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PRE- AND MAIN SURVEYS

DEBATE

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

In this report there are included both the pre-survey report and both main survey reports. The pre-survey report was made by Arto Lankinen, the report for business advisors' main survey by Pasi Kuivalainen and the report for stakeholders' main survey by Päivi Korppi-Tommola.

### 1.1 Pre-survey

During the last decades many European countries have suffered from low economic growth. The low growth has produced unemployment and the deficiency in the use of economical resources. The number of elderly people is also great and it is growing. This contributes to the amount of those taxes which government officials shall achieve in the future. In transition economies the tradition of entrepreneurship was broken during the era of old regime. Even the EU has still not grown to the suchlike home market for European enterprises where they can develop products and services which shall succeed in global economical competition. In this intercontinental economical competition the competitiveness of Europe has been poor. In many countries the promoting of entrepreneurship has seen as a most efficient means to restore the competitiveness of Europe.

To improve the requirements of entrepreneurship EU has eliminated many constrains of the free movements of capital, goods, services and peoples. The benefits of this kind of policy have been greatest in the field of capital markets. The markets of transition economies attract many enterprises with their low labor costs in the industries of traditional industrial manufacturing. The elimination of constrains of the factors of production have not created enough new entrepreneurship to the member countries of EU. Reasons for the exiguity of entrepreneurship exist in the preferences and attitudes of citizens. The occupation of entrepreneur has seen as a risky, uncertain and unhealthy alternative for secure career or employee. To eliminate these constrains of entrepreneurship many countries have created business advising systems. These systems are made up of advising organization in which there are working thousands of advisors in different jobs. The variation of the occupation titles of these advisors is unknown.

For improving the general requirements of entrepreneurship there are many funds and program and project based activities in EU. The aims of these projects are to improve the welfare of those regions which have not been successful in the economical competition. The funding of these projects consist of EU and national sources on capital. The realization of these projects is in the responsibility of local actors suchlike educational institutes, regional development organizations and small groups. The project activity transfer the part of the responsibility for the economical success of region to those organizations which have operations on the region

DEBATE is an InterregIIIC project with the objective of the improvement of the level of business advisory as an instrument of regional development in Europe. The goal of project is clarifying the professional image and status of business advisors by means of establishment of the information and knowledge resources and development of training programs for European business advisory. There are 16 partner organizations from seven countries in Debate project. To this project belongs also two-pieced survey. The national quantitative and qualitative facts about the state of business advisory shall be found out in the first stage of survey. The second stage of survey consists of an inquiry which shall be done to business advisors and to their clients.

The goal of this study is to find out as reliable as possible the numbers of business advisors, their sex distribution, their tasks and duties, their employer organizations and their most common titles of occupation in these seven partner countries of Debate project. A special attention shall be paid to the clarification of the quantitative and qualitative training needs of business advisors.

## **1.2 Main survey**

The first stage of the project was testing it among the business advisors in all partner countries. This way important information about the needs and wishes that business advisors have in different partner countries was gained. This testing was done by separate surveys for business advisors and their stakeholders in all countries.

The idea of having the survey also for the stakeholders serves the simple purpose of finding out if the views concerning the important factors in the role of a business advisor differ between business advisors themselves and the people using their services or otherwise working with them.

In this report we have compared the important parts of the national surveys and made conclusions from them. Also results from the surveys amongst business advisors and the surveys amongst stakeholders have been compared with each others.

Surveys have been completed in all of the seven participating countries. Both surveys have been finished in Finland, Greece, Hungary, Italy and Latvia, and the survey amongst stakeholders also in Estonia and the survey amongst business advisors in Sweden. The same questionnaire forms (APPENDIXES 3 AND 4) have been used in all countries, only some national modifications appear. The target groups for the surveys were business advisors working in public organizations and their customers and other stakeholders.

The number of respondents was smaller than anticipated in most of the countries, which makes it dangerous to draw any strong conclusions. On the other hand the surveys themselves are not the main purpose of the project, but give important insight to the needs and wishes of business advisors and their stakeholders.

## 2 PRE-SURVEY

### 2.1 Definitions

**Business advisor** is a person who is able to give advises about several activities of business. For example advisor is not specialized in export or marketing advising. In this study the clients of business advisors must be enterprises, which work in the industry of primary production, secondary production or private services. In addition the start up entrepreneur can also be clients of business advisors.

**Public equivalent business advising organization** is an organization which produces advising and expert services. These organizations are financed partly or wholly by governmental subsidies. Although most part of financing is received market-basedly from financial markets. The employers or business advisors should be publicly or public equivalently financed. Thus private organizations which produce business advising services shall be left outside this study. The business advising organization belongs to population of this study if it has operation in the area of whole country and the advisors of this organization give advises about several activities of business.

**Occupation** consists of jobs which a person performs. Secondly the definition of occupation is partly dependent on the skills of a person. Occupation is independent from status of person (wage earner, entrepreneur), educational level or industry. The occupational group is determined by the main jobs, competence and the educational level of person. The occupational group can also be determined by the work experience which a person has acquired during his lifetime. The occupation group of a person is that which covers the most jobs which a person has done during the period of observation. In occupation classification there is 10 groups. In this classification business advisors belong to the three highest groups:

1 legislators, senior officials and managers

2 professionals

3 technicians and associate professionals

**Productivity** means the relationship between the utility of production and one, some, or all of the resource inputs used in this process of production. Usually It is measured as a ratio of output per unit of input over time. The increase of productivity is one of the most important means by which the national standard of living can be raised. After the raise of productivity the same output is achieved by the same former amount of inputs. The productivity can be increased by the technological inventions, renewal of organizations, training programs and increasing the use of capital input in production.

**Working population** consist of the population aged between 15 and 74. Working population divides to labor force and to the population outside the labor force. For example students, those whom do housekeeping jobs and those whom serve in the military belong to the population outside the labor force.

**Labor force** divides to employed and to unemployed persons. The activity is defined for employed person according to the workplace in which he has worked most his working time.

## 2.2 The implementation of study and reliability of the results

The implementation of study began in the Genoa Workshop in October 2005. While introduced the baselines of those statistics, which describe the business advising systems of the EU countries. During this Workshop it came out that in EU there are no harmonized occupation, activity and education classifications. Therefore it is impossible to find out the number of business advisors, their job tasks etc. from any Eurostat statistics. As an end result of Genoa Workshop every partner organization were given the task of finding out the statistics and studies of their own countries business advising. To help this task a form (appendix 1) was created. The information of this form formed a basic data for the appraising of reliability of the sources of information in partner countries. One minimum requirement of this study was that the total number of business advisors in every partner country was found out with certainty.

A recent statistic or study was considered as a reliable source of business advisors number. To the form was also attached an instruction letter, in which the implementation of inquiry was

clarified. The essential issue was that all the information that partner produced should cover the whole country, and all the information was collected from the same year. This year of observation should be the year 2000 at the latest. The form and the instruction letter were sent with Allu virtual learning space. The replies to the inquiry should have been returned November 30. at the latest. In spite of three partner countries replies to the inquiry were received during the January of 2006. Two partner countries sent their replies at the end of May 2006. From four countries all the information about business advisors was found from the year 2005 and the information of two countries were found from the years 2004 and 2003. All partner countries found out all the information about business advisors from one year of observation

The real quantitative information about business advisors was collected with Excel-form (appendix 2). This form should have been returned before 15 th. January 2006. Only the Italian and Latvian partners used this form. The other two partners, who returned their answer in time, had added the quantitative information to the form (appendix 1). Also the Greek partner used this form for sending both quantitative information and the sources of information. This form was originally designed to help in finding out the sources of information. From December 2005 to May 2006 were specifications for the collecting of information sent with Allu's communications tools.

Figure 1 is a conclusion of four partner organizations answers to question of sources of information. In three countries the number of business advisors was based on recent studies and in three other countries the number of business advisors is a combination of statistical information and estimation of professional. The Greek partner underlined that there was no reliable information available about public business advisors. Therefore they did not made any kind of estimation about the number of public business advisors. The information about the business advisors numbers can be considered reliable, because the numbers of business advisors were found from the years 2003 and 2005 and those numbers based on statistics or studies mostly.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUROPEAN BUSINESS ADVISOR TRAINING AND EXCHANGE

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FINLAND // ESTONIA // GREECE // HUNGARY // ITALY // LATVIA // SWEDEN

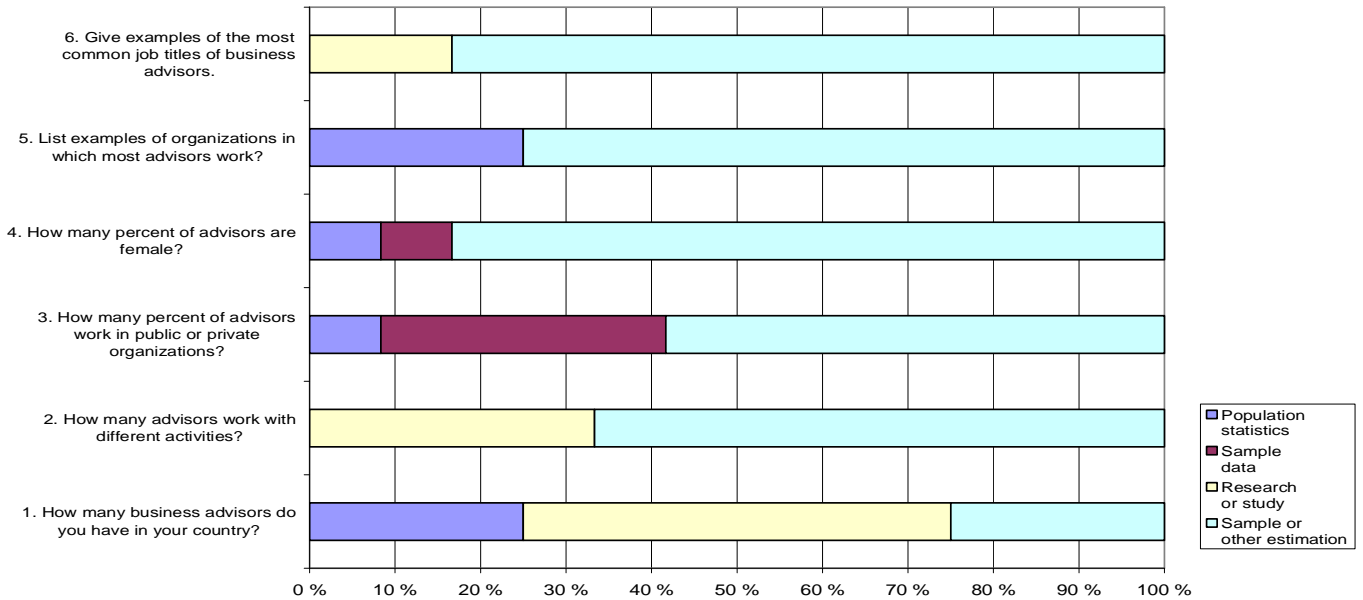


Figure 1. Sources of information

The question 2., which covered the distribution of advisors working time between different activities was generally considered very difficult. The distribution of the working time of advisors assumed to be similar to the distribution of advisors number. This was the basic assumption of this question. In spite of Estonia and Latvia the distribution of working time had to be estimated at least partly. Although the Finnish numbers are partly based on study it has to be remarked that, in this study information of 22 percent of organizations were so inadequacy that those information could not be taken into consideration. In Greece some advisors seems to work along the whole range of enterprising. There is no official data about the use of working time in Greece. The Hungarian and Italian partner organizations evaluated that their replies did not cover the situation of whole country. Also the Estonian and Finnish partners replies can be considered fair at most.

In this study there were two questions (3. and 5.) which covered the employers of advisors. In the guidance of question 3. it was underlined that the total sum of proportions had to be 100 percent. The question 3. was considered difficult by Greek, Estonian and Hungarian partners. The Greek partner used all winter and spring time 2006 trying to find out official statistical information about public business advisors, but they did not managed in this task. In Estonia many advisors have a part-time job, when the quantification of actual employers is a difficult task. In Hungary it was easy to classify reliably those employers who work in agriculture and SME in wood processing industry. The classification of employers of other industries is pure

estimation in the case of Hungary, so the information from this part is not very reliable. The Italian information about the type of employer was based on sample study. In Finland the population of this study was defined so that all advisors who belonged to the population were all working in public organizations. Therefore it can be said that the answers for the question about the type of employer were reliable on the side of Finland, Hungary and Italy. More reliable information from Estonia will be received when the updated databases from the year 2005 will be completed. According to Greek partner's own opinion their replies to questions 3. and 5 based on secondary sources (conversations with experts) and therefore the reliability of those answers is fair at highest.

Only Finnish and Hungarian partners mentioned that their list of employer organizations of business advisors is reliable. Respectively Italian partner had written in her reply that their information about the names of employer organizations did not show the exact reality of the Genoa district

About the frequency of female business advisors there are only estimates as it can be seen from the figure 1. Only from Italy and Hungary there was some statistics on hand. The Estonian and Finnish information about female advisors frequency are pure estimates. The reliability of the information of this question is fair at most, because only Hungarian and Italian partners mentioned that their information is reliable.

The question 6. was taken to this study because it is important to know in what kind of occupations business advisor are working in their workplaces. The occupation title of business advisors was defined in this study by the main job tasks of advisor. This definition was purely subjective, but it was the only method which could be used, because there are no harmonized occupation titles in statistical classifications of Eurostat. That is why it is impossible to find out the exact number of business advisor from any register.

This definition of occupation does correspond with the definition of ISCO88 classification. Some conclusion about the job task of advisors can be drawn on the grounds of these answers. In this question partner had to write down five most common job titles of business advisors of his country. The answers of Greece, Estonia, Hungary, Italy and Latvia were estimations and the answer of Finland was partly based on studies and partly based on personal inquiries.

Information which was received was not exact and the reliability of this information was poor if the evaluation should have been done by same methods than the evaluation of other questions. Because all partners were professionals of business it is a fact that they are the best experts of the business advising of their own country and therefore they really know the most common occupation titles of business advisors. By means of these fact it is more than possible that the information about the most common occupation titles of business advisors is reliable, but the order of this occupation titles is wholly insecure.

In addition to the results of inquiry information about the economical structure of partner countries was collected from statistics. The source of this information was Statistics Finland World in Figures-pages ([http://www.stat.fi/tup/maanum/taulukot\\_en.html](http://www.stat.fi/tup/maanum/taulukot_en.html)). Index numbers of productivity of labor were derived from these statistics. The advisors use of working time was compared to these index numbers labors' productivity. By this kind of comparison it was tried to find out if the supply of advising services is equivalent to the demand of advising services in those countries.

Normally the economic productivity of labor is calculated by dividing the gross national product with total number of working hours. When the productivity of industry is at issue then the gross national product and working hours of this industry is used. In this study there was no working hour of industries on hand, because this kinds of statistics are classified in national statistics.

That is why in this study the productivity of industry was calculated per employee of industry. Then the dividend is the gross national product of industry and denominator is the number or employees of this industry. This calculation produces indicative information about the productivity of industry in the country on hand. The deficiency of this calculation is that it does not take into account the differences which industries have in the length of the working time of employees. There are also differences in the length of working time between different countries. Therefore it is not possible to compare productivity between countries. The differences in the use of capital input make it also impossible to compare the index numbers of productivity between countries. The year of observation of productivity calculations was 2003, because it was the latest year from which the observations could be found out.

### 2.3 The number of business advisors by member countries

First of all it should be noticed that the result of Italy concerned only the region of Genoa. The Italian business advising system differs from other countries in many respects. The Italian system is wholly based on private organization and freelancers, who works as business advisors. The number of freelancers was found from the statistics of the year 2001. In her answer Italian partner complemented the difficulty of this question. The Greek business advising system has many similarities with the Italian system. The great proportion of private advising organization is the most typical of those similarities. In Greece they use very often the concept of consulting in spite of business advising. The concept of consulting came from the generals of ancient Greece, whom needed advice when they planned the future steps in wars.

Table 1. Number of business advisors in the member countries

Country and the year of observation	Number of advisors	Year of observation
Estonia	300	2005
Finland	584	2004
Greece	11244	2003
Hungary	1349	2005
Italy	1093	2005
Latvia	635	2005
Sweden		

The Estonian and Finnish numbers of advisors were based on recent studies. These studies are published in internet and therefore everyone can easily re-examine the results. From all possible estimates of the numbers of Finnish advisors this number is the absolute minimum. This Finnish number of advisors is based on studies, which have been done in two organizations. There were done estimations about the number of advisors and estimations about the distribution of the advisors working time in these studies (Saapunki, Leskinen & Aarnio 2004:34, Huovinen & Sinikallio 2002:11,16). According to same studies the maximum number of Finnish advisors can be calculated 1030 persons.

In this question the answer of Greek partner represent the state of business and management consulting services (National Statistical Code 7414) in Greece. They underlined that they had no information available about public business advising. The magnitude of their answers give a idea what is the difference between advising and consulting.

The Hungarian numbers of advisors were based on survey, which was done in the internal communication system of three organizations (Foundation for Enterprise Promotion ja Chamber or Commerce and Industry and Body of Industry). Results are reliable, because 15 organization out of 20 answered to the survey. The results were also completed with the expert list of MARD (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development).

The answer of Latvia was based on the data of Latvian association of BA's and web page of Latvian Agricultural advisory service. This organization has activities in 26 regions. The other source of information was the local Business supporting centers, which are situated in some (5) municipalities. In addition to these public organizations there are many private advising organizations. The information about the number of BA's was found from the original organizational structure of these organizations

## **2.4 The number of business advisors in different activities**

This question was aimed to estimate the quantity of working time, which business advisors have used to actual client contacts and direct advising. The question proved to be very difficult. There are no follow-up of working time in use in business advising organizations. That is why the results of most countries were only estimates. If there had been done some studies after the year 2000 in member country, the results of these studies were used if the issue of the study touched this question. In table 2. there are the numbers of advisors classified by the activities. Activity is the property of the enterprise, which is the client of advisor. In the guidance of this question respondent were asked to divide the total number of advisors in four categories. Three of these categories are typical industries of economy. The fourth category is the start up enterprises.

Table 2. Number of business advisors in member countries by their employers activities

	Estoni a	Finland	Greec e	Hungar y	Italy	Latvia	Swede n	Total
Primary production enterprises	60	117	1687	470	30	205		2569
Industrial enterprises	130	90	2249	215	500			3184
Private servise enterprises	70	149	4497	271	413	410		5810
Start up enterprises	40	228	2811	393	150	20		3642
Total number of BA's in advising	300	584	11244	1349	109 3	635		1520 5

The Estonian results were based wholly on recent studies. The Finnish results consisted advisors whom were working in four public or public equivalent organizations. These Finnish results were based on partly results of studies, partly estimations. In the Employment and Economic Development Centre of Finland there are working 500 persons. Because 59 % of their working time is used in advising of enterprises, it can be estimated that there are approximately 207 persons whom do this kind of business advising from which DEBATE-project is interested in (Saapunki, Leskinen & Aarnio 2004:34).

From the part of Regional Development Companies the Finnish results were based on the study (Huovinen & Sinikallio 2002:16). According to this study there were 500 persons working in Regional Development Companies (RDC) and 60 % of their working time is not used to actual advising of enterprises (Huovinen & Sinikallio 2002:11, 16). During this part of working time the staff of RDC is doing several tasks as follows: improving requirements of entrepreneurship, project advising, developing tourism, marketing of region, capital investment, etc. In other words it can be said that there were 197 persons in actual advising jobs in Regional Development Companies. In figure 2. there are the distribution of the use of labor in Regional Development Companies of Finland.

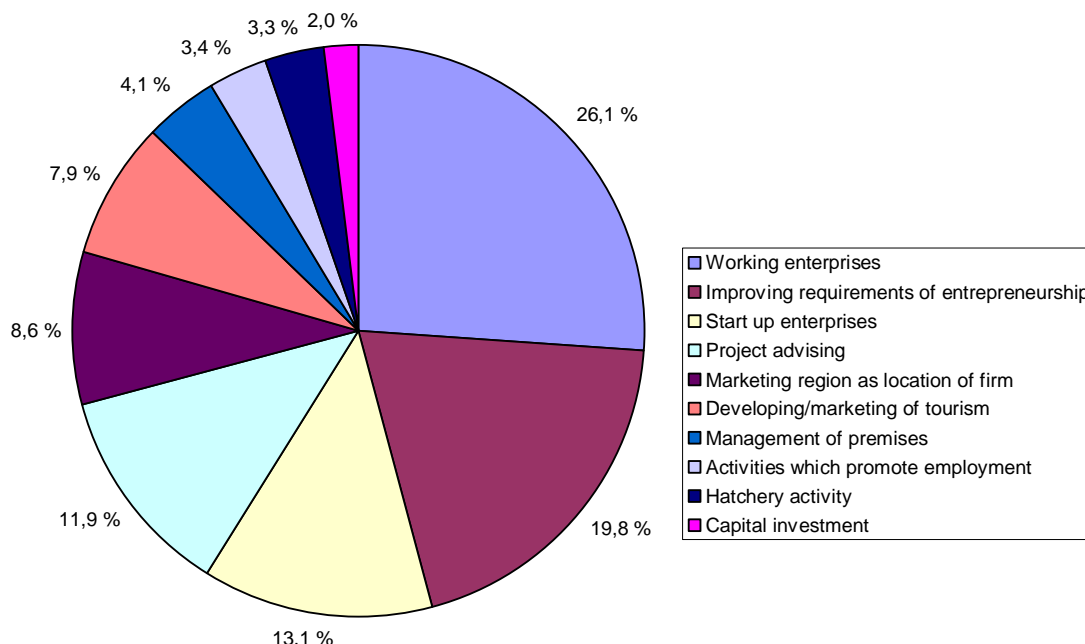


Figure 2 Use of labor input in Regional Development Companies in Finland

From figure 3. it can be noticed that the most part of advisors working time in Estonia and Italy is used to advising of industrial enterprises. Italy has a long industrial history and Estonia is a country which develops towards market economy with long and rapid steps. After the EU-membership Estonia has been a very attractive target for foreign industrial investments. In Hungary the advisors use more time in primary production advising than in the other three countries. This describes the differences of the structure of national economy of these countries. In Finland the advising of start up enterprises is largest task of advisors and in Hungary it is the second largest task of advisors. In the background of Finnish situation there is the problem of unemployment, which was born in the beginning of the nineties. Unemployment has been tried to diminish by encouraging unemployed persons to start a new life as entrepreneur.

It is possible to compare the productivity and advisors use of working time between industries of national economy. In this survey average productivity of labor is used as a index number or labor. The comparison is little bit difficult, because the use of labor input had to be divided

between primary production enterprises, industrial enterprises and private service enterprises. The concepts of system of national accounts were used when the productivity of labor was calculated. In this system **secondary production** consist of manufacturing and construction and **services** consist of both private and public services.

In figure 4. the comparison of index numbers is possible only between the industries of one country. According to this comparison Greece is the only country where the shape of the distribution advisors working time is similar to the shape of index numbers of productivity. In other words it could be said that in Greece the use advisors working time correspond with the differences of productivity. In Estonia the use of working time to advising service enterprises is not as great as it should be by the comparison of productivity. Correspondingly advisors use more time in advising industrial enterprises than it could be supposed by the index numbers of productivity. This kind of situation is partly a result of the extensive change of structure of industry. The increase of secondary production is a typical feature of this development (Statistics Finland World in Figures-pages [http://www.stat.fi/tup/maanum/taulukot\\_en.html](http://www.stat.fi/tup/maanum/taulukot_en.html)).

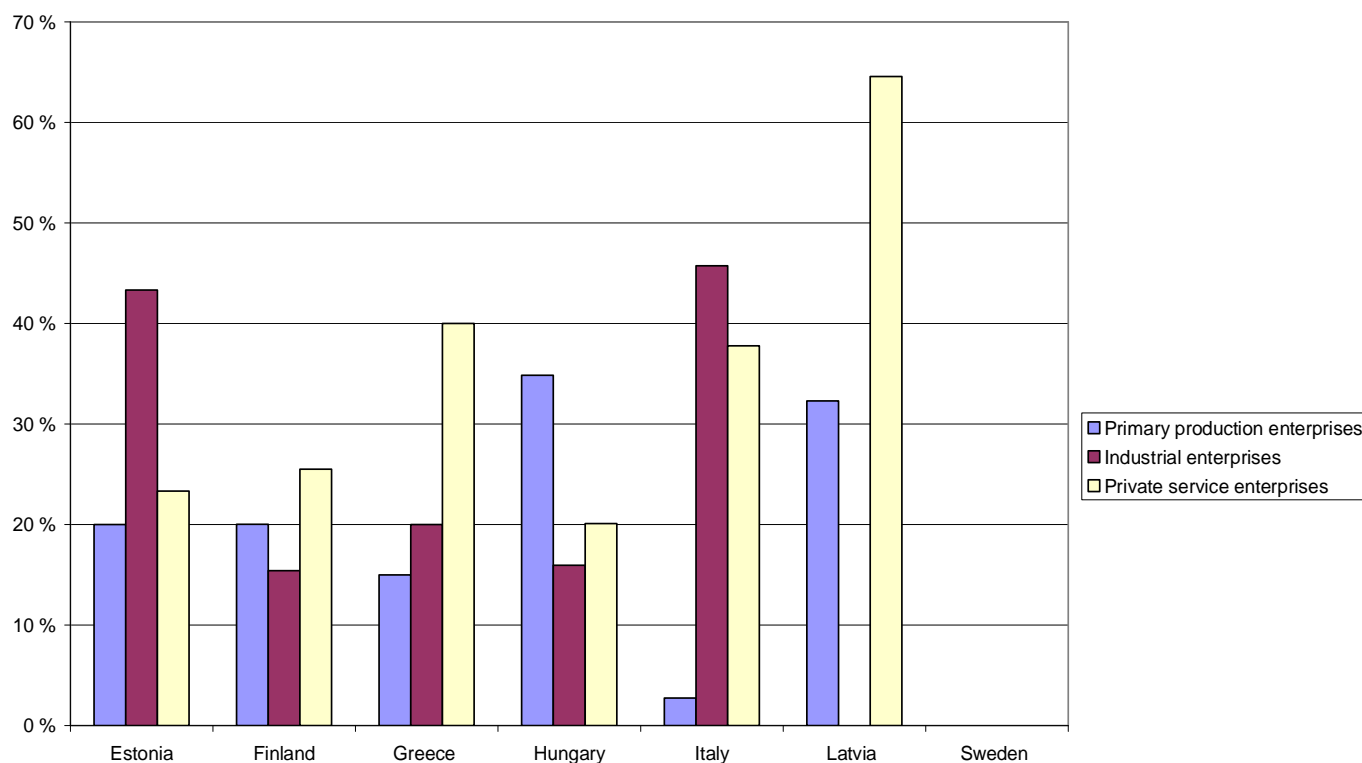


Figure 3. Business advisors working time by activities

In Finland the basic problem is the low productivity of services. Advisors are aware of this problem and it can be seen in the use of their working time. They use the most part of their working time in advising service enterprises. The great proportion of primary production advising is the second Finnish problem. This proportion is greater than it can be supposed by the index numbers of productivity. The reasons for this phenomenon are historical. In the time before EU-membership it was common habit to allocate subsidies of agriculture to the agricultural advising organizations. By this way farmers were accustomed to use advising services. Prices of these services were subsidized and therefore low. During the last decade these financial subsidies have decreased. On the other hand the rules of investment subsidies of EU encourage farmers to increase the size of their farms, which strengthen the farmer's demand of managerial advising services.

In Hungary the most part of advising time was used to advising of primary production enterprises, in spite of the lowest productivity of this industry. In Italy the advisors use of working time and the index numbers of labor input are similar to the numbers of Estonia. To the advising of industrial enterprises was used more working time compared to the working time which was used to the advising of private service enterprise, although the productivity of services is higher. The second typical feature of Italy is the small proportion of working time which was used to the advising of the primary production enterprises.

The shape of the Latvian index numbers of productivity is typical to a industrial country. Because of the lack of the number of those advisors whom worked with industrial enterprises (table 2.) it is impossible to compare completely the use of working time with the index numbers of productivity. It is possible that the use of advisors working time was perfect in Latvia, because more working time was used to advising service enterprises, where the productivity of labor was higher.

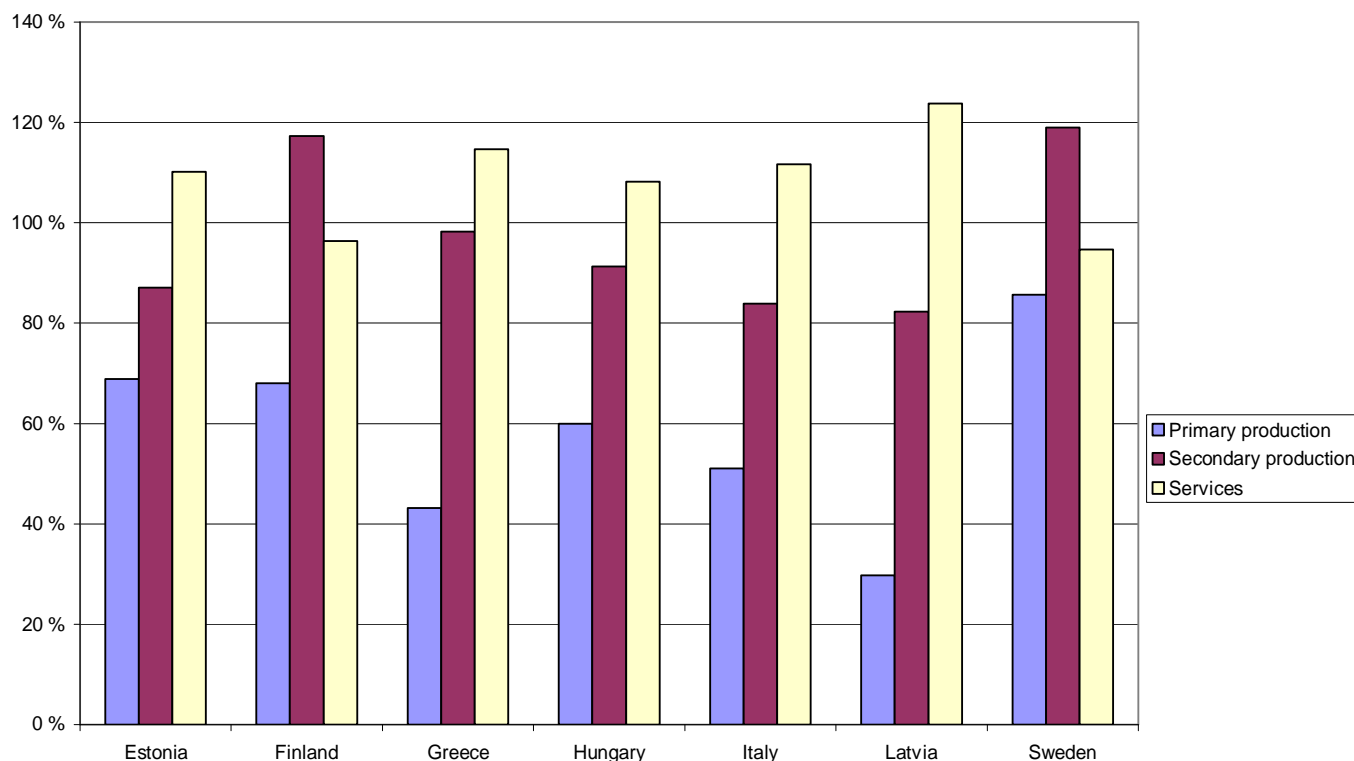


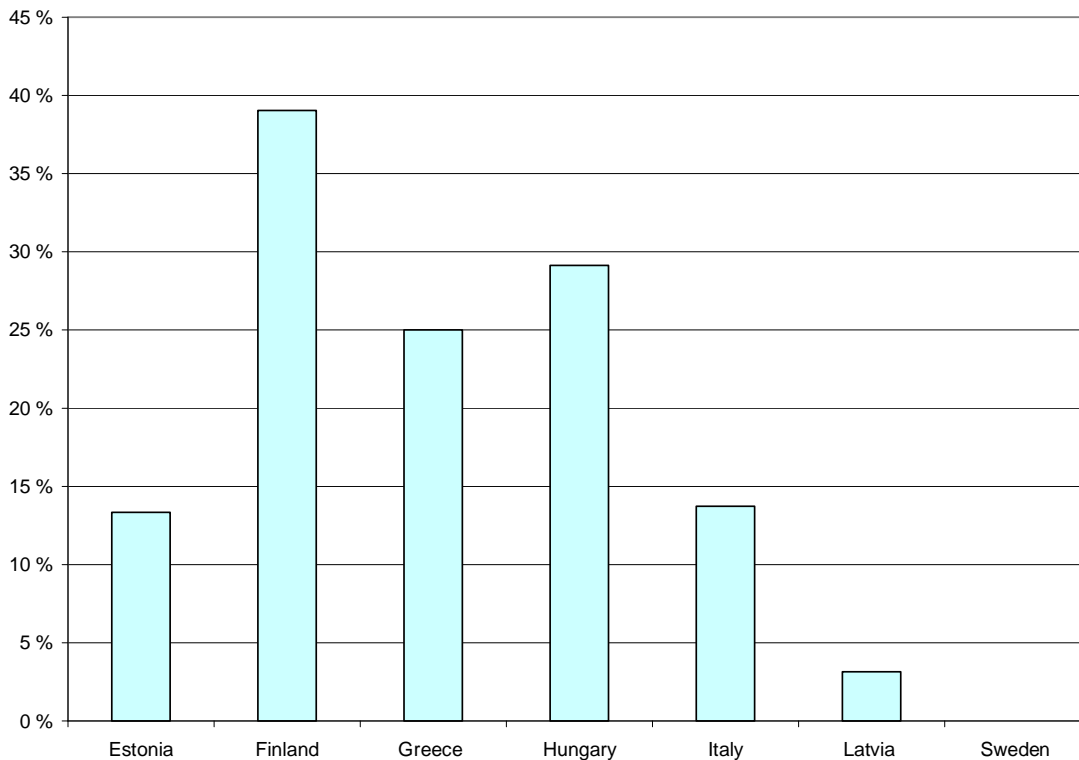
Figure 4. Average productivity of labour

The productivity of labor was highest in services excluding Finland and Sweden. In the future the importance of service industry will increase. As a result of this change more employees will work in service industry enterprises. Business advisors should respond to this challenge by increasing the supply of those advising products which are directed to the service enterprises. In the training program of business advisors there have to be some programs which deal with advising of service enterprises.

The productivity of labor differs from country to country, but according to the index numbers of figure 4. it is not possible to draw conclusions about the existence of these differences. The differences in the use of capital input are the greatest hindrance, which make this kind of comparison impossible.

## 2.5 The advising of start up enterprises

According to the figure 5. advisors in Finland and Hungary used most of their working time to the advising of start up enterprises. The quantity of working time can be compared to the unemployment rate of these countries. A better understanding of those political decisions which have done might be achieved by means of this kind of comparison. From the table 3. it could be noticed that the start up enterprises proportion of advisor working time was greatest in Finland and the unemployment rate was lowest in Hungary.



**Figure 5. Start up enterprises share of business advisors working time**

Respectively in Latvian advisors used the least part of their working time to the advising of start up enterprises and the unemployment rate is among the highest of all DEBATE countries. By means of using extensive advising input to the start up enterprises it might not be possible to decrease the unemployment rate if the other requirements of entrepreneurship are insufficient. The solving of the dependence of these events is not a goal of this survey. Some hints of the nature and the existence of these events in Europe can be achieved by this survey.

Table 3. Start up enterprises share of business advisors working time and unemployment rate in member countries in 2004

	Estonia	Finland	Greece	Hungary	Italy	Latvia	Sweden
Start up enterprises share of advisors working time	13%	39%	25%	29%	14%	3%	
Unemployment rate	9,7%	8,9%	10,5%	5,9 %	8%	10,4 %	6,4 %

## 2.6 The employers of business advisors

The population of this study consisted of business advisors, whom worked in public or public equivalent organization. Later on in this study these organizations are called public organization. If the question arose about the advisors belonging to the population the solution of this question had to be given according to the financing of the advising organization in which this advisor is working. During the survey this definition of population was found too narrow. The original definition of population was based on too much the Nordic type of organize the business advising. In the Southern Europe advisors and consults are more often employees of private enterprises. In this respect Italy and Finland are representatives of extreme ends of the different ways of produce advising services for enterprises.

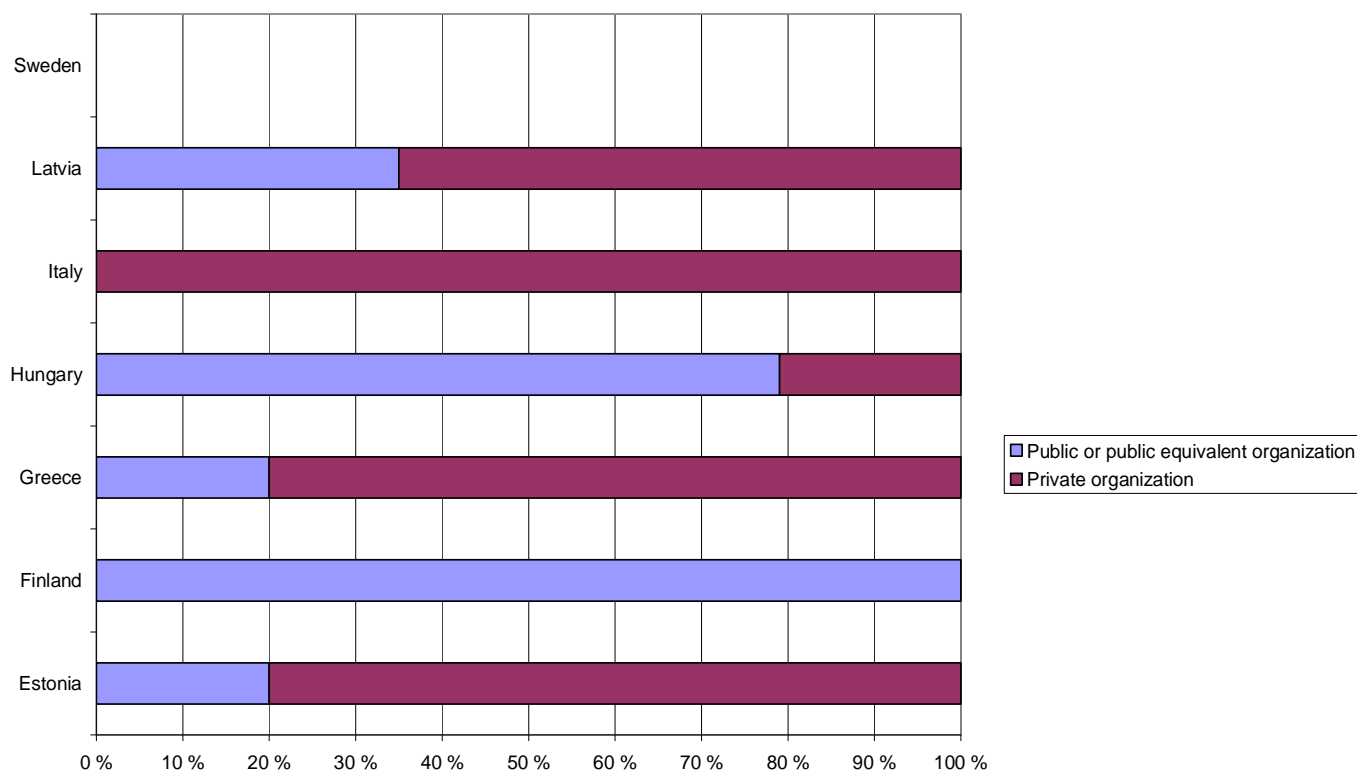


Figure 6. Business advisors by employers organizations

According to the figure 6. in Italy all business advisors were freelancers whom were employees of private organizations. In Finland all business advisors' employers were public organizations. From the situation of the transition economies it can be said that in Hungary business advisors were more often employees of public organization. The Estonian business advising system is based more in the services of private enterprises. Thus the nature of employment of Estonian business advisors was more near to advisors of Southern Europe. As a matter of fact the Estonian answer was completely similar to the Greek answer. This question was considered difficult by Estonian, Greek and Hungarian partners. In Estonia many advisors have a part-time job, when the definition of actual employers is a difficult task.

In order to find out more extensive view of the employers of advisors, it was asked for respondents to list those employers in which most of advisors were working. In the guidance of this question it was mentioned that employer can be public, public equivalent or private. In the analysis of result public and public equivalent employers are considered as one group. The Estonian, Greek and Italian partners considered this listing of employers as a difficult task. From

Hungary was it also difficult to find out names of employers who produce advising services in private sector. From the Finnish centralized and state-run advising system it was easily found out the names of these most important employers. Also in Hungary it was easy to find out the names of employers, who produce advising services in public sector.

On the grounds of table 4. the number of public employers was largest in Hungary. The most important employer in Hungary is MARD (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development). The second country in which there were many public advising organizations is Finland. In Finland ProArgia and Jobs and Society Agency are the most pure advising organizations. The ProAgria has centennial history in advising agricultural firms. Nowadays the focus on agricultural advising is moving from the advising of production issues towards managerial advising of the whole farm firm. In that case new skills, tools and attitude are needed from advisors. In Jobs and Society Agency focus is on start up entrepreneurs advising. They have special product and services to fulfill this task. It was mentioned in the Greece answer that some employers are non profit making organizations. These organizations are often associations etc. which more likely belong to the third sector of economy. The omission of this answer option was one fault of this study.

Table 4. The most common public and public-equivalent employers' organizations of business advisors

Estonia	Finland	Greece	Hungary	Italy	Latvia	Sweden
Estonian Entrepreneurship Agency (EEA)	ProAgria		Regional Offices of MARD		Latvian agricultural advisory service	
Local organisations from the entrepreneursh	Jobs and Society Agency		National Agricultural Quality Insurance Institute			

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ip support system						
	Employment and Economic Development Centre		Research Centers			
	Regional Development Companies		Educational institutes			
			Chambers of Agriculture			
			Foundations of Enterprise Promotion			
			Chamber of Commerce and Industry			
			Body of Industry			

In Estonia and in Italy advisors are more often working in private organizations. According to the table 5. the number of these private employers was greater than the number or similar employers in Finland or in Hungary. Especially in Italy the number of private training organization is remarkably large (46).

Table 5. The most common private employers' organizations of business advisors

Estonia	Finland	Greece	Hungary	Italy	Latvia	Sweden
BDA Estonia		Sole proprietorships	Accounting Ltds	Freelancers	Business agency	

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Business Grain OÜ		Corporationss-Societe Anonyme (SAs)	Private entrepreneurs	Private training organizations (46 )	Tax advisory service	
FK teenused		Limited liability companies (LTDs)	Private firms	Private advisor's organizations	Business supporting center	
Innopolis Konsultatsioonid				Trade-union organizations	Center of financing advisory	
Heiväl Consulting					Center of commerce and etc.	
Foronte OÜ						
PW Partners						
Audentes-Ariko a.s.o						

In Finland there are also private enterprises which offer advising service. The number of these enterprises is very small. The hint of the number of these Finnish private business advising enterprises can be found from the BIS (Business Information System which is maintained by Finnish Tax Administration, Trade Register or Register of Foundations). In March 2006 it was found 26 private advising service enterprises as the result of BIS query.

According to the answer of Greece about 57 % of business advisors worked as sole proprietorship. The rest of advisors worked in 950 corporations (type SAs or LTDs). A average corporation is a workplace for five advisors.

The most common type of business advisors employer correspond to the choices which have been made in different countries in the implementation of business advising. The systems in Finland and Hungary are publicly financed and therefore they are similar. Private entrepreneurship has greater role in the systems of Estonia, Greece, Italy and Latvia.

## 2.7 Female business advisors

When entrepreneur needs services of business advisor in Estonia he meets at 60 % likelihood a female advisor. From figure 6. it can be noticed that the proportion of women in this occupation was second highest in Latvia. In the public advising organizations of Latvia 90 % advisors were female, because the low wage level does not encourage men to work in these organizations. Only 20 % of advisors were female in the private advising organizations of Latvia. The Finnish proportion of female advisors was checked from the contact information of one organization. According to these contact information, which was found from Internet the proportion of female business advisors was 31 percent. This checking was done during the spring 2006. The proportion of female advisors in different countries changes at the same rate than the proportion of female employees. In Greece and Italy advisor is seldom a female. There women are not as often in working life as in North Europe. Hungary is an exception to this rule because women have there very active role in working live but only 30 % of business advisors were female. The proportions of female employees have been found out from World in Figures www pages of Statistics Finland ([http://www.stat.fi/tup/maanum/taulukot\\_en.html](http://www.stat.fi/tup/maanum/taulukot_en.html)).

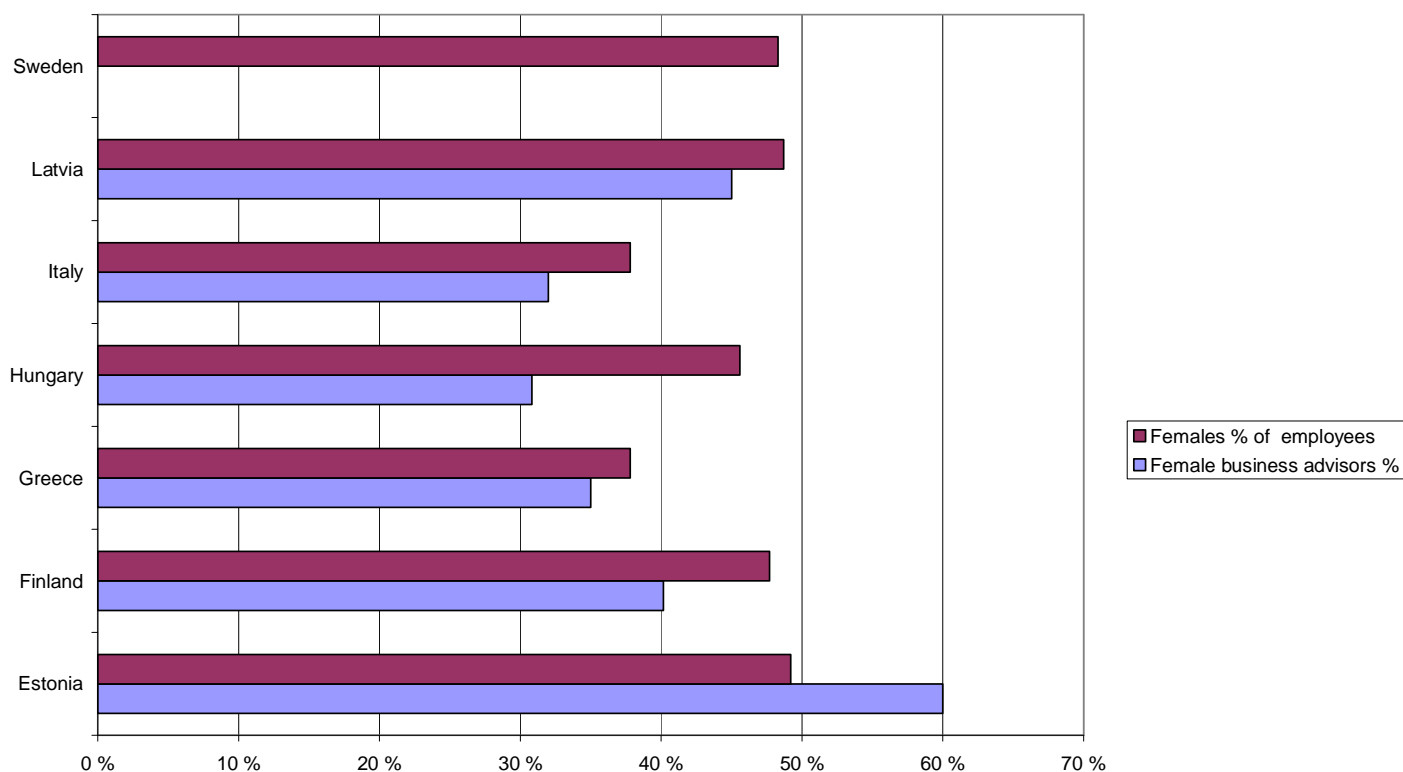


Figure 7. Female advisors and employees

## 2.8 The most common occupation titles of business advisors

From the occupation titles of Estonian and Hungarian business advisors it is possible to conclude that in these countries business advisors are professionals of advising and their expertise is not dependent from special industry (table 6.).

In the Estonian answer the management of basic rules of business was emphasized. The Finnish occupation titles are partly a product of long agricultural tradition and partly they are product of a modern actual business advising.

The occupation titles of Greece are a mixture of advising and consulting. The list of these titles highlights the question about the real nature of advising and consulting. Is the fee the only difference between these concept or does is exist also some differences in substance?. This can also be generalized that the services of business advisor are free for the client. Advisor gets his wage from his public advising organization. The consult gets fee from every minute of the

time which he uses thinking the problems of his client. Which one method produces better results on the point of view of client? The answer is not obvious. There are issue in which advisor can give the best answer, but there are also issue which could be solved best by consult.

The Italian and Latvian lists of occupation titles are mostly connected to specific industry or one special field of business. In this case it is not sure if the advisor is a professional who combines the knowledge of many fields to the benefit of his client. The first item of the Latvian list is typical occupation title of business advisor and that can be counted for the benefit of the Latvian reply.

Table 6. The five most common occupation titles of business advisors

Estonia	Finland	Greece	Hungary	Italy	Latvia	Sweden
Consultant	Business advisor	Business advisor/developer	Advisor	Legal advisers	Business advisor	
Business consultant	Economic advisor	Enterprise/business consultant/advisor	Expert	Architects	Consultant of taxes	
	Business agent	Organization consultant	External/internal advisors	Agronomists	Agricultural consultant	
	Company analyst		Advisory manager	Engineers		
	Development chief		Head advisor	Professional accountants and business consultants		

In the fifth place of list of occupation titles there are in the list of Finland and in the list of Hungary occupations titles that belong to the class of managers in the ISCO88 classification. In the responsibility of these persons there are task like developing of organization and creation of operational precondition for business advisors. The training needs of these persons are greatly different than the training needs of other advisors. Managers make decisions and they are representatives of employers in the place of work.

## 2.9 Conclusions

The goal of this study was to find out as reliable as possible:

- 1 numbers of business advisors
- 2 sex distribution
- 3 tasks and duties
- 4 employer organizations and
- 5 the most common titles of occupation in the partner countries of DEBATE project.

In addition it was aimed to produce quantitative and qualitative information about the training needs of business advisors.

During the observation years 2003 and 2005 there were about 14112 business advisors working in five countries publicly or public equivalently financed advising organizations. This total number of advisors includes 11244 Greek advisors and consults most of whom were employees of private organizations. In Italy business advising services were produced by private organizations and freelancers. The number of this kind of business advisors on the district of Genoa were about 1093 persons. This information about the number of business advisors can be considered reliable, because in every country the information has been found from recent statistics or studies.

By 65 percent probability the business advisor was male. The proportion of female business advisors was bigger in Northern Europe than in Southern Europe. In Estonia 60 percent of business advisors were female. The proportion of female business advisors varied at same rate than the female proportion of labor force. Reliable information about the sex of business

advisors was received only from Hungary and Italy. The information of Estonia Finland, Greece and Latvia were only estimations.

2569 business advisors produced services for primary production enterprises, 3184 served industrial enterprises and 5810 produced services for private service enterprises. In addition 3642 business advisors worked in tasks which were connected to the start up enterprises. The specifying of the distribution of advisors working time proved to be a very difficult task, because there were no follow-up of working time in use in advising organizations. The asked information could not be found from any statistics. That is why the distribution of advisors working time had to be estimated in the most cases.

The distribution of advisors working time should be equivalent to the demand of advising services. A rough guess about this demand was made by the help of index numbers of productivity in the country in question. The most important findings of this comparison were as follows:

- 6 In Estonia the work input which was used to advising private service enterprises did not correspond to the index numbers of productivity. Respectively industrial enterprises used larger share of advisors working time than they had been justified.
- 7 In Finland the productivity in services is lower than in industrial enterprises and most proportion of working time was allocated to private service enterprises. The industrial enterprises share of advisors use of working time did not correspond to the status of industrial enterprises in the comparison of productivity.
- 8 In Greece the use of advisors working time correspond completely the differences of average productivity of labor in different industries of national economy.
- 9 In Hungary most of the advisors working time was used to the advising of primary production enterprises, in spite of the lowest productivity of this industry.
- 10 In Italy more working time was used to the advising of industrial enterprises that it could be economically appropriate.
- 11 In Finland advising of start up enterprises used the largest share of advisors annual working time. In Hungary the share of star up enterprises was second highest of all usages of advisors working time.
- 12 Because of lack of information the Latvian advisor's use of working time could not be compared completely to the average productivity of labor.

In the future the number of service enterprises shall be increased in the member countries of EU. Business advisors have to be able to serve these enterprises even better than before. This trend has to be taken into account when the training program for advisors is planned.

The countries of this study divided to two groups regarding the employer of business advisors. Finland and Hungary were representatives of model that is strongly based on public financing. In Estonia, Greece, Italy and Latvia business advising based more on private enterprises. In Finland and Hungary there existed altogether 11 publicly or public equivalently financed organizations which produced advising services. In Estonia there were only two public advising organizations. The eldest advising organizations of Finland and Hungary were focused on primary production advising. There were altogether 16 different private advising organizations in Estonia, Italy and Latvia. The Greek employers were not in this count. In Hungary there were three private advising organizations.

In Estonia the most common title of occupation of business advisor was consultant. In Finland, Greece, Hungary and Latvia suchlike titles were business advisor and advisor. In Italy all the titles of occupation were titles of degrees in the fields of specialization. Also in Latvia two titles were titles of specialists. On the grounds of these most common occupation titles it is clear that in every country the title of business advisor had not been defined. The quality of the jobs and duties which were included in this occupation was also unclear.

The replies about the most common employer and the most common title of occupation match in this respect with the choices which have been done in the implementation of business advising in different countries. The advising systems of Finland and Hungary are publicly financed the therefore they are parallel. In the advising system of Estonia, Greece, Italy and Latvia the role of private entrepreneurship is greater. The raise of standard of living of European can be secured only if the inventions and innovations of research and development process managed to transfer from desks to daily production process of enterprises. That way the higher productivity shall be achieved simultaneously with the higher welfare of citizens and savings in the use of natural resources. In this process the publicly financed projects, educational institutes and business advising organizations are means, by the help of which the economical, social and ecological goals shall be achieved. The politicians of every country have to choose those

means by which they achieve their goals. In the family-centered Southern Europe where private entrepreneurship forms the basic of the whole society these choices are often different than the choices which have been made in the Northern Europe where everyone believe in the omnipotent welfare society.

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- Statistics Finland World in Figures (<http://www.stat.fi/tup/maanum/index.html>)

## 3 MAIN SURVEY - BUSINESS ADVISORS

### 3.1 Finland

(83 answers)

In Finland the sex distribution of the respondents is very even with 40 women and 43 men. 98 % of the respondents are aged from 30 to 60 years and 60 % have been working as business advisors from 2 to 10 years. Finnish business advisors seem to be reasonably well-educated, 71 % of the respondents having an academic degree. While considering their professional education, commercial education is clearly the most common (59 %). Agriculture or forestry, social sciences and technical education are the other ones with 15 % each. When reviewing business advisors' work history expert's tasks (47 %), entrepreneurship (40 %) and management tasks (39 %) were the most common answers.

Most of the respondents are working in some of the three biggest public organizations or in some public regional development company, Jobs and society having the largest stake with 29 %. 28 % are not working in any of the aforementioned directions.

Business advisors' use of time is quite equally divided between different groups. Companies developing their activities and companies or entrepreneurs starting their business seem to take a bit more time than the others. In the use of time between different branches can be seen more clear division, service sector being clearly the most served sector. Commercial sector is the second most served sector and industry the third.

Business advisors' self-evaluation show that the most important business knowledge skills are considered to be business planning, common knowledge of business, finance, marketing and financing. Respectively in knowledge of business environment the most important things to manage are business networks, competition, distribution channels, changes in social relationships and changes in legislation. When considering personal

competence the respondents see customer orientation, understanding the role of business advisor, motivating and encouraging and negotiation skills the most important skills.

In Finland 27 % of the respondents are very interested in business advisors' degree awarding studies. 36 % are rather interested and only 12 % not interested at all. Naturally a major part of the respondents would like to participate in short, informational courses and events. 35 % think that degree awarding studies are needed and 20 % would like to see third-degree studies.

### **3.2 Greece**

(61 answers)

In Greece most of the respondents were men (69 %) and aged from 30 to 50 years (82 %). The time they have been working as business advisors is very evenly divided between 2 to 20 years. Only 15 % of the respondents have worked either less than two years or more than 30 years, from which 12 % less than two years.

Greek business advisors are very highly educated with 95 % of the respondents having an academic degree. From their professional education business (34 %) and economics (30 %) came up most clearly. 51 % of the respondents have been working as managers before becoming a business advisor. 26 % have been in office work and 15 % entrepreneurs.

According to the answers from different groups of clients the most time take older companies interested in a new business field, new companies developing their businesses and customers who have only a business idea. From different branches service sector is clearly the most served sector (47 %). Industry (28 %) and retail business (20 %) are the other two that came up.

The respondents' self-evaluations show that in business knowledge the most important skills are considered being common knowledge of business, business legislation, marketing, finance and business planning. In knowledge of business environment most important things to be able to cope with are changes in social relationships, cultural changes, changes in national economy, international environment and changes in politics. The most important personal competence factors were considered being psychological competence, negotiation skills, time management, strategic orientation, critical analyzing and performance skills.

In Greece 82 % of the respondents were either rather interested (41 %) or very interested (41 %) in business advisors' degree awarding studies. They want either small informative courses and programs (80 %) or master level education (18 %). 44 % of the respondents see that a certification would have a very high influence on their self-image and 34 % think that the influence would be rather high.

### **3.3 Hungary**

(28 answers)

In Hungary almost two third of the respondents are male. The age distribution is very even, noteworthy is that 25 % are less than 30-years-old and one third over 50-years-old. A major part of the business advisors haven't been working as business advisors for very long. 31 % of the respondents have been working as business advisors for less than two years and 35 % for 2 – 5 years.

The business advisors seem to be highly educated (85 %), although more precise description for the level of their education is not defined in the survey. Manager tasks (25%) and office work (25 %) are the two options that come up when the respondents' work history is reviewed.

The respondents see that in knowledge of business the most important factors are business planning, common knowledge of business, finance, risk management, business taxation and marketing. In Hungary the business advisors were also asked to define the factors that are in need of developing. In knowledge of business these factors are common knowledge of business, business planning and finance.

In knowledge of business environment the most important factors according to the respondents are competition, cultural changes, technological development and changes in national economy. To be developed ones are changes in national economy, international environment and competition. Most important personal competence skills are considered being customer orientation, negotiation skills and learning new things. These skills are also the ones which still are in need of development.

Also in Hungary the respondents are reasonably interested in business advisors' degree awarding studies. 27 % are very interested and 38 % rather interested. 12 % were not interested at all. Surprisingly 49 % of the respondents would like to participate in studies in vocational school. 27 % were interested in short courses.

### **3.4 Italy**

(15 answers)

In Italy 75 % of the respondents are male. All respondents are aged between 30 to 60 years and the distribution is very even. 90 % have been working as business advisor from 6 to 20 years and 80 % have a high education. 50 % of the respondents have commercial education and 40 % have education in agriculture and forestry. Specialist's tasks and manager tasks are clearly the two most common tasks from the respondents' work history.

According to the respondents clients who only have a business idea and older companies developing their business are the two client groups that are served the most. In the time used between different branches agriculture and industry come up clearly.

In business knowledge the respondents see that the most important factors are production, accounting, legislation, common knowledge of business and business taxation. To be developed ones are finance, risk management and logistics. In knowledge of business the most important ones are cultural changes, changes in social relationships, distribution channels, technological development and changes in legislation. In need of development are skills in international environment, changes in legislation and technical development. Most important personal competence factors are time management, negotiation skills, flexibility, customer orientation and critical observation. Respectively in need of development are motivating and encouraging, language skills and cross-cultural competences.

When asked about their interest in business advisor degree awarding studies, 20 % of the respondents said that they are very interested in them and 45 % told that they are rather interested. 30 % would like to participate in master level studies in university and 35 in bachelor level studies either in university or in university of applied sciences.

### **3.5 Latvia**

(17 answers)

In Latvia 10 of the respondents are male and 7 female. Almost half of them (8) are less than 30 years old. 10 of the respondents have been working as business advisors less than five years and only two of them more than 11 years. Specialist's tasks (5) and manager (5) are the two most common answers when the respondents' work history was asked.

Self-evaluations show that marketing, business planning and common knowledge of business are the most important business knowledge related skills according to the respondents. In knowledge of business environment business networks, competition, changes in national economy, changes in politics and technological development are the most important factors. The respondents rated learning new things, analyzing, customer orientation, language skills, strategic orientation and realizing the role of business advisor as the most important personal competence related skills.

When asked about their interest in business advisors' degree awarding studies, most of the respondents were either a little interested (6) or rather interested (7). Ten of the respondents see that short courses would be the most interesting way of learning business advisory and six would like to participate in master level studies.

### **3.6 Sweden**

(127 answers)

In Sweden 69 % of the respondents are male. 40 % of the respondents are aged from 51 – 60 years and 13 % are over 60-years-old. Overall as much as 79 % of the respondents are more than 41-years-old and only 3 % less than 30-years-old. The time the respondents have been working as business advisors is more equally divided. 28 % have been working as business advisors less than five years and 19 % more than 20 years.

The Swedish business advisors seem to be very well-educated, 80 % of the respondents having a higher academic degree. 5 % have a lower academic degree and 15 % have high school or vocational school –based education. As professional education 55 % of the respondents have economy or financial education. Second most common is technical education (13 %). The respondents have quite diverse work histories. Most common answers were professional tasks (35 %), managing director (29 %), office work (27 %) and entrepreneur (26 %).

When considering the time used between different groups of clients, the respondents estimated that companies developing their activities take the most time, followed by clients who only have a business idea and companies interested in new business areas. From different branches three are clearly above the others. These branches are service sector, commercial sector and industry.

The respondents think that in business knowledge the most important factors for business advisors are business planning, finance, common knowledge of business and accounting. The biggest need for development in the field of business knowledge the respondents think they have in knowledge of taxation, behaviour knowledge, legislation, business planning, financing and marketing.

The self-evaluations in knowledge of business environment show that the most important factors for business advisors are changes in society, changes in national economy, business networks, competition and distribution channels. Most in need of development are knowledge of international environment, changes in national economy, technical development and changes in legislation. In personal competence the respondents think that flexibility, learning new things, understanding the role of business advisor, analyzing and customer orientation are the most important factors.

When asked about their interest in business advisors' degree awarding studies, 21 % of the respondents answered that they are very interested in it and 30 % said that they are rather interested. 14 % showed some interest or no interest at all. 65 % of the respondents told that they would like to participate in short courses, 37 % supported vocational training and 14 % would like to have a master level degree.

### 3.7 Summary

In this chapter we will go through the results of the surveys for business advisors. First we will analyze briefly the background information of the business advisors, then we will see business advisors' self-evaluations in different important fields of their work and finally we will handle business advisors' views of professional business advisor –studies.

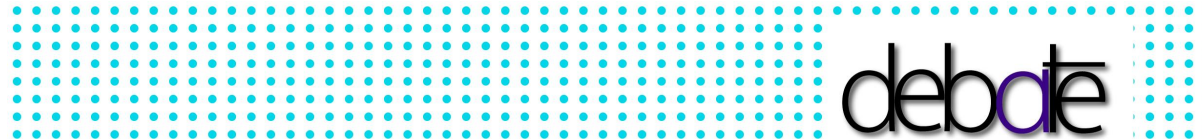
#### 3.7.1 Backgrounds

Most of the respondents are aged equally from 30 to 60 years. The exceptions are Hungary and Latvia where the advisors seem to be younger and respectively Sweden, where the respondents were generally older than in other countries. In Latvia almost half of the respondents are younger than 30 and in Hungary the same proportion is 25%. In Sweden 79 % of the respondents are older than 41 years. The same occurrence can be quite naturally seen in the time the respondents have been working as business advisors.

In all countries the business advisors appear to be highly educated. Most of the respondents have an academic degree. Business advisors' work histories show lots of similarities. In all countries a major part of the respondents have been in office work, having management and specialist's tasks. Entrepreneurship can also be picked up as one part of their histories, but it is not as common as one might expect.

Business advisors' use of time between different groups of clients and different business branches was surveyed in Greece, Finland, Italy and Sweden. Time used between different groups of clients seems to be quite evenly divided between all groups in all countries. Generally clients with only business idea and clients developing their business take a little more time than the others.

When comparing the time used between different branches, we can see that in Finland, Greece and Sweden most time was used with service sector and industry, where as in Italy agriculture and forestry was clearly the biggest sector, industry being the second.



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### 3.7.2 Self-evaluations

Figure 8. Self-evaluations in business knowledge

FINLAND	GREECE	HUNGARY	ITALY	LATVIA	SWEDEN
Answers 83	Answers 61	Answers 28	Answers 15	Answers 17	Answers 127

#### Business knowledge

*Business planning	*Common knowledge of business	*Common knowledge of business	*Production	*Marketing	*Business planning
*Common knowledge of business	*Business legislation	*Business planning	*Accounting	*Business planning	*Finance
*Finance	*Marketing	*Finance	*Legislation	*Common knowledge of business	*Common knowledge of business
*Marketing	*Finance	*Risk management	*Common knowledge of business		*Accounting
*Accounting	*Business planning	*Business taxation	*Business taxation		

#### Urgent to development

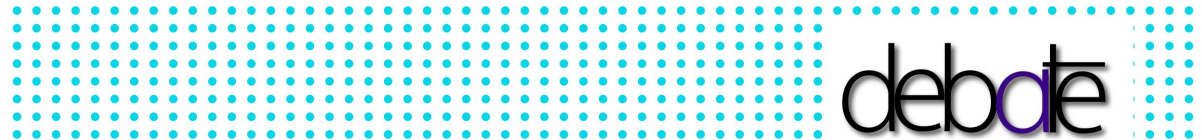
\*Common knowledge of business  
\*Business planning  
\*Finance

\*Finance  
\*Risk management  
\*Logistics

\*Taxation  
\*Behaviour knowledge  
\*Legislation  
\*Business planning  
\*Financing  
\*Marketing

I) Colors indicate similar answers between countries

II) Urgent to development only asked in Hungary, Italy and Sweden



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Figure 9. Self-evaluations in knowledge of business environment

FINLAND	GREECE	HUNGARY	ITALY	LATVIA	SWEDEN
Answers 83	Answers 61	Answers 28	Answers 15	Answers 17	Answers 127

**Knowledge of business environment**

*Business networks	*Changes in social relationships	*Competition	*Cultural changes	*Business networks	*Changes in society
*Competition	*Cultural changes	*Cultural changes	*Changes in social relationships	*Competition	*Changes in national economy
*Distribution channels	*Changes in national economy	*Technological development	*Distribution channels	*Changes in national economy	*Business networks
*Changes in social relationships	*International environment	Changes in national economy	*Technological development	*Changes in politics	*Competition
*Changes in legislation	*Changes in politics	*Business networks	*Changes in legislation	*Technological development	*Distribution channels

**Urgent to development**

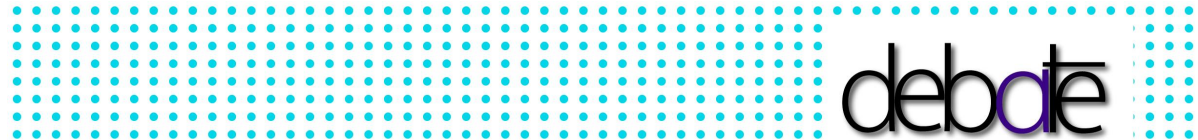
\*Changes in national economy  
\*International environment  
  
\*Competition

\*International environment  
  
\*Changes in legislation  
  
\*Technological development

\*International environment  
\*Changes in national economy  
\*Technological development  
\*Changes in legislation

I) Colors indicate similar answers between countries

II) Urgent to development only asked in Hungary, Italy and Sweden



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Figure 10. Self-evaluations in personal competence

FINLAND	GREECE	HUNGARY	ITALY	LATVIA	SWEDEN
Answers 83	Answers 61	Answers 28	Answers 15	Answers 17	Answers 127

**Personal competence**

*Customer orientation	*Psychological competence	*Customer orientation	*Time management	*Learning new things	*Flexibility
*Understanding the role of BA	*Negotiation skills	*Negotiation skills	*Negotiation skills	*Analyzing	*Learning new things
*Learning new things	*Time management	*Learning new things	*Flexibility	*Customer orientation	*Understanding the role of BA
*Motivating/encouraging	*Strategic orientation	*Performance skills	*Customer orientation	*Language skills	*Analyzing
*Negotiation skills	*Critical analyzing	*Flexibility	*Critical observation	*Strategic orientation	*Customer orientation
	*Performance skills	*Psychological competence		*Realizing the role of BA	

**Urgent to development**

\*Negotiation skills  
\*Customer orientation

\*Learning new things  
\*Performance skills  
\*Flexibility

\*Motivating/encouraging  
\*Language skills  
\*Cross-cultural competence

I) Colors indicate similar answers between countries

II) Urgent to development only asked in Hungary and Italy

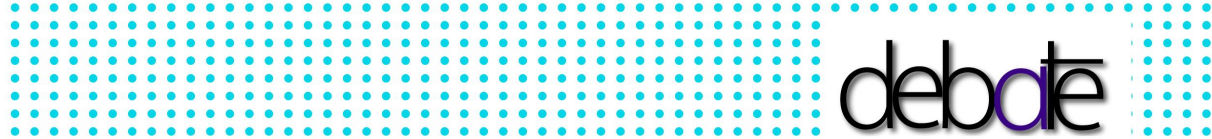
In figure 8 we can see the most important factors concerning business advisors' self-evaluations in their business knowledge. Common knowledge of business was the only factor that was among the most important factors in all six countries. Other common factors were business planning and finance. Self-evaluations in knowledge of business environment have been compared in figure 9. In this part the results were more scattered, but knowledge in business networks, competition, changes in social relationships and national economy, and technological development were the most common ones. Figure 10 shows the comparison of business advisors' self-evaluations in their personal competence. In general the respondents felt that they are best at customer orientation, negotiation skills and learning new things.

In Hungary, Italy and Sweden business advisors were also asked to point out the factors in need of urgent development. The answers show that the respondents feel most need of development in the same areas which they also consider themselves being best at.

### **3.7.3 Business advisor –studies and certification**

When asked if the respondents are interested in business advisors' studies, the answers were very similar in all countries. The most interested country was Greece, where 82 % of the respondents were at least rather interested and half of these very interested. Respectively in Latvia and Sweden the interest is lower, yet about half of the respondents being at least rather interested.

Understandably a major part of the respondents would like to take part in short courses. When considering actual degree awarding studies the biggest interest was shown towards academic studies, either in universities or universities of applied scientists. The exceptions were Hungary and Sweden. In Hungary as much as 49 % of the respondents felt that vocational studies would be the best option. In Sweden 37 % considered vocational studies the best option and 21 % supported academic studies.



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3.7.4 Self-image

Figure 11. Factors influencing business advisors' self-image.

FINLAND	GREECE	HUNGARY	ITALY	LATVIA	SWEDEN
Answers 83	Answers 61	Answers 28	Answers 15	Answers 17	Answers 127

Factors influencing self-image					
*Understanding financial figures and calculations	*Business know-how	*Skills of ethical behaviour	*Skills of ethical behaviour	*Knowledge of business environment	*Business know-how
*Knowledge in business	*Knowledge of business environment	*Knowledge of business environment	*Knowledge of business environment	*Business know-how	*Knowledge of business environment
*Understanding entrepreneurial thinking	*Experience from business life	*Experience from business life	*Skills of entrepreneurial psychology	*Experience from business life	*Experience from business life
*Social skills	*Development of others' personal skills	*Skill to use different tools of BA	*Experience from business life	*Experience as an entrepreneur	*Skill to cooperate with other BA's
*Knowledge of the advise process	*Skill to use different tools of BA	*Skill to cooperate with other BA's	*Experience as an entrepreneur	*Skill to use different tools of BA	

I) Colors indicate similar answers between countries

In figure 11 we can see the most important factors influencing business advisors' self image. In general the most important factors were knowledge of business environment and experience from business life. Also business know-how and the skill to use different tools of business advisor were considered among the important factors in most of the countries.

The effect of the possible business advisor –certification to the self-image was also asked. In Greece and Hungary most of the respondents estimated that the effect would be at least rather high. In Hungary the proportion of these answers was 78,7% and in Greece 52 %. In the other countries the respondents were more hesitant about the effect, but still also in these countries big part of the business advisors think that the effect would be at least rather high.

## 4 MAIN SURVEY - STAKEHOLDERS

### 4.1 Estonia

(20 answers)

Most of the respondents are male (60 %) and the age of 41 - 50 is most common (50 %). 60 % has started their cooperation with BAs less than 2 years ago. The respondents have lower academic degree/university of applied sciences (35 %) or higher academic degree (45 %) and 20 % have been in vocational school. Five have technical education, 5 economics, 4 engineering, 3 social sciences and 3 have other education field.

Three respondents work in public organization and the rest in a company (company of their own or company owned together with other people). Service was the main field of business. 9 stakeholders work in a city, 7 in a town and 4 in the countryside.

The most important business knowledge factors are common knowledge of business, business planning, human resource management, business legislation and business ethics. Technical development, changes in national economy, distribution channels, international environment and changes in legislation are things which are considered important in the field of knowledge of business environment.

Business advisors should know how to motivate and encourage stakeholders. Also customer orientation, realizing the role of a BA and critical analyzing are important skills.

## 4.2 Finland

(147 answers)

Respondents' sexes are very equally distributed. 84 % of them are under 50 years old (25 % less than 30 years old, 29 % are 30 - 40 years old and 30, 6 % are between 41 - 50 years). Most (76 %) of the respondents have started the cooperation with BA less than 2 years ago, 10 % started the cooperation 2 - 5 years ago and only 1 % started the cooperation over 20 years ago.

The level of respondents' vocational education: 22 % upper secondary school, 27 % university of applied sciences/lower academic degree, 28 % technical collage. 32 % have commercial education, 39 % have technical education.

In a company are working 78 % of the respondents (61 % in a company of their own, 12 % in a company owned together with other people and 5 % in a company owned by others). The main fields of their business are service sector (42 %), building (12 %) and retail business (10 %). No fewer than 59 % work in city, 23 % work in the countryside and 18 % in a town.

According to the stakeholders the most important skills of business knowledge are common knowledge of business (92 %), business planning (86 %) and finance (76 %). On the other hand the stakeholders think that logistics, production and human resource management are not very important fields.

The importance of knowledge of business environment: business networks 81 %, competition 81 %, changes in legislation 68 % and changes in politics 63 %. Realizing the role of a BA is the most important (94 %) personal competence, in the second place is customer orientation (91 %), and third is psychological competence

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(89 %). Interesting point is that innovativeness is considered not at all important (10 %). 90 % of the respondents answered that they are satisfied with the BAs services quality. Only 3 % were quite unsatisfied.

According to the stakeholders the most important factors influencing the self-image of a BA are, understanding the financial position and facts (93 %), skills of stakeholder psychology (93 %), consulting services management (87 %) and business know-how (86 %).

### **4.3 Greece**

(61 answers)

Entrepreneurs and stakeholders are mostly male (81 %) and they are between 30 to 60 years old. 45 % of them started to work with business advisors 2 - 5 years ago and most of them (70 %) have a Bachelor or Master degree in the field of service. The majority of the Greek stakeholders live in a city (75 %) and they work for a company (owned by themselves, by others or owned together with others).

Stakeholders assess high BA's competences in common knowledge of business, finance and business legislation, while in the knowledge of business environment they score high in business networks, competition and technological developments. As for the personal assets of the BAs they think that they have competence on strategic orientation, customer orientation and realizing the role of a BA.

Finally, as regards to the factors they consider very important for the professional profile of a BA, the highest scores were given to experience from business life, business know-how and knowledge of business environment.

#### 4.4 Hungary

(27 answers)

The group of stakeholders is mainly consisting of young ones, less than 30 years (54 %), who naturally have rather small experience in cooperating with BAs. They (61 %) started the cooperation less than 2 years ago.

68 % of them have higher education and 32 % have middle education. All of the respondents work in a company (55 % run a business of their own). The most important sectors are first the service sector (52 %) and second are the retail sector (26 %).

According to the stakeholders the most important skills of business knowledge are the common knowledge of business, marketing and finance. They think the BAs should improve their skills on marketing, common knowledge of business and business planning.

If we take a look at the skills related to the knowledge of business environment, you'll see that business networks, competition and distribution channels are the most important ones. The BAs should improve their knowledge in skills like competition, changes in legislation, business networks and international environment.

The most important personal competence skills are as followed: customer orientation, negotiation skills and flexibility. These skills should be improved as well. According to the stakeholders the most important factors influencing the self-image of a BA are business know-how, knowledge of business environment, experience from business life and skills of ethical behaviour.

#### 4.5 Italy

(10 answers)

The respondents have a middle or high level education. The type of their organization is 50 % company of their own or company owned together with other people and 50 % work in cooperatives.

The field of business is divided in primary sector (40 %), retail business, particularly tourism (30 %) and other fields: building, estate development (30 %). The companies are situated generally in towns and some in the countryside.

BA figure should possess some essential characteristics: good cultural knowledge, language skills and strategic orientation. The competences of this new professional figure of BA may be both psycho-sociological and economical one.

The selected companies are heterogeneous and work in different sectors, so the results of this research don't have a common thread. The certification of a professional Business Advisors is not so valued for the stakeholders. More important is the experience in the field, but there is a difference between the agribusiness and the companies of other sectors. The agribusiness takes advantage of the BA's work on the human relations.

The other important quality in the opinion of the stakeholders is the constant updating, and so the knowledge of cultural changes, the changes in social relationship, in national economy, in legislation, in politics, etc.

Important information resulting is, that in Italy is the stakeholder that carries out the function of incentive to analyze the financing theme, technological innovation,

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marketing; so the Business Advisors professional figure is very important in Italy, because actually this professional profile does not exist.

#### **4.6 Latvia**

(10 answers)

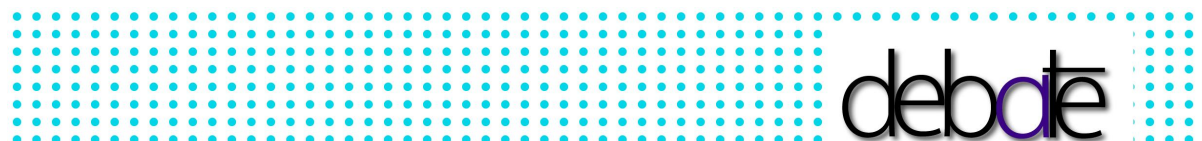
Most of the respondents are less than 30 years old and 6 were male and four persons are female. Three of them had started the cooperation less than 2 years ago, five 2-5 years ago and two 6-10 years ago.

All are working in some kind of company and the fields of these companies are primary sector (2), industry (3), retail business (3) and service sector (2).

The business planning and business legislation are two most important factors in the field of knowledge of business. Also they think that production, human resource management, risk management and marketing are factors which are not needed.

If we take a look at the knowledge of business environment skills, you'll see that business networks, changes in national economy are the most important ones. The cultural changes are not needed in their opinion.

The most important personal competence skills are as followed: realizing the role of a BA, performance skills, negotiation skills, strategic orientation, language skills and time management.



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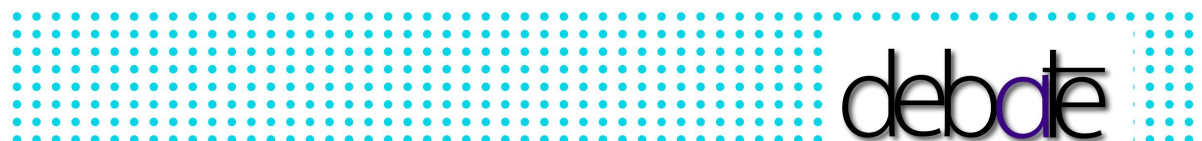
#### 4.7 Professional competence and development needs for ba's in the stakeholders opinion

Figure 12. Business knowledge

ESTONIA	FINLAND	GREECE	HUNGARY	ITALY	LATVIA
answers 20	answers 147	answers 61	answers 27	answers 10	answers 10
<b>Business knowledge</b>					
*Common knowledge of business	*Common knowledge of business	*Common knowledge of business	*Common knowledge of business	*Common knowledge of business	*Business legislation
*Business planning	*Business planning	*Finance	*Marketing	*Business legislation	*Business planning
*Human resource management	*Finance	*Business legislation	*Finance	*The risk management	*Finance
*Business legislation	*Risk management	*Marketing		*Production	
*Business ethics	*Business legislation	*Business ethics		*Business ethics	
<b>Urgent to development</b>					
	*Logistics		*Marketing	*Marketing	
	*Production		*Common knowledge of business	*Business planning	
	*Human resource management		*Business planning	*Human resource management	

I) Colors indicate similar answers between countries

II) Urgent to development only asked in Finland, Hungary and Italy


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Figure 13. Knowledge of business environment

ESTONIA	FINLAND	GREECE	HUNGARY	ITALY	LATVIA
answers 20	answers 147	answers 61	answers 27	answers 10	answers 10

**Knowledge of business environment**

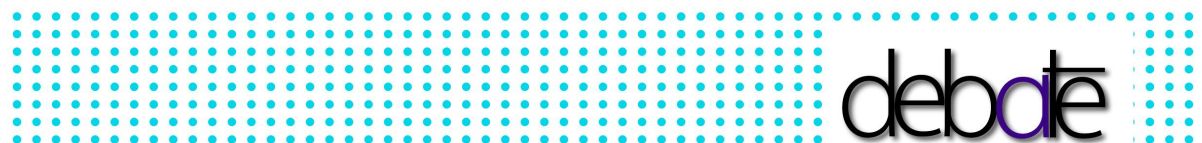
*Technological development	*Business networks	*Business networks	*Business networks	*Ditribution channel	*Business network
*Changes in national economy	*Competition	*Competition	*Competition	*Competition	*Changes in national economy
*Distribution channels	*Changes in legislation	*Technological development	*Distribution channels	*Business network	*International environment
*International environment	*Changes in politics		*International environment	*Changes in national economy	*Distribution channels
*Changes in legislation					*Competition

**Urgent to development**

*International environment	*Competition	*Distribution channel
*Cultural changes	*Changes in legislation	*Business network
*Distribution channels	*Business networks	*Technological development
	*International environment	

I) Colors indicate similar answers between countries

II) Urgent to development only asked in Hungary, Italy and Finland



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Figure 14. BAs personal competence

ESTONIA	FINLAND	GREECE	HUNGARY	ITALY	LATVIA
answers 20	answers 147	answers 61	answers 27	answers 10	answers 10

**Personal competence**

*Motivation/encouraging	*Realizing role of a BA	*Strategic orientation	*Negotiation skills	*Strategic orientation	*Realizing role of BA
*Customer orientation	*Customer orientation	*Realizing role of BA	*Flexibility	*Critical analyzing	*Performance skills
*Realizing role of BA	*Psychological competence	*Customer orientation	*Customer orientation	*Motivating/encouraging	*Negotiation skills
*Critical analyzing	*Critical analyzing			*Customer orientation	*Strategic orientation
	*Negotiation skills			*Flexibility	*Language skills
				*Learning new things	*Time management

**Urgent to development**

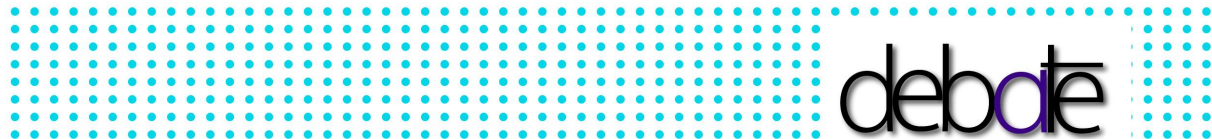
\*Cross-cultural competence  
\*Innovativeness  
\*Strategic orientation

\*Customer orientation  
\*Negotiation skills  
\*Flexibility

\*Realizing role of BA  
\*Performance skills  
\*Negotiation skills  
\*Critical observation  
\*Innovativeness  
\*Analysis

I) Colors indicate similar answers between countries

II) Urgent to development only asked in Hungary, Italy and Finland



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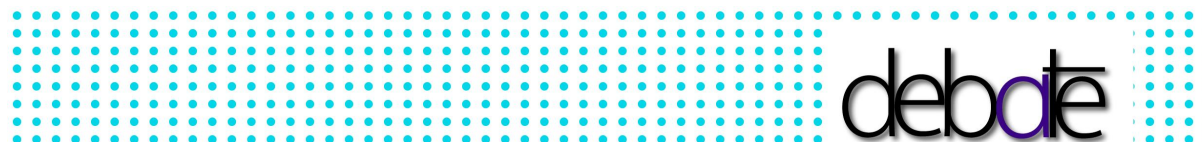
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In all five countries – Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary and Italy - the most important business knowledge sector for the BAs is the common knowledge of business. Also important sectors are: finance, business ethics and business legislation. However those things are not on the list what should be developed, only in Hungary the common knowledge of business.

In the field knowledge of business environment you can also find some same things which are important in more than one country. Those sectors are first business networks (Finland, Greece, Hungary and Italy), and then competition (Finland, Greece, Hungary and Italy) and distribution channels.

You can find in this sector that the customer orientation is very important skill (all five countries). Secondly comes realizing the role of a BA and critical analyzing.



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Figure 15. Important BA profile factors.

ESTONIA	FINLAND	GREECE	HUNGARY	ITALY	LATVIA
answers 20	answers 147	answers 61	answers 27	answers 10	answers 10

Personal competence					
*Motivation/encouraging	*Realizing role of a BA	*Strategic orientation	*Negotiation skills	*Strategic orientation	*Realizing role of BA
*Customer orientation	*Customer orientation	*Realizing role of BA	*Flexibility	*Critical analyzing	*Performance skills
*Realizing role of BA	*Psychological competence	*Customer orientation	*Customer orientation	*Motivating/encouraging	*Negotiation skills
*Critical analyzing	*Critical analyzing			*Customer orientation	*Strategic orientation
	*Negotiation skills			*Flexibility	*Language skills
				*Learning new things	
Urgent to development					
	*Cross-cultural competence			*Customer orientation	*Realizing role of BA
	*Innovativeness			*Negotiation skills	*Performance skills
	*Strategic orientation			*Flexibility	*Negotiation skills
					*Critical observation
					*Innovativeness
					*Analysis

I) Colors indicate similar answers between countries

II) Urgent to development only asked in Hungary, Italy and Finland

## 5 RESULTS FROM BUSINESS ADVISORS AND STAKEHOLDERS COMPARED

### 5.1 Evaluation of business advisors' needs

When considering business advisors' business knowledge, both the advisors and the stakeholders think that common knowledge of business is the most important factor. Also finance was considered an important part of business advisors' knowledge by both parts. The other common factors were business planning, emphasized more by the advisors, and business legislations, respectively emphasized by stakeholders.

Competition and business networks came up from both sides in the field of business environment knowledge. Also distribution channels and changes in national economy point out as common factors. Changes in social relationships were considered an important part of knowledge by the business advisors, but it wasn't seen among the most important factor by the stakeholders.

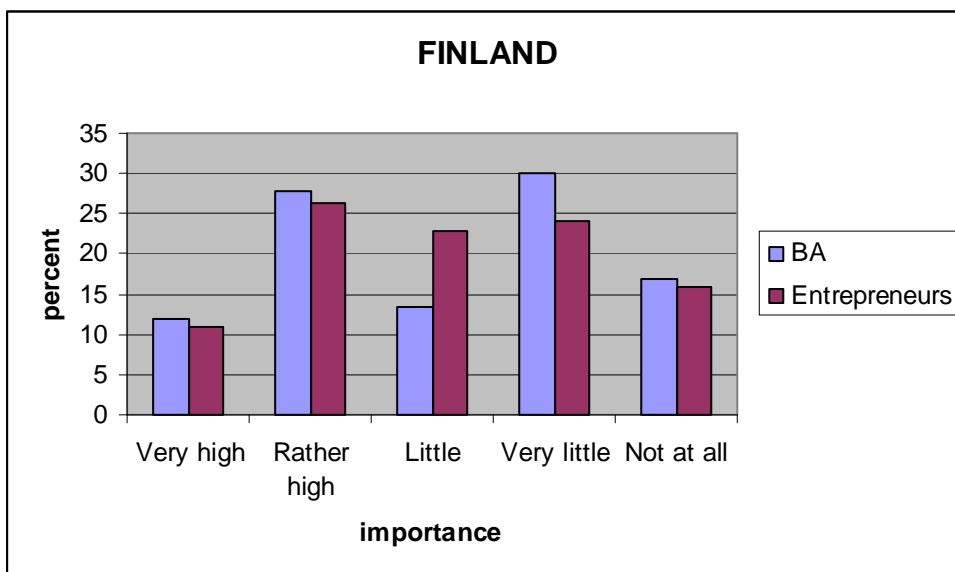
Both sides see customer orientation as the most important personal competence. Otherwise the views differ quite a lot. For example the business advisor consider negotiation skills and learning new things very important, while the stakeholders point out realizing the role of business advisor and critical analyzing. Especially these personal competence related results should be taken seriously, because they can have a strong influence to the whole advising process.

## 5.2 Factors influencing business advisors' self-image

When considering important factors influencing business advisor' self-image both the advisors and the stakeholders, find knowledge of business environment and business know-how the most important. A little surprising result was that the business advisors themselves see experience from business life very important, but the stakeholders don't emphasize this as much. Also the skill to use different business advisor's tools was more important to the business advisors' than to the stakeholders.

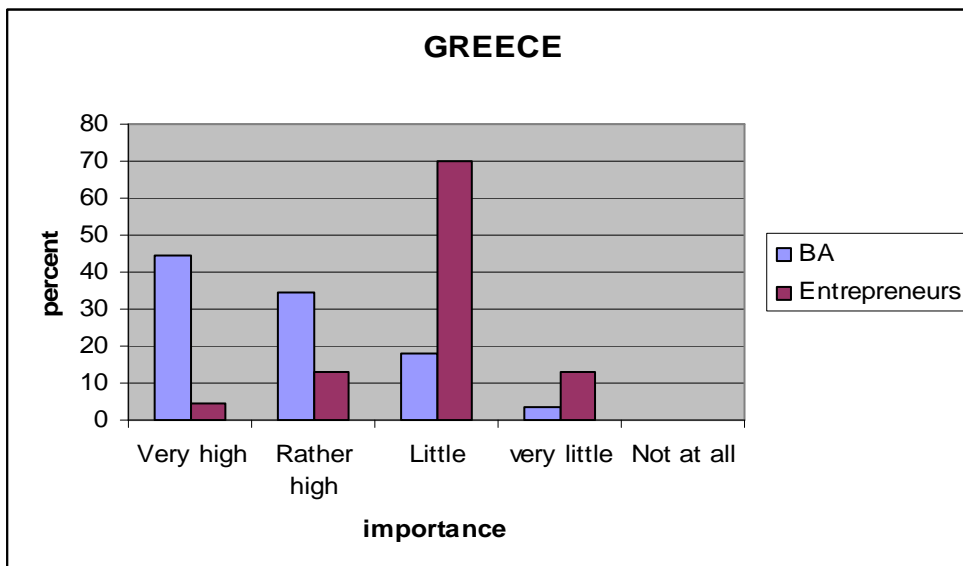
## 5.3 The influence of business advisor –certification to business advisors' image?

Figure 15. Finland's BA's and stakeholders' views of the effects of the BA certification



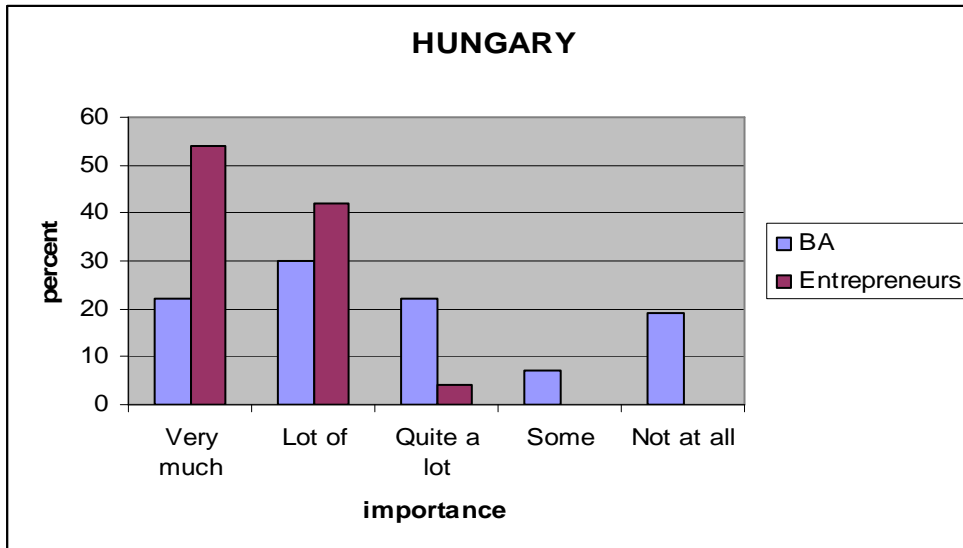
In Finland the figures are almost the same. Both the BAs and stakeholders think that the certification have influence (very much BA 12 % and Stakeholders 11 %). Although there are also persons who think that the certification has no importance. (BA 17 % and stakeholders 16 % )

Figure 16. Greece's BA's and stakeholders' views of the effects of the BA certification



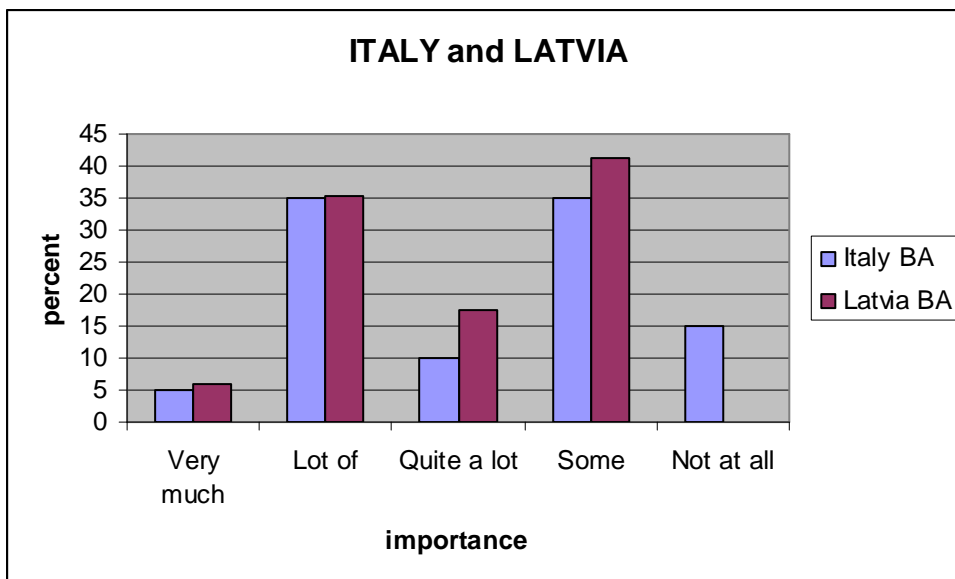
In Greece the stakeholders are not sure, if the certification has influence and on the other hand the BAs opinion is that it has high influence.

Figure 17. Hungary's BA's and stakeholders' views of the effects of the BA certification



At the same time in Hungary the stakeholders believe that the certification has great importance to the image of BAs, while the BAs are more conservative.

Figure 18. Italy and Latvia's BA's views of the effects of the BA certification





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These figures are only the BAs opinions. Both in Italy and in Latvia the BAs believe that the certification has influence.

In Italy for the stakeholders the certification has a minor value. The experience in the field is more important. In Estonia the stakeholders answer gave result with average of 4.4.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

When analyzing these results one should remember that the number of respondents is quite small in most of the partner countries and so all the conclusions cannot be considered statistically valid and reliable. Apparently, for one reason or another, all the researchers have faced difficulties getting answers. Also the reporting methods vary from one country to another.

Despite all that, it is easy to find lots of similarities first of all in both business advisors' surveys and stakeholders' surveys. Also the views of both groups give congruent information. As well between different countries can be seen common fields for development and important factors.

All these surveys clearly show that the role of business advisors is very important and they are truly needed. Because of this it is also easy to state that training and some kind of unification have their places. Challenges to this work will be set by strong EU involvement in this development and the different states and models in this matter.

## APPENDIXES

### 1 Sources of information form for Pre-Survey

Region: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Quantitative information about BA	What is the original source of this kind of information?
1 How many business advisors do you have in your country?	
Is it difficult to find this information?	
What is the most recent year from which you can find this information?	
What can you say about the quality of information?	
1. How many advisor work with:	
1 primary production (agriculture etc.) enterprises	
2 industrial enterprises	
3 private service enterprises	
4 start up of enterprises	
Is it difficult to find this information?	
What is the most recent year from which you can find this information?	
What can you say about the quality of information?	
2. How many percent of advisors approximately work in:	
5 public or public equivalent organizations	
6 private organizations	
Is it difficult to find this information?	
What is the most recent year from which you can find this information?	
What can you say about the quality of information?	
1 How many percent of advisors approximately are female?	
Is it difficult to find this information?	
What is the most recent year from which you can find this information?	
What can you say about the quality of information?	
1 List examples of the organizations in which most of advisors work?	
7 public or public equivalent	
8 private	
Is it difficult to find this information?	
What is the most recent year from which you can find this information?	
What can you say about the quality of information?	
2 Give examples of the most common job titles of business advisors.	
Is it difficult to find this information?	
What is the most recent year from which you can find this information?	
What can you say about the quality of information?	

1) a= population statistics or other census survey, which include the whole population of country

b= sample data, for example the statistic about the labour force are based on survey which is done for sample of the working population

c)= research or study which is done in university, polytechnic or other public organization of your country

d)= sample or other estimation. Sample in this context does not mean a statistical sample. It is for example a number of BA, whom you know personally.

From this number you can estimate the number of BA in the whole country.

## 2 Quantitative measures of BA's –Excel form for Pre-Survey

Debate/Komp 3 Pre Survey Quantitative measures of BA's

Region	Country
Contact person	
Year	2004

1. Fill the table 1 with the total numbers of business advisors in your country according to the most recent Source of your. You should write this year in the cell B5.

Table 1 Number of business advisors in the member country by their employers activities

Primary production enterprises  
 Industrial enterprises  
 Private service enterprises  
 Start up enterprises  
 Total number of business advisors

Country 2004

2004

2. How many percent of advisors worked with public or public equivalent organizations?
3. How many percent of advisors worked with private organizations?
4. How many percent of advisors were female?
5. List examples of organizations in which most of advisors worked?  
 Organization can be for example public, public equivalent, private...

Country 2004

2004

6. What were the five most common job titles of advisors in your country?

Country

2004

### 3 Questionnaire: Business Advisors

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. How old are you?

- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 less than 30 years | 4 51 – 60 years      |
| 2 30 – 40 years      | 5 more than 60 years |
| 3 41 – 50 years      |                      |

2. Your gender?

- 1 male      2 female

3. How many years have you worked as a business advisor?

- |                       |                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 2 less than two years | 4 11 – 20 years      |
| 3 2 – 5 years         | 5 more than 20 years |
| 4 6 – 10 years        |                      |

4. What is your basic education? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is the level of your professional education? \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is the field of your professional education?  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. In which organisation are you working as a business advisor? (There are different organisations in each country!)

- 9 Employment and economic development centre  
 10 Jobs and Society  
 11 Pro Agria  
 12 Regional Development Company  
 13 Some other organisation. Which? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Are you working

- 2 in a city (more than 50 000 inhabitants)  
 3 in a town  
 4 in the countryside

9. What kinds of jobs have you had before starting your work as a business advisor?  
 (You may circle more than one.)

- |                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| 3 blue collar worker | 5 director     |
| 4 office worker      | 6 entrepreneur |

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- 5 specialist \_\_\_\_\_ 7 Some other job.  
Which? \_\_\_\_\_  
6 manager

10. Have you had responsibilities in associations, federations or clubs that are useful for you as a business advisor?      1 yes      2 no

#### JOB DESCRIPTION AS A BUSINESS ADVISOR

11. Assess how many % of your time you are advising **different customer groups** (Total 100 %)

- 1 a customer who only has a business idea \_\_\_\_\_  
2 a new company developing its business \_\_\_\_\_  
3 an older company interested in a new business field \_\_\_\_\_  
4 an old company needing a new entrepreneur/owner \_\_\_\_\_  
5 Other customers. What kind of? \_\_\_\_\_

12. Assess how many % of your time you are advising **in different business fields?** (Total 100 %)

- 1 primary sector (agriculture, forestry...) \_\_\_\_\_  
2 industry \_\_\_\_\_  
3 retail business \_\_\_\_\_  
4 service sector \_\_\_\_\_  
5 Some other field. Which? \_\_\_\_\_

#### PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE AND DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

Assess your competence in the following dimensions that dimensions (**scale: 1 = I do not need it, 2 = poor, 3 = satisfactory, 4 = good, 5 = excellent**).

**Tick (x) the**  
**are urgent for you to**  
**develop.**

#### A. Knowledge of business

13. Common knowledge of business \_\_\_\_\_  
14. Business legislation \_\_\_\_\_  
15. Business taxation \_\_\_\_\_  
16. Marketing \_\_\_\_\_  
17. Accounting, bookkeeping \_\_\_\_\_

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18. Finance	_____	_____
19. Business planning	_____	_____
20. Risk management	_____	_____
21. Logistics	_____	_____
22. Human resource management	_____	_____
23. Production	_____	_____
B. Knowledge of business environment		
24. Distribution channels	_____	_____
25. Competition	_____	_____
26. Business networks	_____	_____
27. Technological development	_____	_____
28. Cultural changes	_____	_____
29. Changes in social relationships	_____	_____
30. Changes in national economy	_____	_____
31. International environment	_____	_____
32. Changes in legislation	_____	_____
34. Changes in politics	_____	_____
C. Personal competence		
<b>Communication and interaction</b>		
34. Realizing the role of a BA	_____	_____
35. Performance skills	_____	_____
36. Negotiation skills	_____	_____
37. Psychological competence	_____	_____
38. Critical analysing	_____	_____
39. Motivating/encouraging	_____	_____
40. Strategic orientation	_____	_____
<b>International competence</b>		
41. Language skills	_____	_____
42. Cross-cultural competence	_____	_____
<b>Self-management</b>		
43. Time management	_____	_____
44. Innovativeness	_____	_____
45. Flexibility	_____	_____
46. Learning new things	_____	_____
47. Critical observation	_____	_____
48. Analysing	_____	_____
49. Customer orientation	_____	_____

## PERSONAL INTERESTS TO STUDY

50. How interested are you to participate in the training for business advisors' degree-awarding education?

- |   |                       |   |                   |
|---|-----------------------|---|-------------------|
| 1 | Not at all interested | 3 | Rather interested |
| 2 | A little interested   | 4 | Very interested   |

51. Which levels of studies would you like to participate in? (You may circle more than one.)

- 13 short courses and programs not leading to a degree
- 14 diploma in a vocational school (2<sup>nd</sup> level)
- 15 bachelor level at a polytechnic
- 16 bachelor level at a university
- 17 masters level at a university
- 18 Some other studies. Which? \_\_\_\_\_

52. How many ECTS credits (1 credit is equal to about 27 hours of work) should the studies be for you? (To study full time a year equals 60 credits = 40 weeks of work.)

- 1 less than 20 weeks (less than 30 credits)
- 2 20 – 40 weeks (30 – 60 credits)
- 3 41 – 80 weeks (61 – 120 credits)
- 4 81 – 140 weeks (121 – 210 credits)
- 5 141 – 160 weeks (211 – 240 credits)

53. How much would it influence your self-image if you received the **certification of a professional business advisor** after the studies?

- |            |   |   |
|------------|---|---|
| Not at all |   |   |
| Very much  |   |   |
| 1          | 2 | 3 |
| 4          | 5 |   |

What are the most important factors influencing your **self-image** as a business advisor? (These factors build the **professional profile** of a BA. Assess each of them using the **scale from 1 to 5**: 1 = not at all important and 5 = very important.)

- |  |       |       |
|--|-------|-------|
| 54. Business know-how                      | _____ | _____ |
| 55. Knowledge of business environment      | _____ | _____ |
| 56. Development of others' personal skills | _____ | _____ |
| 57. Skills of ethical behaviour            | _____ | _____ |
| 58. Skills of human resource management    | _____ | _____ |
| 59. Skills of entrepreneur psychology      | _____ | _____ |
| 60. Experience from business life          | _____ | _____ |
| 61. Experience as an entrepreneur          | _____ | _____ |

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62. Cultural skills \_\_\_\_\_
63. Skills of process management \_\_\_\_\_
64. Skills to use different tools for BAs \_\_\_\_\_
65. Skills to cooperate with other BAs \_\_\_\_\_
66. Skills to manage quality systems/standards \_\_\_\_\_
67. Other skill(s) Which? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want to tell something else concerning the topic of this survey?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your answers!**

**Request for contact information:**

We will also give an opportunity to BAs' customers and stakeholders to assess BA's professional profile in the survey immediately after this one. It is possible only if BAs want to cooperate with us. Please, be so kind and give us the contact information (name and e-mail address) of your stakeholders and customers. We will not reveal the name of the person providing us with this information – only that a BA has given it. You may have **stakeholders** who are working in, for example, a

Bank \_\_\_\_\_

Chamber of Commerce \_\_\_\_\_

Federation of Entrepreneurs \_\_\_\_\_

Public organization/authority to develop business (e.g. Employment and Economic Development Centre in Finland) \_\_\_\_\_

Some other organisation \_\_\_\_\_

**Your customers** (e.g. entrepreneurs, **at least two**) \_\_\_\_\_

**Important!** Please, contact your **customers** and request their permission for the survey.

Thank you for your help!

#### 4 Questionnaire: Entrepreneurs and other stakeholders

##### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. How old are you?

4 less than 30 years

5 30 – 40 years

6 41 – 50 years

4 51 – 60 years

5 more than 60 years

2. Your gender?

1 male

2 female

3. How many years ago did you start your cooperation with a business advisor?

5 less than two years

6 2 – 5 years

7 6 – 10 years

4 11 – 20 years

5 more than 20 years

4. What is the level of your vocational education? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is the field of your vocational education? \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is your organisation?

14 Company of my own

15 Company owned together with other people

16 Company owned by others

17 Bank or some other organisation in the field of finance

18 Chamber of Commerce

19 Federation of Entrepreneurs

20 Public organisation/authority to promote entrepreneurship

21 Some other organisation. Which? \_\_\_\_\_

7. If you circled **1, 2 or 3** (= company), please answer also the following question:

What is your field of business? (If you have more than one fields of business, select the field where you have used a business advisor.)

1 Primary sector (agriculture, forestry...)

2 Industry

3 Retail business

4 Service sector

5 Some other field. Which? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. Are you working
- 5 in a city (more than 50 000 inhabitants)
  - 6 in a town
  - 7 in the countryside

**BUSINESS ADVISORS' PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE AND DEVELOPMENT NEEDS** (Please, assess the BA you have cooperated with. There may be dimensions impossible to assess if do not have experience. These questions can be left unanswered.)

Assess **BA's competence** in the following dimensions that dimensions (**scale: 1 = he/she does not need it, 2 = poor, 3 = satisfactory, 4 = good, 5 = excellent**).

Tick (x) the are **urgent** for your BA to develop.

**A. Knowledge of business**

- |                                 |       |       |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|
| 8. Common knowledge of business | _____ | _____ |
| 10. Business legislation        | _____ | _____ |
| 11. Business taxation           | _____ | _____ |
| 12. Marketing                   | _____ | _____ |
| 13. Accounting, bookkeeping     | _____ | _____ |
| 14. Finance                     | _____ | _____ |
| 15. Business planning           | _____ | _____ |
| 16. Risk management             | _____ | _____ |
| 17. Logistics                   | _____ | _____ |
| 18. Human resource management   | _____ | _____ |
| 19. Production                  | _____ | _____ |
| 20. Business ethics             | _____ | _____ |

**B. Knowledge of business environment**

- |                                     |       |       |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| 21. Distribution channels           | _____ | _____ |
| 22. Competition                     | _____ | _____ |
| 23. Business networks               | _____ | _____ |
| 24. Technological development       | _____ | _____ |
| 25. Cultural changes                | _____ | _____ |
| 26. Changes in social relationships | _____ | _____ |
| 27. Changes in national economy     | _____ | _____ |
| 28. International environment       | _____ | _____ |
| 29. Changes in legislation          | _____ | _____ |
| 30. Changes in politics             | _____ | _____ |

## C. Personal competence

**Communication and interaction**

- |                                |       |       |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|
| 31. Realizing the role of a BA | _____ | _____ |
| 32. Performance skills         | _____ | _____ |
| 33. Negotiation skills         | _____ | _____ |
| 34. Psychological competence   | _____ | _____ |
| 35. Critical analysing         | _____ | _____ |
| 36. Motivating/encouraging     | _____ | _____ |
| 37. Strategic orientation      | _____ | _____ |

**International competence**

- |                               |       |       |
|-------------------------------|-------|-------|
| 38. Language skills           | _____ | _____ |
| 39. Cross-cultural competence | _____ | _____ |

**Self-management**

- |                          |       |       |
|--------------------------|-------|-------|
| 40. Time management      | _____ | _____ |
| 41. Innovativeness       | _____ | _____ |
| 42. Flexibility          | _____ | _____ |
| 43. Learning new things  | _____ | _____ |
| 44. Critical observation | _____ | _____ |
| 45. Analysing            | _____ | _____ |
| 46. Customer orientation | _____ | _____ |

47. In your opinion, how much would it influence a BA's image if he/she has received the **certification of a professional business advisor** after the studies?

Not at all

Very much

1	5	2	3
4			

Assess the most important factors influencing the **professional profile** of a business advisor? (Assess each of them using the **scale from 1 to 5**: 1 = not at all important and 5 = very important.)

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| 48. Business know-how                      | _____ |
| 49. Knowledge of business environment      | _____ |
| 50. Development of others' personal skills | _____ |
| 51. Skills of ethical behaviour            | _____ |
| 52. Skills of human management             | _____ |
| 53. Skills of entrepreneur psychology      | _____ |
| 54. Experience from business life          | _____ |
| 55. Experience as an entrepreneur          | _____ |

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- 56. Cultural skills \_\_\_\_\_
- 57. Skills of process management \_\_\_\_\_
- 58. Skills to use different tools for BAs \_\_\_\_\_
- 59. Skills to cooperate with other BAs \_\_\_\_\_
- 60. Skills to manage quality systems/standards \_\_\_\_\_
- 61. Other skill(s) Which? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want to tell something else concerning the topic of this survey?

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**Thank you for your answers!**