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Business Support on Your Doorstep

## Training for new colleagues of the Enterprise Europe Network



21-22 April 2015

## Diving into the Enterprise Europe Network business in a new style

**Ro-Boost SMEs – new Romanian Consortium for 2015 – 2020 takes initiative in the begging of the journey**

**Regional Development Agency for West Region Romania**, Coordinator of the Romanian *RO-Boost SMEs* Consortium organized with the support of **EASME and DG Growth**, a decentralized training for newcomers in the Network, bringing a change in the tradition to get new colleagues familiarized with the Network in centralized events.

**RO-Boost SMEs Consortium**, entirely new to the Network, took the lead in this endeavor with the view to get acquainted in an intensive and relational setting with the Networks tools, techniques and good practices. The aim was to advance towards a speedy integration within the Network, grasp its *mise en scène* and get plugged in the Enterprise Europe Network environment.

The 2 days newcomers training took place in Timisoara and gathered **37 participants** from Poland, Bosnia, Germany United Kingdom and Romania, all newcomer staff within Enterprise Europe Network Partner organization who got together to learn and network. **The focus** of the training was threefold:

- From a **policy perspective** - To become knowledgeable about the Network's background, evolution and dynamic
- From an **organizational perspective** - to learn the ropes of the Networks structure and modus operandi
- From an **operational perspective** - bring together expertise of Enterprise Europe Network Partners to learn from their experience, share ideas, and discuss challenges and means to address them





The training was opened by Mr. **Sorin Maxim, General Director of West Regional Development Agency** by welcoming participants and presenting briefly facts and figures about Romanian West Region and the Ro-Boost SMEs Consortium which West RDA it coordinates since January 2015.

In the first day **Mr. Sven Schade, Policy Officer within DG Growth**, introduced participants into the European political and economic environment and the European Commission's role into supporting SMEs, especially with regard to impact public innovation support can generate. He discussed in detail about **the role of the European Commission in the Enterprise Europe Network**, history of the Network, challenges in terms of political dynamic and economic trends and changes in the 2015 – 2020 framework. During his intervention, Mr. Sven Schade emphasized how important is for Enterprise Europe Network partners to successfully build a "working" cooperation setting in the regional landscape to best fit the Network's mandate. Further debate was centred on the relationship between of innovation and internationalization and their role in the SMEs growth and competitiveness in the context of continuous dynamics of the markets and new trends.



**Mrs Darina Botsova, Project Advisor within EASME**, presented the executive setup within the Network, role of EASME in the process and means to communicate actively and continuously to contribute to the development of the Network, emphasizing the core mission to support SMEs develop in the context of the European internal market.

In the afternoon, **Mrs. Gabriele Hanisch, Enterprise Europe Network advisor for more than 20 years**, launched the audience into a discussion about **market access instruments**, presenting a variety of tools and means to foster transnational partnerships across Europe and **create impact for clients**. She exemplified different approaches to get SMEs on board, discussing about on do's and don'ts but also about cultural and market maturity variables. Practical examples of brokerage events and company missions carried out by Handwerk International Baden-Württemberg were presented, with accompanying explanations about things to consider to maximize impact and different typologies of events dependent on the outcome pursuit, sector particularities etc. Attention was raised regarding follow-up activities to measure impact achieved.





Mrs Gabriele Hanisch further proposed **three case studies for debate** which were analyzed by participants divided into groups. Ideas were exchanged among participants and further conclusions were drawn from this exercise with Gabriele's guidance related to the importance to

customize support on case-by-case basis, especially involving business support organizations such as incubators or clusters, and also related to creating advantages by engaging other European organizations and networks with the help of EEN Partners across Europe.



The second day started with a short quiz led by **Darina Botsova** to invigorate the atmosphere, just to follow up with an **interactive session about partnership process** and how to get most of it by making partnership agreements happen. This session was facilitated by **Mrs. Valerie Pondaven, Enterprise Europe Network Business Advisor with University of Greenwich**. She went through the partnership process step-by-step with clarifying examples of means to reach clients and undergo screening to surface partnership opportunities, client support throughout the process and closing the deal. Practical situations were analyzed together with participants bringing interesting cases into debate and sharing ideas about means to foster collaboration among SMEs.

In the afternoon session **Mrs. Darina Botsova** presented participants the **Enterprise Europe Network intranet and resources** made available to Partners to guide and help them through the different areas of expertise the Network's putting to use to help SMEs.



One last interactive session was then led by **Sven Schade** bringing into discussion the targeted **advisory service and role of Enterprise Europe Network advisors should play**, putting up for discussions 3 case studies analyzed by participants split in small groups. A bunch of ideas were brought to the table and debated with illustrating arguments from which participants gained insightful perspectives in how to deal with complex client requests and how to figure out means and resources to help clients seize the opportunities.

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All in all the case studies discussed were centered on the 'core' question: "How to create value for our clients, make them more competitive and generate impact on the European internal market" and got participants involved into the debate drawing valuable and resourceful lessons.

Last but not least the training offered participants the opportunities to get to know each other, learn about represented regions and discuss opportunities to collaborate within Enterprise Europe Network. They shared appreciative ideas and suggestions which made us draw at least one definitive verdict: this interactive session was interesting and constructive and we shall do it again.

As for concluding remarks, here's some of feedback:

*It was a pleasure to meet you at the Decentralized Training and try to give to those many newcomers a knowledgeable and meaningful start at the Network. Timisoara brought a lot of its charm to this experience!*

*Thank you and for your team for wonderful time in Timisoara it was a pleasure to be there.*

*Please receive our congratulations for the well-organized training in Timisoara and we'd like to express our gratitude to West RDA team.*

*It was a great pleasure meeting you during the Decentralised EEN Training at Timisoara.*

*It was a real pleasure to participate and am happy that my input met with your expectations.*

*It was my pleasure to meet you at the EEN Training. I have to say that training was organized very well and I was especially delighted by the parks in the center of the town :)*

*Thank you and for your team for wonderful time in Timisoara it was a pleasure to be there.*

*It was a pleasure meeting you all at the training arranged in Timisoara.*

*Thank you for your contributions. The explanations were very clear and necessary in my work*

*Practical examples and experiences with EEN are always the best. I appreciated especially the sincerity of trainers*

*I congratulate you for more than one thing: big achievement to bring the European training to Timisoara, excellent opportunity for networking among EEN consortia, very positive impression of Timisoara to all participants.*