

EDIF SUPPORT SERVICES PILLAR – ACTION FACTSHEET

Action / Programme Name:

SBA and EDIF monitoring

IFIs in charge:

OECD

Contact details:

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Start date:

01.01.2014

Expected end date:

01.07.2016

Scope / Objectives of the initiative:

The overall purpose of the Action is to monitor the implementation of the identified EDIF TA Pillar reform priorities through a comparable benchmarking process. Based on the assessment of SME policy carried out in six Western Balkan economies plus Turkey, targeted policy recommendations on the implementation of the EDIF TA reform priorities can be provided. EU and OECD good practices on fostering innovative and high-potential SMEs will guide the analysis. Its final results are published in the SME Policy Index.

The Index identifies strengths and weaknesses in policy design and implementation, allows for comparison across countries and measures convergence towards EU SME policy standards. It aims to support governments in setting targets on SME policy developments and strategic priorities to further improve the business environment.

The existing SME Policy Index methodology has been upgraded to better capture the quality and policy performance in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of SME policy and to enable an assessment of the implementation of the EDIF TA Pillar's reform priorities and other policies influencing the development of innovative and high potential SMEs (IHPSMEs). The four EDIF TA Pillar reforms have been fully integrated into the next SBA assessment cycle questionnaire for this purpose and further policies influencing the development of IHPSMEs have been revised.

Rationale within EDIF:

A transparent and comparative monitoring based on the SME Policy Index ensures progress in the implementation of the EDIF TA reform priorities and allows for the identification of good practices on the reform priorities and further policies supporting IHPSMEs, measuring thereby also SME policy convergence towards EU and OECD.

Services provided by the programme:

The SME Policy Index comparatively assesses the implementation of the EDIF TA pillar reform priorities and provides a framework to measure the policy performance of the countries with regard to design, implementation and monitoring of SME policy. It also provides a continuous needs assessment pertaining to policies in support of SMEs. The main services provided are targeted policy recommendations based on the assessment providing policy-makers with a framework to improve the development of IHGSMES. Furthermore, the benchmarking exercise provides countries with a score and allows thus comparison amongst each other and towards EU and OECD good standards. A regional report will be published in 2016, summarises the findings from the assessment and provides regional and country-specific recommendations.

Target Beneficiary(ies):

The main target groups for actions related to the SME Policy Index are in the Western Balkans and comprise a) Civil servants in the respective ministries responsible for the policy areas covered in the twelve policy dimensions of the SME Policy Index, b) Public officials in government agencies responsible for SME

development, innovation, internationalisation etc., c) Representatives of business organisations and the private sector, particularly IHGSMES, d) Representatives of further SME policy stakeholders, including international donors, civil society, the academic community and NGOs.

Countries coverage:

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia

Milestones achieved to date:

Module 1: Review and upgrade of the SME Policy Index methodology – completed: An enhanced SME Policy Index Methodology focusing more on policy performance and monitoring and evaluation has been developed. The revision process included meetings with all key project partners, the revision of indicators in cooperation with the governments and a finalised pilot in all countries conducted over summer 2014. The official endorsement of the new methodology and the next SBA assessment cycle with all SBA coordinators took place on 1 October 2014 in Naples, Italy.

Module 2: Deepen the focus of the SME Policy Index on policies that support the EDIF TA pillar reform priorities and IHPSMEs – completed: In order to deepen the focus of the SME Policy Index on policies supporting the EDIF TA pillar reform priorities, new indicators have been added to four policy dimensions of the SME Policy Index, covering business licensing, investment readiness, the VC framework and innovation in SMEs. Furthermore, the transformation from the old 5 level grid into a questionnaire put further emphasis on IHGSMES by including specific questions on them.

Module 3: SME Policy Index Implementation Phase – in preparation (see next section)

Main milestones before project completion:

After having revised the methodology and including the EDIF TA strategic reform priorities, the next step will be to conduct the actual assessment, which will last from January until March 2015. Results will be analysed from April onwards and reconciliation meetings shall take place in May and June in each country to identify gaps in the assessments and discuss progress on the implementation of the EDIF TA reform priorities. The final Index will be published at the beginning of 2016.