

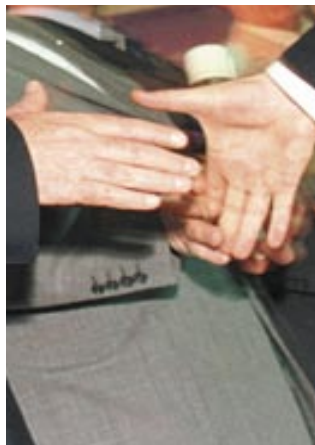


Austrian  
Development Cooperation

# Private Sector Development Initiative for Southeast Europe

Videoconference Series: December 2007 - May 2008

**A knowledge-sharing and peer-learning program utilizing video conferencing  
and other modern interactive communication tools**



In Partnership with



The Global Development Learning Network (GDLN) Private Sector Development Initiative for Southeast Europe, now in its second year, is intended to promote and facilitate dialogue on a range of reforms intended to strengthen the development of efficient business environments in these countries through a series of video conferences and live events.

This year's program is divided into two parallel components:

**Improving the Reform of the Business Enabling Environment in Southeast Europe.** This component seeks to support countries of southeast Europe. This series of video conference dialogues is developed and delivered by the FIAS/IFC Advisory Service team for Southern Europe and is moderated by **Ms. Margo Thomas**, Regional Program Coordinator and Business Enabling Environment (BEE) Manager.

**Promoting Investment in the Western Balkans.** As part of its investment generation business, FIAS is implementing the "Invest in the Western Balkans" (IIWB) program, aiming to help generate foreign direct investment (FDI) by increasing investor interest in the investment opportunities available in the Western Balkan region. This component, part of IIWB's investor outreach activities, aims to enhance the capacity of partner investment promotion agencies (IPAs) in the region. The sessions are moderated by Ms. Margit Mischkulnig, IIWB's Planning and Communication Executive.

## SERIES 1: IMPROVING REFORM OF THE BUSINESS ENABLING ENVIRONMENT IN SOUTHEAST EUROPE

### December 6, 2007 | Systematic Regulatory Reform in Southeast Europe

The quality of regulation affecting markets and business activity is increasingly viewed as a factor of competitiveness that influences the investment decisions of both foreign and domestic investors. Within the context of EU accession and the new Central European Free Trade Area (CEFTA), regulatory reform should help improve the competitiveness of the region for investment and facilitate the flow of goods and services, and several countries of the region have already been listed among the "top ten" reformers in the World Bank's Doing Business reports.

This session will discuss:

- Concepts and principles of systemic regulatory reform
- Issues and challenges in adopting and implementing systemic regulatory reform in southeastern Europe countries
- Lessons of experience

Expert speaker: **Scott Jacobs**, Director, Jacobs and Associates, Inc.

### January 31, 2008 | Business Enabling Environment in Southeast Europe: Increasing Sub-National Competitiveness

Businesses select specific localities for investment, and the business enabling environment in specific localities drives investment location decisions. A critical factor affecting the competitiveness of localities is the cost of doing business. Simplifying regulations affects business start-up and operation on the local level and helps enhance competitiveness and increase private investment, generating growth and creating jobs. Local reforms must be linked to national reforms to address issues in the business enabling environment that are beyond the control of localities.

This session will discuss:

- Streamlining and simplifying sub-national business regulations and building local capacities for better regulation
- Promoting government efficiency and transparency through e-government
- Comparing the performance of localities in order to provide information for investors and to stimulate competition

Expert Speaker: **Cesar Cordova**, Director, Jacobs and Associates, Inc.

### February 26, 2008 | Inspection Reform in Southeast Europe

Government inspectors are on the front line between the state and the market. Their performance has come under increasing scrutiny as the high costs of poor inspection practices has led to reduced economic performance, and weaknesses in governance have become clearer. A good inspection system maximizes compliance with clear and legitimate government regulations by detecting and deterring non-compliance consistently and fairly, and minimizes uncertainty and regulatory risks for businesses by operating transparently and under the rule of law.

This session will discuss:

- The inspections regime
- Overview
- Basic concepts
- Means to reform inspections
- Legal and institutional framework
- Regulatory reform

Expert Speaker: **Tarik Sahović**, Private Sector Development Specialist, IFC, The World Bank Group

### About FIAS

FIAS is a multi-donor service of IFC, the private sector arm of the World Bank Group; the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA); and the World Bank. FIAS advises governments of developing and transition countries on how to improve their investment climates for domestic and foreign investors. FIAS focuses on regulatory simplification, industry-specific investment climate issues, and investment policy and promotion.

## March 27, 2008 | Promoting Business Enabling Environment Reform: E-Government as an Agent for Change

International experience shows the importance of strengthening governance and improving government efficiency for increasing transparency, limiting discretionary authority and reducing the cost and risk of doing business. A range of tools have been applied, including e-Government. In broad terms e-Government is defined as the usage of information technology in government and in the transactions between government and citizens and businesses.

This session will focus on:

- Increasing accountability of public sector institutions
- Reducing corruption by automation of decisions
- Enhancing regulatory governance by streamlining laws
- Enhancing competitiveness of the private sector by lowering compliance costs

Expert Speaker: **Domagoj Juričić**, E-Croatia

### April 24, 2008 | Regulatory Reform Toolbox: What Works, When and Where

The regulatory reform toolbox includes a range of tools to help improve the quality of regulations affecting businesses, reduce compliance costs and strengthen the rule-making process. These tools have been applied to varying degrees and in different combinations in the southeast European countries, with mixed results.

This discussion focuses on the application of these tools, what works, and under what circumstances:

- Administrative simplification
- Public consultation
- Systematic review of the stock and flow of regulations
- Alternatives to regulations

Expert Speaker: **Vedran Antoljak**, Director, Sense Consulting

Moderator: **Edward Donelan**, Senior Adviser, Regulatory Governance, SIGMA, OECD

### May 29, 2008 | Measuring Compliance Costs and the Impact of Regulations

The standard cost model has been developed to provide a simplified, consistent method for estimating the administrative costs imposed on business by government. It takes a pragmatic approach to measurement and provides estimates that are consistent across policy areas, and has been applied in several southeast European countries to estimate the impact of regulatory reform on businesses in term of savings in compliance costs.

This session will discuss:

- Basic concepts and methodology
- Ex-ante measurements of administrative consequences
- Challenges and issues in applying the standard cost model

Expert Speaker: **Peter Bay Kirkegaard**, Special Advisor, Danish Commerce and Companies Agency

## SERIES 2: PROMOTING INVESTMENT IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

### December 13, 2007 | Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Political Will to Deliver Structural Reforms

There is a strong political commitment in all Western Balkan countries to increase FDI that generates sustainable jobs and thus contributes to sustainable economic growth. In order to increase positive externalities associated with FDI, improvements in infrastructure and supply of skilled labor are essential needs in the Western Balkan countries. Locations such as the province of Vojvodina in Serbia serve as best practice examples in the region.

This session will discuss:

- the role of Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs) as reform catalysts
- linking reforms on national and sub-national levels

Expert speakers: **David Brown**, Advisor to CzechInvest  
**Goran Knezevic**, Mayor of Zrenjanin (to be confirmed)

### January 17, 2008 | Attracting FDI: Learning from Practitioners

The Western Balkan countries are undergoing structural reforms aimed at supporting macroeconomic stabilization and ensuring rapid economic growth. Despite the improved overall business and entrepreneurial environment, there are still major shortcomings in the business climate.

In this session, CEOs from foreign companies already active in the region will discuss:

- why start a business in the Western Balkans
- problems arising in the start-up phase and during the business cycle
- strengths and weaknesses of the Western Balkan countries from a practitioner's perspective

Expert speakers: **Lidija Gruber**, CEO, Caristrap, Croatia (to be confirmed)

### February 14, 2008 | Customer Services and Aftercare of Existing Foreign Investors

FDI by existing investors is often neglected as an important source of additional FDI. In fact, around 50% of the foreign companies already active in the region are considering the expansion of their activities in the Western Balkans, according to Ernst & Young's perception study conducted in 2007.

This session will discuss:

- how do aftercare services bring value to investors
- how to make the most use of multipliers
- the role of IPAs

Expert speakers: **Birgit Braunwieser**, Director, Austrian Business Agency, **Dermot Coffey**, Program Manager, IIWB

## March 13, 2008 | Making Investment Promotion More Effective

There are several approaches in promoting a country. Macedonia, for example, has a “flashy” marketing campaign to raise awareness. IIWB’s flagship is marketing outreach events in which all IPAs participate.

This session will discuss:

- country and sector specific marketing activities
- lessons learned
- the role of and support by IIWB

Expert speakers: **Viktor Mizo**, Director, Invest in Macedonia (to be confirmed), **Bransilav Bogarski**, Director, VIP (to be confirmed), **Denis Kalenja**, Director, Albinvest (to be confirmed)

## April 10, 2008 | Building a Network of Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs)

The extent of internationalization over recent years has increased global competition in attracting FDI, and the Western Balkan countries are in global and intraregional competition as well. Despite this competition between countries, there is a common interest to increase the credibility and visibility of the region, and an IPA network forum could support an exchange of views on regional aspects.

This session will discuss:

- the need to set up an IPAs network
- objectives and format of such a network
- the FIAS network

Expert speakers: **Dermot Coffey**, Program Manager, IIWB (to be confirmed), **John Wille**, Lead Investment Promotion Officer, FIAS (to be confirmed)

- The role of international and bilateral agencies
- Lessons for the World Bank (and EBRD) in their interventions in the region
- Training and re-skilling labor force for a competitive economy

## May 15, 2008 | IIWB Support to the Region

The IIWB aims to stimulate increased investor interest in the Western Balkans. In bringing the region onto the radar screen of potential investors, IIWB focuses its activities on implementing investment promotion and facilitation activities, raising visibility and investor awareness of the Western Balkans region and strengthening the institutional effectiveness of the investment promotion agencies.

The session will discuss

- IIWB objectives and regional cooperation
- Key outcomes of these seminars and how they can be translated into country action plans for investment promotion and facilitation
- Proposals for follow-on seminars

Expert speakers: Dermot Coffey, Program Manager, IIWB

### About GDLN

The Global Development Learning Network (GDLN) is a partnership of over 120 learning centers (GDLN Affiliates) in nearly 80 countries around the world. GDLN Affiliates collaborate in holding events that connect people across countries and regions for learning and dialogue on development issues. Offering a combination of distance learning tools such as interactive videoconferencing and the internet, and expert facilitation and learning techniques, GDLN Affiliates enable individuals, teams, and organizations working in development around the world to communicate, share knowledge, and learn from each others’ experiences in a timely and cost-effective manner.

All participating sites in this program are GDLN Affiliates.

**This program has been generously supported by ADA, the operational unit of the Austrian Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe (ADC). The ADA is responsible for the implementation of all bilateral programs and projects in the ADC partner countries. If you are interested in participating in this program or requesting information, please contact:**

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