

REGIONAL REPORT – GREECE



Greek Government Demands Project Management Skills for Managing European Union Funds

By Theofanis Giotis

Community Support Framework (CSF) 2000-2006

At the European Council held in Berlin on the 24th and 25th of March 1999, it was determined that the Community would maintain its overall level of commitment to economic and social cohesion within Europe. Under this agreement, the 2000-06 Community structural assistance budget allocated to GREECE amounted a total of 25.0 billion Euros, in contrast to 19.2 billion euros allocated in 1994-1999. This huge amount was managed by almost 7,500 companies - final beneficiaries in GREECE.

As it turned out, most of these **Companies did not have the Project Management skills and/or expertise** required for managing projects. Today, at the end of the CSF 2000-2006, nobody yet in GREECE can supply **project success metrics**. Everyone in GREECE is aware that the only numerical metric concerning the CSF 2000-2006 is the percentage of the money spent compared to the total budget of **25.0 billion Euros**;

- no successful project rates
- No over budgeted time project rates
- **No quantitative metrics at all**

European Parliament voted for Project Management skills!

On July 6, 2005 European Parliament voted for: "Calls for the inclusion of a reference to the need for a high level of **Project Management skills and qualifications** as an **essential element [in] for ensuring that projects are delivered on time and on budget**" (article 44). This information can be located at the [European Parliament web site](#), "*European Parliament resolution on the proposal for a Council regulation laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund*".

It is obvious that this resolution implies that **European Union's projects** are facing exactly the same problems that all projects face all over the world: over budgeted, over time, scope trimmed/crippled, lesser quality than expected, unsatisfied customers and users etc.

Community Support Framework (CSF) 2007-2012

Being aware of these issues, the GREEK Government is willing to overcome them in the CSF 2007-2012 by Re-engineering the processes involved, by introducing procedures to ensure the highest possible achievement in project quality, project tracking, and meeting user expectations.

So the GREEK Government is demanding that all organizations involved in the CSF 2007-2012, must meet the following criteria:

- Financial Management capabilities
- Auditing
- **Project Management experience**
- Contracting experience
- Legal capabilities
- Procurement Management experience
- Use of ERP systems
- Use of **Project Management Information Systems (PMIS)** etc

Currently there are only a few organizations in GREECE that meet the above criteria; some people claim that there are no more than 2 or 3 organizations in GREECE capable of adhering to these criteria. Estimations are that, finally, **no more than 100 out of 7,500** organizations **will be able to meet the above criteria in GREECE.**

Of all the criteria imposed by the GREEK Government, **Project Management is the most important of all**, as it covers most of the other areas. This has lead to the rapid expansion of Project Management skill development in GREECE during the last 2 years (see following article: PMFORUM Breaking News, Breaking News in the Project Management World, Tuesday, February 06, 2007, **Rapid expansion of Project Management in GREECE**).

**Theofanis C, Giotis***PM World Today Correspondent*

Mr. Theofanis C. Giotis, MSc, MCT, PMP is an International Correspondent for PMForum.org in Greece. Mr. Giotis is also CEO of ITEC Total Solutions SA, an Information Technology Solutions company, and managing director for ITEC Training Services SA, an IT, Project Management and Management Training company. Mr. Giotis has an MS degree in Operations Research from the University of Lancaster (UK) and a BA in Economics from the University of Athens, Greece. Theofanis has 20 years' experience in Management, Finance, IT, Security and PM. He is a co-founder & steering committee representative of the PMI® Greece Chapter and a member of the Greek Computer Society, Greek Operations Research Society, Hellenic Management Association, and several other Greek and international professional organizations. Additional information about Theofanis Giotis can be found at <http://www.pmforum.org/pm%20forum%20team/index.htm#5>.

Theofanis lives in Athens and can be contacted at Theofanis.Giotis@ITEC.edu or Theofanis.Giotis@PMI-GREECE.org.