

Matra Training for European Cooperation

(MTEC)

Practitioners

IPA/Structural Funds

November 23th – December 4th 2009



ECORYS Nederland BV

Key Information

- Objective: Training participants in the implementation of EU IPA/Structural Funds
- Period: November 23rd – December 4th, 2009
- Location: Rotterdam, The Netherlands
- Accommodation: Savoy Hotel, Rotterdam
- Target group: officials from regional and national authorities & agencies who are responsible for the management and implementation of EU IPA and Structural Funds projects
- Participants: 50 in total, drawn from 2 New Member States (Bulgaria and Romania), 3 Candidate Countries (Croatia, Macedonia and Turkey) and 4 potential Candidate Countries (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia)
- Applications: before October 5th, 2009
- Information: structuralfunds@ecorys.com

Introduction

Part of the accession is Chapter 21 of the Acquis, which is related to the regional policy and more specifically to the preparation for IPA/Structural Funds. For many decades the European Union has been supporting lagging regions with funds to improve economic and social conditions in these regions. To harvest the benefits from provided by IPA/Structural Funds, the Candidate Countries will have to continue their preparations to create an effectively functioning institutional and legislative system and proper administrative capacity to absorb and manage the funds.

Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU on 1st of January 2007. Croatia and Turkey are candidate countries; they started accession negotiations on 3 October 2005. In December 2005, the European Council granted the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia the status of a candidate country; accession negotiations have not started yet.

All the other Western Balkan countries are potential candidate countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia. The EU has repeatedly reaffirmed at the highest level its commitment for eventual EU membership of the Western Balkan countries, provided they fulfil the accession criteria. Albania was the first of the officially recognized potential Candidate countries to start the negotiations of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) in 2003. This was successfully agreed and signed in June 2006, completing the first major step toward Albania's full membership in the EU. The negotiations on SAA with Bosnia-Herzegovina started in November 2005, however, they were not completed yet as the country faces a number of reform challenges (i.e. police reform). Serbia started the SAA negotiations in October 2005. These were suspended in May 2006 and resumed in June 2007.

Montenegro commenced the negotiations on SAA in October 2005, as a part of Serbia-Montenegro. These were suspended in May 2006 and recommenced in September 2006 with independent Montenegro.

Although progress towards accession varies among countries, becoming proficient in European affairs is of key importance for the government administrations of all of these countries. Furthermore, the effective and efficient absorption of the Funds available is of crucial importance.

Government officials, especially from the Candidate Countries, are thus faced with the tremendous challenge of dealing with the Acquis and the new developments in the EU, as well as simultaneously dealing with domestically related affairs they cope with in their daily work. In these circumstances it is very difficult for government officials to obtain all necessary knowledge concerning the European policies and the required skills enabling them to contribute to the social dialogue both on the national and EU level. Even though the New Member States are fully involved in the Structural Funds, there remains a need for training, especially amongst the (potential) applicants and the more junior staff members. The MTEC course on IPA/Structural Funds is designed to help officials from the New Member States and the Candidate Countries to prepare for the day when they will have to find their own way in the EU regional policy issues.

In this course ECORYS Nederland BV has designed a comprehensive, tailor-made and intensive training course aimed at training regional and national government officials in the field of implementing and managing EU IPA/Structural Funds actions. It is clear that all participants should become fully acquainted with European regulations in the regional policy and IPA/Structural Funds and the implementation and management of these funds. The participants should be able to apply this knowledge in practice. For this purpose a skills development programme is integrated, which will give the participants the opportunity to apply theory to practical problems found in their own country. In this way the participants will be able to use the acquired knowledge in their working environment and feel confident in implementing IPA/Structural Funds.

Objectives of the course

The main objective of the course is to train the participants in The development of skills for project development, appraisal and implementation.

The programme takes the participants through all stages of the project life cycle: from programming/project development through implementation, financial management and control to monitoring and evaluation, and will result in a robust group of well-trained executives in the various countries. The focus will be as much as possible on the implementation of IPA/Structural Funds.

After the training the participants will:

- overview of differences application requirements Structural Funds, IPA decentralised and IPA centralised
- know how and have developed skills in identifying problems and formulating objectives (Logical Framework Analysis)
- know how to set up a partnership
- know how and have developed skills in identifying activities
- know the relevant regulations and know how to test their project on them
- know how, and have developed skills in project budgeting
- know how to set up implementation arrangements for the project
- know how to monitor a project
- know how to manage a project, including financial management
- know how to tender and test the quality of CBAs and feasibility studies
- know how to set up a publication plan for a project of programme
- know how to appraise a project.
- have gained knowledge on the Dutch practice and have established contacts

- have gained insight in practices from other countries and have established contact among each other.

This year ECORYS organises two training courses on IPA and Structural Funds: a one for programme managers and this one for practitioners.

The programme management course is meant for more experienced staff of the Managing Authorities/IPA units that implement IPA/Structural Funds and will cover all aspects of the Programme Cycle.

The practitioners' course, is directed to project development and project appraisal under IPA/Structural Funds. This course is (potential) applicants and project appraisers in the IPA/Structural Funds management without much experience.

Approach of the course

ECORYS uses an interactive approach as much as possible. Basic texts will be provided to be studied by the participants. The training modules contain a mix of teaching and interactive exercises.

Some modules contain presentations and questions and answers. Those are meant to transfer knowledge and skills. In other modules the participants will apply the learnt knowledge and skills by producing joint papers and holding presentations. Other modules are focussed on illustrating examples through study visits and presentations from other countries. During the training the participants have many opportunities to learn from each other as well.

Structure and contents of the course programme

A distinctive feature of the programme is the policy life cycle. The policy life cycle is a commonly accepted systematic approach to programming, programme and project elaboration, project implementation, evaluation, and corrective action.

The programme of the course includes different modules. They are part of a coherent framework (policy life cycle) and based on the same principles (e.g. logical framework).

The accent in the programme will be on project development, appraisal and implementation skills. Intertwined to the content-related parts are activities targeted at skills improvement.

The modules include:

- *Introduction EU IPA/Structural Funds Structures & PCM*

In this first introductory part of the course the following topics will be dealt with:

- IPA/Structural Funds in the EU, including state of the art in the countries;
- Project Cycle Management and project application requirements;
- Project pipeline development.

- *Project development*
 - Logical Framework Analysis;
 - Partnership, activities and indicators;
 - Project management and Risk Management;
 - Communication;
 - Budgeting and co-financing.

- *Rules and Regulations*
 - State aid;
 - Public procurement and PRAG.

- *Project evaluation studies*
 - Feasibility studies and CBA.

- *Excursions*
 - Excursions to projects and Management Authorities

- *Monitoring and Change Management*
 - Project Monitoring
 - Change management

- *Project Appraisal*
 - Project appraisal (theory)
 - Project appraisal assignment

The everyday practice of IPA/Structural Funds will receive considerable attention with field visits and study trips. Furthermore, practitioners from the Netherlands and other EC countries will be available to tell about their experiences. At last, there will be an exchange of learning experiences from the participants. For this purpose, the participants have to prepare a case of what they have learned.

Organisation

ECORYS Nederland BV

ECORYS Nederland BV is a fully independent applied economic research and advisory institute currently involved in many projects in various disciplines all over the world. ECORYS Nederland BV is specialised in economic strategy development, IPA/Structural Fund interventions, economic impact assessment, programming and training.

ECORYS Nederland BV has large-scale practical experience in the EU IPA/Structural Funds in Western Europe and New Member States of Central and Easter Europe. As a result it is aware of the major problems and potentials that arise during the implementation of IPA/Structural Funds throughout the whole EU. Furthermore, it is involved in numerous projects in EU candidate countries focused on the pre-accession strategy, including the preparation for EU IPA/Structural Funds and the establishment of an institutional framework.

Dates

The course will be held at the World Trade Centre in Rotterdam from the 23rd of November through to the 4th of December 2009. You will be expected to arrive in The Netherlands on November 22th. You will fly home on December 5th 2009.

Fees/Accommodation

The Netherlands Government will provide fellowships covering costs, such as international travel, board and lodging, visa and insurance, tuition fees, lecture materials and excursions in so far as included in the programme.

Participants will be accommodated in the Savoy Hotel in Rotterdam.

Teaching Staff

The teaching staff will consist of:

- Staff Members from ECORYS Nederland BV;
- Lecturers from several Structural Fund programmes in the Netherlands and other EC Countries.

Admission Requirements

The course is designed for government officials from regional development agencies or central and regional governments in Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Turkey, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Albania. In principle employees from any organization that is likely to play a role in the implementation of IPA/Structural Funds (e.g. as applicant or beginners within the Structural Funds/IPA Management) are potential participants.

The maximum number of participants is 50. Important points on which the selection of participants will be based are:

- The participants should be *fluent* in spoken and written English;
- The participant should be highly motivated and enthusiastic;
- The participant should be comfortable with sharing their knowledge, perhaps in the form of a solo presentation;
- The participant should clearly demonstrate an immediate need for training on IPA/Structural Funds
- The participant is either involved in the IPA/ Structural Funds Management/project appraisal or a (potential) applicant without much experience.

Applications

Applications should be made through the Netherlands Embassy in the applicant's country. Application forms should be downloaded from the website: www.cross-agency.nl.

Go to Downloads, click on application form for the relevant course, click on your country; you can then download the application form.

Applications (duly signed by the applicant and his or her employer) should be submitted before **October 5th 2009**, through the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the applicants' country. By this date, all forms, including the signed employer statement, must be received by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Please note that the application instructions on the website need to be followed carefully.

Only fully documented applications will be considered. Admission will be on a competitive basis. The participants will be selected by the steering committee.

Applicants who have been accepted for the course are expected to attend. In case of no-shows or cancellations within 3 weeks before the start of the course, the organisers reserve the right to claim any costs incurred (e.g. pre-paid flight tickets) from the applicant's employer.

Information and course organisation

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More information on the courses developed under the MTEC programme

- The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in your country can supply more copies of this leaflet and information about the other courses.
- For further information, you can contact either the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands or EVD/CROSS:

EVD/CROSS

P.O. Box 20105

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Website: www.cross-agency.nl

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Contact person: Mr. Michiel Zimmer