PRO-STRATEGY GUIDE
Testing report no 1

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Project partners /

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Testing procedure – overview

During the meeting in Kaunas the Consortium had a discussion regarding the effectiveness of conducting testing procedure in SMEs at that stage of preparation of crucial product – the content of PRO-STRATEGY Guide. Finally common decision was made that due to lack of time recognized as a barrier in SMEs in cross-cultural analysis and difficult holiday time, it will be more effective to conduct the internal evaluation of prepared material first and then, having the pre-final version of product (in digitalized version) conduct the testing within the target group asking about their opinion. All Partners agreed.

The subject of internal testing procedure was to evaluate the quality of 30 Flashcards developed within the WP3. The table below presents the authors of particular Flashcards.

UNIT	Flashcard	Author
UNIT 1 Foundations of Strategic Management	General policy, Vision and Mission	KRIC
	Concept and Scopes of Business Strategy and Elements of Strategic Management	KRIC
UNIT 2 The external Environment	Porter's Five Forces – Competitive Position Analyses	KRIC
	Strategic Groups	KRIC
	Concextual and Perceptual Environment	KRIC
UNIT 3 Internal Environment	Leadership	Hominem
	Analysis of Internal Environment	Hominem
	Business operations structure and resources	Hominem
	Core skills and knowledge management	Hominem
UNIT 4 Business Level Strategy	Generic strategies	PROFES
	Value Chain Analysis	PROFES

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UNIT 5 **Vertical Integration for SMEs**	Vertical Integration for SMEs	PROFES
UNIT 6 **Internationalisation of SMEs**	Internalisation of SMEs	Hominem
UNIT 7 **Diversification for SMEs**	Diversification for SMEs	PROFES
UNIT 8 **Business Development**	Business Development	Euroform
	Evolution of Business development	Euroform
	Benefist, costs and risks of business development	Euroform
UNIT 9 **Strategy Implementation**	Implementation of Company Strategy	KRIC
	Functional Rules/Policies	KRIC
	Process Management	KRIC
	Risk Management	KRIC
	Crisis Management	KRIC
	Change Management	KRIC
	Innovation Policy and Management	KRIC
UNIT 10 **Quality Control and Quality Assurance**	Continuous Improvement	Euroform
	Reliability, Maintainability and Safety	Euroform
	Business Process Reenginering	Euroform
	Six Sigma	Euroform
	Enterprise Resource Planning	Euroform
	Total Quality Management	Euroform

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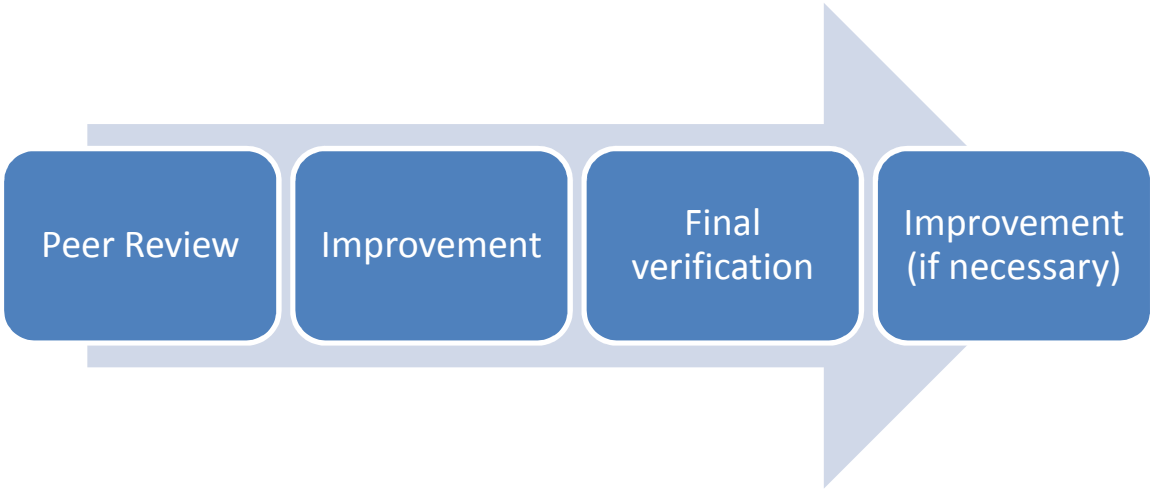
All Partners were engaged – MERIG acted as Quality Assurance Partner. Below the process of this internal testing procedure is briefly described.



Stage 1: Peer Review

Authors of Flashcards (Hominem, KRIC, Euroforom and PROFES) give each other a feedback. In some organization not only authors were engaged in this procedure.

PROFES as WP7 leader created a template accepted by all Partners. This template was used as a standard for providing the feedback (it is attached in this report). Moreover, MERIG as internal Quality Assurance expert also provided the peer-review. Each Flashcard has been reviewed by at least 4 person from other organisations which all together gives the result of 120 feedbacks uploaded on on-line internal communication platform.

Stage 2: Improvement (round 1)

After receving all feedbacks, authors incorporated the most important and crucial suggestions and uploaded the improved versions on the on-line platform.

Stage 3: Final verification

MERIG as project evaluator expert was responsible for conducting the final quality review of provided final Flashcards versions. The goal of this procedure was to check wheather the most important suggestions were implemented by authors. The feedback was provided on standardized form and uploaded on the on-line platform.

Stage 4: Improvement (round 2)

In case more improvements were necessary to achieve high quality of Flashcard, authors were asked to include amendments. After that all Flashcards (the content) were ready to start being translated and digitalized.

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Testing procedure – framework

On the meeting in Kaunas Partners established the common framework for testing procedure regarding Flashcards.

Number ot task	Title of the task	Who is responsible	Deadline
1	**Methodology for reviewing procedure**	PROFES	1.07.2014
2	**Revivising the units from Strategy Train**	All Partners	See below
1	Foundation of Strategic Management	KRIC	30.07.2014
2	The external environment	KRIC	30.07.2014
3	Internal environment	Hominem Challenge	30.07.2014
4	Business Level Strategy	PROFES	30.07.2014
5	Vertical Integration for SMEs	PROFES	30.07.2014
6	Internalisation of Smes	Hominem Challenge	30.07.2014
7	Diversification for SMEs	PROFES	30.07.2014
8	Business Development	Euroform RFS	30.07.2014
9	Strategy Implementation	KRIC	30.07.2014
10	Quality control and quality assurance	Euroform RFS	30.07.2014
3	**Preparing question for 'word cloud'**	All Partners (according to list above)	30.07.2014
4	**Revising question for diagnostic tool**	All Partners (according to list above)	30.07.2014
5	**Preparing the platform (with instruction how to use it) and template for testing**	PROFES	30.07.2014
6	**Preparing innovative learning model**	PROFES	30.07.2014
7	**Internal testing (revising each other work, preparing a feedback, embed it into a platform)**	All Partners	15.08.2014
8	**Final review of all units**	MERIG	31.08.2014
9	**Implementing the suggestions after testing (internal and final review)**	All Partners	15.09.2014

It has to be explained that this was the initial plan agreed in Kaunas. However, due to holiday time and individual reasons, Partners were not be able to accomplish the plan until the 15.09. All Partners developed a new suitable schedule and decided to conduct the testing as soon as possible with regards to necessity of following the general project schedule. Finally, the testing procedure was accomplished by 15.10.2014.

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Testing procedure – description of Partners' contribution

All Partners participated in testing procedure described in this report. Below there is information given by Partners (on provided form – attached at the end of this report) about their engagement regarding different issues.

Description of Partner's task(s) in testing procedure	
Euroform RFS	In order to perform testing procedure, all the Flashcards assigned to the project partners were downloaded. They were carefully read, so they were evaluated according to a template which listed a series of questions. Each question reflected the main criteria from the results of WP2.
Hominem Challenge	During the testing procedure we have fulfilled the following tasks, for each one of the Flashcards: • Reading the Flashcard developed by partners. • Comparing the content of the Flashcard with the initial content of the "Strategy Train", for the corresponding unit. • Monitoring the adequacy of the content to the objective of Pro-Strategy Guide project (length, required information, exercises, case studies…). • Monitoring the adequacy of the "questions for cloud" in order to make sure they were both suitable and representative. • Monitoring of the language used in the Flashcard • Checking if the bibliography has been updated and checked whether the links to URLs were still valid and working. For each one of the above listed tasks, we have produced a feedback, where suitable.
KRIC	We have reviewed already developed content and provide feedback. (for further development , if necessary).
MERIG	MERIG acts as transfer as well as quality assurance partner in the PRO-STRATEGY Guide project. Therefore testing as well as evaluation plays a very crucial role in the tasks performed by our institution. As transfer partner MERIG has a very good knowledge about the content of the former Strategy-Train units that served as basis for the content elaboration of Pro-Strategy Guide. This is why during the content testing it has been agreed that MERIG will perform a two level testing and feedback circle: In the first round all

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	Flashcards/units elaborated by all other consortium members MERIG provided feedback by using a standard template. After that the authors of the units had the chance to review and improve their units based on the feedback provided. In a second step MERIG was responsible for checking if the feedback provided has been incorporated properly or if explanations why certain issues remained unchanged have been explained sufficiently. Overall this process allowed to improve the quality of the Flashcards/units and as well to harmonize them to a certain degree.
PROFES	PROFES as a leader of WP7 (Testing) coordinates all testing procedures. At this stage has developed a proposal of framework which has been discussed on meeting in Kaunas in order to set suitable plan. PROFES has also created the template for testing which has been used as a standard in the first phase. An instruction on how to upload the filled templates on on-line platform has been prepared and provided to all Partners. As the leader PROFES has also been responsible for guarding the deadlines and solving occurred problems. PROFES has also actively participated in preparing the feedback for all Flashcards according to agreed criteria and on agreed template as well as implemented the suggestions rising the quality of Flashcard content.

Who were engaged in testing procedure in Partners' organizations?	
Euroform RFS	Fabiola Spagnuolo, who was responsible for Flashcards drafting, supported by Sandra Sitnikaite.
Hominem Challenge	Testing procedure has been executed by: • Yazid Isli • Elena Rodríguez Vargas.
KRIC	Project PRO-STRATEGY team (Kaunas Regional Innovation Centre): • Renata Steponaviciene, • Birute Velykiene, • Rita Marcinkeviciene
MERIG	At MERIG this process has been led by Brigitte Zörweg, who was supported by Johann Laister, who assisted especially in the second evaluation round.
PROFES	At PROFES the testing procedure has been coordinated by Project Manager, who was supported by Krzysztof Naparty (Researcher) and people from organization who have been informed about the project and have suitable

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	knowledge to provide feedback.

How many Flashcards have been reviewed by your organization?	
Euroform RFS	9 Flashcards were assigned to Euroform to develop. Therefore, in order to do the testing procedure 21 Flashcards were read.
Hominem Challenge	We have read all Flashcards developed by other Partners in their first version.
KRIC	All Flashcards prepared by other Partners have been reviewed.
MERIG	All Flashcards/units, in total 30, have been read and reviewed twice.
PROFES	All Flashcards prepared by other Partners have been reviewed.

What kind of other organization have been engaged?	
Euroform RFS	Any other institutions/colleagues from other companies weren't engaged in testing procedure.
Hominem Challenge	At this stage, we have only engaged our staff to read and comment the Flashcards developed by project partners, including Hominem. In a further stage, our plans are to involve our silent partners (Chamber of commerce and FOREM foundation).
KRIC	At this stage any other organizations have not been involved.
MERIG	At this stage the Flashcards/units have only been reviewed internally by MERIG staff. The testing on external level is foreseen at later stage.
PROFES	At this stage we have decided not to engage any other institutions/organizations (due to their occupancy). However, at the next stage of testing we plan to involve them in the process.

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Conclusions

After accomplishing the internal testing procedure regarding the Flashcards' content, all Partners have expressed their opinion about the meaning of this process as well as given recommendations for the next step of testing – this information could be treated as a solid base for further improvement.

How would test procedure influence the final result?	
Euroform RFS	Testing procedure definitely influenced the quality of the Flashcards and it helped to implement all the characteristics that were designed.
Hominem Challenge	The testing procedure has a direct and positive impact on the final result as it allows: • Detect potential areas of improvement before making more steps and investing time and resources. • Share experience between all partners engaged in the project, in terms of the way to develop the Flashcards. • Unify the format of all Flashcards developed by the partners.
KRIC	The testing procedure has been influenced the quality of project results in following way: • By ensuring high quality result • By ensuring target group needs are fulfilled • By disseminating and creating awareness
MERIG	Due to the fact that the 30 Flashcards/units have been elaborated by different authors from four partner organisations form four different European countries, this feedback process supported a better harmonization of the different Flashcards/units.
PROFES	Testing procedure has contributed to achieving the better quality of final results by: • Seeking the potential fields to improve by Partners with fresh look on prepared Flashcards • Sharing the source of business information among Partners that might be used in order to improve the Flashcards • Ensuring standardization of Flashcards preparation that would lead to achieving similar quality in national versions

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How the effectiveness of implemented testing procedure could be assessed?	
Euroform RFS	In a scale between 1 to 10, the effectiveness of implemented testing procedure can be rate equal to seven.
Hominem Challenge	The result of the internal testing conducted by all partner, including Hominem, has been versed in a "Peer Review" document for each Flashcard. This testing has allowed the project team to identify some areas of improvement that have been integrated like for example: • Improving the exercises and adding new ones • Adapting the case studies to SMEs reality • Assess the accessibility of the language used in the Flashcards and modify it to make it suitable to SME´s reality • Balance all Flashcards and put them all under the same unified style and format
KRIC	The testing procedure could be assessed as effective.
MERIG	Due to the fact that the first feedback round of the internal quality assurance manager was scheduled before the authors incorporated the feedback from the other authors, it was necessary to read all 30 Flashcards/units twice. This process could have been made more effective, by reviewing the updated Flashcards, already including the feedback and recommendations from other authors. By doing so, only those Flashcards that needed some improvements based on the feedback provided by the internal quality manager would have needed a second revision and not all of them.
PROFES	The implemented testing procedure has been effective due to fact that it has allowed to achieve one standard of Flashcard and harmonize the quality of the content making it available for SMEs' requirements in 4 countries by using the proper, understandable language, engaging exercises and practical inspiration in case studies. All Partner were able to participate in procedure in flexible way as on-line platform was used for uploading feedback (thanks to that we have avoided the situation that only one person was responsible for uploading them being a 'narrow throat' for others).

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What can be done in the future to improve the testing procedure?	
Euroform RFS	During the testing procedure, there were a lot of revisions, and peer reviews were carried out over and over again. To avoid repeating the work several times, all the things that need to be implement must be better clarified before, in order to get a more homogeneous results between the partners.
Hominem Challenge	Dedicate more and a suitable time for the testing procedure. For example, we should avoid running this task during summer holidays.
KRIC	Create detailed questionnaire and set criteria for optimal evaluation.
MERIG	Due to the fact that the first feedback round of the internal quality assurance manager was scheduled before the authors incorporated the feedback from the other authors, it was necessary to read all 30 flashcards/units twice. This process could have been made more effective, by reviewing the updated flashcards, already including the feedback and recommendations from other authors. By doing so, only those flashcards that needed some improvements based on the feedback provided by the internal quality manager would have needed a second revision and not all of them. Anyway, the chosen procedure has been agreed by all consortium members at the second partner meeting in Kaunas.
PROFES	In order to improve the next round of testing procedure: • On-line questionnaire could be created which would allow to gather results automatically and be more comfortable for people participating in testing • Set suitable and feasible deadlines and avoid conducting the testing in holiday time • Engage representatives of target groups (SMEs and consultants/trainers) as well as external organization (supportive organization)

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Conclusions - summary

In general the implemented testing procedure was assessed by Partners as effective leading to achieving the high quality of Flashcards content adjusted to SMEs' needs in four European countries. However, there are some things that could be improved in the next round of testing procedure. In order to make it more effective the Consortium plan to:

- Conduct the testing procedure both on internal (within the Partners' organisations) as external (target group representatives, supportive organisations) ground
- Create an on-line questionnaire included close type questions and send it to representatives of target group
- Engage the institutions that could help the Consortium to reach the wider audience of target group representatives
- Conduct the testing in longer time perspective in order to gather as many responds as possible

Testing templates used in different stages

Template used in Peer Review

Flashcard being tested	
Who has prepared feedback	
Area of testing	Partner's respond
Are there any notions that requiring explaining in glossary? If yes, please indicate them.	
How do you assess the quality of case studies presented in Flashcard in terms of their usefulness for SMes?	
How do you assess the quality of exercises presented in Flashcard in terms of their ability to engage users?	
Are there any part of the content you would recommend to cut off? If yes, please indicate which ones.	
Are there any issues you would recommend to add to the	

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content? If yes, please name them.	
How would you assess the level of difficulty of presented content presented in Flashcard?	
How would you assess the accessibility of language of the content presented in Flashcard?	

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Template used in Final Verification

Reviewed Flashcard		
WP Nr.	*Unit Nr.*	*Flashcard Title*

Peer Reviewer		
Name	*Organisation*	*Review Date*

Overall Assessment

Please assess, if the following criteria are fulfilled, by ticking [X] "Yes" (fulfilled) or "No" (only partly or not fulfilled). Please make a short comment to highlight improvement potential. If a criterion is not applicable, write "n.a." as comment. Detailed suggestions for improvement can be made in the table "Suggested improvements" below. In documents, more detailed comments could also be made using the "rework mode" or "notes" function (in .docs' or .pdfs'). Please reference to these details in the comment section.

Make your final conclusion by ticking [X] here →→→→

Accepted (No/only very small revisions required.)	**Accepted - Changes required**	**Not Accepted** (for peer-review again)

Area of investigation

Criterion	***Remark at peer review stage***	***Improvements made***		***Comment***
		Yes	***No***	
Identification of author(s)				
Improvement of abstract				
Changes in glossary				
Orthographical and grammatical correctness				
Appropriateness of question(s) for cloud				
Improvement of exercises				
Improvement of case studies				
Changes in content				
Identification of information sources				

General Comment/s

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Template used to collect the feedback about testing procedure from Partners

Who has prepared feedback	
Area of testing	**Partner's respond**
Describe your task in testing procedure	
Who were engaged in testing procedure in your organization?	
How many Flashcards have you read?	
Have you engaged any other institutions/colleagues from other companies in testing procedure? If yes, please explain their role?	
How would test procedure influence the final result?	
How would you asses the effectiveness of implemented testing procedure?	
What can be done in the future to improve the testing procedure?	

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