WELCOME TO THE 3rd NEWSLETTER OF WIDE PROJECT
Written by SVIM S.p.A. - WIDE Technical Secretariat

The third and last volume of the WIDE Newsletter presents WIDE activities and results achieved throughout nearly 3 years of project life: meetings, analysis, working methodologies, pilots actions and dissemination of the project to its stakeholders and target groups. The newsletters have been published annually in five languages (English, Italian, French, Spanish and Greek) and have provided up to date information about the project and its findings.

If you would like more information about the project, send an e-mail to the following address: apantaloni@svimspa.it.

THE REGION OF CENTRAL MACEDONIA CAPITALIZE WIDE RESULTS
Written by Region of Central Macedonia – WIDE partner

On the 15th of February 2013, the Region of Central Macedonia organized the 1st workshop for the capitalization of WIDE results in the frame of Component 3. The event took place in room “Pneuma” of the Region of Central Macedonia and targeted stakeholders from the organization of RCM and other cooperating public organizations. Results from the mapping of innovation policies/services, the definition of the shared methodology and the business development potentialities analysis in Central Macedonia, were presented to stakeholders from the Development Agency of Thessaloniki (ANETH), from the Center for Research and Technology Hellas (CERTH), from the Regional Development Fund of Central Macedonia (RDFCM), from the Directorate General for Development Planning, Environment and Infrastructure, the Directorate General for Development and the Directorate General for Internal Operation of RCM. This was the first out of three capitalization events that will be organized in Central Macedonia with the other two taking place in the beginning of March and in the beginning of April, 2013.

Index:
Welcome to the 3rd Wide Newsletter 1
RCM capitalize WIDE results 1
Opportunities in Med countries for SMEs 2
Customized development paths 2
Thessaloniki Internationalization ForuMed 3
Innovation for Business in Granada 3
Innovation ForuMed in Toulon 3
Customized development paths in Andalusia 4
WIDE workshop in Central Macedonia 4

Event Announcement

- INNOVATION FORUMED - WIDE FINAL EVENT
16th - 17th May 2013, Toulon (France)
The event is organized by TVT Innovation within WIDE project, together with WIDE Partners, MSMEs and stakeholders linked to innovation & economic development coming from Italy, France, Spain and Greece.
INNOVATION AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES FOR SMEs. ENTREPRENEURS, RESEARCHERS AND EXPERTS EXCHANGE IDEAS
Written by CNA Innovazione – WIDE partner

In the occasion of the workshop “Innovation and new opportunities in the Mediterranean countries for Smes. Entrepreneurs, researchers and experts exchange ideas” that took place on the past June 27th, 2012 the current situation of the companies’ development in the MED markets was discussed with two entrepreneurs together with a representative of the University and a representative of the Company Consulting.

The importance of the aggregation between companies and the research community, as a combination of the entrepreneurs’ courage, strength, competence, analytical skills and knowledge skillset of the researchers has been one of the most important point discussed.

Through the exchange of experiences and the sharing of common interests is possible to create a virtuous circle of points of view towards the research, as confirmed by two “virtuous cases”, presenting their positive feedback coming from their strategies on the Mediterranean countries.

For its geographical position, Italy is the closest country to the south shore of the Mediterranean and represents the passage between Europe and Northern Africa, remaining for 2012 the first trading partner in the Med Area, with an interchange amounting to 57.7 billion euros.

In order to increase the production and sales force, it is important that companies act as a network, through investments in quality, research and innovation, and by promoting an "scientific business culture".

"MARCHE ECCELENTI": THE BEST ENTREPRENEURS OF MARCHE PRIZED FOR THEIR CAPACITY TO INNOVATE
Written by CNA Marche - WIDE partner

January 25th 2013 was a very important day for small businesses of the Marche region who bet on innovation as a lever of competition on the markets. In a workshop attended by about 200 participants, co-organized by the WIDE partner CNA Marche and the CNA branch of the Province of Fermo, entrepreneurs and managers of Marche SMEs shared their ongoing experiences within the WIDE Project and the competition “Excellent and Innovative Companies 2012”. Common goal of the 2 initiatives: to identify good practices for supporting companies to undertake innovative paths and select the best among those micro-SMEs which proved able to innovate the most, on issues such as business strategies, HR management and knowledge of the international system of complex relations in which they operate.

The results achieved by the WIDE project were illustrated by Sergio Bozzi, CEO of SVIM SpA and by Simone Petrelli, consultant for CNA Tecno Quality, who is assisting the eight companies from the regions Marche Abruzzo regions selected during the WIDE pilot phase for the development of customized innovation plans.

This first part of the discussion was followed by a round table on "The Excellent Marche: Innovate to Recover Productivity and Compete,“. The debate was animated by the economic analyst Marco Marcatili, Stefano Micelli - Professor of Economics and Business Administration at the University Ca’ Foscari and author of the book “Artisan Future“ - and Dr. Claudio Giovine, head of the Department of Industrial Policy of CNA Italy.

WHAT COMES OUT OF THE 10 CUSTOMISED DEVELOPMENT PATHS CARRIED OUT BY THE FRENCH RIVIERA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE?
Written by CCINCA. - WIDE partner

The diagnostics have all been completed and presented to company directors. Actions are in progress. The methodology and the tools used by CCINCA’s consultants have proven their efficiency, as 2M€ software company owner says: "I expected to go down to the nitty-gritty: I am not disappointed. With a much better view of our future market and a new approach to our offer, we are now ready to innovate in our marketing and commercial practices. We also got acute answers to our questions regarding P.I. Thanks to CCINCA’s diagnostic and action plan, I am sure to move forward faster, and safely too."

Besides the usefulness of this part of the WIDE project, what other outputs can we point out? In 9 out of 10 cases, company strategy is clear to the owner/director but obviously not clear enough to stakeholders. The fact is, none of the MSMEs have a written strategy. Therefore, communication, sales messages and company image do not stand out among fierce competition. For employees, it may even be a lower motivation factor. Most of the company founders are technicians. Business development is not part of their culture. Although they do rather well in this matter, they could greatly improve with a little help (training sessions for example). The situation is the same as far as human resources are concerned. They look forward to finding the opportunity to recruit the ideal profile, but do not even know where to start from. They do not use much of HR services either because of the price.

To cut a long story short, MSMEs do need some kind of help as long as it is practical, immediately useful... and cheap. What has been pointed out through WIDE customised development paths is that innovation-oriented MSMEs lack methodology and commercial

WATCH OUT!

Follow the 40 Local Customized Paths that the project developed for the firms selected by project partners.

Participate to WIDE final event in Toulon!

Get involved in the last capitalization workshops organized at local level in each country that implements the project!
THESALONIKI INNOVATION – INTERNATIONALIZATION FORUMED
Thessaloniki 18 – 19 of October 2012
Written by Thessaloniki Chamber of Commerce - WIDE partner

The two days Forum “Thessaloniki Innovation – Internationalization ForuMed” was organized the 18 and 19 of October 2012, in Thessaloniki, Greece, by the TCCI in collaboration with all WIDE partners. The following specific events have been realized in the framework of the Forum:

An open event about SMEs’ innovation and internationalization took place in the morning of Thursday 18th October at the TCCI premises. Significant academics, entrepreneurs, representatives of supporting entrepreneurship institutions and of the Greek Managing Authority of the Program MED, presented and discussed with the public a variety of issues related to innovation, development and internationalization, mainly focusing on SMEs. A total of 67 persons, comprising project partners, representatives of the SMEs participating in the pilot projects for the implementation of the organizational innovation development plans, executives of other companies from the Region of Central Macedonia and representatives of supporting entrepreneurship and innovation institutions, attended the event.

In the afternoon of Thursday 18, project partners together with representatives of the SME’s participating in the pilot project, visited the headquarters of the company ‘’BETA CAE SYSTEMS’’. It is a TCCI member that produces simulation software regarding crash tests for new models of completely extrovert SME. During the study visit, the vision and the everyday operation of the company have been presented.

In the Morning of Friday 19, the 1st workshop about the capitalization of results related to organizational innovation (Phase 4.4) took place at the TCCI premises. The first results and the methodology of Organizational Innovation Customized Paths have been presented by the consultants and discussed with SMEs and innovation support institutions representatives.

INNOVATION FOR BUSINESSES IN GRANADA PROVINCE PROMOTED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF GRANADA
Written by County Council of Granada - WIDE

One of the most significant activities carried out in the framework of the project has been the development of Organizational Innovation Customized Paths for the 12 companies selected from amongst those which filled out the questionnaire on “Organizational and Marketing Innovation. Practices and impacts on the performance of European SMEs” The training workshops, based on participative methods for building entrepreneurial capacity, covered the following areas: organizational innovation (the application of new technologies in management methods), Cloud computing, Web 2.0, on-line marketing, positioning on the Internet and social networking sites, e-commerce and internationalization. To round off and complete the training, two individualized consultancy sessions were held with each company in order to analyze skills to reach their objectives.

This is perhaps a way for private and public entities to get together and work on a (European?) program that could combine practical training and consultancy, at a price MSMEs can afford.

INNOVATION FORUMED
Toulon, 16-17 May 2013
Written by TVT Innovation - WIDE partner

The next Innovation FORUMED and WIDE’s final event will be hosted by TVT Innovation in Toulon, South of France on the 16 & 17th of May. Innovation Forumed is a two days meeting focused on innovation & new business opportunities in the Med area. We will welcome WIDE’s project partners, European SMEs, public and private actors (such as Business Incubators, R&D Centers, clusters, higher education students …) and regional stakeholders concerned by business innovation support and economic development.

Experts on organizational innovation will present the new trends in business innovation, workshops and co-working will be organized and networking events will allow people to meet and exchange during the two days.

The opening session will be dedicated to the WIDE’s project presentation and its main outputs with entrepreneurs that will share their experience on WIDE’s Innovation Paths. Presentations will take place on innovation in business models, open innovation & end-users. We will also talk about international support & softlanding initiatives for entrepreneurs in the Med area.

The workshops will focus on tourism and eco-energy as key economic sectors with talks on best practices and new trends in end-users and business development.

Entrepreneurs from different Mediterranean countries (Italy, France, Spain and Greece) will also have the possibility to meet during B2B meetings and exchange on future business opportunities. In parallel, a WIDE Steering Committee will be organized for the project’s partners.
their potential in the aforementioned areas and make recommendations for ways to improve.
Following the successful implementation of these customized roadmaps for innovation, we have launched a series of sessions aimed at raising awareness and offering entrepreneurial consultancy for transferring these good practices to the entrepreneurial sector in Granada province. The ultimate aim of these sessions is to improve the competitiveness of entrepreneurial projects by means of implementing innovations. Also currently taking place are local seminars on entrepreneurial innovation, consolidation and updating. Through this activity, the County Council of Granada is responding to the demand from different areas in the province that require information and innovative tools to find the answers to problems in specific sectors of the economy, and to disseminate the results of the project to the business fabric of Granada province and to public and private sector agents with entrepreneurial skills bases.

ANDALUSIAN SMEs RECEIVE THE SUPPORT OF ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION EXPERTS THANKS TO THE WIDE CUSTOMIZED DEVELOPMENT PATHS
Written by CECA - WIDE partner
Within the framework of the WIDE project, The Retail Business Confederation of Andalusia (ECSC) in recent months has undertaken the development of strategic plans for each of the SMEs of Commerce that were selected for this. At first there was a personal interview their owners and a number of pictures at different aspects of the establishment, through which were detected improvement needs of different business areas (human resources and training, infrastructure, new technologies communication systems, customer management systems, providers, and quality,...). Having identified these different proposals were made for improvement, which is currently being implemented with the help of technicians ECSC and external staff, such as, among others, obtaining a certificate proving the Quality Service Company, Plans Window Dressing and Interior, full Software Programs that perform full management and control of the business and Use of New Technology (Social Networks, Websites, Blog, eCommerce, etc).

The aim of this whole process of implementation is to enable SMEs to innovate in those areas that are stagnant and thus achieve improved and more competitive business.

WIDE WORKSHOP "INNOVATION FOR THE SUPPORT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF SMES"
Written by Region of Central Macedonia - WIDE partner
On the 4th of March 2013, the Region of Central Macedonia (RCM) organized the Workshop: “Innovation for the support of entrepreneurship and of the development of SMEs” in the Regional Council Hall and in the frame of the project WIDE – “groWing of SMEs: organizational innovation and Development in mEd area” which is co-funded by the MED program. Participants in the event included the Deputy Governor of Extroversion, New Technologies and Innovation of RCM, Mrs. Tzelina Makrantonaki, other representatives and officials of RCM and the seven Regional Units of RCM, representatives of regional economic actors, of academic organizations, research centers and the private sector. The workshop commenced with Mr. Nikos Vasileiadis, technical consultant of RCM, presenting WIDE, its main activities and the role of RCM in the project. Then, Mr. Antonis Bouboulas, director of the studies department of the Thessaloniki Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TCCI) analyzed the role of TCCI in the project as well as TCCI’s activities aiming at the promotion of innovation in Central Macedonia.