

## PROJECT FACTSHEET

### SME Policy Index: Eastern Partner Countries 2012 (Enterprise Policy Performance Assessment)

To create better operating conditions for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in the six Eastern Partner countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine), this project analyses and evaluates each country's SME policy environment based on the guiding principles of the EU Small Business Act.

#### Objective

- Support Eastern Partner countries in designing and implementing effective policy measures that promote SMEs and, in doing so, create jobs and encourage innovation by:
  - Benchmarking SME policy performance at the country and regional levels using a common template of policy indicators related to all ten principles of the EU Small Business Act.
  - Identifying SME policies' strengths and weaknesses by consulting with private sector associations, governments, and donors.
  - Developing recommendations and exchanging best practices to support Eastern Partner countries in developing comprehensive SME policy frameworks and mechanisms for SME policy making.

#### Timeline

- Design Phase (October 2010 – March 2011)
  - October 2010: First meeting of the EU SME Panel and OECD Eastern Partnership Enterprise Policy Development Working Group.
  - March 2011 – Two workshops held in Brussels and Torino to finalise and endorse **a common template of indicators** for evaluating SME policies in each country.
- Evaluation Phase (April 2011 – January 2012)
  - At an OECD Ministerial Conference and second working group meeting held in June 2011, Eastern Partner countries agreed in a common declaration to **develop targeted policies** supporting SMEs and entrepreneurship.
  - Eastern Partner countries carried out two **self-evaluations** based on principles discussed in the working groups.
  - The OECD, European Commission, ETF and EBRD carried out **independent assessments** with the support of local consultants.
- Consolidation phase (February 2012 – October 2012)
  - Bilateral stakeholder meetings were held in all six Eastern Partner countries to consolidate findings from self-evaluations and independent assessments.
  - October 2012: Launch of the *SME Policy Index: Eastern Partner Countries 2012*.

## Structure

- **EU SME panel** under the EU Eastern Partnership Platform 2 on 'Economic integration and convergence with EU policies' oversees activities and provides strategic guidance to the project.
- **OECD Working Group** on Enterprise Policy Development brings together private sector associations, governments of the region, and donor representatives to discuss regional policies and to exchange best practices between Eastern Partner and OECD countries. The working group meets once a year and contributes to the policy evaluation, and preparation of a set of policy improvement recommendations for all countries.
- **Capacity-building seminar** for policy makers was held on 24-28 October 2011 in Trento, Italy. It focused on SME policy tools with a selection of themes identified as priority areas in the Enterprise Policy Performance Assessment. Participants gained a more practical understanding of the EU Small Business Act's instruments. Key findings and conclusions from the seminar will be included in the final *Eastern Partnership SME Policy Index 2012* report.

## OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme

- The OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme was launched in 2008 to support Eurasian economies in developing more vibrant and competitive markets. It includes seven countries from Central Asia (**Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan**) and six countries from Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus (**Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine**).
- The Programme's approach leverages OECD instruments and tools in order to assess where and how to enhance the **competitiveness** of countries, sectors and regions to generate **sustainable growth**. Since its inception, the Programme has developed and implemented several regional and country specific competitiveness strategies, complemented by capacity building seminars and coaching for policy makers.

## Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

- The OECD is a multi-disciplinary inter-governmental organisation of 34 member countries based in Paris which engages an increasing number of other countries and economies from all regions of the world. The Organisation's core mission is to help governments make better policies for better lives.
- Through its network of 250 specialised committees and working groups, the OECD provides a setting where governments compare policy experiences, seek answers to common problems, identify good practice, and co-ordinate policies. The Organisation's work begins with data collection, policy analysis and benchmarking, then moves on to a collective discussion of policy experiences followed by the identification of good practices, setting of global standards and mutual peer review.

[www.oecd.org/daf/psd/eurasia](http://www.oecd.org/daf/psd/eurasia)