



Technical Assistance of the Greek Export Promotion Action Plan

Grant Agreement SRSS/S2016/029

Deliverable Report 2.2

2.2.1 Development of modes of operations and IT set-up for the help-desk

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List of Abbreviations

AICEP	Institute of External Trade of Portugal
BI	Business Intelligence
BMWi	Federal Ministry for Economy Affairs and Energy (Germany)
BoG	Bank of Greece
CC	Chamber of Commerce
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
DPT	Department
EC	European Commission
ECA	Economic & Commercial Attachés
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
ELOT	Hellenic Organization for Standardization
EPA	Export Promotion Agency
EPANEK	Operational Programme “Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship”
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
EU	European Union
EG	Enterprise Greece
GD	General Directorate
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
GNTA	Greek National Tourism Organization
GS	General Secretariat
GSDP	General Secretariat for Digital Policy
GTAI	Germany Trade and Invest
ICE	Italian Institute of Foreign Trade
INTL	International
ITC	International Trade Center
IXPOS	German Business Portal (GTAI service)
KEPE	Centre of Planning and Economic Research
KPI	Key Performance Indicator



MADB	Market Access Database
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Greece
MinAgriculture	Ministry of Rural Development & Food
MinFin	Ministry of Finance
MoE	Ministry of Economy and Development Greece
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NSRF	National Strategic Reform Framework (ESPA)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PDO	Protected Designation of Origin
PGI	Protected Geographical Indication
PSE	Panhellenic Exporters Association
SEC	Exporters Association of Crete
SEV	Hellenic Federation of Enterprises
SEVE	Exporters' Association of Northern Greece
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SRSS	Structural Reform Support Service
TA	Technical Assistance
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WEF	World Economic Forum
WTO	World Trade Organization



1. Executive Summary

The present report covers the activity 2.2.1 “Development of modes of operations and IT set-up for the help-desk” and provides the basis (together with the deliverable on activity 2.1) for activity 2.3.1 “Preparation of ToR for help-desk”.

GIZ Team supported by consulting experts, using feedback from meetings with representatives of public and private sector bodies, in Greece and abroad, elaborates recommendations on the modes of operation of the future help-desk, as well as on the technical solutions to be adapted.

Regarding the modes of operations, we recommend the following:

1. The help-desk of EG should deliver service and provide information along the 5 axes of Guiding, Empowering, Advocating, Coordinating and Whistleblowing
2. The Inter-ministerial Extroversion Committee¹ (possibly even a higher authority, i.e. Prime-ministerial or Presidential Decree) should assign clear authorities to the help-desk in its role to be the central point of interaction in supporting (potential) exporters in Greece, especially for its advocating, coordinating and whistleblowing activities. A similar procedure has been followed in the paradigm of legislation regarding the Investor Ombudsman of EG).
3. The Operational Extroversion Committee should promote this role, communicating it to the participating authorities and bodies, preparing the path for the signing of SLAs, MoUs and contract between EG and the stakeholders.

The Operational Extroversion Committee should appoint tasks to EG enabling them to fulfill the Coordinating and Whistleblowing activities, i.e.

- a) regular reporting on issues faced by the enterprise community that need attention,
- b) regular reporting on the state-of-play of interactions within public sector authorities and between private and public sector bodies, addressing possible overlaps and lack of synergies,
- c) regular reporting on challenges faced within the public authorities support system to exporters, i.e. deviations from agreed SLAs as per answering times, insufficient or contradictory information delivered to companies, proposals on measures to improve the interaction of companies with the public sector, etc.
- d) submission of proposals on the improvement of the export promotion activities and instruments in use, or on implementing alternative ones
- e) regular monitoring of KPIs on its own service delivery

¹ IEC convened July 11th 2018 agreeing to compile suggestions from all involved Ministries on the coordination framework for export promotion activities, including the (future) help-desk functions.



4. The role as the central point of interaction in supporting (potential) exporters in Greece should be furthermore promoted extensively through various channels of communication and cooperation, by means of a structured raise-awareness and publicity plan, as integrated in the funding proposal of EG towards to relevant authority (EPANEK)².
5. Building know-how capacity within EG is needed and should focus on largely enriching their knowledge base, both regarding the information available for the Guiding processes and the educational material necessary for the Empowering services
6. SLAs, MoUs and contracts between EG and various stakeholders should be signed, as an expression of a clear division of labour

Moreover, in order to avoid duplication of effort and expenses (meaning integrating same tools in help-desk and IT system), EG and MoE should speed up processes led to submitting the Technical Fiche to the Funding Authority (EPANEK), end of March 2018, so that it will precede those of the IT System. The Technical Fiche was approved by EPANEK in mid July, initializing the implementation phase.

Following that, and to avoid duplication of effort and systems, the Technical Fiche of the IT system (to be submitted by EG) has been accordingly adjusted, foreseeing interoperability with help-desk's IT tools, such as BI, matchmaking-platform etc.

The management model of the help-desk needs a clear structure (set-up) and workflow, supported by CRM software, which is described in detail regarding the roles of the Front Office, Back Office and Key Account Managers. Recommendations on an evaluation process based on specific KPIs are presented, as well as a suggestion on the frequency of their reporting to the supervising authority, which is proposed to be the Inter-Ministerial Extroversion Committee (or any future successor public body).

New staffing needs, in number and function/responsibilities, are presented, and the financing options, including their sustainability, are investigated and introduced.

In connection with the technical solutions, GIZ suggests to:

1. develop a help-desk web-interface (web form and dedicated microsite), as the first step for its integration into the future common IT-system - whenever ready -
2. include social media, newsletter and forum services
3. provide a phone call center for the receipt of requests as well as for outbound calls
4. provide personal assistance nevertheless, which is indispensable regarding the Empowering role (education, networking). GIZ underlines the need of support to be expanded beyond the web-based instruments (FAQs, E-learning, Match-making platform). The integration of Regional Advisors,

² See GIZ Deliverable Report 2.3.



especially when intending to enlarge the number of exporting companies and to elevate the export turnover of existing exporters, and Antennas abroad, facilitating networking in strategic target markets, should be considered.

The IT set-up of the help desk is elaborated, foreseeing compatibility provisions with the future Export Promotion IT System³; it is suggested to integrate specific software tools, such as a Match-making platform, an E-learning platform, an Events / Calendar management tool, Forum software, newsletter and social media applications. It should furthermore include a Business Intelligence system, inter alia to flexibly adapt to different data formats from various information sources.

Compatibility issues with other IT-systems, website services and other help-desks, which are mapped and briefly described, should be ensured by Open data Application Programming Interfaces (APIs), as those are considered to be the foundation of such compatibility at the technical level.

³ See GIZ Deliverable Report 1.1.3.



2. Recommendations on modes of operations

The recommendations on the modes of operations are based on the findings reported in Deliverable Report 2.1 as per:

- operating under a clear vision / scope
- addressing the (help-desk related) major impediments to trade by providing the suitable content and services consequently,
- following a management model which allows continuous evaluation of targets and performance
- building up a comprehensive structure (set-up)

In detail, the modes of operation need to take into account the suggested 5 support axes:

- *Guiding*: The focus is giving assistance to find information, data, contacts, etc., thus enhancing business sophistication of Greek (potential) exporters.
- *Empowering*: The focus lies on supporting capacity-building, networking, consulting, coaching, mentoring and training and enriching human resources skill-sets.
- *Advocating*: The focus widens and includes acting on behalf of the inquiring company, trying to find solutions from all suitable sources (of public and private sector), in topics surrounding pre-customs & customs procedures, quality and technical compliance, legal framework and documentation of exports (regulatory compliance).
- *Coordinating*: The focus is the coordination of interactions within public sector authorities and between private and public sector bodies, addressing the challenge of overlaps and lack of synergies for export promotion in Greece.
- *Whistleblowing*: The focus widens to tackling inefficiencies and deficiencies within relevant public authorities and ensuring quality services are delivered to companies in a legitimate and timely manner, while in parallel providing policy makers with input and insight of the challenges faced by Greek exporters or companies trying to export, as part of the strategic planning for Export Promotion.

In that context, Enterprise Greece should develop an Exporters' help-desk by upgrading the modes of operation of the existing Corporate Support Department.

Currently, EG's help-desk export / trade related functions are restricted to services provided by the Corporate Support Department (CSD), which is staffed with 2 employees (one Head of the Department and one executive employee). The approximately 300 export related requests per year are submitted to the CSD via a) generic web forms (from the corporate site: info@enterprisegreece.gov.gr⁴) and direct e-mail (to CSD staff accounts communicated to companies from previous contacts), b) phone calls and c) personal meetings.

⁴ GIZ: The same account is used for requests to EG's investment branch, which also administrates the account.



In terms of *guiding*, when the requested information is not available or generated within EG, inquiring companies are often referred to relevant authorities outside EG, without the capacity to follow up on final delivery. CSD staff uses (mostly already publicly available) data from other public sector bodies, such as MFA, as well as from ELSTAT, ITC, Exporters' and Business Associations and media.

For *empowering* (potential) exporters, the CSD facilitates networking by benefiting for access to databases, such as Kompass, while also occasionally conducting consulting seminars in cooperation with regional Chambers of Commerce.

The mandate and competent jurisdiction of EG to operate as Ombudsman for Investors does not apply analogically to the CSD, thus restricting current capacity to *advocate* (potential) exporters in their interaction with other relevant institutions of the public sector.

As per *coordinating*, until recently the CSD was not supported by a Client Relations Management (CRM) system, thus limiting the staff's capacity in logging, ticketing and following up of requests that remain stored as unstructured data in excel format. This input is currently not shared or used as feedback by other relevant authorities or within EG, neither it finds way to the EG corporate website in the form of FAQs.

Furthermore, data on average response time to requests or on average time for phone service delivery are not available, making it hard to benchmark respective key performance indicators (KPIs).

EG is also currently not vested with the authority to operate a whistleblowing service.

2.1 Recommendations as per scope / vision and authorities (to be assigned)

An Export Promotion Agency (EPA) – looking at good practices in other countries - usually takes the role to coordinate export promotion stakeholders and be the first address for information and assistance for both national suppliers and foreign buyers. Such agencies – in most cases - are supervised by or are even integrated within Ministry(ies) with authority(ies) over Economic, Trade, Business, Industrial and Foreign Affairs. Close cooperation and coordination between the agencies and related Ministries, as well as with other stakeholders like Chambers, Business Associations, Exporters' Associations, local Administrations etc. is considered indispensable.

Enterprise Greece being the National Export Promotion Agency (EPA) of Greece is the eligible body for coordinating the respective Greek export promotion stakeholders and for being the first point to address to for information and assistance for both national suppliers and foreign buyers.



From the policy perspective, the help-desk of EG should therefore be introduced to all public and private bodies active in the extroversion committee, as the responsible public body in authority of the support of (potential) exporters. The focus should lie on the canalization of (all) export-related enquiries through the help-desk of EG in order to

- avoid confusion in the business community in terms of various public actors responsible
- ensure a common service level
- enrich the knowledge base at EG
- exploit the possibility of whistleblowing feedback by reaching a reliable sample size

without suppressing or preventing the use of direct contacts between relevant stakeholders and companies once established.

The help-desk to be established should be able to address the needs and expectations of (potential) Greek exporters, providing both generic information and customized personalized assistance to individual clients:

- it should become a central point of interaction with export promotion related service providers and of a network of partners and contributors.
- it should contribute to the sharing of information generated from public and private sector bodies

The central idea is that interested (potential) exporters will contact the help-desk as the entry point for information, and through the help-desk receive information or/and service requested, or will be delegated to other stakeholders, other help-desks or other sources of information.

It is recommended to extensively promote the help desk support functions in public, in order to reach out to potential clients/enterprises. For this purpose, a raise-awareness-budget (lump sum of € 60.000) has been foreseen (see relevant help-desk Technical Fiche and deliverable report 2.3.1).

Moreover, for promotion purposes, cooperation with (and publicity through) private and public bodies should be ensured. Thus, enterprises will be reached more easily, and the support will be offered more targeted and efficient – also taking into account the current lack of EG's physical presence outside Athens and Thessaloniki. Namely, this cooperation should be sought after with the business and exporters associations, as well as with the (local) Chambers of Commerce and the regional authorities.



2.2 Recommendations as per content and services

Content and services to be provided, taking into account the 5 support axes of the modes of operation, are recommended to be as follows:

1st Support Axis: Guiding

In order to be able to perform this support to the Greek enterprise community, a coherent Knowledge Base within EG organization needs to be developed, capitalizing on synergies with partners in the public and private sector. This includes the availability of:

- General Economic information, on Greek economic environment and Greek external trade. Adding to existing EG content, the data should be provided by gaining access to already publicly available data bases and reports within Greece and outside Greece (EL-STAT, EUROSTAT, ITC, MoE, MFA). Interconnectivity with country reports of the future IT-System should be foreseen.⁵
- Sectors/Countries of priority for Greek exporters, according to the national export promotion (growth) strategy, as agreed in the Inter-Ministerial Extroversion Committee (and currently depicted in EG and NSRF priorities).
- Trade statistics by country/sector, by gaining access to data bases and reports within Greece and outside Greece (EL-STAT, EUROSTAT, ITC, Euromonitor, MoE, ICAP/KOMPASS). Interconnectivity with MFA Business Guides is foreseen via the future IT System, also developed by EG.
- Legal issues on trade.
- Country/sector related regulations on customs and products, based on “How to Export Guides” / FAQ tree guides to be prepared (see below 2nd axis empowering), complemented with data from the Market Access Database (MADB) of the EU. Interconnectivity with the publicly available content of the Customs Authority’s ICISnet and its help-desk should be foreseen.
- Country/sector specific business news: The data should be generated by EG based on Business Intelligence tools and expertise, as well as by access to data bases and reports within Greece and outside Greece (ITC, Euromonitor, ICAP/KOMPASS, MFA reports from ECAs and private sector bodies).
- Business opportunities in the country/sector (including Tenders): Such data should be compiled by accessing data bases and reports within Greece and outside Greece (ICAP/KOMPASS, MFA reports from ECAs and private sector bodies).

⁵ General Economic Information on target countries – in the intermediate phase prior to access to the country reports in the future IT-System – can be found in the (free) databases of EUROSTAT, ITC, OECD, World Bank, UNCTAD etc.;
See also for example: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/ameco/user/serie/SelectSerie.cfm.



- Information on events (fairs, missions, inward visits etc.), based on EG's annual plan and the Common Events Calendar (MFA, MinAgric, NGTO, and desirably also from Chambers of Commerce and Regional authorities), including information communicated to EG by the private sector.
- Importers database for the specific country/sector, compiled by existing and updated data of EG and by accessing databases within Greece and outside Greece (ICAP/KOMPASS-Hoovers, MFA reports from ECAs and private sector bodies).
- Information and links on "how to finance" exports (to be tendered, as part of the "how to export" guides and as described in help-desk's Technical Fiche).

All the above data will find way in "How to Export Guides" to be prepared (see below 2nd axis empowering), complemented by information from external sources (Business Associations, legal experts networks etc.).

2nd Support Axis: Empowering

Based on the guiding axis, which obviously also aims at enriching the knowledge on export-related matters within the companies, the empowering function pursues the broader goal of capacity-building within the enterprise community on the one hand, and facilitating the networking between potential buyers and exporters on the other hand.

The capacity building process can be divided into steps, which are depicted in below table:

Capacity Building Level	Initiatives
Raising awareness	Initiatives are intended to raise awareness of the benefits of exporting and to provide a general understanding of exporting as a means of promoting <i>non-intenders</i> into <i>intenders</i> .
Building export-readiness	Initiatives provide learning opportunities for <i>intenders</i> to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to become <i>new exporters</i> .
Selecting target markets	Initiatives mainly help <i>intenders</i> identify and understand specific foreign markets / sectors where their products or services have good prospects so they can become <i>new exporters</i> . They also help <i>experienced exporters</i> move into new markets.
Identifying sales opportunities	Initiatives inform <i>intenders</i> , <i>new exporters</i> , and <i>experienced exporters</i> about qualified clients and their needs, expose products to buyers, and match exporters with potential buyers.



Closing export deals	These initiatives help <i>intenders</i> become <i>new exporters</i> and <i>experienced exporters</i> to expand their markets, by helping them interact with prospective buyers, present offers, and complete export contracts. This category also includes follow-up services after the deal, such as registering successful contracts, benchmarking challenges, satisfaction rates with support received etc.
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Source: Adapted from USAid

Currently, the Head of EG's Corporate Support Department is conducting training seminars occasionally on basic export topics, by visiting Chambers of Commerce, nationwide. In order to systematize the empowering function, we recommend as a first step to develop educational content in the form of "How to Export Guides" educational brochures (available online, but can also be printed and spread out traditionally) and e-learning guides, which can be made accessible to registered users of the help desk online.

The titles describing the content of these brochures and e-learning guides are proposed to be as follows:

Raising awareness

Content to be generated within EG as part of "How to Export Guides", incorporated as informational script for help-desk operators (front and back office), training content in VET and consulting programs, including e-learning platform, intended for both potential and existing Exporters.

- "Advantages for a company to export"
- "How to grow the export business", promoting synergies and clusters

Building export-readiness

IT application/tools to be developed in order to facilitate users in assessing their export maturity and drafting export plans. Export plan guidelines generated by "How to Export Guides" should also be incorporated as training content in VET and consulting programs, including e-learning platform.

- "Guidance to self-assess export readiness"
- "Create export plans"

Selecting target markets

Supporting enterprises to apply methodology tools to research the markets, based in ITC tools for identifying export prospects and opportunities, as well as in reports generated by relevant public (MoE, KEPE) and private sector institutions (Business/Exporters' Associations).



- ITC export prospects map⁶
- Knowledge base interface

Identifying sales opportunities

The identification of sales opportunities is accomplished by the networking facilitation, which is within the day-to-day scope of work of EG already now. It is enforced by the participation of enterprises in trade fairs and trade missions, as well as by individually connecting interested buyers from abroad with potential suppliers in Greece.

- Web-based Match-making platform (see below, IT set-up)

Closing export deals

The closing of specific export deals is considered by the majority of international practices to be beyond the scope of an EPA. When it comes to deals of strategic importance to the country, however, it is considered to be part of economic diplomacy. Nevertheless, coaching and mentoring on the issue of “how to close an export deal” in a generalized way should be within the scope of the capacity building program of EG. Guidelines on usual contract terms, pricing, forms of delivery and payments on exports, shipping & logistics, customs, licenses & export related documentation should be generated, following FAQ structure, while specific deals are suggested then to be accompanied by the private consulting sector.

- Guidelines and FAQs on export contract terms and procedures
- Follow-up on B2B meetings arranged during fairs, trade missions, inward visits of foreign buyers (via CRM tool).

The empowering function is one of the most important instruments to be employed in order to broaden the export base of Greece, both by significantly enlarging the number of companies which export and by elevating the export revenues of existing exporters. Therefore, we recommend putting increased focus to the educational measures in the near future, and expanding them largely.

In order to realize this, we suggest to make use of the regional authorities⁷ and the local Chambers of Commerce⁸, and benefit from them as (or assign to them to operate as) regional advisors of EG. Furthermore, EG should consider establishing a coherent network of antennas in strategic⁹ target markets capitalizing on expertise

⁶ And additionally the methodology tool as per Activity 3.1.2, once made publicly accessible.

⁷ GIZ recommends the initiation of a dialogue by IEC with the regional authorities on a framework of cooperation, since they are independent bodies, incentivizing synergies.

⁸ GIZ: As public entities supervised by MoE, which also supervises EG.

⁹ GIZ: As per result of methodology to be proposed in Activity 3.1.2.



and infrastructure of Economic & Commercial Attachés Bureaux, GNT0 Bureaux and Bilateral Chambers of Commerce, to avoid duplication of effort and resources.

3rd Support Axis: Advocating

Prerequisite to act on behalf of inquiring companies and thus to exercise the advocating role of the help desk is to be clearly mandated to do so (by the extroversion committee or even higher authority, i.e. Prime-ministerial or Presidential Decree, following the paradigm of legislation regarding the Investor Ombudsman of EG). When this mandate has been assigned, it should be communicated to all relevant authorities, starting with the Operational Extroversion Committee members, and the enterprise community (potential clients).

GIZ has also prepared SLA and MoU drafts for future use with the relevant actors, i.e. those which either deliver the answer or service directly to the client (and answers are only monitored by the help-desk) or answer back to EG help-desk, who collects the answers and transmits them to the client. The SLA drafts serve as an open-end tool, foreseeing possible updates in roles, content and services, as subjects for future adjustments and changes according to feedback from the Greek exporters and clients of the help-desk.

By making use of the CRM which is currently being set up within EG, and its adaption to the work-flow of the help desk to be established, it will be possible to monitor the client satisfaction with the advocating services delivered, either directly by EG or through the relevant partner bodies.

Moreover, we suggest continuously enriching and updating an FAQ section (see below, IT set-up), making use of repeatedly recurring questions or problems, if answers can be grouped and standardized.

4th and 5th support axes: Coordinating and Whistleblowing

A functioning help-desk, when widely known by the enterprise community in Greece, and extensively used by them, gains detailed insights in regard of the challenges faced by Greek exporters or those intending or trying to export. These insights should be made available to policy makers, at least as part of the strategic planning for Export Promotion, if not – depending on the specific subjects coming up – on a more general level of policy making.

In connection with its whistleblowing and coordinating support axes, the help-desk of Enterprise Greece should therefore be assigned the following tasks and authorities:

1. Regular reporting to the extroversion committee or any future relevant body within the public coordinating framework on export promotion, on issues faced by the enterprise community that need attention.



2. Regular reporting on the state-of-play of interactions within public sector authorities and between private and public sector bodies, addressing possible overlaps and lack of synergies.
3. Regular reporting on challenges faced within the public authorities support system to exporters, i.e. deviations from agreed SLAs as per answering times, insufficient or contradictory information delivered to companies, proposals on measures to improve the interaction of companies with the public sector, etc.
4. Proposals on the improvement of the export promotion activities and instruments in use, or on implementing alternative ones.
5. Regular monitoring of KPIs on its own service delivery.

Reporting frequency needs to be defined within the hierarchical higher relevant authority for coordinating state-funded export promotional activities (in the current status the Inter-ministerial Extroversion Committee), where the reports should be discussed regarding suitable measures to be taken. GIZ suggests reporting to be discussed at least twice per year, foreseeing such input from the help-desk support.



2.3 Division of labour

Both wider tasks of the help-desk, as a service provider and a coordination mechanism, require clear definitions of roles and division of labour with relevant institutions of the public and private sector. In the current state-of-play, GIZ has identified three levels for division of labour and (potential) cooperation, as follows:

- with content / service providers (as identified in Deliverable Report 2.1.2)
- with relevant authorities responsible for export promotion activities (as represented in the Operational Extroversion Committee and mapped in Deliverable Report 3.1.1)
- with existing help-desks of the public and private sector.

For defining roles and (potential) synergies, according to best practices reviewed, the following set of (legal) instruments is suggested:

- Mandate(s) of authority (for EG to operate as an advocating mechanism for exporters, benefiting from similar existing experience, structure and framework of the Investor Ombudsman, which has been developed by EG)
- Service Level Agreements and Web Service Agreements, explicitly defining service / content delivery provisions
- Memoranda of Understanding for generic cooperation schemes and exchange of (unstructured) data and information
- Contracts with providers (in case of economic, commercial transactions)

Additionally, cooperation and connectivity with other relevant institutions can be achieved in a less official (legal) mode, via **web services**, meaning the services offered automatically by an electronic device to another electronic device, communicating with each other via the World Wide Web. In practice, a web service provides an object-oriented web-based interface to a database server, utilized for example by another web server, or by a mobile application, that provides a user interface to the end user. Another common application offered to the end user may be a mashup, where a web server consumes several web services at different machines, and compiles the content into one user interface.

Cross-referencing the above, the new EG help-desk, when vested with above mentioned authority/mandate to advocate and facilitate synergies with all relevant institutions (both public and private) having export related responsibilities, needs to institutionalize the relationships to other useful help-desks via Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs).

Drafts of such SLAs and MoUs are provided by GIZ to EG and the relevant Greek Authorities, and attached in Annex 4.3, while a table of institutions and bodies subject to such agreements that will facilitate division of labour and efficient provision of services, is depicted below:



Relevant institutions with responsibilities and content related to help-desk		
Institutions / Bodies	Content / Services	Type of Agreement ¹⁰
Ministries		
Ministry of Economy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Secretariat (GS) for Industry • GS for Commerce / General Company Registry (GEMI) • GS for Private & Strategic Investment • General Directorate (GD) for Intl Organizations / Dpt for Export Policy • Start Up Greece • KEPE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Business Environment ○ Export procedures & documentation ○ Legal framework for commerce ○ Economic and statistical data 	MoUs / Web Services
Ministry of Foreign Affairs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Diplomacy Branch (ECAs) • Market Ombudsman¹¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bilateral export reports ○ Business guides (by country) ○ Importers' data ○ Business news (incl. Tenders) 	SLAs/ MoUs Cooperation with existing help-desk¹²
Ministry of Rural Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directorate for International Policy / Relations • Dpt for Promotion of Products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pre-custom procedures ○ Quality compliance ○ PDOs / PGIs framework ○ Production statistics ○ Approved Traders registry 	SLAs/ MoUs/ Web service
Ministry of Finance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GD for Economic Policy • Directorate for Intl Economic Relations • General Accounting Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Business / Tax environment ○ Economic & statistical data 	SLAs/ MoUs/ Web service
Other public & independent authorities		
Independent Authority for Public Revenue (AADE): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customs Authority • ICISnet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Customs procedures & framework ○ Statistical data 	SLAs/ MoUs/ Web service Cooperation with existing help-desk
ELSTAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Statistical data 	SLAs/ MoUs/ Web service

¹⁰ GIZ: MoUs are suggested to be used with other Ministries as general agreement framework, while SLAs are recommended to be used in cases of sources with more specific content (not available elsewhere).

¹¹ See also Annex 4.1 for more details on existing help-desks.

¹² See also Annex 4.1 for more details on existing help-desks.



Bank of Greece	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Economic & statistical data 	Web service
Chambers of Commerce: Export Departments (Dpts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Business registries ○ Economic & statistical data ○ Networking support 	MoUs Cooperation with existing help-desk(s)
Private sector bodies		
Business / Exporters' Associations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEV • PSE • SEVE • SEC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Business registries ○ Economic & statistical data ○ IT tools ○ Networking support ○ Transfer of know-how 	SLAs/ MoUs/ Web service Cooperation with existing help-desk(s)
Bilateral Chambers of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Business registries ○ Economic & statistical data ○ Networking support ○ Business environment 	SLAs/ MoUs/ Web services
Private & Cooperative Banks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eurobank • Alpha Bank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trade finance framework ○ Market reports ○ Transfer of know-how 	MoUs Cooperation with existing help-desk(s)
Content Providers (as-is & to-be) : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kompass/Hoovers/ICAP • Euromonitor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Market research (by country / industry) ○ Importers registries ○ Export opportunities (incl. Tenders) 	Contracts
Service Providers (to-be) : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call Center • IT & software 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Front desk support ○ Matchmaking tool ○ E-learning platform ○ BI ○ CRM 	Contracts
EU & International Institutions		
EU Authorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MADB • EUROSTAT • European Enterprise Network • Euromed Helpdesk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ International trade framework & procedures ○ Economic & statistical data ○ Networking support 	Web services/ Links
International Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITC • UNCTAD • WTO • World Bank • OECD • WEF • EBRD • EIB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Methodology for export opportunities ○ Economic & statistical data ○ International trade framework ○ Trade finance information 	Web services/ Links

Source: GIZ



The main objective behind clear division of labour and promoting synergies is to avoid duplication of effort and resources, while facilitating sharing of information within the public sector and towards the final beneficiaries of the help-desk (private companies).

Nevertheless, the usefulness and efficiency of those synergies, especially with existing help-desks, has to be the subject of continuous assessment (i.e. judged by the information input needed by EG respectively provided by the other help-desks).

Moreover, the extent to which the private sector institutions will be ready to support – because most of them have restrictions as per their users, i.e. only members, customers – and will be requesting fees for their services to EG, needs to be officially negotiated and elaborated at a bilateral (management) level, using SLA drafts as guidelines for (possible) cooperation.

In meetings with the GIZ team, SEV, PSE, SEVE as well as both Alpha Bank and Eurobank expressed their general willingness for cooperation.

2.4 Management model

A result-oriented, comprehensive management model, especially related to a help-desk structure should integrate as core values the following:

- Adding value to clients
- Building capacity
- Ensuring sustainability
- Harnessing innovation
- Investing in people

Such a management model, integrating evaluation and assessment procedures, should follow international standards (like ISO or EFQM) or national standards and guidelines (like ELOT).

GIZ envisages the following pillars of the management model:

- Organizational set-up (structure)
- Knowledge base (content)
- Evaluation mechanisms (assessment)

Structure

As already stated, aligning service content and help-desk set-up, the central idea behind the suggested flowchart (see below) is that interested (and registered) exporters will contact the help-desk as the entry point for information, and through



the help-desk receive information or/and service requested or will be delegated to other Stakeholders, other help-desks or other sources of information¹³.

The general organizational set-up of the help-desk has already been described in deliverable report 2.1¹⁴. It requires the development of internal hierarchies in the Front desk and Back office as well as a group of Key Account Managers. In combination with sectoral specialists and administrative support personnel within EG and other relevant institutions (i.e. the contact persons of bodies represented in the OEC) utilizing a CRM system will lead to a streamlined work-flow that will provide all necessary monitoring and information to control the help-desks processes and generate performance and statistical data.

¹³ GIZ: Help-desk should ensure and follow up that services/information have been provided in the agreed timely manner. See paragraph 2.1.

¹⁴ See GIZ deliverable report 2.1, page 58.



In the suggested structure, **Front Desk** operators will provide general information to exporters or other stakeholders (i.e. regional chambers) using a Frequently Asked Questions tree guide (see relevant paragraph below “Knowledge Base”). If the answer is not available in the FAQ tree, the inquiry will be delegated to the Back Office for further processing.

In cases of matters which refer to the whistleblowing axis, delegation should lead to the appointed Integrity Officer / Legal Advisor / Ombudsman, a person - most preferably - with legal expertise and possibly operating as independent / external partner, following recent EG (or MFA) experience with Ombudsman functions.

The **Back Office** personnel will be responsible for:

- Updating (in cooperation with the Key Account Managers) the FAQ tree guide
- Processing enquiries that could not be addressed or delegated otherwise from the front desk.
- Collecting information from external sources
- Preparing and simplifying information that will be provided through various channels to the exporters (Web, Newsletters etc.)

The **Key Account Managers** (KAM), already appointed in the EG organizational chart as Head of Departments (in geographical or sectoral terms or both) shall be responsible for:

- Return responses delegated to them by the Back Office
- Provide assistance and further advocacy only to registered clients and most likely for enquiries that cannot be grouped otherwise as generic (for example experienced exporters with specific challenges, or “newcomers” at the verge of exporting, lacking more strategic guidance). KAMs should be able to provide assistance by e-mail, phone or/and meetings in-person.

KAM should be supported by a network of specialists from the public and private sector. Initially these specialists could derive from the representatives of public and private bodies in the Operational Extroversion Committee (OEC)¹⁵, operating as antennas in their field of expertise (i.e. matters of agricultural products, Customs procedures, transfer of know-how from experienced exporting companies etc.).

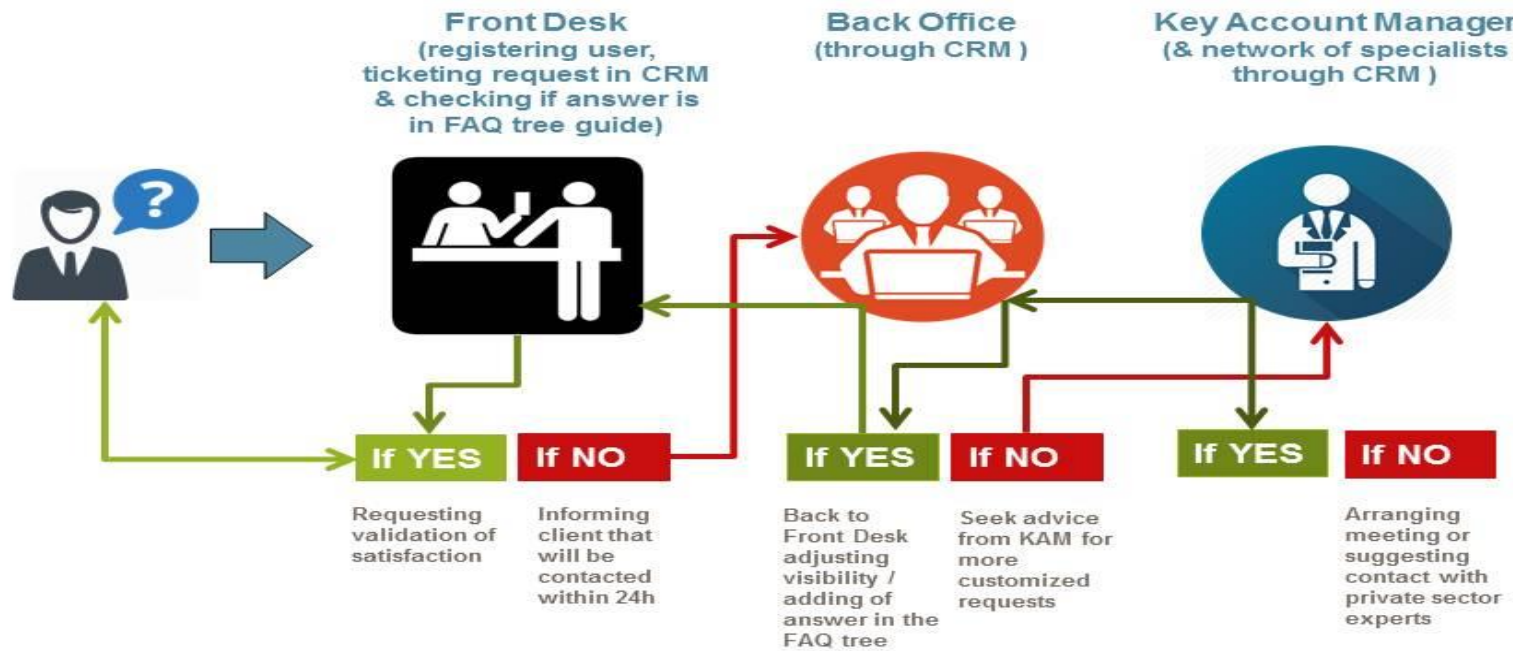
All the above can be depicted in the graph below:

¹⁵ See Annex 4.2.



Inquiry Flow Chart

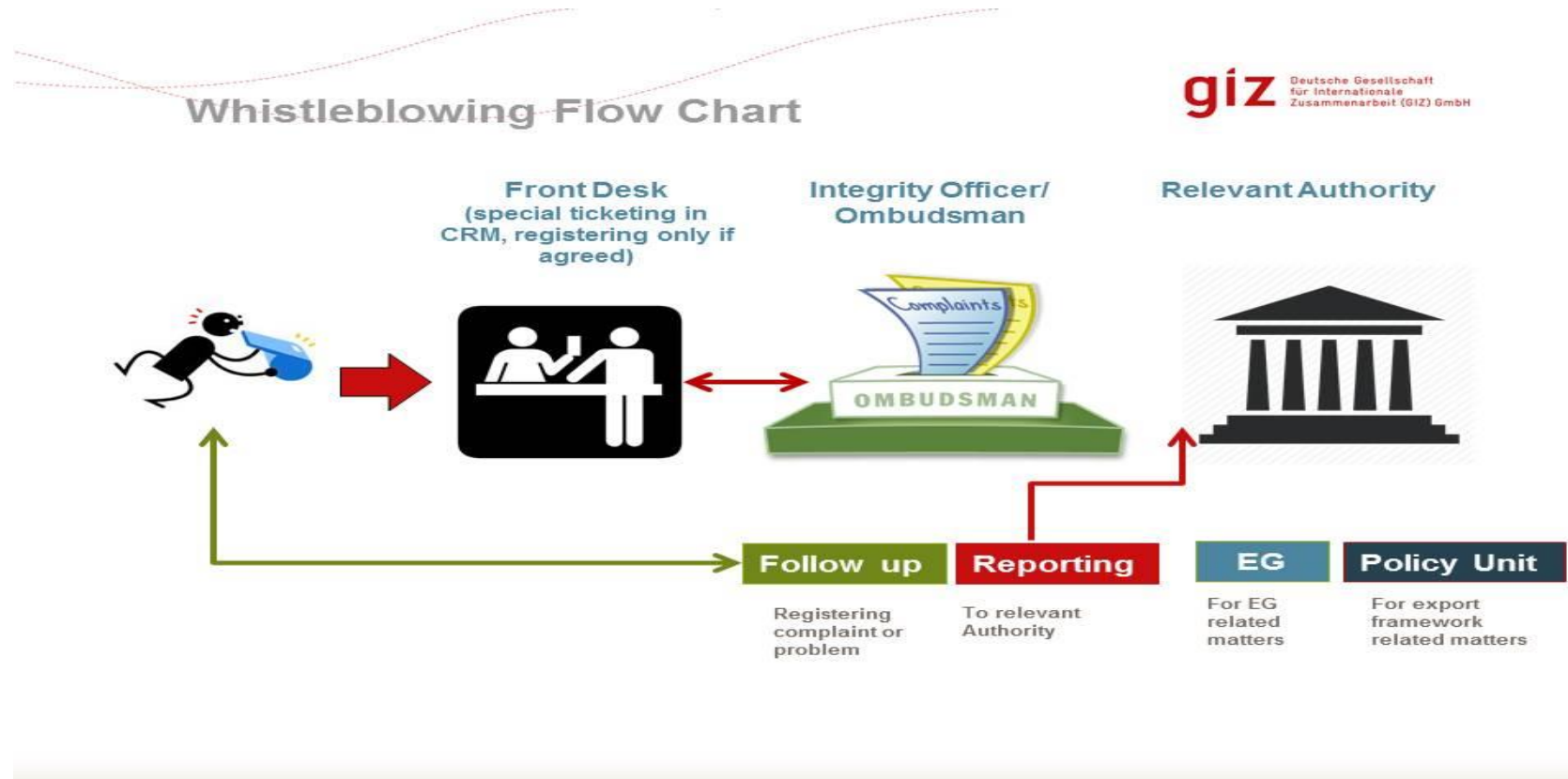
giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



Graph: Help-desk inquiry flow chart



In the case of a whistleblowing complaint, the flow chart is adjusted accordingly as follows:



Graph: Help-desk whistleblowing flow chart



Even when adapting the outlined organizational set-up and structure, GIZ however remains concerned about the networking capacity of EG, both domestically and abroad. The Organization is currently lacking presence outside Athens and Thessaloniki, where the bulk of potential exporters may be located, while Commercial Attachés abroad and MFA officials seem rather reluctant to delegate information back to companies through EG.

Best practices reviewed showcase the efficiency of deploying a networking mechanism that include Regional Advisors (Regional Chambers of Commerce, regional consultants etc.) and presence points abroad (in strategic key markets or broader geographical areas). We would strongly recommend that expanding EG presence both domestically and abroad will enhance its role as EPA and coordinating mechanism for export promotion activities.

Institutional cooperation between EG help-desk and MFA in foreign countries could be foreseen in the on-going procedure for the amendment EG' Statutory Law (4242/14)¹⁶.

Knowledge Base

Today, EG depends on outside sources and databases to compile or generate information (EL-STAT, business associations, MFA, MinAgric, ITC, ICAP, Kompass etc.), thus having limited capacity in providing Guidance, Advocating and Empowering services.

To address these challenges, GIZ suggests the development of a Knowledge Base, as the second pillar of the help-desk (along with CRM system), intended for use by EG and other public authorities' staff, as well as final beneficiaries (exporters and potential exporters).

The Knowledge Base should be structured on the foundation of "How to Export Guides" and around an FAQ tree guide, allowing Front Desk and Back Office operators, as well as the help-desk's web interface, to facilitate end users in accessing desired information and data.

The FAQ tree guide will navigate Front Desk and Back Office personnel to (grouped) answers in each of the 5 support Axes content and services (as described in paragraph 2.2); guidance, empowering, advocating, coordinating and whistleblowing.

Empowering Greek companies to export also consists of empowering human resources and developing skill-sets for entrepreneurs and exporting companies'

¹⁶ Synergies and programmatic agreements between EG and MFA are already foreseen in the existing Greek legislation (EG Statutory Law 4242/2014). In the light of recent developments and in order to ensure EG and MFA cooperation for the development of the Export Promotion IT System, Greek authorities examine the possibility of an Amendment to the Law, taking into account the need for a clear division of labor.



personnel. For example, Enterprise Ireland offers mentoring and coaching support to Exporters and Export Training courses or Webinars. The development of training courses and webinars¹⁷ should start and become an integral part of the help-desk, contributing more input to the FAQ tree.

The above suggestions are summarized in the Graph below:

¹⁷ GIZ under WP 3 will provide a manual with minimum criteria for the financing of training and consultation programs for exports and recommendations on a coordination framework for such activities (Deliverables 3.1.3 & 3.2).



FAQs Tree Guide chart



giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Via web interface, IT tools & Front Desk (search by sector/country)

Guidance

Generic economic data
Sectors/Countries of
priority
Trade statistics by
country/sector
Generic export
regulations (MADB)
Business news &
opportunities (incl.
Tenders)
Events calendar

Empowering

Advantages of exports
Assess export
readiness
How to get ready to
export
Create export plans
Information on how to
finance exports
Usual contract terms
(pricing, forms of
delivery and payments
on exports)

Advocacy

Delegating to
sources of
information from
relevant
authorities
(Useful links and
contact info)

Coordination

Registering and
following up (CRM)
on delegated
inquiries to relevant
authorities
(Useful links and
contact info)

Whistleblowing

Registering
complaints or
problems

Via training & consultation programs, KAM and network of partners

Importers database for
the specific
country/sector
Specific country/sector
related regulations on
customs and products
Specific legal issues
on trade by
country/sector

Methodology to
research the markets
How to grow the export
business
Guides about Shipping
and logistics
Customs & licensing
guides

Acting on behalf
of the inquiring
company to find
solutions from all
suitable sources
(public & private
sector)

Elevate to higher
authority:
Exporters' problems
Overlaps of
activities
Potential synergies
& improvements
KPIs evaluation

Raise awareness on
capacity to whistle-
blow

Graph: Knowledge base and FAQ tree flow chart



Evaluation

The monitoring and assessment of modes of operations, of synergies and partnerships forged and of the provision of services, based on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Impact Indicators has to be an integral part of a comprehensive management model. Meeting critical values and sustaining results should be part of a continuous administrative process, at least as far as the collection of information and Key Performance data are concerned, and shall be carried out in regular terms, at least once a year.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) suggested by GIZ in relation to service delivery are:

- **Response time** in enquiries: Immediate by phone, automated reply in web forms (contact within 24h)
- **Average Waiting Time** by phone contacts: No more than 1 minute
- **Average Phone Time** by contacts: No more than 30 minutes. If answer not available caller to be contacted by help-desk within 24h.
- **Number of Enquiries received:** No less than 600 per year (doubling current figures)¹⁸
- **Average Response Time for Enquiries received:** Within 5 working days
- **Number of Enquiries answered within average response time:** 95%
- **Number of Pending Enquiries:** less than 5% after 10 working days
- **Number of New Companies registered:** Equal to the number of enquiries (submitted by single VAT number), not already registered in EG CRM & ERP systems. Target value: double existing data base of 1500 companies, within 2 years

As a potential challenge in this respect, it has to be acknowledged that setting up concrete KPIs cannot in all of the above cases be a unilateral process, as it depends a lot in the finalization of SLAs, MoUs and contracts with contributors and service providers, who need to agree on the performance indicators.

Impact Indicators shall also be set to evaluate the overall service delivery of the help-desk towards exporters.¹⁹ The Impact Indicators to be suggested (export increase, job creation, quality improvement, innovation) and their respective target values however need to be set on a higher political level (possibly within the Extroversion Committee), and then be monitored accordingly.

The evaluation process for the performance of the help-desk services should aim:

- to evaluate the impact of the help-desk for the target-users, i.e. companies in Greece that have contacted the help-desk to be assisted in their exporting activities

¹⁸ GIZ: Estimation is based on a) number of enterprises seeking support from help-desks as percentage of active export enterprises and b) projection of number of Greek enterprises exporting, if EU average is met.

¹⁹ See GIZ deliverable report 2.1, page 45.



- to assess the *quality* of the information provided in terms of reliability, timely updates, completeness etc.
- to self-assess the overall service and result to proposals for improvements of the service.

The evaluation system should provide for regular evaluation reports, for example as follows:

- Half-yearly presentation of KPIs
- Annual quantitative progress reports (KPIs and possibly Impact Indicators) and a self-assessment
- Every two years a user and experts survey and assessment on activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts
- Every three years a Benchmarking report comparing with similar services

2.5 Human resources

Currently EG has scarce human resources allocated to the Corporate Support (CS) Department, which presently provides help-desk services for exporters (2 employees), while enquiries received are not processed in a unified way, depending on the means of submitting them (by web form, by phone, by direct e-mail to personnel etc.)²⁰.

In 2017, the CS Department received around 300 enquiries for support from enterprises. GIZ Team estimates (using GTAI and SBA Fact Sheet figures²¹) that this number will be tripled in the near future (if EG help-desk gains visibility among exporters). We therefore suggest that:

- at least 3 skilled personnel should be recruited within the funding process for the help desk development project, according to EPANEK framework, as new additional staff of the Back Office, receiving, processing and delegating enquiries and answers (back and from Key Account Managers²² and other relevant institutions / partners). The Back Office personnel will be the main users of the CRM System and responsible for follow-up services. Future needs for additional help-desk staffing should be foreseen in the forthcoming recruitment procedure of EG, which aims at doubling the current Organization's human resources (+50 new recruitments), ensuring sustainability after the end of funding period.

²⁰ GIZ: The introduction of a CRM (in progress) will help structuring the processing of enquiries and the work-flow in general.

²¹ GIZ: Estimation was based on a) number of enterprises seeking support from help-desks as percentage of active export enterprises and b) projection of number of Greek enterprises exporting if EU average is met.

²² Head of Departments in EG organizational chart, with responsibilities by industry/sector or/and by geographic region.



- part of Front and Back Office responsibilities could also be outsourced to external partners, such as call center service providers, Business Associations help-desks, Chambers of Commerce and Regional Authorities, thus leading to capacity building through synergies and networking. Access of these partners to help-desk CRM system should also be foreseen.
- as per Key Account Managers, a job description and positions within the future organizational chart for *Thematic Specialists* for
 - a) financing/funding,
 - b) regulatory compliance (procedures & standards) and
 - c) logistics/packagingshould also be foreseen in the forthcoming recruitment procedure of EG, as these fields relate to major trade impediments already identified and acknowledged in terms of companies' needs and data currently missing.

It is recommended that the recruitment and out-sourcing procedure should be supported by vocational education and training programs for both dedicated personnel (existing and new) and outside partners / contributors, ensuring quality in service provision.

As an example, GIZ supported to familiarize EG management and existing staff with knowledge regarding content, using comprehensive examples for country reports from GTAI and iXPOS portals²³ and conducting workshops with the International Trade Center (ITC) and Euromonitor, as (potential) providers of such content.

2.6 Financing

Enterprise Greece, the National EPA of Greece, fulfilling respective MoE strategies on export promotion, has been selected as the eligible body for submitting a funding proposal to the relevant authorities (EPANEK) for the development of a help-desk. EG's eligibility has been validated by EPANEK under Call 073 "for the upgrading of services of Public Administration bodies for supporting business environment and the extroversion of enterprises (Cycle B)".

The funding procedure consists of a) submitting a Technical Fiche²⁴ to the funding authority (after a respective decision by the EG Board), b) assessment of the Technical Fiche by the funding authority (within 2 months), c) issuing an acceptance or rejection decision from the funding authority. Once the proposal is accepted, EG will launch a tendering procedure for each of the project's deliverables, according to the predefined timetable.

²³ Head of Departments in EG organizational chart, with responsibilities by industry/sector or/and by geographic region.

²⁴ See GIZ deliverable 2.3.



Taking into account MoE's priorities, GIZ suggests a gradual implementation of help-desk's deliverables (sub-projects) until the end of the funding period (24 months since initial acceptance of funding). Preliminary estimates place help-desk's total budget at around 550,000.00 euros. This gradual implementation, as well as the budget estimates are analyzed in deliverable 2.3.

According to the existing funding framework, a Monitoring-of-implementation Committee needs to be established. Project Coordinator, Project Manager, Project Contact Person and Committee members should be appointed from EG high and middle management and staff.

The financial sustainability of the project after the funding period must be ensured. The major continuing cost components after the funding period are related to

- Personnel cost (employees and outsourced services, i.e. call-center services)
- Cost for databank-access (yearly subscriptions)

The cost for databank-access should be covered by the internal yearly budget of EG. The total cost (approximately €30.000 per year)²⁵ is not significantly high, so GIZ estimation is that covering them by the regular budget is feasible.

Personnel hiring beyond the funding period depends on the general government policy and procedures. As per information GIZ has received, EG's recruitment procedure for +50 personnel will be concluded by end of Q2/Q3 of 2018. Some of the newly hired personnel could thus be assigned to the help-desk positions after the end of the funding period. Alternative solutions can be considered whenever necessary and useful, i.e. continuing or increasing the services assigned to the outsourced call-center (service contracts), deploying more outsourced services (consultants) or temporary employment contracts.

Furthermore, some EU best practices suggest that a fee could be introduced for customized services. At the current state of play, EG institutional law and Greek Authorities' vision reflects that service delivery will be free of charge.

GIZ estimates show that an increase of EG visibility to (potential) Exporters and the broader spectrum of service delivery will result to a growth in the Organizations turnover (more clients to participate in Fairs, Trade Delegations and promotion activities, currently under fee), thus covering extra expenses deriving from the help-desk operations²⁶.

²⁵ See GIZ Deliverable report 2.3.

²⁶ GIZ: A 10% of the total budget of the help-desk development is suggested to be allocated in publicity expenses, according to the Technical Fiche proposed by GIZ (see GIZ Deliverable Report 2.3).



3. Recommendations on technical solutions

Best practices in EU member states suggest that a help desk should not be restricted to a traditional “phone call center” or face-to-face meetings, but requires various communication channels. A web interface is developing into the most frequently used foundation upon which help-desk services are structured. Considering the current composition of enterprises²⁷ in Greece and taking into account endogenous characteristics and demographic data (access and use of internet, age of entrepreneurs, size of enterprises by number of employees, export maturity etc.), GIZ recommends that using web interface as a base, EG help-desk should deploy all available methods for service delivery, as follows:

- **Web interface**

A help-desk microsite (integrated in the EG website) structured in the form of FAQs and Useful Links, along with Web Forms or Email contacts will facilitate a) generic responses (without direct human interaction) and b) filtering, documenting and ticketing of more complex enquiries that require the expertise of more qualified²⁸ personnel (of the help-desk or other relevant institutions).

Furthermore, the help-desk should also find its expression within the future (common) IT-system for exporters, both in ways of web-interface as well as contact possibilities via email, phone or chat. In addition to that, we suggest that a web interface or at least a link (banner) guiding to the help-desk can be applied to various other public (possibly also private) sector body’s websites, such as Chambers of Commerce, other Ministries, ICISnet, etc.

- **Social media:** Social media platforms (i.e. facebook, twitter, linkedin, Instagram etc.) should be used as an additional means of communication with the enterprise community. Alerts, news, events, etc. can be communicated through this channel, whereas a first guidance with links to web documents within the EG website may also be given.
- **Newsletter:** The possibility to subscribe to a newsletter – already edited once per month by EG, and to be enriched with information on the export promotion activities – should also be foreseen.
- **Forum:** An on-line discussion forum where exporters can exchange experience and information regarding selected markets, procedures, etc., but also facilitating direct communication with EG administrators

- **Phone/Call center**

Phone enquiries shall rather be limited to giving guidance to the content of the FAQ tree guide, as they include the risk of misunderstandings or incomplete information. Phone communications for more complex issues that require support from Back Office personnel or Key Account Managers shall deploy resources to respond timely over the phone²⁹.

²⁷ See ELSTAT report, July 2017.

²⁸ See paragraph 2.5.

²⁹ GIZ: As far as phone contact is concerned the German GTAI offers phone assistance at a fee (€42,50 for 30 minutes) deploying experts on regions and subjects. Other help-desks, like Italtrade,



- **Outbound phone communication** however can be used when intending to inform about activities of EG such as exhibitions, seminars etc., in order to follow up and ensure sufficient participation.
- **Personal assistance**
Beneficiaries should be able to receive guidance, empowerment and advocating support, as well as to address the whistleblowing mechanisms, in-person, during pre-arranged meetings with EG experts (when all other modes of operation have not produced satisfactory results).
 - **Infrastructure support** within EG to host meetings in-person
 - **Empowering visit to companies by EG personnel** for provide *in situ* services
 - **Regional Advisors** are also recommended to be foreseen, in order to raise awareness and provide assistance, especially to “non-intenders” (companies that are not currently examining the possibility to export) and potential exporters.

As per the beneficiaries of the support, the provision of services should follow a registration procedure, during first contact with the help-desk and to be integrated in the CRM System, including the possibility to set up a personalized user dashboard, registering key company/person data (contact information, company name, VAT number, sector of activity or interest etc.).

While the registration is proposed to be free of charge, it gives the opportunity to the help-desk to identify and classify each client and monitor both the individual service delivery and trace enquiries and contacts with the client. It also serves the purpose of creating a database of (potential/intender) exporters which can be used for outbound evaluations calls/contacts, as a source of potential EG clients, in terms of communicating future export promotion activities (fairs, trade mission, inward visits of foreign buyers etc.).

3.1 IT set-up

While an efficient CRM system remains at the core of the help-desk, focus should be also in empowering staff and beneficiaries with appropriate IT tools. GIZ proposes the following as key components of a comprehensive help-desk IT set-up:

- a. Match-making platform tool, for matching domestic supply with foreign demand and facilitating business networking. This specialized IT tool is being used for providing personalized information to (potential) exporters and importers as potential buyers. Besides processing and cross-referencing the profiles of the exporting and importing companies, such a platform also supports i) Posting of specific requests from Greek / foreign

offer only a very limited time to be accessed by phone (2½ hours daily) and clearly define that individual services are payable at a rate of € 300 per man day.



- companies and ii) direct messaging capacity between exporters and importers
- b. E-learning platform, for remote guidance of potential exporters, but also for the continuous training of EG staff and outside partners.
 - c. Events / Calendar management tool, that will allow importing, processing and following-up information surrounding export promotion events, coupled with an automatic notification mechanism (Events Alerts).
 - d. Forum software, to facilitate direct communication of internet users with dedicated EG administrators, creating relevant threads regarding exports issues, resulting to compile “real life” FAQs.
 - e. Newsletter application for creating, editing and automatically sending an electronic newsletter to a selected database with e-mail addresses of registered users.
 - f. Social Media accounts and analytics tool, for the integration of social networks in the communication channels of the help-desk with final beneficiaries. The social media analytics tool will be implemented for the measurement of some KPIs on the efficiency of social networking posts.
 - g. Business intelligence system, coupled with search engine optimization and automated dynamic reporting tool (for integrating data from outside sources) functions. As such, BI software will support decision-making (in EG and through EG to all relevant Authorities), facilitate identification of market / industry trends, sector trend detection and provide exporters sophisticated input (reports). BI can also be used to identify and track KPIs.

According to existing funding framework and Call 073 guidelines (from which EG will request funding for the development of the help-desk), IT expenses are not allowed to exceed 30% of the total budget. GIZ suggests that EG management should consider implementing all of the above, even by foreseeing these expenses in the Organization’s annual operating budget.

3.2 Compatibility

One of the basic information sources from which the help-desk shall draw data and other information input (and vice-versa insert new information and input learned), will be the Export Promotion IT System under development. At the same time, EG help-desk, as a single entry point for enquiries from (potential) Exporters will be interlinked with the (to-be developed) Export Promotion IT System, as well as with existing help-desks, from public and private sector institutions.

In that context, GIZ Team, supported by IT consulting experts, have checked for compatibility requirements of both ends (Export Promotion IT System and EG Help-desk), and concluded that open data Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) are considered as the foundation of such compatibility at the technical level. Open data



approach is also mandatory according to the binding Directive of the General Secretariat of Digital Policy (GSDP) for the implementation of the IT System. GIZ recommends that EG help-desk, as per its IT set-up, should also follow the same approach.

Specifically, GIZ suggests that well-structured Application Programming Interfaces (API) are to be implemented together with specific web services (in the form of SLAs) addressed to existing information systems and help-desks of the identified relevant (public and private, Greek and international) institutions.

To address the challenge of other help-desks not being able to interconnect with EG help-desk (lack of web interface, outdated IT systems etc.), GIZ strongly suggests that the development of the EG Knowledge Base should be supported by Business Intelligence tools that could integrate all input of data, no matter if the data are unstructured or/and not compatible with formats (to-be) used by the help-desk.

These suggestions take into account both scenarios regarding the future of the (implementation of) Export Promotion IT System - the implementation as initially agreed by the Greek Authorities (a common platform by two pillars: MFA and MoE/EG) or the implementation of two separate IT Systems. In both cases, a help-desk empowered with IT tools (which can later be utilized and integrated in the common IT-platform) and structured (as per web set-up) around open data APIs, could ensure compatibility with any (existing and future) IT systems, as well as providing the critical and needed information to the final beneficiaries.

To avoid duplication of effort and expenses (meaning integrating same tools in help-desk and IT system), EG and MoE should speed up processes leading to submitting the Technical Fiche to the Funding Authority (EPANEK), by the end of February, so that it will precede those of the IT System. If that happens, Technical Fiche of the IT system will be adjusted, foreseeing interoperability with help-desk's IT tools, such as BI, matchmaking-platform etc.



4. Annex

4.1 Mapping of other export related help-desks

In 2016, MoE assigned a study to the private consulting company Intraway. They surveyed 56 public and private sector bodies involved in export promotion and support. Around 80% of those organizations stated that they provide help-desk services, even though only 36% of those included help-desk operation in their founding laws and only 13% have integrated a position of at least one IT/help-desk content manager.

As per means of service delivery, 31% of public and private sector help-desk provide information and guidance via e-mail, 28% by phone, 26% through face-to-face meetings and only 6% with tools like instant messaging. Other ways for service delivery were also identified, as follows: *seminars, while participating in fairs and business delegations, newsletters and awareness campaigns.*

Following a specific methodology, the study does not discriminate between content of information provided via a web information portal and a help-desk, though supporting that a combined solution (information both from IT System and Help-desk), serves better the companies'/ clients' needs and expectations.

Although a conclusive list of help-desks mapped is not included in the published version of the Intraway study, GIZ identified help-desk services for exporters being offered also from other public or private organizations, such as:

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Market Ombudsman): Launched in end of 2015, the Market Ombudsman is described by the MFA as *"a modern tool for supporting businesses and provides HelpDesk services, through the Foreign Ministry's "Agora" portal, to Greek enterprises active internationally, with the aim of supporting the export efforts of Greek enterprises and expanding Greek business activities into new markets"*. As a one-person office MO, facilitates communication of companies with ECA Bureaux abroad, while providing ad hoc guidance to interested parties on where to find relevant information.
- Customs Authority (ICISnet): Via ICISnet portal companies can fill out web forms with enquiries, review FAQs and seek advice by phone from dedicated personnel
- Chambers of Commerce: As public sector entities CCs foresee Export Departments for supporting interested parties with export procedures and guidance, whereas not all of them have established such a department in reality. While responsible for issuing export documents (such as Certificates of origin), CCs – not having their own export-related, coherent content - depend on collaboration with other public and private sector bodies to provide information to exporters, mainly through workshops and seminars (but not in a standardized way).



- Regional Authorities: Like in the case of CCs, some of the Regional Authorities have developed business support departments, integrating export related support (not always in a consistent way).
- Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (SEV): SEV in 2016 launched the ExportReady Service, which consists of 3 pillars: ExportReady Master, for transferring of know-how by experienced exporters, ExportReady Discover providing market info and analysis, with content provided in cooperation with *Fitch* and ExportReady Connect for networking support. From late 2017 information (links) for the above 3 pillars can be found via ExportReady Help Desk e-mail (web form) and a dedicated phone number.
- Panhellenic Exporters' Association (PSE): Using web forms and phone, interested parties can contact PSE dedicated contact person asking for export related information. In the PSE website generic information can be found in the form of a Guide for Exporters, while registered members can access Importers and Potential partners Registries. The website also supports classified ads and information on Tenders (mainly from MFA data).
- Northern Greece Exporters' Association (SEVE): SEVE describes its structure as a One-Stop-Shop for exporters and has integrated a Business Support & Information Department in its organizational chart. Via SEVE website registered members can have access in trade statistics, business guides and networking services. For more customized enquiries, web forms and phone call assistance are also available.
- Eurobank: ExportGate is Eurobank's platform for supporting Greek exporters. While focusing more in B2B networking, ExportGate is coupled with the Ask the Experts function, where companies can seek more customized support, in addition to generic guidelines and statistical data available on the web interface.
- Alpha Bank: Via its international trade platform, Alpha bank aims at providing support to exporters. The help-desk service consists of guidance within the platform and delegation to other bank departments (mainly for financing issues).



4.2 OEC network

In May 2016 a revision of the initial Prime-ministerial decision provided for the creation of an Operational Extroversion Committee (OEC) to assist the work of the IEC.³⁰ The OEC has members from the following bodies:

- Secretary General of Ministry of Economy (Chairman)
- Representatives from Ministry of Economy (International Relations)
- Representatives from Ministry of Foreign Affairs (International Economic Relations)
- Representatives from Ministry of Rural Development (International Economic Policy)
- Representatives from Enterprise Greece (Trade & Investment Branches)
- Representatives from Export Credit Insurance Organization (OAEP)
- Representatives from National Tourism Organization (GNTO)
- Representatives from General Secretariat of Coordination (Ministry of State)
- Representatives from General Secretariat of Digital Policy (Ministry of Digital Policy)
- Representatives from Independent Authority for Public Revenue (Customs)
- Representatives from Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (SEV)
- Representatives from Pan-Hellenic Exporters Association (PSE)
- Representatives from Exporters Association of Northern Greece (SEVE)
- Representatives from Regional Authorities (Attica Regional Authority)

GIZ recommends that representatives from the above mentioned bodies should be used as contact persons and antennas creating a network of specialists and sources of information for the help-desk.

³⁰ Official Gazette, Greek Government No 1529/30-5-2016, available at <http://www.mindev.gov.gr/images/tropopoiisi-apofasis-systasis-epitropis-exostrefeias.pdf>.



4.3 SLA – MoU drafts

(Attached in a separate document due to file size – in Greek language. A general summary in English language can be found below).

SLA / MoU³¹ SUMMARY

BETWEEN

ENTERPRISE GREECE AND THE PROVIDER / PARTNER

RECITAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help Desk is an exporter support service within ENTERPRISE GREECE.• ENTERPRISE GREECE is the Help Desk operator, responsible for the uninterrupted operation and maintenance of the Help Desk.
ARTICLE 1 - OBJECT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The cooperation between ENTERPRISE GREECE and the Provider regarding the provision of the Service (as defined below).• The purpose of the Help Desk Service is mainly to support Help Desk users.• Service definition and description: The services required to operate the Help Desk Service and support the Help Desk Users (e.g. provide advice on the benefits for an interested party to export, advice on preparing for export activity).• The provision of the Services will take place in the appropriate manner, indicatively and without limitation via email, telephone, web-interface, personal meetings.
ARTICLE 2 – OBLIGATIONS AND DUTIES OF PROVIDER	<p>(Indicatively :)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Effort to provide Services within five (5) working days.• Providing Services with the utmost consistency, responsibility for the correctness and validity of their

³¹ GIZ: SLA can be converted to MoU by removing specific KPIs and clauses (and *vice versa*).



	content, etc.
ARTICLE 3 - OBLIGATIONS AND DUTIES OF ENTERPRISE GREECE	(Indicatively :) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creation and support of the Help Desk Service• Help Desk Service handles Help Desk Users' requests• Establishment of a Services Assessment System
ARTICLE 4 - INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Provider grants to ENTERPRISE GREECE the non-exclusive and non-transferable right to use the Service and Data provided by the Provider, the trade name and other symbols.• The Services provided shall be retained in the absolute ownership of Provider.
ARTICLE 5 - CONFIDENTIALITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All information is strictly confidential.
ARTICLE 6 – DURATION AND TERMINATION OF SLA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Duration of indefinite time.• Possibility of any time termination upon thirty (30) days' written notice.
ARTICLE 7 – FINAL PROVISIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The SLA cannot be (re)assigned to third party, without prior written consent.• Only written amendments are allowed.• Greek law is applicable – Greek Courts are competent.
ANNEX A	HELP DESK SERVICES