of business: Measures aimed at the smooth conduct of the transfer of business: public campaigns, mentoring schemes of the process, creating a fund to Bulgarian Development Bank to finance the process of transfer business. The implementation of the indicative measures under this investment priority aims at achieving a positive effect on the development of a sustainable market competitiveness of the Bulgarian SMEs	
Action 2	Regional Business Transfer Platform	N/A		Operational programme "Innovation and Competitiveness" 2014 – 2020 (OPIC)	Relevance (how the action contributes to improve the policy instrument(s) addressed) Priority areas of the strategy are: Encouraging entrepreneurial activity; Providing appropriate regulatory and administrative framework for SMEs by applying the "Think Small First"; Improving conditions for SMEs to access foreign markets; For Entrepreneurship - Create and maintain an environment in which entrepreneurs can thrive and entrepreneurship is rewarded: care for future entrepreneurs, in particular by encouraging entrepreneurial interest and talent, particularly among students, young people and women by easing the conditions for starting a business; easing access to finance through existing and new programs by priority start and more; Transfer of business: Measures aimed at the smooth conduct of the transfer of business: public campaigns, mentoring schemes of the process, creating a fund to Bulgarian Development Bank to finance the process of transfer business. The implementation of the indicative measures under this investment priority aims at achieving a positive effect on the development of a sustainable market competitiveness of the Bulgarian SMEs	-2021
Action 3	Financial Instruments / Mentoring Schemes and Certification Schemes	N/A		Operational programme "Innovation and Competitiveness" 2014 – 2020 (OPIC)	Relevance (how the action contributes to improve the policy instrument(s) addressed) Priority areas of the strategy are: Encouraging entrepreneurial activity; Providing appropriate regulatory and administrative framework for SMEs by applying the "Think Small First"; Improving conditions for SMEs to access foreign markets; For Entrepreneurship - Create and maintain an environment in which entrepreneurs can thrive and entrepreneurship is rewarded: care for future entrepreneurs, in particular by encouraging entrepreneurial interest and talent, particularly among students, young people and women by easing the conditions for starting a business; easing access to finance through existing and new programs by priority start and more; Transfer of business: Measures aimed at the smooth conduct of the transfer of business: public campaigns, mentoring schemes of the process, creating a fund to Bulgarian Development Bank to finance the process of transfer business. The implementation of the indicative measures under this investment priority aims at achieving a positive effect on the development of a sustainable market competitiveness of the Bulgarian SMEs	-2021

Monitoring of AP implementation

Key action	Method	Indicators of implementation
Key Action 1 Local Network for Owner- Managers (successors)	Records of engaged and consulted SMEs	Number A report with recommendations
Key Action 2: Regional Business Transfer Platform	Records of engaged and consulted SMEs	Number A report with recommendations
Key Action 3: Financial Instruments / Mentoring and Certification Schemes	Records of engaged and consulted SMEs	Number A report with recommendations

Endorsement of the action plan has been provided by:

– Bulgarian SME Promotion Agency BSMEPA
Dr. Boyko Takov, Executive Director

– Ministry of Economy, Directorate“Economic Policy”
Mr. Zhelyaz Enev, Director of Economic Policy Directorate

16.10 – 16.25 Short Debriefing

A reiteration of the expectations of the final action plans submitted to the JTS was stressed, it was agreed the workshop was highly valuable for each partner to refine their own action plans and a deadline was agreed and set for a second version of each partner regions AP to be sent to the advisory partner for a detailed review and proofing. The deadline was set for 15.10.2019. With feedback expected for late October/ early November.

To mark the occasion of the final meeting of the partners during phase I, the Director of lead partner, Peter Wolfing, offered his gratitude to partnership for their close collaboration and results of the previous three years.

16.25 – 17.00 Steering Group Meeting

The following agenda items of the steering group meeting were discussed and formally agreed upon:

- 1) Dissemination event

The dissemination event to be held during SME Assembly in Helsinki in November 2019 was discussed and updates of the workflow and expectations described by mediating partner (PP5) to all partners. It was agreed the lead partner will present during the allocated STOB regions presentation slot, in addition to a select amount

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<https://www.interregeurope.eu/stobregions/>

of partners offering mentorship as part of the workshop session, entitled Master class on upgrading growth policies with BTs on 27th November 2019. Other stakeholder and co-organisers involved in the session include; Federation of Finnish enterprises, Seinäjoki University of applied sciences, Finnvera, Entrepreneur case of the transfer process in Finland and Transeo Association.

STOB Partner's showing interest to join the event were made.

2) Reminder of tasks for the Mid-term review and to wrap up phase 1

The mid-term review for the STOB project will take place on 19.9.2019. Partners were asked to submit any missing clarifications as soon as possible.

3) Joint action

During the action plan session it became clear that several partners plan actions related to quality standards for BT consultants. All partners declared their willingness for a joint action, therefore pp1 will ask JS for further advice and conditions.

Communications output as part of the Action plan/wrap-up of phase I meeting

Active and running commentary of the event was disseminated via the project's social media channels.

A news article and press release of AP/wrap-up meeting of phase I can be found on the STOB regions Interreg Europe website through the following link: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/stobregions/>

All output and content, the AP concepts from the meeting are uploaded to the project's successionwiki site for dissemination purposes. <https://successionwiki.emfprojekt.de/action-plan-workshop/>

Appendix



Picture 1. Event location