

ESF THEMATIC NETWORK ON SIMPLIFICATION

REPORT ON SCO PRACTICES

(Draft for the 6th Meeting of the Thematic Network - The Hague – 8-9 June, 2017)

References:

Member State / Region	BELGIUM FLANDERS
Reference number (TN's map of SCO practices)	10

Contact details:

Name of the Institution	DWSE - AESF
Address	Flemish Community – Ellips building
Name of contact person	Caroline Meyers
Telephone	
Email	Caroline.meyers@wse.vlaanderen.be

<u>Type of SCO reported</u> <i>(Please choose one of these types of SCO: flat rate financing, standard scale of unit costs, lump sum).</i>	LUMP SUM
<u>Type of activities covered by the SCO</u> <i>(Please indicate what type of activities is targeted by the SCO).</i>	PREPARATORY PHASE OF TRANSNATIONAL PROJECT

A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A1. Description of the type of operation *(Please describe in brief what types of operations are covered by SCO)*

The operation is a preparatory phase of a transnational project.

The project is composed of milestones :

Phase	Activities	Output	Resources
Forwarding a project idea	- Describing societal challenge	- Project idea in the project proposal	/
Preparatory phase	- Desk research - Partner research	Desk –and partner research report	15.000 euro
Phase 1: Project implementation	- Project implementation - Validation	- 2 Interim report - Final report phase 1 and provisional project output	255,000 euro at the utmost
- Phase 2 Dissemination	Dissemination activities	- Final report phase 2 and overall project output	30,000 euro at the utmost

After the approval of the project idea, organizations can finetune the forwarded societal challenges in an additional preparatory phase.

Two objectives apply for this phase.

- A first objective states that project promoters should finetune and elaborate further the societal challenge which they have described in the project idea.
- A second objective consists in the fact that promoters should look for Flemish and transnational partners to jointly tackle the societal challenges. The partnership should at least consist of one Flemish and one transnational partner.

The projects within this call depart from an existing practice or societal challenge from the Flemish labor market or from abroad (which is relevant for the Flemish labor market) and will set up a network on the basis of it. When tackling a certain challenge, one may have the opportunity to set up an innovative project or to improve an existing service. ESF Flanders does not impose maximum criteria regarding actions which can be set up within the network. A few minimum criteria, however, have been set up in order to ensure that the projects may end up with a relevant output as a final product (for instance, the minimum target may be “mutual learning”).

A2. Definition of outputs/results *(Please give a short definition of outputs and/or results)*

The output of this phase is a report, in which prospective studies as regards partnerships as well as the content are laid down. Moreover, a description of the partner search in one (or several) European member states / and in Flanders is added. One has to check whether the desired products, tools, etc. provide an answer to the defined challenge that the project is tackling. The product *as such* does not have to be a part of this report yet. The report might as well conclude that no good products/methods/measures can be detected in other countries, no partners have been found or the subject cannot be taken up in the desired partnership. If this turns out to be the case, the project ends after the preparatory phase.

A3. Beneficiaries *(please indicate the types of beneficiaries involved in the operations covered by SCO)*

All beneficiaries able to set up the actions required

A4. Target group(s) *(Please list target groups within projects covered by SCO)*

The target group are service providers in the labour market.

B. METHODOLOGY AND CALCULATION METHOD

B.1 Methodology *(please indicate which methodology/ies has/have been used: Fair, equitable and verifiable method / use of existing EU schemes for similar types of operation and beneficiary / Use of existing own national schemes for similar types of operations and beneficiaries / use of rates and specific methods enshrined in the regulation or in a delegated act / use of a draft budget /combination of methodologies). Please indicate if the concerned SCO has been covered by Art. 14(1) ESF)*

The SCO has not been covered by Art. 14(1).

Use of historical data (MA). Preliminary approval by the AA.

B.2 Calculation Methods *(please describe how the calculations have been made)*

For financing the preparatory phase we take similar research studies.

From the experience with other studies (benchmark: wage scale A111 Flemish Authority adjunct van de directeur for someone with 0 till 5 years of job experience) we estimate a cost of 10,856,56 EUR for 4 months of wage for the junior consultant. This concerns a maximum 0.55 FTE job. Its calculation is based on the standard scales that were used by ESF in the most recent calls 2015 – 2016.

1) **Motivation of estimated workload**

The motivation of the workload mentioned above (0,55 FTE during 4 months) can be calculated as follows:

- 1) Literature study (4 days)
- 2) Talks with critical friends, experts, ESF (2 days)
- 3) Search for transnational partners (4 days) + visits and cross-border traveling (2x3 days)
- 4) Search for Flemish partners + traveling + introductory talks (6 days)
- 5) Brainstorming, designing project, finetuning with all of the partners (10 days)
- 6) Writing down and editing (8 days)

IN TOTAL: 40 days. This equals 0,55 FTE (39,6 days) divided over 4 months.

Motivation of the elements mentioned above

To determine the workload for the staff member, we have looked at experiences from former transnational projects, that were carried out by ESF Flanders itself. The preparation costs to submit a transnational project have not been taken up in these projects, but we have enough of aspects to estimate the costs.

In the European network **Career and Age** a phase 0 was introduced which had to enable us to establish a good basis for the project (brainstorming, search for experts, talking to critical friends, ...). For this phase 0, 4 months were foreseen. The reality has shown us then that we needed 6 months. When we consider all of the days that all staff members in the “Career and Age” network have worked, we end up with an average of 0,5 FTE that would have worked on the project. The people who worked in this project are all seniors on an A level. When we consider the **DEUCE** project, we can see that overall even 1 FTE has been working on this project, seniors of an A level. But, as it concerns a preparatory phase and not yet the effective implementation of the project, we think that a junior must be capable to carry out this preparatory phase on the basis of a 0,55 FTE.

- 1) For the **literature study** we reserve 4 days. In the Allinclusive@work project 100 days were reserved for an expert (for literature study and survey). This was within the frame of a project of 1,5 years. When we estimate that this expert has spent 10 days on literature study, we can take into account 10% of the time. Assuming a 40 days period (0,55 FTE over 4 months) this results in 4 days.
- 2) For the talks with critical friends, experts and ESF we count 2 days. For the promoters of the approved project ideas, ESF Flanders will

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organise a start-up session during the preparatory phase, to which an explanation by an expert will be added. For this, we estimate one day. For preparatory talks with experts and critical friends we foresee one day. In the DEUCE project preparatory discussions with the foreign partners were held (each time, also critical friends and experts were present). For this, two days have been reserved. As this concerns talks in Flanders, we assume that during the remaining day, talks with two experts or critical friends can be held.

- 3) For the **search of partners** we foresee 6 days for the Flemish partners (including the talks) and 4 days for the transnational partners (apart from the talks). We have advised our promoters to establish a partnership that is as solid as possible. Finding the right partners, both Flemish and transnational, requires time. In the projects that we mention, the finding of partners is not mentioned in the final budget, because we already had to designate the partners in the project proposal. However, we advise the promoters to look for several Flemish partners (we expect a Flemish partnership with 3 to 5 partners on average). For the transnational partnership we advise promoters to collaborate with at least two foreign partners (to retain at least one partner with an approved ESF project in another country). One can see in all of the projects (DEUCE, Allinclusive@work and Career and Age) that we have reserved two till 3 days on average for a face-to-face meeting in a foreign country.
- 4) For brainstorming, project implementation and finetuning with all partners we plan 10 days. In the Allinclusive@work project a focus group was organised to elaborate further the initial project idea and in the Career and Age network a future search was set up to achieve broad support for the project. Each time, several stakeholders were involved. Depending on the applied participative method, between 1 and 2 days are needed (one day for the focus group and 2 days for a future search). The preparation as regards content and organization for such an event requires 6 days at least (more precisely: writing down a preparatory text and organising the event as such) The original text has been altered in accordance with the results of the focus group or future search and have been forwarded to the respective partners (for this, at least 2 days are needed). Finally, the respective partners come together to establish a final result. For this reason, we count one day. These findings are mainly based on recent experiences in the Career and Age network, for which a full future search was carried through and the way of working mentioned above was implemented.
- 5) For **writing down the project** (which is at the same time a final report for the preparatory phase) we withhold 8 days. In the Allinclusive@work project, UNIZO was responsible for this. They reported 55 days. They had to write 3 reports; this corresponds with approximately 18 days for one report. With our estimation of 8 days we keep a broad margin below this number.

These calculations are, as mentioned above, based on experiences from earlier transnational projects of ESF Flanders, such as DEUCE, All inclusive @ work and Career and Age.

2) Motivation of operational costs and overhead

Apart from time investment, operational costs and overhead are included in the lump sum. These also are based on experience from projects which

have been submitted by ESF Flanders and approved by the European Commission.

- 1) As it has been advised to include 2 transnational partners in the project, we expect 2 travels abroad. We estimate that there will be travels of 2 persons (one of which will be the junior financed by ESF).
 -2 travels at 1,800 EUR = 2x 900 EUR (average for the flights + sleeping accommodation + daily fee). based on the average daily fee that is granted by the Flemish Authority for professional travels abroad.
 - 2) Travels in Flanders + meeting costs
 - 1,000 EUR
 - 3) Costs to collect material (content / translations / etc.)
 - 1,500 EURO
- TOTAL = 6,100 EURO, operational financing, transnational and indirect costs.

Motivation of the elements mentioned above

For the **travels abroad** we expect that two staff members will join the discussion. In each project (DEUCE, Allinclusive@work and Career and Age) we counted on 500 EUR for a flight ticket and an average of 150 EUR for accommodation and a possible daily fee (in case no meals are offered). In our calculation we assume a flight ticket of 400 EUR, accommodation costs for 2 nights at 150 EUR (= 300 EUR) and a daily fee of 200 EUR for three days (we foresee a daily fee of 100 EUR per day = 50% on day 1 and 3 and 100% on day 2= 200 EUR). This should cover all costs for foreign travels. This way we follow the principle that is used by the Flemish Authority and we have an average cost regarding accommodation and daily fee. Therefore, we schedule a total cost for travels abroad of 3,600 EUR (for two persons and two travels).

For the other costs (travel in Flanders, meeting costs, collecting material) we have enough of examples of costs to motivate our forfaits:

- Organising a focus group is estimated in other projects at 500 EUR
- Translation costs were estimated at 62 EUR per page
- For traveling we reckon with an average 50 EUR X 2 (for 2 persons) X 5 meetings = 500 EUR and a maximum of 500 EUR for catering (or daily fee)

Rounded off, this comes down to a lump sum amounting to 15,000€ for wage (junior 0-5 years of service.), operational financing transnational and indirect costs ((10,856,56+6100=16,956,56 EUR)

B.3 Data source (please indicate the type of data used and the data source)

The data source are internal reports and experiences by the MA.

C. IMPLEMENTATION OF SCO

(Please describe in brief what implementation rules and conditions have been set out)

The result of the preparatory phase should be a report with relevant content, which contains at least the following sections:

Obligatory Sections for the report in order to be eligible for lump sum financing:

1. Description of the challenge/practice on the Flemish labor market and necessity for transnational collaboration (added value) regarding the subject;
2. Description of the problem/challenge in the consulted countries and how the experiences can be integrated in the project;
3. Presenting the own organization and the consulted partner(s), both Flemish and transnational ones;
4. Motivating of the 'common interest' and potential 'conflicts of interest';
5. Describing of the objectives for the respective partners;
6. Explaining project activities concerning content
7. Planning with:
 - role and responsibilities of each partner;
 - time schedule and respective phases;
 - milestones;
 - evaluation.

Assessment of report for start-up of phase 1

The report sections mentioned under point 1 of the report are decisive to apply for lump sum financing and concern efforts. Consequently, these efforts will be assessed as regards their content in order to start phase 1.

Phase 1 can be started up as soon as the 7 sections have also been assessed positively as regards the **content** according to the assessment criteria regarding the content for the desk and partner search report. A project has to find at least one Flemish partner with which a partnership agreement is signed and at least one transnational partner, with which the TCA is signed.

Phase 1 does not start if the deepening and the finding of partners goes wrong. In that case, the lump sum can be paid, but it will not be possible to continue the project.

D. AUDIT TRAIL

(Please provide a brief description of the audit trail for the concerned SCO, including documents, key contents/conditions and procedures)

The reports are archived in the archiving system of the MA.

E. ASSESSMENT BY THE AUDIT AUTHORITY(IES) INCLUDING EVENTUAL EX ANTE ASSESSMENT

(If relevant, please explain how the audit authority has been involved in preparation and assessment of the SCO).

The audit authority was involved in the ex ante assessment of the SCO.

F. IMPACT OR ADDED VALUE FOR THE MA, BENEFICIARIES AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

(Please explain how you have perceived impact/added value of the SCO for the MA, beneficiaries and other stakeholders).

G. SPECIFIC ISSUES FACED WITHIN CALCULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCO

(Please indicate any issues/problems/challenges you have experienced when setting out or implementing the SCO, i.e. high workload, state aid, public procurement, national legislation, revenues etc.)

None

H. LESSONS LEARNED AND POINTERS

(Please indicate any unforeseen practical implications that have emerged and any key lessons you have learned from the development and implementation of the concerned SCO practice).

None so far

I. ANNEXES OR LINKS TO ONLINE DOCUMENTS

(Please list documents or links to online documents like complete methodology, calculation methods, documents submitted to the Commission, guidance for MAs and beneficiaries, calls for proposals, audit trail, legal acts etc.).

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