

Matra Training for European Cooperation

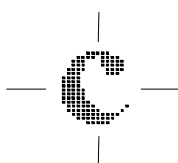
(MTEC)

Structural Funds

October 30th – November 17th 2006



ECORYS Nederland BV



Netherlands Institute of International
Relations, "Clingendael"

Key Information

- Objective: Training participants in the implementation and management of EU Structural Funds
- Period: October 30th – November 17th, 2006
- Location: The Hague, The Netherlands
- Accommodation: NH Hotel, The Hague
- Target group: officials from regional and national authorities & agencies who are responsible for the management and implementation of EU Structural Funds
- Participants: 50 in total, drawn from 10 New Member States (Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia) and the acceding and candidate member countries (Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Turkey and Serbia and Montenegro)
- Applications: before September 15th, 2006
- Information: viera.spanikova@ecorys.com

Introduction

Part of the accession is Chapter 21 of the Acquis, which is related to regional policy and more specifically to the preparation for 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 future assistance provided by the Structural Funds, the Candidate Countries will have to continue their preparations to create an effectively functioning institutional and legislative system as well as sufficient administrative capacity to manage the funds.

Negotiations on Chapter 21 were opened with Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia in April 2000 and with Latvia, Lithuania, Malta and Slovakia in March 2001. Bulgaria and Romania followed in November 2001 and March 2002. The negotiations on this Chapter were closed with the 10 countries in December 2002 and with Bulgaria and Romania in 2004. The Chapter has just been opened with Turkey and Croatia in 2005.

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 are faced with in their daily work. In these circumstances it will be very difficult for government officials to obtain all necessary knowledge concerning the European policies as well as 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 more junior staff members. The MTEC course on 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 EU regional policy.

In this course ECORYS Nederland BV and the Clingendael Institute have joined forces to design a comprehensive, tailor-made and intensive training course training regional and national government officials in the field of implementing and managing EU Structural Funds. It is clear that all participants should become fully acquainted with European regulations in the regional policy and 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 managing Structural Funds.

Objectives of the course

The main objective of the course is to train *the participants in the management of EU Structural Fund mechanisms after the accession and to develop skills and attitudes necessary to play an active role in the development and implementation of national and European regional policies.*

The programme takes the participants through all stages of the policy life cycle, from programme management, programming, implementation to monitoring and evaluation and financial management and control, 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 the Structural Funds.

After the training, the participants will:

- Know about different actors and institutions in the decision making and legislative procedures in the EU, especially in the field of regional policy;
- Be able to apply planning and programming techniques in the context of National Development Plan, Community Support Framework, Single Programme Document, Programme Complement, Sectoral Operational Programme and Regional Operational Programme process;
- Understand how Structural Funds influence and complement public finance;
- Be able to deal with promotion and preparation of programme implementation and have had some examples of implementation of Structural Funds in other countries;
- Have fundamental skills, for programme implementation such as project development, project appraisal, project selection, risk analysis and cost and benefit analysis;
- Have fundamental skills and knowledge on financial management and control;
- Develop skills necessary for the adequate implementation of EU regulations and general skills such as (international) negotiating
- Know about the monitoring and evaluation in a EU Structural funds context;
- Be able to help create an appropriate Administrative Capacity to manage the Structural Funds in their own country;
- Be able to and feel confident to play a role in the management of the Structural Fund policy life cycle;
- Have gained more knowledge on good practices from other countries.

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 working.

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 papers together and holding presentations. Other modules are focussed on showing 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 (eg. logical framework).

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

The modules include:

- *EU Structural Funds History, Concepts and Context*

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

- Development of Structural Funds in the EU;
- The institutional framework of the EU and the Treaties;
- New Treaties and Institutions;
- Structural Fund concepts and Regulations;
- Structures and Models for organising and managing the Structural Funds;
- Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (optional module).

- *Strategic Planning and Programming*

- Key concepts in Structural Funds planning and programming;
- Structural Fund Programming in practice;
- SWOT-analysis;
- Setting Objectives and Priorities;
- Establishing measures;
- Logical Framework Analysis.

- *Implementation and absorption capacity*

- Project pipeline and absorption capacity;
- Project promotion and project development;
- Practice of project development

- Project appraisal and project selection;
- Risk analysis;
- Cost Benefit Analysis.

- *Financial management and control*
 - Establishing financial tables;
 - Audit trail;
 - Co-financing;
 - The control process;
 - Integration of Structural Funds into the national public finance system.

- *Monitoring and Evaluation*
 - Differences between pre-accession programmes and Structural Funds;
 - Establishing indicators;
 - The actors in the monitoring process;
 - Experiences with different monitoring systems;
 - Ex-ante, on-going and ex-post evaluation;
 - Contracting out evaluation exercises;
 - The functioning of a monitoring system
 - Concrete examples.

- *Negotiations*
 - General negotiations skills;
 - International and European Negotiation Processes
 - Bilateral Bargaining with the European Union
 - Multilateral Bargaining within the European Union
 - The Behaviour of Effective Interstate Negotiators

The everyday practice of 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, Structural Fund interventions, economic impact assessment, programming and training.

ECORYS Nederland BV has large-scale practical experience in the EU Structural Funds in Western Europe. As a result it is aware of the major problems and potentials that arise during the implementation of Structural Funds. It is involved in numerous projects in Central and Eastern Europe for their pre-accession strategy, which includes the preparation for EU Structural Funds and the establishment of an institutional framework.

The Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Clingendael

The Clingendael Institute is an independent, non-profit, academic institute situated in The Hague, specialising in policy-making in the field of international relations.

The Clingendael Institute focuses its expertise on European integration and international security. The Clingendael European Studies Programme (CESP) develops, unites and disseminates topical expertise on European Union policy issues. Its research focuses on the political and administrative context of the European Union, the borders of the EU, current internal and external EU policy developments, and the position of The Netherlands in the enlarging Union.

Dates

The course will be held at the NH Hotel in the Hague from the 30th of October through to the 17th of November 2006. You will be expected to arrive in The Netherlands on October 29th.

Fees/Accommodation

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

Participants will be accommodated in the NH Hotel in The Hague.

Teaching Staff

The teaching staff will consist of:

- Staff Members from ECORYS Nederland BV;
- Staff Members from the Clingendael Institute;
- 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 Accession Countries, Turkey and Croatia. In principle employees from any organization that is likely to play a role in the management of Structural Funds (e.g. as Implementing Body, Managing authority or Paying Authority) are potential participants.

The maximum number of participants is 50. Important points on which the selection of participants will be largely 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 Structural Funds.

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 the **15th of September, 2006**, through the Royal Dutch Embassy in the applicants' country. By this date, all forms, including the signed employer statement, must be received by the Royal Netherlands Embassy. 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

ECORYS Nederland BV Region, Strategy & Entrepreneurship

P.O. Box 4175

3006 AD Rotterdam

The Netherlands

Telephone : +31 10 453 86 54

Fax : +31 10 453 86 50

E-mail : viera.spanikova@ecorys.com

Contact person: Mrs. Viera Spanikova

More information on the courses developed under the MTEC programme

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

EVD/CROSS

P.O. Box 20105

2500 EC The Hague

The Netherlands

Telephone: +31 70 778 81 39

Website: www.cross-agency.nl

E-mail: crossonline@info.evd.nl

Contact person: Mr. Diederik ter Haar