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Consortium:



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RE	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)	
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	

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1 Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

The main results obtained during project implementation were subjected to a validation with the local stakeholders. Each partner carried out a local validation session (workshop) in their respective region. These regional validation workshops were oriented to policy makers, programme managers and end-user SMEs. The main objective was to present and discuss with stakeholders the main findings and recommendations that came out of the project.

In the context of the collaboration strategy established with the other ongoing projects, MaPEeR SME and RAPPORT, whenever possible, GPrix partners join forces with partners from these other projects to jointly organize the regional validation workshops. These workshops were complemented by other “awakening” workshops in other events where the GPrix project was presented in order to involve as much as possible other stakeholders outside the regions covered by the study.

2 Regional Validation Workshops

2.1 West Midlands

23 February 2011, Stoke-on-Trent, UK GPrix Workshop

High-level experts meeting – Analysis of the Innovation and R&D support measures for SMEs of the West Midlands.

Introduction

This report details the presentation and discussion of the GPrix findings and recommendations that took place at the Regional Validation Event on February 23rd 2012. One measure of the quality of the discussion is that participants unanimously agreed to extend the session by 45 minutes.

Summary

Date&Hour	23 rd February2012, from 16:00 to 18:15
Meeting location	Staffordshire University, Stoke on Trent, United Kingdom
Participant entities	See the list of participants
Main Objectives	Disseminate to Regional SMEs and other stakeholders on the results and recommendations of the GPrix project

Invitation sent to stakeholders

Date: 23rd February 2012, 16:00-17:30

Venue: Staffordshire University Business School, Ashley Building, room LT014

Subject: Supporting SME innovation in traditional manufacturing industry:
invitation to an event at Staffordshire University Business School

Invitation letter

A group of researchers at Staffordshire University Business School are the UK partners in the GPrix project, which is one of three research projects designed to evaluate best practice in innovation support measures, especially for SMEs. While the other projects have focussed on fast-growing SMEs (the so-called “gazelles”) and SME research and development, the GPrix project focussed on SME innovation and innovation support in traditional manufacturing industry.

The GPrix team is now in a position to report its main findings and recommendations. These will be of particular interest to:

- SMEs thinking of engaging with innovation support programmes – such as Knowledge Transfer Programmes, Innovation Vouchers and UKTI schemes;
- public-sector colleagues concerned with the design and delivery of support programmes; and, more widely,
- anyone concerned with helping SMEs to innovate as part of the broad agenda of “rebalancing” the UK economy towards manufacturing.

We do not intend only to be on “transmit” mode! We intend this to be a “validation” event. We want to tell you about our findings and recommendation but we also want your comments, criticisms and suggestions to take to the final conference in Brussels. From this, final recommendations will be included in our final Report, which will be part of the evidence base used to allocate future EU funding for SME innovation. Against the background of much diminished domestic funding, we hope to influence EU policy to the advantage of SMEs in traditional manufacturing industries, which continue to be hugely important sources of wealth creation, exports and employment in the West Midlands.

The evidence base for our recommendations includes in-depth interviews with programme managers, survey responses from nearly 100 SMEs in traditional manufacturing industries in the West Midlands and detailed case studies of innovation and innovation support in 10 of these firms. We also learn from a wider evidence base of well over 300 survey returns and 70 case studies from 7 European regions, each of which is similar to the West Midlands in being the location for substantial ceramics, leather, textiles, metal fabrication, and auto industries.

Participants List

Name	Organisation	E-mail
Professor Geoffrey Pugh	Staffordshire University	G.T.Pugh@staffs.ac.uk
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The presentation at the Regional Validation Event (23-02-2012):
Professor Geoff Pugh and event participants

GPrix outcome

The outcomes of the workshop were two-fold:

1. research results and corresponding policy recommendations were disseminated to key stakeholders; and
2. important feedback was obtained from informed professionals, which helped to shape the final policy recommendations of the GPrix project.

The following gives a summary of the presentation, given by Professor Geoffrey Pugh, and of the feedback from participants. For reasons of space, the recommendations are given only in summary form; the recommendations in full are reported in GPrix Deliverable 3.3. However, the discussion and feedback from participants are presented in full.

Professor Pugh began by emphasising that the purpose of the event was “to both transmit and receive”: namely, to report evidence-based recommendations for both support policies and support programmes designed to increase innovation by SMEs in traditional manufacturing industry; and to modify these proposals in the light of informed critique.

The background to the project was sketched; in particular, the GPrix definition of “traditional industry” was explained. Professor Pugh then turned to the findings and recommendations.

GPrix outcome

Policy principles for the institutions, type and scope of innovation support for SMEs in traditional manufacturing industry

1. Implement best practice evaluation of programme effectiveness

The recommendation from the GPrix project is that *best practice evaluation should be required for all major innovation support programmes.*

Discussion and feedback:

Two main points arose from discussion.

First, lack of best practice characterises not only evaluation of business support programmes at regional and local level in the UK but also at the EU level. Although groups of experts within the EU are familiar with best practice evaluation methodology, this has not been implemented in practice by the EU (e.g. in relation to Framework programmes and projects).

Second, evaluation was also characterised as “very poor” and “very weak” from the perspective of SME programme participants. One SME owner insisted that his firm “could have used the money better” with continuing evaluation combined with visits and mentoring during the life of the project. This SME experience is consistent with the GPrix recommendation to “build in” evaluation into all business support programmes (rather than adding it as an ex post afterthought).

- 2. One size does not fit all: make innovation support consistent with traditional sector innovation models:** There are different innovation models. SME innovation in traditional manufacturing industry is not based on R&D but, far more often, on the application of tacit knowledge and know-how to design. Correspondingly, their support needs are different from SMEs in, say, emerging technologies. Hence, *different innovation models suggest different support programmes or, at least, a broader more inclusive emphasis in existing innovation support programmes.*
- 3. The need for institutional stability:** In the UK the institutional landscape of business support is constantly changing. This contrasts with other EU partners countries, notably Germany. The proposal for the UK is for fewer and more stable delivery organisations and programmes.
- 4. Support non-technological innovation, including marketing:** *To promote SME innovation in traditional sectors there should be more emphasis on non-technological innovation, especially marketing.*

Discussion and feedback:

This recommendation was subject to much discussion and valuable feedback.

First, the point was made that we need to be clear on what we mean by marketing – the concept is used variously from a broad approach almost coterminous with “business strategy” to a narrow approach almost coterminous with “sales”. However, in the GPrix research and detailed results, marketing activities are set out in detail and rigorously defined.

One SME owner with experience of a major R&D project made the point that “marketing should be embedded in the whole process” and criticised the lack of “end to end” thinking on the part of programmes and their managers. Specifically, the programme was “R&D fixated”, excluding both “design” and “marketing” activities (“as soon as these were mentioned ... the answer was no!”). Marketing activities, in particular, were “disallowed costs”. The result was that his firm “could not get the best out of the programme”. One of the consultants present broadly agreed, but made the point that marketing activities could be supported if they were presented using the terminology of “exploitation” and “dissemination” – e.g. activities related to getting into supply chains. However, participants doubted the value of SME owners and managers having to learn a new language and political skills in order to get the best from support programmes.

While SMEs can apply for different support programmes to meet different purposes – e.g. “proof of market” and “proof of concept” – the practicalities of such an approach are to be doubted. By the time different programme support has been put into place the commercial opportunity is likely to have passed.

The point was raised that marketing support, like design support, may raise problems from the perspective of competition law. The closer support is to particular products, the more one firm may be being supported in relation to others. However, legal difficulties in definition need not be a bar to establishing principles for support programmes. If legal difficulties can be confronted in areas such as IPO, then they can be confronted in other areas of concern to business.

- 5. Recognise exporting as innovation:** For SMEs in traditional manufacturing *exporting should be recognised as a dimension of innovation and supported as such*. In other words, innovation and export promotion should be part of a joint strategy and, hence, made available to SMEs in a related rather than in a fragmented manner.

Discussion and feedback:

In the context of SMEs in traditional manufacturing industry, there was general agreement among participants that exporting should be seen and supported as innovation.

One of the consultants represented at the validation event cited recent research in the auto industry suggesting that for SMEs the top priority is connecting to supply chains; and that the leading supply chains are in Germany. In this case, the innovation is to solve the problem of “how to get it out there”; and, correspondingly, the most popular support programmes were those that helped firms to go to Germany, find out “who to engage with” and to link with German supply chains.

The presenter noted that one of the most common delivery organisations mentioned by UK respondents is UK Trade and Industry (UKTI), which is a long-established institution promoting UK exports and is generally – although not universally - known and trusted by SMEs in traditional manufacturing industries. This is consistent with our emphasis on institutional stability as one of the keys to SME participation in innovation support programmes.

6. Extend innovation support to business groups

Many manufacturing enterprises belong to groups of related businesses. Although these are not SMEs in a legal sense many do operate as SMEs in a business/economic sense. The corresponding GPrix proposal is that *any company owned by a larger group but operating as a separate entity should be entitled to the same help as an independent SME.*

Discussion and feedback:

Some telling criticisms were made of this proposal. First, there is the practical difficulty of how to distinguish business groups from conglomerates that do not preserve the operating autonomy of constituent enterprises. Secondly, this proposal would involve a blurring of boundaries that would not be possible – or permissible – on legal grounds. Instead of the GPrix proposal, two suggestions were advanced: the first was to institute separate programmes for firms belonging to business groups; the second was to provide innovation support through tax credits that would not discriminate between firms of different sizes. This second proposal is consistent with the GPrix proposals on R&D tax credits, which are discussed below.

7. Innovation support programmes should be demand led

This principle for policy design is implicit in some of the previous recommendations: in particular, making innovation support consistent with traditional sector innovation models; supporting non-technological innovation, including marketing; and recognising exporting as innovation. Both the GPrix project and the MAPEER project *found SME respondents to be overwhelmingly favourable to explicitly demand-led support programmes such as Innovation Voucher schemes.*

Discussion and feedback:

There was general agreement on the principle of “demand-led” support. In this connection, there was much discussion of Innovation Vouchers.

One SME owner reminded participants that in the West Midlands, and the UK more generally, Innovation Vouchers provide SMEs with £3,000 to spend on support from a university. This pays for 30 hours of support, so the prerequisite for success is “someone who is enthusiastic”; otherwise, it is just a matter of “signing off the paperwork” even when not much has been accomplished. In their present form, Vouchers are

1. too small – they are only useful if the project is “off the shelf” and “can be understood in a morning”, and
2. “too short-term”.

On the issue of SME contribution, the point was made that “if a firm cannot offer £3,000” then the programme manager should “question if it is worth getting involved with them”. However, the counter-argument was advanced that a Voucher is “often the first support measure undertaken by a firm” and that this “can be a stepping stone” as “by tackling a small problem” a SME may “realize what a university can do for them”. Another participant suggested that as a “stand-alone”, Vouchers are “not so useful”; yet as a “stepping stone” they can be “useful”.

A strong view was expressed that Innovation Vouchers are “more effective than other innovation advice” and, consistent with the previous point, “if the Voucher establishes a relationship, then the SME will come back again”. Developing this idea, the point was made that “SMEs find it hard to find an expert who can help”.

There was general agreement that higher-value Vouchers should be made available, as is generally the case elsewhere in the EU. Innovation Vouchers were described as “brilliant” but this was seen as “to do with speed”; often, SMEs wanted something “fast even if not complete”. The view was expressed that in the UK there was a “gap between Innovation Vouchers and KTPs”. Conversely, elsewhere in the EU there were “many short two/three-month projects”. Higher-value Vouchers could address this “gap”.

Principles for programme design and implementation

- 8. The selection process of firms into innovation support programmes should be more inclusive.**

The GPrix recommendation is that ***the selection process of firms into innovation support programmes should be reformed***. There is potential for improving the overall innovation outcomes of innovation support programmes for SMEs in traditional manufacturing industry by selecting typical firms with the most to gain from support rather than selecting those with the greatest propensity to innovate but the least to gain from support.

To reform the selection process by making it more inclusive requires many more firms to select from. Consequently, ***a corollary of reforming the selection process is the need to remove participation obstacles***.

9. Make it easier for SMEs to participate in support programmes

Procedural principles for encouraging traditional sector SMEs to participate in innovation support programmes are essentially two-fold:

1. Simple and speedy procedures
 - a. Reduce bureaucracy!
 - b. Do quickly!
 - c. Pay quickly!
2. Provide guidance during the project
 - a. Mentoring
 - b. Coaching

Discussion and feedback:

Discussion focused on how to bring about greater SME involvement in innovation support programmes.

A representative of a trade association suggested that “awareness is critical”. Even awareness of UKTI - which is one of the longest established, best regarded and most used business support measure – is “patchy”; “not all firms know about it”. The presenter suggested from the evidence of the GPrix case studies that one problem is that SMEs are bombarded with a constant stream of new programmes and initiatives and that SMEs “can’t cope with the volume of e-mails”. The comment of the colleague from the trade association was “that’s right”, with the result for any new programme that “nobody knows about it”.

The presenter suggested that the key issue of SME awareness is related to the stability of programmes and of the institutions delivering them. Greater institutional stability will allow relationships to be formed and, with this, the personal contacts and recommendations that can secure SME commitment.

Finally, there was support for awareness raising events at universities, including “Continuing Professional Development (CPD)-rewarded” events. In addition, simple explanations on a web site could help (using, for example, simple charts of time commitment/cost vs effectiveness to characterize support programmes).

10. Simplify and broaden the scope of R&D tax credits

In addition, the findings of the GPrix econometric evaluation are consistent with case study evidence in giving rise to the final GPrix recommendation; namely, to ***simplify and broaden the scope of Research and Development (R&D) tax credits***. In effect, the proposal is to transform the R&D tax credit – arguably the product of a narrow, technical model of innovation – into ***an innovation tax credit consistent with a broader concept of innovation***, which includes both technological and non-technological innovation.

The proposal for a broader innovation tax credit to replace or supplement R&D tax credit is consistent with other principles and recommendations supported by GPrix research into innovation and innovation support for traditional sector SMEs: broadening the scope of innovation support measures to match the innovation models of SMEs in traditional sectors; promoting demand-led support; and simplification of innovation support – assuming that tax credits replace most or, at least many existing programmes - would favour long-term institutional stability and easier provision of advice and practical assistance. Finally, to these principles and recommendations the GPrix evaluation adds a value for money argument for innovation support delivered through tax credits; namely, compared to existing programmes, innovation tax credits will be more inclusive and so increase the effectiveness and, hence, the value for money of public innovation support.

Discussion and feedback:

The recommendations on simplifying and broadening R&D tax credits in favour of SMEs in traditional manufacturing industry gave rise to some important disagreements and qualifications.

One SME owner “completely disagreed” with the view endorsed by the GPrix research that R&D tax credits are too difficult, expensive and narrowly defined to be of benefit to SMEs in traditional manufacturing industry. He reported his experience, from the perspective of a firm with an annual turnover of a little under £3 million, that with the help of the company accountant “we did it ourselves” and that HMRC had been most helpful in doing so (a visit from a “really helpful” tax inspector was unusual as he was “trying to give us money”!). Moreover, this experience was not unique: other SME owners of his acquaintance had also found that “it is easy to do”, contrary to the usual view from SMEs. Finally, giving some practical advice, his experience was that management accountants were more useful in new ventures such as claiming R&D tax credits than are their chartered colleagues; moreover, that the “hardest thing to do” was “getting the engineers to record it” (i.e., eligible activities), although a relatively small amounts of training and practical measures such as the assignment of cost codes could overcome this problem.

The view was expressed that there was probably a critical mass for the relevance of R&D tax credits of around a turnover of £2 million. Less than this and firms “don’t want to know”; above this and firms “can do it”.

A common view was the need for awareness raising among SMEs; for example, many SMEs think – erroneously – that R&D needs to appear on the P&L account for them to be eligible for R&D tax credits. In general, there is confusion regarding who can claim and

how expensive it is to do so. Most SMEs do not have the time to read and digest the literature (e.g. on eligibility). In this respect, events like a forthcoming seminar at Staffordshire University on R&D tax credits were seen to be useful. The suggestion was made that awareness raising on this and other types of business support could be built into certifiable CPD programmes. In addition, a low-level lay person's guide as to what activities are eligible for R&D tax credits could help take up, as would case studies and dissemination of case law. Awareness raising events involving specialist Tax Inspectors were also suggested. There are agents who for a fee will prepare a SME's claim.

A representative of a trade association in a sector of traditional manufacturing suggested that the situation was changing from that suggested by the presentation. In his experience, there was "growing awareness that it is not expensive to claim R&D tax credits" and that "more SMEs are claiming". For example, this is helping to redefine the concept of "waste", as SMEs undertaking design work that does not work, for example, can claim this as an R&D cost. SMEs typically "struggle at first" but increasingly were seeing R&D tax credits as a "good scheme". He anticipated much greater take up. According to this contribution, the latest changes to the scheme might soon lead to much greater levels of take up by SMEs in traditional sectors.

2.2 North and Central Portugal

28 April 2010, Matosinhos, Portugal Portuguese Joint Workshop MaPEeR SME - GPrix

High-level experts meeting – Analysis of the Innovation and R&D support measures for SMEs of the North and Central Regions of Portugal.



The GPrix Workshop in Portugal

From left to right:
Mr. Pedro Soutinho (Inova+/GPrix); Mr. Eurico Neves (Inova+/GPrix); Mr. Pedro Capucho (AEP), Ms Andreia Moreira (Rose Vision/ MaPEeR SME) and Prof. Borges Gouveia (Aveiro University).



Overview of the participants

The GPrix/MaPEeR SME Workshop in Portugal was held in close collaboration with the most important business association in the country and chamber of commerce and industry (AEP - Associação Empresarial de Portugal). The main purpose of the workshop was to raise awareness of stakeholders to both projects' goals and activities while promoting a discussion with the participants to know their views of public support to innovation. The panel of experts include universities, business associations, SMEs (managers), public bodies (managers of innovation support programmes), technologic centres and innovation clusters (Competitiveness Poles) which include R&D centres and industrial companies.

Agenda

Date & Hour	28 th April 2010, from 10:00 to 13:00
Venue	Salão Nobre da AEP – Associação Empresarial de Portugal, Matosinhos, Portugal
Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SEEI – Secretaria de Estado da Energia e da Inovação (Secretary of State for Energy and Innovation)<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ António Bob dos santos (Deputy Secretary of State for Energy and Innovation.)• AEP – Associação Empresarial de Portugal (Business Association)<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Pedro Capucho (Director of the Department of Studies)• UA – Universidade de Aveiro (University)<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Borges Gouveia (Full Professor)• ISCTE – Instituto Superior de Ciências do Trabalho e da Empresa (University)<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Sandro Mendonça (Professor)• ADI – Agência de Inovação (Public Innovation Agency)<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Bibiana Dantas (Project Manager)• TICE – Pólo de Tecnologias de Informação, Comunicação e Electrónica<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Vasco Lagarto (Member of Executive Committee)• CEIIA – Centro para a Excelência e Inovação na Indústria Automóvel (Automotive R&D Centre)<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Bernardo Ribeiro (R&D Director)• CITEVE – Centro Tecnológico das Indústrias Têxtil e do Vestuário (Textiles R&D Centre)<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Braz Costa (General Director)• CICECO – Centro de Investigação em Materiais Cerâmicos e Compósitos<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Joaquim Vieira (Vice-Director) <p>SMEs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• OPT – José Paulo Delgado (CEO)• POLISPORT – Sara Silva (Financial Director)• CELOPLÁS – João Cortez (CEO)• TIS - Daniela Carvalho (Head of Economics and Management Unit) • ECOCHOICE – Miguel Henriques (Administrator)• MULTIWAVE PHOTONICS – José António Salcedo (CEO)• DEVAN-MICROPOLIS – Rita Prestes (Director)• TINTAS BARBOT João Braga (Technical Director)
Main Objectives	Gather the insights of experts from several actors of the innovation process. Confront different views in an open dialogue between SMEs, universities and research centres, business associations and programme managers from local public bodies. Identify the existing tools and barriers to SME R&D&I activities, as well as to think about the

	next developments of EC SMEs research policies
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Results

The GPrix workshop was quite successful, engaging participants on an active discussion about innovation support measures and how to improve them and make them more accessible to the SMEs. Participants have shown great interest in the project outcomes and they note that there are no good studies of innovation in SMEs. One major conclusion from the debate is that most of the SMEs feel that the public support is more targeted at R&D than innovation thus not directly addressing their needs. Another common complain is the excess of fragmentation of the programmes that tend to focus more on some specific theme or goal rather than covering all innovation needs of the SMEs, forcing them to apply to several different programmes if they want to cover all components of their innovation plan which is often composed by many different aspects that go from the typical tech transfer from R&D centres to the implementation of innovative business strategies.

10 November 2011, Matosinhos, Portugal Portuguese Joint Workshop GPrix - MaPEER

High-level experts meeting – Analysis of the Innovation and R&D support measures for SMEs of the North and Central Regions of Portugal.

Summary

Date & Hour	10 th November 2011, from 09:00 to 13:30
Meeting location	AEP, Porto, Portugal
Participant entities	See Annex with list of participants
Main Objectives	Disseminate to Portuguese SMEs and Portuguese stakeholders on the results of the activities of GPrix and MAPEER SME projects

Introduction

In the context of the GPrix and MAPEER SME projects, INOVA+ and Rose Vision have jointly organized an experts meeting to analyze the support measures to research, development and innovation (R&D&i) for SMEs in Porto, Portugal. This meeting is a continuation of the November 2010 meeting held in Valencia, Spain, but with focus on the current achievements that both projects have got so far. This meeting constituted the workshop scheduled to be held in Portugal aiming at reporting on the achievements of both projects, by sharing information on stakeholders,

measures to enhance SME participation as well as invitations to the final late response to questionnaires distributed by MAPEER SME.

The MAPEER study on Portugal R&D system was presented by Dr. Julián Seseña, as well as the conclusions from the Experts Panel.

GPRIX studies on the traditional sectors and their specific needs were also highlighted by Eng. Pedro Soutinho.

The meeting was held in the premises of the AEP - AEP- Associação Empresarial de Portugal, to whom both projects MAPEER SME and GPRIX were enormously thankful for their assistance.

On behalf of AEP, Mrs María Teresa Mota opened the meeting and expressed the importance of the SMEs profiles for Portugal.

MAPEER and GPRIX projects presentation, respectively made by Julián Seseña and Pedro Soutinho, focused on scope, R&D panorama at European and national level, main outputs, countries and sectors covered, and priority areas.

It has been emphasized that these complementary support action projects have been analysing and have benchmarked SME research and innovation support activities at national, regional and European level that facilitate the knowledge production and acquisition by SMEs and those that increase SME innovation capacity. Based on the results of benchmarking exercise, the GPrix and MAPEER SME projects have developed recommendations on how to structure efficient, SME-friendly programmes, in particular at European level.

In order to achieve these results, the projects have gathered at regional level the experts' opinions that have been brought to the attention of European Experts Panel on Research by SMEs, for further discussion and elaboration of detailed recommendations.



North and Central Portugal - Regional Validation Workshop

GPRIX outcome

The main purpose of the workshop was to disseminate project results and outcomes to key stakeholders, namely to SMEs. The panel of experts include universities, business associations, SMEs (managers), public bodies (managers of innovation support programmes), technologic centres and innovation clusters which include R&D centres and industrial companies. SMEs in

particular have shown great interest in the project outcomes as there are a lot of studies targeting innovation in SMEs but no many targeting the traditional sectors.

One major outcome of the project is that most of the SMEs feel that the public support is more targeted at R&D than innovation thus not directly addressing their needs. Another common complain is the excess of fragmentation of the programmes that tend to focus more on some specific theme or goal rather than covering all innovation needs of the SMEs, forcing them to apply to several different programmes if they want to cover all components of their innovation plan which is often compose by many different aspects that go from the typical tech transfer from R&D centres to the implementation of innovative business strategies.

This wider approach to innovation is not possible using current programmes and multiple projects in different programmes is usual beyond the SME capacity and available resources.

The following list summarizes our findings coming out mainly from face-to-face meetings, from the workshops and other actions, i.e., from a direct contact with company's managers.

- Too much red tape
- Too much fragmentation
- Too much complexity upon application
- Radical institutional instability
- More flexible in scope
- Idea to market too long for SMEs mindset
- Not in line with the SMEs' needs

One programme that has been around for some time is already addressing these needs, namely the successful Innovation Voucher which became an easy first step for SMEs of the traditional sectors to start their participation in innovation support programmes. But the main advantage of this programme typology is not only the boost in participation but the networking generated, as it is promoting cross-linking between SMEs and R&D centres. This identified best practice has important lessons to be learned and some of its key elements could be easily exported to other types of programmes and therefore should be considered when designing new support measures

Then, Pedro Soutinho presented the SWOT analysis (displayed bellow) made in each region clearly showing many different situations but also some common key aspects that will be crucial to develop recommendations that can be applied at the European level.

The most relevant finding here is that SMEs of traditional sectors are so much involve in networking structures as it was desirable. In fact the participation in clusters or competitiveness poles are recognized as a crucial step to get inside these existent R&D&I networks but many SMEs of the traditional sectors are still outside of these networks. This hampers innovation in traditional sectors, as SMEs are not participating in the regional strategy and they miss the important spillover effects of this collaborative structures.

	Strengths	Weakness	Opportunities	Threats
PT	Flexibility to adapt (small series; fast to react; quality)	Low productivity and qualification	Brazilian and African countries markets	Access to credit
ES	Strong Export capacity	Average SME size < 10	Clusters and logistics centres	Loosing competitiveness
DE	Structured clustering and networking	Some innovation comes from other regions	Cross-linking with innovation/R&D Institutes	Increased competition from the East
IT	Innovative Clusters	Low business capitalization	New international markets	International competition pressure
UK	Presence in global niche markets	Ageing physical and human capital	Export growth in niche markets	Rising costs from regulations, taxes, energy and finance
FR	Structured channels & clusters	Traditional sectors out of the network	Better coordination of the structures of support for the innovation	Relocation to countries with lower labour costs
NL	Innovative entrepreneurship	difficult to finance innovation	niche markets in Europe	competition from countries with lower wages

Finally, Mr. Pedro Soutinho, presented the results of the innovation survey targeted at SMEs of the traditional sectors, showing a clear positive impact of the public support measures in the capacity to innovate of these firms.

In general, the survey clearly shows, positive impact on firm performance but in particular, a positive impact on employment, showing that R&D&I programmes are also an effective tool to fight unemployment. In one sentence: Support programmes do make a difference!

Agenda

9h30	Recepção dos Convidados	
9h45	Boas Práticas e Barreiras Existentes para PMEs no acesso a Incentivos Comunitários nas áreas de I&DT:	Pedro Soutinho
	- Apresentação do Projecto Europeu <i>"GPrix: Good Practices in Innovation Support Measures"</i>	
10h15	- Apresentação do Projecto Europeu <i>"MAPEER SME: Paving the way for SME-friendly R+D+I Programmes"</i>	Julian Seseña
10h45	Partilha de experiências com os participantes	
11h00	Coffee Break	
11h15	A importância das PMEs nos Programas de Financiamento Europeu – como posicionar a minha empresa	Nuno Soares
11h45	Apresentação do Programa Capacidades: <i>"Investigação em benefício das PME"</i>	
	- Condições e regras de participação	Miguel Sousa
	- Concurso aberto (6 Dezembro 2011)	
12h30	Discussão aberta	

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2.3 COMUNIDAD VALENCIANA

15 April 2010, Valencia, Spain

Spanish Joint Workshop MaPEeR SME – Gprix

High-level experts meeting – Analysis of the Innovation and R&D support measures for SMEs of the Comunidad Valenciana.

Introduction

In this forum, experts representing different public entities as IMPIVA, Commerce Chamber (La Cámara) or local government (Generalitat Valenciana) talked about the existing support measures with representatives of valencian SMEs. As a result of this event the organizers drew conclusions and recommendations on how to consolidate the role of SMEs in the regional, national and also European research programs.

Date & Hour	15 th April 2010, from 10:00 to 12:30
Venue	Salón de Grados de la Universidad Politécnica de Valencia, VALENCIA – SPAIN

Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AIDO: Elena Boronat, Isabel Ferrando; • Cámara de Valencia: Carmen Villena Ugarte; • CEEI Valencia: Jesus Casanova, Jose Alamar; • CSD: Carolina Marco; • Dirección General de Industria e Innovación: Eduardo Tomás; • IMPIVA: Juan Manuel Sanmartín, Eduardo Viana; • Instituto de Tecnología Cerámica: Enrique Sanchez Vilches; • Instituto Tecnológico AINIA: Julio Carreras; • Instituto Tecnológico de la Energía: Ricardo Ridaura Belenguer; • Prodevelop: Javier Muñoz Ferrara; • Rose Vision/ MAPEER SME: Andreia Moreira, Antonio Alfaro • Setival: Rafael Vidal • Universidad Politécnica de Valencia/ GPRIX: Ana Levin
Main Objectives	<p>Gather the insights of the regional experts of Valencia directly implicated in the R&D&I programs of the region</p> <p>Identify the existing tools and barriers to SME R&D&I activities, as well as to think about the next developments of EC SMEs research policies</p>

Round table discussion – main conclusions and recommendations

Participants: Antonio Alfaro, Innovation Director of Rose Vision, has moderated the roundtable which has counted with the participation of the people indicated in page 2.

Points discussed:

Point 1: Rethinking the definition of SME adopted by the European Commission

The concept includes micro, small and medium enterprises. When comparing companies under this classification, it is clear that the positioning, priorities and business strategy of a 200 people company is different from the positioning of a 10 employee company. This classification is, therefore, unsuitable to serve the different needs of the companies under this classification, namely the R&D specifications.

Besides differentiating large companies and SMEs, the policies and programs fostering R&D should take the micro, small and medium sub-classification into consideration in terms of rules for participation and funding.

Looking at the current situation in Valencia, the following can be said:

- Total number of SMEs of Valencia region: 362.844
- 99.8% of the of the companies in Valencia are SMEs

	Nº enterprises	% Total
1 - 9 employees	159.768	44,1
10 - 49 employees	17.541	4,8
50 - 200 employees	2.381	0,7

> 200 employees	449	0,1
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Source: Cámara de Comercio de Valencia (Commerce Chamber)

Point 2: Financing needs of SMEs

Very often Spanish SMEs need to finance themselves as well as their clients (there is a high % of overdue payment due to the crisis), so they found themselves without any money to invest in R&D. Several companies do not have their own funds to invest in R&D and, giving the current situation, they cannot participate in R&D programs because they do not have the possibility of recur to bank loans for the % of investment that is usually necessary for this sort of projects.

«According to the latest European Central Bank Report¹, among the four largest euro area countries, the access to finance of SMEs in Spain remained worse than for those in Germany, France and Italy. While SMEs in all euro area countries reported on balance a further deterioration in the availability of bank loans, Spanish SMEs continued to be the most negative. Likewise, the rejection rate for bank loan applications was highest for Spanish SMEs (25%, as against 20% in the first half of 2009) and lowest for French SMEs (7%, as compared with 12% in the first half of 2009)»

In Survey on the Access to Finance of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in the Euro Area: Second Half of 2009

In what concerns the timing of the project financing, at EU level, pre-financing payment is made at the start of the project corresponding to 80% (in FP7 for example), while at regional and national level the financing is usually paid after the first year of the project. Therefore, the implementation of similar rules as the ones used at EU projects could stimulate the participation of SMEs in the research programs. Bank guarantees are also a barrier to the inclusion of SMEs in RTD programs. A good example was taken in Spain in “Plan Avanza”, taking into consideration that this is no longer a requirement at this year’s calls.

Point 3: Calls structure and possibility of including SMEs in different stages of a project

Taking an R&D Project into consideration, we notice that the first activities are very far from the market and this may be interpreted by SMEs as an entry barrier. The SMEs should be able to enter at different stages of a project in order to facilitate their integration. For example, it is fundamental to involve the SMEs in the exploitation part – where there is a clear perceived benefit by SMEs, once it is the closer stage to the market – an effort could be done to allocate more PM of smaller partners in this stage.

Furthermore, to foster SMEs participation in R&D programs, this interest in the exploitation part should be better reflected in programs structure and a higher percentage of SMEs could be required for projects that are near the market. I.e., as more market-oriented the project is, the larger is the percentage of SMEs of the consortium. Another possible solution discussed was to associate bigger R&D projects to larger SMEs (Medium enterprises, following the sub-categories).

Regarding the calls structure, if it is built on specific topics to which companies have to stick to, this may also be a also limit the participation of SMEs, therefore more open calls could be launched as a means to facilitate inclusion of SMEs or, again, the possibility of including SMEs in a later stage of the project.

Point 4: R&D effort vs Business opportunities

¹ Survey on the Access to Finance of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in the Euro Area: Second Half of 2009

In order to attract SMEs into R&D projects, it would be interesting to perform market analysis studies associated to a program/project and to disseminate this information when the call is launched. This measure would allow the interested parties to know which concrete opportunities existing behind a specific R&D line. Another point highlighted by the SMEs present at the meeting was that the decision-making processes for RTD projects acceptance and implementation are too long. This not only has implications in the financial efforts that need to be done, but also in the human resources management implied for companies with small teams, once it is difficult to compromise resources for a long period of time. Finally, it is also important to establish a clear difference between R&D and Innovation projects and develop focused approaches for both cases once they imply different timings, durations, and support required. The further use of 2-step proposal submissions (pre-proposal / full proposal if successful) and shortened innovation cycle, including reduction of insecurity and lack of information about participation in publicly funded research projects was proposed. When comparing the European and the American approach towards results exploitation, we may conclude that the latter is much more market-oriented. The question is how to pass the R&D into the market? How to exploit the results? This is a great problem in Europe and, consequently, in EU-27 countries. To solve it, the first step could be to stimulate it at regional and national level. A possible measure would be to put more effort on product marketing and attract public financing to do this communication activity at regional, national and even international level.

Point 5: Support provided by managing entities

Similarly to the service provided at EU level, the national and regional authorities managing the programs, could designate people to offer some guiding to the companies interested in presenting a proposal. Furthermore, if it was possible to have 2 stage proposal presentations, where only the best proposals would pass to the second stage, SMEs could be better advised and the preparation effort would only be dedicated to the best proposals. Looking at the question from the program managers' point of view, it is difficult to have the agility to have dedicated staff to do the project counseling part and to accommodate shorter support programs. Nevertheless, several measures could be taken to respond to the needs of SMEs: fiscal incentives; visit the companies before deciding which proposals are approved; tutoring. In addition, in order to participate in the R&D programs, the SMEs should have a dedicated person to this activity, which is an incompatible situation to most SMEs. An external person could be one solution. In what concerns the support provided to companies, a good practice to be followed could be CELTIC project, which offers a closer advisory before the submission of the proposal. Some of the measures developed at regional level by Dirección de Industria to stimulate the participation of the companies in National programs include: effort to stimulate the mobility and the coordination between public agents, specific actions targeting clusters, and stimulate companies to elaborate proposals. Furthermore, attention is given to which of the SMEs are participating in the programs: the micro, small or bigger.

Point 6: How to involve SMEs with no experience in R&D

It is important to give attention to the regional/national programs, once they are usually the first step for companies that are entering R&D support programs. After this initial step, companies launch themselves into international programs.

In what concerns European programs, the FP7 is a good example of the efforts done to increase the involvement of SMEs (around 15% of the beneficiaries of the consortium are SMEs). Another good example from FP7 that could be implemented at regional level is the concept of the PIC as a measure to diminish the bureaucracy of the programs.

Fiscal deductions for R&D in SMEs are available in Spain, but they are costly to obtain. To ask for it, you need to have a special report provided by the Spanish Ministry of Industry and this organism

is collapsed. There should be a change in the laws to allow smaller institutions like IMPIVA (the ones that manage funding) to provide such reports.

Another point is the lack of national and regional programs that help the commercialization of an innovative product. Once the project is finished and an innovative product is in the market, the SME has to spend time and money traveling, providing demos, writing white papers or in commercial missions. This part of the process is not granted at all and sometimes SMEs perceive that the investment should be also to create market. Maybe the government or regional government (Consellería) should provide Visibility and networking opportunities for SME's at national and international level for brokerage, presentation of capacities and project ideas.

Point 7: Future opportunities regarding R&D projects

In what concerns opportunities at international level, the PPPs (Public Private Partnerships) represent the next R&D programs where the higher amount of funds will be available. Unfortunately, the SMEs or even the regions are very far from these decision processes. SMEs represent 65% of the PIB and 99% of the industry and they can only take part of 1/3 or the Global European Budget. PPPs are only built around the industrial sector and the main actors of it.

Within this context, it is fundamental to put more pressure to open the doors to the participation of SMEs – up to know this is a closed process and they can only enter in the 3rd phase of implementation to develop applications. A formal complaint should be made on the following items: how the PPPs are generated (no participation in the conceptual part) and how the PPPs are implemented (the participation is reduced to a small part related to the applications).

Thinking about alternative ways to insert the SMEs, the pressure could be made through technological platforms or by a panel of experts such as the one to be created by MAPEER. The main objective is to gather the voices of the SMEs, the regional representatives, the SMEs associations and all the experts that can bring added value to the consolidation of the role of SMEs in the regional, national and also European research programs.

In conclusion, there is a need to simplify the way to access R&D programs. The R&D programs should be adapted to SMEs needs and not the other way around.

2.4 SAXONY-ANHALT

24 November 2011, Magdeburg, Germany

Joint Workshop MaPEeR SME – RAPPORT - GPrix

High-level experts meeting – Analysis of the Innovation and R&D support measures for SMEs of Saxony-Anhalt.

Introduction

In the context of the GPrix, RAPPORT and MAPEER SME projects, Fraunhofer IFF, the Otto-von-Guericke University Magdeburg and Leibniz University Hannover have jointly organized an experts meeting to discuss their findings regarding the innovation support measures for SMEs. The meeting was the regional validation workshop of the GPrix project in Saxony-Anhalt (Germany).

The cooperation and exchange of experiences between these three projects together with regional support institutions was very productive. Thus several meetings took place in the course of the project, focusing on the current achievements in each project combined with a critical reflection and

advice for others to overcome limitations. The German validation workshop was held in Magdeburg aiming to report on the findings of the three projects, by sharing information on stakeholders like the program manager (IB Bank Saxony-Anhalt) and the Federal Ministry of Economics and Science Saxony –Anhalt (Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Wirtschaft des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt). In addition it was aimed to inform SMEs of Saxony-Anhalt about the results of the in-depth research, in order to stimulate a controversial discussion regarding recommendations for the European Commission and the program manager.

The meeting took place at the Fraunhofer IFF in Magdeburg, Germany and was moderated by Stefan Voigt, GPrix.

Summary

Date&Hour	24 th November 2011, from 13:00 to 16:00
Meeting location	Fraunhofer IFF, Sandtorstraße 22, Magdeburg, Germany
Participant entities	See Annex with list of invitation
Main Objectives	Disseminate of project results of GPrix to stakeholders of Saxony-Anhalt and discussion / feedback

Agenda

time	Activity	responsibility
13:00	Welcome and Introduction	Stefan Voigt, Fraunhofer IFF
13:15	Identifying Best Practice Elements among Three Programme Clusters	Dr. Olga Munteanu, Leibniz Universität Hannover
13:45	RAPPORT – Knowledge for business innovation in SMEs – Methodology for understanding current practice of KTT support mechanisms for SMEs	Claudia Theilmann, Otto-von-Guericke Universität Magdeburg
14:15	Regional Innovation Support Measures for SMEs from traditional sectors – Results of the GPrix project	Stefan Voigt, Fraunhofer IFF
15:00	Discussion with participants about their experiences in connection with success factors and challenges regarding innovation support measures for SMEs	Stefan Voigt, Fraunhofer IFF

Stefan Voigt, who moderated the meeting emphasized that these complementary support action projects have been analysing and have benchmarked SME research and innovation support activities at national, regional and European level that facilitate the knowledge production and acquisition by SMEs and those that increase SME innovation capacity. Based on the results of benchmarking exercise, the GPrix, RAPPORT and MAPEER SME projects have developed recommendations on how to structure efficient, SME-friendly programmes.

MAPEER

The workshop started with the presentation of Ms.Munteanu. After she introduced the objectives and methodology of the project, she presented the results gained in the course of the project. The results showed that the program design is an important factor for SMEs to engage R&D&I activities and covers a number of topics like: structure of the programmes suitable for SME needs, categorization of the participant SMEs, improve the accessibility of programmes to SMEs by covering all sectors and sizes of SMEs, apply a demand-driven approach by focusing more on SME needs; set minimum participation targets for SMEs in all R&D&I programmes, promote the true Open Innovation concept bringing the visionaries on top of the overall leadership of the research activities; redefine the different categories of SMEs, by paying special attention to the Micro-enterprises which amount 92 % of the overall European enterprises; better focus, transparency and rationalization of the selection of the research projects including the contribution of SMEs in the definition of the respective work-programmes (when programmes are defined); extend experiences like those based on the Grant-Vouchers, improve the funding levels and ensure that SMEs do access to their maximum amounts allowed by the programme, set schemes for incentives and tax deduction due to R&D&I investment.

The main recommendations of MAPEER can be summed up as follows:

- More efforts should be made to promote the benefits of the R&D programs and the benefits for SMEs participation. Material could include both statistical data and practical case studies, focusing on commercial benefits.
- There should be increased mentoring for SMEs with regard to the application process and procedures involved. Continuous and interactive signposting by national agencies to the most relevant European programs for and SMEs needs. There should be targeted control mechanisms developed to provide SMEs with a scheduled return on investment.
- The evaluation of research projects where SMEs do participate (either within Regional, National, European levels) do require the active involvement of SME's experts as evaluators. It is difficult for SMEs to be evaluated by experts who belong to academia or to large industries; we have to admit that the perspective of business, perspective of excellence towards exploitation, from SMEs is rather different from the experts who usually work at Academia or Large Industries.
- Programs should prioritize the exploitability of results rather than the pursue scientific excellence.
- A particular case of those projects which are at very initial stage of the ideas should retain special consideration. Projects targeting the "proof of concept" development stage (pre-commercialization stage) should be more supported in FP. Financing of this stage should be assured since this is still quite risky stage and the venture capital or business angels are not ready / eager to enter with their financial resources at this level, while SMEs do not have enough resources to move over this very crucial stage. If the FP provides possibilities to take part in such projects, this could further boost involvement of SMEs in FP research projects.

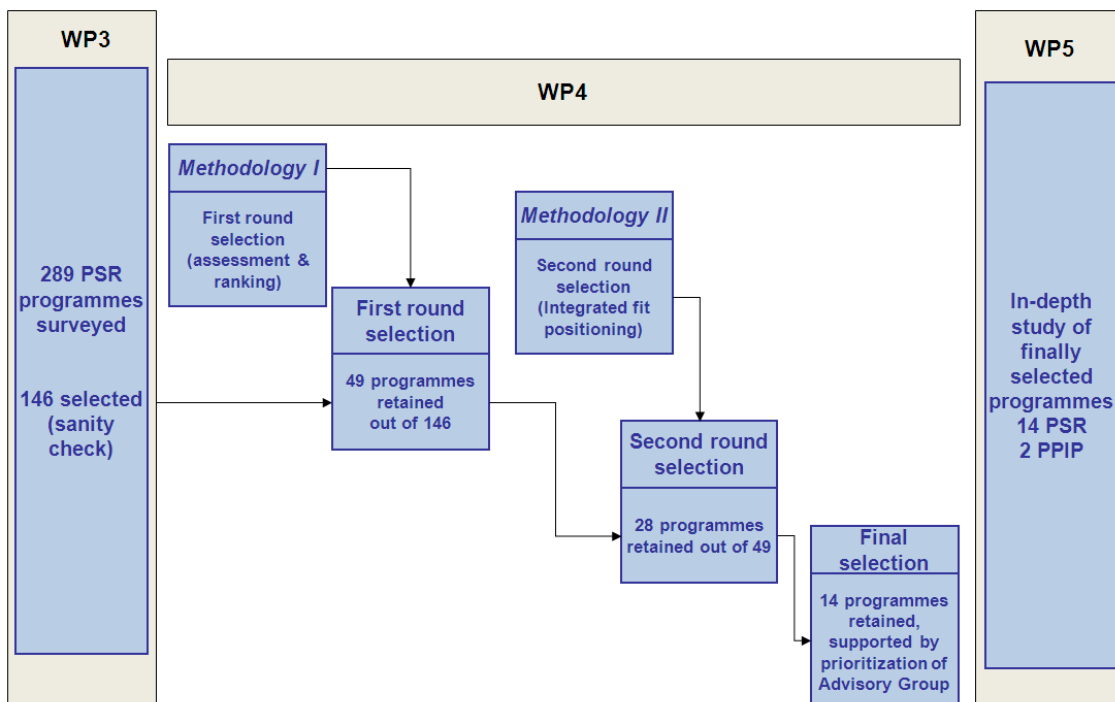
In order to achieve these results, the projects have gathered at regional level the experts' opinions that have been brought to the attention of European Experts Panel on Research by SMEs, for further discussion and elaboration of detailed recommendations.

RAPPORT

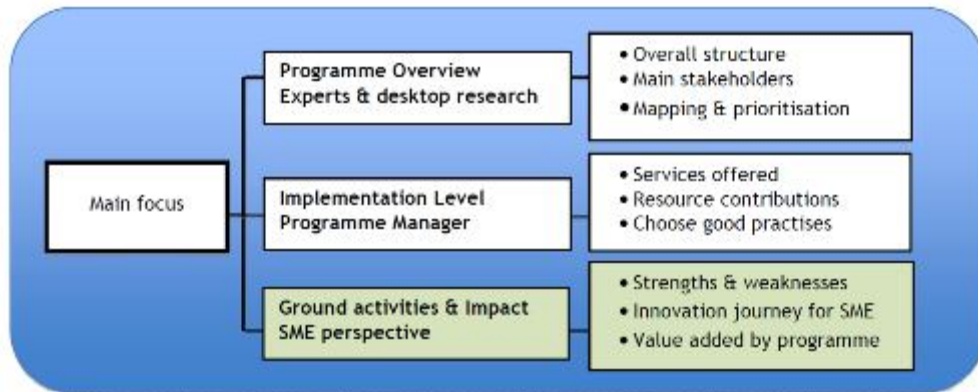
After Dr. Olga Munteanu of the MAPEER Project presented their results, Ms. Theilmann introduced the scope and results of RAPPORT. First of all the objectives and methodology of the project were displayed, which are:

- To develop a reference guide of good practices including benchmarks for strengthening the knowledge exchange and knowledge transfer between research organizations and various kinds of SMEs; under the term good practices, the reference guide will refer to the specific services offered and the deployed programmes as well as the relevant policies
- To develop a blueprint paper on new emerging forms of SMEs support for research backed by large corporations in a context where open innovation and public-private partnerships have increasingly gained importance; the paper will include benchmarks for private initiatives and public private partnerships of different kinds to support research activities within small businesses in different industries (e.g. consumer goods, IT, pharmaceuticals)
- To initiate the engagement of policy-makers and other relevant stakeholders (see Table 16) into a dialogue and ensure the 'translation' of the reference guide and the blueprint paper into a roadmap for embedding the more suitable practices and policies into the European Research Area and the policy making at both regional and national levels

The methodology of the project can descriptively be seen in the figure below.



The units that have been analyzed in the course of the projects and thus, complete the introduction of RAPPORT are showed in the graphic below.



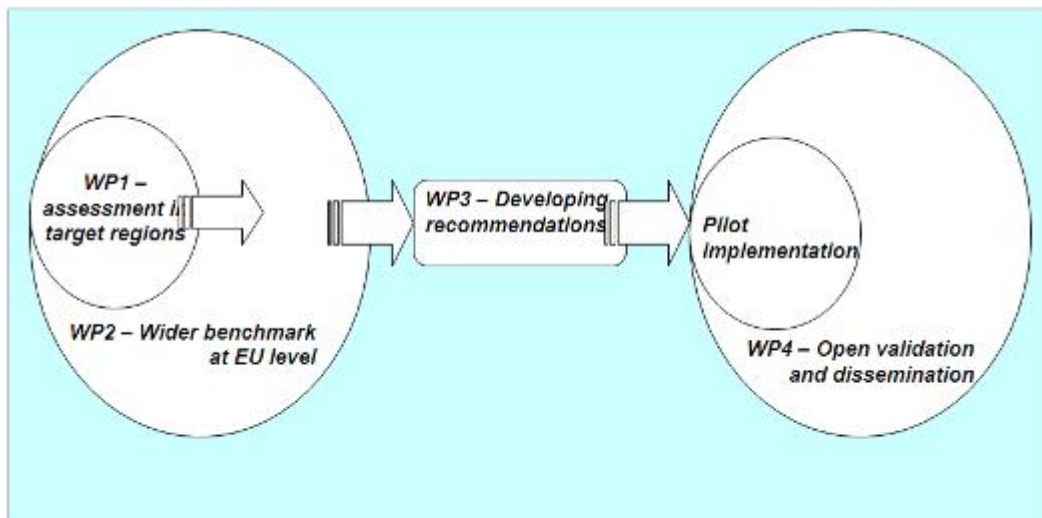
In the end some best practice programmes are identified that are analysed in-depth. The results of these analyses are subject of matter of the remaining project time.

GPRIX

The last presentation was done by moderator of the meeting, Stefan Voigt responsible for GPrix. The main purpose of the workshop for GPrix was to disseminate project results and outcomes to key stakeholders.

GPrix has the following goals:

- A characterization of the economic fabric and innovation context, in 7 regions, including a detailed SWOT analysis;
- Development of tools and methodologies to assess the additionally of Innovation Support Programmes in SMEs;
- Promote an open dialogue with stakeholders to validate findings;
- Develop a set of recommendations

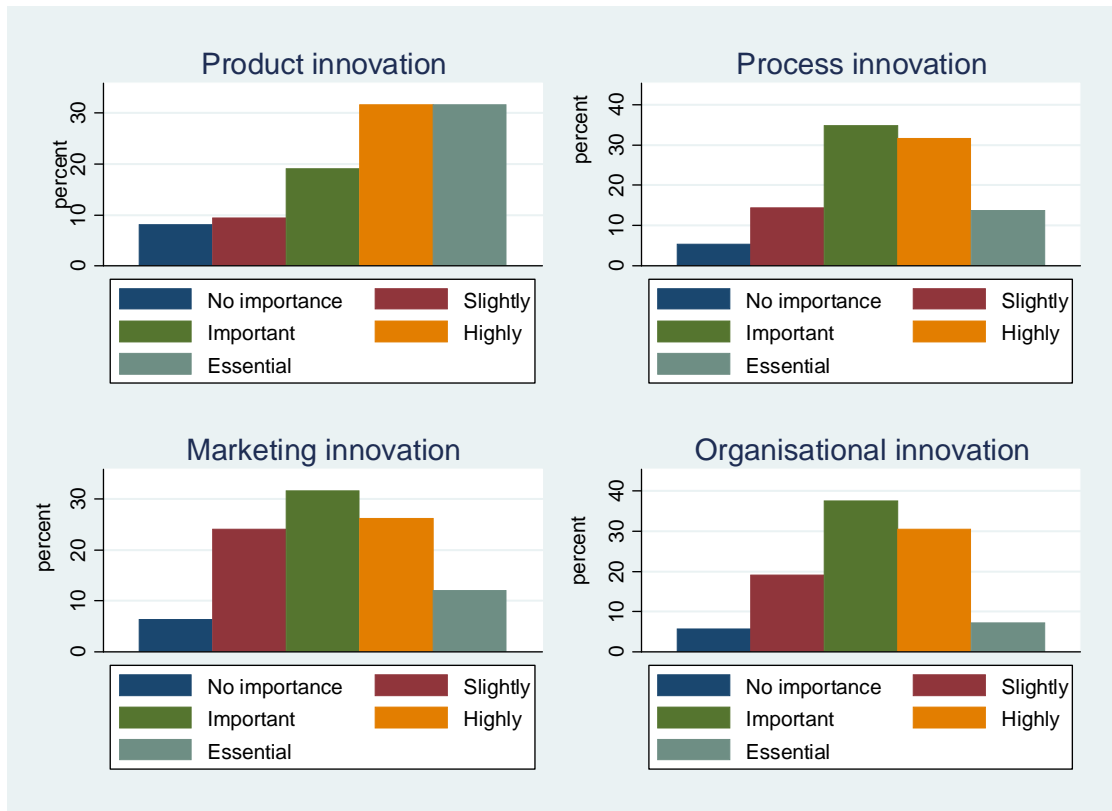


One major outcome of the project is that most of the SMEs feel that the public support is more targeted at R&D than innovation thus not directly addressing their needs. Another common complaint is the excess of fragmentation of the programmes that tend to focus more on some specific theme or goal rather than covering all innovation needs of the SMEs, forcing them to apply to several different programs if they want to cover all components of their innovation plan which is often composed by many different aspects that go from the typical tech transfer from R&D centers to the implementation of innovative business strategies.

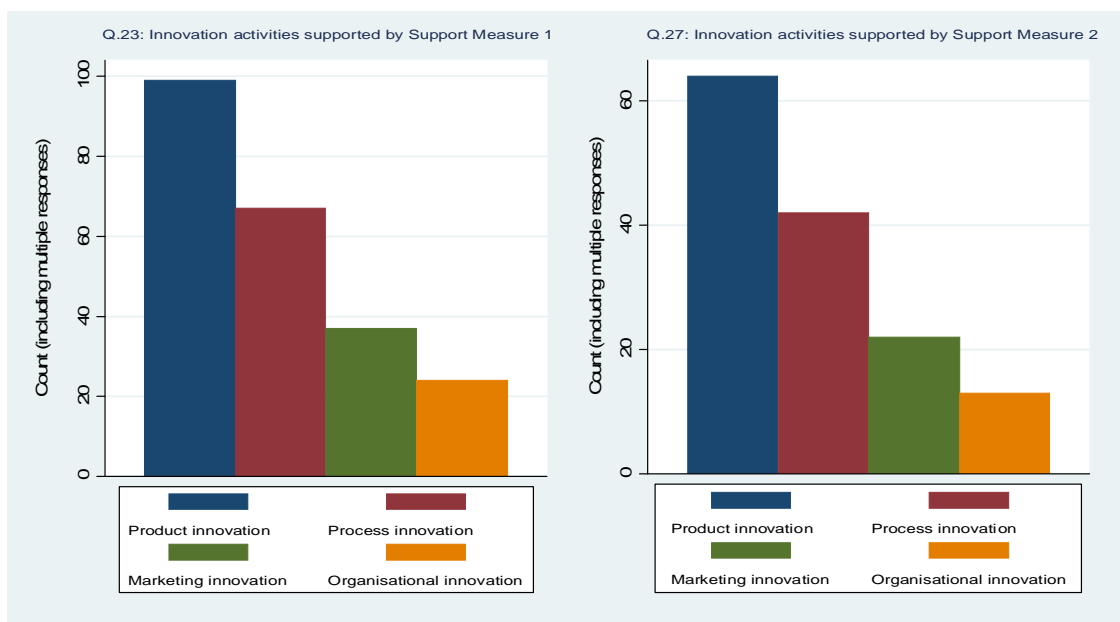
The following list summarizes our findings coming out mainly from face-to-face meetings with the program managers, from the workshops and SME case studies (with SME managers) and survey analysis.

- Innovation is mainly associated with product and process improvements and developments
- Innovation support measures have often been chosen with the help of external consultants that also helped SMEs to apply these measures
- Innovation support measures are often the determining factor for SMEs to innovate
- Innovation support measures mostly cause higher turnover for SMEs or enable SMEs to enter new markets and to take the risk the development of new products entails
- the administrative effort applying and using innovation support measures is sometimes seen as a burden that should be reduced to enable more SMEs to use these support measures (especially doubled data transmission, degree of accuracy)
- the flexibility of changes in the course of programs regarding products specifications (which might come up due to research results that haven't been expected or market changes) and the flexibility of financial support could be improved
- prematurely start of measures is sometimes critical
- the evaluation of programs success is not been done so far, which limits evaluations of programs

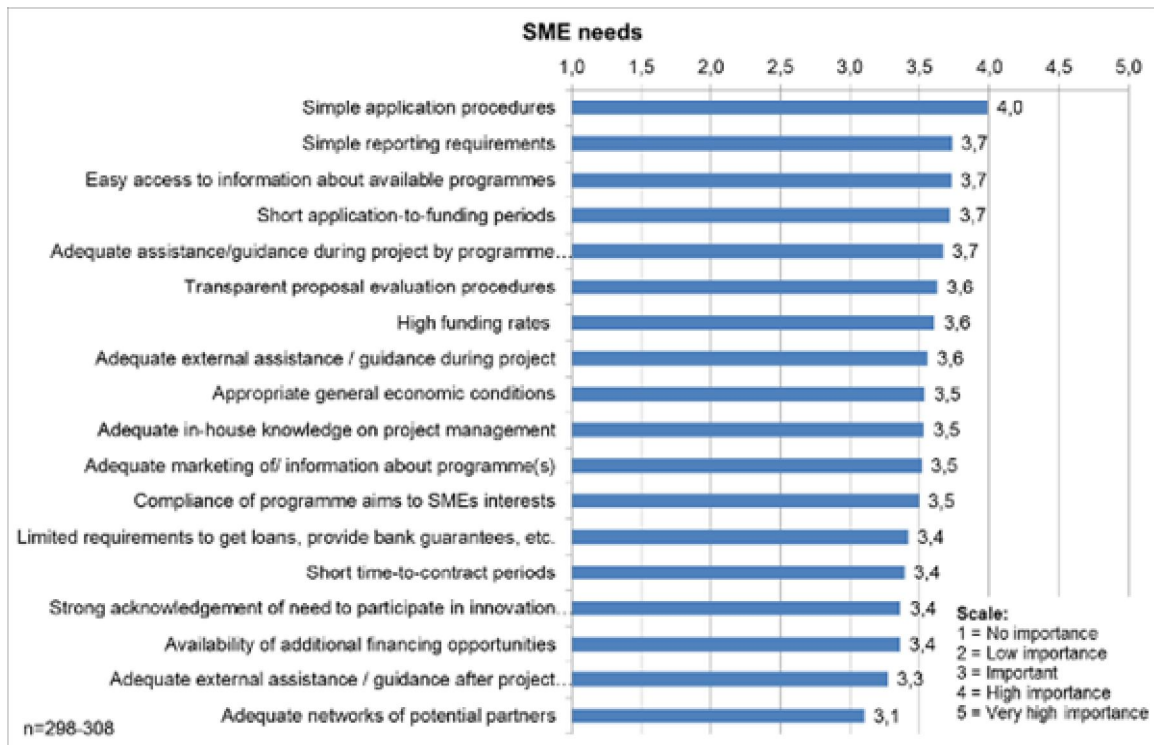
Results from the questionnaire analysis show the importance of different kinds of innovation for the SMEs performance.



These results are in line with the kind of innovation that has been mostly supported by programs as show in the figure below.



The main needs of SMEs to enable them to participate and use innovation support measures are displayed in the figure below.



In general, the analysis that has been done so far (questionnaire, case studies, interview of programme managers) shows that support programmes do make a difference!

GPrix Outcome

The findings of the GPrix consortium were received with great interest. The first recommendations of the GPrix project were discussed from different viewpoints point, as all important roles were represented:

- The GPrix consortium reflected SMEs input from interviews and questionnaires.
- The Federal Ministry of Economics and Science Saxony-Anhalt represented the money giving institution.
- The Investment bank of Saxony-Anhalt is the only responsible programme manager for innovation support measures in Saxony-Anhalt.
- TTI is a technology transfer institution which often supports SMEs in selecting and applying for innovation support measures.

Finally the recommendations were seen as realistic and appropriate as well. The discussion will be continued after project ending on 3rd of April 2012 in Magdeburg.

Invitation List

No.	Name	Organisation
1	Buttkus, Antje	Investitionsbank Sachsen-Anhalt

2	Fahlberg, C.-Friedrich	MAHREG Automotive eine Initiative des Sachsen-Anhalt Automotive e.V.
3	Gutowsky,Catrin	Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Wirtschaft des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt
4	Hamel, Kathrin	EU Service-Agentur LSA, Investitionsbank Sachsen-Anhalt
5	Hartwig,Beate	Investitionsbank Sachsen-Anhalt
6	Henk, Matthias	HeidelandArgrar AG
7	Ilchmann, Helga	Enterprise Europe Network Sachsen-Anhalt c/o tti Magdeburg GmbH
8	Jennerjahn, Anja	Fraunhofer IFF
9	Kauert,Veronika	Technologie-Transfer-Zentrum (TTZ) der Otto-von-Guericke-Universität
10	Kraus, Herbert	SM Calvörde Sondermaschinenbau GmbH & Co. KG
11	Lang, Frédérique	Université de Strasbourg (FR)
12	Langnickel, Kai	Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Wirtschaft des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt
13	Lobe, Christopher	Fraunhofer IFF
14	Müller, Jörg	Metallverarbeitung Halle / Nietleben GmbH
15	Munteanu, Olga	Leibniz Universität Hannover
16	Rönnebeck, Klaus	Zorn Instruments
17	Schmidt,Heide	Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Wirtschaft des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt
18	Schneider, Klaus	HydraulikSeehausen GmbH
19	Seidel, Kerstin	Steinbeis Europa Zentrum (SEZ) in Stuttgart
20	Szarata, Daniel	Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Wirtschaft des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt
21	Theilmann, Claudia	Otto-von-Guericke Universität Magdeburg
22	Thurow, Melanie	Technologie-Transfer-Zentrum (TTZ) der Otto-von-Guericke-Universität
23	Voigt, Stefan	Fraunhofer IFF
24	von Garrel,Jörg	Fraunhofer IFF
25	Weber, Elisabeth	SondermaschinenOschersleben GmbH
26	Wiedenmann, Ernst	AFM Technology GmbH
27	Wolf, Andreas	Otto-von-Guericke-Universität
28	Zott, Claudia	Investitionsbank Sachsen-Anhalt

03 April 2012, Magdeburg, Germany – Follow up Joint Workshop MaPEeR SME – RAPPORT – GPrix

High-level experts meeting – Final results of MaPEeR SME and GPrix

Summary

Date&Hour	3 rd April 2012, from 14:00 to 16:00
Meeting location	Forschungs- und Entwicklungszentrum Magdeburg, Breitscheidstrasse 51, 39114 Magdeburg
Participant entities	See Annex with list of participation
Main Objectives	Disseminate of project results of GPrix to stakeholders of Saxony-Anhalt and discussion / feedback

Agenda

time	Activity	responsibility
14:00	Welcome and Introduction	Andreas Wolf, Otto-von-Guericke Universität Magdeburg
14:30	Making Progress and Economic Enhancement a Reality for SMEs: New Approaches towards RTDI Programmes	Dr. Olga Munteanu, Leibniz Universität Hannover
15:00	Recommendations for future policies - The case studies	Stefan Voigt, Fraunhofer IFF
15:30	Discussion with participants about their experiences	Andreas Wolf, Otto-von-Guericke Universität Magdeburg

Participation List

No.	Name	Organisation
1	Hamel, Kathrin	EU Service-Agentur LSA, Investitionsbank Sachsen-Anhalt
2	Ilchmann, Helga	Enterprise Europe Network Sachsen-Anhalt c/o tti Magdeburg GmbH
3	Kauert, Veronika	Technologie-Transfer-Zentrum (TTZ) der Otto-von-Guericke-Universität
4	Langnickel, Kai	Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Wirtschaft des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt
5	Munteanu, Olga	Leibniz Universität Hannover
6	Rauschenbach, Peter	KAT-Centre of Competence in Engineer and Renewable resources
7	Schmidt, Heide	Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Wirtschaft des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt
8	Venschott, Martina	Leibniz Universität Hannover
9	Voigt, Stefan	Fraunhofer IFF
10	Wolf, Andreas	Otto-von-Guericke Universität Magdeburg



MAPEER

Ms. Munteanu presented the final results from the MaPEeR SME project. This included identified good practice programmes as well as suggestions for future development. The following table presents good practice programmes:

Name of Programme	Cluster/type of programme
Avanza (I+D) programme (ES)	Sectoral
CDTI – PID (ES)	Open
Ideas (LT)	SME-targeted
Industry 2015 (IT)	Sectoral
Innocsekk+ (HU)	SME-targeted
KMU Innovativ (DE)	Sectoral
Support for market oriented R&D activities (HU)	'Open'
Supporting business innovations (HU)	SME-targeted
Verbundforschung (BW) (DE)	'Open'
Vinnova Forska & Vax (SE)	SME-targeted
VMSP – APVV (SK)	SME-targeted
ZIM – Cooperation (DE)	SME-targeted
PRO-INNO (I+II)	Sectoral
FFG – Basisprogramme (AT)	-
FFG Cooperation Bonus (AT)	-
Intelektas (LT)	'Open'
Baross Gabor (HU)	-
QREN co-promotion (PT)	Sectoral

- No single programme has all good practice elements
- Good practice elements exist in all of the clusters but no cluster has it all
- Need for improved programmes especially designed for SMEs BUT not only

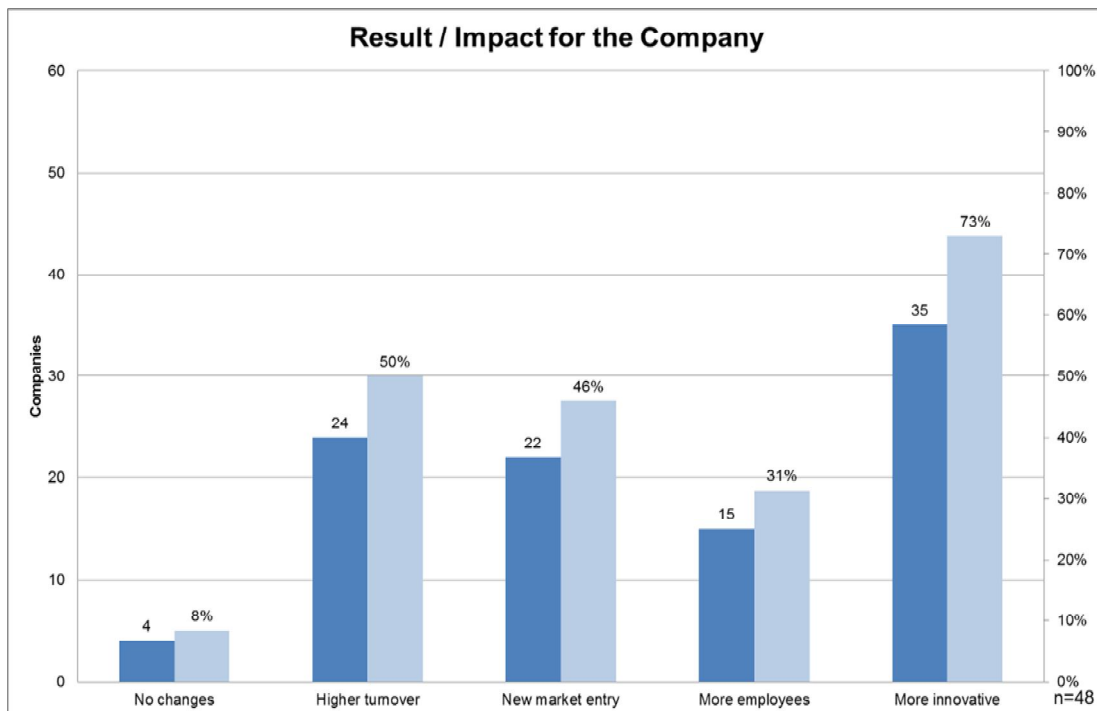
MaPEer suggested the following ways forward:

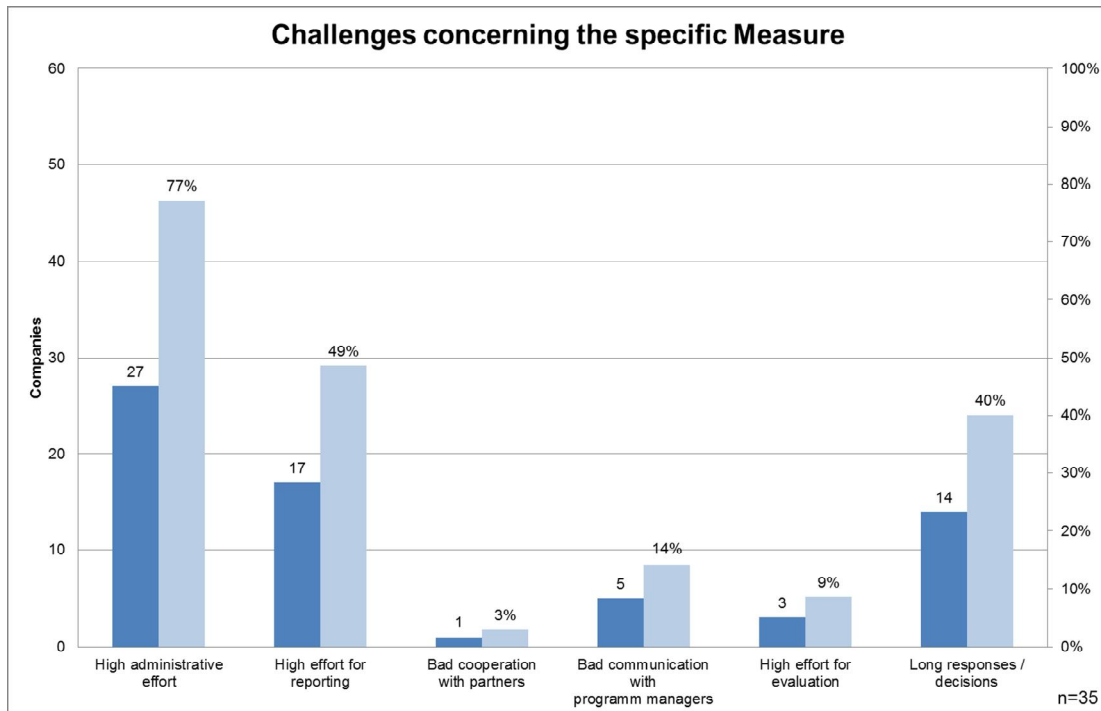
- EEP-SMEs made very concrete suggestions, e.g.:
 - a proposal evaluation approach moving from “pure excellence” to “excellence and exploitability”
 - adaptation of the payments’ schedule to the expenses’ schedule,
 - Grant-Vouchers allowing extension of the consortium to include SMEs at any time of the project lifetime;
 - inclusion of students & Professors at SME research teams;
 - complement grants with loans...
- EEP-SME addressed also more generic SME problems with recommendations (an ‘open innovation’ approach, a minimum SME participation in certain EU init., fostering pre-commercial procurement procedures, transferring good practices across different levels...

GPrix

Stefan Voigt presented the final results of the GPrix project focussing on the case studies and the recommendations.

Therefore the main figures from the overall case study analysis of the seven regions covered by GPrix were presented. The following figures illustrate some important aspects from the interviewed SMEs.





The case studies should give an impression about the efforts and needs of SMEs regarding innovation support measures. As a result of all the different analysis' the recommendations were shown.

As an abstract, the following recommendations were presented and discussed. Within the recommendations the consortium divided in two levels: Recommendations on the design and implementation of support policy and of innovation support programmes:

- Policy: Shift of Innovation Focus from only Technological Innovation
- Policy: Acceptance of Exporting as Innovation
- Policy: Innovation Support Measure Programmes should be evaluated by "State of the Art" Procedures
- Policy: Business groups of SMEs
- Policy: Simplify and broaden the scope of R&D tax credits
- Policy: "One face to the customer" or good common Marketing for all different Support Programmes
- Policy: Need for institutional stability
- Programmes: Reform the Selection Process
- Programmes: Demand-led Programmes
- Programmes: should be easily adaptable to on-going operational activities
- Programmes: SME need Support with Application and Administration
- Programmes: Special Marketing towards SMEs without Innovation Activities / R&D&I Departments

GPrix Outcome

The findings of the GPrix consortium were received with great interest. The recommendations of the GPrix project were discussed from different viewpoints point, as all important roles were represented. Finally the recommendations were seen as realistic and appropriate as well.

2.5 EMILIA-ROMAGNA

8 November 2011, Bologna, Italy Joint Workshop MaPEeR SME – GPrix

High-level experts meeting – Analysis of the Innovation and R&D support measures for SMEs of Emilia-Romagnat.

Introduction

The Workshop is organized by ENEA in the framework of GPrix project activities GPrix. These activities foresaw the preparation of three reports: the first concerns the description of the economic fabric of the region Emilia-Romagna, the second is related to identifying the characteristics of the main programs and regional initiatives aimed at R & D in SMEs, the third is aimed at identifying the needs and constraints expressed by SMEs in participating in these programs.

The event is aimed to inform the Programme Manager and SMEs on the main findings of the reports, sharing good practices and discussing the appropriate recommendations to be shared internationally with other policy makers.

Summary

Date & Hour	8 th November 2011, from 09:00 to 13:30
Meeting location	ENEA, Aula Magna - Via Martiri di Monte Sole, 4 Bologna
Participant entities	See Annex with list of participants
Main Objectives	Disseminate to Emilia Romagna SMEs and stakeholders on the results of the activities of GPrix and MAPEER SME projects

Agenda

09:30-10:00 Registrazione

10:00 *Saluto di benvenuto*

Diego Santi

ENEA UTT VALNET – Responsabile Servizio Valorizzazione e Networking

10:15 *Progetto GPRIX*

Maria Paola Beghi; ENEA UTT VALNET

10:35 *Progetto MAPEER*

Antonio Carbone

APRE – Agenzia per la Promozione della Ricerca europea

10:55 Rapporto su bisogni e ostacoli delle PMI nella partecipazione ai programmi di ricerca e innovazione: *i risultati dei progetti GPRIX e Mapeer ; Maria Paola Breggi - Antonio Carbone*

11:30 Tavola rotonda “Esperienze e buone pratiche della regione”

Tutti i partecipanti

12:45 Conclusioni

Diego Santi; ENEA UTT VALNET

13.00 Pranzo a buffet

Invitation sent to Emilia Romagna stakeholders

Gentile Signore/a,

come d'accordo con il Dr. Diego Santi, sono lieta di invitarla alla tavola rotonda che si terrà nel corso del workshop che ENEA organizza in collaborazione con APRE, Agenzia per la Promozione della Ricerca Europea, il prossimo 8 Novembre a Bologna presso la sede di via Martiri di Monte Sole,4 nell'ambito del progetto europeo GPrix (Good Practices in Innovation Support Measures for SMEs: facilitating transition from the traditional to the knowledge economy).

L'incontro ha l'obiettivo di informare i Programme Manager, gli stakeholder e i rappresentanti di associazioni di imprese dell'Emilia Romagna sui principali risultati emersi nelle attività svolte, in particolare nel corso della tavola rotonda saranno discusse le metodologie e le opportune raccomandazioni da condividere a livello regionale, nazionale e internazionale.

Il programma del workshop e la descrizione della principali caratteristiche del progetto sono allegate alla mail. Per iscriversi chiediamo cortesemente di rispondere alla presente mail.

Cordiali saluti

Maria Paola Breggi

GPrix outcome

On behalf of ENEA, Mr. Diego Santo opened the meeting and expressed the importance of the SMEs profiles for Emilia Romagna.

MAPEER and GPRIX projects presentation, respectively made by Antonio Carbone and Maria Paola Breggi, focused on scope, R&D panorama at European and national level, main outputs, countries and sectors covered, and priority areas.

It has been emphasized that these complementary support action projects have been analysing and have benchmarked SME research and innovation support activities at national, regional and European level that facilitate the knowledge production and acquisition by SMEs and those that increase SME innovation capacity. Based on the results of benchmarking exercise, the GPrix and MAPEER SME projects have developed recommendations on how to structure efficient, SME-friendly programmes, in particular at European level.

The main purpose of the workshop was to disseminate project results and outcomes to key stakeholders, namely to SMEs. The panel of experts include universities, business associations, SMEs (managers), public bodies (managers of innovation support programmes), technologic centres and innovation clusters which include R&D centres and industrial companies.

MAPEER SME conclusions

- Simplification of participation requirements, reducing reporting requirements and time-to-funding;
- Creation of a bottom-up scheme for SMEs and calls for proposals with open deadlines and not-fixed deadlines, since most of the innovations generated by SMEs is not programmed but it's the results of the interaction with suppliers and customers: incremental innovation;
- Promoting the Intellectual Property Rights Protection benefits and tools in the search for results;
- Reducing financial barriers (bank guarantees) required for SME participation at the R&I Programs;
- Strengthening partnerships between industry and research communities through national programs and other initiatives (e.g. tax credits).

Main findings of the Roundtable

1. Technological innovation attracts SMEs more than other types of innovation.
2. At the European level, project handling is quite fast, compared with the regional or national levels.
3. Evaluation and negotiation - role of the officer. At the national and regional level the negotiation phase and the officer are not foreseen.
4. The reporting phase is very difficult at any level.
5. Additionality. Employment and cooperation with RTD performer.
6. Quality of the proposals at regional level has improved over the last 10 years.

7. Increased the number of calls to finance the best proposals.

Round table participants

1. ASTER (Regional Agency for Industrial Research, TT and Innovation)
2. APRE (The Agency for the Promotion of European Research)
3. CNA Innovazione (Confederazione Nazionale Artigianato)
4. CNR (National Research Center)
5. Confindustria Ceramica
6. Democenter (Innovation Center)
7. ENEA (Italian National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development)
8. Legacoop e Laboratorio Regionale LARCO-ICOS
9. Ministero Sviluppo Economico (Ministry of Economic Development)
10. Trentino Sviluppo (Innovation Center in Trentino Region)
11. Regione Emilia-Romagna (Emilia Romagna Regional Government)
12. Studio Pedrini (SME)
13. Unindustria Bologna
14. Veneto Innovazione (Innovation Center in the Veneto Region)

List of participants

Organization	Name	email
UNINDUSTRIA	Rodolfo Ravagnan	r.ravagnan@unindustria.bo.it
Regione E. Romagna	Giorgio Moretti	gmoretti@regione.emilia-romagna.it
Studio Pedrini	Gian Luca Monti	monti@studiopedrini.it
CNR BOLOGNA	Roberto Zamboni	direzione@isof.cnr.it
Trentino Sviluppo	Luca Capra	info@trentinosviluppo.it
Demo Center	Massimo Garuti	m.garuti@democentersipe.it
Veneto Innovazione	Ivan Boesso	info@venetoinnovazione.it
CNA Innovazione	Marcella Contini	contini@cnainnovazione.net
ASTER/Ministero dello Sviluppo Economico	Leda Bogni	leda.bogni@aster.it
ASTER	Valeria Bandini	valeria.bandini@aster.it
Valerio Nannini	Lega coop/ICIE	info@legacoop.bologna.it
APRE	Antonio Carbone	carbone@apre.it
ENEA	Luca Gazzotti	luca.gazzotti@enea.it
ENEA	Alessandra Zamagni	alessandra.zamagni@enea.it
ENEA	Daniele Tondini	daniele.tondini@enea.it
ENEA	Guido Tonini	guido-tonini@enea.it
ENEA	Laura Fussi	laura-fussi@enea.it
ENEA	Paola Leonelli	paola.leonelli@enea.it

2.6 LIMOUSIN

24 february 2012, ESTER Technople Limoges, France

Local group - GPrix

High-level experts meeting – Analysis of the Innovation and R&D support measures for SMEs in limousin and un europe.

The GPrix local group for Limousin region in France was held in close collaboration with the collaboration with the regional council, the university, the regional chamber of commerce and industry, the university agency for development of research in the Limousin, the cluster Viameca.

The main purpose of the workshop was to present the project, the survey results, the case studies, the European comparisons and propose solutions, both at European and local levels. The discussion with the experts was very interesting on their views of public support to innovation for innovative and traditional (non innovative) companies.

Summary

Date & Hour	28 th February 2012, from 14:00 to 16:30
Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cluster Viameca<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Arnaud Boquillon (project manager)• Regional chamber of commerce and industry<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Pierre-Henri Lefebvre (Director of ARIST)• University of Limoges<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Emmanuel Rafin (engineer of European projects)• Regional Council<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Fanny Duban (Attachée)• University incubator<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Claude Lory (Director)
Main Objectives	Gather the insights of experts from several actors of the innovation process. Confront different views in a open dialogue between SMEs, universities and research centres, business associations and programme managers from local public bodies. Identify the existing tools and barriers to SME R&D&I activities, as well as to think about the next developments of EC SMEs research policies

GPrix outcome

The GPrix workshop was quite successful, engaging participants on an active discussion about innovation support measures and how to improve them and make them more accessible to the

SMEs. Participants have shown great interest in the project outcomes. One major conclusion from the debate is that most of the SMEs feel that the public support is more targeted to innovative companies than traditional activities. Another common complain is the excess of fragmentation of the programmes that tend to focus more on some specific theme or goal rather than covering all innovation needs of the SMEs, forcing them to apply to several different programmes.

In terms of innovation programs, the respondents told the need to simplify and expand R & D credits, and to create gateway to marketing and commercialization programmes.

Another track from the conclusions of the study : design programs adapted to the operational activities, with calls for projects over the year instead of dates often short.

Finally, traditional businesses are not in the network of innovation and thus have many difficulties to obtain information.

2.7 NORTH BRABANT

14 May 2012, Eindhoven, The Netherlands,

GPrix Workshop

High-level experts meeting – Analysis of the Innovation and R&D support measures for SMEs of Noord-Brabant.

Introduction

This GPrix local validation workshop for the region of Noord-Brabant was held in collaboration with Brainport Development NV which is the agency that was also visited and involved in the early phase of GPrix when the research was designed. They offered to host the meeting at their premises and made some addition suggestions for invitations, and they had a preference for a limited number of participants. The purpose of the workshop was to present the results of the survey and the case studies, and to validate the conclusions and policy recommendations. The deliverables ‘D1.7 - Impact assessment of measures on SMEs’ as well as the ‘Final Report-publishable summary’ were send along with the invitation. From three people we received a reply that they are interested in what we send them, but that they were not able to join the meeting. The overall conclusion of the workshop was that the regional policymakers were happy that this academic study confirmed some thoughts and messages that the participants had brought forward into the current policy discussions at regional, national, and even european level.

Summary

Date & Hour	Monday 14 th May 2012, from 14.00 – 16.30
Meeting location	Brainport Development NV, Emmasingel 11 5611 AZ Eindhoven
Participants	Piet Boomsma, Policymaker SME and Entrepreneurship, Bureau Energy and Innovation, Province Noord-Brabant , ‘s-Hertogenbosch; Sjef van Herpt, Innovationadvisor, Syntens Eindhoven; Linco Nieuwenhuyzen, Strategy Advisor, Brainport Development NV, Eindhoven; Hugo Hollanders, Senior Researcher, UNU-MERIT/Maastricht University;

Main objectives

Rene Wintjes, Senior Researcher, UNU-MERIT/Maastricht University.

Presentation , discussion and validation of GPrix research results with regional innovation policy stakeholders, conclusions and recommendations, with a special focus on the results, conclusions and recommendations concerning Noord-Brabant

GPrix outcome

After 17 slides which gave a short description of the project and the main results of the survey, the findings and recommendations were presented and discussed. The following gives a summary:

One size does not fit all, make innovation support consistent with traditional sector innovation models: There are different innovation models. SME innovation in traditional manufacturing industry is not based on R&D but, far more often, on the application of tacit knowledge and know-how to design. Correspondingly, their support needs are different from SMEs in newly emerging High-tech sectors. This finding corresponds to the policy-mix of Noord-Brabant, and also the roles of the various programmes and intermediates, and in particular concerning the approach of Syntens and for instance the project 'Toekomst Bedrijven', and the design programme 'Design Pressure Cooker'.

The need for institutional stability: Especially the UK the institutional landscape of business support is constantly changing, 'but also in the Netherlands' the participants immediately added on the spot. Also the regional innovation support institutions are under pressure over the last year and in the recent national budget-reduction discussions, many even suggest to get rid of all kinds of existing subsidies and agencies who provide them.

Support non-technological innovation, including marketing: To promote SME innovation in traditional sectors there should be more emphasis on non-technological innovation, especially marketing.

Recognise exporting as innovation: For SMEs in traditional manufacturing exporting should be recognised as a dimension of innovation and supported as such. In other words, innovation and export promotion should be part of a joint strategy and, hence, made available to SMEs in a related rather than in a fragmented manner. In reaction to this point a participant raised the question whether export leads to innovation or vice versa. While for some very R&D intensive high-tech products the relation is rather that innovation leads to exports, for many SMEs in traditional sectors exporting is an innovative activity and involves innovative activities in order to make export possible, e.g. in terms of marketing and adjusting products to foreign markets.

Many manufacturing enterprises belong to groups of related businesses. Although some of these groups are not SMEs in a legal sense many do operate as SMEs in a business/economic sense. The corresponding GPrix proposal is that any company owned by a larger group but operating as a separate entity should be entitled to the same help as an independent SME. In most cases these companies are not excluded from participation. Several examples of interviewed companies in Brabant were discussed. E.g. in one case the group of three textile companies together still fell within the legal SME definition.

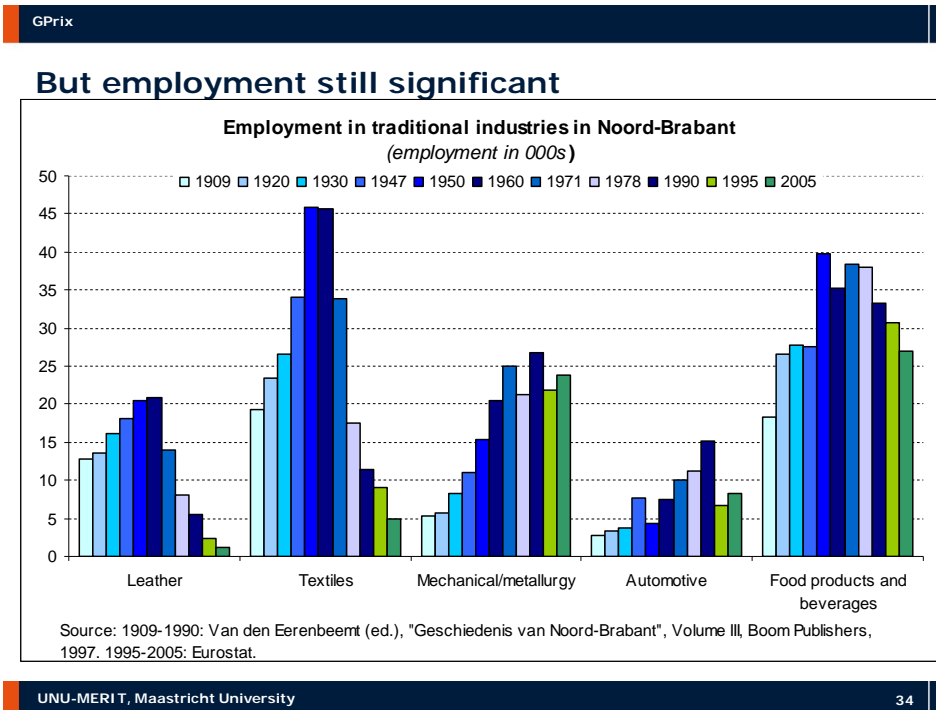
Simplify and broaden the scope of R&D tax credits. The participants also agreed with this recommendation, but it is not an easy message since the discussion is rather to abolish it or keep it. But indeed, it is addressing mainly technological innovation.

Lack of proper evaluations of business support programmes at regional and local level. The policy experts explained that there are other exceptions, e.g. the monitoring and evaluation by EIM of the (Toekomst bedrijven) 'Futurise businesses' programme. An explanation mentioned was that the current budgets are already under pressure.

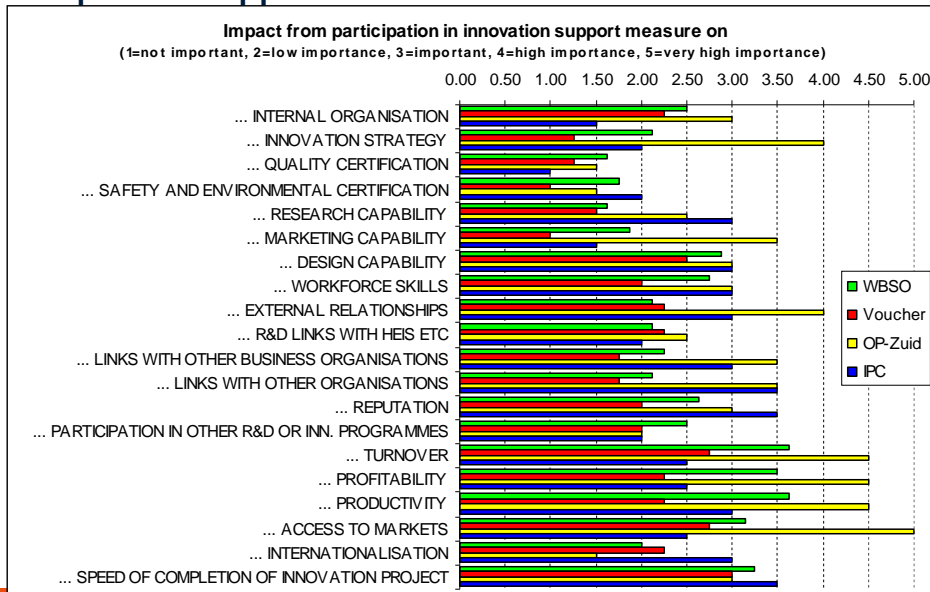
The selection process of firms into innovation support programmes should be less selective and more inclusive. The main conclusions of the GPrix research on the effectiveness of support programmes are that there is little effect on the innovation of SME participants and that systematically larger positive effect would have been achieved in case a random selection of SMEs participants would have been applied. The selection procedure by programme managers is typically one of “cream skimming” or “cherry picking”. Agencies are behaving as banks who are selecting for safe investments, but this reduces the additionality, since those firms selected for innovation support are those most likely to innovate irrespective of programme support. This recommendation was welcomed, but this is not the message that many (especially national) policy makers and politicians want to hear.

Remove participation obstacles; Increase the number of firms wanting to participate in innovation support programmes. Simple and speedy procedures are needed: Reduce bureaucracy, Do quickly, Pay quickly, and provide guidance during the project (Mentoring, Coaching). Reaching SMEs at the base of the pyramid, is where additionality can be generated, but it calls for more intense interaction and contact in order to extend the client-base of the intermediates, raising awareness, trust and inclusion, and serve as ‘eye-opener’. This fits with the concepts, approach and policy tools in Noord-Brabant. It is a good recommendation, but again some (e.g. in the light of state budget-cuts) will contest this recommendation.

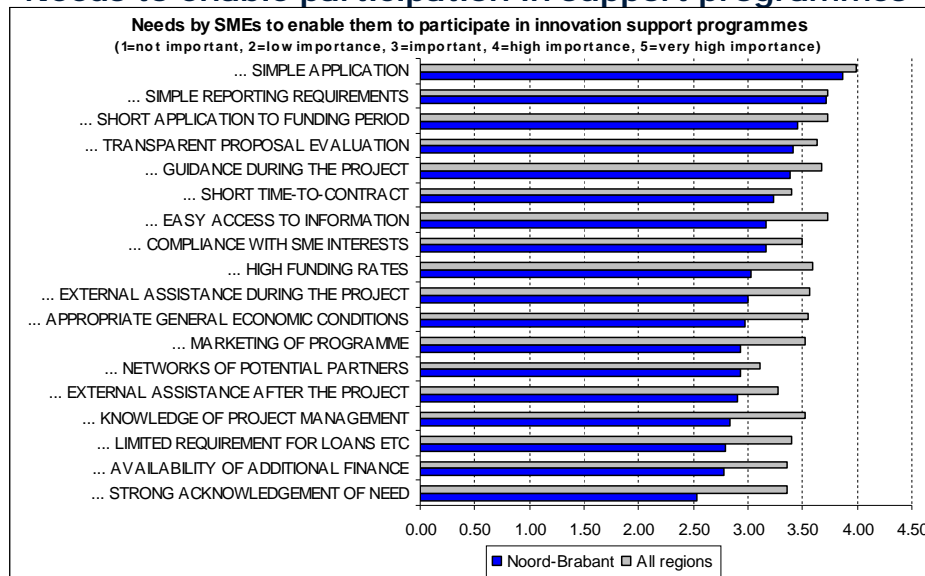
During the last part of the meeting some issues highlighting the results on Noord-Brabant were discussed, amongst others, based on the following slides:



Impact of support measures



Needs to enable participation in support programmes



Conclusions GPrix Noord-Brabant (NL)

- Manufacturing S(M)Es in traditional sectors are still of economic importance, also in the innovative, high-tech, high-labour-cost region of Noord-Brabant
- Responding SMEs are quite innovative (expenditures, % of sales).
- They have existing idea for internal project and seek funding, commercial consultant 'finds' subsidy, 'selects' scheme
- For subsidy schemes like 'OP-Zuid' the application procedure is selective, only good proposals are approved
- Designing new products, testing, buying new machinery, searching & developing new markets are more important activities than research

Conclusions GPrix Noord-Brabant (NL)

- Some negative experiences with EU Structural Fund 'OP-South' programme concerning late payment
- Positive about Syntens (regional, good personal communications) and Agency NL (National, e.g. easy procedures of R&D tax scheme and Vouchers)
- Quality of regional evaluation practices has decreased: full-colour brochures with selected cases of impact, or unreliable statements from programme managers in EU Structural Fund programme reporting, e.g. a summary number of 'created jobs' for the whole programme
- Promising recent return of the pro-active approach at regional level: role of Syntens and schemes like 'futurised businesses' which address SMEs which have not received innovation support before.

The discussion also addressed the SMEs in the metal products sector, which are again central in the same discussion as some 15 years ago, since they are for instance supplying to (the large Chip-machine manufacturer) ASML, but it would be good for all of those in the supply chain if those suppliers do not get too dependent and that they pursue an innovation and export strategy of their own, because also ASML is benefited when their suppliers follow this international and innovative route. This situation is similar to the situation during the cluster project supporting suppliers of Océ (the copy-machine manufacturer).

Another point of discussion was the development of the concept of Smart Specialisation. Some have claimed it implied that support should go to the most promising firms in a few top-sectors,

while others have stated that a broad base of innovative SMEs remains an important regional asset, and so are policies designed to broaden this base of innovative SMEs and not only in a few (nationally) selected priority fields.

Up-take of the project results

Since the event took place, we have observed a noticeable up-take of the project results by the target stakeholders of the region. In fact, the Province of Noord Brabant was very interested in the project results and even published an article on the matter in one of their briefings. The document was published in Dutch but I free translation to English is provide below:

Surprising results on research on innovation support

UNU-Merit is a joint research and training institute of the United Nations University and Maastricht University. The institute studies the social, political and economic factors that are a source of technological innovation. The project GPrix, Good Practices in Innovation Support Measures for SMEs, is a research study done in seven European regions to identify measures that have been successful in the development of traditional sectors. The study took place in the following regions: North / Central Portugal, Limousin, Emilia-Romagna, West Midlands, Comunidad Valencia, Saxony-Anhalt and North Brabant. The sectors are included in the study were the food, leather, textiles, ceramics, basic metals and automotive industries.

According to the researchers, the study comes with some surprising results, showing that better results can be obtained from measures if they are promoted in the larger number of SMEs. Based on an econometric analysis, the researchers conclude that (1) innovation is more effective when it focuses on all type of firms than on innovative companies only. There is great need for (2) institutional stability: there shouldn't be new institutions responsible for implementing the innovation support measures every time there's a change in innovation policy. In traditional industries the emphasis should not be placed on technological innovation, but on (3) other forms of innovation such as marketing and design. (4) Export Promotion leads many companies to innovation and growth. (5) Innovation support must be based on the needs of SMEs. In this sense the Voucher system plays a very functional tool. Finally, the study expressed a for long repeated far call to the government: (6) reduce bureaucracy, take fast decisions, fast payment, offer mentoring and coaching in the innovation process.

The study is available on request from Peter Boomsma (ext 8873 or pboomsma@brabant.nl)

3 Other Workshops outside the Regions

3.1 Warsaw

27-29 October 2010, Warsaw, Poland GPrix Workshop at eChallenges 2010



From left to right: Anja JennerJahn (Fraunhofer, Germany), Ewa Kocinska (University Foundation, Poland), Ana Levin (Universidad Politecnica de Valencia, Spain, chair) y Nadine Doden, Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg, Germany

The GPrix consortium join forces to participate in the eChallenges 2010 conference to disseminate the project activities and goals, in particular on Eastern European countries. Initially, the GPrix consortium submitted a paper to the conference that was accepted to held a workshop during the conference. In the scope of collaboration strategy previously agreed with the MaPEeR SME and RAPPOR projects, the coordinator of GPrix ask if the other projects wanted to join us in this action. Following this invitation, partners from the other projects participated in the workshop as speakers, namely:

- Ms. Ewa Kocinska from the Adam Mickiewicz University Foundation, Poland, representing the MaPEeR SME project.
- Ms. Nadine Doden from Otto-von-Guericke-University Magdeburg, Germany representing the RAPPOR project.

The GPrix project was represented by the following partners:

- Ana Levin, chair of the workshop from Universidad Politecnica de Valencia, Spain
- Anja JennerJahn from Fraunhofer, Germany

The GPrix project organized **workshop 8a: Good Practices in Innovation Support Measures for SMEs**, chaired by Ms. Ana Levin from the Universidad Politecnica de Valencia, Spain. The program consisted on the following presentations:

- Innovation Support Measures for SMEs: Facilitating Transition from the Traditional to the Knowledge Economy Anja Jennerjahn, Fraunhofer IFF, Germany
- Innovation in SMEs: Looking Beyond The 'Gazelles', The 'Goliaths' and the 'Pioneers' Nadine Doden, Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg, Germany
- How to Pave the Way for SME-friendly R&D&I Programmes? Ewa Kocinska, Adam Mickiewicz University Foundation, Poland

The eChallenges 2010 conference is the 20th in a series of Annual Conferences supported by the European Commission, which regularly attracts over 650 delegates from leading commercial, government and research organisations around the world to share knowledge and experience,

lessons learnt and good practice in the areas of e-Infrastructures, ICT for Networked Enterprise & RFID, e-Government & e-Democracy, e-Health, Collaborative Working Environments, Living Labs, Digital Libraries and Cultural Heritage, Technology Enhanced Learning, Intelligent Content & Semantics, High Performance Computing Applications, Security and Identity Management and Mobility. The goal of e-2010 is to stimulate rapid take-up of Research and Technology Development (RTD) results by industry and in particular SMEs, and help open up the European Research Area (ERA) to the rest of the world.

More info at <http://www.echallenges.org/e2010/>

Results:

Our workshop in eChallenges 2010 was quite successful, engaging participants on an active discussion about innovation support measures and how to improve them and make them more accessible to the SMEs. The paper written by the GPrix partners is now published out of the research work performed by the group and can be referenced as:

- NEVES, E., SOUTINHO, P., PUGH G., RESCHWAMM K., HOLLANDERS H., VOSS, T., (2010): Innovation Support Measures for SMEs: facilitating transition from the traditional to the knowledge economy; Paper presented at the eChallenges 2010 Conference, Warsaw.

3.2 Rome

27 April 2010, Rome, Italy European SME Week 2010

In the frame of MaPEeR SME project, GPrix partner Italian partner ENEA has participated in four events within the European SME Week 2010 in Rome (at the Italian Ministry of Scientific Research). The events were organized in cooperation with Enterprise Europe Network and the National Confederation for the Craft sector and SMEs. SMEs who participated to this initiative have shown a great interest in the objectives and outcomes of the projects