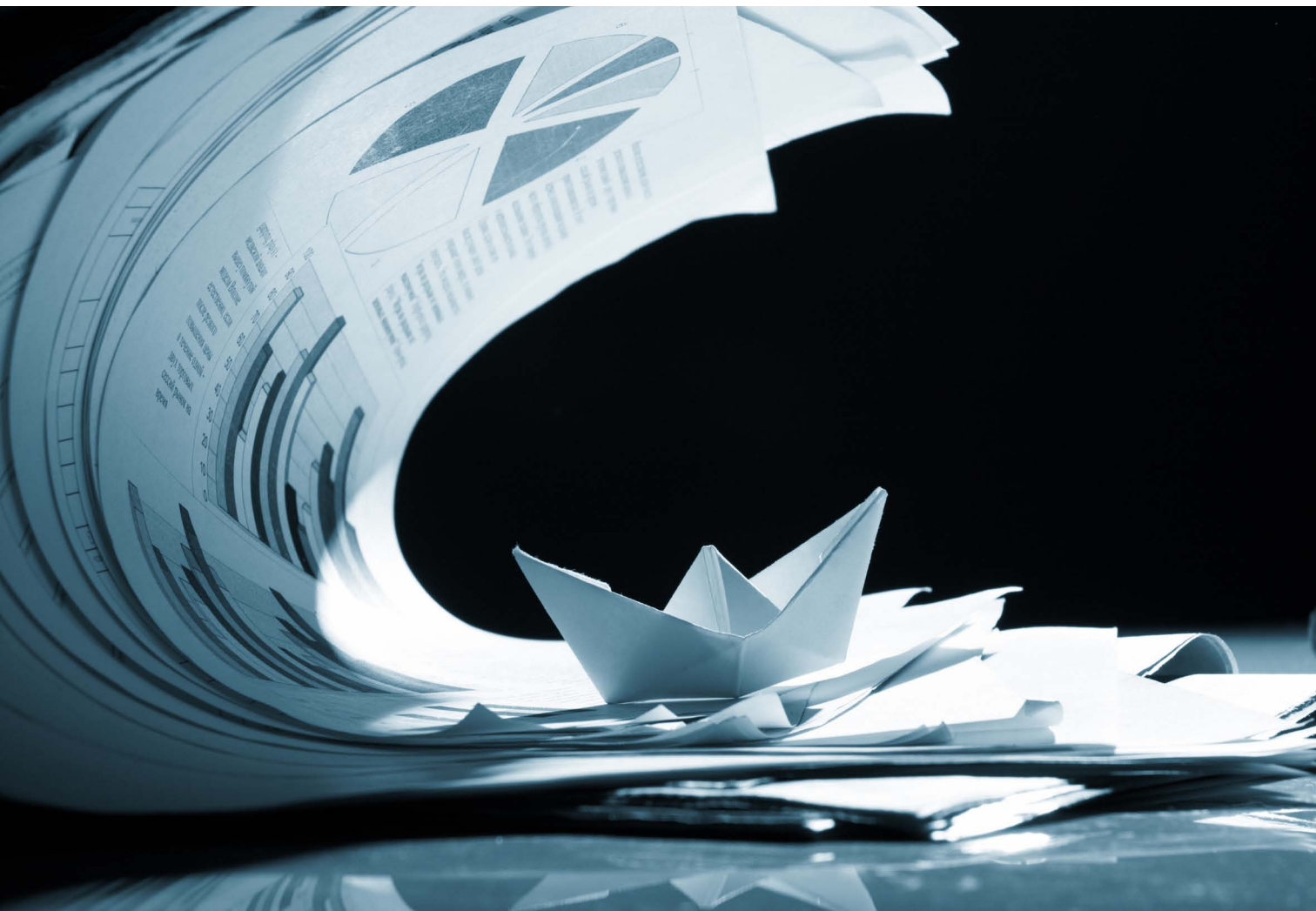


ICHNOS Plus

Innovation and Change: Network of One-Stop Shops for business.



Building on good practice to boost the regional
entrepreneurial environment June 2008 – July 2010



European Regional
Development Fund

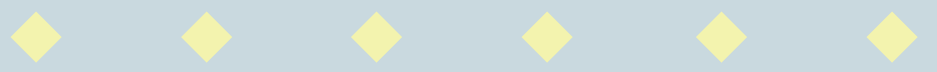


Ελληνική
Δημοκρατία



Περιφερειακό Ταμείο
Ανάπτυξης Β. Αιγαίου

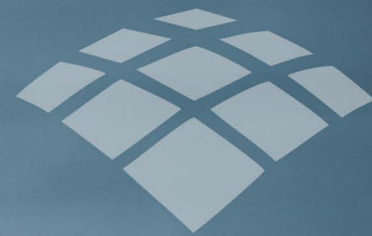




ICHNOS Plus
Innovation and Change:
Network of One-Stop Shops for business.

◆ CONTENT

	page
Chapter 1. Introduction	
Foreword	3
From ICHNOS to ICHNOS Plus	4
INTERREG IVC	5
Main features of Capitalisation projects	6
Description of partners	6
Chapter 2. Cutting red tape and making life easier for Businesses in Europe. Policy context.	9
Chapter 3. Starting up a business in...	
a. Sardinia, Italy	13
b. Galicia, Spain	14
c. North Aegean, Greece	15
d. Vysocina, Czech Republic	16
e. Silesia, Poland	17
f. Estonia	18
Chapter 4. Transfer process	21
Chapter 5. Results and action plans	
a. General Overview	27
b. Regional Action Plans	
i. Action Plan for the Region of Sardinia	28
ii. Action Plan for the Region of Galicia	29
iii. Action plan for the Region of North Aegean	30
iv. Action plan for the Region of Vysocina	31
v. RAction plan for the Region of Silesia	32
vi. Action plan for the Region of Tartu	32
vii. Regional Action Plans at a glance	34
c. Other outputs and results achieved	37
Annex 1. Policy context. Legal measures related to the project.	39



Chapter 1

Chapter 1

Introduction

Foreword

ICHNOS Plus is one of the first six **INTERREG IVC** capitalisation projects approved in April 2008. The ICHNOS Plus project was conceived to the aim of capitalising a previous valuable experience, the Interreg IIIC Project ICHNOS, that was concluded in April 2007. ICHNOS provided the opportunity to put into value the joint effort of three partners with the goal of helping the respective regional authorities to facilitate the administrative simplification for the start-up and exercise of enterprises. More specifically, ICHNOS tackled the issue of fostering the establishment of **One-Stop Shops for business**, known also as **Points of Single Contact**, by defining a common model of **Regional Centre of Competence**, stemming from interregional cooperation. During the project lifetime the policy context experienced a significant evolution towards the direction of the project, in particular through the 2006 Conclusions of the Spring Council and the implementation of Bolkestein Directive in 2009.

For this reason, the original partnership that implemented ICHNOS was maintained intact in this capitalisation project, and new partners were invited to join the new project.

The six partners of ICHNOS Plus worked relentlessly for two years to exchange their experience, knowledge and good practices to make life easier for businesses in their respective regions and boost their competitiveness by simplifying the administrative procedures for registering new companies and obtaining permits and licences. This is a key challenge for a number of European regions.

Each partner took inspiration from the best practices shared and found the best possible ways to fit them into their respective regional operational programmes or, where not possible, under other regional or local funds, by involving all the necessary stakeholders at national and local level.

The main result was the development of an **Action Plan** for all participating regions. These plans specify how the good practices are being transferred and implemented at the regional and local level. Each action plan was signed by respective Managing Authority or relevant regional and local stakeholders.

This publication presents an overview of the transfer process and Action Plans developed during the project life.

From ICHNOS to ICHNOS plus

ICHNOS (Innovation and Change: Network of One-Stop Shops) was prepared and the proposal was put forward in April 2004 and finally approved under condition in November 2004. The project started in March 2005 and was due to conclude at the end of February 2007, with a final two months project extension until the end of April. The idea of the project was to define and experiment a common model of a regional Centre of Competence of One-Stop Shops in order to facilitate the communication and the support of the Public Administration to the enterprises.

The ICHNOS project aimed to create this model at a European level. The project was developed in a four-step process:

1. Analysis of the context
2. Definition of the Regional Centre of Competence
3. Co-division of the project outcomes with the stakeholders
4. Dissemination

The idea was born from the common requirements as well as the specific ongoing experiences of three European regions having different legal, institutional, administrative and economic environments with regards to the implementation of O.S.S.s, such as Sardinia (Italy), Galicia (Spain) and Vysocina (Czech Republic). The project establishes a number of objectives that set the grounds for its development. These focus on:

Support to enterprises through regional Centres of Competence.

The project idea focused on the definition and experimentation of a common model for a regional Centre of Competence for One-Stop-Shops for businesses. The idea was born from the common requirements and from ongoing experiences in the interested territories.

European network of One-Stop Shops.

The added value of the project was the comparison of experiences and competences, at a national and European level, which will lead to the formal definition of a common model for a regional Centre of Competence.

This model allowed the improvement/rationalization of the models, which are currently used in the respective regions. The partner organizations from various European regions also created during the project a first net of regional centres, which stimulated the continued cooperation and exchange of competences.

The project **ICHNOS PLUS** aims to build on the achievements of "ICHNOS: Innovation and Change - Network of One-Stop Shops", concluded in April 2007, that produced a model of Regional Centre of Competence (R.C.C.) for One-Stop Shops for business (O.S.S.).

Chapter 1

Introduction

A Regional Centre of Competence (R.C.C.) for One-Stop Shops (O.S.S.) is defined as an organization (public or private) aimed at developing specific actions to support the operation of O.S.S. in a region, contributing to the economic growth of the region by facilitating business start-ups and providing a better support to entrepreneurs.

As a capitalization project, ICHNOS PLUS focuses on the transfer and deployment of the R.C.C. model and its mainstreaming into the regional policies through the E.U. Structural Funds Operational Programmes. The R.C.C. model has been conceived as a structure to co-ordinate O.S.S. acting as single points of contact for enterprises. The basic objectives of ICHNOS PLUS are both optimizing the implementation of this model in the three regions which carried out ICHNOS and promoting its effective transfer and deployment in other European regions.

INTERREG IVC

INTERREG IVC is a 'soft cooperation' programme supporting the collaboration of European regions and cities within EU-wide partnerships. Its aim is to promote exchange and transfer of knowledge and best practice across Europe.

INTERREG IVC provides funding for interregional cooperation. It is implemented under the European Community's territorial co-operation objective and financed through the European Regional Development Fund (E.R.D.F.).

The overall objective of the INTERREG IVC Programme is **to improve the effectiveness of regional policies and instruments**. A project builds on the exchange of experiences among partners who are ideally responsible for the development of their local and regional policies.

The areas of support are **innovation and the knowledge economy, environment and risk prevention**. Thus, the programme aims to contribute to the economic modernisation and competitiveness of Europe. INTERREG IVC is linked to the objectives of Lisbon and Gothenburg agenda.

Typical tools for exchange of experience are **networking activities** such as thematic workshops, seminars, conferences, surveys, and study visits. Project partners cooperate to identify and transfer good practices. Possible project outcomes include for example case study collections, policy recommendations, strategic guidelines or action plans. INTERREG IVC also allows light implementation or piloting, but only if these complement the exchange of experience activities.

The programme supports two types of projects: **Regional Initiative Projects** (Regional Initiative Projects are 'classic' interregional cooperation projects comparable to those already supported under the INTERREG IIIC programme) and **Capitalisation Projects** (Capitalisation Projects are interregional cooperation projects which focus specifically on the transfer of regional development good practices into mainstream E.U.).

Main features of Capitalisation projects

A *capitalisation project* is an interregional cooperation project, which focuses on the transfer of good practices, which were previously developed and identified by the partners, into the mainstream Structural Funds programmes in the participating regions.

Capitalisation projects are addressed to Managing Authorities – or intermediate bodies set up by them – who are aware of existing good practices and seek solutions to more efficient implementation of their own Structural Funds programmes. In **Capitalisation Projects** partners build on already identified good practices. Capitalisation projects are set up to transfer these good practices into mainstream programmes of E.U. Structural Funds. This is done by developing action plans and involving relevant policy makers. The European Commission offers additional expertise to some of these projects, named Fast Tract Projects.

ICHNOS Plus was one of 6 capitalisation projects approved in Call 1.

Essential elements of the capitalisation projects are as follow:

- Starting point: pool of good practices made available by the project.
- Key actors: managing authorities responsible for Structural Funds and relevant regional/national policy-makers.
- Main activity: exchange of experience on transferring good practices into Structural Funds Operational Programmes.
- Main result: developing an 'Action Plan' for all participating regions signed by the respective Managing Authority and relevant regional stakeholders. It will describe how the good practices will be implemented in the selected operational programmes.

Description of partners

The partnership is made of 6 partners:



Ancitel Sardegna (Italy)

A service organization responsible for local development established by the association of Sardinian municipalities: A.N.C.I. Sardegna. Ancitel Sardegna has a long time experience in managing E.U. projects, it was the Lead Partner of the ICHNOS project as well as now in ICHNOS Plus. <http://www.ancitel.sardegna.it/>



CESGA (Spain)

The Supercomputing Center of Galicia (C.E.S.G.A.) is the center for high-performance computing, communications and advanced services used by the Scientific Community of Galicia, the University academic system and the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (C.S.I.C.).

<http://www.cesga.es/content/view/8/4/lang,en/>

Chapter 1

Introduction



The Vysocina Region (Czech Republic)

The Vysocina Region is one of fourteen self governmental authorities established in 2000 in the Czech Republic. The region has many small enterprises (90% are S.M.Es.) and as a new E.U. Member is challenging the changing role of Regional Governments. The Vysocina Region is also well known for its interest in the modern I.C.T. technologies using in regional development encouragement.

<http://www.kr-vysocina.cz/en/ict.asp?p1=1037>

http://www.kr-vysocina.cz/en/vismo5/dokumenty2.asp?id_org=450028&id=1014&p1=1024



North Aegean Region (Greece)

The Regional Development Fund was founded in February 1998 at the North Aegean Region and operates as a private company. Due to its special legal form (it belongs to the public sector but it has the flexibility of a private firm) is the only authority within the services of a region that can successfully implement a European project and contribute to its developmental plans.

<http://www.northaegean.gr/bsite/home/english.asp>

<http://www.ptaba.gr/web/guest/2>



Tartu Science Park (Estonia)

Tartu Science Park (T.S.P.) was founded in 1992 and was the first organization in Estonia to set up with clearly stated intention of supporting innovation.

The T.S.P. technology incubator offers a variety of services to start-up companies from fully developed infrastructure and office services to business and management consultancy. There are 15 incubation companies on T.S.P. premises, working in the national key fields of material technology, biotechnology and I.C.T. The incubator faced a vast expansion in 2006 when an additional 3000 m² of workspace was renovated, constructed and dedicated to incubation services.

<http://www.sciencepark.ee>

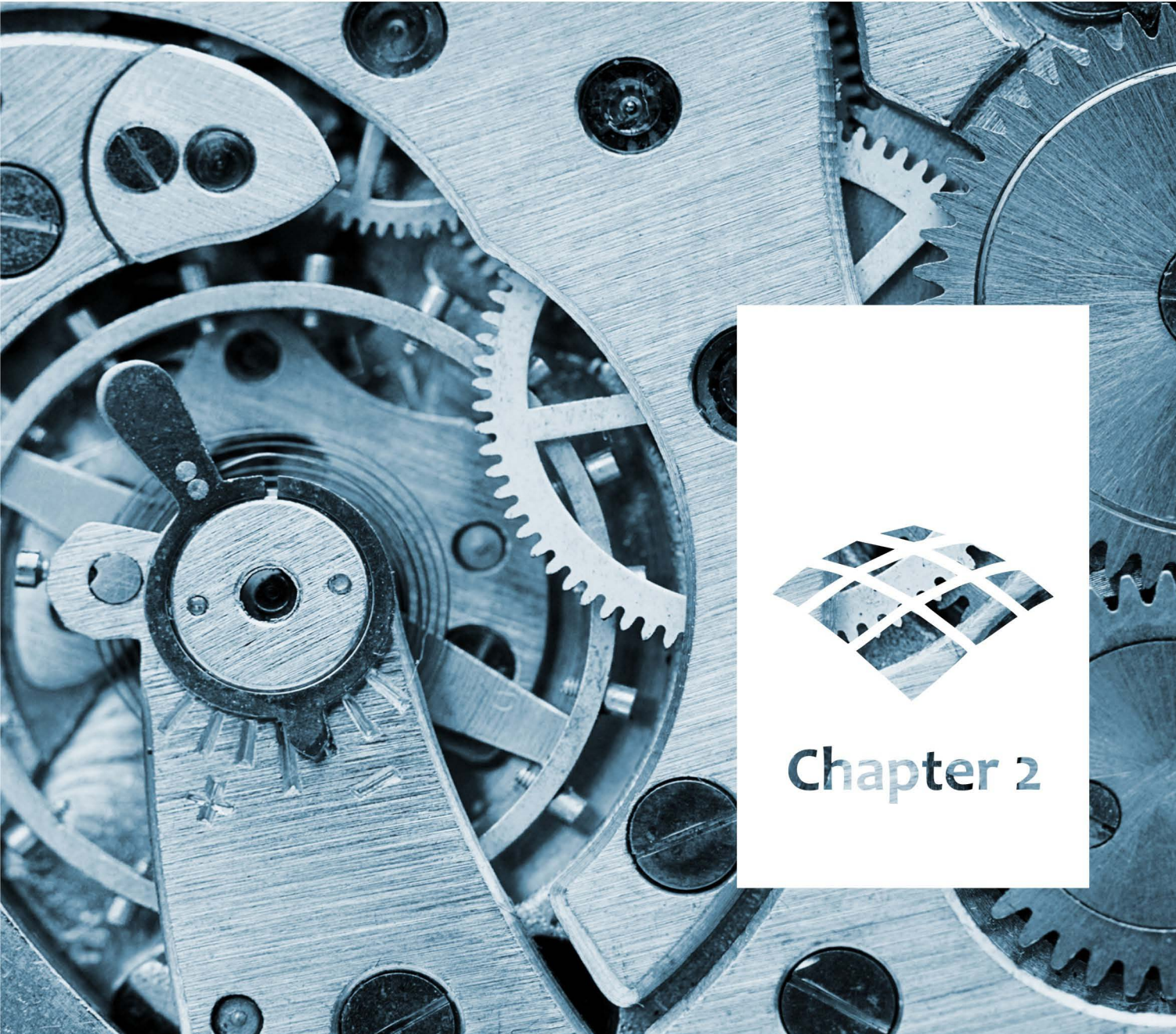


The Ruda Slaska Business Incubator (Poland)

The Ruda Slaska Business Incubator is a partnership in which the City of Ruda Slaska holds a 100% share. The headquarters of the Ruda Slaska Business Incubator (R.S.B.I.) are situated on the premises of the Upper Silesian Technological Incubator.

The aim is to create favourable conditions for the establishment and development of innovative businesses, by guaranteeing support in terms of infrastructure, marketing, personnel and finance, as well as additional services.

<http://www.inkubatorrudzki.pl/en/9/1203682584/1203683076/2>



Chapter 2

Cutting red tape and making life easier for Businesses in Europe. Policy context.

ICHNOS Plus project addressed the challenges which European regions are facing and tried to find new ways how to increase the competitiveness of the regions. The solution can be found in sharing experiences and results linked to the administrative simplification for doing business.

According to Doing Business Ranking (published by International Finance Corporation) that measures business regulation in 183 countries worldwide, most countries involved in the ICHNOS Plus fill worse position than O.E.C.D. average.

Country	Ease of Doing Business Index	Starting Business	Number of procedures	Number of Days
Estonia	24	37	5	7
Spain	62	146	10	47
Poland	72	117	6	32
Czech Republic	74	113	8	15
Italy	78	75	6	10
Greece	109	140	15	19

Source: <http://www.doingbusiness.org/economyrankings/>

*Note: A high ranking on the Ease of Doing Business index means the regulatory environment is conducive to the operation of business. This index averages the country's percentile rankings on 10 topics (Starting a Business, Dealing with Construction Permits, Employing Workers, Registering Property, Getting Credit, Protecting Investors, Paying Taxes, Trading Across Borders, Enforcing Contracts, Closing a Business) made up of a variety of indicators, giving equal weight to each topic. The rankings are from the **Doing Business 2010** report, covering the period June 2008 through May 2009.*

European Commission makes long-term effort towards improvement of S.M.Es. position that represent 95% of all enterprises in E.U. Many initiatives were launched and put into operate through respective legislative acts. In relation to ICHNOS Plus project we can identify three main areas of legal acts:

- Measures focused on red tape cutting (mostly for S.M.Es.)
- Measures focused on support of S.M.Es.
- Measures focused on improvement of I.C.T. application in business and life.

In the past, the Commission also clearly established the necessary recommendations for starting up a business:

- A single registry centre.
- A single registry document.
- A single identification document.

For the achievement of the objectives it was necessary to remove national restrictions based on traditions, custom practice and national conditions. Harmonization of laws in Member States has been a big task for many years that was crowned by approval of the Directive on Services in the internal market in 2006.

Area of systemic support of S.M.Es. is a matter of Small Business Act for Europe, where cutting red tape is also involved. I.C.T. usage is a cross-sectional issue that was discussed and expressed in many E.U. policies, from which i2010 is the complex one..

The concept of R.C.C. that is derived from necessity to make network of O.S.Ses. more efficient is based on E.U. policies focused on business start-ups, cutting red tape, exploitation of information technology and implementation of smart administration.

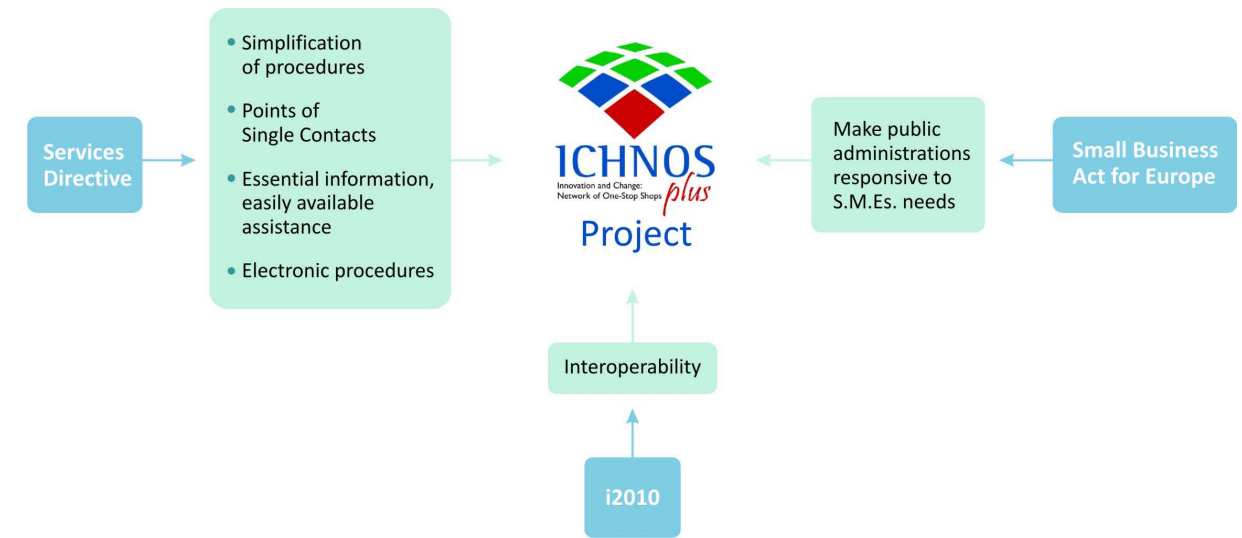
Three main legal measures with strong relations to project agenda were identified:

- EU Service Directive.
- Small Business Act.
- EU initiative i2010.

A detailed description of these initiatives and their relation to the ICHNOS Plus project can be found in Annex 1.

Chapter 2

Cutting red tape and making life easier for Businesses in Europe. Policy context.



Picture 1. European legal rules influencing ICHNOS Plus project.





Chapter 3

Chapter 3

Starting up a business in...

a. Sardinia, Italy

One-Stop Shop for businesses in Sardinia

In Sardinia one stop shops (Single Contact Points - P.S.C.) are dealing from 2004.

What was done?

- Simplification law and administrative efficiency**
 The P.S.Cs. (S.U.A.P.) is the only addressee of the entrepreneur in the all phases of business, the applications submitted to the other Administrations will not be accepted. With the introduction of **self-certification**, in 2008, the entrepreneur doesn't have to wait for the authorization of the Public Administration.
- Internet Portal** (www.sardegna-suap.it)
 In 2006 a P.S.C. dedicated section was created in the regional institutional Internet portal, linked to the related thematic website (www.sardegna-suap.it), where the following services are available:
 - An on line database concerning regional procedures along with associated forms and regulations in force.
 - Information concerning the supply of industrial zones.
 - Funding opportunities offered by national and regional investment incentive schemes.
- Intranet**
 In November 2007 a knowledge-management data processing platform was produced to offer a discussion forum for the P.S.Cs. and the other Administrations involved, in addition to a legal advice service named "The expert response", by which univocal regional positions are given to users on practical interpretative questions.



In addition the knowledge-management information platform consists also of the following services:

- PSC file management software.
- Legal advice.
- Documents and forms database.
- News on legal and relevant issues for the O.S.Ses.
- Training courses, workshops and meetings between the provinces, the local authorities and operators**
 With the aim of facilitating the introduction of the 2008 reform of administrative simplification and solving queries arising from every day work, the Regional authority has periodically organized workshops targeted to the local authorities and operators involved in the authorization process.

SardegnaSuap
LO SPORTELLINO UNICO PER LE ATTIVITÀ PRODUTTIVE

Sportello Unico | Fare impresa | Adempimenti

SPORTELLINO UNICO
Cosa è
Cosa fa
Come funziona
Dove si trova
Chi partecipa

FARE IMPRESA
Dove incidono
Incentivi e agevolazioni
Bando e gare d'appalto

ADEMPIMENTI
Come fare per...
Avvio della pratica
Consultazione e gestione

ACCEDI ALLA TUA PRATICA
cod. fiscale o P.IVA
Incaricofiscista
password

Recupero dati di accesso
Registrazione | Attivazione

Pratica online

SPORTELLINO UNICO
Semplificazione amministrativa per le imprese
Dal 2008 bastano solo ventiquattro giorni per avviare un'attività imprenditoriale in Sardegna, grazie alle misure di semplificazione e accelerazione dell'iter amministrativo produttivo del governo regionale.

Modularistica
È disponibile online tutta la modularistica SUAP in formato pdf editabile.

Modifica dei procedimenti del SUAP
La Legge Regionale n. 2 del 5 marzo 2008, ha modificato totalmente i procedimenti dello Sportello Unico per le Attività Produttive prevedendo due procedure possibili per la nascita di un'attività produttiva: immediata avvio e la procedura con "santificazione di servizi" (art. 1, comma 10-bis).

Programma incentivi
È stato approvato il programma regionale degli incentivi alle imprese, attraverso l'approvazione della delibera n. 27/12.27.18 n. 27/12 del 06/04/2008.

L'importanza della firma digitale per i SUAP
La firma digitale rappresenta un importante strumento per ridurre i tempi di trasmissione dei documenti all'interno dei procedimenti SUAP.

ULTIME NOTIZIE
03.08.08 Onere di nuovi incentivi
26.06.08 Modificati allegati A della modularistica
23.06.08 Legge 60/2008 - DA a otto giorni

www.sardegna-suap.it | info@suap.sardegna.it | 070 5200000 | 070 5200001

© 2008 Regione Autonoma della Sardegna
partner del progetto | mappa | note legali | contatti

b. Galicia, Spain

One-Stop Shop for businesses in Galicia Region, Spain

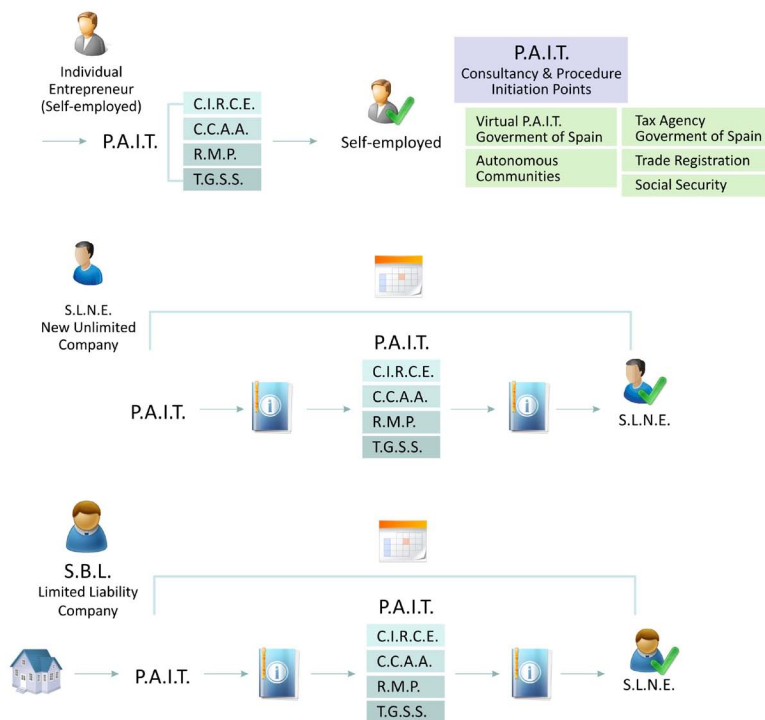
One-Stop Shops is a joint initiative of the Spanish public administrations (General Administration of the State, Autonomous Regions, Local Administrations) and non-profit entities (Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Navigation).



The One-Stop Shops in Spain:

- Allows the start-up of business initiatives in an average time of 48 hours.
- Offers information, guidance, advice, and processing free.
- Allows to save time and costs for registering a start-up company, simplifying red tape and increasing efficiency.
- Does not require paper forms.

Self-employed, new limited company, limited liability companies only goes to a point P.A.I.T. (Consultancy and Procedure Initiation Points) for the start-up of its business. They can do that too via Internet, in the virtual P.A.I.T. (<http://www.circe.es>).



Picture 2. Source: I.N.E. (D.I.R.C.E.)

Chapter 3

Starting up a business in...

Business registered by telematic procedure

Specific features for legal form of business to telematic register in Spain:

Legal Form	Nº partners	Startup Capital	Responsibility
New limited Company (S.L.N.E.)	Maximum 5 persons	Minimum 3.012€ Maximum 120.202€	Limited to contribution
Limited Liability Company (S.R.L.)	Minimum 1 person	Minimum 3.005,07€	Limited to contribution
Individual Entrepreneur	1 person	There is not legal minimum	Unlimited

Source: <http://www.circe.es/>

c. North Aegean, Greece

One-Stop Shop for businesses in North Aegean Region, Greece



The business environment in Greece has changed drastically, in the last few months. According to the old law, even while establishment procedures differ in general, depending on the type of business, they do include certain common stages. Initially, the business premises must be established.

Following this, the sole trader or the partners of a legal entity (corporate enterprises) must register with the competent insurance body. In most cases, the business shall also be registered with the competent chamber of commerce. Depending on the type of activity, issuing an installation and operation technical license or a professional practice license may be required. Then, the competent Tax Office shall issue a V.A.T. registration number and perform the bookkeeping process. Special procedures are also followed concerning staff recruitment, as well as other actions, such as trademark protection. On April 2010 Economy, Competitiveness and Shipping Minister presented a bill to Greece's Cabinet which foresees the creation of a one-stop shop to establish all types of enterprises, with the aim to reduce the procedure required to just one day. The minister said the new procedure will cut costs by over 70% and raise Greece on the global competitiveness scale from the 109th to the 90th position. Currently, 15 steps and 38 days are required to set up a business, which will become one step in one day, with the help of the General Commerce Register.

d. Vysocina, Czech Republic

One-Stop Shop for businesses. Evolution in Vysocina Region, Czech Republic

From the 2005, when the “Legal, Economic and Organizational Context for O.S.S. in the Czech Republic - VYSOCINA Report” was prepared during the ICHNOS project, the business environment in the Czech Republic has changed significantly till now (October 2008).

Many concrete changes were introduced, from which the finalization of Z.A.P. project and amendment of Trade Licensing Act were the most important ones.

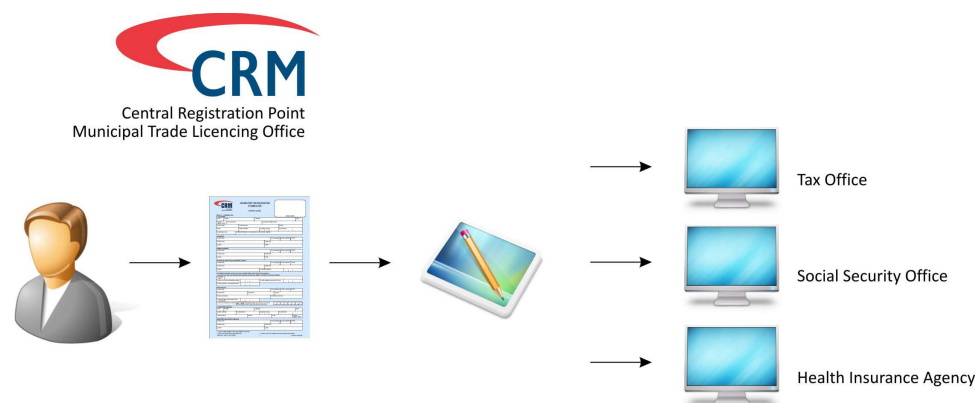
Main changes before 1.07.2008:

- The Simple Register Form (Jednotný Registrační Formulář - J.R.F.) was launched by Amendment of Trades Licensing Act. This form unified the registration procedure into several obligatory record systems (evidences).
- Trade licensing offices were entitled to provide a function of Central Registration Point (Centrální registrační místo - C.R.M.).
- A system of new points for general communication of citizens with public administrative was put into operation called CzechPoints.

Main changes after 1.07.2008:

- Amendment of Trades Licensing Act simplifying the business start-ups and next operation.
- Possibility to announce a new business as well as changes in existing business also electronically.
- Improvement of methodical support of entrepreneurs, publishing of guidelines and legal advices at several internet portals, i.e. BusinessInfo (www.businessinfo.cz), the Portal of Public Administration (portal.gov.cz), portal of Ministry of Industry and Trade (www.mpo.cz), official portal of Czech judicial system (www.justice.cz).

Entrepreneurs in Vysocina region can exploit a network of several hundreds CzechPoints that are located in every municipal office as well in every post office. Central Registration Points are established in 15 municipal Trades Licensing Offices.



Picture 3. Scheme of registration procedure for self-employed entrepreneurs in the Czech Republic.

Chapter 3

Starting up a business in...

e. Silesia, Poland

One-Stop Shop for businesses. Evolution in Silesia, Poland

O.S.S. existing in Poland since 01.04.2009.

Now registration of business activity is possible through:

- Points of single contact – to set up a business it is enough to apply in one place in every city office. The Points of single contact is a transitional solution, in which companies and businesspeople will be prepared for the introduction of “zero window” principle.
- “Zero window” is a system in which will allow the completion of all administrative processes required in opening a business to be done on the Internet. The process of registration will be fast and simple (electronic signature will be required). A Central Record and Information Data of Business Activity – public platform with information regarding Polish enterprises will be created. It will be implemented in July 2011.



www.sekap.pl

It is a portal where is possible to set-up a business in Silesia via Internet with electronically signature.



www.ruda-sl.pl

The City of Ruda Śląska (Poland) decided to open a one-stop-shop for all citizens in the shopping centre where it is possible to start-up a company. Since January 2009, the Polish partner, Ruda Slaska Business Incubator, is rendering advisory services about how to set up a business, what are the rules about running a business, from where to get money to start and run a business.



www.eu-go.gov.pl

It is portal where everyone can find information how to set up a business in Poland. It is e-Points of Single Contact. In a future it will be a national system in which all administrative processes required in opening a business will be done via Internet.



What are the difference between One-Stop Shops in Silesia and in other countries.

Activities	In Silesia	In other countries
Providing information on how to establish a business.	Partly	Yes
Collecting applications for the establishment of a new enterprise.	Yes	Yes
Collecting applications, permit granting and obtaining authorizations from the institutions involved in the procedure of setting up a new business.	No	Yes
Collecting applications, permit granting and obtaining authorizations from the institutions involved in the administrative procedures concerning the already existing enterprises.	No	Yes
Advisory services for the business founders and those already running a business.	No	Yes
Electronic procedures	Partly	Yes

f. Estonia

One-Stop Shop for businesses. Evolution in Estonia

In Estonia Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communication and Ministry of Justice are responsible for implementing Bolkenstein Directive. Estonian Government approved "Information Society Development Plan 2013" action plan with its ordinance nr 667 in 30th November 2006. The minister of Economic Affairs and Communications approved on 7th December 2007 a decree nr 97 "Support requirements and Rules for Investment Plan for development of Information Society". According to abovementioned and other legal documents, Estonian government has allocated E.R.D.F. funding and implemented point of single contact to the extent required by the Services Directive.



The goals of Estonian Point of Single Contact are:

- To lead the entrepreneur to the desired service through P.S.C.
- To improve the quality and access to services offered by the state.

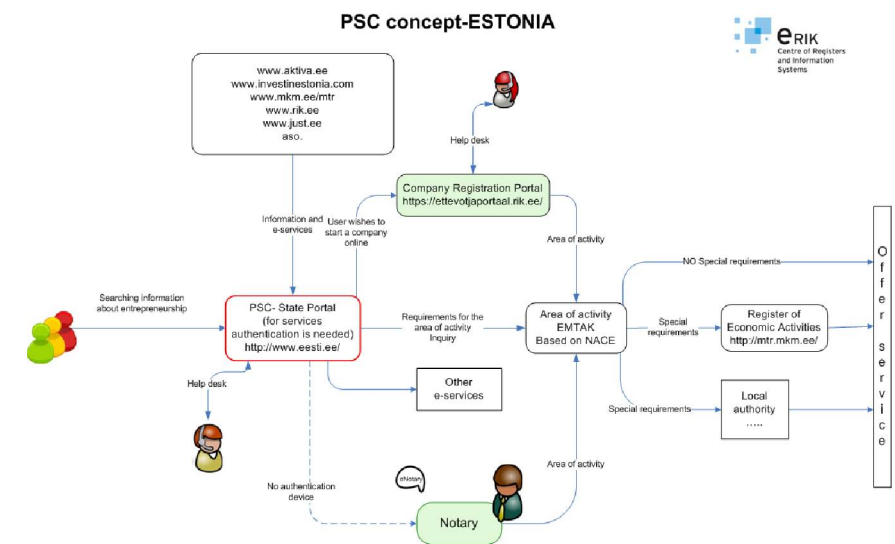
Chapter 3

Starting up a business in...

- To set up a structure, which guarantees the availability of basic information about service activities and ensures the continuous updating of that information.
- To aggregate information into the single point so that the users can reach information quickly.
- Service providers get a consistent overview of their ongoing applications or requests.

The purpose was not to establish a central information system, but to ensure interoperability of public sector information systems and the estate portal. Estonian P.S.C. can be accessed through the state portal www.eesti.ee (sub-portal for entrepreneurs) and also through the portal www.estonia.eu which is a virtual gateway to Estonia for foreigners.

State portal directs entrepreneur to an appropriate e-service. For instance, Company Registration Portal enables to register a company online within two hours. Estonian P.S.C. consolidates information and state offered services including starting and operating a business as well as information about book-keeping, taxes and other requirements for businesses.





Chapter 4

Transfer process

In the INTERREG IVC programme manual, transfer is defined as “a practice introduced by one partner, which has a concrete and measurable impact on another partner”. How this worked in practice in the framework of the ICHNOS Plus capitalisation project?

Over the two-year project, the six partners were engaged in a peer-to-peer exchange and mutual learning process consisting of 4 main phases:

1. Awareness-raising and understanding.

The main aim of this stage was to prepare the ground for the effective transfer of the good practices made available by the project. A context analysis was carried out investigating the main features that affect enterprises' start-ups and exercise: the socio-economic context, the state of the art related to one-stop-shops for businesses and the opportunities for implementing the O.S.S. and the Regional Centre of Competence into the Structural Funds Operational Programmes in each partner region, in order to obtain a comparative picture having the same baseline. A report collecting the 6 regional context analysis was prepared and made available on the project website (<http://www.ichnos-project.org>).

The 1st Interregional seminar (Cagliari, 11 December 2008) was set out under the heading “How to implement the model of Regional Centre of Competence for one-stop shops in the partner regions?” to discuss the good practice and to understand how partners can learn from each others' experiences. The event provided a valuable opportunity to listen to the progress achieved in the initial partner regions and the different context and regulatory environments of the new partners of the ICHNOS Plus project with regard to administrative simplification for business start-ups.

2. Exchange and learning.

The effective exchange of experience was achieved through a combination of on-site visits, seminars and interregional meetings. On-site visits and staff exchanges involved in turn all partners and were aimed at building capacity, raising awareness and understanding of the methodologies and techniques put into practice (i.e how R.C.C. and O.S.S. play a role in simplifying the administrative procedures; which tools and competences are required by R.C.C. practitioners and the resources devoted).

Activities included:

- **Peer-to-peer visits** of selected organizations and institutions acting in support of entrepreneurship in partner regions. During the visits, participants got information about business support programmes, procedures for business registrations and getting licenses and permits from public authorities involved in the authorisation process.
- **Staff exchanges** between more and less experienced partners were undertaken for a better understanding of the good practices. Activities included visits, meetings and interviews with policy makers and managers.
- **Interregional seminars**, with a more theoretical and training approach, had the result to analyse partners specific contexts and constrains; and have open debate on the items addressed.

The 2nd Interregional seminar took place in Santiago the Compostela (Spain) on 19th June 2009. One of the key topics of this event was the I.C.T. solutions that contribute to the administrative simplification of formalities and procedures for business registration. This topic was developed around the idea of interoperability between I.C.T. systems, which is a key tool for administrative simplification.

3. Adaptation.

During the third phase, the practices were analysed to see how they could be adapted to fit within the context of the partners' regions.

Lessons learnt during in site visits, staff exchanges and seminars were used to prepare the feasibility study for the implementation of the R.C.C. model. This document analysis the normative, organisational and financial feasibility for the transfer of the good practice into the E.U. Structural Funds mainstream programmes and/or into other regional and local funds.

This document and the feedbacks raising from its discussion with partners' respective Managing Authorities and relevant regional and local policy and decision makers was the baseline for drawing up the final document: the Action Plan.

Chapter 4

Transfer process

The aim of the 3rd Interregional seminar held in Prague on 23-24 March 2010 was to verify the state of the transfer process of the good practices and address the difficulties and constraints regarding to the transfer into the mainstream programmes. Partners with main difficulties: North Aegean Region, Vysocina and Tartu Science Park, were committed in a strong effort to find a solution for mainstreaming the good practices in the interregional seminar.

The Lead Partner of the Erik Action, another capitalisation project, was also invited to tell their experience and the solution found for these kind of situations within their partnership.

Another useful tool for partners, prepared by Ancitel Sardegna, Cesga and Vysocina, was the "R.C.C. Toolkit", which is a key document containing well-arranged instructions and guidelines in support of partners for the creation and development of Regional Centre of Competence for O.S.S. network. This toolkit will be useful for new involved regions as well as for all the other regions willing to implement the RCC model and the interrelated practices.

4. Commitment

The final and most important step was the development of an **Action Plan** for the endorsement of the transferred practices by the participating regions. This is a binding document describing how these good practices will be implemented under partners' respective operational programmes.

Even if all partners did their best to involve their respective Managing Authority and to mainstream the practices in their Structural Funds Operational Programme, in a few cases this mainstreaming process was finally not possible. For example, Estonian government had already implemented central P.S.C. solutions. However, Tartu Science Park came up with a solution. The regional state authority finances the implementation of good practice: the virtual O.S.S. as described in the Action Plan.

Another unexpected factor was the particular political and economic situation in Greece: a reform of the local administration law, that is going to start from 2011, will transform regional authorities, from their actual status as governmental bodies to elected local authorities. Thus it was not possible to sign the action plan within this on-going process. Instead of this, a proposal to the new elected regional authorities was drafting-up and presented. However, the Management Authority of the Operational Plan Competitiveness were willing to sign the Action Plan.

At 23th and 24th of June the 4th interregional seminar was organized in the Region of North Aegean. The aim of the seminar was to discuss with local actors (entrepreneurs local authorities etc.) the Greek action plan, development by the Regional Development Found, within the ICHNOS Plus project, and the dissemination of the results of the project.

Taking into account the expression of interest of the new Greek government to set-up services that will simplify the setup of new businesses the objective of the Greek action plan is to propose an effective model of support of business start-up and development in the Region of North Aegean.

In the seminar, which took place in the island of Samos, participated and contributed with their experience and ideas partners from Poland, Spain and Czech Republic.

A key milestone of the transfer process was the involvement of the **key actors**: managing authorities responsible for structural funds and relevant regional/national policy-makers (the so called “**deep delegations**”). To ensure their commitment, they were invited to the main interregional events. However, the organisation of regional and local face to face meeting and inter-institutional visits was also important to get them involved and interested during the whole project.

New initiatives resulting from the exchange and interregional activities:

- Creation of the Contact Centre of the Vysocina region. Its objective is to provide equal and transparent access to information concerning relations citizens - public administration and citizens - region, regardless of communication means, from anywhere anytime.
- An one-stop-shop for all citizens was opened in the shopping centre in Ruda Slaska by the City Council where it would be possible to start-up a company. Since January 2009, the Polish partner, Ruda Slaska Business Incubator, is rendering advisory services about how to set up a business, what are the rules about running a business, from where to get money to start and run a business.

Chapter 4

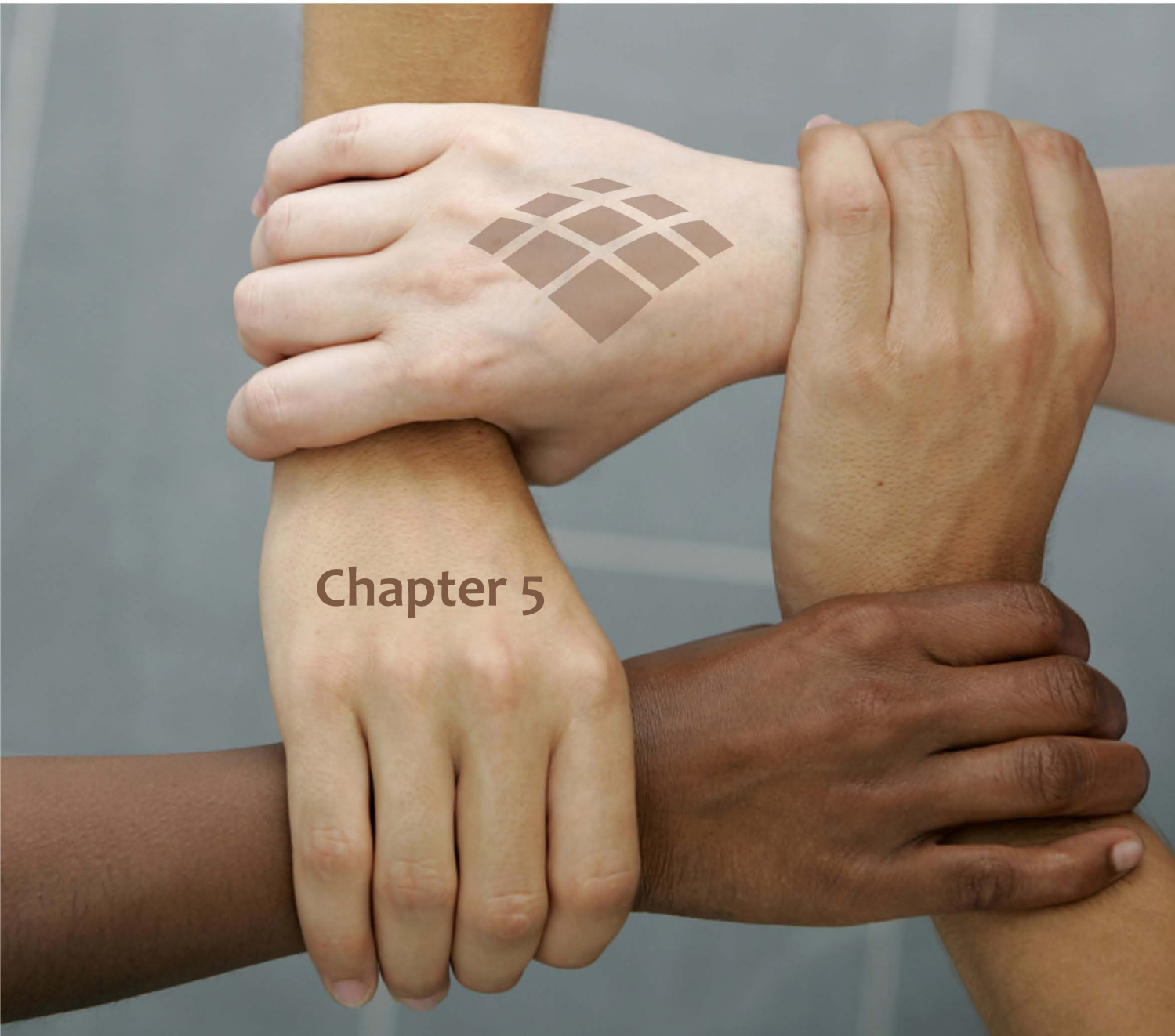
Transfer process

Dissemination activities contributed to the information and involvement of relevant Authorities and stakeholders. Three major dissemination events were organised during the project life: the **launch conference** (Cagliari, December 2008), the **mid-term conference** (Lesvos Island, September 2009) and the **Final Conference** “New ways to competitiveness - from European Cooperation to Local Actions”, held in Tartu on 11 May 2010.

The final dissemination event “New Ways to Competitiveness - from European Cooperation to Local Actions” took place in Tartu on 12th May 2010. The overall aim of the conference was to discuss the methods and good practices on how regions can learn from each other and how they can transfer relevant experiences and turn existing policy models in one region into new actions in other regions.

Over 230 innovation support experts, government officials and entrepreneurs from 22 European countries participated the event in Tartu. Opening words were said by Estonian Minister of Regional Development, Mr. Siim Valmar Kiisler, and Deputy Programme Director of the INTERREG IVC Joint Technical Secretariat, Mr. Erwin Siweris, ensuring high level politicians were involved in disseminating the outputs and results of ICHNOS Plus.





Chapter 5

Chapter 5

Results and action plans

a. General overview

In general, an Action Plan is a strategic document that defines precisely how the good practices will be implemented in the operational programme of each region participating in a Capitalisation project. It should be signed by the Managing Authority (M.A.) of each of the participating regions.

Action plan is a main output of INTERREG IVC capitalization projects. The main objective of these kind of projects is not to realize and implement existing good practice in the region but to prepare a strategic document that defines precisely how the good practices will be implemented with support of other programmes. Operational programmes approved by the Commission were supposed to be the main vehicle for implementation of good practice that was identified during Interreg IVC capitalization project.

ICHNOS Plus has met these requirements by setting 6 Action plans that:

- Declare main objectives of each region in the field of setting up R.C.C.
- Select the most suitable and useful good practice from the RCC common model that will be implemented in the region.
- Describe target group and final beneficiaries.
- Estimate cost necessary for establishment and running of chosen good practice.
- Identify operational programmes that could be exploited for achievement of aims.

During the project preparation 5 concrete good practices were identified by ICHNOS Plus:

1. The **Regional Centre of Competence (R.C.C.)** an organizational model for the coordination and support of the network of One One-Stop Shops (O.S.Ses.) for business.
2. A **set of technology tools**, mainly software, to support both internal (Back Office) and external (Front Office) processes of O.S.S.
3. A **database "SPORTELLO"** containing detailed information related to the procedures required for starting and operating a business.
4. A **training model** for the O.S.S staff .
5. The **virtual O.S.S.:** a website containing all the information regarding business start-up.

These good practices were made available for Action Plans created by ICHNOS Plus participating regions.

b. Regional Action plans

i. Action Plan for the Region of Sardinia

The Regional Action Plan for the Autonomous Region of Sardinia developed within the ICHNOS Plus project supports the realization of the Territorial Marketing action within the Region.

The Action Plan also includes the realization of a specific tool to support the entrepreneurial localization in Sardinia. Consistent with the O.S.S. regulations it will be accessible online within the institutional portal arranged by the Industry Authority. It will be thus possible, for enterprises already set up or in their start-up phase, to have at their disposal relevant territorial marketing information and suggestions to be helped in their investment determinations in Sardinia.

“The Regional Programming Centre of the Region of Sardinia, as Management Authority of Sardinia Regional Operative Programme “Regional Competitiveness and Employment” E.R.D.F. 2007-2013, will be responsible in association with the Regional Industry Department for the implementation of the following good practices, according to what determined in the Action Plan prepared for the Region of Sardinia: Development of the territorial marketing component inspired by the model of ICHNOS Plus Project Regional Center of Competence for One Stop Shops”.

The Action will be financed by the resources of the R.O.P., Axis VI, which has as its ultimate aim the development of enterprise competitiveness, supporting innovation.

Action Plan of Sardinia was signed at the conference New Ways to Competitiveness in Tartu (10-12 May 2010) by Mr. Francesco Ventroni, a representative of Regional programming Centre of the Autonomous Region of Sardinia responsible for European Territorial Cooperation.



Signature of the Sardinian Action Plan at the ICHNOS Plus Final Conference (Tartu, 12 May 2010)

Chapter 5

Results and action plans

ii. Action Plan for the Region of Galicia

The Galician Action Plan within ICHNOS Plus goals is entirely based in the goals of the Galician organism responsible for improving and supporting entrepreneurship and Galician business:

- Law creating the I.G.A.P.E. (*Galician Institute for Economic Promotion*), Ley 5/1992 de 10 xuño B.O.E. No. 247 10/14/1992 (*Law 5/1992 on June 10 Official Bulletin of State No. 247 10/14/1992*)
- Regulation and initiation of activity Decree 391/1992, 30 de decembro DOG 01/07/1993 No.3 (*decree 391/1992 on December 30 Official Diary of Galicia 01/07/1993 No.3*)

Concepts: Multichannel One Stop Shop integrated support service for business and entrepreneurship projects.

Increase of services such as P.A.I.T.S. (Consultancy and Procedure Initiation Points) of S.L.N.E. and S.R.L., the realization of pilot experiences in network (Points of information) and its consolidation, the relationship of Territorial Offices with the entrepreneurs and businessmen from all backgrounds, as well as services provided from the Call Centre I.G.A.P.E., the achievement of all these services is done by various means and channels: face to face, telephone, Internet, etc. The integration of all of them and essential to give a quality service.

The I.G.A.P.E. (Galician Institute for Economic Promotion) expects be a reference for entrepreneurs and businessmen in their relationship with the information and procedures necessary for placement in practice of entrepreneurial ventures in the search for greater effectiveness and efficiency.

iii. Action plan for the Region of North Aegean

The aim of the proposed action plans (functional programs) is to give the answers on **how the strategic goals of the R.C.C./O.S.S. will reach to the final recipients**, the entrepreneurs and local communities.

In this context have been developed 4 separate parts of the action plans. Each of them services a certain strategic goal.

Part 1. Single Contact Point

This part of the action plan serves the strategic goal to offer all the necessary services **that minimize or even annihilate** the time and efforts that the entrepreneur allocates for subjects that **do not concern** the planning and the growth or the operation of the business.

Part 2. Business planning and development

This part of the action plan serves the strategic goal for an effective information and support with regard to the investment opportunities, operational planning and business development

Part 3. Business education and training

This part of the action plan serves the acquisition of capabilities and knowledge which the entrepreneurs and local communities needs, for the planning and development of private or collective business.

Part 4. Operational and technical development of the R.C.C./O.S.S.

This separate part of the action plan serves the acquisition of the necessary human recourses, infrastructures and technical means, so that the R.C.C./O.S.S. to be as successful as possible.

Chapter 5

Results and action plans

iv. Action plan for the Region of Vysocina

The Action Plan reflects regional needs to support the visibility of the region and sustainability of regional businesses, to implement the national programme towards simplification of administrative procedures and to create a consensus of regional stakeholders. For the successful implementation of any regional action plans, including this one, the new forms of wide cooperation with all relevant partners is crucial. For this particular Action plan, the first line partners are:

- Chambers of Commerce.
- Business incubators/One-Stop shops.
- Small business associations.
- Representatives of S.M.Es.
- Intermediary organisations (service providers).
- Network of regional info-centres.
- eGON centres/eGovernment centres.

This Action plan consists of 2 parts:

- Official declaration
- Annex with detailed description

Official Declaration presents that Regional Centre of Competence (R.C.C.) model will be implement in the region as a Good Practice No. 1 acquired from ICHNOS Plus project - The Regional Centre of Competence (R.C.C.) an organizational model for the coordination and support of the network of One One-Stop Shops (O.S.Ses.) for business. The model will have a specific form as Vysocina Region Contact Centre.



This model, if to be implemented in Vysocina, is coherent with Regional Operational Programme South-East, priority axis 3, area of support 3.4 Public services of regional significance. Vysocina Region will adopt the common R.C.C. model as a Contact Centre of Vysocina Region with the aim of equal and transparent access of citizens (including entrepreneurs) to any public sector information within region.

The implementation of the R.C.C. model has been conditioned by legislative aspects in the Czech Republic and the Vysocina and it will be fully implemented within the established Contact Centre of the Vysocina Region.

The future steps, as the building of the Knowledge Database, are defined and supported by the ICHNOS Plus Toolkit. The implemented R.C.C. model will help to bridge the gap between national and regional responsibility in the process of reduction and simplification of administrative procedures for business start-ups, which is solved at national level (legislative issues). Regional stakeholders and S.M.Es. users will benefit directly from better services and cross-border cooperation.

Action Plan was signed by Mrs. Marta Sargánková, the Director of the Office of the Regional Council of the South-East Cohesion Region, declaring that the Office will pay attention to the objectives and outputs of the project (in case of the project ICHNOS Plus its support for creation and running of Contact Centre of the Vysocina Region).

v. Action plan for the Region of Silesia

Silesia Region has chosen the Good practice No.1 - The Regional Centre of Competence (R.C.C.) an organizational model for the coordination and support of the network of One One-Stop Shops (O.S.Ses.) for business. Its Action Plan respects Polish legal framework and also the fact that the Regional Center of Competence (R.C.C.) project contains only those elements eligible to be financed by the European Social Fund - Human Capital Operational Program.

The program is being introduced on the national level and the institution responsible for its implementation, particularly for the financing of the R.C.C., is the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration. The main task of the Human Capital Operational Program is to increase the level of employment and social integration. All parts of common R.C.C. model are developed in the Action Plan regarding human resources and possible funding from Human Capital Operational Programme.

This Action plan consists of 2 parts:

- Official declaration.
- Annex with detailed description.

In the Official Declaration the Good Practice 1: The Regional Centre of Competence (R.C.C.) for One-Stop Shops (O.S.Ses.) model is defined as a system of managing and servicing to the O.S.S. network provided by Ruda Slaska Business Incubator.

The annex of this declaration contains the detailed regional action plan for Silesia Region.”

vi. Action plan for the Region of Tartu

Tartu region has chosen the Good practice No. 5 - Virtual O.S.S., because there are the best conditions for its implementation in Estonia. Estonian Government approved “Information Society Development Plan 2013” action plan with its ordinance nr 667 in 30th November 2006. Minister of Economic Affairs and Communications approved on 7th December 2007 a decree number 97 “Support requirements and Rules for Investment Plan for development of Information Society”.

According to above mentioned and other legal documents, Estonian government has allocated E.R.D.F. funding and implemented point of single contact to the extent required by the Services Directive. Therefore ICHNOS Plus Action Plan can exploit both favourable legal conditions and available sources of finance.

This Action plan consists of 2 parts:

- Official declaration.
- Annex with detailed description .

In the Official Declaration Tartu City Government declares that will be responsible for the implementation of the identified Good Practice number five– virtual one stop shop. Virtual one-stop-shop would be a website containing necessary information for entrepreneurs in Tartu region. Tartu City Government will maintain the website for at least 24 months.

Chapter 5

Results and action plans

The virtual O.S.S. will be a website containing all the information regarding business start-up and has two stages:

- A web portal with news and information.
- A virtual OSS that allows users to create an enterprise by merely using electronic means (as foreseen in the Services Directive).

The role of a R.C.C. in this case means into practice:

- Technical support.
- Assistance.
- Promotion.

Tartu City Government together with Tartu Science Park and other stakeholders will develop a regional website for entrepreneurs, the portal would serve as a regional electronic Point of Single Contact. It will include information about local regulations for businesses, regional entrepreneurship support structures etc). The portal would also link to online services on the state portal for entrepreneurs. The website would be in Estonian (<http://ettevotlus.tartu.ee>) and in English (<http://business.tartu.ee>) to enable easy access to companies from other EU countries.

Reducing bureaucratic burden and creation one-stop shops for businesses is a way forward. The aim of the ICHNOS Plus project was not only to discuss the methods and good practices on how regions can learn each other, but also specify concrete actions how to transfer relevant experience into regional policy. Action plans created by each region can kick regional strategy towards new direction or turn existing policy models in one region into new actions in another.

vii. Regional Action Plans at a glance



Partner:	Ancitel Sardegna, Italy
Good practice:	No. 1 R.C.C. model: part of territorial marketing
Source of funding:	E.R.D.F. R.O.P.
Amount of funds (€):	Circa 300.000
Authority signing the action plan:	Regional Programming Centre of Sardinia - M.A. for the E.R.D.F. R.O.P.
Date of signature:	12 May 2010



Partner:	Cesga, Spain
Good practice:	No. 4 E-Learning platform for entrepreneurs and business consolidation No. 5 Galician Virtual O.S.S.
Source of funding:	No. 4 E.S.F. No. 5 Regional funds
Amount of funds (€):	No. 4 Roughly 35.600 a year (177.800 in 5 years) No. 5 200.000 € per year
Authority signing the action plan:	I.G.A.P.E. on behalf of Directorate, General for Planning and Funds, Galician Treasury Ministry, Government of Galicia (M.A. monitoring the E.R.D.F. in Galicia).
Date of signature:	28 June 2010

Chapter 5

Results and action plans



Partner:	Vysočina, Czech Republic
Good practice:	No. 1 Contact Centre of Vysočina Region, based on the R.C.C. model for transparent access of citizens to any public information.
Source of funding:	R.O.P. N.U.T.S. 2 South-East
Amount of funds (€):	Circa 40.000
Authority signing the action plan:	Office of the Regional Council of the South-East Cohesion Region
Date of signature:	23 June 2010



Partner:	North Aegean, Greece
Good practice:	No. 2 Technology tools to support Back and Front Office processes of O.S.S. No. 4 Training model for the O.S.S. staff
Source of funding:	National Structural Funds
Amount of funds (€):	N/A
Authority signing the action plan:	M.A. for the O.P. 'Competitiveness'
Date of signature:	23 June 2010



TARTU TEADUSPARK

Partner: Tartu Science Park, Estonia

Good practice: No. 5 Virtual one-stop-shop for entrepreneurs in Tartu region

Source of funding: Tartu City Government

Amount of funds (€): 20.000 per year

Authority signing the action plan: Tartu City Government

Date of signature: 22 June 2010



**Rudzki Inkubator
Przedsiębiorczości**

Partner: Ruda Slaska Business Incubator, Poland

Good practice: No. 1 Regional Centre of Competence
No 4 Training programs for O.S.S. staff and institutions linked with O.S.S. activities

Source of funding: E.S.F. national Structural Funds (Human Capital O.P.)

Amount of funds (€): 175.000

Authority signing the action plan: M.A. of Silesia R.O.P. (Marshall Office)

Date of signature: 30 June 2010

Chapter 5

Results and action plans

c. Other outputs and results achieved

- Report of the context analysis carried out in the six partner Regions investigating the socio-economic context and the state of the art related to O.S.S.;
- toolkit containing instructions and guidelines for the creation and development of Regional Centre of Competence for O.S.S. network;
- 4 Interregional thematic and training seminars on the main issues of relevance for the project;
- 5 on site visits;
- 3 staff exchanges;
- 6 feasibility studies to analyse the feasibility for a tailor-made transfer and implementation of the practices into each partner region;
- 6 Action Plans (one for each participating region) for the transfer of the good practices into the regional and local programmes.
- 24 staff members with increased capacity resulting from the exchange of experience at interregional events
- 2 regional/local policies and instruments improved in the field tackled by the project:
 1. Creation of the Contact Centre of the Vysocina region. Its objective is to provide equal and transparent access to information concerning relations citizens – public administration and citizens – region, regardless of communication means, from anywhere anytime.
 2. A One-Stop Shop for all citizens was opened in the shopping centre in Ruda Slaska by the City Council where it would be possible to start-up a company. Since January 2009, the Polish partner, Ruda Slaska Business Incubator, is rendering advisory services about how to set up a business, what are the rules about running a business, from where to get money to start and run a business.



Annex 1

Policy context. Legal measures related to the project.

EU Services Directive

The Directive 2006/123/EC on services in the internal market, known as “Services Directive” (in the past also known as Bolkestein Directive), aims to reduce administrative burdens that affect service providers preventing them from establishing in other Member States and to remove all remaining regulatory and technical obstacles to the free circulation of services in the European Economic Area by making it easier to provide services temporarily or remotely. The Services Directive sets out an ambitious programme of administrative simplification. A key element is the establishment of a **‘Point of Single Contact’ (P.S.C.)** in each Member State, giving the possibility to service providers and other interested parties to obtain information on national requirements and procedures by electronic means. Whilst the Directive sets out minimum legal requirements for the P.S.C., each Member State must find and implement its own model of P.S.C.

The main areas of the Service Directive that refer to ICHNOS plus project and the idea of O.S.S. are as follows:

- Article 5 : Simplification of procedures and formalities applicable to service providers.
- Article 6: Points of Single Contacts.
- Article 7: List of essential information which Member States must make easily accessible through the “points of single contacts”, obligation of assistance on the part of P.S.C. etc.
- Article 8: Electronic procedures.

Articles in details:

Simplification of procedures and formalities

According to **Article 5**, Member States have to examine all procedures and formalities applicable to access to a service activity and to the exercise thereof and must, if these procedures are not sufficiently simple, simplify them. This requires Member States to undertake a real effort of administrative simplification and reduction of the administrative burden. Member States could take into consideration simplified administrative procedures used in other Member States and **exchange best practice**.

Points of Single Contacts

The “points of single contact” defined in **Article 6** are meant to be the single institutional interlocutors for the service provider, who will not have to contact different authorities or bodies to get all the relevant information and complete all the necessary steps relating to his service activities. Member States need to make the “points of single contact” available for all service providers established in their territory or in the territory of another Member State. Through this points service providers should complete all procedures and formalities needed for running their business. The objective of **setting up One-Stop Shops for businesses** has been pursued by Member States for several years and the obligation established in the Services Directive is therefore in line with this.

Provision of essential information

Article 7 contains a list of essential information which Member States must make easily accessible through the “points of single contact” to service providers and service recipients. **This information needs to be accessible at a distance and by electronic means.** “Points of single contact” need to reply as quickly as possible to request for information and shall, in case the request is unclear or incomplete, inform the applicant without delay. Information to be provided includes the requirements service providers have to comply with when they want to provide services in a Member State.

Member States will also have to regularly review and update the information. In addition to the information on the requirements which services providers have to comply with, competent authorities should provide, when requested by services providers or recipients, assistance on the way these requirements are usually applied or interpreted.

Electronic procedures

Article 8 establishes an obligation for Member States to “ensure that all procedures and formalities relating to access to a service activity and to the exercise thereof may be easily completed, at a distance and by electronic means, through the relevant points of single contact and with the relevant competent authorities”. In order to ensure that electronic procedures are easily accessible for providers, they should in principle be available via easily accessible through communication networks such as the Internet. Such an understanding is also in line with the use of the term “electronic means” in other Internal Market instruments. **Electronic means have to be available for the whole administrative process**, from the service provider’s initial application/submission of documents to the final reply, if required, from the relevant competent authority.

The Small Business Act for Europe

The Small Businesses Act adopted in June 2008 is a set of ten principles to guide Member States in their policy towards S.M.Es. The Small Business Act aims to improve the overall policy approach to entrepreneurship, to irreversibly anchor the “Think Small First” principle in policymaking from regulation to public service, and to promote S.M.Es.’ growth by helping them to tackle the remaining problems, which hamper their development.

The symbolic name of “Act” given to this initiative underlines the political will to recognize the central role of S.M.Es. in the E.U. economy and to put in place for the first time a comprehensive policy framework for the E.U. and its Member States:

Annex 1

Policy context.

Legal measures related to the project.

1. Create an environment in which entrepreneurs and family businesses can thrive and entrepreneurship is rewarded.
2. Ensure that honest entrepreneurs who have faced bankruptcy quickly get a second chance.
3. Design rules according to the “Think Small First” principle.
4. Make public administrations responsive to S.M.Es.’ needs.
5. Adapt public policy tools to S.M.E. needs: facilitate S.M.Es.’ participation in public procurement and better use of State Aid possibilities for S.M.Es.
6. Facilitate S.M.Es.’ access to finance and develop a legal and business environment supportive to timely payments in commercial transactions.
7. Help S.M.Es. to benefit more from the opportunities offered by the Single Market.
8. Promote the upgrading of skills in S.M.Es. and all forms of innovation.
9. Enable S.M.Es. to turn environmental challenges into opportunities.
10. Encourage and support S.M.Es. to benefit from the growth of markets.

ICHNOS Plus project relates mainly to principle four: The E.U. and Member States should make public administrations responsive to S.M.E. needs, making life as simple as possible for S.M.Es., notably by promoting eGovernment and one-stop-shop solutions. E-government and one-stop shops, in particular, have the potential to improve service and reduce costs.

The ongoing implementation process of the Services Directive (whose timing goes together Small Business Act) will contribute to make life easier for S.M.Es. and requires Member States to set up points of single contact, to reduce in number and lighten authorization schemes, and to **eliminate regulatory barriers** to the development of services activities. It also offers opportunities to go beyond its requirements in **accelerating the start up of business operations**. To translate this principle into practice, the Member States are invited to reduce the level of fees requested by the Member States’ administrations for registering a business, taking inspiration from E.U. best performers. Member States have to reduce the time required to set up a business to less than one week, where this has not yet been achieved, in order to accelerate the start-up of S.M.Es.’ commercial operations by reducing and simplifying business licences and permits. More specifically, Member States could fix a deadline of maximum 1 month for obtaining the necessary licences and permits, except in certain cases where a longer period is justified by serious risks to people or the environment refrain.

EU Initiative i2010

The i2010 programme focuses on convergence, bringing together the telecom industry and Internet service providers on the one side and the content industry (i.e. the media) on the other side. The programme is based on 3 “I” – Innovation, Investment and Integration into everyday life. European Commission emphasises interoperability as basis for content exchange and co-operation of different information systems.

i2010 focuses on concrete policy priorities:

1. Creating a single information space (this includes revising regulations, supporting content creation and broadband as well as security issues)
2. Increasing E.U. investment in I.C.T. research by 80% (including trans-European demonstrator projects and actions for S.M.Es.)
3. Promoting an inclusive European information society (including better public services and quality of life actions with three flagship initiatives)

The ICHNOS Plus project relates to ideas of i2010 mostly in point one that deals of interoperability and security of information space. Interoperability is key element for One-Stop Shops, because different information systems, devices and platform have to “talk to one another” and services must be portable from platform to platform. The question of security is also important because users have to feel safe and R.C.C. must be sure that information systems are protected against fraudster, identity stealing and technology failures.

The development of **electronic administration services** represents a key element in the process of improving the information and services that the different administrations offer to citizens and companies, as well as the simplification of all the administrative procedures. Interoperability and Open Source Software are very important topics. Interoperability is the milestone because R.C.C. I.C.T. systems will have to “understand” the systems hosted by other government initiatives, in order to use their services.

Every R.C.C. should adopt and implement the European Framework of Interoperability that is constructed on the basis of 8 principles as follows:

1. Accessibility
2. Multi-linguism
3. Security
4. Personal Data Protection
5. Subsidiarity
6. Use of open standards
7. Value the benefit of free software
8. Use of multilateral solutions



ICHNOS Plus
Innovation and Change:
Network of One-Stop-Shops for business.

This edition was prepared, edited and paid by the Regional Development Funds of North Aegean region with E.R.D.F. funds for ICHNOS plus project. The material was collected by all the partners of the project and constitutes deliverable of the project.