

FORUM 3 Supporting business creation and transfer

The issues

Creating or taking over a business is one effective solution for creating employment, even during times of crisis, and the European Social Fund is a long-term partner in national networks supporting business creation (network of chambers of commerce and trade, management boutiques, ADIE, etc.) helping to increase the number of entrepreneurs who receive support. Through these vectors, 15% to 20% of entrepreneurs who are far from the traditional banking system (job seekers, beneficiaries of minimum social benefits, etc.) receive ESF aid. This ESF aid, in addition to multiplying the number of businesses founded, also contributes to improving support and helping the new businesses last over time.

At the end of the first half year 2009, nearly 270,000 new businesses were created, and 500,000 enterprises could see the day by the end of 2009, despite the crisis. This boom in entrepreneurship, even though it is connection in part to the simplified "auto-entrepreneur" status, is having an effect on support networks that now have to face new challenges: an unprecedented increase in their activity between 2008 and 2009, a change in the kind of new business projects presented, which are often more vulnerable to risk, and entrepreneurs who are in greater difficulty.

Under the effects of the recession, entrepreneurship has been perceived, in certain cases, as the last resort in the face of job loss, and ESF-supported business creation networks have had to reinforce and even change the support they provide to entrepreneurs who are creating or taking over businesses, notably for the most vulnerable among them.

This situation, however, provides the heads of entrepreneurship networks with the opportunity to rethink how they do their job: better risk management, sharing methods, homogenizing the work done by the platforms, and leading networks. How are the support networks a new influx of entrepreneurs and their changing profiles integrating into their daily practice?

One of the challenges at the end of the crisis will be to support the survival of the firms that have been founded since the end of 2008. Among the responses is to provide more support at the beginning, to better build the business projects before they are created. In exchange, this support raises questions in the networks about the conditions linked to their partnership with the other business-creation stakeholders and the place they intend to hold in the various phases of the measures. What could be the added value of the European Social Fund in connection with new measures such as NACRE? Are discussions regarding the networks looking at a new way to consider support for business creation and financing projects? Are they causing a redistribution of roles among operators? ■■■

ESF: A Partner to Tackle the Crisis

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France

Forum 3 Presentation



European Social Fund: A Partner to Tackle the Crisis / Forum Supporting business creation and transfer

Project

"Potentiel 71" (Region of Burgundy) Synergy to help business creation and transfer

In the Department of the Saône et Loire, three small-business creation/transfer support organisations—Potentiel 71, business incubator, the Management Boutique and the Association for the Right to Economic Initiative (ADIE), which is a consulting and microcredit organisation—formed a strong local partnership with the goal of building meaningful and lasting entrepreneurial projects. This partnership takes shape in creating links among their initiatives, mutualising reception structures and coordinating their propositions. They offer a coordinated path to business creation at a regional level.

The crisis had a major impact on this approach. Starting in 2008, they had to face an influx of people seeking information about business creation. To meet the increased demand and to provide quality support to lasting businesses, the three structures used European Social Fund aid to adapt their support approach.

Various initiatives were set up: initiatives to increase awareness among women about entrepreneurship and business creation, support in project testing for "trial entrepreneurs", and microcredit measures.

In 2008, more than 1600 people were received in the department of the Saône et Loire, including:

- 1000 who received support
- 65 who were able to test their project
- 50 microcredits granted
- 350 business creations or transfers.

Caroline Vannier, who received support from these structures, will give an account of how she founded her business. This former training counsellor chose to start a business called "Les filles de l'épicier", a travelling grocer that contributes to local economic development in the rural area and corresponds to needs of the inhabitants. ■■■



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Speakers

Moderator

François Dechy, Deputy Director of France Active Financing and head of business creation for France Active

François Dechy is a graduate of Science Po Rennes and the Aix en Provence Institute of Business Administration. He joined France Active in 2005. He has run France Active's business creation division since 2007. He leads, coordinates and develops the loan guarantee and banking intermediation activity that the France Active network set up to help business creation and transfer. ■■

Experiences

Benoît Mousset, Director, IDEO Management Boutique, Burgundy ■■

Caroline Vannier, Company Director, Les filles de l'épicier ■■

Fabrice Geistlich, Director, ADIE Burgundy ■■

Perspectives

Anne Bailbé, Director of Labour, Deputy Director of the Burgundy Regional Department for Labour, Employment and Continuing Training

She will present the NACRE measure implemented in Burgundy. ■■

Denis Dementhon, Programme Leader, France Active

He is responsible for the National Support and Resource Centre (CNAR), a national link in the DLA (local support measure). Financed by the Deposit Office, CNAR financing is lead by France Active. ■■



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Louis Vervloet, Director of the ESF Managing Authority, Belgium Flanders

Louis Vervloet has a lot of experience with the European Social Fund and manages the ESF Flanders Managing Authority in Belgium. In this role, he actively participates in European network work on inclusive entrepreneurship, led by the German ESF Managing Authority, called "Inclusive entrepreneurial policies, promoting business creation for all". ■■

Reporter

Anne Baverey, Head of the European Social Fund Unit, Burgundy Regional Department of Labour, Employment and Continuing Training. ■■