



SOCIALSME NEWSLETTER

Sustainability and social responsibility through learning in SME

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☀ II meeting in Sofia

Second partnership meeting in Sofia Bulgaria, was hosted by partner NASMB in May 2009. Topics of the meeting included were presentation of the requirement synthesis report and the discussion of the conclusions from the report for the implementation of the concept. Partners also took the opportunity to discuss the implications of the global financial crisis for the project. It concluded that, while the crisis is a limitation of the resources of SME, the crisis will also be an opportunity to communicate new business strategies like BSR. A substantial part of the meeting was devoted to the presentation of the draft version of the supporting material for the implementation of the 6x3 workshop concept, presented by ISOB. The draft was approved in general and was finalised and elaborated following the recommendations of the discussion.

☀ III meeting in Nicosia

The focus of the third project meeting organised by partner University of Europe in Nicosia, Cyprus in October 2009 was the preparation of the field testing of the 6x3 concept. Focus of the discussion was the implementation of the field testing. Partners agreed that while the material supports a comprehensive and thorough going approach, it is a central characteristic of the concept to let the process be guided by the needs of the respective client. Implementation will therefore focus on these needs, selecting from the materials what is most helpful in the specific situation, while at the same time maintaining the general framework of the concept as a process of a sequence of on-site workshops involving key decision makers in the company and focusing on the strategic planning of BSR measures.



☀ CSR in SME conference in Cyprus

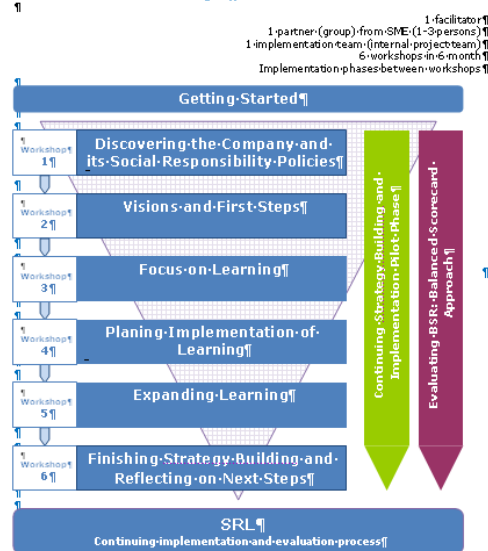


A major event in the dissemination of SOCIALSME was a conference on CSR at the 6th October 2009 in Nicosia Greece. On invitation of the University of Europe, Cyprus, the conference drew an audience of about 70 experts from business and academia, among them many business students. The conference was opened by Prof. Costas Gouliamos, vice dean of the University. Mantos Mavromatis, President, Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry addressed the conference for the Cyprian Business community and declared his support for the project.

☀ SOCIALSME product: simple and useful tool for SME

The SOCIALSME 6x3 workshop concept is the central product of the project. It consists of a general guideline for the implementation of six workshops in SME by one facilitator working with a pilot group of 1-3 key decision makers from the company. In the workshops these decision makers will develop strategies of Business Social Responsibility to be implemented in their company including concrete plans of activities and evaluation measures using Balanced Scorecard methodologies. The general guideline for the implementation of the workshop sequence is complemented by about 140 pages of didactical material that forms a resource pool for the facilitator.

General-Setup



☀ Whats new on social responsibility in SME?

Lithuania: International conference „Sponsorship value for business and society in economic crisis time“ has been organized on 30th of November, 09. International company “Danone” has presented the experience in implementing corporate sponsorship programmes. Also the “Auction of volunteers” has taken place after the conference, i.e. representatives of companies have been asked to propose volunteers- employees of their companies who could involve in project developed by social organizations. *More in <http://www.investorsforum.lt>*

Poland: Attention of owners and managers of SMEs in Poland under study was generally and predominantly focused on business objectives, as opposed to social ones. Moreover, this strong dominance of economic objectives over social aims in SME management practice does not mobilize the decision makers to seek competitive advantage in the sphere of social and intellectual activities. *This and other highlights of an article on CSR in Poland published in the latest issue of e-mentor, an internet publication on knowledge management: http://www.e-mentor.edu.pl/32,691,Spoeczna_odpowiedzialnosc_malego_przedsiębiorstwa_-_przejawy_i_dylematy.html*

Whats new on social responsibility in SME?

Portugal: In Portugal is booming across a very wide range of initiatives that develops more intensely from 2006, with an emphasis on quality and certification in fields of study or academic level associations, the creation of new entities within the networks, publications and finally the Community and national funding. Based on the criteria selected or items can therefore be regarded as the last four years in the field of corporate social responsibility are growing rapidly in line with other European Union countries more advanced. Finally, with the global financial crisis came to warn the irregularities committed, they should and may be replaced by the responsibility of all with an emphasis on business, a new economic model based on shared ethical values, equitable, cooperative and inter generational with the future generation.

From interview with Jose Ramalho, Representative of the Employment and Vocational Training Institute for the Technical Committees, CT 164 - Social Responsibility and CT-165 for Business Ethics which elaborate the Portuguese norm. President of the Active Agents of Change.

Romania: John Asto, owner of AstonEco Management - a multi-disciplinary CSR and management consultancy company: "I think, from a business perspective in Romania "green" has become a marketing tool. I am not sure if it is still a positive marketing tool though. Until recently, it was a tool relatively cheap for a company to attract customers or have some advantage on the competitors. But it's not going to last for long, people are going to ask questions about the real impact of a company's programs". *More from this interview in <http://beta.vita.it/news/view/94430>*

Latvia: Scientists and researchers are invited to participate in the 15th International Scientific Conference "Economics and Management-2010". The Conference will take place from 22-23th, April 2010 at "Maritim Park Hotel Riga" conference center. The primary objective of the conference – to bring together scientists and researchers for a general scientific discussion about changes in economics and management occurring throughout businesses and studying processes in the context of globalisation. One of section will be *dedicated for Business Social Responsibility issues*.

The conference will be held together with Lithuanian Operational Research Society within EURO (LitORS), Economics Faculty of Kaliningrad State Technical University, Faculty of Engineering Economics of Riga Technical University, Faculty of Business and Management of Brno University of Technology. More in www.icem.lt

Spain: Less than 822 SME in Spain now have, or soon will have, a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Report thanks to an initiative from Instituto de Crédito Oficial (ICO) in conjunction with Caja Navarra (CAN). As a result of this pioneer project, which has aroused the interest of over 2,000 Spanish enterprises, SME are now keen to report on the economic, environmental and social aspects of their activity. Until now, this information had been furnished almost exclusively by large companies. *Source: <http://www.ico.es/web/contenidos/4/7019/index?abre=1953>*

Cyprus: The first European SME Week, took place from 6 to 14 May 2009, is a campaign to promote entrepreneurship across Europe and to inform entrepreneurs about support available for them at European, national and local level. It allows SMEs to discover an array of information, advice, support and ideas to help them develop their activities. The event was co-organized by the European Office of Cyprus and the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry. It is an event devoted in enhancing the ability of Cypriot SME's to compete for European grants.

Bulgaria: Sofia Meeting-discussion held on 29th of October, 2009 about "Facilitating in the context of providing integrated consultancy services to SME". During this meeting the topics of SOCIALSME project have been discussed and the needs/readiness of the SMEs to receive such integrated services in which the CSR is included. Very interesting participants took place and presented their views from companies, Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce, Center for Economic Development, Institute for Public-Private Partnership, South-West University, Association of Bulgarian Cities and Regions, experts and media. It was concluded that the majority of SMEs are not prepared for implementation of CSR/BSR/ and need to start with integrated consultancy which to help them to plan in midterm perspective in order to overcome the crisis and to implement the principles of CSR as a competitive advantage during the period of economic growth. It has been discussed that business representative organizations and LLL providers could be involved more actively in this process and they are motivated to include modules for CSR in integrated consultancy to their members/clients.

Consultants on SOCIALSME product

Consultants who could introduce and acknowledge how to work with SOCIALSME product in every country are presented below:



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