

I³ – INNOVATION AND INCUBATION INITIATIVE

LEONARDO DA VINCI PROJECT
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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	3
1. METHODOLOGY.....	4
2. FINDINGS.....	6
2.1. THE BI/ BIC STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE	6
2.2. SME QUESTIONNAIRE	14
2.3. FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE	17
2.4. AGENCY QUESTIONNAIRE	19
2.5. DESK RESEARCH.....	20
2.5.1. <i>Definition of Business Incubation</i>	20
2.5.2. <i>Partners Desk Research</i>	21
2.5.3. <i>Review and examination of relevant training mechanisms in the USA and Europe</i>	24
THE CONCLUSIONS.....	28
APPENDICES	31
A. BI/ BIC/ STP QUESTIONNAIRE	32
B. SME QUESTIONNAIRE	37
C. FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE	40
D. GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES AND AGENCY QUESTIONNAIRE	42
E. ARTICLES FOR DESK RESEARCH	44
F. BIS/ BICs STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE CHARTS	45
G. SMEs QUESTIONNAIRE CHARTS.....	49
H. FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE CHARTS.....	51
I. GOVERNMENT AGENCIES REPRESENTATIVES QUESTIONNAIRE CHARTS.....	52

Introduction

The I³ – Innovation and Incubation Initiative project aims to develop a multimedia training resource for the personnel of business incubators (BIs) and business innovation centres (BICs), in order to enhance their business performance.

These centres offer a range of support services that are specifically tailored to the needs of innovative, high growth ventures and therefore contribute significantly to "improving Europe's overall competitiveness, catalysing the entrepreneurial process, promoting regional economic development and accelerating SME growth and the innovation process." (Business Incubators: Decisive Factors for Success, DG Enterprise, 2001)

However, results from the Commission's Innovation Scoreboard 2001 confirm that, "The EU is under-performing significantly in these areas when compared to the US", and that, "the potential for greater use of these instruments [incubators] is significant and steps ought to be taken to encourage it." The project promoters believe that the most effective way of improving incubator performance is to increase the capacity of their personnel, enabling them to build on their general business experience and become expert in the areas of particular concern to incubatee companies. This need to enhance the management and practices of incubators and similar providers is confirmed by the recent Benchmarking of Business Incubators Report commissioned by DG Enterprise. Through I³, the project partners will be given an opportunity to jointly research best practice in the field of incubation and to explore the means by which such practice can be adopted by business incubators and other business support providers in Europe.

The Objective of the Training Needs Analysis (TNA) – to identify the training and support requirements of the personnel of BIs, BICs and Science and Technology Parks (STPs), and to identify existing training options for such personnel.

1. Methodology

During the first partner meeting in Galway (Ireland) it was agreed that the project should target the staff of BICs, Incubation Centres and STPs, etc. who assist High Potential Start-Ups (HPSUs) or the “top 5%” of incubatee companies.

As part of the Training Needs Analysis set out in the project application the following activities were to be undertaken:

- Interviews with 5 BIC / incubator managers in each country
- Focus groups with staff from 2 BIC’s in each country
- Interview with representatives of BIC / incubator networks
- Interview with a government agency (representative) in each country
- 80 BIC/Incubator client companies to be consulted
- Desk research.

These targets were discussed at the first partner meeting and arising from the meeting it was agreed that the following tasks would be undertaken:

1. Each partner will interview five (5) BIC / Incubator / Enterprise Centre Managers (Ireland, Lithuania, Greece, Spain, Northern Ireland (UK), with EBN & EBAN to contact centre managers in a number of countries. This will result in:
 - 5 Country Specific TNA Reports
 - 1 EU-wide TNA Report
2. Interviews with high potential SME’s (incubatee companies) would also take place. The following breakdown for SME interviews was agreed with each partner agreeing to secure the following:

WESTBIC	20
Kaunas	15
Omagh	15
Others	6 each
3. EBN would make contact with representatives of the various BIC Associations in each of the partner countries.

4. Each partner would interview a representative of a Government Agency responsible for the promotion of Innovation in their respective countries.
5. Focus groups with staff from two BIs/BIC's in each country would take place based on the following breakdown:

WESTBIC	2 Focus Groups
Kaunas	1 Focus Group
I de E	1 Focus Group
Atlantis	1 Focus Group
Omagh & Initiative	Minimum of one and possibly two Focus Groups

6. Desk Research

For the purpose of securing this information four different questionnaires were developed, including:

- 1) a questionnaire for staff of business incubators/ business innovation centres/ science and technology parks;
- 2) a questionnaire for High-Potential SMEs (HPSUs);
- 3) a questionnaire for focus groups and
- 4) a questionnaire for governmental agencies which deal with innovation, technology and business support issues.

For each questionnaire reporting templates were developed.

Partners agreed that the research would take place on a person-to-person basis where possible. Where this was not possible targets were sent a copy of the questionnaire by e-mail, followed up with a telephone call.

The main beneficiaries of the training material, which is to be developed based on the results of the TNA report, are managers of BICs, BIs and other HPSU support institutions. Direct clients (HPSUs, SMEs) of these business support centre managers will also be impacted by the content of the material. Therefore, partners agreed to use the following weighting / rating system for analysis and interpretation of the data:

- 40% weight was applied for results from BICs, BIs, STPs managers;
- 30% weight was applied for results from Focus groups;
- 20% weight was applied for results from SMEs;
- 10% weight was applied for results from Agency / Government representatives.

Based on these weighting / rating indexes, each partner identified a range of topics to be included and incorporated into the training material and then the topics most in demand were identified for inclusion in the final content of the training material.

2. Findings

The main objective of the Training Needs Analysis is to identify specific training and information requirements of BI/ BIC/ STP personnel in providing assistance and support for HPSUs.

All data collected by the questionnaires was “close-ended” and organised into tables and charts.

2.1. The BI/ BIC Staff Questionnaire

The questionnaire was divided into 4 sections:

A) **Background** (personal background of a respondent and general background on the BI/ BIC (hereafter named – The Centre). The personal background section of the questionnaire aims to show the level of qualification and educational background the respondent holds.

- 88.6% of respondents have a university or college degree,
- 41.0% have a Masters degree/ MBA,
- 20.5% indicated having an executive development qualification,
- 4.3% have a vocational or technical training qualification.

These responses show that almost every second respondent has more than one qualification background.

The survey results have shown that the respondents have 4.6 years of work experience in the field of business incubation and business innovation support institutions.

A business and engineering educational background was most popular among Centre staff (39.0% and 33.3% respectively). An educational background in economics, accounting and law were also popular backgrounds among respondents (19.0%, 12.9% and 11.4% respectively).

Responses have shown that half of all centre staff have an additional educational background. (see Annex F).

The general background option intended to collect data on the operational background of the Centres.

- 57.1% of the Centres are not-for-profit organisations (NPO);
- 20.0% of the Centres were Companies limited by Guarantee;
- 8.6% of the Centres were private companies. However, this is not the case for in Greece and Lithuania where 87.5% are NPOs.
- 2.9% are Campus Companies. It should be noted that the latter form of legal status is used only in Ireland.

The questionnaire also included a question on the number of Centres in each partner country in order to identify the extent of possible pilot training courses or presentations even though the training resource is to be available to all European Centres.

Results show that the number of BIs/ BICs and STPs vary among partner countries. For example, Spain and Ireland have the highest number of BIs with 400 and 200 each. This number contrasts greatly with Greece and Lithuania who have 5 and 7. The number of BICs also varies within respective countries from 23 in Spain to 3 in Greece and 0 in Lithuania. With regards to STPs numbers also differ between countries, for example, there are 7 STPs in Lithuania and 46 in

Spain. Therefore the total number of Centres in all partner countries is more than 1000.

Almost 57% of Centres indicated a fixed term tenancy as an option for exit/graduation policy in the Centres.

58.5% of the Centres target high-growth companies: from 40% in Lithuania to 80% in Ireland and Spain.

Table 1. Personal background

Centre's name	WESTBIC	ATLANTIS	EBN	EBAN	I de E	IED & OMAGH	KTC	Average
Qualification								
Vocational or Technical Training	0	0	0	0	0	30	0	4.3
University or College Degree	80	100	100	80	80	80	100	88.6
Master Degree / MBA	40	33.3	40	0	80	60	40	41.0
Executive Development	0	33.3	0	20	40	30	20	20.5
Educational Background								
Engineering	0	66.7	20	0	40	20	40	33.3
Business studies	40	0.0	40	40	60	60	40	39.0
Law	20	0.0	0	40	20	0	0	11.4
Accounting	20	0.0	0	20	40	10	0	12.9
Computing	0	0.0	0	0	0	20	0	2.9
Human Resources	20	0.0	0	0	0	20	0	5.7
Public administration	0	0.0	0	0	0	20	40	13.3
Finance	0	0.0	0	0	40	10	0	7.1
Economics	0	0.0	20	40	40	20	0	19.0
Other	0	33.3	20	0	0	50	0	11.9
Working period (in Centre)	5.4	5.7	6.1	3.4	4.5	7.5	4.2	4.6

Note: the results provided in the table above were acquired by project partners from the questionnaire they distributed in their respective countries.

B) Business Development Services.

In total, 83.3% of respondents provide in-house help with business basics and 12.8% provide help to provide external sources (see Annex F). In general, most training development is required in:

- Advice and assistance in manufacturing/ production issues (44.3%)
- New product development issues (41.4%),
- Technology commercialisation advice and assistance (36.7%) as well as in marketing advice and assistance (29.0%) and project management (27.1%) (see Annex F).

60% of BI/ BIC staff respondents in Ireland desire skills development in areas such as intellectual property management, assistance in accessing loans and technology commercialisation advice and assistance. In the Greek case, 67% of BI/ BIC staff require training and knowledge in supporting companies with Business Basics; 33% require staff training and additional knowledge in marketing advice and assistance, intellectual property management, assistance in accessing loans, new product development, and manufacturing/ production issues as well as formal and informal venture capital. All Lithuanian respondents require development in the following: technology commercialisation advice and assistance, assistance in project management, staff/ management team development and training. 80% of Lithuanian respondents require development in new product development advice and assistance as well as in advice and assistance in manufacturing/ production issues and taxation.

The table below shows the Index Values of BI/ BIC staff responses' *gathered by each partner*. These Index Values are derivative values of each partner's priority ranking multiplied by a percentage value of the *development required* column value as indicated by respondents during the TNA. An *Overall Index* value is calculated by calculating an average of *Index* values of all partners then multiplying it by the number of a frequency of appearance of the priority. An *Overall Rank* is numbered in descending order according to the *Overall Index* value.

Table 2. BIs/ BICs Staff Rankings of Business Development Services

Business Development Services	WESTBIC		ATLANTIS		EBN		EBAN		I de E		IED & Omagh		KTC		Overall	
	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank
Investor linkages (Venture Capitalists, Seed Capital Funds, etc.)	8,0	11			133,33	1	60,0	5			236,3	1			437,6	1
Technology commercialisation advice and assistance	108,0	1			22,22	6					38,6	9	227,3	2	396,1	2
Help with business basics			150,00	1			120,0	1			80,0	5			350,0	3
Advice and assistance on New Product Development	26,7	5	8,33	4	66,67	2	53,3	6			120,0	3	55,4	4	330,4	4
Project Management advice and assistance	13,3	8					53,3	7			6,0	15	250,0	1	322,7	5
Technology Transfer advice and assistance	10,0	9			33,33	5	20,0	13			180,0	2	34,3	8	277,6	6
Marketing advice and assistance	26,7	4	42,86	2			40,0	9	135,0	1	4,4	17			249,0	7
Intellectual property management	48,0	3			13,33	9					11,4	14	128,0	3	200,8	8
International trade assistance	22,9	7			38,10	3	8,9	16	20,0	2	60,0	7	8,0	9	157,8	9
Advice and assistance in Manufacturing/Production Issues	26,7	6	8,33	5	33,33	4	14,5	14	6,7	6	30,0	11	35,6	7	155,1	10
Assistance in accessing Loans	80,0	2					72,0	4							152,0	11
Links to Higher Education institutions							77,1	3	8,9	5	60,0	6			146,0	12
Accounting and financial management assistance							43,6	8			83,3	4			127,0	13
Advice and assistance on Taxation					22,22	7	6,7	17			56,3	8	40,0	6	125,1	14
Informal Venture Capital							106,7	2							106,7	15
Management/Staff development and training									16,0	3	22,5	12	50,0	5	88,5	16
Advice and assistance on Finance							26,7	11			38,6	10			65,2	17
Networking activities	4,0	12			16,67	8	26,7	10	11,4	4					58,8	18
Formal Venture Capital			22,22	3	11,11	10	20,0	12			5,0	16			58,3	19
General legal services	8,0	10					10,0	15	4,0	7	13,3	13			35,3	20
Other																

Monitoring / judging the progress of resident companies.

- 48.6% of BIs/ BICs consider that a business plan is necessary for entry to incubation/ enterprise support centres;
- 56.7% of all respondents highlight regular meetings as a tool for monitoring the progress of resident companies;
- 42.4% see job creation levels as the most appropriate monitoring tool;
- Consultations with experts (32.4%), new product development (29.0%), consultations with scientists/ university (17.1%) and turnover (16.7%) are considered less important in terms of monitoring. For graphical information see Annex F.

Influence of the Centre in assisting resident SMEs.

In general, business support Centres are most influential in supporting SME co-operation with Agencies and Authorities (3.7 out of 5) as well as supporting SME participation in training programmes (3.5). These centres are also influential in supporting SMEs to access loans and grant funds (3.4) as well as Stimulating innovations (3.2), networking with other centres (3.1) and co-operation with Chambers of Commerce (3.0). The centres are less influential in the areas of Technology transfer (2.8), supporting joint ventures and strategic alliances (2.6) and support in sourcing new clients (2.6). For graphical information see Annex F.

New services are planned to be provided to the clients of the Centre.

On average, only 18% of respondents indicated that their Centre is planning to provide additional services to client companies.

- C) **Links with the external organisations.** 87.6% of respondents from the selected countries indicate links with the governmental departments/ agencies, while 80.5% of BIs/ BICs indicate links with regional authorities. For graphical information see Annex F.

Factors, influencing co-operation with external organisations. 68.1% of BIs/ BICs indicated that regional aspects influenced their level of co-operation with external organisations. Political aims, policies and programmes, economic & scientific surroundings have been indicated by 45.7-51.4% of all respondents as

being influential in their level of co-operation with external agencies. For graphical information see Annex F.

- D) **Necessary skills acquisition.** 76.7% of BI/ BIC/ STP respondents indicate the Internet/ Web sources as an information source for acquiring business support / development skills. 66.7% of all BI/ BIC staff questioned indicates external training and reading of publications as the basic means for acquiring the skills necessary to provide incubation and innovation support to clients, while 57.1% indicate that in-house training provides the necessary skills. For graphical information see Annex F.

Multimedia Training Tool

A multimedia Training *tool* would be considered by most participants to be of great assistance in equipping staff with the necessary skills in providing incubation and innovation support to clients. 4 out of 5 respondents were in favour of a multimedia training tool.

Training tool preferences

55.2% of BIs/ BICs staff indicated a preference for an accredited formal training course as the format for the training tool and 44.8% would prefer an information resource.

The awareness on supports for SMEs development provided by the EU

This is comparatively high among the staff of BIs and BICs – 76.7% of all respondents are aware of the support provided by 5th and 6th Framework Programme, 74.8% - of Leonardo da Vinci Programme and 42.9% - of Phare Programme. 19.0% of all respondents are aware of other specific support programmes provided by EU.

Difficulties faced in provision of business development, incubation and innovation supports.

56.2% of all questioned BIs/ BICs indicate the lack of financial resources to be the major difficulty in providing support to client companies, while 31% indicate a lack of experience amongst staff/ management. This is the biggest difficulty faced by

the majority of Lithuanian and Greek Centres (80% and 66.7% respectively). For graphical information see Annex F.

2.2. SME Questionnaire

Partners distributed the questionnaire for SMEs in their respective countries and 69 responses were received. The results were interpreted by applying weighted average depending on the number of questionnaires received by respective partner. WESTBIC collected 20 questionnaires, 15 were collected by KTC, 11 – by Omagh Enterprise Company, 10 – by Initiative Economic Development, 7 – by Atlantis and 6 – by Instituto de Empresa.

The questionnaire is divided into 2 sections:

A) **Background** (personal background of a respondent and general background on the SME). Personal background collected the data on the level of qualification and educational background of respondents.

- 53.6% of respondents were owners while 27.5% - represented managers of the businesses surveyed.
- 36.2% of all respondents have a qualification in engineering,
- 27.5% - in computing,
- 26.1% - in business studies.

The survey results show that the respondents have, on average, 2.3 years of experience working in the field or running their own business. For graphical information on education and qualification background see Annex G.

The majority of questioned enterprises (58%) were private ones. This is the tendency in Ireland, Lithuania, and Europe in general. On average, responding organisations had been in existence for 2.7 years.

The majority of responding enterprises (53.6%) operate in the area of Information & Communication Technologies (ICT). For graphical information see Annex G.

B) According to the use of **Business development services**, the majority of all responding enterprises have sought marketing advice and assistance, networking activities as well as business basics were also commonly sought (respectively 59.4%, 56.5% and 53.6%), while in Ireland the supports most used by SMEs are assistance in networking activities (65% of all respondents), intellectual property

management (50%) and links to higher education institutions as well as marketing advice and assistance (40%). 42.9% of Greek enterprises avail of assistance in networking activities, 28.6% in help with business basics, advice and assistance on marketing, new product development, technology transfer and assistance. For graphical information see Annex G.

In evaluating service needs, 33.3% of enterprises indicate a requirement for general legal services, 23.2% expressed a need for supports in intellectual property management. Fewer companies require help with the business basics (7.2%), management/ staff development and service (7.2%), accessing formal venture capital (7.2%) and informal venture capital (5.8%). For graphical information see Annex G.

In evaluating the level of the *Centre's assistance in providing business development supports*, the highest rates were given the Spanish Centres for their supports to SMEs in co-operation with chambers of commerce and other authorities (4,0 out of 5) and support in participation at trade fairs and in training programmes (3.8), as well as Greek Centres (2), Irish companies appreciate the assistance provided by these centres in establishing relationships with new partners and co-operation with chambers of commerce and authorities (2.4), while Lithuanian Centres were given rate of 3.7 for networking with other centres. For graphical information see Annex G.

The table below shows which *Business Development Services* are mostly needed by SMEs. The *Total Need of the Service* percentage is an average mean calculated by applying the weighted average calculation method as outlined earlier.

Table 3. SMEs Rankings of the need of Business Development Services provided by the Centres

Business Development Service	WESTBIC	ATLANTIS	I de E	IED	Omagh	KTC	Average Need of the Service	Rank
	Need of the Service							
General legal services	25,0	71,43	33,3			73,3	33,3	1
Intellectual property management	20,0	28,57	16,7			60,0	23,2	2
Technology Transfer advice and assistance	5,0	42,86			9,1	53,3	18,8	3
Advice and assistance on Taxation	30,0	71,43	16,7				17,4	4
Advice and assistance in Manufacturing/Production Issues	10,0	14,29				60,0	17,4	5
Accounting and financial management assistance	25,0	57,14	16,7	10,0			15,9	6
Advice and assistance on New Product Development	15,0	14,29	16,7			40,0	15,9	7
Investor linkages (Venture Capitalists, Seed Capital Funds, etc.)	25,0	42,86	16,7		9,1		14,5	8
Marketing advice and assistance	30,0	28,57	16,7	10,0			14,5	9
Assistance in accessing Loans	20,0	57,14			9,1		13,0	10
Advice and assistance on Finance	25,0	42,86	16,7				13,0	11
Technology commercialisation advice and assistance	10,0	57,14	16,7		9,1		11,6	12
International trade assistance	20,0	14,29	16,7		18,2		11,6	13
Links to Higher Education institutions	25,0	28,57					10,1	14
Project Management advice and assistance	5,0	57,14				6,7	8,7	15
Networking activities	15,0	28,57			9,1		8,7	16
Management/Staff development and training	15,0	28,57					7,2	17
Help with business basics	15,0	14,29		10,0			7,2	18
Formal Venture Capital	15,0	14,29			9,1		7,2	19
Other	10,0	14,29	16,7				5,8	20
Informal Venture Capital	10,0	14,29			9,1		5,8	21

2.3. Focus Group Questionnaire

Interviews with Focus groups with staff from 2 (two) BIs/BICs in each country took place based on the following breakdown: WESTBIC – 2 (two) Focus Groups, KTC, Instituto de Empresa, Atlantis and Omagh Enterprise – 1 (one) Focus Group each.

The questionnaire was divided into 4 sections.

- 1) **Influence of Bis, BICs, STPs in assisting resident SMEs.** In general, the focus groups have indicated that the major development needs of resident SMEs include the establishing of R&D facilities (3.6), export market development (3.2), accessing formal and informal capital, improving management capacity and stimulating innovations (3.0). The major areas for development in Irish Centres include assistance in participation in training programmes, co-operation with chambers of commerce and other agencies and authorities (3.0). In Greece the situation is slightly different with improvement in management capacity and production issues, export market and new product development (4.0) indicated as areas where supports are required. According to the Lithuanian focus group assistance in establishing R&D facilities needs development (5.0), while Spanish Centres indicate a need for export market development (5.0) as well as in support in researching new markets, participation in training programmes, networking with other centres and stimulating innovations. For graphical information see Annex H.
- 2) Regarding **Business Development Services**, help with the business basics is used on 100% basis in each selected country. General legal services, intellectual property management, management/ staff development and training services, assistance in new product development and some others are also used on 100% basis (see Annex H).

The most development is needed in advice and assistance in new product development and technology commercialisation (3.6 out of 5) as well as in intellectual property management (3.4) and technology transfer advice and assistance (3.2). For graphical information see Annex H.

3) 3.3 out of 5 respondents were positive in terms of the need for a multimedia **Training tool**. 78.6% of all focus group respondents would prefer the accredited formal training course, while the rest 21.4% would prefer information resource (see Annex H). 100% of Spanish, UK and Lithuanian respondents express preference to accredited formal training course, and contrarily, Irish respondents would prefer information resource (57%). Greek respondents would equally prefer accredited formal training course and information resource.

The table below shows an opinion of focus groups staff with average response values and ranking of *Business Development Services* which are most required.

Table 4. Focus Groups Rankings of Business Development Services to be developed.

Business Development Service	WESTBIC	ATLANTIS	I de E	Omagh	KTC	Average	Rank
	Needs to be developed						
Advice and assistance on New Product Development	3,0	5,0	4,0	3,0	3,0	3,6	1
Technology commercialisation advice and assistance	3,0	5,0	3,0	3,0	4,0	3,6	2
Intellectual property management	3,0	4,0	3,0	3,0	4,0	3,4	3
Technology Transfer advice and assistance	3,0	5,0	2,0	2,0	4,0	3,2	4
Networking activities	4,0	5,0	1,0	3,0	1,0	2,8	5
Accounting and financial management assistance	4,0	0,0	4,0	2,0	2,0	2,4	6
General legal services	4,0	2,0	3,0	1,0	2,0	2,4	7
Management/ Staff development and training	2,0	3,0	2,0	3,0	2,0	2,4	8
Advice and assistance on Finance	4,0	0,0	4,0	2,0	2,0	2,4	9
Help with business basics	3,0	3,0	3,0	1,0	1,0	2,2	10
Marketing advice and assistance	3,0	0,0	5,0	2,0	1,0	2,2	11
Assistance in accessing Loans	4,0	0,0	4,0	3,0	0,0	2,2	12
Investor linkages (Venture Capitalists, Seed Capital Funds, etc.)	4,0	4,0	2,0	1,0	0,0	2,2	13
Links to Higher Education institutions	4,0	3,0	2,0	1,0	1,0	2,2	14
Advice and assistance in Manufacturing/Production Issues	2,0	0,0	2,0	3,0	3,0	2,0	15
Project Management advice and assistance	1,0	0,0	3,0	2,0	3,0	1,8	16
Formal Venture Capital	4,0	0,0	3,0	1,0	0,0	1,6	17
Advice and assistance on Taxation	2,0	0,0	2,0	2,0	2,0	1,6	18
Informal Venture Capital	4,0	0,0	0,0	2,0	0,0	1,2	19
International trade assistance	2,0	0,0	1,0	2,0	0,0	1,0	20
Other	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	21

2.4. Agency questionnaire

This questionnaire was designed for government or agency representatives working in the field of business development and innovation promotion. Four representatives from Ireland, Greece, UK and Lithuania were interviewed. EBAN also has interviewed seven representatives from all around Europe.

According to the results collected from all partners, there is an average of 9.5 BIs, 4.1 BICs and 3.7 STPs in all countries in Europe. There are also approximately 45.3 enterprise centres. However, this does not correlate with the study in Ireland (168) which has almost three times the average number of enterprise centres (see Annex I).

Regarding the **influence of the Centre in assisting resident SMEs**, agencies questioned rated Centre supports in assisting SMEs to participate in training programmes as being quite high (3.7) and co-operation with other agencies and authorities (3.6) with networking with other centres at (3.4). Services such as the improvement of production processes, support in researching new markets and supporting joint ventures and strategic alliances are rated as being low at (2.0 and 2.1) (see Annex I).

The majority of Agencies would prefer to see an information resource tool (60%) as opposed to an accredited formal training tool (40%). However, the agency representatives consider a training tool to be of great assistance for BIs/ BICs staff in providing them with the necessary skills to support their clients (3.8 out of 5). (see Annex I).

100% of Agencies indicate lack of skills/knowledge amongst BIs/ BICs staff / management as the biggest difficulty that Centres face in providing business development, incubation and innovation supports to their clients, lack of experience (60%) and lack of financial resources (40%) are mentioned as well, while only 20% of government and agencies representatives consider the lack of appropriate information as a factor which influence the quality of support provided. (see Annex I).

2.5. Desk Research

In conjunction with the TNA survey, desk research was also conducted. This research consisted of two parts:

- Desk research carried out by all partners in their respective countries,
- Desk research to review and examine of relevant training mechanisms in the USA and Europe.

The objective of desk research is to identify the current situation in business development support services in BIs/ BICs their current processes, existing training materials in the field as well as existing national or regional SME support programmes based on established business incubation infrastructures.

2.5.1. Definition of Business Incubation

Business Incubation can have several definitions and approaches. According to the National Business Incubators Association (NBIA) in the US, “Business incubation catalyzes the process of starting and growing companies, providing entrepreneurs with the expertise, networks and tools they need to make their ventures successful. Incubation programs diversify economies, commercialize technologies, create jobs and build wealth.”

In Europe, the EC Business and Innovation Centres – EC-BICs – are the only EC – European Commission – recognised quality approved incubator model. The EC BICs are support organisations for innovative small and medium-sized business and entrepreneurs. Operating in the public interest, they are set up by the principal economic operators in an area or region, in order to offer a range of integrated guidance and support services for projects carried out by innovative SMEs, thereby contributing to regional and local development. The BICs are grouped together within the European BIC Network (EBN).

Incubators are generally characterized by some relevant features, which generally include:

- a managed work space providing shared facilities, advisory, training and
- financial services, and a nurturing environment for tenant companies;

- a small management team with core competencies;
- selection of start-up companies entering the incubator, - 20 to 25 companies on average, generally expected to graduate after 3 years.

Incubator models may vary according to:

- their mandate (for-profit or not- for-profit)
- the type of sponsorship they have (public – private – mixed)
- their focus (mixed-use – niche). The most frequent types of niche incubators are related to technology (technology incubators) and bio-technology (bio-incubators). More recently, and especially in the U.S., a new generation of dot.com incubators emerged, although their number considerably decreased after the so-called ‘internet bubble’ in early 2000.

Incubation programs may also have a wide range of goals, including:

- economic development and generation of new jobs;
- marketing of research investments;
- property venture/real estate development;
- creation of entrepreneurship in transition economies;
- opportunities for national immigrants and nationals graduating abroad;
- development of export production.

2.5.2. Partners Desk Research

Each partner was asked to provide information on the following points for each respective country (see annex E).

A description of business incubation varies from country to country, but, in general, it is described as a support programme that stimulates faster development of new businesses by providing administrative, managerial and infrastructural environment for such businesses. Business incubators provide a set of facilities - physical space, shared services, business and legal advice, and financial inputs – to facilitate their creation and assist them until “graduation”, when they have the capacity to “survive” in the outside competitive environment.

The services that are mainly offered by Business Incubators are:

- Initial Capital Funding,
- Space in the Incubator, under flexible and economically accessible conditions, providing also the ability for further extension,
- Common services for all incubatee companies, including secretariat and common office equipment,
- Management assistance and provision of advice,
- Regular contact with technical support companies,
- Networking services (entrepreneurial interrelations, interaction and exchange of ideas),
- Further support and invigoration services (for later stages)

BICs offer a package of specialised services to start-up and fledgling companies. These include providing information and advice on new product development, marketing new technologies, general management, organisational development, commercialisation, financing, business co-operation and internationalisation.

Incubation programmes have various objectives in different countries. Depending on the *initiator* of the programme, business incubation goals are:

- development of the economy,
- generation of new jobs,
- promotion of industrial regeneration
- increase economic progress in the local community and country-wide
- accelerating the start-up of new businesses and help to maximise their growth potential in a way that is more difficult for alternative SMEs support structures to achieve,
- profit,
- technology transfer and commercialisation,
- revitalisation of disadvantaged or rejuvenated zones,
- diversification of the industrial profile,
- promotion of certain types of activity,
- promotion of certain population groups.

The business incubators survey and research in partner countries revealed that there is a lack of comprehensive information on business incubation processes in the countries. Most of the information which is available is statistical information about the numbers of business incubators and business innovation centres, number of tenant companies and their field of activities, number of employees as well as jobs generated.

Apart from this, there is little research information on business incubation available, the most recognisable factor and benefit of incubation infrastructures is a success rate of incubatee companies. This number varies from country to country, but experience shows that the percentage of success amongst incubators' clients is far higher than for start-up enterprises which develop outside of incubator facilities. In Lithuania, for instance, success rate in business incubators reaches 80-85% while the average success rate for start-ups outside of Lithuanian incubators is 15-20%.

The average number of jobs in incubatee companies is 8-10. The research indicated that BIs employ up to 4-5 administration and management staff and here is an average of 20-40 client companies located in the BIs.

Approximately 50% of BIs/ BICs/ STPs have entrance and graduation policies for tenant companies. In some countries the policy is defined by national strategies. However, some criteria are defined by the Centres independently.

In general, there were no barriers identified to business incubation development in partner countries. On the contrary, business incubators are part of national policies in many countries and are supported by national governments or SMEs support institutions.

Lack of management experience, lack of financing as well as a lack of awareness on available business incubation programmes are main internal barriers for qualitative and infrastructural development of incubation system.

2.5.3. Review and examination of relevant training mechanisms in the USA and Europe

The research of relevant training mechanisms and programmes in business incubation revealed that there are a lot of programmes designed to assist incubatee companies. The content of such programmes depends on the goals which incubators strive to reach and the incubators themselves. For instance, if the main goal of the incubator is job creation in a region where social-economic problems of unemployment are main concern, the training programmes are oriented to business development and entrepreneurship. If the incubation centre is oriented towards innovation and technology development, for example, in science and technology parks, then training programmes are designed to assist innovative and technology oriented start-ups and spin-offs.

However, the research revealed that is quite difficult to find a training programme which would be oriented to BIs/ BICs/ STPs managers and staff to increase their capacity and skills to assist starting businesses and support them in development. The lack of training programmes in assisting start-ups and spin-offs especially is appreciable in the sector of innovations and technology transfer.

A prominent **International Business Incubator (IBI)** in Silicon Valley (USA) as an incubation training programme offers several information, training, and consulting programs designed to assist international audiences in effectively evaluating and planning business incubator services in their communities.

Training Services. The IBI offers a range of information and training programs on business incubation. These may range from a brief discussion and tour of the IBI to an intensive two-week training session. The programs levels are listed below.

- *Introduction to Incubation* (2 or 4 hour programme): history of the development of business incubators; forms of business incubators; purposes of creating incubators; how they can be created; how they can be staffed; impacts on new businesses and SME's; impact on industries and communities; requirements for community and political leadership; costs and how they can be financed

- *Company Visit* (1 to 2 days). The visit includes discussions and seminars with local experts and professionals on business incubation issues, including legal, financial, political, and venture capital concerns.
- *Management / Developer Training* (20 to 24 hour programmes). The training programme includes: uses either a case study or a real situation for evaluating a community and its business incubator potential; encourages skills in planning, collaboration, evaluation, and financial management necessary to create a viable incubator project; Includes review of the process of site selection, team selection, sizing the incubator, developing a tenant selection focus, business plan, and staff selection; Includes visit to a potential incubator site (existing building) and evaluation of costs and problems. Appropriate for a proposed development team or those who will appoint them (university, government, industry, and financial institutions).
- *Comprehensive Business Incubation Training* (1 to 2 week programme). This program is designed to introduce delegations to all aspects of incubator development and management in the context of community strengths and needs. U.S., California, and European projects are used as illustrations.

Training material for managers of business incubators was developed in Europe. It was prepared with the support of European Commission Leonardo da Vinci programme project *Management of Business Incubators*. Project partners were Kaunas University of Technology (Lithuania), Aachen Technology Centre (Germany), Alytus Business College (Lithuania), ATLANTIS Consulting S.A. (Greece), Business and Innovation Center in Northern Seeland (Denmark), Latvia Technology Park (Latvia), Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Lithuania (Lithuania), Telsiai County Governor Administration (Lithuania). The material focuses on problems of establishment of business incubators and provides guidance for the start-up and operation of the infrastructure. It also provides some basic steps for support of innovations and technology transfer but does not analyse these issues in depth.

One of most recognisable and highly evaluated incubation programmes in Europe is the **Israeli** incubation model. The model is oriented to innovation and technology development and is described as "...support organizations that give fledgling

entrepreneurs - immigrants and non-immigrants - an opportunity to develop their innovative technological ideas and set up new businesses in order to commercialize them". The incubator program is applied in all parts of the country, under the guidance and with the support of the Office of the Chief Scientist of the Ministry of Industry and Trade. The program was first implemented in 1991, when immigration from the former Soviet Union had reached its peak.

The technological incubator in Israel is an autonomous non-profit corporation. It is run and managed by a professional salaried director, a policymaking management, and a projects committee that selects and monitors projects. The latter two governing institutions are composed of professionals of the highest calibre from industry, business, and science-corporate and industrial executives, R&D managers in high-tech enterprises, professors, heads of faculty in research institutes, and public figures. The incubator is structured to permit ten to fifteen R&D projects to run simultaneously, and is organized and equipped to support the projects in all respects during their stay.

Functions of the Incubator. The principal purpose of the technological incubator is to help entrepreneurs successfully implement and commercialize their projects.

For this purpose, the incubator provides the following services:

1. Assistance in determining the technological and marketing applicability of the idea and drawing up an R&D plan;
2. Assistance in obtaining the financial resources needed to carry out the project;
3. Assistance in forming and organizing an R&D team;
4. Professional and administrative counseling, guidance, and supervision;
5. Secretarial and administrative services, maintenance, procurements, accounting, and legal advice;
6. Assistance in raising capital and preparing for marketing.

Acceptance criteria: One of the main acceptance criteria is an R&D project based on an innovative technological idea that aims to develop a product with export marketing potential. A fledgling entrepreneur with a project idea is allowed to stay for approximately two years in the incubator. During this time, the entrepreneur should carry his/her idea to a stage of explicit product definition and proven technological and marketing feasibility. There should be a prototype or working model and an orderly

business plan. The project should be ready for commercial investment and/or a strategic partner who is an expert in the field.

After the two-year period, entrepreneurs should be able to continue on their own if necessary, availing themselves of regular channels of State support and outside investments. The budget for the projects is up to \$350,000 over two years and 85% of approved budget is available as a grant from the State

There are **special requirements** for the projects:

- Initial ownership of the project shall be as stipulated by the rules of the steering committee.
- The State shall be reimbursed up to the sum of its grant through royalties on sales, pursuant to the rules of the steering committee.
- The new product shall be manufactured in Israel.

Immediately upon entering the incubator, the project is registered as a limited-liability company and learns to operate as a commercial venture. An agreement is signed between the project developers and the incubator management to stipulate the developers' rights and to ensure management's ability to attain its goals and meet its commitments to the State.

Fields of Activity. Generally speaking, activity takes place in all fields of R&D. There are no predetermined fields of specialization at the incubators. Some incubators - especially those located near research institutes - prefer projects that can benefit from the technological infrastructures available to them. A few incubators have chosen a specialization; for example, there is a Software Incubator. Some of the incubators are gradually becoming more specialized, after several projects in shared disciplines have matured there.

There are 23 technological incubators in Israel today. Approximately 200 projects are being carried out in the technological incubators. By the end of 2001, 735 projects had left the incubators (in addition to the 200 that remained). Of these "graduates," 51 percent have continued to operate and 49 percent have been discontinued.

The Conclusions

As mentioned in the introduction, the TNA has 2 main objectives:

- to identify the training and support requirements of the personnel of business incubators (BIs) and business & innovation centres (BICs),
- to identify existing training options for such personnel.

On the basis of data collected the following conclusions may be drawn:

1. The purpose of the project, in the framework within which the TNA was conducted, is not to identify basic training needs, but intends to develop a training tool for BI/ BIC staff working with High-Potential Start-ups. Therefore, *Business Development Services* such as *Help with Business Basics* and *Marketing Advice and Assistance* should be eliminated from the final list of Training tool topics. There are many comprehensive training material sources available on these topics and it would not be beneficial to *reinvent the wheel*.
2. To identify priority rankings of *Business Development Services* the data from all questionnaires was analysed separately by target groups and then gathered into a general table. The data was then analysed by applying weighted averages. The priority rankings after completion of the analysis are provided in the table below.

Topics such as *General Legal Services*, *Accounting and Financial Management assistance* are also difficult to tailor to the needs of Europe as a whole as legal and accounting aspects are different in all countries and the project itself cannot cater for such a general situation. However, general information on funding issues for start-ups in the partner countries should be provided as a separate information section in the website, under the heading “Funding opportunities”. The section will include links to the national funding agencies and institutions in the respective partner countries.

Topics such as *Technology Transfer Advice and Assistance* and *Technology Commercialisation Advice and Assistance* cover similar areas and may be covered by one separate topic *Technology Transfer and Commercialisation*.

Regarding *Investor linkages*, all partners will have to provide tools and ways to approach investors in their respective countries. *Formal* and *Informal Venture Capital* should be addressed in the same way because, for instance, there are no available venture capital funds in Lithuania, however, there are other means of applying for various funds. As outlined there will be a section on funding issues for start-ups in the partner countries included as a separate information section on the training website

Table 5. Overall priority rankings of Business Development Services

Business Development Service	Rankings			Overall	
	BI/ BIC	SMEs	Focus Group	Index	Rank
Advice and assistance on New Product Development	4	7	1	3,67	1
Technology commercialisation advice and assistance	2	12	2	4,22	2
Technology Transfer advice and assistance	6	3	4	4,67	3
Intellectual property management	8	2	3	5,00	4
Investor linkages (Venture Capitalists, Seed Capital Funds, etc.)	1	8	13	6,56	5
Help with business basics	3	18	10	8,67	6
Marketing advice and assistance	7	9	11	8,78	7
Accounting and financial management assistance	13	6	6	9,11	8
Advice and assistance in Manufacturing/Production Issues	10	5	15	10,56	9
Project Management advice and assistance	5	15	16	10,89	10
Assistance in accessing Loans	11	10	12	11,11	11
General legal services	20	1	7	11,44	12
Advice and assistance on Finance	17	11	9	13,00	13
Links to Higher Education institutions	12	14	14	13,11	14
Advice and assistance on Taxation	14	4	18	13,11	15
Networking activities	18	16	5	13,22	16
Management/Staff development and training	16	17	8	13,56	17
International trade assistance	9	13	20	13,56	18
Informal Venture Capital	15	21	19	17,67	19
Formal Venture Capital	19	19	17	18,33	20
Other	21	20	21	20,78	21

Taking into account all the data collected and analysed, the Top 5 topics for the training tool utility are the following:

- 1) Advice and assistance on New Product Development;
 - 2) Technology Transfer and Commercialisation advice and assistance;
 - 3) Intellectual property management;
 - 4) Advice and assistance in Manufacturing/Production Issues;
 - 5) Project Management advice and assistance.
3. There was a concern amongst the project partners about the training tool utility preferred format. The survey identified the following:

Table 6. Training Tool Preferences

	BIs/ BICs	Focus Group	Government Agencies	Weighted Average
Accredited Formal Training Course	55,2	78,6	40,0	62,1
Information Resource	44,8	21,4	60,0	37,9

The data shows that 2/3 (two out of three) of respondents would prefer the *Accredited Formal Training Course* instead of *Information Resource*. The survey results also maintain that 100% of all BI/ BIC staff are using the internet as a primary source for their daily activities. Therefore, an on-line training tool is the most appropriate way to target the audience.

4. Our desk research demonstrates that a lot of incubation training programmes do exist. These programmes are primarily designed for incubatee companies. However, there is no comprehensive training material or programme for BI/ BIC managers, which would increase their ability and quality of business support services to their client companies. The result of the I³ project – Web-based Training Tool – should be highly beneficial for all users and indirectly for HPSUs.

APPENDICES

A. BI/ BIC/ STP Questionnaire

I³ – Innovation and Incubation Initiative

- Training Needs Analysis Survey -

This Questionnaire forms part of a project funded by the Leonardo da Vinci Programme entitled “I³ – Innovation and Incubation Initiative”. This is a project which aims to identify training needs of, and develop a comprehensive training tool for, the management and staff of Business & Innovation Centres’ and Business Incubators’ (hereafter named – The Centre) in order to improve their ability to provide services to high-potential, high-growth businesses. The end product will be an interactive training tool, customised to the needs of the user and delivered via the internet.

To develop the abovementioned tool we have prepared this questionnaire to assess the current situation in European innovation and incubation environment and to identify knowledge and information gaps amongst management and staff involved in the provision of innovation and incubation supports.

In order to ensure the success of this project we would greatly appreciate your assistance in completing the following questionnaire. Confidentiality is assured and the information will be used for the purpose of summation and learning tool development only.

Please complete and return the questionnaire by the [date], 2003 to [name of organisation] for the attention of [name of contact person] or by e-mail [e-mail address]

A. BACKGROUND**A1. Personal Background**

1. Name of respondent (optional) _____

2. Job Title / Position in the Centre _____

3. Qualifications:

	Year of Attainment	Title of Course	
Vocational or Technical Training	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
University or College Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Master Degree / MBA	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Executive Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____

4. Educational background:

Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/>	Accounting	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public administration	<input type="checkbox"/>
Business studies	<input type="checkbox"/>	Computing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Finance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Law	<input type="checkbox"/>	Human Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	Economics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)		_____			

5. How long have you worked in the Centre? _____

A2. Centre Background

6. Official name of the Centre _____

7. Legal Status of the Centre

Non-Profit Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Private Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-Governmental Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Company Limited by Guarantee	<input type="checkbox"/>
Governmental Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campus Company	<input type="checkbox"/>
Semi-state Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify)	_____

8. Address of the Centre

Street _____

Postal code _____
 Country _____
 Phone _____
 e-mail _____
 Number of staff _____

City _____
 Fax _____
 Web _____

9. How many Innovation / Incubation centres are there in your country?

Business Incubators
 Business Innovation Centres
 Science and Technology Parks
 Enterprise Centres

10. Management / Staff of the Centre (please give NAME, QUALIFICATIONS, POSITION in the Centre)

Name	Qualifications (e.g. Degree in Engineering, MSc in..., PhD in...)	Position in the Centre
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
...		
...		

11. Do you have an exit / graduation policy for companies in the Centre? Yes No

If yes, does it relate to:

Fixed Term tenancy Employment levels
 Annual Turnover Other (please specify) _____

12. Does your Centre actively target High-Growth Companies? Yes No

If yes, please detail: _____

B. SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE CENTRE

1. Please indicate in the table below if your Centre provides the listed service (either in-house or via external sources); Please indicate if this is a service area in which your staff require training and development; and finally in the third column please rank the top 5 services in order of priority in which you feel staff training and development is most required.

Business Development Services	Availability (✓)		Area requiring training and development (✓)	Priority Ranking (Rank top 5 where 1=most required)
	In-house	External		
Help with business basics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marketing advice and assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accounting and financial management assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General legal services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intellectual property management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistance in accessing Loans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Management/Staff development and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Investor linkages (Venture Capitalists, Seed Capital Funds, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice and assistance on New Product Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice and assistance in Manufacturing/Production Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Networking activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Technology commercialisation advice and assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Links to Higher Education institutions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
International trade assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Formal Venture Capital	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Informal Venture Capital	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Technology Transfer advice and assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project Management advice and assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice and assistance on Taxation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice and assistance on Finance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. How do you monitor / judge the progress of resident companies (please tick):

A Business plan is necessary for entry to the Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regular meetings to review business plan with clients	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consultation with experts	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consultation with scientists / university	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job creation levels	<input type="checkbox"/>
New Product Development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Turnover	<input type="checkbox"/>
No monitoring procedures – assistance is provided on request	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. How influential is your Centre in assisting resident SMEs in the following areas: (please evaluate from 1 to 5, where 1=minor influence, 5=major influence)

	Minor influence		Major influence		
	1	2	3	4	5
Support in sourcing new clients					
Support in researching new markets					
Participation in training programmes					
Networking with other centres					
Co-operation with Chambers of Commerce					
Co-operation with other Agencies and authorities					
Accessing formal and informal venture capital					
Accessing loans and grant funds					
Technology transfer					
Supporting Joint Ventures and Strategic Alliances					
New Product Development					
Improving Production Processes					
Improving Management Capacity					
Stimulating Innovation					
Export Market Development					
Establishing R&D facilities					
Other (please specify below)					

4. Do you plan to provide new services to clients of the Centre:

Consultancy services (please specify below)

Additional services (please specify below)

Other (please specify below)

5. In your opinion, what additional services (apart from those outlined above) are needed in the Centre (please specify)

C. CO-OPERATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

1. Indicate those external organisations with which you have links (please tick):

Regional authorities (County Councils / Corporations)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Industry & Service companies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chamber of Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consultants & experts	<input type="checkbox"/>
Patent and Trademark Attorneys	<input type="checkbox"/>	Banks and / or credit organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scientists, Third Level and Research institutions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Venture Capitalists	<input type="checkbox"/>
Government Departments / Agencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Development Organisations (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional Associations (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Factors influencing co-operation with external organisations (please tick):

Regional aspects	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aims of regional development	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Political aims and programmes	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic & scientific surroundings	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

D. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING NEEDS OF CENTRE STAFF/MANAGEMENT

1. How do Centre staff / management acquire the skills necessary to provide incubation and innovation support to clients? (please tick)

In-house training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal research (please tick below)	<input type="checkbox"/>
External training (please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	- read publications	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	- Internet / Web sources	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>		

2. How beneficial would a training tool on identifying, recruiting and supporting High-Growth Companies be? (Rank from 1 to 5 where 1 is of No Benefit and 5 is Highly Beneficial)

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Please tick which training tool you prefer?

Accredited Formal Training Course	<input type="checkbox"/>	Information Resource	<input type="checkbox"/>
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4. Are you aware of the supports provided by the EU for SMEs development? (please tick)

YES NO

If YES please specify

5 th and 6 th Framework Programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	Phare Programme	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leonardo da Vinci Programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>
		_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. What are the biggest difficulties you face in providing business development, incubation and innovation supports to clients? (please mark)

Lack of experience amongst staff / management	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lack of financial resources	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of skills/knowledge amongst staff / management	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of appropriate information		_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Are there any additional comments you wish to make:

B. SME Questionnaire



I³ – Innovation and Incubation Initiative
- Training Needs Analysis Survey -

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To develop the abovementioned tool we have prepared this questionnaire to assess the current situation in European innovation and incubation environment and to identify knowledge and information gaps amongst management and staff involved in the provision of innovation and incubation supports.

In order to ensure the success of this project we would greatly appreciate your assistance in completing the following questionnaire. Confidentiality is assured and the information will be used for the purpose of summation and learning tool development only.

Please complete and return the questionnaire by the [date], 2003 to [name of organisation] to attention of [name of contact person] or by e-mail [e-mail address]

A. Background

A1. Personal Background

1. Name of respondent (optional) _____

2. Job Title / Position in the company (please tick):

Owner Other (please specify below) _____

Manager _____

3. Educational background:

Engineering <input type="checkbox"/>	Accounting <input type="checkbox"/>	Public administration <input type="checkbox"/>
Business studies <input type="checkbox"/>	Computing <input type="checkbox"/>	Finance <input type="checkbox"/>
Law <input type="checkbox"/>	Human Resources <input type="checkbox"/>	Economics <input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please specify) _____

A2. Company Background

4. Name of the Company _____

5. Legal Status of the Company

Personal (private)

Joint-stock company Other (please specify) _____

6. For how long does your Company operates at the Centre _____

7. When was your business established: _____

8. Which High-Tech sector does your Company belong to? (please tick)			
Advanced materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	Defence	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information & Communication Technologies	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mechatronics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research & Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify below):	<input type="checkbox"/>
Biotechnology	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

B. SERVICES NEEDED BY THE COMPANY

1. Please indicate in the table below if your Company uses the listed service provided by the Centre; Evaluate which of the services your Company currently receive from the Centre is most beneficial (where 1 = least beneficial, 5 = most beneficial); and finally in the third column please mark if the service is not available at the Centre but it would be useful for your Company.

Business Assistance Services	Yes (✓)	Evaluation from 1 to 5	Need of the service (✓)
Help with business basics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marketing advice and assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accounting and financial management assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General legal services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intellectual property management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistance in accessing Loans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Management/Staff development and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Investor linkages (Venture Capitalists, Seed Capital Funds, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice and assistance on New Product Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice and assistance in Manufacturing/Production Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Networking activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Technology commercialisation advice and assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Links to Higher Education institutions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
International trade assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Formal Venture Capital	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Informal Venture Capital	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Technology Transfer advice and assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project Management advice and assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice and assistance on Taxation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice and assistance on Finance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. How much assistance does the Centre provide your Company in relation to the following? (where 1 = Little assistance, 5 = Great assistance)

	Little assistance		Great assistance
		1 2 3 4 5	
Establishing relationships with new partners		<input type="text"/>	
Support in searching new clients		<input type="text"/>	
Support in searching new markets		<input type="text"/>	
Participation in fairs and training programmes		<input type="text"/>	
Networking with other centres		<input type="text"/>	
Co-operation with chambers and authorities		<input type="text"/>	
Other (please specify below)		<input type="text"/>	
_____		<input type="text"/>	
_____		<input type="text"/>	

3. What additional services in your opinion are needed for your Company from the Centre apart from all the above (please specify)

4. Do you have knowledge on support rendered by the EU for SMEs development? (please mark)

YES

NO

If YES please specify

5th and 6th Framework Programme

Phare Programme

Leonardo da Vinci Programme

Other (please specify below)

5. Any additional comments you wish to make:

C. Focus Group Questionnaire



I³ – Innovation and Incubation Initiative
- Training Needs Analysis Survey -
 Focus group questionnaire

This Questionnaire forms part of a project funded by the Leonardo da Vinci Programme entitled “I³ – Innovation and Incubation Initiative”. This is a project which aims to identify training needs of, and develop a comprehensive training tool for, the management and staff of Business & Innovation Centres’ and Business Incubators’ (hereafter named – The Centre) in order to improve their ability to provide services to high-potential, high-growth businesses. The end product will be an interactive training tool, customised to the needs of the user and delivered via the internet.

To develop the abovementioned tool we have prepared this questionnaire to assess the current situation in European innovation and incubation environment and to identify knowledge and information gaps amongst management and staff involved in the provision of innovation and incubation supports.

In order to ensure the success of this project we would greatly appreciate your assistance in completing the following questionnaire. Confidentiality is assured and the information will be used for the purpose of summation and learning tool development only.

1. What do you perceive as your deficiencies when providing business development support to emerging high-growth incubate enterprises? (please evaluate from 1 to 5, where 1=does not need development, 5=needs to be developed)

	Minor influence	1	2	3	4	5	Major influence
Support in sourcing new clients			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Support in researching new markets			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Participation in training programmes			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Networking with other centres			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Co-operation with Chambers of Commerce			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Co-operation with other Agencies and authorities			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Accessing formal and informal venture capital			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Accessing loans and grant funds			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Technology transfer			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Supporting Joint Ventures and Strategic Alliances			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
New Product Development			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Improving Production Processes			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Improving Management Capacity			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Stimulating Innovation			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Export Market Development			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Establishing R&D facilities			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Other (please specify below)			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
_____			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
_____			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	

2. What areas / issues do incubate companies most seek advice on? Please, tick if applicable and rank a frequency of address to the area / issue from 1 to 5 (where 1=rarely, 5=very frequently)

Business Development Services	(✓)	Frequency of address (where 1=rarely, 5=very frequently)
Help with business basics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marketing advice and assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accounting and financial management assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General legal services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intellectual property management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistance in accessing Loans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Management / Staff development and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Investor linkages (Venture Capitalists, Seed Capital Funds, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice and assistance on New Product Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice and assistance in Manufacturing/Production Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Networking activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Technology commercialisation advice and assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Links to Higher Education institutions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
International trade assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Formal Venture Capital	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Informal Venture Capital	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Technology Transfer advice and assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project Management advice and assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice and assistance on Taxation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice and assistance on Finance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. How beneficial would a training tool on identifying, recruiting and supporting High-Growth Companies be? (Rank from 1 to 5 where 1 is of No Benefit and 5 is Highly Beneficial)

1 2 3 4 5

4. Please tick which training tool you would prefer?

Accredited Training Course Information Resource

D. Government Representatives and Agency Questionnaire



I³ – Innovation and Incubation Initiative
- Training Needs Analysis Survey -
 Government representatives

This Questionnaire forms part of a project funded by the Leonardo da Vinci Programme entitled “I³ – Innovation and Incubation Initiative”. This is a project which aims to identify training needs of, and develop a comprehensive training tool for, the management and staff of Business & Innovation Centres’ and Business Incubators’ (hereafter named – The Centre) in order to improve their ability to provide services to high-potential, high-growth businesses. The end product will be an interactive training tool, customised to the needs of the user and delivered via the internet.

To develop the abovementioned tool we have prepared this questionnaire to assess the current situation in European innovation and incubation environment and to identify knowledge and information gaps amongst management and staff involved in the provision of innovation and incubation supports.

In order to ensure the success of this project we would greatly appreciate your assistance in completing the following questionnaire. Confidentiality is assured and the information will be used for the purpose of summation and learning tool development only.

- 1. Name of representative _____
- 2. Job Title / Position in the Agency _____
- 3. Name of the Agency _____

4. How many Innovation / Incubation centres are there in your country?

- Business Incubators
- Business Innovation Centres
- Science and Technology Parks
- Enterprise Centres

5. How would you rate a level of services of Innovation / Incubation centres that they provide to high-potential and incubatee companies? (please evaluate from 1 to 5, where 1 = low level of services, 5 = high level of services)

	Low level					High level
		1	2	3	4	5
Support in sourcing new clients		<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				
Support in researching new markets		<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				
Participation in training programmes		<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				
Networking with other centres		<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				
Co-operation with Chambers of Commerce		<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				
Co-operation with other Agencies and authorities		<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				
Accessing formal and informal venture capital		<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				
Accessing loans and grant funds		<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				
Technology transfer		<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				
Supporting Joint Ventures and Strategic Alliances		<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				
New Product Development		<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				
Improving Production Processes		<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				
Improving Management Capacity		<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				
Stimulating Innovation		<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				
Export Market Development		<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				
Establishing R&D facilities		<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				
Other (please specify below)		<input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				

6. In your experience, what additional services should Innovation / Incubation centres provide to high-potential companies? (please specify)

7. How beneficial would a training tool on identifying, recruiting and supporting High-Growth Companies be? (Rank from 1 to 5 where 1 is of No Benefit and 5 is Highly Beneficial)

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Please tick which training tool would be most appropriate?

Accredited learning approach	<input type="checkbox"/>	Information Resource tool	<input type="checkbox"/>
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9. In your opinion, what are the biggest difficulties Innovation / Incubation Centres face in providing business development, incubation and innovation supports to clients? (please mark)

Lack of experience amongst staff / management	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lack of financial resources	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of skills/knowledge amongst staff / management	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of appropriate information		_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

E. Articles for Desk Research

I³ – Innovation and Incubation Initiative

Incubation (BICs' Science and Technology Parks) overview in respective countries

1. Provide a definition on business incubation used in your country;
2. What are main objectives that are targeted by BIs in your country? (specific expertise area, unemployment, etc.)
3. Is there any business incubation research accomplished in your country? What are its results?
4. Provide the following information (if available): business success rate in BIs; do BIs focus on specific areas of expertise; average number of jobs (incubatee companies); average number of employees in BIs (administration, management); average number of clients (tenants, external companies); average turnover of incubatee companies;
5. Services of business incubators (space for offices, advice on various business topics);
6. Number of BIs, BICs and STP in your country;
7. Average size of BIs;
8. Location of BIs, i.e. on STP, industrial parks, university campuses, etc.;
9. Legal status of BIs: are they a part of national support system to SMEs or private companies; for profit or not-for-profit; etc;
10. Do BIs have an entrance or graduation policies: are these policies common to all BIs in your country or it depends on policy of each BIs independently?
11. Do BIs monitor graduated companies?
12. Is there any training materials developed for business incubator managers (staff) in your country?
13. Is there any governmental department which monitor an operation of BIs in your country?
14. Is there any survey accomplished in your country which would identify main reasons of start-up business failure?
15. Key barriers to business incubation in your country;
16. Policy / strategy on business incubation in your country (if available);
17. Success stories on business incubation in your country.

F. BIs/ BICs staff questionnaire charts

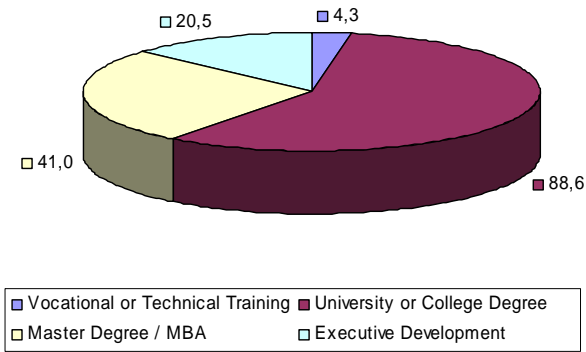


Chart 1. Qualification of BIs/BICs respondents

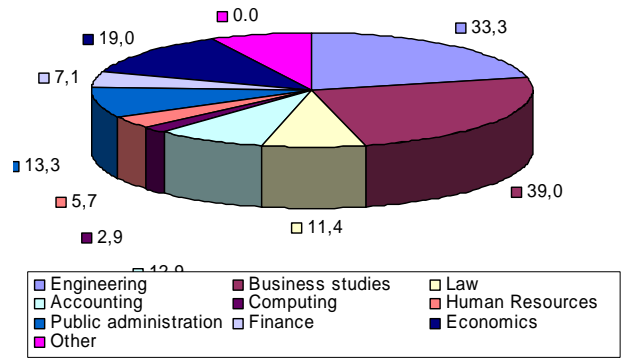


Chart 2. Educational background of BIs/BICs respondents

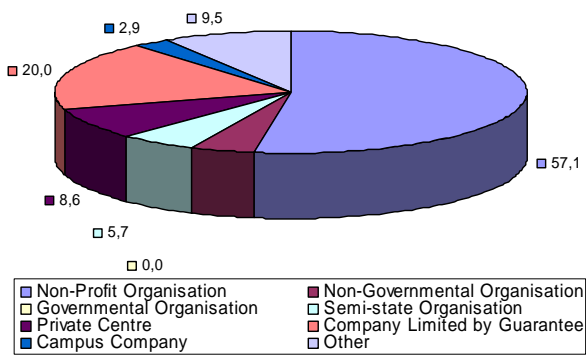


Chart 3. Legal Statuses of the Centres

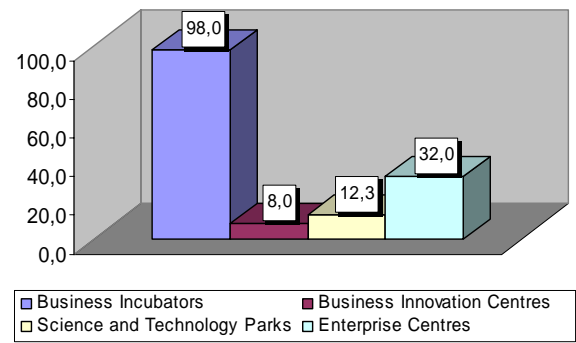


Chart 4. Average number of the Centres

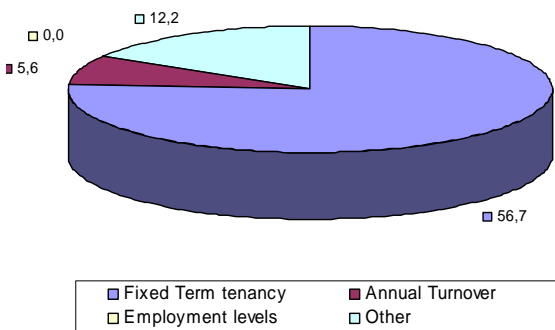


Chart 5. Exit/ Graduation Policy

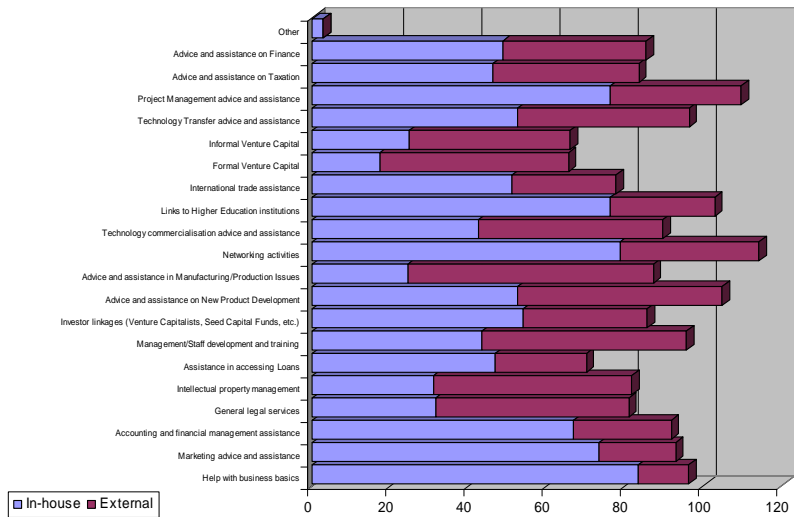


Chart 6. Service availability

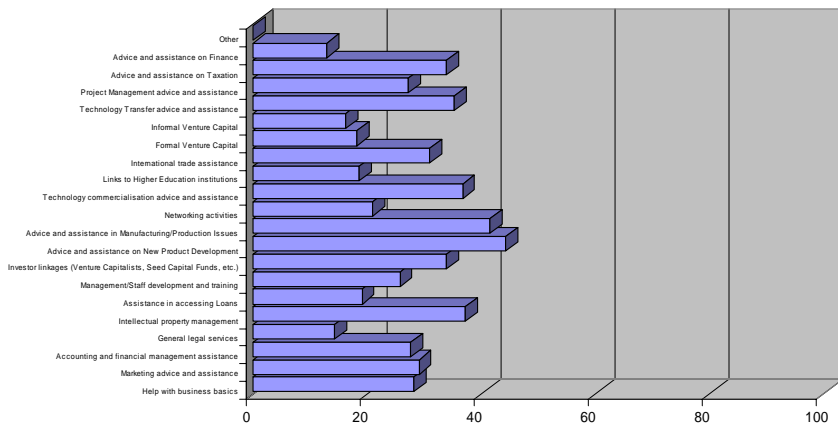


Chart 8. Service Development Required

TNA report

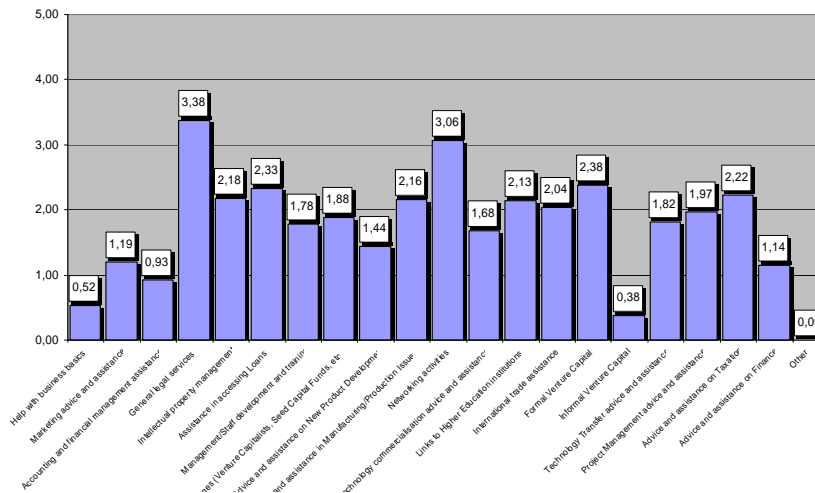


Chart 7. Service Priority Ranking

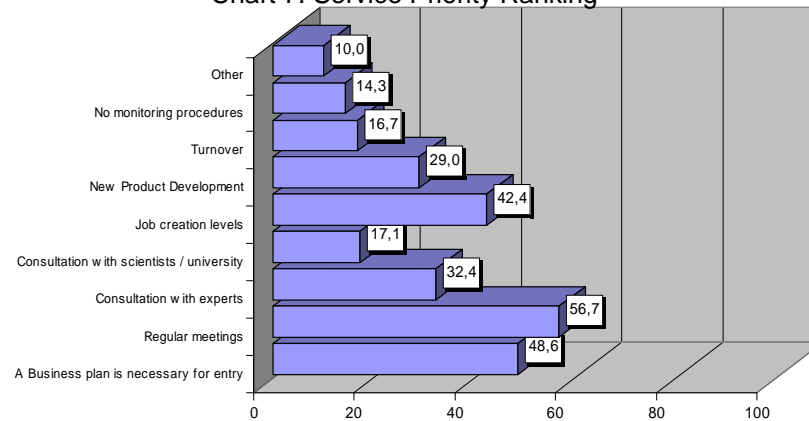


Chart 9. Monitoring/ Judging the progress of resident companies

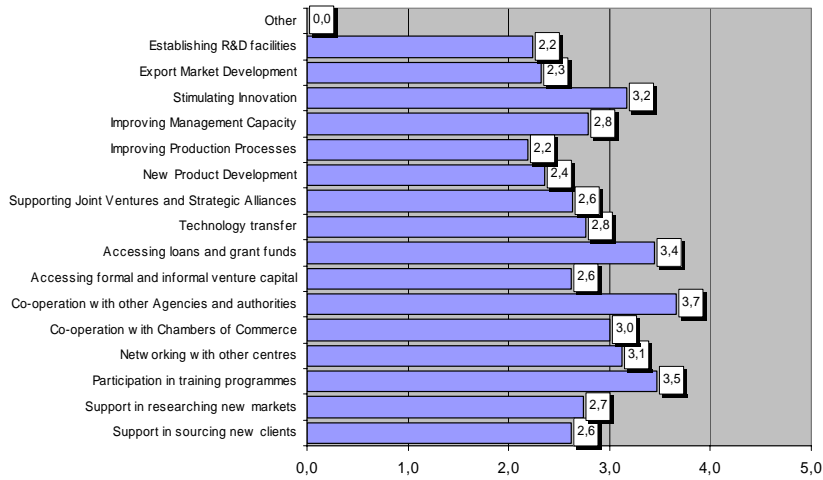


Chart 10. Influence of the Centre in assisting resident SMEs

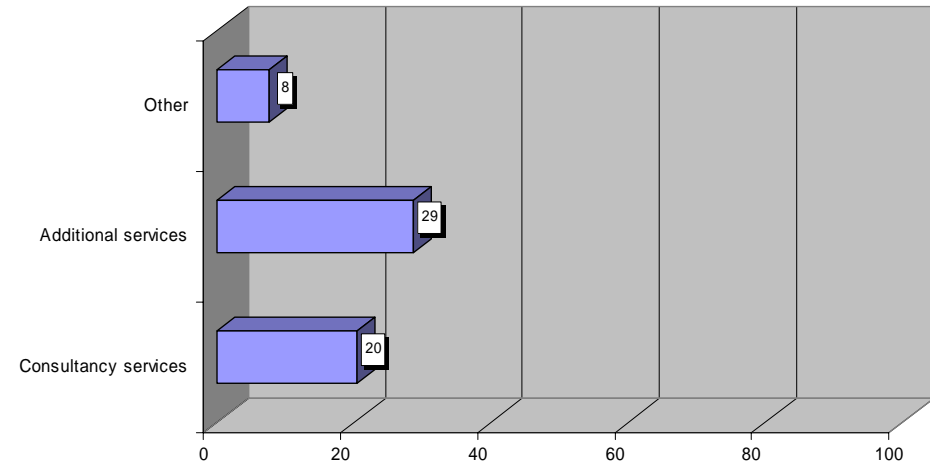


Chart 11. New services to be provided in the Centes

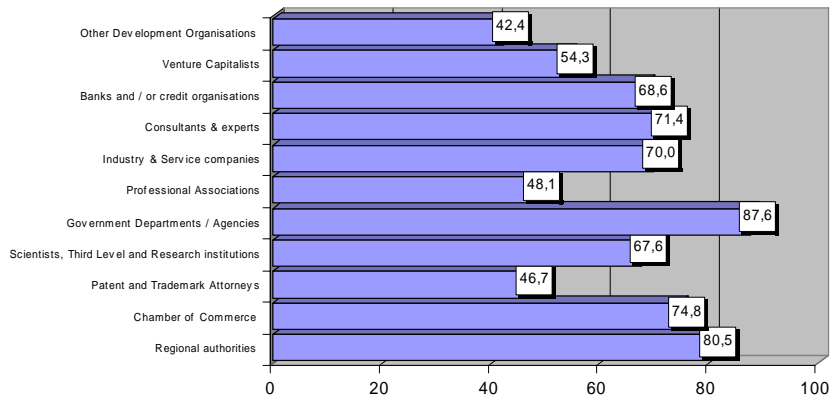


Chart 12. Links with external organisations

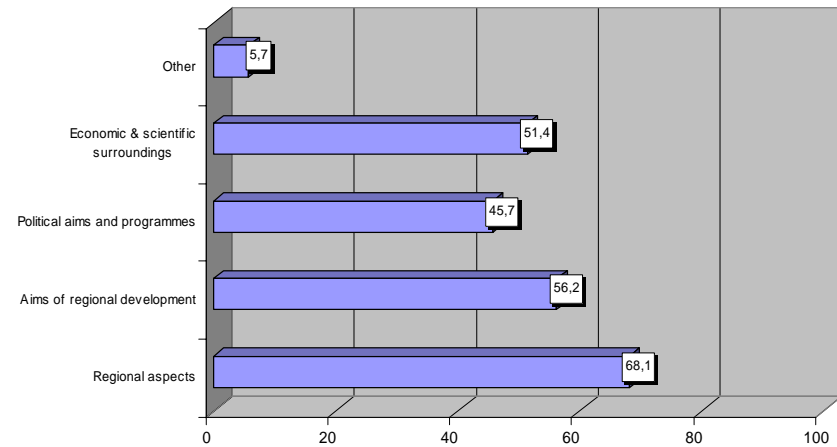


Chart 13. Factors influencing co-operation with external organisations

I³ – Innovation and Incubation Initiative

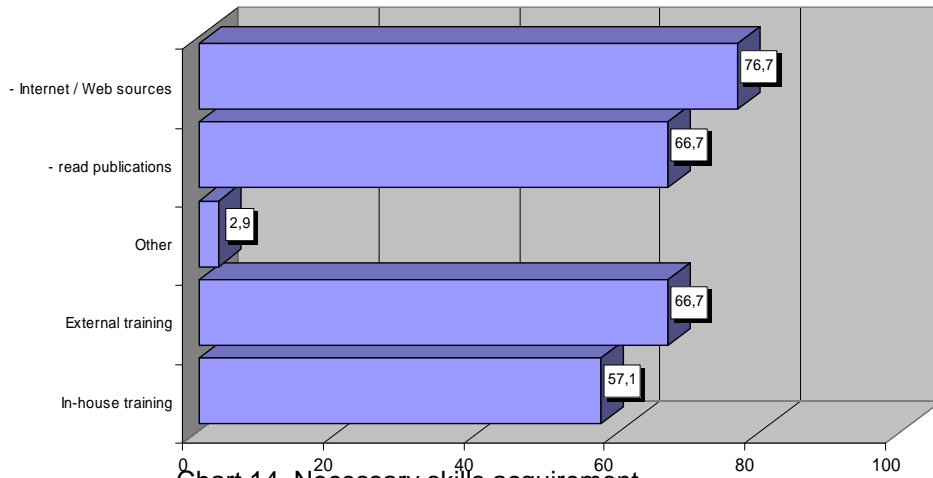


Chart 14. Necessary skills acquirement

TMA report

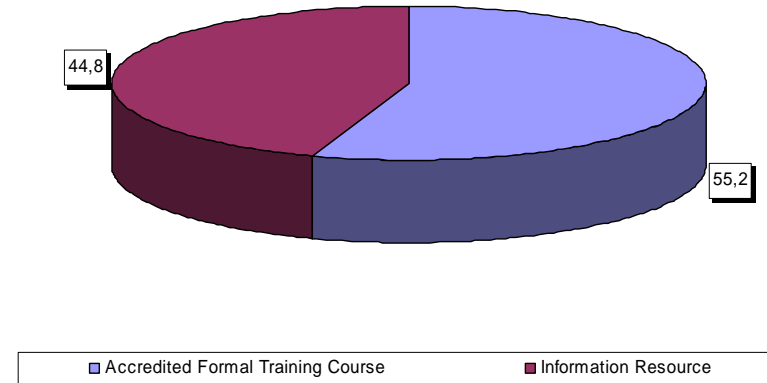


Chart 15. Training Tool Preferences

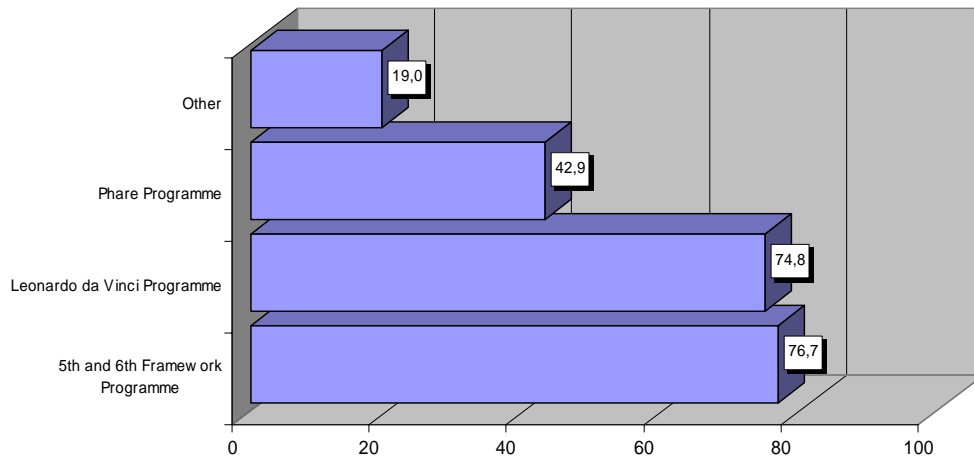


Chart 16. Awareness on support for SMEs development provided by EU

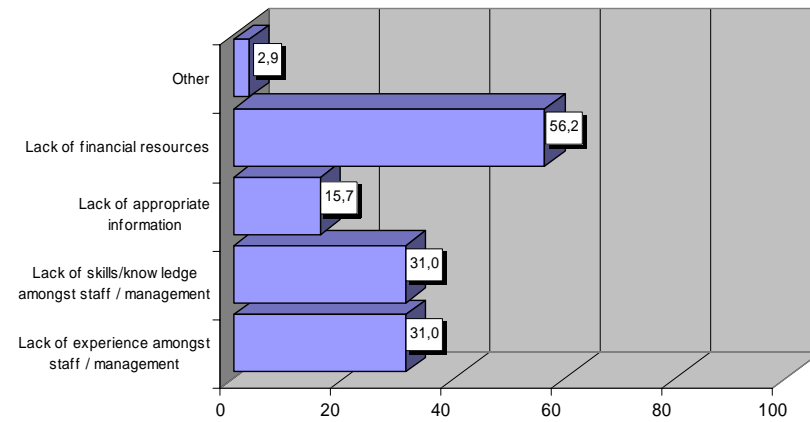


Chart 17. Difficulties faced in provision of support for SMEs

G. SMEs questionnaire charts

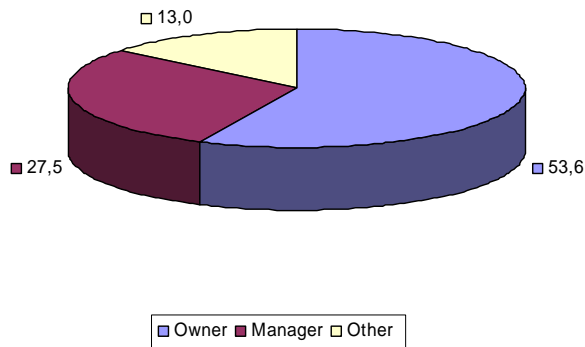


Chart 1. Job titles

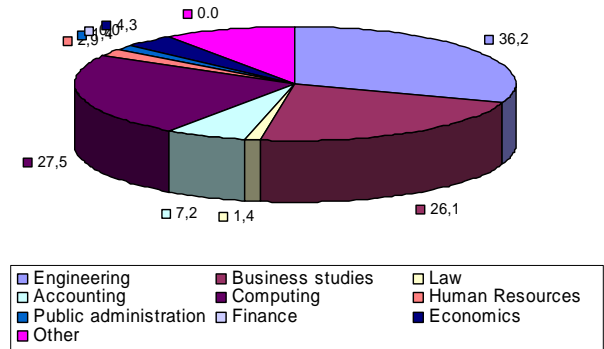


Chart 2. Educational Background

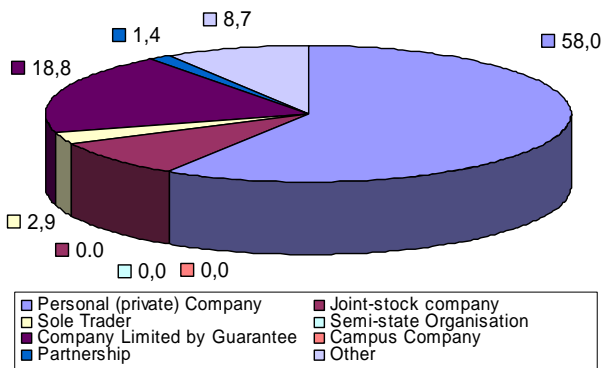


Chart 3. Legal Status of the SMEs

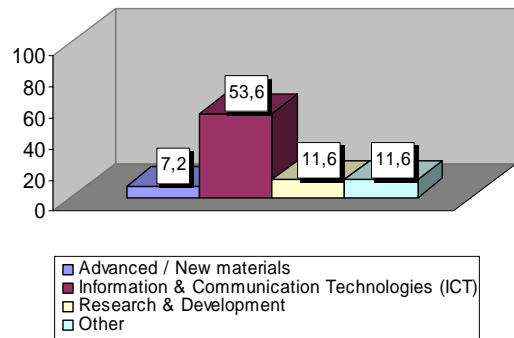


Chart 4. High-tech Sector of the SMEs

I³ – Innovation and Incubation Initiative

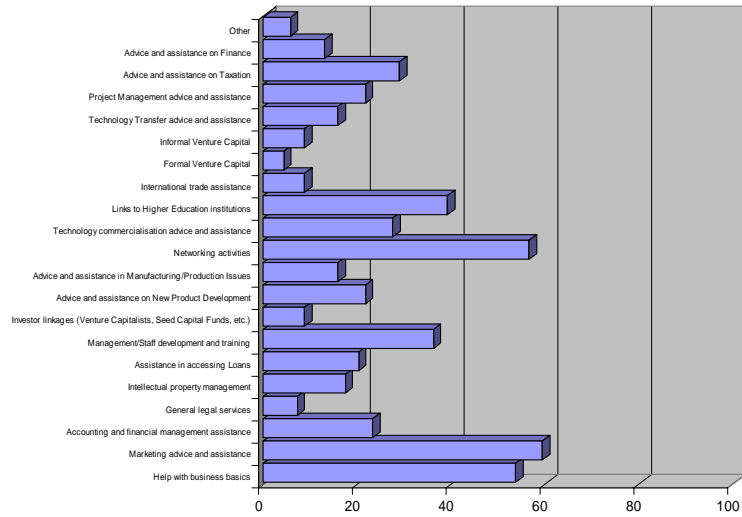


Chart 5. Use of the Services

TNA report

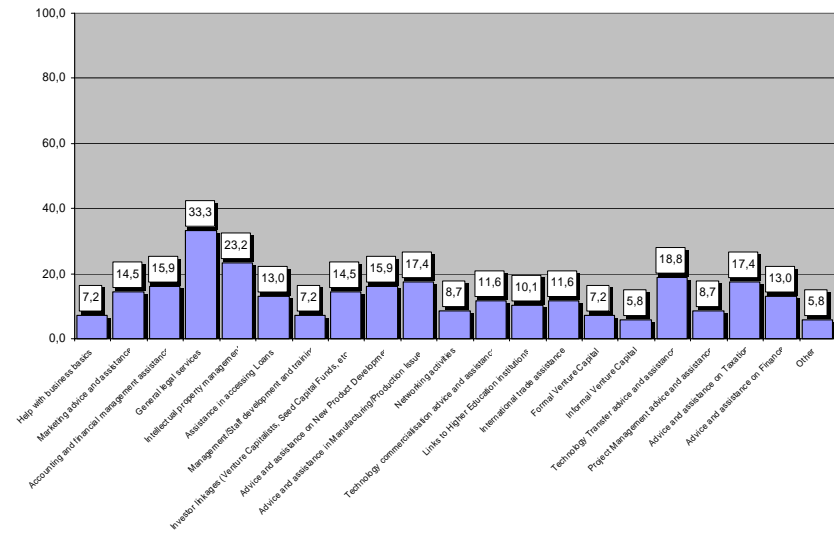


Chart 6. Need of the Services

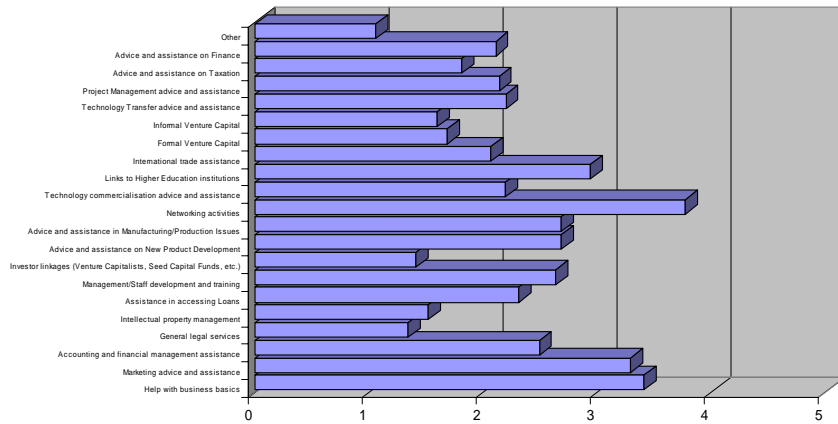


Chart 7. Evaluation of the Services

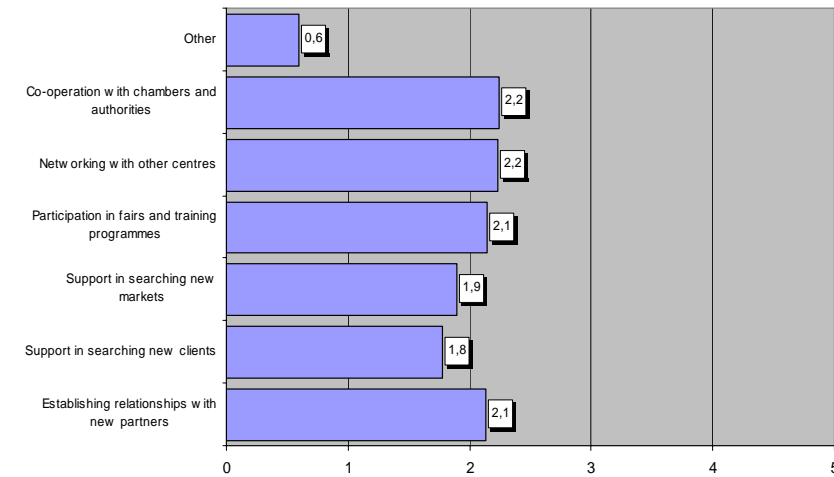


Chart 8. Influence of the Centre in assisting resident SMEs

H. Focus Group questionnaire charts

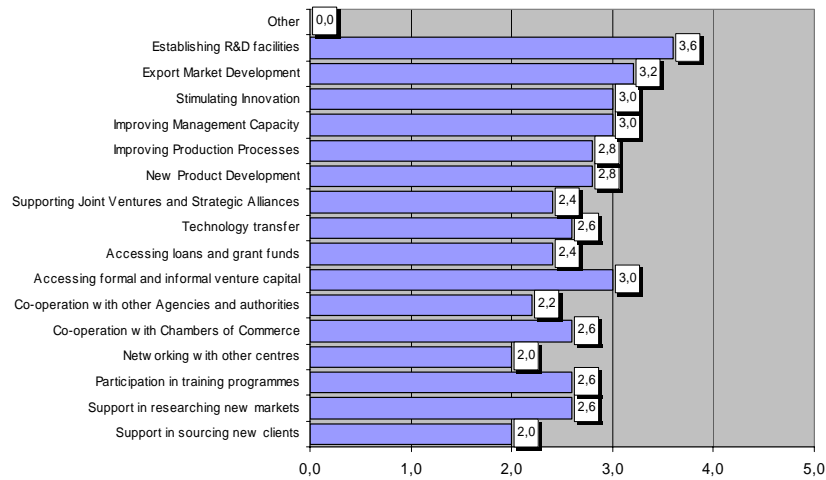


Chart 1. Influence of the Centre in assisting resident SMEs

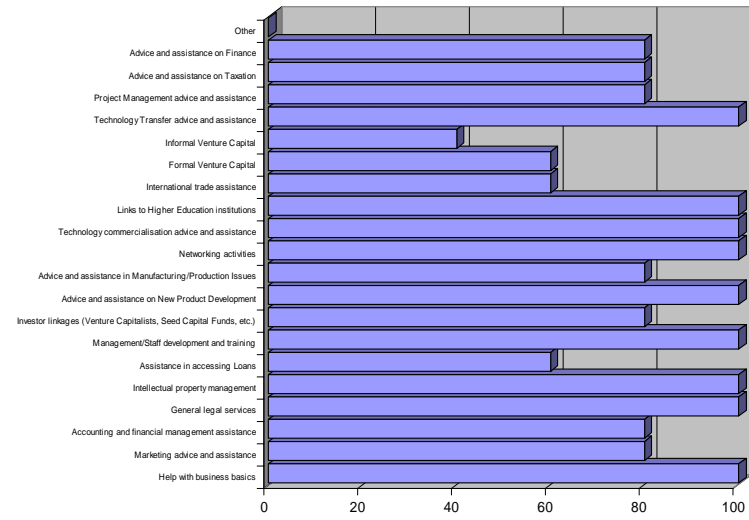


Chart 2. Use of the Services

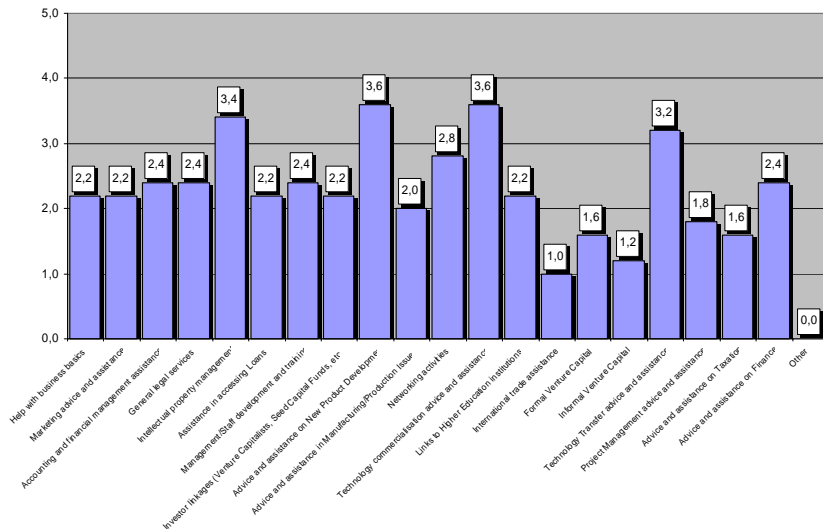


Chart 3. Frequency of use

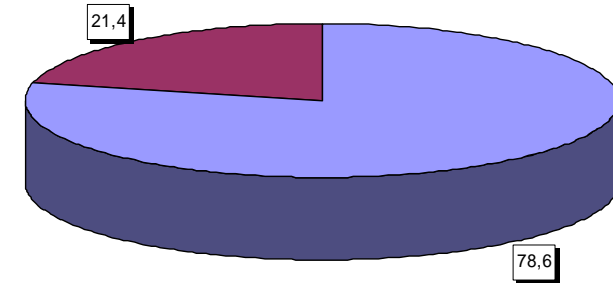


Chart 4. Training tool preferences

I. Government Agencies Representatives questionnaire charts

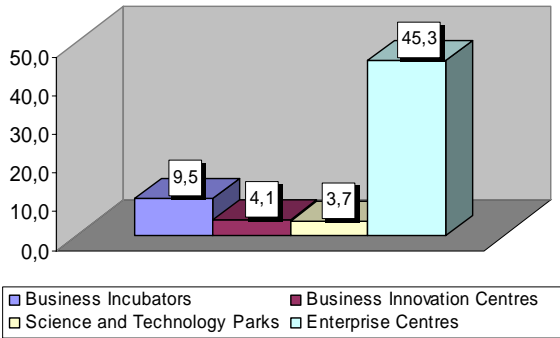


Chart 1. Number of the Centres

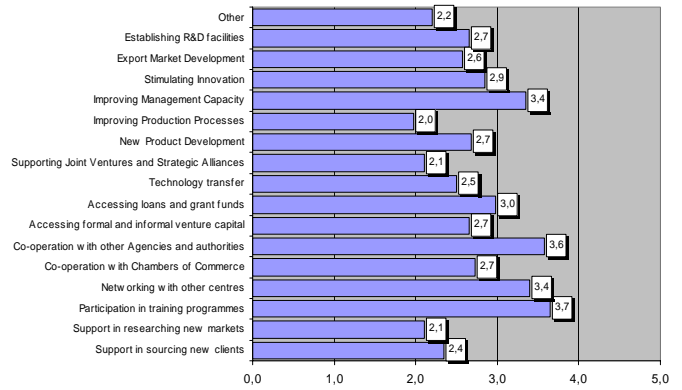


Chart 2. Influence of the Centre in assisting resident SMEs

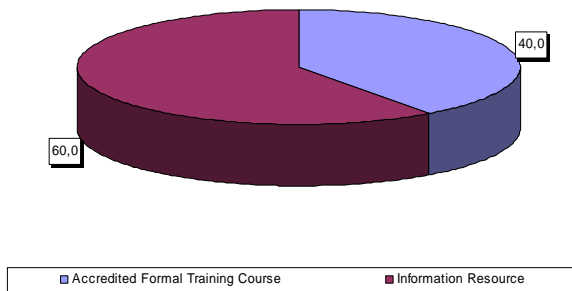


Chart 3. Training Tool Preferences

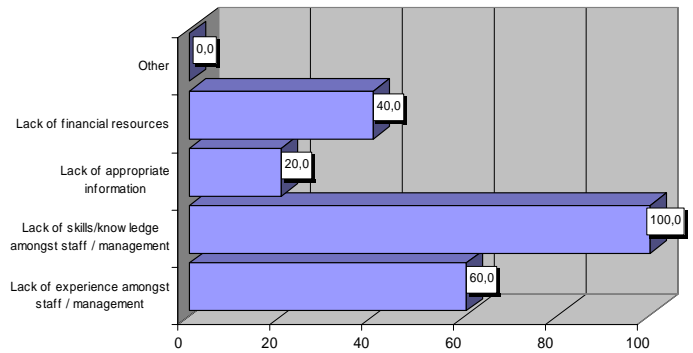


Chart 4. Difficulties faced in provision of support for SMEs