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Letters to Editor

PROJECT: GET IT SERBIA

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Abstract

Mission of this project is to increase competitiveness of the potential entrepreneurs living in Bor's region, which will result with rapid development of micro enterprises, resulting from knowledge base created during the project. This will have a great impact in increase absorption capacity in the region which will lead to better understanding and use of future EU and other funds. This will result with decrease of unemployment. To achieve this, Management department of Technical faculty in Bor has found strong partner in Hewlett Packard (HP) and its HP GET-IT program. Also, project GET-IT Serbia wouldn't be possible without strong support from Micro Enterprise Acceleration Institute (MEA-I).

Keywords: HP, GET-IT, MEA-I, Project

1. INTRODUCTION

HP believes that micro enterprise development is one of the most effective ways of helping the unemployed or underemployed. In the European Union (EU) member states in average18 percent or 5 million graduates from schools and universities below the age of 25 were unemployed in 2007. Youth unemployment in Europe is significantly higher than the average unemployment of 7.7 percent across all ages.

Most unemployed or low-income earners have limited access to technology and – perhaps most importantly – no real knowledge of how to use information technology (IT) to develop their capabilities further. If marginalised populations had greater access to both IT and IT-related

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business training, they would be able to acquire additional skills and could better qualify for a job or understand how to run their own business successfully. Microenterprise development helps people to start or expand very small businesses with the help of IT technology, training and a curriculum.

2. AN INTENSIVE COURSE FOR GRADUATES IN BUSINESS *IT*

"Graduate Entrepreneurship Training through IT" (GET-IT) is helping young un or underemployed people and graduates – aged 16 to 25 – to acquire the business and IT skills to enter professional life, or to start their own businesses.

HP launched GET-IT in May 2007. The programme is now integrated into 37 existing training centres with local NGOs that are already active in education and job creation in EMEA.

GET-IT training consists of interactive courses that deal with practical IT solutions for daily business challenges. The core element is a innovative curriculum called Technology Tools (T-Tools) that bridges the divide between pure business skills courses and technical skills courses. T-Tools fills the gap between business and standard IT courses. The modules explore how different IT solutions can address common business challenges in the areas of Management and Operations, Finances, Communication, and Marketing. Students are also in a better position to evaluate their skills and to identify their own needs for further training and development.

The primary goal of T-Tools is to demonstrate how entrepreneurs can improve the success of their businesses using Information and Communication
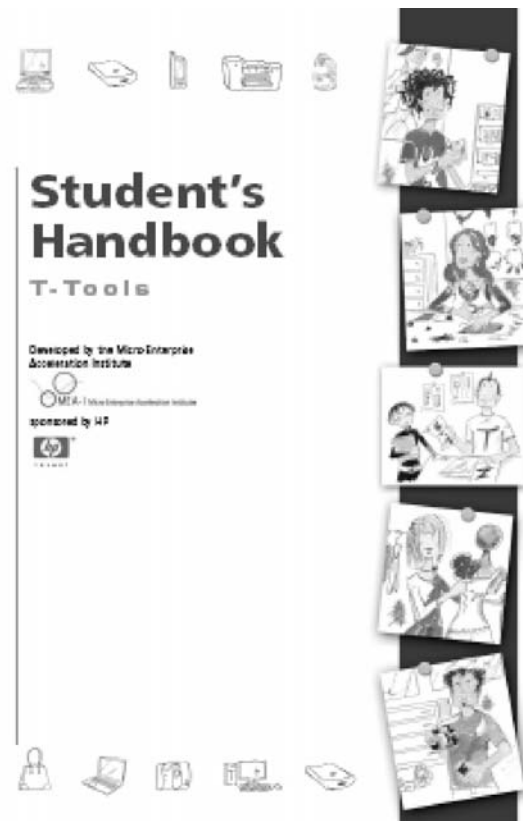
Technology (ICT). To achieve this goal, the GET-IT curriculum focuses on helping microentrepreneurs do the following:

- Start-up a business with right tools and clear ideas about the challenges and possible solutions

- Gain awareness and comfort with ICT

- Gain knowledge and skills in the business applications of ICT

- Use ICT to improve their business' efficiency and growth.

A secondary goal of this course is to provide participants with the opportunity to assess their needs for further training and technology investment.

Finally, this course offers participants the opportunity to share their ideas, experiences, and advice with each other. Learning from the varied experiences of other participants is an important component of this course [1].

HP Graduate Entrepreneurship Training through IT (GET-IT) [2]

The approach of T-Tools curriculum is far from traditional lecturing. Its approach is totally new and innovative and this way making difference with its originality.

This is not a typical business skills course (such as accounting or marketing), nor is it a typical technology course, in which the objective is to learn to use a particular software application or piece of equipment. This course can be considered a bridge between business and technology courses available to young entrepreneurs; it focuses on showing the power of technology when applied to the business realities (See Fig. 1).

Moreover, T-Tools course is modular and complements the offer of the existing training courses. It has basic and advanced options and is immediately applicable to the different business challenges. The highest value of the course is the comprehensive step-by step hands-on activities.

Another ingredient of the T-Tools curriculum is the use of experiential learning methodology. The experiential learning cycle works as follows:

First, participants are provided with new information; second, they process the information in a hands-on experience; third, they reflect on the experience; and fourth, they apply what they have learned. Research shows that adults learn best in this hands-on way.

Each topic in this curriculum includes the following components specifically designed to propel participants through this cycle to allow for richer, fuller learning in the classroom:

- Participants start with a scenario that introduces concepts around a particular topic.

- Participants then gain experience with a technology tool.

- Participants reflect on whether and how this tool might be applied in their own businesses.

Participants leave with the skills and knowledge to take additional steps toward applying a solution [1].
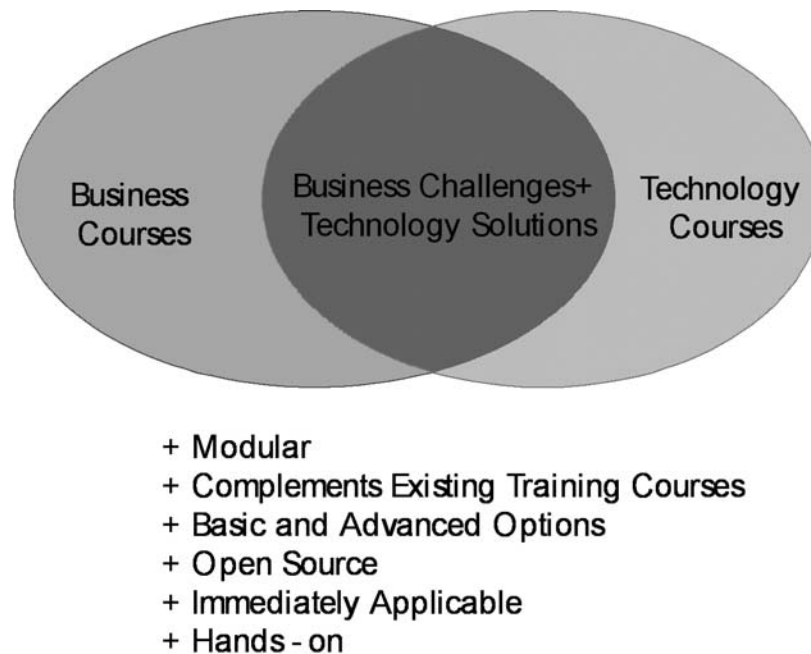
+ Modular
+ Complements Existing Training Courses
+ Basic and Advanced Options
+ Open Source
+ Immediately Applicable
+ Hands - on

Figure 1. The bridge between business and technology courses available to young entrepreneurs [1]

In 2008, the HPs plan is to extend the GET-IT centres to all together 70 training institutions to deliver training programmes to15,000 students in approx. 30 EMEA countries.

More information can be found on the HP GET-IT website: *http://www.graduate-training-through-it.net/index.php [2]*

2.1. Participating countries – "Graduate Entrepreneurship Training through IT" (GET-IT)

As part of the 2008 GET-IT programme, a maximum of 35 additional HP GET-IT centres will be awarded a grant package to be able to offer training. The following countries have been chosen according to the HP EMEA business strategies and growth perspectives: Algeria, Belgium, Bosnia, CIS, Croatia, Egypt, France, Iberia/Portugal, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kenya, Lebanon, Morocco, Nigeria, Oman, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, South Africa, Tunisia, UAE, UK and Uganda.

2.2. Getting ready for GET-IT

Participating organisations receive HP equipment, the T-Tools Guidance course for their trainers and the T-Tools training materials. Curricula are available in the following languages so far: French, Finnish, German, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian and Russian. For Africa, the English and French versions will be used as appropriate. Translations into Arabic will be delivered in addition.

Trainees who participate in a GET-IT training course in collaboration with local agencies will receive:

• Access to state of the art HP technology managed and staffed by local training and business development service providers

• Practical, hands-on training in how to use information and communications technology to be more productive

• Access to an online learning community with resources and tools to help sustain the trainees business's growth

The technology grant package includes:

• 9 HP Compaq laptops

• 1 HP Compaq Notebook/ Tablet PC ultra-light

• 1 HP Ultra-slim Expansion Base with DVD drive (Docking station for tablet PC)

• 1 HP Pen for Tablet PC with Tether

• 10 AC SmartAdapter for Tablet PC + Laptops

• 10 HP USB Optical Travel Mouse

• 4 HP IPAQs

• 1 HP OfficeJet all-in-one printer/scanner/copier/fax

• 1 HP Wireless Access Point

• 1 HP ProCurve Switch 408

• 1 digital projector

• 1 Mobile Net cart small Edition for use+ storage as mobile solution with the HP laptops (width122cm, height 66cm, depth 78 cm, weight 65kg)

• T-Tools curriculum materials

• Participation in T-Tools "train-the-trainer" sessions on curriculum delivery

• Participation in GET-IT network with additional benefits

• Opportunity to participate in 'Master Trainer Session' upon successful completion of T-Tools guidance course. Travel cost to be paid by NGO, training delivery to be paid by HP.

VAT and shipment costs will be included. The value of the mobile solution grant to each social organisation is USD $23,000 (HP List Price) plus appr. USD $ 20,000 for the curriculum and the train-the-trainer session.

2.3. A strong partnership to implement GET-IT

HP collaborates with the Micro Enterprise Acceleration Institute (MEA-I) for the

successful roll-out of the programme. MEA-I was launched in July 2006 (www.mea-i.org)[3] and if fully sponsored by HP.

3. GET-IT 2008 PROJECT PLAN

3.1. Project timeframe for HP fiscal year 2008

December 2007 – January 2008
   - Select 35 social NPOs through RFP process
   - Roll-out 2008 GET IT programme

February 2008 – April 2008
   - Finalise selection process for 35 social NGOs
   - Arrange first Train the trainer sessions

May 2008 – July 2008
   - Next phase of Train the trainer sessions
   - Master training sessions (prerequisite is to successfully complete T-Tools Train the trainer session and NPO to fund travel and accommodation for trainer)
   - Order equipment for selected NPOs

August 2008 – October 2008
   - Training centers to be fully operational
   - First results/feedback available

3.2. Eligibility Requirements

From December until end of January, HP has selected additional 35 local social not-for-profit organisations (NGOs) in approx. 24 countries that are qualified to offer training to graduates according to the defined criteria below. Requests for proposals (RFPs) could be completed upon invitation only. Successful applications for the grant had to include:

   * A description of the organisation's missions and aims
   * A documentation of the technological infrastructure available
   * A description of how the training programme can augment existing programmes
   * A description of how the technology will be used for the delivery of the GET-IT training
   * Access to the right Student target group (age 16-25 years)

Only not-for-profit organisation (including chambers of commerce) and government agency were eligible applicants. It had to meet all of the following requirements:

   * Provides business training as a primary part of its mission
   * Provides a substantial portion of its services to underserved communities
   * Has a local area network installed in the training center, with at least one data port and two electrical outlets available in the room allocated to the project and has technical infrastructure to support use of the Internet
   * Has the ability to provide support and maintenance of the mobile HP technology solution
   * Located near to an HP site or existing MAP/GET-IT training center

3.3. Review Criteria

Key criteria to evaluate the proposals included:
   * Supported target group of the organisation
   * Details provided as to how technology

and curriculum will benefit the trainings and the students

    * List of additional stakeholders and supporters involved with the organisation

    * Existing reporting processes

    * Sustainability plan

    * Previous success stories or details of positive social impact (e.g. training of unemployed increased employability of students, supporting marginalised people)

    * Opportunities for HP employee volunteering

    * Number of people the technology and curriculum will impact

Preference was given to organisations that:

    * Help young unemployed people

    * Support gender initiatives (e.g demonstrate commitment to ensure equal female participation, training for women only)

4. GET - IT SERBIA

Since Management departmant of Technical Faculty in Bor felt that we meet the eligibility requirements and are willing and able to fulfill the grant recipient commitments associated with this grant, we respond to the Request for Proposals by submitting our own project proposal [4].

4.1. Project Title: GET-IT Serbia (HP Graduate Entrepreneurship Training)

4.1.1. Target groups

First target group of this project are students of Technical faculty in Bor and students of high-school from Bor region. For this target group this programme will offer superpose to theoretical knowledge obtained at school/faculty. Second target group are unemployed citizens from Bor's region. This group of people will obtain knowledge necessary to ease their potential attempt for starting their own business or improving their chances of getting skilled jobs. Both target groups could be regarded as potential Entrepreneurs.

Nevertheless, We suppose that one fits all approach is not the right one for both groups since members of those target groups have different background and requirements for their future individual micro enterprises. Trainers needs to be able to address individual needs..

Final Beneficiaries of the project are Local community (people living in Bor district). Increasing their competitiveness after realization of the project will result with rapid development of micro enterprises, resulting from knowledge base created during this project, which will have a great impact in increase absorption capacity in the region which will lead to better understanding and use of future EU and other funds.

Reason for selection of target groups is that the future of this region as well as the future of the whole country higly depending on developing SMOs sector. The capability of these group in micro enterprise development is, at present stage, restricted and this project will enable them to realize those activities that they would not be able to realize using their own resources and existing skills. Also, the basis of the local social and economic reconstruction is the realization of local development projects which are to be managed by local micro enterprises.

4.1.2. Tentative timeline

Project phases:
- **Phase 1:** Promotional activities for the

realization of the project including promotional material for potential attendants and other advertising material,

- **Phase 2:** Preparing and printing the GET-IT Manual, on Serbian language, according to the T-Tools training materials and diversity among the different target groups. Proposed elements are:

a. First element: Basic knowledge of how to use information technology (IT) to further develop attendant's capabilities. This segment of the course will explore how different IT solutions can address common business challenges in the areas of Management and Operations, Finances, Communication, and Marketing. This part of the program will include: using MS office tools in those areas, using internet, easy ways of making websites, how to raise and administrate web page on the internet, text and image processing using Photoshop, Corel Draw and QuarkExpress and its application for marketing purposes.

b. Second element: Project management, including: Introduction to Project Management, Project initiation, Project planning and control, Project implementation, Project closeout and reports, Scheduling and cost control, Resource allocation and estimating, evaluation and forecasting. This part of the program will include MS Project and QM for Windows tuition of the attendants.

Both elements will be at different level for two target groups. For the first target group material will be based on what they know theoretically as starting potential which should be increased. For the second target group material will be at less demanding level, offering basic practical knowledge which can be extended during time.

Notice: in the next cycle, phase 2 will only consists modification of already prepared material, according to the new group structure.

- **Phase 3:** Selecting individuals and organization which would be included in project. Early start of this phase is the beginning of the phase 2 and late finish is the end of the phase two. Those two phases are connected because the material for the course is prepared according to the group composition.

- **Phase 4:** Defining List of candidates for studying groups (consisting of 10 candidates for each target group),

- **Phase 5:** Realization of GET-IT courses (according to the Manual defined by T-Tools training materials and modified for the needs of the target groups),

- **Phase 6:** Control of realization of GET-IT school Programme, forming the final report of GET-IT project development (Final report will include reports containing observations after every phase and potential improvements for the next cycle of the
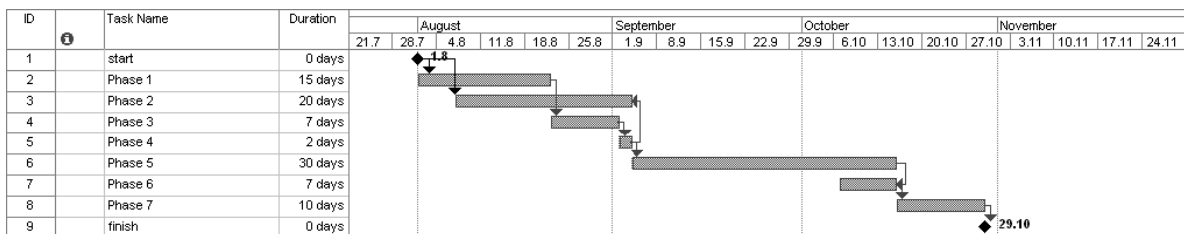
ID		Task Name	Duration	July	August					September				October				November			
				21.7	28.7	4.8	11.8	18.8	25.8	1.9	8.9	15.9	22.9	29.9	6.10	13.10	20.10	27.10	3.11	10.11	17.11	24.11
1		start	0 days																			
2		Phase 1	15 days																			
3		Phase 2	20 days																			
4		Phase 3	7 days																			
5		Phase 4	2 days																			
6		Phase 5	30 days																			
7		Phase 6	7 days																			
8		Phase 7	10 days																			
9		finish	0 days																	29.10			

Figure 2. GET-IT Serbia project timeline [4]

programme).

- **Phase 7:** Promotion activities after realization of each stage of the project, preparing GET-IT courses web site and promotion material.

Interdependences and duration of each project phase are presented in Figure 2.

During this project we plan to educate 12 groups of 10 people in one shift. Since we have two target groups we will have two shifts a day that would be 240 people per year.

4.2. Why do we need this project?

4.2.1. Average percentage of unemployment in Bor region and Serbia [5]

In Bor's municipal Number of unemployed people in November 2007 was 13.720. This number is large if concerning population of this region which in total is 55.817, among which employable (38.767). Number of people who own their businesses are 1.304. The number of unemployed people in Bor has risen in past 10 years, since collapse of one of the largest industrial corporation which is located here. (Mining and Metallurgy Basen – RTB Bor). In past 10 years, number of employees in RTB Bor decreased from 15.000 to 5.000, remaining lost their jobs. Since economy in this region was mono-structural, largely depending on RTB, most of those unemployed don't have jobs jet. There wasn't enough companies to absorb those people and they doesn't have enough knowledge to start their own business.

Serbia: By the end of November 2007, registered number of unemployed people in Serbia was 785.061 (Officially registered rate of unemployment in November was 25.4%), among which 54.1% were women.

By the end of November 2007, 382.697 persons were registered as first-time job seekers (225.155 or 58.8% were women). Others (402.364 persons) had been previously employed (199.183 or 49.5% were women). The participation of first-time job seekers in the total number of the unemployed in November was 48.7%, whereas the participation of the unemployed with previous working experience in the total number of active unemployed persons was 51.3%.

Compared to the previous month, unemployment decreased within the category of first-time job seekers by 6.855 persons (1.8%) and decreased by 5.301 persons (1.3%) among the unemployed with previous experience.

According to the duration of unemployment, the participation of different categories in the registered unemployment was as follows: up to 1 year (20.4%), 1-2 years (20.2%), 3-5 (16.6%), 2-3 (13.1%), 5-8 (12.5%), over 10 years (11.2%) and 8-10 (3.9%).

According to the duration of unemployment, the participation of women in the registered unemployment was as follows: up to 1 year (20.5%), 1-2 (18.7%), 3-5 (16.6%), over 10 (14.0%), 2-3 (13.5%), 5-8 (13.0%) and 8-10 (4.2%).

The participation of men was as follows: up to 1 year (24.7%), 1-2 (21.8%), 3-5 (15.9%), 2-3 (13.9%), 5-8 (12.1%), over 10 (8.0%) and 8-10 (3.5%).

Regarding the age, the participation of different categories in the registered unemployment was as follows: 31-40 (24.5%), 41-50 (23.2%), over 50 (21.7%), 19-25 (16.3%), 26-30 (13.3%) and up to 18 (1.0%).

Women: 31-40 (27.6%), 41-50 (24.1%), over 50 (16.8%), 19-25 (15.9%), 26-30

(14.8%) and up to 18 (0.9%). Men: over 50 (27.5%), 41-50 (22.1%), 31-40 (20.1%), 19-25 (16.7%), 26-30 (11.5%) and up to 18 (1.2%). 450.804 persons (57.4% of the total number of the unemployed) had been waiting for employment longer than 2 years (long-term unemployment), among which 257.914 (57.2%) were women. 53.7% of unemployed skilled workers and 63.7% of unskilled had been waiting for a job more than 2 years.

The structure of the unemployed in November 2007, according to their qualifications, did not change significantly:

- I – 249.176 (31.7%) (only 4th grade of elementary school)
- II – 42.749 (5.5%) (elementary school)
- III – 210.242 (26.8%) (trade school)
- IV – 211.376 (26.9%) (high school)
- V – 9.970 (1.3%) (higher school)
- VI – 30.757 (3.9%) (equal to College education)
- VII – 30.765 (3.9%) (B.Sc)
- VIII – 26 persons. (PhD)

The structure of unemployed women in November 2007, according to their qualifications, was as follows:

- I – 136.906 (32.3%)
- II – 24.263 (5.7%)
- III – 89.985 (21.2%)
- IV – 134.355 (31.7%)
- V – 1.752 (0.4%)
- VI – 18.459 (4.4%)
- VII – 18.606 (4.4%)
- VIII – 12 persons.

The structure of unemployed men in November 2007, according to their qualifications, was as follows:

- I – 112.270 (31.1%),
- II – 18.486 (5.1%),
- III – 120.257 (33.3%),
- IV – 77.021 (21.4%),

- V – 8.218 (2.3%),
- VI – 11.926 (3.3%),
- VII – 11.559 (3.2%)
- VIII – 14 persons.

The analysis of the structure of unemployment, according to gender and qualifications, showed that women's participation in the unemployment was higher within the skilled categories (high school (IV) – 63.6%, two-year college – 60.1%, university – 60.6%).

The largest number of unemployed women was registered in the following fields of activity:

- textile industry (87.3%),
- health care (82.8%),
- education (77.9%),
- culture, art and media (76.0%),
- economy, law and administration (74.9%),
- social and humanistic sciences (74.0%) and
- chemical and non-metal industry and typography (71.1%).

The largest number of unemployed men was registered in:

- mechanical engineering and metal processing industry (86.1%),
- electrical engineering (85.0%),
- transport (81.8%),
- sport (80.1%),
- public utility, upholstery and painting services (75.7%),
- forestry and wood processing (67.2%) and
- geodesy and civil engineering (64.2%).

During November 2007, there were 33.478 newly registered persons, among which 16.476 (49.2%) were women and 17.462 (52.2%) had previous working

experience. Compared to the previous month, the total number of new entrants decreased by 5.5%, while the number of new entrants with previous experience decreased by 6.2%.

36.398 unemployed persons were deleted from the register in November 2007 (18.813 or 51.7% were women), which was 0.1% more than in the previous month.

Above figures shows very large percentage of unemployment in Serbia. If we take a look on the structure of employed people in last 7 years and percentage of self-employed (entrepreneurs) situation is even worst, Table 1.

4.3. Project Objectives

Concerning that large number of unemployed people in Bor region and even Serbia could easily become self employed was main motivation for starting this project. Increasing their competitiveness after realization of the project will result with rapid development of micro enterprises.

Reason for selection of target groups is that the future of this region as well as the future of the whole country is highly depending on developing SMOs sector. The capability of these groups in micro enterprise development is, at present stage, restricted and this project will enable them to realize those activities that they would not be able to

realize using their own resources and existing skills. Also, the basis of the local social and economic reconstruction is the realization of local development projects which are to be managed by local micro enterprises. This will lead to decrease of unemployment and, in cumulative way, better perspective for young people after graduation.

Further objective is to form network of entrepreneurs and potential entrepreneurs as the part of GET-IT Serbia association. This network will, during time, outgrow the borders of Serbia and its surroundings. Steps in this direction have already been taken.

4.4. Results

Since project proposal from Technical faculty in Bor was positively reviewed, Technical faculty in Bor officially become GET-IT partner organization. As the result one Trainer from Management department of Technical Faculty in Bor was invited to Guidance Course for the HP Microenterprise Development Program "GET-IT" (Switzerland, Zurich, May 2008). After successfully finished course, he obtained certificate as GET-IT trainer.

Important fact is that entire T-Tools material is already translated to Serbian language, by HP representatives, and available at GET-IT official site (member

Table 1. Participation of self employed in total number of employed people in Serbia [4]

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Total	2101668	2066721	2041395	2050854	2068964	2025627	2002344
Employed in public and state owned firms	1752226	1676835	1611632	1580140	1546471	1471750	1432851
Entrepreneurs and self employed people	349442	389886	429763	470714	522493	553877	569494

area). This helps HP Serbia project a lot.

Also, during beginning of September 2008, we expect that equipment form HP will arrive to Technical faculty in Bor. Then we will start courses planed in our project proposals (Phases 5 and 6 in Figure 2).

4.5. Already achieved

1. Promotion of this project is the part of TF Bor presentation at conference in UEMR Resita, Romania. Technical Faculty in Bor is engaged in common project with University in Resita (Romania). Project is financed by European Union – PHARE program, and its main topic is developing strategy for regional entrepreneurial development of Romania – Serbia border region. GET-IT is completely comparative with the aims of this project and this is why its promotion should be the part of our strategy. Since now we had three seminars with our Romanian partners. Forth seminar will be organized from 10th to 14th September in Resita, Romania. The theme of the seminar will be: Business development-sucessful entrepreneurial practice for the companies in Caras-Severein (Romania) and Bor (Serbia). At the end a book will be publishes containing the entire strategy created. Significant place in this book will be devoted to GET-IT program as the part of our strategy for further development of the entrepreneurial practice in Bor region.

2. Phase 1 (see Figure 2) is partly realized concerning preparation of marketing material and forming web page at TF Bor web site (www.menadzment.tf.bor.ac.yu /HP%20MEA.htm) [6]. The obstacle of completely realization of this phase was: not knowing exact date of the equipment arrival. This information is important for determining of all courses start date.

3. During July 2008., technical faculty in Bor have signed agreement with Concepts University College in London. One of the topics of our agreement was starting of common online studies. First group of students is already formed with students from Nigeria. One of the courses that will be offered to these students is based on GET-IT (T- Tools) manual. It will completely be organized according to the Guidance Course for the HP Microenterprise Development Program "GET-IT" (Switzerland, Zurich, May 2008).

4. Publishing information concerning engagement of Technical Faculty in Bor in GET-IT programme is also one of the activities of phase 1 (Figure 2), which is realized with this article .

5. CONCLUSION

During this project, at the beginning, we plan to educate 12 groups of 10 people (from Bor region) in one shift. Since we have two target groups we will have two shifts a day that would be 240 people per year.

If only 10% of this people become encouraged to start their own business, then we will have 20 new SMOs each year. Most of those organizations, if surviving first year, will have to increase and this way to employ new people. Rising of the entrepreneurship spirit in the region will lead to multi structuring of the business potentials and higher investment. This will invite foreign capital investment as well [7].

This way we will have cumulative progression of the employment in the region.

In parallel with Bor region same program will be realized in other Serbian cities: Jagodina, Pirot and Leskovac. It wouldn't be hard to organize network there, since Technical Faculty in Bor already have

similar activities in those towns.

During our project we will keep firm contact with all our attendants and this way we will have information of their further plans. Accordingly we will know how many of them have really started their own business and what are their future plans. As the part of the project we will have our own network of new entrepreneurs which will be very useful for sustainability of our project in the future.

ПРОЈЕКАТ: ГЕТ ИТ СРБИЈА

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Абстракт

Мисија овог пројекта је повећање компетенција потенцијалних предузетника који живе у борском региону, што ће резултовати брзим развојем микро предузетништва, заснованом на знању стеченом током овог пројекта. Ово ће имати велики утицај на повећаном абсорпционом капацитету региона који се огледа у бољем разумевању коришћења фондова ЕУ и других. Ово ће резултовати смањењем незапошљености. Да би се ово постигло, Одсек за менаџмент Техничког факултета у Бору је пронашао јаког партнера у Хјулит Пакарду (ХП) и програму ГЕТ ИТ. Такође, овај пројекат неби био могућ без подршке Института за убрзање микро предузетништва (МЕА-И).

Кључне речи: ХП, ГЕТ-ИТ, МЕА-И, Пројекат

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