



## **Technical Assistance to SME Development**

An EU funded project managed by the European Agency for Reconstruction  
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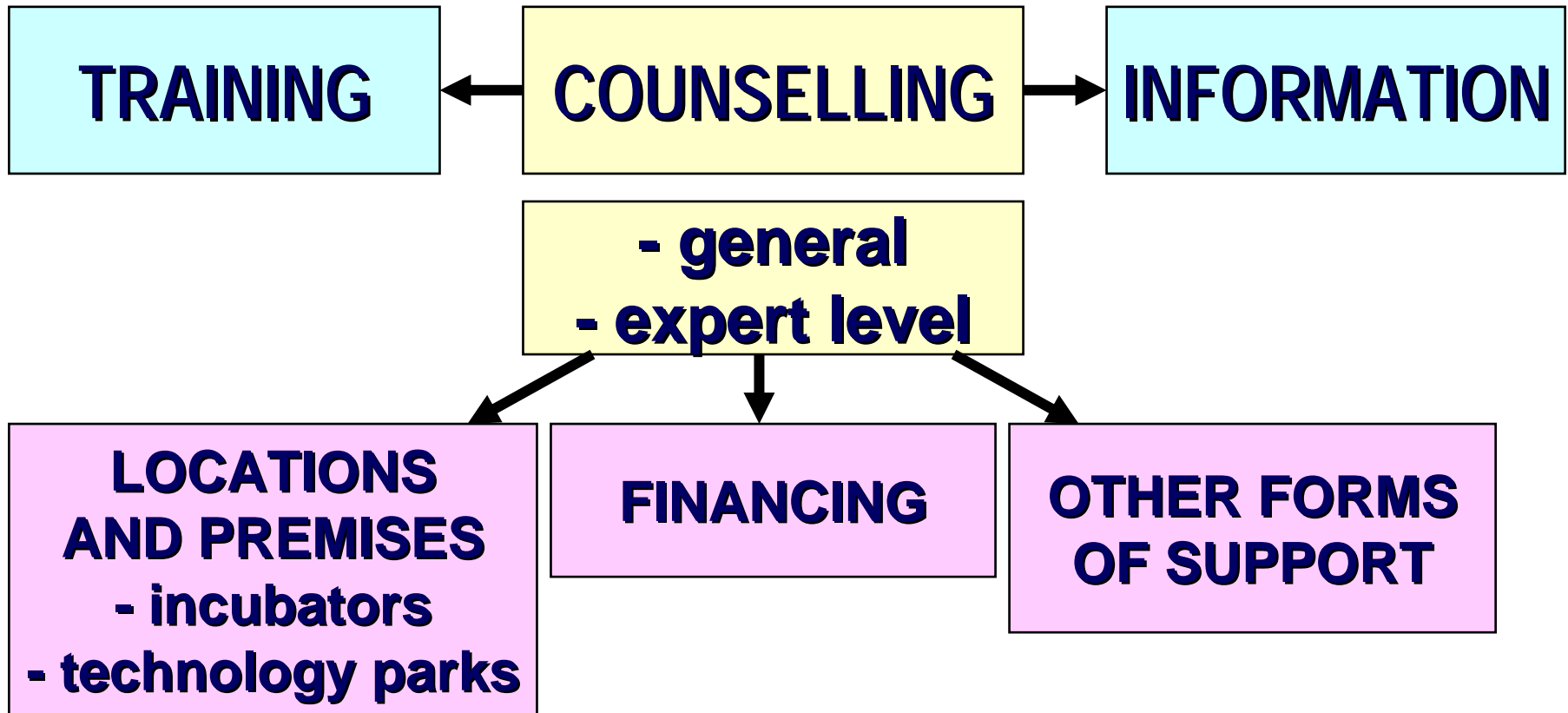


# ***The Voucher Counseling Scheme: Lessons for Macedonia from Slovenian Experience***

**Dr. Jaka Vadnjal**  
**Skopje, 9.5.2008**

# ***SYSTEM OF THE SUBSIDIZED SME COUNSELLING: "VOUCHER" SYSTEM***

## **Forms of SME / entrepreneurship support**



# ***COUNSELLING PROCESS***

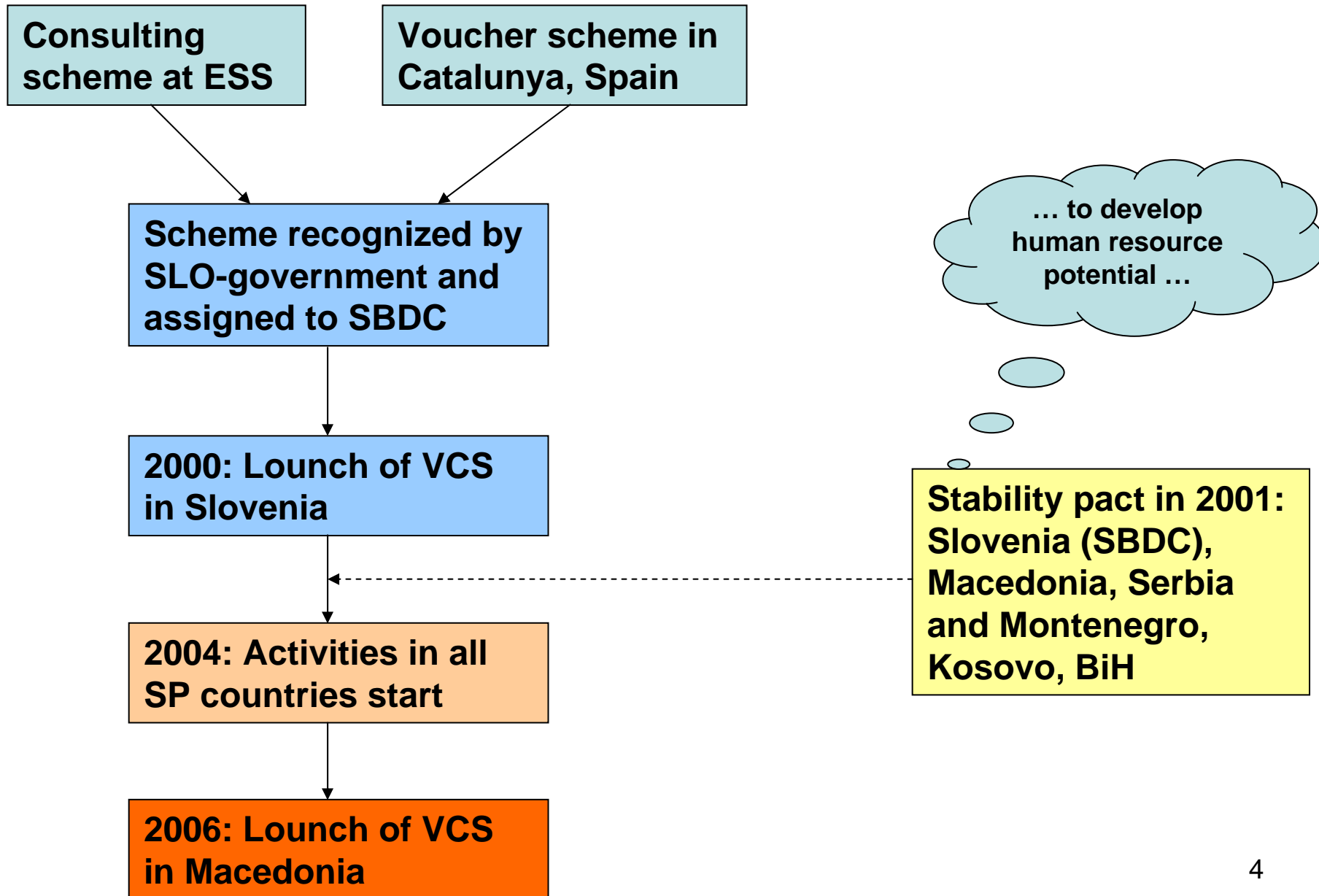
**ENTREPRENEUR: ASSESSMENT**

**ENTRY INTO THE SYSTEM:  
SELECTION OF COUNSELLOR**

**COUNSELLING PROCESS - WHAT  
SHOULD THE PRODUCT BE?**

**IMPROVING THE ENTREPRE-  
NEURIAL PROCESS (RESULTS)**

# SOME HISTORY



# *Some comments on history*

## **Other countries:**

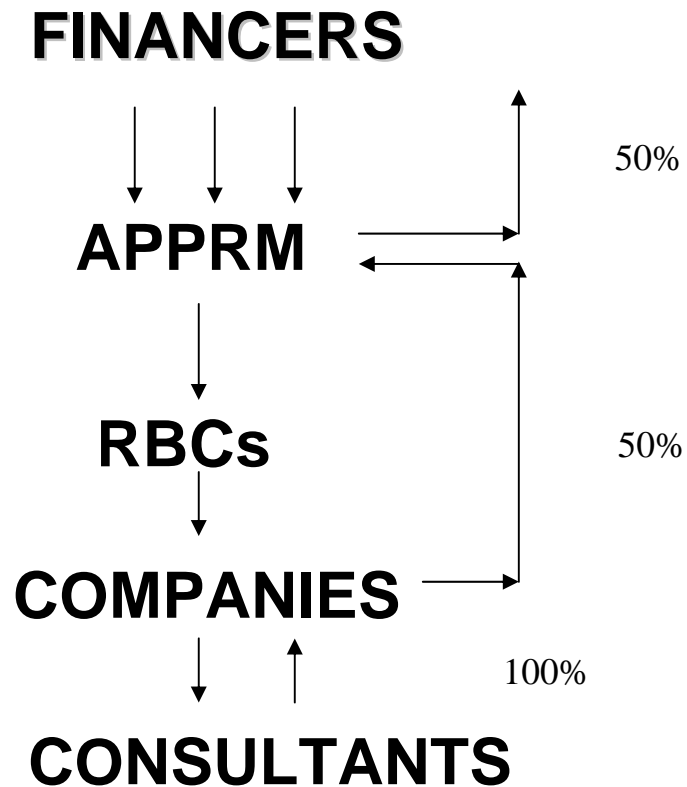
- EU funded projects in all countries
- Nothing happened
- A little bit of awakening in BiH but on the level of economic regions
- Others: ...

## **Macedonia:**

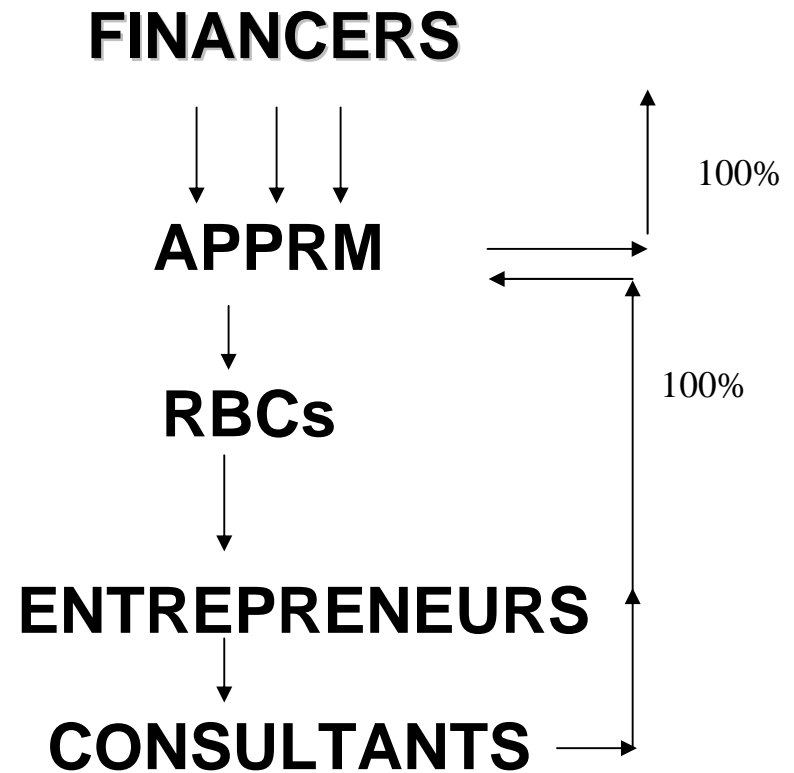
- EU funded projects (SME support and TASME) but,
- APPRM which took VCS as one of their main activities and
- Two enthusiasts:
  - **Marjan S.**
  - **Ljubiša N.**

# How it works?

## Existing companies

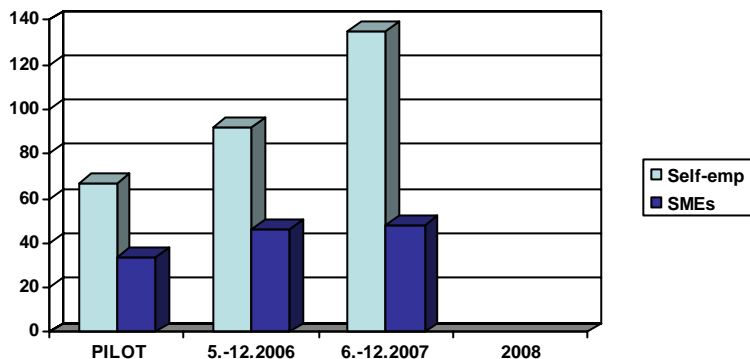


## Potential entrepreneurs

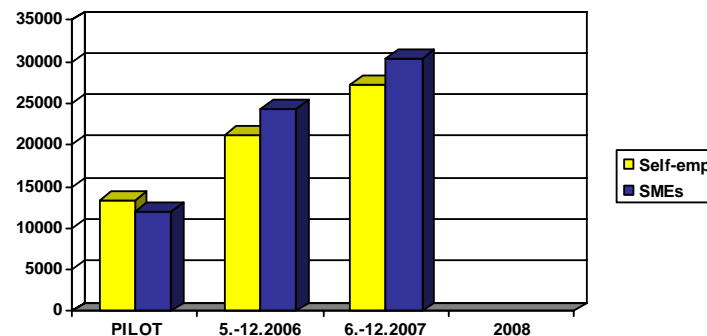


# VCS in Macedonia

Number of completed projects



Value of subvention



## Regional Centers:

Skopje

Strumica

Ohrid

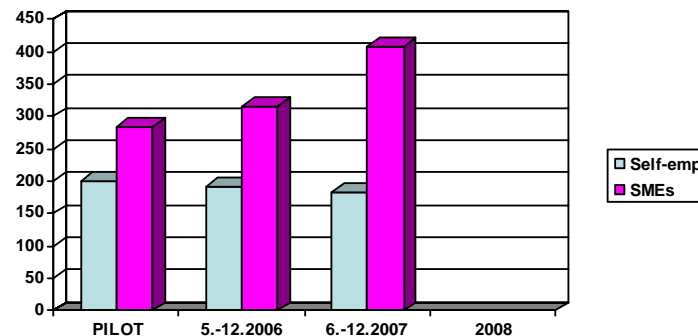
Bitola

Kumanovo

Tetovo

Plan was 12...

Value of average subvention



# *Evaluations*

- Evaluations in Slovenia: 2002, 2004, 2006
- Evaluations in Macedonia: 2006 (pilot) and 2007 (mid-term)
- More qualitative methodology approach
- Challenge: quantitative approach with the awareness of serious methodological limitations issues by OECD (1997)
- 2008 Evaluation done within TASME project using methodology from Slovenia (2006)



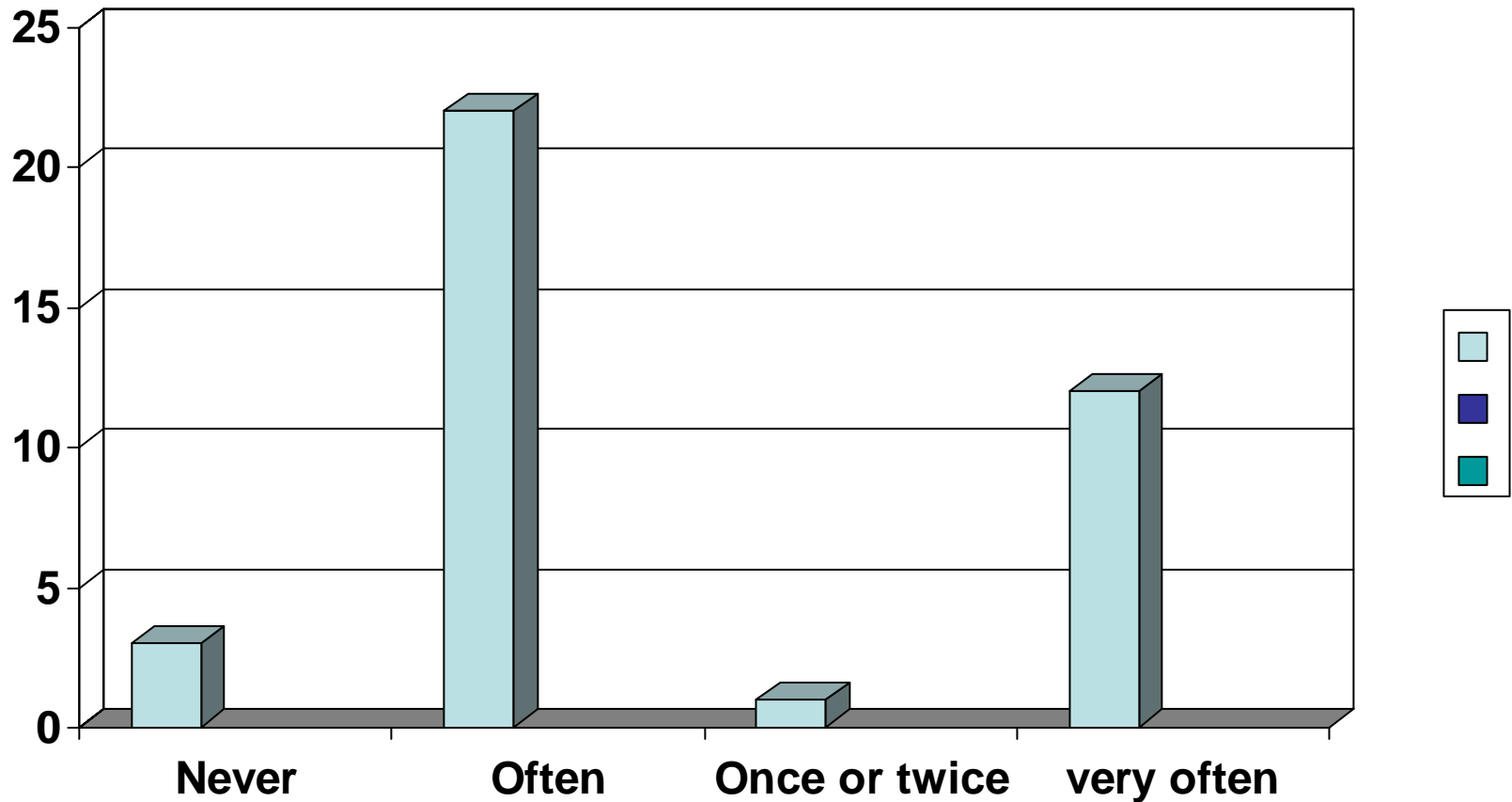
# Basic data on evaluation in 2008

	RM 2008	SLO 2006
<b><i>How satisfied are you with the provided services within VCS ?</i></b>	4.87	4.30
-- Counseling contibuted to better business performance	4,75	3.30
- Overall impression about provided cervice is positive	4,84	N/A
++ Consultant was a real professional	4.92	4.50
+ The content of the consulting service was very up-to-date.	4.90	4.40

# Basic data on evaluation in 2008

	RM 2008	SLO 2006
<b><i>How satisfied are you with regional centers within VCS ?</i></b>	4.69	3.81
-- Availability at official office hours	4.50	
- General readiness to communicate	4.60	
++ General advice and information	4.91	
+ Advice on procedures to establish ne business	4.87	

# *How often did you later remember/use the advice provided by the consultant?*

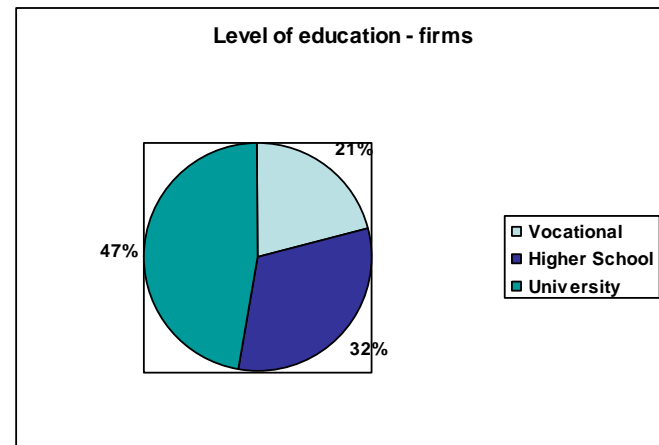
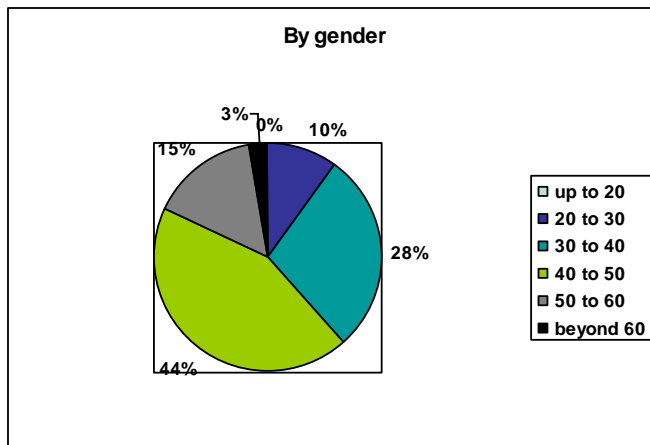
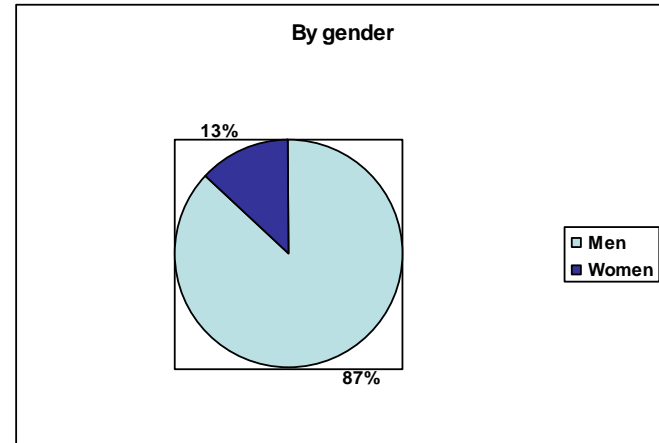
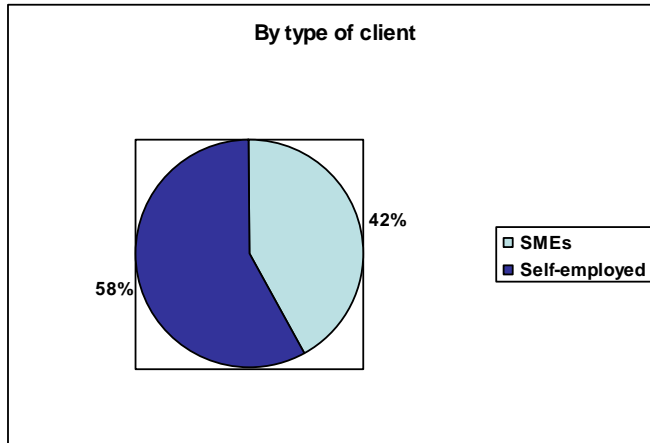


# Basic data on evaluation in 2008

	RM 2008
<b><i>Please evaluate your skills and knowledge (1-very bad, 5-very good)</i></b>	<b>3.97</b>
-- Accounting	3.32
- About EU	3.43
++ Technical skills and expertize	4.67
+Customer relationship	4.55

# Population evaluated

(39 SMEs + 54 SE = 93), surveyed in April 2008



# *The importance of VCS of spread of national entrepreneurial culture*

- One of the soft-support measures
- Evaluations are problematical for methodological issues
- A strong need to believe in the measure
- Importance:
  - Level of entrepreneurship
  - Local development
  - Growth of SMEs
  - Business performance
  - Human resource capacity building

# *Plan for further evaluation and benchmarking*

- Slovenia
- 37 organizers
- 1000+ consultants
- Economic data
- Macedonia
- 8 organizers
- 218 Consultants
- Availability

Expected outcome:

- Learning process – human resource development
- Program development opportunities
- Improved management
- Evaluation and monitoring upgrade
- Marketing activities

# ***Recommendations for Macedonia***

- Need for persistence
- Call to government to support the program
- Development of human resource capacities on the level of all stake holders:
  - Clients
  - Consultants
  - Organizers
- Powerful central SME development agency with strong partners on local/regional level