



Trend Chart on Innovation in Europe

DE 33

General presentation of the measure/scheme/action/regulation

Country

Germany

Geographical coverage, national or regional (state region)

(National)

Title of the measure

ATI / Innovation management

Information Source/Reference

www.vito-verband.de

Overview (nature, main goals)

The programme initially supported the establishment of a technology transfer infrastructure (agencies for technology and innovation - ATI) in the New Länder. The BMWI provided basic financing for a total of 20 ATI spread over the whole territory of Eastern Germany. The agencies provide consulting and information services for SMEs and start-ups. From 2000 on, basic financing for ATI ended and was changed to project financing, now called Innovation management.

Action Plan objective addressed by measure

I.4. Innovation & Management

III.5. Absorption of Technologies by SMEs

Administering agency

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Description of Scheme

General Information

Reference to legal basis (e.g. act, public document, ...)

Directive on the Programme 'Innovationsmanagement' issued by the BMWI in December 2000.

Does the measure receive central funding or regional funding?

Central

Start date

1992

Expected date of completion

1999, modified in 2000 and extended until 2004

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Previous measure (name, date, links with the current measure)

no

Reasons for launching/modifying the new measure

There was a lack in technology consultants and technology transfer oriented infrastructures in the new Länder at the beginning of the 1990s. The ATI-network provides information and services for SMEs in order to reduce their information asymmetries, reduce transaction costs in innovation activities and technology co-operation and foster the diffusion of new technologies.

Have any of the main features of the measure/scheme/action/regulation changed during its implementation

In 2000, basic financing for ATI was changed into a project financing scheme, called 'Innovation Management', accompanied with a reduction in the public funding. This programme provides funding for SMEs if they use innovation consulting services by an agency. The programme is now available to 17 ATI agencies. In 2001, the share of total consulting costs covered by the programme was reduced from 10 percentage points. Today, most ATI agencies act quite similar to private technology consultants, and some are integrated in the innovation consulting network of local chambers of commerce.

What is the predominant role of the government?

funding source for the agencies

Target Group**Who are the target groups of the measure?**

Large Companies/Large Industrial Companies

SMEs/Industrial SMEs

Other

Organisation and Implementation**Organisation and Structure**

The ATI-programme originally supported 20 technology transfer agencies in Eastern Germany which provide mainly the following services: Technology- and innovation consulting, innovation and network management, consulting in organisation- and marketing problems, help to use specific services offered by external experts, support for using innovation policy measures offered by the EU (innovation relay centres), supply, analysis and processing of market- and technology information from online databases, regional networking (organising events, discussion fora, meetings etc.). In the beginning of the ATI-programme, firms could use these services at low fees or for free. Today, ATI-agencies either offer services at price and quality similar to that offered by private consulting firms, or they are integrated in the innovation consulting infrastructure provided by the regional chambers of commerce. From 2000 on, ATI-agencies are partially financed on a project base via the programme 'innovation management'. If small firms use innovation consulting services by one of today 17 ATI agencies, they can receive a fund from the programme. Funding is provided for a three stage consulting procedure: 1. firm audit and feasibility study of the innovation project 2. concept of realising the innovation project 3. project management consulting. Small firms sign an agreement with one of the ATI agencies on using consulting services in innovation projects. Subsidies are provided for ATI agencies based on confirmation of the small firm that the services were carried out. Small firms have to cover between 20 and 50 per cent of total consulting costs, depending on the stage and the volume of consulting. These rates were increased in 2001. Consultants should cover all three stages, but may be determined at stage 1 or 2. The volume of funds provided by this programme for a certain ATI agency may not exceed 30 per cent of total personal costs of the agency.

What are the criteria for eligibility?

Funding is provided to SMEs only if they use services by one of the 17 technology transfer agencies in Eastern Germany. There are no restrictions concerning sectors or technology. Firms must meet the EU-criteria for small firms (less than 50 employees, not more than 7 mill. Euro annual turnover etc.).

What is the mode of delivery of the measure?

Direct subsidies for using consulting services in innovation processes, subsidies reduce fees to be paid by small firms, i.e. they are directly transferred to the ATI agencies.

Financing : Overall budget allocated to the measure

not available yet

Financing : expenditure per year

appr. 3.7 mill. Euro in 2000

Financing : other budgetary sources (additional financing)

Promotion for innovation consulting services used by small firms is also provided by the scheme DE_46 and by various programmes on the Länder level.

**Results
Result Measurement**

What are the main indicators for the measurement of the results ?

increase in innovation activities by East German SMEs

Where an evaluation has taken place, what were the main results achieved?

no evaluation so far

If no official evaluation has been undertaken, have there been any indicators of success?

not available yet

Observations**Which mechanisms seem to function well in the measure?**

The basic funding of ATI was viewed as losing efficiency in the late 1990s, as a dense network of private technology consultants emerged. Thus, basic finance was stopped, a public funding is now provided only on a project base and at a lower level of public funds. The new innovation management scheme for East German SMEs seems to be well demanded and increases the use of innovation consulting services by SMEs, especially as East Germany SMEs are reluctant to use private services due to high costs, uncertainty of outcome and information asymmetries concerning the quality of the services offered.

Which mechanisms seem to be less successful in the measure?

not available yet

Are there any other measures planned or in operation as a follow up to this measure? Direction of the planned measures? Objectives? Target groups?

not available yet

