



Benchmarking Review of Key EU Bankers' Associations

Background

Convergence's objective is to promote the strengthening of market participants associations in South-East Europe¹. We will pursue this goal by creating a structured channel of consultation between financial sector authorities and market participants and by supporting it with analytical studies and other consensus-building activities.

The World Bank sponsors the Convergence pilot to learn how to strengthen the market-led component of financial sector development. Building new markets and rolling out new products requires a close cooperation between authorities and market participants. This, in turn, presupposes that the latter can credibly articulate and support policy proposals. Convergence aims to bridge the large capability gap existing between EU practices and the reality on the ground in the Balkan region.

Purpose of Visit

To guide Convergence's strategy, we would like to understand how prestigious EU banking associations have built and run their business to further the interests of the banking industry and how they have created a long-term relationship of mutual trust with authorities. We also would like to explore areas for potential co-operation.

Following are some issues we would like to explore during the meeting.

A) Strategy and Operations

- Strategic objectives – when were they last set and in response to which external developments?
- A quantitative and qualitative summary of your actions over the last 10 years
 - Examples of successful projects and explanations why they succeeded
 - Industry-led initiatives (market platforms, new products,...)
 - Are there any cases of failed interventions and why?
- Governance and organizational structure:
 - Short description of internal organization - resources allocation
 - How “projects” are identified?
 - How does the BA promote discussion and consensus-building on specific issues of particular interest for the banking industry
 - What governance tools are used to generate an industry view?

¹ Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania; Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro.



- How much analytical activity is conducted? Is economic evaluation done?
- How best to promote drafting of more market-friendly regulations?

B) Potential Support to Convergence's Activities

Following are some areas of interest to us:

- How to make the case for more budget from member banks to strengthen operations?
- How to ensure that all banks, small and big, feel they have an equitable voice?
- How to produce technical documents of good quality that authorities can understand?
- How to design a win-win collaboration with the Central Bank?
- How to design a media strategy?

Above all, we would be grateful for any advice you could give us on what the elements of strengthening strategy of a “ceremonial” banking association could be? Where to start from? What are the “investments” in the first two years? And what are those in following years? How much should the strategy rely on “own” resources and how much on “hired” resources?

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