

European Commission

12th ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF COMPETITIVENESS OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES 2017

Programme implementation at half time: 2017

SZÉCHENYI 2020

MINISTRY FOR NATIONAL ECONOMY

12th ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF
COMPETITIVENESS OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES



Venues of the conference

1. Accomodation of our guests: **Hotel President** • Budapest, Hold street 3-5, 1054

2. Venue of the presentations and plenary sessions: **Aranytíz** • Budapest, Arany J. street 10, 1051



"Programme implementation at half time: 2017" is the title of the international conference dealing with implementation of the competitiveness operational programmes, organised for the twelfth time by the Ministry for National Economy of Hungary in cooperation with the European Commission in Budapest between 18-19th of May 2017.

12th ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF
COMPETITIVENESS OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES
2017 Programme implementation at half time: 2017



Driven by the success and the positive feedback received from participants of prior events, the Deputy State Secretariat for the Implementation of Economic Development Programmes of the Ministry for National Economy (Hungary) and the European Commission jointly organize the 12th annual international conference on the implementation of Competitiveness Operational Programmes.

The conference aims to be a forum for sharing key experiences and good practices for the European Commission and the representatives of member states. These conferences traditionally focus on the competitiveness operational programmes of member states. This year's main topic will be the exchange of experiences gathered at the mid-term of the programming period by member states (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, Lithuania, Croatia, Germany, Austria and Finland) as well as the Commission.





At our conference, participants include the representatives of the European Commission, ministries from Hungary and other member states, managing authorities of EU funds at primarily Central European member states, the leading officials of intermediate bodies, chambers of commerce and industry, other partners and media representatives.

The programme is set to be opened by high-ranking Government officials who will also present their experiences at plenary sessions. On the second day, four section meetings are scheduled to be held, where attendees are to share and debate their views and opinions from the angle of their respective countries, based on the process they have made in their home countries. The working language of the conference is English.

During the course of these two days, presenters and participants of section meetings are to discuss experiences gained in the management of ongoing competitiveness operational programmes, paying special attention to challenges and opportunities which have arisen by the mid-term of the programming period.

Besides discussing professional issues, the conference provides a great opportunity for establishing contacts and the networking of managers.



Programme

Thursday, 18 May 2017

Moderator: **Adam Abdulwahab** Programme Manager
European Commission, Directorate for Administrative Capacity Building and Programme Implementation II, DG REGIO

9.00 – 9.30	Registration
Welcome speech	
9.30 – 9.40	**Tamás Karsai** Head of Managing Authority Ministry for National Economy of Hungary
Opening remarks	
9.40 – 9.50	**Andriana Sukova-Tosheva** Director European Commission, Directorate for Investment, DG EMPL
9.50 – 10.00	**Thomas Bender** Head of Unit European Commission, Directorate for Administrative Capacity Building and Programme Implementation II, DG REGIO
10.00 – 10.10	**Eszter Vitályos** State Secretary for EU Development Projects Prime Minister's Office of Hungary
Introduction of the Competitiveness OPs in the relevant countries, sharing the mid-term experiences with the 2014-20 programming period.	
10.10 – 10.30	**Tomáš Novotný** Vice Minister for European Funds, Research, Development, Innovations and Investments Incentives Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic
10.30 – 11:00	Coffee Break – Tolnay Klári Room (3rd floor)
11:00 – 11.20	**Nataša Kulakowski-Kramarić**, Assistant Minister Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts, Croatia

11.20 – 11.40	**Svetlana Gombos** Head of Managing Authority Managing Authority of Competitiveness Operation Programme, Ministry of Regional Development, Public Administration and European Funds, Romania (tbc)
11.40 – 12.00	**Madalina Istrate** Managing Authority of Regional Operational Programme, Ministry of Regional Development, Public Administration and European Funds, Romania
12.00 – 12.20	**Marcin Łata** Head of Managing Authority, Ministry of Development, Poland
Questions and Answers	
12.30 – 14.00	Lunch – Knight Rooms (ground floor)
14.00 – 14.20	**Edmund Škorvaga** Programming, Monitoring and Evaluation of EU Structural Funds, Ministry of Economy, Slovak Republic
14.20 – 14.40	**Kalin Marinov** Deputy Director, Directorare General for European Funds for Competitiveness Ministry of Economy, Bulgaria
14.40 – 15.00	**Reiner Kneifel - Haverkamp** Head of EU-Funds Coordination, Internationalization Unit Ministry of Justice for European Affairs and Consumer Protection of Brandenburg
15.00 – 15.20	**Balázs Rákossy** State Secretary for EU Funds Ministry for National Economy of Hungary
15.20 – 15.45	Questions and Answers
Closure of the first day / Closure of the first day	
15.45 – 16.00	**Adam Abdulwahab** Programme Manager, European Commission, Directorate for Administrative Capacity Building and Programme Implementation II, DG REGIO

Programme

Friday, 19 May 2017

Parallel sessions

9.00 – 9.30	Registration
9.30 – 11.30	Parallel panel discussions
11.30 – 12.00	Coffee Break – Hall (1st floor)
12.00 – 12.40	Summary reports by the session moderators
12.40 – 12.50	Summary, **Adam Abdulwahab** European Commission, Directorate for Administrative Capacity Building and Programme Implementation II, DG REGIO
12.50 – 14.00	Lunch – Knight Rooms (ground floor)



Section topics to be discussed

1. Increasing role of Financial Instruments

- Please introduce us the institutional structure you set up for implementing financial instruments.
- Please share with us some information about your process setting up FIs: how did you cope with public procurement in order to select fund managers and financial intermediaries?
  What kind of products do you have (loan, guarantees, venture capital, combined products)?
- What is the state of play of implementation of the 2014-20 financial instruments in your country/region? How many products have you launched?
  Which is your most successful product so far?
  What kind of results have you reached?
- Do you consider combining FIs with grants?
  If so, combination in a single FI measure or as two separate measures? In what areas do you consider such combinations?
  What body will provide the grant component when combined in a single FI measure (MA/fund manager)? What body will provide the grant when combined as two separate measures (fund manager acting as intermediate body for grants/MA)?
- Do you have a single monitoring and information system for Structural Funds? What kind of IT system do you have for financial instruments? How does the IT system back up the combined products you have? Do you have a one-stop-shop system in the process in order to make procedures more transparent for applicants?
- Which do you think the most important issues are that need to be clarified in order to make the implementation smoother?
- What measures have you taken/are planning to take to raise awareness of the non-grant support?
  Are there centrally managed campaigns?
- What are the main obstacles/challenges your MAs face in FIs implementation / preparation of FIs implementation?

Section chair
Reiner Kneifel- Haverkamp
Ministry of Justice for European Affairs and Consumer Protection of Brandenburg

Discussants
Magdalena Pronobis
Marshal Office of the Pomorskie Region, Poland

Renata Adomavičienė
Ministry of Economy, Lithuania

Sanja Fiser
Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts of Croatia

Velina Popova
Ministry of Economy of Bulgaria

Adam Abdulwahab
European Commission DG REGIO

Doru Zafiu
Ministry of Research and Innovation, Intermediate Body for COP, Romania

Emil Pícha
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic (tbc)

Section topics to be discussed

2. Audit risk management in calls for proposals

- What are the first experiences of the implementation of the new programming period?
- What is right frequency of management verifications balancing between control costs and risk handling?
- How do you get assurance on the reliance of performance indicators to be introduced into the IT system?
- How do you control/audit compliance with market price? At which stages of the process (project selection, payment claims etc.) are verifications done?
- How widespread are Simplified Cost Options?
- How do you evaluate the "success" of R&D&I projects?

Section chair

Balázs Dencső
DGAEF - Hungary

Discussants

Radka Bucilova
Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic

Sanda Hilgen
Ministry of Research and Innovation, Intermediate Body for COP, Romania

Peter Petrik
European Commission DG REGIO

Milán Kovács
European Commission - DG EMPL

Csaba Novák
Ministry for National Economy of Hungary



Section topics to be discussed

3. Social dimension of competitiveness programmes – employment and training

- Social dimension of competitiveness programmes: In your opinion what are the most important social dimensions that a competitiveness programme must deal with?
- SME training: In the field of supporting trainings for employees of SMEs, what are the most important areas that need improvement in your opinion? Do you combine technological development and trainings? Do you combine ERDF and ESF funds in any form?
- Developing entrepreneurial attitudes and skills: Importance of vocational education in developing an entrepreneurial attitude and business skills. Do you have any national or EU funded programme for developing entrepreneurial attitude especially in public education? What is your experience on it?
- Job creation vs raising productivity and competitiveness by production automation: Shortage of qualified professionals and high rate of long term unemployment among the low-skilled workforce with lower educational level are simultaneously present in Europe's economy. Production automation can be an answer to raising competitiveness but not necessarily to job creation. If you face this problem, what kind of measures do you use in your OP to manage this issue?
- Social enterprises: Experiences on promoting social enterprises, which type of mentoring services do you provide for start-up social enterprises?; In your country/region do you have experience on combined use of ESF with financial instruments or ERDF for social enterprises?
- Work-life balance: How to develop services and implement innovative practices to ensure work-life balance?
- Flexible employment: What type of good practices do you promote in your programmes on flexible employment?; In your view what can be the contribution of flexible employment to SME development?
- Youth entrepreneurship: How do you support youth entrepreneurship, do you have any dedicated programme for this target group? What is your experience on Youth Guarantee scheme and use of Youth Employment Initiative? Do you use financial instruments to promote youth entrepreneurship? Do you combine ESF and financial instruments for employment promotion?

Section chair

Representative of the Min istry for National Economy of Hungary

Discussants

Jouni Ponnikas
Regional Council of Kainuu, Finland

Zoltán Balogh
European Commission - DG EMPL

Noémi Danajka
Ministry for National Economy of Hungary

Representative of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic



Section topics to be discussed

4. SME 4.0 – role of SMEs in Industry 4.0

- From your aspect what does Industry 4.0 really mean? Why it is that Industry 4.0 is creating such interest?
- In your opinion what are the main role and tools of the public sector that can help SMEs' transition to Industry 4.0? Does the Operational Programme that you deal with help the transition of SMEs in using Industry 4.0 solutions?
- If yes, what are the most important tools you use to provide incentives to SMEs in your country/region? What are the most important areas at SME level which need to be improved so that SMEs be able to exploit the advantages of Industry 4.0? If not, what could be done?
- Support of Industry 4.0 and state aid.
- Is your organisation's personnel prepared well to deal with project proposals submitted in subjects in or related to Industry 4.0? Do you think such project proposals require any special skills from the MA/IB staff side (like knowledge of the fields ICT, digitalisation)?
- If you have dedicated programmes for this purpose do you use any focus points, specialisation (e.g. sector, size) at the call for proposals aimed at supporting SMEs in this field or do you use a horizontal approach?
- What does digitalization entail for manufacturing? Do you think that there are other sectors/ segments where Industry 4.0 can be applicable? In your viewpoint can the Industry 4.0 be interpreted at company level or it must be applied in the whole value chain of the product/service provided by the given company?
- At applying Industry 4.0 solutions what can be the short-term business opportunities at company level according to your experience?

Section chair

Petr Porák
Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic

Discussants

Agnieszka Krasicka
European Commission
DG REGIO

Daniel Pitoňák
Slovak Business Agency

Kerstin Koren
Office of the Regional Government of Lower Austria
Department Economic Affairs, Tourism and Technology

Lyudmila Tozeva
Ministry of Economy of Bulgaria

Gyula Pomázi
Deputy State Secretary
Ministry for National Economy

Presenters



Adam ABDULWAHAB

Programme Manager - EU Policies,
European Commission, Directorate General
for Regional and Urban Policy

Mr Abdulwahab started his professional carrier in 1999 in the Hungarian Ministry of Economy. His main responsibility was to develop economic strategy, including institutional preparation for the EU Structural Funds. In 2003 he joined DG Regional Policy of the European Commission. In the beginning his work was mainly related to the accession of the 10 Member States joining the EU in 2004. He participated in developing the mandate of European Commission for the financial period 2007-14.

Between 2006 and 2014, he worked on evaluating effects of Cohesion Policy, with special focus on development and application of economic indicators. He also contributed to the result orientation framework for the financial period 2013-20. He has been working in the unit responsible for Hungary since 2014.

Renata ADOMAVIČIENĖ

Chief Expert at Financial Instruments Division
Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Lithuania



Renata Adomavičienė has more than 10 years professional experience in the implementation and management of EU programmes and projects in the field of energy efficiency and SME competitiveness, development of strategic documents and sectoral policies. She has been working on the coordination of the financial instruments in the 2007– 2013 and the 2014 – 2020 programming periods since March 2011. She coordinates and manages all the relevant tasks concerning setting up and implementing financial instruments designed to improve access to finance for SMEs.



Zoltán BALOGH Ph.D.

Programme Manager – EU policies
European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Graduated at the Budapest University of Economic Sciences and Public Administration and completed his Ph.D. studies on the field of regional management at the Corvinus University of Budapest. He joined the College of Nyíregyháza as a lecturer and project manager in 2003, later he became the regional representative of Észak-Alföld Region in Brussels from 2008 to 2012. He was coordinating the international affairs of Észak-Alföld Regional Development Agency from 2012. Since 2014 he is working as a programme manager for the European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.

Thomas BENDER

Head of Unit
European Commission, Directorate for Administrative Capacity Building and Programme Implementation II, DG REGIO



Thomas Bender is from Regensburg in Germany, where he also studied and obtained a doctorate. He worked in research from 1987-1993 Since 1994 he works for the European Commission, mainly in DG Employment and since 2016 in DG REGIO.



Radka BUČILOVÁ

Deputy Director, Structural Funds Coordination Department
Ministry of Industry and Trade, Czech Republic

Deputy Director, Structural Funds Coordination department
Deputy Minister, Ministry of the Environment
CEO, State Environmental Fund
Director, Anti-flood Measure Department
Director, Managing Authority of Cohesion Fund Department, Ministry for Regional Development
CEO, State Environmental Fund
Deputy Director, Department of Economic Policy, Ministry of the Environment
Education: Techno chemical University, Prague, Czech Republic

Balázs DENCSŐ

Director General
Directorate General for Audit of European Funds, Audit Authority, Hungary



Since 2010, when the authority was established, Balázs Dencső has been Head of the Directorate General for Audit of European Funds (DGAEF), which is the Audit Authority for SOLID Funds as well as EU Structural Funds in Hungary. The DGAEF is responsible for preparing the strategy and planning, performing auditing as well as preparing control reports and closure declarations. Balázs Dencső has particularly extensive expertise and practical experience in auditing public procurement in the context of EU funding. Between 2003 and 2010, Balázs Dencső was working at the Ministry of Finance in the Central Harmonisation Unit which was responsible for the coordination and harmonisation of the European and national funds' control and audit.



Noemi DANAJKA

Head of Unit for ESF Co-financed Priorities
Managing Authority for Economic Development Programmes
Ministry for National Economy

Noemi Danajka has 20 years of experience with management and implementation of pre-accession funds and ESF and ERDF co-financed projects in the field of human resources development. She has been active in ESF management since the set-up of the first managing authority for human in the programming period 2004-2006 period, dealt with policy co-ordination and planning in the 2007-13 period, with active labour market and training related planning of the 2014-20 period. She has been involved in the implementation of the ESF co-financed priorities of Economic Development and Innovation Programme since October 2014.

Sanja FIŠER

Head of Unit
Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts- Intermediary Body, Croatia



Ms. Sanja Fišer is an economist working in the Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts as the Head Unit responsible for programming and evaluation of programmes. In focus of her work were development of SME related strategic documents and sectoral strategies and cooperation with international institutions. Since 2005 she is engaged in the management of EU programmes and projects in the field of entrepreneurship and regional competitiveness. She is also a certified trainer and lecturer in the field of strategic planning and management of EU programmes.



Sanda HILGEN

Ministry of Research and Innovation,
Intermediate Body for COP, Romania

Since 18 December 2008 I have worked within the IB for Research, Priority Axis 2 - SOPIEC.
My position is Head of Unit and I am in charge with the management of "on the desk" and "on the spot" verifications of the reimbursement claims, control activity, irregularities and debts recovery.
I coordinate the technical assistance activity of IB Research, as well.

Madalina ISTRATE

Ministry of Regional Development,
Public Administration and European Funds, Romania





Marcin ŁATA

Director of Programmes Supporting Innovation and Development Department, Head of Managing Authority, Ministry of Development, Poland

The department fulfils the role of the Managing Authority for Innovative Economy Operational Programme 2007-2013 financed from European Regional Development Fund as well as Smart Growth Operational Programme to be implemented in the 2014-2020 financial perspective.
Since 2000 he has been involved in the preparation and implementation of social and economic development programmes in Poland, including EU financed programmes.

Tamás KARSAI

Head of Managing Authority, Deputy State Secretary
Managing Authority for Economic Development Programmes,
Ministry for National Economy of Hungary



Mr Karsai has been participating in the establishment of the Hungarian system dealing with Structural Funds. Until 2004 he worked as chief head of secretariat for the MA leader of the first competitiveness framework program and then supported the work of the Managing Authority as an external consultant. From 2010 he worked as an advisor to the Monitoring Committee. Since August 2013 he has been heading the Managing Authority.
Since 2014 he is Deputy State Secretary at the Ministry for National Economy.
In an earlier phase of his career he also worked as a management consultant, economic journalist and was also active at an investment bank. He studied in Budapest and London.



Reiner KNEIFEL-HAVERKAMP

Head of Unit EU-Funds Coordination, Internationalisation
Brandenburg Ministry of Justice, for European Affairs
and Consumer Protection

Lawyer and former diplomat, he has held various management positions in the Brandenburg government and served as Programme Manager for Poland in DG Regional Policy of the European Commission.

Kerstin KOREN

Area Manager for Research and Technology
Regional Government of Lower Austria
Department for Economy, Tourism and Technology



Kerstin Koren studied at TU Graz and TU Wien Chemical Engineering with emphasis on organic-chemical technology and process engineering. She graduated in 2000 and proceeded to work as a project manager for tecnet capital, providing advice and assets for High Technology Companies. Passionate about technology projects, the move to Department for Economy, Tourism and Technology of the Regional Government of Lower Austria, in 2011 was a natural fit. Since December 2015 she is Area Manager for Research and Technology. She is also the project manager in charge for "Wirtschaft 4.0", the Lower Austrian initiative dealing with industry 4.0 and digitalisation. Besides she is the responsibleLower Austrian Indermediate Body for the "ERDF program Investment in Growth and Jobs Austria 2014-2020.



Agnieszka KRASICKA

Programme Manager – Croatia
European Commission – Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO)

Agnieszka joined DG REGIO in 2008. Initially she was responsible for pre-accession support and accession negotiations with Croatia, Iceland and Turkey. Later she has moved to the policy unit, where she was developing horizontal initiatives aiming at support of implementation of EU funds, such as TAIEX REGIO PEER 2 PEER. Since mid-2016 she is responsible for monitoring of business and innovation support and financial instruments in Croatia.

Before joining Commission, Agnieszka worked in the Polish Ministry of Economy, where her main responsibility was preparation of government strategic documents, including business support instruments, later-on implemented under the OP Innovative Economy 2007-2013.

Nataša KULAKOWSKI KRAMARIĆ

Assistant Minister
Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts, Croatia



Mrs. Nataša Kulakowski Kramarić is an economist with a 9-year experience in the field of EU funds (from pre-accession assistance to Interreg and competitiveness programmes). During this time she was involved in programming, system development (including development of procedures), project monitoring, financial and accounting management and closure of the programmes. Beside mentioned, as certified trainer of Financial Management and Control of EU funded projects, she held numerous trainings to state and public officials dealing with EU funds.



Kalin MARINOV

Deputy Director DG European Funds for Competitiveness
Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Bulgaria,
Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Member of the Supervisory Board of the Fund Manager of Financial Instruments in Bulgaria (since December 2016) and chairperson of the SME Initiative Bulgaria Investors` Board (since March 2016) representing the Ministry of Economy in both managing bodies. Before joining DG European Funds for Competitiveness in March 2015 he was Executive Director of the Economic Policy Institute, Sofia for more than six years. In 2013 he participated in the premier initiative of the U.S. Department of State - the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) – "Accountability of Government II".

Csaba NOVÁK

Head of Intermediary Body
Managing Authority for Economic Development Programmes,
Ministry for National Economy of Hungary



Mr. Csaba Novák started his career with nine years of economic research. Starting from 2001, he was involved in planning the first National Development Plan, initially at the Ministry of Economy and Transport, and later at the National Development Office. Following the planning period, he worked first as operational chief at the ECOP's Managing Authority.

In 2007, he joined MAG – Hungarian Economic Development Centre, a government agency, where he was in charge of project evaluation, contracting, finance and monitoring. From September 2010 as the Director for Strategy and International Relations he was responsible for external audits, irregularity management and international projects.

Currently he works as a head of division in the Economic Development Operational Programmes Managing Authority at the Ministry for National Economy.

At the MA he is responsible for the management of the project cycles of projects funded by Economic Development and Innovation OP.



Tomáš NOVOTNÝ

Vice Minister for European Funds, Research, Development, Innovations and Investments Incentives Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic

Mr Tomáš Novotný, born on 15th September 1968 is married and has one child. He completed his schooling at the Secondary school in Prague – Vysočany in 1988 and he graduated from the Faculty Mr Tomáš Novotnýof International Affairs at Prague´s University of Economics in 1993 with specialization in International Politics and Diplomacy. In 1997 Mr Tomáš Novotný graduated from the Fakulty of Law at Charles University in Prague where he completed in 2001 his JUDr. study focused on the Law of European Communities. After that in 2007 Mr Tomáš Novotný completed his Ph.D. study at Prague´s University of Economics focused on European Studies. In the period 1997-1998 he began his career as secretary of the organizational committee of the Chamber of deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic. From 1998 to 2000 he worked as expert on the EU affairs at Investiční a Poštovní banka, a.s. From 2000 to 2002 he worked as deputy director of the State fund of environment, director of the implementation agency and advisor to the minister focused on the EU funds. In the period 2002-006 Mr. Tomáš Novotný held the position of deputy minister of environment and director of the section of external relationship of the Ministry of environment. From 2006 to 2008 he worked as director of the Section for drawing the EU funds and deputy general director at Technoexport,a.s. From 2009 he worked as director of the Regional Council office of Central Bohemia. Mr Tomáš Novotnýwas named Vice Minister of the Ministry of Industry and Trade as of 11th February 2014 and he manages the Section of EU Funds, Research, Development, Innovations and Investment Incentives.



Peter PETRIK

Programme Manager European Commission
DG Regional and Urban Policy

Peter joined DG Regional and Urban Policy of the Commission in 2007. He worked as External Auditor for several Member States and then as Head of Sector for Strategic HR and Budget Planning, before becoming Programme Manager for Czech Republic and Slovakia.
He also has several years of audit experience in KPMG Slovakia.
Peter holds Master Degrees from Rotterdam School of Management (Cum Laude) and University of Economics in Bratislava.
He is Fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants.

Daniel PITOŇÁK

Head of Business Environment Analysis Department
Slovak Business Agency (SBA)



Mr. Daniel Pitoňák is responsible for preparation of studies and analyses related to economic environment, business development and trends within the SME sector, including monitoring and evaluation of the support measures for SMEs. He was involved in preparation of the National Strategy for Support of SMEs and the introduction of the SME test in Slovakia. He has long experience with EU programming, he was involved in programming of the Operational Programme Research and Innovation 2014-2020 and took part in preparation of financial instruments for SMEs for 2014-2020 period.



Gyula POMÁZI

Head of Department Ministry for National Economy,
Department for Enterprise Development, Hungary

Gyula Pomázi has consultancy and managerial work experience more than 25 years. He has initiated complex development plan for more economic areas in Hungary and took part in the implementation of these projects. Furthermore he has participated many large companies and institutions' development as a program manager in the coordination of strategic projects, full organizational and operational review, initiating quality measurement system, development of IT systems and management systems. His areas of expertise also include reforming of the state and public administration systems, developing management systems of financial and national coverage organizations' and managing of regional economic development programs.
Won special prize the Project Manager of The Year award in 2012.

Jouni PONNIKAS

Regional Development Specialist
Regional Council of Kainuu, Finland



Jouni Ponnikas (Ph.D.) works as regional development specialist at Regional Council of Kainuu (RCK). On his responsibilities are coordination of regional bio economy and smart specialization (RIS3) strategies and sustainable energy action plan 2020 (SEAP) of Kainuu as well as regional monitoring and foresight. Regional Council of Kainuu is a member of Covenent of Mayors (COM), an associate member of Bio-based Industries Consortium (BIC) and Ponnikas is the representative of Kainuu in these networks. Ponnikas is a member of Interreg Europe funded Bridges-project`s interregional Steering Committee. Bridges` (years 2016 – 2021) aim is to improve partner regions' RIS3 implementation.



Velina POPOVA

State Expert at Programming, Monitoring and Evaluation of OP Dept.
DG European Funds for Competitiveness
Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Bulgaria

Velina Popova has more than 10 years professional experience in EU structural funds assistance. She started her career with pre-accession funds back in 2007. With the commencement of the first programming period for Bulgaria she joined OP Development of the Competitiveness of the Bulgarian Economy 2007-2013, initially with responsibilities in project monitoring and verification.
In 2012 Velina switched to the programming department of the OP Competitiveness, where she was instrumental for the successful launch and implementation of one of the OP's most important priority areas, Energy Efficiency in SMEs. Recently Velina has been strongly involved in extending the use of financial instruments, supported by ESIF.
She also played key roles in the preparation of two operational programmes, OP Innovation and Competitiveness 2014-2020 and OP SME Initiative.
Velina is fluent in English, Portuguese and French.

Petr PORÁK

Department of Research, Development and Innovation
Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic

He is particularly involved in developing and implementing support programmes, using the means of EU Structural Funds that are focused on innovation including technology transfer and the infrastructure for industrial research and development. He is also involved in FP 7 and publishes.



Magdalena PRONOBIS

Head of the Financial Instruments Unit
Marshal Office of the Pomorskie Region, Poland
Department of Regional and Spatial Development

Ms. Pronobis joined the FI team in Pomorskie over three years ago – her responsibilities include both the closure of the FEI 2007-2013 and the programming and implementing of FI 2014-2020.
She has also PhD in economics and she is an academic teacher at a one of the private schools of higher education in Poland. Ms Pronobis has a 10-year experience in the European funds field as a consultant, auditor and a researcher.

Balázs RÁKOSSY

State Secretary for EU Funds
Managing Authority for Economic Development Programmes,
Ministry for National Economy of Hungary



Mr Rákossy coordinates the planning and the implementation of the Economic Development and Innovation Operative Programme (GINOP), the Regional and Municipal Development Operative Programme (TOP) and the Competitive Central Hungary Operative Programme (VEKOP).
As of 2010, Chief of Staff of the Minister of State for the Prime Minister's Office; as of 2012 Chief of Staff of the Minister Responsible for Liaison with International Financial Organizations, as of 2013 Chief of Staff of the Minister for National Economy.
At the earlier stages of his career he worked in 2002-2004 as the Chief Legal Counsellor of the EU's Hungarian delegation, Chief Legal Officer at Pfizer, and Regional CLO as of 2006, after that Chief Legal Officer at British American Tobacco and MOL.
Graduated with a law degree from Janus Pannonius University of Pécs; post-graduate degrees from University of Maastricht and the University of Oxford.



Andriana SUKOVA- TOSHEVA

Director, Directorate "Investment"
European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Ms Andriana Sukova-Tosheva is an economist with a long experience in the public sector (more than 15 years, from researcher to a Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture) as well as in NGO sector (5 years) and business management (chairperson of the Board of Directors of a big foreign company).
After Bulgaria's accession to the EU, Ms Sukova-Tosheva joined the Cabinet of Commissioner for Consumer Protection Meglena Kuneva. In August 2010 she was appointed Director in DG EMPL where she is currently in charge of all funds in the DG - ESF and FEAD, EaSI and EGF. Ms Sukova-Tosheva has numerous post-graduate trainings in the UK, Italy, Japan, USA.

Edmund ŠKORVAGA

Programming, Monitoring and Evaluation of EU Structural Funds
Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic



Lyudmila TOZEVA

Head of Programming, Monitoring and Evaluation of OP Dept.
DG European Funds for Competitiveness
Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Bulgaria

Lyudmila Tozeva has more than 10 years professional experience in preparation of strategic and programming documents at regional and national level and the system of management and control of EU funds in Bulgaria.
She was part of the team responsible for programming, implementing and evaluating the OP "Regional development" 2007-2013.
Since beginning of 2013 she is the Head of Programming Dept. responsible for programming, preparation of procedures for selection of operations, OP Monitoring Committee functioning and evaluation of Competitiveness OP for 2007-2013 and 2014-2020 programming periods.

Eszter VITÁLYOS

State Secretary for EU Developments
Prime Minister's Office, Hungary



Eszter Vitályos was born in Budapest, Hungary. Having obtained her law degree from Pázmány Péter Catholic University in 2005 she started working at CIB Bank as head of the customer service division. Her career in public administration began in 2006 at the Municipality of Leányfalu as she became the Head of the Mayor's Cabinet and Head of Secretariat. Between 2006 - 2012 she was Deputy Mayor in Pócsmegyer.
From 2010 she started working for the Hungarian Parliament, in the Cabinet of Municipalities. Between 2012-2013 she worked at the Prime Minister's Office Heading the Department of Policy Coordination.
She started working as Vice President responsible for legal and financial affairs of the National Development Agency in August 2013. As of January 2014 she was first Deputy State Secretary than State Secretary for EU Developments at the Prime Minister's Office of Hungary.



Doru ZAFIU

Senior Counselor
Ministry of Research and Innovation,
Intermediate Body for COP, Romania

Since 2 May 2006 I have worked within the IB for Research, Priority Axis 2 - SOPIEC.
My position is Senior Counselor and I act as "Irregularity Officer", in charge with the management of irregularities, covering the entire range of activities from prevention and detection all the way through, debts recovery. Also, I manage suspected frauds.
As a liaison officer with the banks and other financial intermediaries, I deal with financial instruments developed under our programme.





A revision of our conference from last year,
based on the report of the MTI (Hungarian Telegraphic Office)

With EU funds for Hungary's economic development



An international conference on experiences in the programming period 2014-2020 was held in Budapest on 9-10 June 2016.

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Minister of State for the Utilization of EU Funds Balázs Rákossy of the Ministry for National Economy pointed out at his keynote speech delivered at the opening of the conference that in the programming period 2014-2020 operative programmes were to focus on economic development and the boosting of employment.

Minister of State for EU Development Projects Eszter Vitályos of the Prime Minister's Office said that in the programming period 2007-2013 150 thousand tender bids were received, of which 70 600 were granted funding, and HUF 9223bn of EU funds were allocated. Of the applicants, hardly 44 thousand were enterprises, and public sector bodies





funding in the period 2014-2020. It is important to have EU-backed contracts implemented in 2017-2018, and to accelerate the absorption and disbursement process of funds. She stressed that the Government was closely cooperating with Hungarian market participants in utilizing EU funds. As one of the examples she mentioned that the Government designed the new law on public procurements -- as much as EU procurement regulations allow -- to create a level playing field in accessing domestic public sector development projects for Hungarian economic stakeholders vis-á-vis Western European enterprises which have long had these conditions at their home markets. Eszter Vitályos



also said that in the tendering process more attention would be paid to reducing red tape; less information would be asked of applicants and a simplified, electronic submission system has been launched.

The Government has prioritized the supporting of capacity expansion, research and development, efforts to gain market share and to increase the exporting capacities of SMEs, aiming to lift the number of SMEs active on foreign markets from the current 2500-3000 to above 10 000. The Minister of State has also highlighted efforts for the re-industrialization of the Hungarian economy: in this regard the Government's objective is to increase the industrial output-to-GDP ratio from the current 22 percent to 30 percent.

Balázs Rákossy emphasised that for the period 2014-2020 Hungary has earmarked some HUF 720bn to cover financial instruments related to refundable EU resources, three times the amount in the period 2007-2013. The disbursement of funds has begun through the Hungarian Development Bank (MFB). The efficient utilization of EU funds plays a key role in the achievements of the Hungarian economy, he noted.

The European Commission's Director General for Regional and Urban Policy Erich Unterwurzacher stressed at the conference that the utilization of EU funds must focus on SMEs, and competitiveness programmes deserve support. In the programming period 2014-2020, refundable financial instruments used in the support of SMEs will play a larger role, and Hungary



has been among the first countries to introduce these instruments, he said.

Director General for Employment and Social Affairs Adriana Sukova-Tosheva of the European Commission said that the EU considered youth employment a topic of vital importance; in the long term another key issue was labour market balance and relevant measures would be subsidized from the social fund.



Notes



Notes

IMPRINT:

The brochure was issued by the Managing Authority for Economic Development Programmes,
Ministry For National Economy of Hungary

The photos of the brochure were taken at the Annual Conference in 2017.

The cover photo of the Hungarian Parliament was taken by Miroslav Petresko

Information about the conference and the presentations will be available on the website of the conference: **http://gfpconf.gov.hu/en**

Please, send your questions, opinions, and requests to the following e-mail address: **gazdasagfejlesztes@ngm.gov.hu**

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