



## 2011

On behalf of the project group BT in SME, I like to wish you a very good and healthy 2011, personally as well as professionally. Let us hope that our project contributes to better vocational education and training in Europe and that it supports small enterprises in their process of business transfer in future.

A bit late because of the deadline for proposals in frame of the Lifelong Learning program.

## Needs

Studying and discussing the process of business transfer we meet a lot of restrictions and hidden feelings. In The Netherlands we have the saying: '*do not show your dirty laundry outside*' which implies that it is not usual to discuss private problems, difficulties or troubles in public. This is also true for business transfer because there can rise a lot of difficult situations: profit and cashing money as a result from selling the company, financing a transfer, authority in the company, continuing the company because of history, workers and owners, communicating ('many men, many minds') with hidden 'agenda's', secrets, wishes, etc. Entrepreneurs who consider to withdraw from a business and to transfer the business, hesitate to make this public because of competition, suppliers, customers, values, and marketing.

In Lithuania (and some other European countries) business and independent entrepreneurship is rather young (since 1990) and their greatest challenge now is 'growth'. There is a lot of competition, professionalism and internationalization, but Business Transfer is not yet top priority.

In Germany the national situation of Business Transfers is on the focus of the Ministry, Chamber of Commerce, financial businesses and institutions, tax regulations, consulting enterprises a.s.o.. All these actors have already established in specific forms like workshops, literature, counseling interviews to clarify, to provide advise and to support family business to be prepared for a take over.

In the next decennium, transfers will become more important because original initiators who started in fifties or sixties of the former age, become older and have to transfer their business (ownership, shares, authority, etc.). Also, as in many other countries, death duties / inheritance tax, tax obligations and the distribution of the 'property' among relatives influence

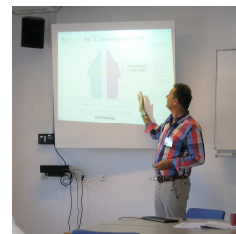
the transfer process enormously. Therefore, these countries and the companies in these countries have to prepare their transfer or their future in time!

## Project progress

- DVD case studies: we have made interviews on Business Transfers with expert persons. These interviews will be subtitled and published on the project website in March 2011.
- In November 2010 we have had our third work meeting in Portugal. Due to the strike of the air-traffic controllers in Portugal we had to organize some alternatives for the meeting. Important aspects were:
  - The story of a young Portuguese entrepreneur who aims to take over once the business of his parents.
  - Our colleagues in Austria have started a second phase in business transfer. In the first phase they produced a book entitled: *Business Succession in Europe; your way to success; ISBN 3 902103-17-5*
  - The experiences of some partners with their training and coaching.
  - There is increasing information about transfer of businesses by research, in publications, video materials that we have gathered. An overview of websites with these products is available and is regular updated.
  - The training partners (Avans, KRIC, BFW-Nürnberg, IPP-ISCAP and Syntra-Limburg) have started with training or coaching of entrepreneurs aiming to transfer their business. Books, video case materials and discussions with experts support these trainings. The website provides more information (sometimes still draft versions).

## Publicity

Peter ter Horst (Avans University) and Jos Schijns (Open University) have presented a lecture on Business Transfer during IntEnt conference in Arnhem (NL) this year. Avans developed a course on business transfer in cooperation with European partners. The paper is available on the website ([www.business-transfer.nl](http://www.business-transfer.nl))





To transfer a business without losing trust and peace of the family and with perspectives for the company (owners, managers and workers) in the future requires good preparation, intensive and open communication and support of experts. A book that might help to understand this process better is: 'Overdracht van het Familiebedrijf, 2009; Story Publishers; Gent-BE (in Dutch); and in Germany Unternehmensnachfolge – Die Optimale Planung (in German) ([www.bmwi.de](http://www.bmwi.de)). Our project website provides you with a range of references that helps you getting more insight and knowledge in the BT process (<http://www.business-transfer.nl/project/development-of-the-bt-program-wp2> ).

Jos Paulusse (EEP) and Lilli Maierhofer (Berufsförderungswerk Nürnberg) joined the Conference of the European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (EFVET) in order to promote and introduce the Program of Business Transfer in SME. The numbers of interested parties who showed up during the presentation in form of a roundtable support the necessity and the attractiveness of this relevant subject in the whole European Union.

### Worth knowing

- An interesting article (in Dutch) has been published by mr. Jozef Lievens. He expects a 'tsunami' of transfers of family enterprises in coming years. In perspective of our economies, employment and investments it is wise to manage these transfer in the right way and so assure the survival of these enterprises. Refer to: [http://www.fbnet.be/downloads/persbericht\\_belang\\_van\\_familiebedrijven\\_081012.pdf](http://www.fbnet.be/downloads/persbericht_belang_van_familiebedrijven_081012.pdf)
- In frame of this project, professor Peter ter Horst, AVANS University of Applied Sciences develops an international program for Business Transfers and is looking for materials as books, modules, video cases, or lectures that can support us with the further development of the program. Contact mr. Peter ter Horst by e-mail ([pe.terhorst@avans.nl](mailto:pe.terhorst@avans.nl)) if you are interested.
- Another project on Business Transfer has started in November 2010, is coordinated by

mrs. Andrea Lang ([www.bit.at](http://www.bit.at)) and focus on dissemination of achieved results on business transfers.

- The final report of the Expert group (EC, November, 2009) is available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promotingentrepreneurship/familybusiness/family\\_business\\_expert\\_group\\_report\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promotingentrepreneurship/familybusiness/family_business_expert_group_report_en.pdf)
- A study on BT was presented by the EC and is available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/files/craft/family\\_business/doc/familybusiness\\_study\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/files/craft/family_business/doc/familybusiness_study_en.pdf) (EC, 2008)

### News and Announcements

- The final conference of BT in SME in Nürnberg during which the final products (the coaching programs, the background materials, the video cases and the comic book, etc. ) are presented and distributed has been settled at: Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011 (opening at 12.00 at BFW Nürnberg). The program includes life stories of entrepreneurs, video materials, lectures by entrepreneurs from other countries, a discussion forum and presentation of project outcomes and products.
- ISCAP-IPP works on a further analysis of the educational needs for business transfers in Portugal. We will keep you informed about the results in the newsletter.
- The next EFVET conference is scheduled 26-29 October 2011; Malta. [www.efvet.org](http://www.efvet.org)

Jos

Newsletter BT in SME

Send your reactions / remarks or cancellation to the coordinator at: [jpa@planet.nl](mailto:jpa@planet.nl)