



“ATM for SMEs”

Access to Microfinance for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Project is aiming at improving the access to microfinance in the participating regions

Cagliari, October 2017. The main strategy of the EU-financed project is to **support social entrepreneurship** through providing access to microfinance and contribute to a high level of quality and sustainable employment, reducing disparities and poverty and thus contributing to the realization of the “Inclusive Growth” priority of the Europe 2020 strategy. There is a wide variety of microfinance programs across Europe, however, there are significant differences in how these microfinance initiatives reach their target groups. The regional partners prepared different action plans which are demonstrated and discussed at their meetings and study trips.

At the meeting in May organised by the Spanish partner **CEEI Burgos** the project partners presented their best practices that have been implemented in their own regions. Some of them are quite similar but the activities, results and contributions are different, like the ‘Make Women Bankable’ program to foster the acquisition of loans by women or the ‘Social Business Women Microloan’ that is design for women who are interested in having professional support for setting their own businesses.

In order to measure the social impact of the actions it is necessary to exchange experiences and ideas about policy approaches for financial inclusion, assessment of social outreach and social business financing. This was the programme of the workshop organised by the Sardinian Partner **Autonomous Region of Sardinia** in May in Cagliari. The participants also discussed the exchange of the policies which can be utilized in other regions as well. Identification of success factors and of the possible impact of the policy exchange to the local/regional policies were considered.

The participants introduced good practices that should be further deployed at local level and included in the regional Action Plan. One of these is the programme introduced by the Sardinian partner, that aims at creating a system of smart grids in order to ensure security and stability in the regional energy's sector. Further diversifying the energy mix and decreasing harmful greenhouse emissions are also important goals.

On the third day of the field trip the participants visited a local cultural site, the Manifattura Tabacchi in Cagliari.

Project information:

Number of partners: 10

*Countries involved: Hungary,
Germany, Poland, Italy, Spain,
Norway, Croatia, Belgium*

*Main outputs: 9 regional action
plans, 6 study trips, 9 improved
policies, 6 new projects
generated*

*Project duration: 4/2016 –
3/2021*

ERDF funding: 1.622.097 €