



## II INMA workshop

The second workshop was predominantly devoted to validate INMA thematic areas with the particular attention to the prepared Strategic Management module.

Despite our efforts to gather a larger group of participants we finally managed to encourage the following representatives of various local institution and enterprises: International Business Studies Manager of WPBS, Regional Labour Office representative, representative of West Pomerania Economic Association, Szczecin Business Centre, regional director from the West Pomerania Marshal Office and the owner of the research and development company "Liber".

The main aim of the workshop was to open a discussion about the Strategic Management thematic module content as well as about other thematic areas being part of the project toolkit.

In the first part of the workshop, discussion was focused on the Innovation Agent profile and its Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Experts pointed out that the thematic areas are well structured and selected and potential future Agent is about to acquire a complete set of knowledge needed to fulfill his role. What is more, it is also important for the Agent to become well-known among the SME's, hence once the project is complete, the promotional process should continue to further disseminate benefits coming from his innovative activities potentially highly desired among entrepreneurs.

It was also stressed that during the turbulent economic situation, it might be very difficult for the agent to get into companies, particularly small ones, which are struggling to survive on the market and are rather reluctant to hire additional people. They allocate most of the financial resources for maintaining their position rather than finance the innovation. On the other hand, this might also be a chance for the Agent to convince the companies, that it is the investing in innovation that might come as a cure for their business and they should focus on it. This is a big challenge for the Agent. We can also include to the weaknesses the fact, that small enterprises are afraid of getting people from the business on board, making their financial data available for someone from the outside of the company, they also think, that they now best how to manage their own company from the innovation issues point of view rather than an Agent, who in their perception is just a person with only the theoretical knowledge with not much of an experience on the field.

Despite the above, participants see a bright future of Innovation Agents in the coming years. We know, that anything what is new is never easily accepted and adopted, there is time of hard work needed to make that popular and widely used among enterprises. Hence, it is important to prolong

this initiative after project completion and further develop in other activities, where the Innovation Agent profile might become the starting point.

As for the module structure, it was assessed quite positively, there were only doubts that the first three chapters are too theoretical and might be monotonous. However, it is always essential to provide some theoretical base, so that students can understand the practical part of the module.

Participant would see some of the chapters further developed and as everyone is hoping and expecting the right person selected for conducting the module will contribute to its development enriching the contents by its own practical examples.

The main barrier for some of the potential training participants might be the language as according to recruitment specifications all of them should demonstrate rather strong language skills. This is particularly needed for active input in the projects international platform, that is intended to gather all training users from the whole consortium in one place. A great number of unemployed women, who are currently seeking for the job, are unable to communicate in English.

The time devoted for realization of all modules might be too limited. There is quite a lot of material included in the toolkit and preferably, if possible, more time should be allocated.

To summarize it, the training programme looks very promising and everyone is looking forward for its realization. Upon completion, lessons should be learned and programme further fine-tuned for future implementation within other innovation activities in the region, nationally and within the EU.