



Newsletter #1

March 2011



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∨ INTRODUCTION TO THE PROINCOR PROJECT

PROINCOR is a European project aiming at facilitating innovation across Central Europe by establishing capabilities for the diffusion and application of innovation. The project period is from 04/2010–03/2013 with an overall budget of 3 million EUR.

The **PROINCOR** partnership consists of ten partner organisations from seven CENTRAL EUROPE Member States from seven CENTRAL EUROPE Member States (Germany, Austria, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Italy and Hungary). **PROINCOR** is implemented through the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

PROINCOR deals with the diffusion and application of knowledge in new products, processes and services. **PROINCOR** aims to strengthen the competitiveness of SMEs by boosting their innovation performance in the geographical corridor from the Baltic to the Mediterranean Sea. By focusing on this transnational geographic area **PROINCOR** will contribute to the decrease of economic disparities between Eastern and Western regions and countries along the former iron curtain. There is still a considerable gradient from west to east concerning relevant economic indicators.

The vision of **PROINCOR** is to pave the way to create an innovation corridor of emergent regions along the former dividing line. After the enlargement of the European Union we have the huge opportunity to develop the Baltic-Adriatic corridor to a knowledge-based economic region.

All **PROINCOR** project partners are integrated in the innovation support system of their regions. They act in the fields of technology transfer, regional economic development and incubating. They are all aware that there is still a lack of trust and mutual understanding

between the business world and the technology and know-how providers as well as the intermediary organisations. On the one hand in each involved region several organisations are claiming to offer SME support. On the other hand most of the SMEs which are not familiar with the principles of innovation management and public funding schemes don't find the right partners to improve innovation performance and competitiveness.

The **PROINCOR** partnership intends to overcome these barriers and obstacles.

PROINCOR will address a high number of enterprises with innovation needs in main manufacturing and industrial service sectors of the involved regions and countries. Innovation audits free of charge will be conducted by innovation advisors. During two visits in the company the advisors will assess the current innovation performance. By means of these innovation audits, strengths and weaknesses of the internal innovation management of the company are determined. Afterwards innovation projects will be initiated.

PROINCOR will exploit all available information about innovation needs and opportunities from the perspective of the SMEs to intensify the collaboration between different innovation support actors and companies in the Baltic-Adriatic corridor. The project partners will link up the innovation support systems from all ten regions and make access to high-level technologies and other expertise among the partner regions.

The result-oriented approach of **PROINCOR** will be measurable in terms of companies with improved internal innovation management, trained managers and employees, launched product and process development projects including preparation of investments and new established transnational cooperation.

Geographical location
of the PROINCOR project partners



PROJECT PARTNER INFORMATION

Bautzen Innovation Centre

Bautzen Innovation Centre (TGZ) was established in 1995 on an old industrial site. TGZ Bautzen is a not-for-profit organisation, the shareholders being the town of Bautzen, the district of Bautzen and Bautzen Savings Bank. We work with our own management to run the innovation centre and to carry out projects promoting regional economic development including local networks.

Bautzen Innovation Centre has essentially three key strategic objectives:

- Support of start-ups and incubation
- Technology transfer and innovation
- Support and regional economic development



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Business- and Innovation Centre Frankfurt (Oder)

Strengthen innovative companies in a regional context, expedite structural transformation, facilitate existing recourses of technological know-how – these were the main tasks of the public-private-partnership technology center, when it was established in 1991. Over the last 20 years the Business and Innovation Center has developed to a well acknowledged institution in East-Brandenburg.

Nowadays, the BIC sets focus on companies that have been in business for a long time but also on people who are about to set up their own business. The main task of the Center is to counsel, to encourage and to assist said inquirers.

The essential idea of the BIC is to be a close partner to young enterprises and to individually support them. It is important to provide special skilled services where required. A main national and international Partner-Network supports us in being present for our customers directly.



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Geographical location
of the PROINCOR project partners



PROJECT PARTNER INFORMATION

Adam Mickiewicz University Foundation, Poznań Science and Technology Park

Poznań Science and Technology Park (PSTP) is the meeting place for representatives of science, modern industry and all aspects of entrepreneurship. The main purpose of the science park is bringing research results (and research scientists) closer to the social and economic practice in all of the Wielkopolska region. PSTP conducts its activity in the field of research services, supports the relations between science and economy, takes part in the implementation of innovative activities and provides entrepreneurs with lease area, services supporting business activity and help to acquire funds for innovative development. For many years PPNT teams have taken part in various projects supporting technology transfer, stimulating participation of the Polish units in the UE framework programs. According to the mission, within PPNT projects, science, research, innovation and business co-operate together.



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Regional Development Agency – ARLEG S.A.

Regional Development Agency „ARLEG” S.A. develops Lower Silesia region through participation in projects with the aim of increasing competition of enterprises through transfer of technology, diffusion and application of innovation. The Agency cooperates with local authorities in the field of improving efficient functioning and development of cities and communes, by providing comprehensive services when applying for EU funds. “ARLEG” S.A. supports enterprises by advising and training services, especially for small and medium enterprises, as well as preparation of business plans, feasibility studies and applications for EU funding. The Agency develops human resources through providing EU co-funded programmes aimed at active fight against unemployment and promotion of entrepreneurship.



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Geographical location
of the PROINCOR project partners

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PROJECT PARTNER INFORMATION



BIC innovation, legal corporation pool

BIC innovation is non profit organisation established for the strengthening the national and international cooperation in the innovative scientific and industrial activities in the Czech competitive economic area. BIC innovation cooperates with regional and national partners such as universities, research institutions, regional stakeholders, innovation firms and chambers of commerce. BIC innovation is established as a part of regional innovation strategy in relation to the research result application in SMEs.

BIC innovation cooperates on national and international projects supporting small and medium entrepreneurs. We offer special services for Czech entrepreneurs as very important help to them with support of their innovation strategy and relationship between them and science area. The tools for the business goal realisation are support of SMEs on the innovative development strategy. The services to SMEs are applied on non-commercial bases and consist of advisory services in long term innovative services with the partnership with research institution support.

bic innovation
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Styrian Business Promotion Agency SFG

The Styrian Business Promotion Agency SFG, is a state owned company dedicated to strengthening and growing the Styrian economy. The SFG offers targeted services ranging from general support and information to financial consultancy and inward foreign direct investment. Our specialist areas include grants and subsidies, company re-location/expansion and assistance in selecting attractive commercial property in the region. We help with gaining access to training, to research and development funds, to networks and innovative financing and to technology and knowledge transfer. Innovative R&D projects are also supported through a series of national and European funding programmes.

Styria is an economic region boasting a wealth of high-achieving, competent, motivated and highly-qualified people. The role of the SFG is to further develop the assets of the region and in doing so to contribute to sustainable economic growth and development in the province.



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Geographical location
of the PROINCOR project partners



PROJECT PARTNER INFORMATION

Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Hajdú-Bihar County

Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Hajdú-Bihar County acts as the opinion leader in the economic life of Hajdú-Bihar County. It makes a lot to create such economic environment in the area where the members can develop and successfully compete at domestic and at the world market.

Chamber's Its mission is to help / promote enterprise development by offering the best services and technical advice to their members, to provide value added services and various information on industrial property rights, patents or national and EU legislation, grants and applications to assist SMEs to enter markets.

The Chamber is also responsible for organizing craft masters' training and supervising vocational training and it is in contact with local municipalities and national authorities and takes part in setting local legislation.



**HAJDÚ-BIHAR MEGYEI
KERESKEDELMI ÉS
IPARKAMARA**

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Technology Park Ljubljana Ltd.

Technology Park Ljubljana (TP Lj) was established in 1995 and acts as a business support centre for innovation and incubation for high-tech companies. TP Lj supports creation of start-ups, spin-offs and growth of new enterprises based on the results of research from universities and institutes. It acts as a liaison between business and research community. TP Lj's mission is to ensure a top-quality business support environment for the transfer of research findings and innovative commercial ideas to successful and internationally competitive entrepreneurship.

TP Lj is the largest technology park in Slovenia and has strong official bonds with local, regional and national authorities. In this respect, is leading partner in the field of innovation and research policy in the region as it is involved in drafting and proposing recommendations in the field of further development of policy on innovation and business support environment.

TP Lj is a member of International Association of Science Parks and a founder of national Association of technology parks and incubators.



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Geographical location
of the PROINCOR project partners



PROJECT PARTNER INFORMATION

BIC Incubatori FVG SPA

In business since 1989, the BIC Incubatori FVG SpA manages one of the first BIC – Business Innovation Centre established in Europe, which is certified by the European Commission. The regional incubator supports the growth of knowledge intensive start ups and spin-offs, operating mainly in the ICT, biotechnology and pharmaceutical sectors, by providing the following services to the business community:

- Identification and development of innovative projects
- Involvement in international networks and cooperation initiatives
- Business linkages and assistance in setting up transnational partnerships
- Assistance in business planning
- Financial tutoring and managerial coaching
- Well equipped premises and modular logistics solutions

Being part of the Friulia SpA group, the Financial Holding of the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, BIC Incubatori FVG can also provide financial solutions designed for an efficient management of debt along the various stages of partner companies development.



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Agency of Regional Development - ARR

Regional Development Agency) was founded in the year 1996 based on a ruling of the Euroregion Nisa, a civic association of the towns, municipalities, and districts of Liberec, Jablonec and Nisou, Semily, Česká Lípa, and Děčín (the Šluknovský projection).

The ARR's aim of business operation is to provide regional public administration, towns, and municipalities with professional assistance on a long-term basis with regard to the generation of regional programmes, conceptual plans, and strategies in the individual areas of public and economic life. It also intends to offer assistance in the formulation of objectives, the definition of measures to accomplish such objectives, communication with both the professional and general public, and last but not least, to provide professional services in the implementation of individual investment and non-investment projects. ARR activity follows from the need to improve the information flow especially for the small and medium enterprises but also for the other organisations especially in the Liberec Region. Since October 1998 ARR also provides services of Euro Info Centre (EIC).



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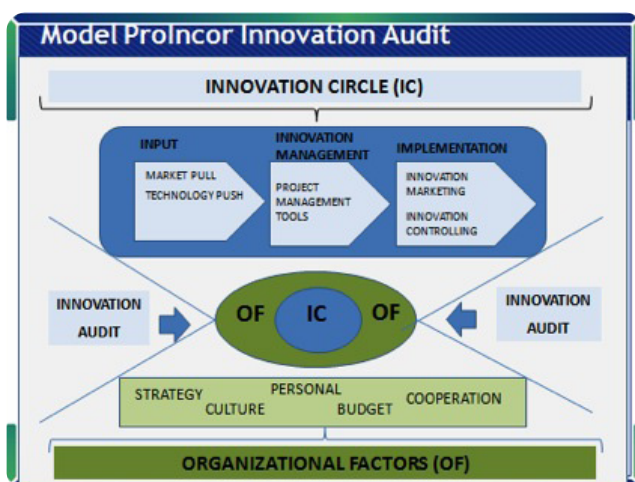
✓ PRESENTATION OF THE PROINCOR AUDIT GUIDE METHODOLOGY

The **PROINCOR** Innovation Audit will analyze, evaluate and stimulate the innovation process and innovation environment in SME's from a technical orientated sector. The **PROINCOR** Innovation Audit will monitor the state of the art concerning innovation by giving a monitoring report on the state of the art on innovation (process and environment) in companies. With this report the innovation advisor should be able to give further advices to improve the innovation system in the company.

The **PROINCOR** Innovation Audit will include questions to the „innovation process and environment“ in companies. The output will be two spider diagrams (one for the narrow innovation circle and one for the enabling factors). The spider diagrams will be also interpreted in a written and oral way.

The audit will be carried out in personal meetings between the advisor and the company. Two meetings within the companies are a „must“. In the first meeting the audit will be carried out and in the second meeting the audit will be interpreted. The following meetings in the companies will have to task to offer consultancy on innovation issues which came out of the audit.

The target group of the audit are SME's with a technical background.



DESCRIPTION OF THE AUDIT

The **PROINCOR** innovation audit is auditing the narrow innovation circle and also organizational factors which are having a strong influence on innovation management.

Innovation Circle (IC)

Within this part of the audit, the narrow innovation process regarding how new products/services are created or process improvements are done, new markets were entered, new business models developed, will be analyzed.

Sector Input: This sector contains questions, where do ideas come from and do companies work actively and systematically in that early phase of innovation.

Sector Innovation Management: This sector will contain question, how systematically is the innovation process organized.

Sector Implementation: This sector is targeting the questions, how new products are brought to do market.

Organizational Factors (OF)

Within this part of the audit, the ability towards innovation in companies will be analyzed.

Sector Strategy: Questions on an innovation strategy

Sector Culture: Questions on an innovation cultur

Sector Personal: Questions on how people are trained on innovation tools, methods, etc.

Sector Budget: Questions on the budget which is foreseen for innovation activities

Sector Cooperation: Questions on how cooperation with universities, research organizations, etc. are established and used.

∨ PAST EVENTS

PROINCOR Kick-off meeting in Bautzen, Germany (22–23 June 2010)

The kick-off meeting, including the innovation conference, was organised by Bautzen Innovation Centre (TGZ) on 22nd–23rd June 2010. On 22nd the project manager Mr Prof. Dr. Jürgen Besold, Bautzen Innovation Centre, started the kick-off meeting with introductions about the Central Europe Programme and the project **PROINCOR**, the delegates and the work packages. The meeting continues with organisational aspects like control and audit guidelines, budget, subsidy contract and partnership agreements and with the setting-up of the **PROINCOR** advisory board. In the afternoon each project partner presented their organization and region, followed by individual consultations.

On 23rd June the speaker of the advisory board Mr Dr. Wolfram Leunert, deputy of the district president, district Bautzen, opened the public innovation conference. After that the project manager informed the participants about the project **PROINCOR**.

Specialists from Germany, Austria and Sweden introduced the participants with informative presentations about innovation, innovation audits and state aid programmes. This conference finished with presentations of regional innovation systems and implementation strategies for **PROINCOR** by the project partners.



*Project partners at the kick-off meeting in Bautzen, Germany
(22–23 June 2010)*



*Innovation conference in Bautzen, Germany
(22–23 June 2010)*

▼ PAST EVENTS

PROINCOR Steering group meeting in Graz, Austria (19–22 September 2010)

„Innovation“ was the leading theme of the Workshop and Project Meeting within the scope of **PROINCOR**, which took place on 19th–22nd September 2010 in Graz, Auersbach and Grambach.

The workshop started in Graz with the presentation of Wolfgang Schabereiter, who answered the question „Why innovation?, followed by Jürgen Besold with „What are the key aspects of innovation management?“. Bjorn Westling finished the course of lectures, showing „Practical examples of innovation management“. The first workshop day ended with a sightseeing tour in the city centre and a lovely dinner with perfect view over Graz.

On the second day, all partners met in Auersbach, where Susanne Urschler gave an overview on existing audits, before Wolfgang Schabereiter and Jürgen Besold talked about „The **PROINCOR** Audit“. Afterwards - going into practice - two case studies have been presented and the project partner had the chance to try Syrian beer and whiskey.



*Steering group meeting in Graz, Austria
(19–22 September 2010)*

The additional **PROINCOR** Steering group meeting on the third day in Grambach was structured in five work packages:

- In work package 1 the project manager informed partners about the request for clarifications from the JTS and the 1st start-up report was discussed. The lead partner told the present participants about the preliminary program of the 2nd Steering group meeting and the 1st meeting of the transnational innovation advisor group.
- In work package 2 the WP leader informed the partnership how to use the **PROINCOR** logo and presented the structure of the **PROINCOR** website. The partnership made its decision about the **PROINCOR** messages.
- In work package 3 the WP leader gave a short presentation - the innovation workshop has focused the content of this work package one day before.
- In work package 4 the WP leader distributed the WP 4 work plan and timetable. He explained the outputs, tasks and deadlines in detail.
- In work package 5 the WP leader had already distributed a form to analyse innovation policies – in month 10 of the project all partners have to finalise seven country-specific reports.

With all partners focused on what to do next to forward the **PROINCOR** project, the third day of the project meeting was closed.

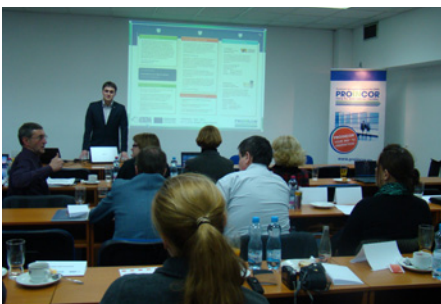
▼ PAST EVENTS

PROINCOR Steering group meeting in Prague, Czech Republic (1–3 December 2010)

From 1st to 3rd December 2010 Steering group meeting and meeting of Transnational innovation group took place in Prague, Czech Republic. The place of proceeding was in building of the Czech Association of Scientific and Technical Societies near Charles Bridge and with amazing view on the Prague Castle.

Meeting was organised by Czech project partners from Brno and Liberec. The first day was opened by project leader Mr. Jürgen Besold. Results of project and future actions were discussed. Leading partner informed partnership about the 1st progress report including the 1st finance report and the foreseen implementation of the project until the 3rd Steering group meeting in Trieste (June 2011). The second day was opened by Mrs. Ivana Ptáčková, the member of Advisory board in Liberec Region. The presentations on how innovation audit is done by **PROINCOR** partners was discussed and addressed.

The meeting of **PROINCOR** partners was during **The week of research, development and innovation in Czech Republic INNOVATION 2010**, which was organised by Association of Innovative Entrepreneurship Czech Republic in cooperation with Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Committee on National Economy, Agriculture and Transport of the Senate of the Parliament Czech Republic, domestic and foreign members and partners of AIE CR. Participants of the **PROINCOR** meeting visited the exhibition section of INNOVATION 2010 with new innovation projects presentations.



Steering group meeting in Prague, Czech Republic (1–3 December 2010)

▼ FORTHCOMING EVENT

PROINCOR Steering group meeting in Trieste, Italy (8–10 June 2011)



BIC Incubatori FVG SpA

From 8th till 10th June 2011, BIC Incubatori FVG SpA will host the **PROINCOR** Steering Group Meeting and Transnational Innovation Advisory Group Meeting.

The event will be held at the Savoia Excelsior Hotel, located on the waterfront of Trieste, and at the local Incubator premises. The meetings will follow the submission of the second Progress Report to the EU Central Europe Joint Technical Secretariat and thus focus on the activities undertaken so far and on the further steps and decisions to be taken. Particular attention will be dedicated to the core of the whole project - the SMEs Innovation Audits carried out by each project partner. The three days program foresees a visit to the BIC Trieste and also a guided walk through the historical city centre. At the Incubator the participants will have the possibility to visit technology intensive companies and discuss with their managers some interesting innovation cases.

