ΕΝΔΙΑΜΕΣΗ ΔΙΑΧΕΙΡΙΣΤΙΚΗ ΑΡΧΗ
ΠΕΡΙΦΕΡΕΙΑΣ ΑΝΑΤΟΛΙΚΗΣ ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΙΑΣ & ΘΡΑΚΗΣ

Project Development Lab 1 Summary Report

Sustaining the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process in Eastern Macedonia and Thrace

6-7 May, 2015	Project Development Lab 1, Komotini, Greece

SMART SPECIALISATION PLATFORM

THE FIRST PROJECT DEVELOPMENT LAB IN THE REGION OF EASTERN MACEDONIA AND THRACE

1. INTRODUCTION

This report[1] summarises the main outcomes of the first of two Project Development Labs (PDLs), which took place in Komotini on 6-7 May 2015. The Labs aim to support next steps in progressing and sustaining the entrepreneurial discovery process in the region. First the rationale and approach are explained, followed by an overview of the process applied during this first lab and of its main results.

2. RATIONALE AND APPROACH

Over the period of November 2014-May 2015 four focus groups have taken place, aimed at developing the entrepreneurial process of discovery (EDP) in specific thematic areas[2]. In order to further advance the ideas emerged from those events, two Project Development Labs have been scheduled, aiming to both further sustain the process, keeping EDP focus group participants interested and engaged in the EDP process, and to increase 'absorption capacity' of R&I funds when calls for proposals are launched. In the latter case, initial business ideas should be further developed[3] and obtain further support by interested stakeholders, in order to be better prepared for future funding opportunities when they arise. Unlike the EDP focus groups, the labs do not focus on any single thematic area, but operate as two consecutive events, both covering all four of the thematic areas. The first Lab took place on 6-7 May 2015 during a two-day event, the second Lab followed in June.

The methodology for the first PDL underwent several iterations, taking into account the need of the region for an internal meeting between the national and regional administrations. Therefore the first Lab has been designed to be a closed technical workshop that would address the programme-specific issues (including checking the 'fundability') of the ideas collected (i.e., identification of relevant funding sources, applicable state-aid rules, output and result indicators, revision of the EDP-provided budgets and time schedules) and assessing the degree of maturity of each of them in terms of the business and the research aspects. As an outcome, PDL1 envisaged specific suggestions for improvement to be

---

addressed by the stakeholders at a later stage of the process. REMTh's RIS3 Management Unit[4] were envisaged to use the results of PDL1 towards completing their Action Plan, in preparing draft calls for proposals, in addressing legal and administrative issues related to such calls, and in aligning them with the planned calls at national level. Finally, this two day exercise had been seen as an opportunity for the members of the Management Unit to learn on-the-job how to develop programme- or funding-aware action plans and be able to replicate the entire process each time a new round of EDP focus groups would be launched.

Detailed instructions were provided to all participants one week in advance of the meeting (30 April 2015), together with the URLs of the documentation that would be referenced during the meeting (texts of Operational Programmes, EU regulations, minutes of the EDP workshops), a fiche that would be used for the discussion, the codification of the information that would be needed to fill the fiche and a copy of the RDI Funding Guide for the region that has been developed by JRC-IPTS as part of the Preparatory Action. Output and result indicators of the Regional and the National Operational Programmes relevant to the regional RIS3 were also collected and distributed during the event.

3. PROCESS AND OUTCOMES

Composition of participants

In addition to JRC-IPTS, the Managing Authority and a group of supporting external experts, participants in the first PDL included representatives of (see Appendix II for the full list of Participants):

▪ national government agencies in charge of the co-ordination of programme preparation and implementation with extensive expertise on the relevant ESIF regulations including state-aid rules, ex ante conditionalities and the national RIS3;

▪ regional government directorates whose responsibilities are closely linked to the regional RIS3 priorities;

▪ regional higher education and research organisations.

---

[4] According to the latest version (Version 9 – April 2015) of the RIS3 document, the Management Unit was envisaged to consist of 4-5 highly skilled individuals coming from the Managing Authority, the Regional Government Directorates and the regional HEIs. Its main responsibilities include: (a) the elaboration, the continuous update and the execution of the Action Plan; (b) running the monitoring system and reporting on the progress in achieving its targets/objectives; (c) co-ordinating the activities of the so-called Knowledge and Innovation Communities; (d) transforming the RIS3 strategic objectives into operational objectives and their delegation to the stakeholders; (e) establishing networks with other Regions; (f) engaging in proactive fundraising and drafting proposals with the Region as beneficiary; (g) disseminating the outcomes of any RIS3-related activity to the stakeholders and (h) planning and executing future instances of the entrepreneurial discovery process with the help of the KICs.

Discussion on 'fundability' of ideas

The participants discussed the 44 project ideas generated in the four EDP focus groups (see list of ideas in Annex III) , covering issues such as effectiveness, appropriateness, delivery mechanisms, project selection criteria, fitness to the national RIS3, state aid rules and their implications for launching calls in each of the areas discussed, etc.[5] A significant portion of the discussion was also devoted to clusters, since cluster formation projects were suggested in all four EDP focus groups. Representatives of GSRT agreed to share call texts with the regional Managing Authority and the representatives of the state-aid unit in the Ministry of National Economy proposed to check any draft call texts for compliance with state aid rules.

Classification of ideas

A detailed mapping of the delivery instruments that the Managing Authority intends to use in implementing the ROP was presented (see Appendix II). This was then used as a basis for discussing the ideas and to check under which instrument they would fit best. To this end, some ideas were split into several components. The results of this discussion are presented in Appendix III. The participants found that two of the 44 EDP focus group ideas were not sufficiently well defined to be further processed (ideas with reference EDP3WG4P1 and EDP4WP2P3) and that one was incompatible with ESIF regulations (reference EDP2WG2P1). For the remaining 41 ideas, 50 components were identified and linked to three main funding sources: 30 to REMTh's Regional Operational Programme (ROP), 8 to the Operation Programme (OP) Competitiveness, Entrepreneurship and Innovation and 12 to the OP Rural Development (Agri Funds). In terms of ERDF investment priorities, 14 components were classified under 1b, 3 under 2b, 2 under 2c, 3 under 3a, 14 under 3d and 2 under 4b (see Appendix III). Finally, 14 components were classified under Measures 4, 16 and 19 (Community-Led Local Development - CLLD) of the OP Rural Development. In conclusion, a majority of the idea components seems to fit well in the ROP. As expected, due to the significant share of the primary sector in the region, OP Rural Development will be another major funding source.

One indirect benefit of the event is that local research providers, i.e. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have become aware of the full range of ideas discussed during the EDP focus groups and were exposed to some implementation issues that might be relevant to them. HEIs could act on this information in planning technology transfer and mobility initiatives.

---

[5] Questions arising from the discussion include: Are all needs of the four value chains covered with the ideas collected? Should proposed ideas be ranked according to their expected return on investment? Should public funding be provided to all project ideas proposed, and what is the rationale for providing public funding as opposed to private funding?

Additional instruments for 'soft' actions

The remainder of the event was spent on discussing implementation options for two EDP case studies that had both research and entrepreneurial components. These can be seen to demonstrate that although a "best-fitting" instrument had been assigned to them during the previous discussions, alternative and potentially more attractive delivery instruments could also be considered to implement them. The discussion that followed highlighted that although some projects – mainly soft actions in creative tourism – can be funded under the delivery instruments proposed in Appendix III they might create more impact if considered under the perspective of Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI) or Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) or Public-Private Partnerships (PPP). For example, the Managing Authority has recently contracted a consultant to develop an ITI-based project called "The Cultural Via Egnatia". The CLLD instrument cannot be used yet, due to the fact that it is part of the OP Rural Development, which has not reached a final version yet. The participants agreed that all three could be considered as interesting topics for PDL2. Appendix IV presents a list of ideas that could be considered for implementation through ITI or CLLD.

Internationalisation

JRC-IPTS stressed the importance of including an international dimension in the delivery instruments, e.g. by including internationalisation as one of the project selection criteria in a call for proposals. As ERDF rules do not allow to fund directly beneficiaries outside the region, ways should be explored to enable sourcing of knowledge from outside the region, e.g. by outsourcing part of the tasks to parties outside of the region (and if necessary, to identify the "outsourced" partners already in their proposals), to seek for consortium partners that want to collaborate without receiving funding, or through cooperation with other regions.

RIS 3 governance

The critical role of the future RIS3 Management Unit in routing stakeholders' ideas to the most appropriate delivery instrument was stressed by JRC-IPTS. In order to be able to make full use of all delivery instruments available for implementation of the RIS3, such a Management Unit must be operational. A Governance Working Group with participation of key stakeholders is currently developing a proposal for a governance structure adapted to the region's needs in order to effectively implement the RIS3.

APPENDIX I – LIST OF PDL1 PARTICIPANTS

No.	Name	Affiliation	6.5.2015	7.5.2015
1	Karel HAEGEMAN	IPTS-JRC	✓	✓
2	Elisabetta MARINELLI	IPTS-JRC	✓	✓
3	Vassileios PITSINIGKOS	Managing Authority REMTh	✓	✓
4	Panagiotis KOUDOUMAKIS	Managing Authority REMTh	✓	✓
5	Ioannis KESSANLIS	Managing Authority REMTh	✓	✓
6	Christos EMMANOUILIDIS	IPTS-JRC Expert	✓	✓
7	Effie AMANATIDOU	IPTS-JRC Expert	✓	✓
8	Ioannis TOLIAS	IPTS-JRC Expert	✓	✓
9	Michalis METAXAS	IPTS-JRC Expert	✓	✓
10	Konstantinos KOKKINOPLITIS	Managing Authority REMTh Consultant	✓	✓
11	George TSAKIRIS	REMTh - Rural Development Directorate	✓	
12	Achilleas SACHPATZIDIS	REMTh - Veterinary Directorate	✓	
13	Konstantinos KALOUDIS	REMTh - Development Planning Directorate	✓	
14	Paraskevi CHOURIDOU	REMTh - Development Planning Directorate	✓	✓
15	Panagiotis CHATZINIKOLAOU	GSRT, Agro-food Platform Co-ordinator	✓	✓
16	Nikolaos SARGIANOS	GSRT, Materials Platform Co-ordinator	✓	✓
17	Pantelis BOTSARIS	Democritus University of Thrace / Vice-Rector	✓	
18	Dimitrios BANTEKAS	REMTh Institute of Technology / Vice-Rector	✓	
19	Damianos STATHAKIS	REMTh Institute of Technology Consultant	✓	
20	Evangelos STOURAITIS	Ministry of National Economy / State Aid Unit	✓	✓
21	Katerina MARA	Ministry of National Economy / State Aid Unit	✓	✓
22	Emmanuela KARAPATAKI	Central Managing Authority	✓	✓
23	Smaro ZISSOPOULOU	Central Managing Authority	✓	✓
24	Michael DRITSAS	Managing Authority "Competitiveness & Enterpreneurship"	✓	✓
25	Natassa LAMBRINIDOU	REMTh		✓

SMART
SPECIALISATION
PLATFORM

APPENDIX II – LIST OF ROP-REMTH DELIVERY INSTRUMENTS & THEIR PUBLIC FUNDING BUDGETS.

Code	Title	Short Summary or Comments	Public Funding (€)
1.1b.1.1	New Product Development Grants for SMEs	Individual SME investments in applied research aimed at product innovation. These actions may relate either to investment plans of individual SMEs with sufficient R & I capacity or to SME partnerships with academic or research institutions; Stimulation of start-ups aiming to commercialise research outcomes.	3 000 000.00
1.1b.1.2	New Product Development Grants for Large Enterprises.	Investments of large enterprises in applied research aimed at product innovation and/or partnerships of large enterprises with academic/research organizations.	1 000 000.00
1.1b.1.3	Innovation Vouchers	Supporting the development of new-to-the-firm innovations by SMEs.	4 000 000.00
1.1b.2.1	Research Grants to HEIs/PROs for filling knowledge gaps in RIS3 priorities and disseminating knowledge and best practices.	Small-scale research projects to address regional needs; joint experimentation facilities; demonstration projects.	4 084 619.00
1.1b.2.2	Technology Transfer for the benefit of SMEs.	Investments of HEIs or PROs for joint promotion of (a) their intellectual property rights, (b) their research outcomes, (c) services offered, (d) laboratory or research infrastructures to businesses; Proactive technology transfer activities to enterprises; stimulating the creation of IPR porfolios in HEIs/PROs; academic spin-offs.	2 000 000.00
1.2c.3.1	eGovernment services for the Regional Authorities	Support to regional public authorities for upgrading their electronic services mix; improve the functionality and the interoperability of their ICT systems; create publicly available (open) digital content and improve interactivity with citizens.	1 500 000.00
1.2c.3.2	eTourism / eCulture services for the Regional Authorities	Support to public authorities in developing tourism- and culture-related applications and content.	1 964 327.00
1.2c.3.3	eParticipation	Digital literacy improvement projects within the Region.	600 000.00
1.3a.4.1	Grants in support of the establishment and the initial operation of new, knowledge- or research-intensive enterprises		15 000 000.00

Code	Title	Short Summary or Comments	Public Funding (€)
1.3a.4.2	Grants to incubators of knowledge- or research-intensive enterprises		8 000 000.00
1.3d.5.1	Support to SME business plans aiming to new product development by adopting off-the-shelf technological innovations, especially KETs		10 274 148.00
1.3d.5.2	Support to SME business plans aiming to adopt process, organizational or marketing innovations		1 500 000.00
1.3d.5.3	Support to SME business plans aiming to improve power efficiency in existing enterprises and introduce the use of renewable energy sources	Supporting business investment plans from all sectors for the introduction of energy-efficient technologies and use of RES with a focus on exploiting geothermic fields and biomass.	5 000 000.00
1.3d.6.1	Support of clustering or networking of SMEs to promote joint product/service development and/or joint marketing/promotion activities in RIS3 priority sectors		5 000 000.00
1.3d.6.2	Support of the establishment of collaboration networks in the fields of tourism and culture		1 500 000.00
1.3d.6.3	Integrated Territorial Investments in Tourism	Supports integrated itineraries, destination management, local branding, joint promotion and similar.	4 000 000.00
1.3d.6.4	Integrated Territorial Investments in Culture	Supports integrated itineraries, destination management, local branding, joint promotion and similar.	2 000 000.00

APPENDIX III - RESULTS OF PHASE 1 – IDENTIFICATION OF EDP FOCUS GROUP IDEA COMPONENTS AND CLASSIFICATION[6]

EDP input code	EDP input short title	EDP Idea Components			
		TO1	TO2	TO3	Other
EDP1WG1P1	Research and exploitation of local wine grape varieties	1b (1.1b.2.2)			M16
EDP1WG1P2	Development of a network for collecting and management of data on wine grape cultivation		2c (1.2c.3.2)		
EDP1WG1P3	Exploitation of indigenous microbiota in the production of local wines	1b (1.1b.2.2)			M16
EDP1WG1P4	Methods to prevent the growth of Dekkera/Brettanomyces bruxellensis against wine spoilage	1b (1.1b.2.2)			M04
EDP1WG2P1	Energy Production using by-products of winemaking or distilling				ROP/4b
EDP1WG2P2	Food Supplements and Cosmetics	1b (1.1b.2.2)			
EDP1WG2P3	Using distillery by-products as organic fertiliser	1b (1.1b.2.2)			
EDP1WG2P4	Using by-products of winemaking or distilling for animal feeds	1b (1.1b.2.2)			
EDP1WG2P5	Tsipouro-based Liqueurs			3d (1.3d.6.3)	
EDP1WG3P1	Local varieties & local histories of wine			3d (1.3d.6.2)	
EDP1WG3P2	Wine, gastronomy, culture, entertainment combined			3d (1.3d.6.2)	
EDP1WG4P1	Branding			3d	
EDP1WG4P2	Creation of tourist product "Wine-Gastronomy / Cultural Tourism"			3d (1.3d.6.2)	
EDP1WG4P3	Formation of "wine value chain" cluster			3d (1.3d.6.1)	
EDP2WG1P1	Cluster for Animal Husbandry and Agriculture			3d (1.3d.6.1)	
EDP2WG1P2	Genetic Mapping and Genetic Improvement	1b			

---

[6] More than one entry per line suggests that this idea consists of multiple components to be funded by one or more programmes. Four-digit codes in parentheses indicate that this component can be funded by the ROP. Otherwise, the component can be funded by another OP.

JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE

EDP input code	EDP input short title	EDP Idea Components			
		TO1	TO2	TO3	Other
EDP2WG1P3	Inter-community supporting Farming/Production; Short Supply Chains				M16Y4
EDP2WG1P4	Completion of Vertical Integration-Slaughterhouses in Small Farms				M04Y2
EDP2WG2P1	Religious Certification of Meat and Meat Products				
EDP2WG2P2	Production of certified traditional meat products and their promotion via marketing innovations			3d (1.3d.6.1)	M04
EDP2WG2P3	Innovative technologies in producing local non-pig meat products with improved conservation ability	1b (1.1b.1.1)			
EDP2WG3P1	Development of a Certification Scheme for dairy products based on local quality characteristics (geographic, chemicals and organoleptic properties)	1b (1.1b.2.2)			M16
EDP2WG3P2	Sustained and integrated promotion of local, traditional fermented food systems from authentic microbial cultures	1b			M16
EDP2WG3P3	Development of functional products based on local dairy products	1b (1.1b.1.1)		3a (1.3a.4.1)	
EDP2WG4P1	Dairy/Meat Cluster				M04Y3
EDP2WG4P2	Research and implementation of new technologies and methodologies for the production of new value added products	1b (1.1b.1.1)			
EDP2WG4P3	Energy Production from Animal Waste			3d (1.3d.5.3)	
EDP2WG4P4	Development of a Network for Collecting and Managing of Dairy Production Chain Data				M16
EDP3WG1P1	Improve Eco-Tourism and Nature Activities				ROP/6c or CLLD
EDP3WG1P2	Put Existing Infrastructure to other uses during the low season			3d (1.3d.6.2)	
EDP3WG1P3	Managing & Coordinating the touristic product at the local / regional level			3d (1.3d.6.1)	
EDP3WG2P1	Innovative management of cultural heritage		2b (1.2)	3a	
EDP3WG2P2	Innovative applications of touristic touring with emphasis on cultural heritage		2b (1.2)		
EDP3WG3P1	Personalised Tourism Services through a digital platform		2c (1.2c.3.2)		
EDP3WG3P2	Development of high added value digital tools for key tourism sectors		2b (1.2)		
EDP3WG3P3	Establishment of an organisation to offer support for digital business innovation in tourism			3a (1.3a.4.1)	
EDP3WG4P1	Enhancement the knowledge aspect to support local actors				
EDP3WG4P2	Development of co-operative projects for linking locality, history and gastronomy			3d (1.3d.6.2)	

SMART SPECIALISATION PLATFORM

EDP input code	EDP input short title	EDP Idea Components			
		TO1	TO2	TO3	Other
EDP4WP1P1	Geological and Geophysical Research in Marble Quarries, Underground Mining Equipment	1b (1.1b.2.2)			
EDP4WP1P2	Integrated interventions for energy efficiency in quarries and marble processing facilities			3d (1.3d.5.3)	ROP/4b
EDP4WP1P3	Development and Diffusion of know-how on reusing quarry and marble processing residues and scrap	1b (1.1b.2.2)			
EDP4WP1P4	Cluster for marble value chain			3d (1.3d.6.1)	
EDP4WP2P2	Restoration of Marble Quarries				CLLD
EDP4WP2P3	Planning/Co-ordination of access to raw materials				

APPENDIX IV – LIST OF EDP FOCUS GROUP IDEAS THAT COULD BE CONSIDERED FOR IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH INTEGRATED TERRITORIAL INVESTMENTS (ITI) OR COMMUNITY-LED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT (CLLD).

EDP input code	Short Title	Short description
EDP1WG2P5	Tsipouro-based Liqueurs	Creation and development of a completely new to the market product family based on a tradi-tional production technique
EDP1WG3P1	Identification and preservation of local wine varieties and related cultural assets	Adoption of selected wine varieties, cultivation and wine making practices and methodologies in order to disseminate this knowledge to all businesses and inter-ested individuals
EDP1WG3P2	Creation and branding of an integrated tourist product based on wine, gastronomy and cultural heritage	Exploitation of regional wines, gastronomy and cultur-al assets in order to create a strong image of REMTh
EDP1WG4P2	Formation of a "wine value chain" cluster within EMTh	Creation of strong linkages among the various players of the wine value chain within the Region
EDP3WG1P1	Improve Eco-Tourism and Nature Activities in REMTh	The idea is about improving the infrastructure in support of eco-tourism and nature activities (hiking, climbing, bird-watching, mountain bike, hunting, camping, 4x4 racing, herbal tourism, etc), especially within the boundaries of the Region's four National Parks
EDP3WG1P2	Extending the season of under-utilised regional assets	The idea is about organising off-season cultural and athletic events to extend the touristic season. Rehabilitation tourism is included within the specific concept.
EDP3WG1P3	Managing & Coordinating the touristic product at the local / regional level	The idea is about organising regional organization for managing and co-ordinating the touristic product in REMTh

EDP input code	Short Title	Short description
EDP3WG3P3	Establishment of an organisation to offer support for digital business innovation in tourism	The idea refers to a horizontal intervention that will incorporate regional regional-level data recording and management, innovation awards and destination management services
EDP3WG4P1	Enhancement the knowledge aspect to support local actors	The idea is about the formation of a regional culinary centre to develop local cuisine capabilities in accordance with key tourism objectives (through a PPP)
EDP3WG4P2	Development of co-operative projects for linking locality, history and gastronomy	The idea is about the creation of a structure to design a gastronomy-tourism strategy that will influence the touristic promotion of REMTh
EDP4WP2P2	Restoration of Marble Quarries	Explore novel ideas for quarry restoration (apart from standard ones like tree planting), such as creating leisure areas, open theatres, and others.