

WARMIA MAZURY

1. Title of the practice REGIONAL INNOVATION SUPPORT SYSTEM
2. Precise theme/issue tackled by the practice <p>Development processes favor regions where large conurbations are located, ample resources of highly qualified workforce are available and modern, innovative infrastructure make a possible to maintain active contacts with abroad. Unfortunately the province of Warmia and Mazury is not reckoned among such regions. The European Union highlights the need to develop innovations, whose aim is to increase the growth rate, spread the prosperity to poorer regions and catch up with the more competitive regions. For this reason, a starting point for the Regional System of Innovation Support is to stimulate absorbing innovations by regional companies and create good climate for competitive business development.</p>
3. Objectives of the practice <p>The Regional System of Innovative Support (RISS) aims to effectively stimulate regional resources in order to increase competitiveness and wealth of Warmia and Mazury. The RISS aims to evaluate the status of innovation by increasing spending on innovations and raising awareness of the entrepreneurs' (SME) about importance of innovations. Practice should be efficient at creating a feeling that that the situation of the enterprises depends mostly on the innovations. Practice opens up still new development opportunities for those who want to be competitive. The effectiveness of such support may be ensured thanks to co- operation between institutions and companies operating in this field. Building innovative potential involves on the one hand elimination of mentally barriers to introduce "new technology", on the other hand increase pro- innovative awareness among enterprises. RISS aims to build of innovative potential undertakings actions increasing the capacity of regional enterprises to absorb innovations and found for innovations are promoted. The System aims to support the entrepreneurs, who wish to join the group of modern, competitive companies with strong market position, who plan their development on the basis of innovative solutions.</p>
4. Location <p>The districts of Warmia and Mazury region (21)</p>
5. Detailed description of the practice <p><u>- Origin</u> Network was created thanks to cooperation between Warmia and Mazury Regional Development Agency in Olsztyn and Marshall Office in Olsztyn as a result of implementation of Regional Innovative Strategy (RIS) - a document which outlined the basic activities aimed at increasing region's competitiveness. Results and analyses on various innovative aspects in the socio- economic dimension and the willingness to support each and every innovative attitude in the region have impacted the method of formulating strategic objectives under horizontal approach. One of the objectives was building innovative potential. Building innovative potential involves elimination of barriers to enterprise and opening up new development opportunities for those who want to be competitive. The system meets the objective of strategy, helps to realize the foundation of RIS.</p> <p><u>Timescale</u> RISS started on 2005 (IV) – start- up phase: creating of system : employment, equipment, 2006 (I) – implementation phase.</p> <p><u>Bodies involved / implementation</u> Lead Partner and Coordinator represented organization and university: - Marshall office acted as the Lead Partner of the project</p>

- Warmia and Mazury Regional Development Agency responsible for network
- Warmia and Mazury University (Quality and Innovation Centre, The technology and innovation transfer centre).
It was crucial to involve university because of they are responsible for research and transfer technology
Process and detailed content of the practice

1. RSWI is a structure of 21 Poviats Contact Points in the whole territory of Warmia and Mazury Region.
2. Consultants search for the innovative entrepreneurs and offer them assistance.
3. Consultants providing necessary assistance remain at entrepreneurs' service at each Point. Consultants provide information related to various aid programmes addressed to entrepreneurs and instruct them how to benefit from the programmes.
4. Consultants help to create communication channels between entrepreneurship and research and development centers for the process of developing innovative companies. Both the WMRDA and centers would make a technological audit. Regional System of Innovation Support is the one responsible for supporting this process.
5. Consultants create the database of companies located in the region and remain the contact with them.

Financial framework

The project is financed by Structural Funds – European Regional Development Funds, and public budget.

6. Evaluation

Possible demonstrated results

- Introducing some changes to companies according to the directives after technological audits.
- Share of companies that have introduced innovations.
- Rising of to the consultancy services.
- Companies which started innovative activity.
- Annual Innovative Exhibition - the companies demonstrated innovative products or services.
- Innovation's catalogue of the Warmia and Mazury Region.
- Leader of Innovation- annual event while the most innovative regional companies are awarded.

Possible success factors

In some cases proper exploring the knowledge and funds gives an advantage a company to conduct more innovative and competitive business, to gain economies of scale and to score an advantage over the competitors. The increasing innovative companies have an influence on the economic situation of the region.

Difficulties encountered

- Skills of consultants work without supervision.
- Differences in districts area - inadequate amounts of consultants on the area of districts.
- Lack of pro-innovative enterprises.
- Indicators of project – small flexible indicators.(unexpected situation as a crisis could have an influence for the fulfillment of project)
- Entrepreneurs afraid risking introducing the research results.

Transferability of the practice to other regions

Person responsible for implementation of project are convinced that method would be transfer to the other regions. Experiences shows that it depends on the willingness of the consultant and owner who want to increase the competitiveness of the company.

Contribution to enhancement of CBC cooperation - Adaptability for SME support

The practice also serves as a bridge- building between public organizations engaged in the RISS and Small and Medium Enterprises, brings them closer.

7. Lessons learnt from the practice	
<p>The practice shows us that system is able to support the entrepreneurs who wish to join to the modern, competitive companies with a strong market position, who plan their development on the basis of innovative solutions. Currently SME's of Warmia and Mazury have gradually learned to take opportunity to use knowledge and transfer it to the companies, break the mentality barriers to make a contact with the institutions which could help them to increase theirs ability to introduce innovations.</p>	
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REGIONAL CONTACT POINTS - THE EXPLOITATION OF EUROPEAN FUNDS BY ENTERPRISES	
2. Precise theme/issue tackled by the practice	
<p>The EU finance has opened up great development opportunities for companies. The position of Warmia and Mazury province among the poorest EU regions, together with current development challenges, do not allow for any waste of funds and time. Period 2007-2013 has created opportunities for enterprises to apply for funds for investments because benefits would driver from the development and modernization of the existing companies. It is extremely important to ensure the smooth cash flow between companies and institutions responsible for implementation European funds on the regional level. A serious problem would be to cope with requirements to apply for funds. In that reason is very important to create good communication channel between companies and institutions to better utilization of European funds.</p>	
3. Objectives of the practice	
<p>Practice refers to the exploitation of European funds on the regional level. The Regional Operational Program Warmia and Mazury for the years 2007-2013 (ROP W&M) is a planning document of executive character, the major goal "Increase of economic competitiveness and the number of quality and network links"and detailed objective steam directly from the basic development plan i.e. Strategy of social's development of Warmia and Mazury viovodship until 2020, being another instrument for its implementation. The objectives of ROP W&M for the years 2007- 2013 will be achieved by means of implementation of measures within seven priority subject axes supported by the means of technical aid. The territorial government of Warmia and Mazury viovodship is fully responsible for preparation and implementation of the regional operational program financed from the structural funds for the first time. The management</p>	

board of Warmia and Mazury areas holding the function of manager of the voivodship responsible for operational tasks and assuring its appropriate implementation.

The board has assigned Warmia and Mazury Regional Development Agency to implement priority-entrepreneurship. The main objective priority is increasing of the capability and competitiveness of Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) from Warmia and Mazury.

Access to finance for SME is priority because new investments bring about profits for company on each level, would have a significant influence for increase of their competitiveness. WMARR created contact point to better utilization of European funds. Consultants provide support related to the realization of project from public funds. They give the services on each level of project.

4. Location

The practice has a country dimension.

5. Detailed description of the practice

Origin

After the joining Poland at European Union, country as an entrant received a money from UE budget on the favourable conditions. Funds are assigned for the equalization disproportions between regions. To raise the competitiveness of region will be possible by increasing spending on new investment in company, implementation of innovative solutions. On that reason is significant for region to exploit opportunities and use funds properly.

Development of economy makes a need for free of charge services offered to enterprises who want to apply for funds to develop business. Polish Agency for Development of Entrepreneurship created the support system for it. The contact points (CP) are a part of system. Employers who have entered a contact w CP expected that consultants will provide them support with regards to EU funds, help them to submit an application and realize project according to the rules. Very important is to keep good relations between enterprises and institution because it would have a significant influence for better utilization funds.

Timescale

Contact points have been acting since 2002(period before accession) so far.

Bodies involved / implementation

-Polish Agency for Development of Enterprises (Authority institution).

-Warmia and Mazury Regional Development Agency - responsible for CP on the regional level.

Process and detailed content of the practice

Contact points have operated on the regional and local level. Consultants are engaged in Olsztyn (regional CP) and in some districts. Beside that consultants are on duty in districts once a week.

1. Employers and persons who want to set up a business look for information related to the European funds.

2. "Clients" contacted with consultants by email, call, website or personal contact.

3. Usually "clients" get information at once. If the problem must be consult they wait for answer maximum three days.

4. Services are monitored - all calls are recorded, the consultants fill in the forms.

Financial framework –

The project has been financing within Structural Funds and public budget on the framework of Operational Programme Human Resources (sub- action 2.2.1).

6. Evaluation

Possible demonstrated results

- Exploitation of allocated funds properly. Warmia-Mazury Regional Development Agency exploited allocated money within priority subject axis "entrepreneurship" and signed agreements with companies for co-financing.
- Innovations and modernizations introduced into companies.
- Clients returned.
- Services grew by over 100 %.

Possible success factors

- The regional economy will change for the better.
- The regional innovation level will improve
- Wealthy society
- The bridge building between companies and enterprises.

Difficulties encountered

- Employers complain about trouble procedures, documentation. Complaints are passed on the management authority.
- Work intensity links to client's fluctuation – it isn't possible to predict the number of clients and plan work.
- Area of services is depending on the period.
- Quantity of telephone calls.
- Impatient clients.
- Call's recording

Transferability of the practice into other regions

Person responsible for implementation of project are convinced that method would be transfer to the other regions. Experiences shows that it depends on the willingness of the consultant and owners who want to invest in development of company.

Adaptability for SME support

The practice also serves as a bridge- building between public organizations engaged in the CP and Small and Medium Enterprises, brings them closer.

7. Lessons learnt from the practice

Short overview

Creation of support system for enterprises was important for better funds use. Enterprises should take a chance to co-finance of investments and apply for money from EU. The practice shows us that Contact Points are able to support the entrepreneurs who wish to apply for EU funds, who plan their development on the basis of structural funds. Currently SME's of Warmia and Mazury have gradually learned to take opportunity to seek money for the new investments. On the one hand it would bring significant shift for the regional economy. On the other hand was created bridge between enterprises and institutions.

8. Contact information

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9. Other possible interesting information

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1. Title of the practice INVESTOR ASSISTANCE CENTRE IN WARMIŃSKO-MAZURSKIE REGION

2. Precise theme/issue tackled by the practice

Poland offers foreign investors many incentives for investments which are tailored to their needs. There are possibilities to link various forms of aid - e.g. in Special Economic Zones - and tax incentives that are issued by local authorities councils. The EU structural funds also support investments in Poland. These are not only direct, but also indirect investments, which help to build and modernize the existing infrastructure. Economic promotion and attracting new investors are strategic objectives of the regional authorities. Regional economy is in bad shape, the level of competitiveness is low. Moreover there are a small number of foreign investments in the region, the companies do not have strong enough capital. But this process is improving.

3. Objectives of the practice

The main objective of the INVESTOR ASSISTANCE CENTRE IN WARMIŃSKO-MAZURSKIE REGION (IAC) is economic promotion of warmińsko-mazurskie province and increasing of the flow of foreign investments to voivodship. This objective is fulfilled by professional service of foreign investors potentially interested in investments on the warmia-mazury region. The main task of IAC is to group the investments in the province as well as providing consulting for the potential investors. It would have an impact on the entrepreneurship and clusters. INVESTOR ASSISTANCE CENTRE offers investors support at every stage of the investment process. The Centre is contact point for everyone who consider invest capital within Warmińsko-Mazurskie region. Center supports exporting activity of entrepreneurs from region .At the Investment Centre entrepreneurs can obtain specific information on Polish regulations, sector indicators and investment proposals, such as business and local authority initiatives. The Investment Centre has co-operated with local government and government institutions, its knowledge of local conditions and the experience of the Center's staff will positively assist a business person in ultimately making an investment decision. The Centre promotes the main advantages of voivodship:

4. Location

Warmińsko-mazurskie voivodship (headquarter is in Olsztyn)

5. Detailed description of the practice

- Origin

Investor Assistance Centre in Warmia and Mazury Region was brought to life on the basis of tripartite agreement between Polish Information and Foreign Investment Agency, The Marshall Office of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship and Warmińsko-Mazurska Regional Development Agency in Olsztyn in 2005

Timescale

The Investor Assistance in Warmia and Mazury Region was brought to life in 2005.

Bodies involved / implementation

- Polish Information and Foreign Investment Agency,
- The Marshall Office of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship
- Warmińsko-Mazurska Regional Development Agency in Olsztyn in 2005

Process and detailed content of the practice

The main activities of Centre are following:

- Professional assistance and drafting complex offers of areas and objects prepared for new infestations.
- providing information for potential investors - assistance in the investment process,
- distribution and promotion of offers not only in the country but also abroad,
- finding proper localization – both Greenfield and Brownfield,
- organizing cooperation with foreign partners,
- trade mission preparation - economic promotion of the region,
- events organizing,
- participation in domestic and foreign fairs,
- monitoring the current situation concerning investment issues,
- distribution of promotional materials,

Legal framework

Investor Assistance in Warmia and Mazury Region is acting on the basis tripartite agreement.

Financial framework

Currently self- financing.

6. Evaluation

Possible demonstrated results

- Cooperation with the Polish Information and Foreign Investments Agency (PAIIZ) in Warsaw guarantees high level of services (maintaining PAIIZ standards).
- Award for the best land- the competition aim is to choose the best area for investments.
- Common events fe. economy forum, mission.
- Establishing contacts between enterprises.
- Investors number
- Adjustment of investment offers.
- Organization of Foreign Missions to border region – Kalingradzki district
- Updating the investment offers

Possible success factors

- More investments in Warmia-Mazury will have a positive influence on the regional economy.
- An innovation solutions for companies would appear.
- Border regions will take common actions to develop the international cooperation.

Difficulties encountered

- Municipalities don't want to enter cooperation with investor assistance centre. Beside that Offices don't assign person responsible for contact with investors.
- Lack of actual dates.
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Transferability of the practice to other regions

Person responsible for implementation of project are convinced that method would be transfer to the other regions. Experiences shows that it depends on the willingness of the consultant and owners who want to invest in development of company.

Contribution to enhancement of CBC cooperation - Adaptability for SME support

The practice also serves as a bridge- building between enterprises from differences regions, brings them closer.

7. Lessons learnt from the practice

The practice shows us that system is able to support the entrepreneurs who wish to invest in region, exploit business opportunity to grow the business. Investors have a chance to get professional support, experienced of the Center's staff will positively assist a business person in ultimately making an investment decision. Beside that very important is an organizing common events between border regions, f.e. missions, economy forum. It would have positive effect on the export activity and exchange knowledge between enterprises.

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