How to Implement SPI Platform Activities?

This chapter sets out the steps for implementing SPI Platform activities once funding has been secured.

Two issues have to be settled: i) Who is going to be in charge of daily operations? and ii) What projects are to be undertaken by the partnership?

This chapter presents some functions of the SPI Secretariat, the hiring process, and the build-up to the first program activity. It provides supporting documentation on the sharing of responsibilities among SPI Secretariat staff, draft job advertisements, a draft message to candidates, an outline of the memorandum on the selection process and its results, a training package and a template for presenting the first modernization program.

7.1. Building up the SPI Secretariat

This involves defining the allocation of responsibilities among the members and identifying and training the team leader and the members.

7.1.1. Designing the SPI Secretariat

The SPI Secretariat is a small, efficient unit consisting of up to three full-time professionals. It is set up to help market participants and authorities to work harmoniously together on analysis of regulatory change opportunities and on sound and credible proposals to the authorities.

The SPI Secretariat coordinates the work of the project working groups, supports the solution design process, promotes technical public-private consensus, prepares public-private consensus and supports enactment work. **Annex VII-1** presents the SPI Secretariat's ToR and responsibilities.

The quality of the SPI Secretariat and its work is of utmost importance for the success of the SPI Platform. The SPI Secretariat staff must have the necessary seniority to be able to:

- bring together partners, managers and experts in the project working groups, which have to persuade senior managers of the financial institutions to assume ownership of the projects;
- convene project working group meetings in an environment free of hierarchical constraints; the members' professional status will give them the authority to support the project management group;
- plan, implement and coordinate multi-project activities;
- carry out analytical activities, and research regulations and international experience;
- design analytical tools; and
- record accurately the substance and important nuances of the discussions of the project working groups and SPI Committee.

The main responsibilities of the SPI Secretariat are described in Chapter 1.1.8. **Annex VII-2** gives a formula for the sharing of responsibilities among SPI Secretariat staff of three full-time members – a general manager, a director of the policy modernization program and an office manager.

If office management can be covered by the banking association, the SPI Secretariat analytical team could be enlarged with another member, who could be a part-time expert. Depending on the size of the SPI Secretariat team, the responsibilities in the Annex can be shared differently: for example, some executive tasks of the general manager could be allocated to an additional person.

7.1.2. Hiring the SPI Secretariat

Advertising the job

To ensure a large pool of candidates, job advertisements should be posted on the websites of the central bank's and the banking association, on specialized human resource websites and published in major newspapers. **Annex VII-3** contains a sample job advertisement for the position of general manager.

Special attention should be given to the selection of the SPI general manager, who has to be a senior person with management experience, entrepreneurial skills and the ability to run the day-to-day work of the SPI Platform without intervention from the main SPI partners.

Selection process

The experiences of SPI Romania and SPI Albania lead to a four-stage process of selection of the SPI Secretariat that also involves other SPI partners. The process should be transparent and thorough so that the SPI Secretariat acquires the professional legitimacy required to do its work. The interviewing panel should consist of banking association representatives; it may be enlarged as the process develops with representatives from partner institutions.

The sequence should ensure that the general manager is selected first so that he or she can be involved in the recruitment of the other members of the SPI Secretariat. Recruitment of the office manager should not pose problems unless further promotion to the status of analyst is foreseen. Selection of the right analyst and compatibility with the general manager are most important.

Short-listed candidates should be invited for a first interview. The message should contain a description of the selection process and the requirements for each step (see **Annex VII-4**).

Round One

The purpose of the first meeting is to get to know the candidates and their professional backgrounds and to assess their compatibility with SPI Platform requirements. The interviews should take about an hour. Candidates should be invited:

- to familiarize themselves with the material on www.spi-albania.eu and the banking association website. They should be invited to read about the SPI governance framework, the SPI Secretariat's responsibilities and the activity programs;
- to discuss their views on the SPI mandate and strategy; as indicated in the job advertisement, SPI Secretariat staff need to have an entrepreneurial desire to build a new institution;
- to justify their suitability for the job in terms of professional and personal background.

Round Two

Round two is a technical session. Shortlisted candidates from round one should be asked to identify at least three possible modernization projects that could be handled by the SPI Platform and to develop one of them. This will test their understanding of SPI projects and their analytical and planning capabilities.

Round Three

The third round is dedicated to assessing team compatibilities and team-building. Teams of candidates shortlisted for general manager and director of analytics should be tested in several meetings to define the dynamics of the team. The output of this round should be the proposed SPI Secretariat team.

Round Four

The proposed SPI Secretariat team should present their candidacies at an SPI Committee meeting, at which a final decision should be reached. The selection panel should report to the SPI Committee meeting on the selection process (see **Annex VII-5**).

7.1.3. Training the SPI Secretariat

The SPI Secretariat should have a training session on the SPI Platform, SPI partner institutions and SPI methods and procedure.

The banking association and the central bank should invite the SPI Secretariat team to study tours of their institutions to acquaint them with their organization and activities. With regard to training on the SPI Platform, **Annex VII-6** contains a self-training support tool. The SPI Secretariat should receive training opportunity on RIA procedure.

7.2 Preparing a Multi-Annual Modernization Program

Multi-annual modernization program should be built on the findings of the round of consultations with the banking community, performed through bilateral meetings and through the seminar by the banking association when building consensus on the establishment of the SPI Platform.

For consulting SPI stakeholders, the SPI Secretariat must use a detailed questionnaire adapted to the national context. The SPI Albania 2009 questionnaire (**Annex VII-7**) presents the proposed annual activity program[13]). To facilitate project proposals, this document guided consultation among participants on Albanian market issues, topics raised by the Governor of the Bank of Albania at the Banking Forum, the Strategic Directions for the Albanian Financial Sector outlined in the National Strategy for Integration and

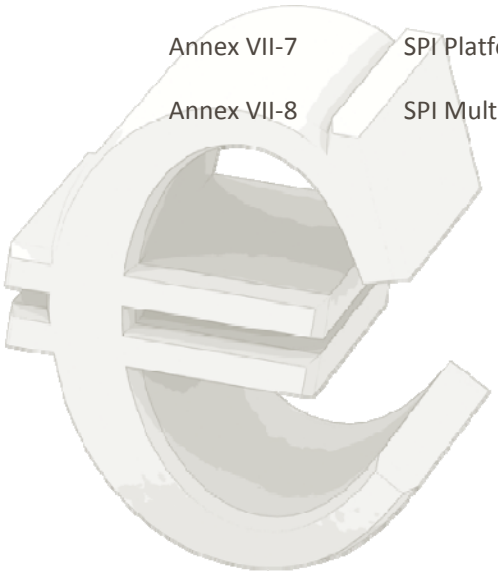
[13] (http://www.spi-albania.eu/admin/js/filemanager/files/web/spicommittee/thirdmeeting/02%20SPI%20Albania%20Proposed%202009%20Program.pdf

Development (2007–2013) and the Bank of Albania regulations issued in 2008. The SPI Secretariat should look for similar issues in modifying the questionnaire.

Another source of SPI projects is analysis of the current state of the market compared with the EU Financial Services Action Plan (FSAP) to identify issues where the SPI could be involved and issues that were not proposed by the stakeholders. The directives of the Government for achieving EU *acquis* are to be considered by the SPI Secretariat as complementary to project proposals by the public authorities.

On the basis of information gathered through the questionnaires, the SPI Secretariat must set up bilateral talks with the proposers of projects to understand the problems to be addressed and the regulatory implications. Project proposals should be listed in a table that should be sent to SPI stakeholders for prioritization.

Of the proposals prioritized by SPI stakeholders, projects for the current year should be selected, bearing in mind that the SPI Secretariat could be expected to manage two or three projects in four months. The SPI General Manager then has to plan the implementation of the activity program for the current year.

The proposed SPI multi-annual activity program has to be presented for the SPI Committee for approval in the format presented in **Annex VII-8**. The approved program should then be communicated to the SPI stakeholders.

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