



ECDN Newsletter April to May [2021]

Dear ECDN members, we hope that you are all doing well and enjoying spring! We know we have, although the weather has not been the best (at least not here in Denmark, we have kept busy. For the past months we have had meetings with both members of the European Commission, large interest groups such as SME United, and national groups such as the IBCB, we have learned a lot and must conclude that the ECDN is facing some exciting years. You can read more about our activities in this newsletter – Have a nice read!

Train-the-trainers webinar

In the days from the 19th and to the 25th of April several of our members as well as our president, Sandy Madar, participated in the first sessions of the webinar “Train-the-trainers”. The webinar is an online course on how to improve the quality of the debt advice services for households in Greece, Romania, Poland, Hungary, Spain, and Italy. In this first session the participants were introduced to the different models of debt advice existing in Europe. The focus of these sessions were debt advisors, target groups and financial education for debt advisors. The webinar will continue through the next couple of months and the next session will be in June.



General Assembly 2021

When the Management Committee met on the 11th of May, they decided that the General Assembly 2021 will be on the 19th and 20th of November 2021. Hopefully, we will be able to meet in person but because we cannot foresee the situation surrounding COVID-19 in November, the Management Committee did not decide on a physical location yet; furthermore, it was decided that it should be possible to participate online too. lastly, it was decided that the ECDN will not reimburse expenditures of members at this year’s General Assembly.

During the meeting the Management Committee also discussed the membership applications received by the coordination office of the ECDN since the last meeting in December. The *Temida Foundation* from Bulgaria has applied for membership, and from Italy we have received membership applications from the two organizations: *Misdebito by Resolving Studi snc* and *Legge3.it – Amoro srl*. The Management Committee have accepted the



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applications and the next step is for the General Assembly to decide whether the organizations can become members.

As you might recall the Management Committee is working to change the statutes and in this regard construct a section about GDPR compliance in general. Since there are different levels of GDPR restrictions on the European and the national level, the Management Committee have contacted a Belgian lawyer to assist in the work.

Advisory panel for the European Commission on Non-Performing Loans

Our president, Sandy Madar, has been given the honor of being invited to have a seat on the advisory panel for the Commission advising on Non-Performing Loans in Europe. Together with other important stakeholders representing the financial sector she will be attending meetings in the panel discussing the possibilities of establishing a data hub at European level and the potential review of Pillar 3 disclosure.



Financial education project

We have taken an important step on the way to improve the level of financial literacy in Europe. In some European countries, organisations have created different forms of tools for financial education like Crésus' teaching game Dilemme, and Kohlopoly in Germany. The ECDN has for some time now worked on the idea of creating a similar game in other European countries, and now we have found the right cooperation partners.

The project is at the moment still in the planning stage and we are working to get the funding in place, but we hope to be able to tell you more about the project very soon.



EARLY
WARNING
EUROPE

SME United Early Warning

As you might know from our social media the ECDN has begun an exciting cooperation with umbrella group for associations of SME, SME United. We reached out to the organization as we had been informed about their Early Warning Project. Early Warning Europe is a network organization that has cooperated on establishing Early Warning mechanisms in Poland, Spain, Italy, and Greece, providing support to 3500 companies in distress in 2017-2019. The consortium also worked to



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promote the early warning approach throughout Europe and thanks to these efforts early warning schemes are being established in six new countries: Croatia, Finland, Hungary, Lithuania, Luxembourg, and Slovenia.

Since 2019 the organizations involved in the project have continued their efforts, and we believe both the ECDN and SME United could benefit from the collaboration. One of the first steps we have taken is focused on Romania. Early Warning Spain meet a great deal of Romanian citizens in their daily work in Spain. Often, they have travelled to Spain in the search for work and end up being self-employed entrepreneurs, who if they then get into trouble related to debt will reach out to the SME United. Besides being able to help them regarding problems with debt, the Early Warning Project can also help if the Romanian citizen wish to return to Romania, as they can support the individual on how they might startup a similar business to the one they leave in Spain, back in Romania. But then when the Romanians return to Romania, we need to make sure they know where they can find help in the form of debt advise and financial counselling if they need it. The ECDN and SME United's Early Warning Project will work together and refer to each other whenever necessary. We have already made the necessary connection in Denmark, Romania, and Spain but we would like to expand so please contact us on info@ecdn.eu if you wish to be a part of the collaboration and make the connections in your country.

IBCB launches surveys of Culture and Trust in the banking sector

On the 17th of May, the Irish Banking Culture Board launched its Eist surveys on the culture internally in the banking sector and the publics opinion on the banks. The Irish Banking Culture Board was established in April



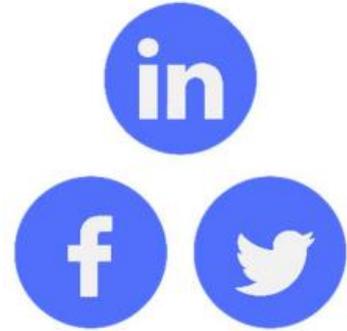
2019, and is an independent industry initiative, fully funded by five retail banks operating in Ireland. The aim of the IBCB is to rebuild the trust in the sector through demonstrating a change in behavior and overall culture. The survey provides insight into the current organizational and day-to-day culture, observed workplace behavior and decision-making in the sector. If you wish to read the rapports from the survey you can find them here: <https://www.irishbankingcultureboard.ie/publications/eist-survey-of-bank-culture/> and <https://www.irishbankingcultureboard.ie/publications/eist-public-trust-in-banking-survey/>.



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Best wishes,

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