



SECOND WORKSHOP SUMMARY REPORT OF ITALY

October 8th, 2010



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Background

Consorzio Lavoro e Ambiente promoted the workshop to associations, owners of young SMEs, consultants and experts of the tourism and no-profit world.

The aim of the workshop was focused on the solutions on how improve training and support offers in the selected sectors and which practices can be considered as successful and deserving more attention.

The first part of the seminar was dedicated to explain the findings of the Italian research on small and medium enterprises needs and problems. Subsequently our organization showed the results and findings of the first Italian workshop and of the international conference held in Helsinki in May 2010. After the explanation of the past activities the debate was opened.

Unfortunately there has been a low attendance due to the fact, we suppose, there is low attention regarding methodologies and approaches to support young SMEs.

The attention is less when experts and young entrepreneurs know we have no fundings to support consulting activities.

The workshop was held on the 8th of October 2010 in the Kirner Association in Rome.



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Workshop Agenda

- 09.00 Presentation of the Smetrainet project
- 09.30 Presentation of the first workshop
- 09.30 Discussion about how to raise awareness about the importance of the promotion of young businesses at political level
- 11.45 Discussion about ways and best practices in the field of training and guidance for SME's after the second year of activity
- 13.00 Lunch time
- 14.00 Discussion on how to improve training and support offers in the tourism and no-profit sector
- 15.00 Discussion about which approaches are better to cope with the arising challenges of the NGOs sector
- 16.30 End of the workshop



List of Participants and Working groups

The participation was quite poor due to the low attendance of entrepreneurs and experts. Stakeholders of public institution and political decision maker were not attending. The reasons of the poor turnout of experts and public are, on one side the duration of the workshop (one full day is too long) and, on the other hand, it was addressed to two very distinct sectors such as tourism and non-profit world.

Below the workshop participants:

NAME	SURNAME	POSITION
Gianni	Silvestri	EXPERT
Ernesto	Damici	CONSULTING
Umberto	Parisi	EXPERT
Alessandro	Manasse	JUNIOR CONSULTING
Giuseppe	Onori	JUNIOR CONSULTING
Marco	Calì	JUNIOR CONSULTING
Giovanni	Russo	CONSULTING
Giuseppe	Rossi	CONSULTING





Selected Sectors and Justification for Selecting Those Sectors

Consorzio Lavoro e Ambiente chose the sectors of tourism and no-profit world. The choice was focused on these two particular sectors because in the tourism sector are created every year many new enterprises and the dimension of the new firms is generally small or very small. Both the tourism and the no profit sector suffer of a short life of their enterprises. SMEs in both sectors surely need a better support that sometimes is completely absent.



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VIII. Identified Current And Emerging Needs In The Selected Sectors.

The experts pointed out different problems in the two sectors and, in a second moment, the debate has moved on the solution to be adopted.

We can summarise the main findings about problems and need for young SMEs:

- **Lack of financial resources and difficult to access to credit**

Experts emphasised on the difficult access to credit for young SMEs. One of the most critical subject for young SMEs is, indeed, the economical support. Bank credit is the most diffused type of economical support for young SMEs but, at the same time, is too often the unique tool in which entrepreneurs can count on. Experts remarked also that the dimension of the enterprise is negatively correlated with the access to credit. Smaller is the firm, more is difficult for the young entrepreneurs to receive financial resources. Having access to a bank loan does not avoid to enterprises the feeling to be constrained to their access to finance. This feeling could come from the volume or insufficient credit or unsatisfactory banking condition linked to it. Young SMEs have, further, more difficulties than other enterprises to credit access. Due to



the difficulty of credit access many times young SMEs turn to informal kind of credit as the request to relatives and friends. This is also true for other kind of help (commercial skill, entrepreneurial experience and general knowledge in the field of business). It is fundamental that these kind of topics are discussed with entities which are able to finance the actions.

- **Lack of specific support**

The opinion of the experts on the findings of the Italian research on the training and support structures for young SMEs and the results of the Helsinki conference was pretty good but the problem is not to have just information but the specialised and expert support. The consultants report a lack of specific support for young SMEs. A very important topic remarked by the experts is the lack of counselling, lack of development support and training difficulty.

The training offer decreases with the size of the firm, smaller is the enterprise, less training activities are developed. Often there is also a difficulty in identify specific needs of training of employers. The high cost of training is another big obstacle to the vocational training for SMEs and specially for employers.



- **High expenses for consultants**

High qualified consultants cost too much and young SMEs have very low budgets. It is difficult for young SMEs to allocate financial resources to training.

- **Entrepreneurs not trained**

Young entrepreneurs are generally poorly trained on different subjects (financial aspects, bureaucratic aspects, administrative aspects, fiscal aspects, legal aspects) and the inter-professional funds do not train entrepreneurs because, under the existing law, it is not their duty.

One of the most emerging need is the training of the new entrepreneurs because, if on one side many times they are really ready and willing to grow up together with their own firm on the other hand they find on their way enormous difficulties due to the lack of experience and proper training.

The same is it true for Quadrifor (The Bilateral Institution for Developing Vocational Training and Services for Executives Cadres)clients and for educational institutions for managers. The entrepreneurs generally attend training courses only when they have to face very serious problems. They have to be able transform the information and skills acquired in immediate solutions to their problems but this is only a drastic and special solution.



- **No profit world and difficulty to find exposures**

Experts pointed out a special problem regarding the no-profit world. No profit entities do not have capital and for this reason they have difficulties to find exposures from the banks.

- **Low interest for no profit enterprises**

There is a very low interest regarding no profit enterprises. The low interest is not only at political level but is a common feeling.

IX. Solutions (Methods, Approaches, Structures) And Strategies (To Cope With These Emerging Needs At National Level)

- **Lack of financial resources and difficult to access to credit**

The experts think the solution to the problem can be the strengthening of the sharing bank guaranties with public fundings.

- **Lack of specific support**

One solution can be to address a more specific support to the



SMEs world but especially to the micro enterprises that are the enterprises more suffering for the problem.

- **Consultants expenses**

The solution is to suggest to chambers of commerce and to the Regions to allocate funds for consulting services and not only for training.

- **Entrepreneurs not trained**

The idea of the experts is to ask that also entrepreneurs has to be trained through INTERPROFESSIONAL FUNDS, changing the existing law.

- **No profit world and difficulty to find exposures**

A solution, shared by experts, can be to ask to the big banks to create a section for exposures addressed to no profit world (In Italy two big banks already made it).

- **Low interest for no profit enterprises**

The solution to ask to employer's associations to define a special group on the training and consultancy needs for no-profit enterprises.



Evaluation Of The Workshop

The eight experts and consultants attending the workshop filled the evaluation form.

1. I was informed clearly about the aim/scope of the workshop before the workshop

All participants answered they received the workshop agenda and topics in advance and they were informed. Usually they received the materials by the Associations involved.

2. The workshop met my expectations

6 yes 2 blank

3. In my opinion, the best topic/session was

For three of them the best topic was the one explanation of the findings of the Helsinki conference and the best practices of other countries. The others answered they preferred the session and the discussion on the current needs of SMEs.

4. I would develop the next workshop by

2 participants answered they will develop the next workshop in their association.

5. The main points of the workshop which I recall were

For five people on eight the point they recall better was about the difficulty to credit access. Two answered they recall better the point on best practices in the field of training and guidance



for SME's after the second year activity. One answered no one.

6. I hope that the following issues would be handled in the future

The problem of the access to credit for four experts, the problem of the training for young entrepreneurs for three of them, the problem related to the no profit world and the low interest on it.

7. The workshop duration was long enough

All participants answered it was too long.

8. I suggest that the next workshop would also be invited the following experts

No written suggestions

9. No further comments

After the workshop we organised two short meetings with no profit networks (ANTEAS and ETSI) and hotel association to discuss about possible next steps.

