

Beyond subsidising training costs

Policies to increase training provision in micro, small and medium-sized enterprises

Case vignettes

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Chapter 1.

Introduction

This document is an integral part of Cedefop study 'Beyond subsidising training costs: Policies to increase training provision in micro, small and medium-sized enterprises'. The [main/synthesis report](#) is available online. This supporting document contains over 190 case vignettes presenting a broad range of examples of 'structural instruments' - i.e. going beyond targeted financial support - providing support for training in enterprises, and in particular MSMEs, implemented in the EU countries and the UK.

Depending on the size of the country, between 4 (small country) and 15 (large country) examples of policy instruments were collected. The collection includes 30 examples which are considered as borderline cases (for example, covering only a narrowly defined group, such as self-employed engineers or professional is adult education, or promoting CVET in MSMEs only as a minor activity among many others).

Short descriptions of the instruments were collected from May to July 2020, then reviewed, selected and further elaborated in the period from August to November 2020.

Chapter 2.

Presentation of the case vignettes

Country	AT						
ID	AT_01						
Name in English	AT_01 Counselling for SMEs						
Name in local language	<i>Impulsberatung</i>						
Year of implementation	2015						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					
In Austria, the Public Employment Service (PES) provides free-of-charge up to 11 days of counselling on a broad range of HRM and HRD related issues, including training. Although enterprises of all sizes are eligible, the de-minimis regulation limits adoption by large enterprises. Micro (1-9 employees) and small enterprises (10-49 employees) mainly use the instrument. Between 2015 and 2019, more than 4 000 enterprises have been reached, with about 1 100 enterprises completing all stages of the proposed counselling process. The instrument builds on experiences gained with closely related approaches in three ESF-funding periods (1999-2014); however, the Austrian government now fully funds the offer. Regional consulting enterprises with lengthy experience in the field provide counselling in close cooperation with the local PES units. The approach aims to expand access of micro and small enterprises to a broad blend of the PES-supported schemes that either target enterprises (training networks, co-funding training costs of low-qualified adults or older employees) or individual employees (various forms of upskilling initiatives or the training-leave scheme that offers an alternative to lay-offs during temporarily lower demands for labour). The counselling therefore belongs to a package of structural (counselling, training networks) and financial (co-funding of training within the networks, co-funding of training for specific groups of employees) schemes. It also aims to increase the use of a much broader set of support instruments provided by the PES to SMEs and, more specifically, their individual employees. The structural incentives address, first, the 'know-how' related barriers; however, they also focus on the motivational barriers of management or individual workers that limit training. By facilitating access to financial incentives, the support addresses the cost barrier. Given the consultants' intimate knowledge about upskilling opportunities offered by the PES, the counselling also helps to overcome provision barriers. An educational outreach component informs individual employees about existing upskilling schemes. An (unpublished) evaluation of the 2015-18 period led to the decision to prolong the measure for an indefinite period from 2019 onwards.							

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References:

<https://www.ams.at/unternehmen/personal--und-organisationsentwicklung/impulsberatung-fuer-betriebe>

Country	AT						
ID	AT_02						
Name in English	AT_02 aws Support for digitalisation						
Name in local language	aws Digitalisierung						
Year of implementation	2015						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X			X			
The 'aws Digitalisation' (aws Digitalisierung) programme supports SMEs (and to some extent larger enterprises) in production and services related to digitalisation projects and is administered by the Austria Wirtschaftsservice Gesellschaft GmbH (aws) and the promotional bank of the Austrian federal government. Funds for 'aws Digitalisation' come from the 'Austria Fund' (Österreich-Fonds), financed by taxes on wages and devoted to funding basic research, promoting applied research and developing technology and innovation. The measure was first implemented in 2015 under the name 'aws Industry 4.0'. The programme that run during this research started on 1 January 2020 and lasted until 31 December 2021. Eligible enterprises can apply for funding of projects up to two years following three phases: (1) Planning phase (maximum EUR 150 000), (2) Investment phase (maximum EUR 200 000), (3) Qualification and training (maximum EUR 150 000). Eligible costs include education and training costs, personnel expenditures, consulting, software development and investment in digital equipment. Phase (3) mainly focuses on qualification and training to develop digital skills among low-skilled employees. The programme planning document describes the interrelationship of skills acquired in the work process ('digital experience') and in training modules provided by external trainers.							

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References:

<https://mkik.hu/hirek/folytatodik-a-modern-vallalkozasok-programja>

Country	AT						
ID	AT_03						
Name in English	AT_03 Support for cooperation of single person enterprises in Tyrol						
Name in local language	EPU-Kooperationsförderung Tirol						
Year of implementation	2014						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X					X	X
In Tyrol, the regional government provides a support measure for single person enterprises willing to start cooperation regulated by a legal directive that came into force on 01.07.2014 and was valid until 30.06.2021. The latest amendment to the directive came into force on 01.07.2019. Groups of at least two single person enterprises that intend to start a cooperation project related to the development, production and marketing of new products, processes and/or services can apply for this support measure. The project must have a clearly defined objective, be expected to be economically feasible or exploitable and be market oriented. The subsidy amounts to a maximum of 30% of eligible costs between EUR 1 000 and EUR 10 000. Eligible costs include entrepreneur's salary, costs for external expertise or marketing costs. There are no organised learning activities mentioned as fundable project activities (not excluded either), but the type of project envisaged by the subsidy most likely encourages a high level of informal learning among the participants.							

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References:

<https://www.tirol.gv.at/arbeit-wirtschaft/wirtschaftsfoerderung/wirtschaftsfoerderungsprogramm/epu-kooperationsfoerderung/>

Country	AT						
ID	AT_04						
Name in English	AT_04 Support for business takeover						
Name in local language	Weiter!Führen						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X		X			
The regional government of Styria provides a number of support measures for enterprises to promote economic growth and innovation in the region. The following example demonstrates how these measures are specific and interconnected at once. The measure to support business takeover (Weiter!Führen) targets legal entities which intend to take over an existing SME with at least two full-time employees or which have done so in the previous six months before the submission of the application. They can apply for cofunding of counselling services in the fields of human resources, investment and financial planning, strategy development, law and innovation in relation to the business takeover. The counselling needs to go beyond answering individual questions and be described and documented in a project report. A consulting project must be of at least EUR 2 000 to be eligible for funding. The subsidy is granted and may cover up to 50 % of the eligible costs. The maximum amount of the grant is EUR 2 500. This support measure started as a pilot project in 2019 and is endowed with EUR 350 000. Further funding is possible after the budget has been exhausted and a positive impact analysis has been conducted. If activities implemented based on the counselling result in the need of competence development of an enterprise's employees, another support measure granting up to 50% cofinancing of external training costs in the field of digitalisation or internationalisation can be applied for (Erfolgs!Kurs).							

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References:

<https://www.sfg.at/f/betriebsuebernahme/>
<https://www.sfg.at/f/weiterbildung/>

Country	AT						
ID	AT_05						
Name in English	AT_05 FemTech - Support for gender sensitive HR management in technical R&D						
Name in local language	Femtech Karriere						
Year of implementation	2004						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X		X			
Within a programme to promote human potential in research, technology and innovation, the Austrian Ministry of Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology funds the measure "FEMtech Career" to support organisations that want to employ, promote and retain more women in scientific and technical professions by building up gender competence in various areas of their business. The measure was first established in 2004. At the time of this research, the programme run in the period 2015-2020. The call was open for enterprises with R&D projects or non-university research institutions, both with a focus in technical sciences. Enterprises of all sizes are eligible to apply, although a de-minimis clause is in favour of SMEs. The maximum funding sum per project is EUR 50 000 covering 70% (small enterprises), 60% (medium-sized enterprises) or 50% (large enterprises) of the costs including third-party costs such as costs for gender expertise, costs for awareness and public relations and personnel costs of researchers during further training. The participating organisations have to implement two compulsory modules - project management and building gender competence (includes, for example, training for key personnel). In addition, they can choose from various other modules on the promotion of women and equal opportunities thereby tailoring the measure to their corporate goals including modules on the improvement of HRM (e.g., targeted career development for female junior staff, introduction of a mentoring system, recruiting), improvement of the work-life balance of employees (parental leave management, working time models), reorganizing public relations from a gender-sensitive perspective.							

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References:

<https://www.ffg.at/femtech-karriere>

Country	AT						
ID	AT_06						
Name in English	AT_06 Innovation support by coaching and subsidised innovation assistant positions for SMEs						
Name in local language	Innovationsassistent						
Year of implementation	1998						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X		X			

In several regional provinces, there is a specific type of programme (although marketized partly under different names) implemented that are foreseen to support SMEs to promote innovation activities based on coaching, further training and subsidies for a new full-time position dedicated to innovation activities. The programme was first launched in Upper Austria in 1998, followed by Vienna (2000), Lower Austria (2002) as well as Salzburg, Carinthia, Tyrol. There are some variations concerning the use of co-funding by the EU structural funds, the emphasis laid on the three components coaching, training and wage-subsidy (e.g., the criteria to what extent training in the company can be funded) and the amount of fundable costs across the regions.

As an example, the instrument provided in the Salzburg region under the Name in English “Innovation assistance and innovation and technology transfer coaching” (Innovationsassistentenz und Innovations- und Technologietransfer-Coaching) is described in the following. The regional government of Salzburg implements the programme based on a funding directive using means of the European Regional Development Fund. The aim of this measure is to support SMEs in identifying innovation potential and in preparing innovation and technology transfer projects (for example in the context of renewing their product range or introducing innovation management or new process technologies). The programme is aimed at SMEs that are interested in and have potential for innovation projects but are unable to provide the necessary know-how within the company due to the size and/or structure of the company or the innovation project. Exceptionally, support can also be provided to large companies in the production of tangible goods or production-related service companies that are setting up new operations in Salzburg. In case, a company only applies for the support of innovation and technology transfer coaching, external consulting services between EUR 2 500 and EUR 10 000 are eligible for a 50% funding. In cases, where companies choose to apply for the “Innovation Assistance” package, they have to prepare an innovation project with a project period of at least one year. For the implementation they can be granted 50% of personnel costs up to EUR 90 000 for 18 months (for a full-time academic position), training costs related to the implementation of an innovation project for up to EUR 7 000 and consulting or coaching cost up to EUR 5 200.

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References:

Salzburg: https://www.salzburg.gv.at/wirtschaft/_Seiten/innovationsassistent.aspx
Lower Austria: http://www.noel.gv.at/noel/Wirtschaft-Tourismus-Technologie/Innovationsassistentin_-_Foerderung.html
Upper Austria: <https://www.innovationsassistent.at>
Carinthia: <https://kwf.at/foerderungen/kwf-ausschreibung-innovationsassistent/>
Tyrol: <https://www.standort-tirol.at/page.cfm?vpath=unternehmen/foerderungen/landesprogramme#innovationsassistentin>
Vienna: <https://www.waff.at/unternehmen/foerderung-innovation-und-beschaefigung/>

Country	BE						
ID	BE_01						
Name in English	BE_01 Job coaching of new employees						
Name in local language	<i>Jobcoaching op de werkvloer</i>						
Year of implementation	Unclear: at least since 2008 (there is a source mentioning that job coaches are financed via the VIA-3 agreement (Vlaamse Intersectorale Akkoorden), starting from 2008 (language coaches financed via this agreement from May 1, 2009)						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
					X		
					Providing work experience or on-site training spells to non-employees		
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					X
This programme 'Job coaching of new employees' guides new employees in their job, facilitating their quick integration in the workplace with a particular focus on (soft) skills and attitudes rather than technical skills. Since 2008, the initiative has covered Flemish companies irrespective of their size. The programme is the result of a partnership between the Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue (FOD WASO), Flemish Social Profit Funds (Vlaamse Social-Profitfondsen (VSPF), the Flemish Community and the Flemish Employment Agency (VDAB); it is financed via VIA agreements (Vlaamse Intersectorale Akkoorden), i.e., public means. The coaching itself is supplied by Werkplekarchitecten (a network of 38 non-profit organisations specialised on-site/on the job counselling, coaching and training). Specifically, employers (small or large) in need of external support for training a new employee can apply for this programme. Job coaching is customised (frequency can be chosen by the employer), on-site and aims for fast integration on the work floor of employees. To benefit, employees have to work in Flanders, be employed in the firm less than a year and be in need of additional support to train for his/her new job. The Job coaching activity can last up to six months and is free for both employers and employees. Coaching activities cover both employer and new employee(s). No evaluation studies are available on the programme but from a qualitative perspective, it is probably a useful mechanism, especially for speedy integration of new employees from disadvantaged groups (e.g., low skilled, non-Dutch speaking, employees with special needs or disabilities, etc.). It is likely not useful for medium or high skilled employees.							

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References:

<https://werkgevers.vdab.be/werkgevers/coaching>

<http://jobentaalcoaching.be/>

Testimonials can be found on <http://jobentaalcoaching.be/getuigenissen>

Country	BE						
ID	BE_02						
Name in English	BE_02 Dutch language coaching of new employees						
Name in local language	<i>Taalcoaching op de werkvloer</i>						
Year of implementation	Unclear: at least since 2009						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
					X		
					Providing work experience or on-site training spells to non-employees		
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X				
This policy measure, namely “Dutch language coaching of new employees”, should be seen as complementary to the already described “Job coaching of new employees”. The programme is aimed at Flemish companies, irrespectively of their size (including MSMEs), and it is financed via VIA agreements (Vlaamse Intersectorale Akkoorden), i.e., from public means. It is being implemented since 2009 onwards. In this regard, and in addition to on-site job coaching, the Flemish Employment Agency (VDAB) offers the possibility to apply for Dutch language coaching targeted to company employees with a lack or insufficient knowledge of Dutch language (typically migrant workers). Language coaching is tailor-made and focuses on real work-related situations, enlarging the scope in relation to general Dutch language courses). Benefitted employees have to work in Flanders, be less than one year employed in the firm and, finally, be in need of additional Dutch language support. This language coaching activity can last up to 12 months and is free for both employers and employees. The programme also supports and trains/coaches work colleagues and managers in order to teach them how to support the employee in his/her learning process. There are no public evaluations on the policy measure. Notwithstanding this, and from a qualitative perspective, and since It can only applied in addition to ‘regular’ job coaching (see above), it is probably a useful mechanism, especially to integrate quickly new employees from disadvantaged groups (e.g. low skilled, employees with special needs or disabilities, etc.) and without sufficient knowledge of Dutch language to interact with colleagues or clients.							

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References:

<http://jobentaalcoaching.be/taalcoaching-op-de-werkvloer>

Country	BE						
ID	BE_03						
Name in English	BE_03 Get Smart Training Awards						
Name in local language	<i>Get Smart Opleiding Awards</i>						
Year of implementation	Unclear (at least since 2017)						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
					X		
Every year since 2017 onwards, the “Get Smart Opleiding” Awards (“Get Smart Training” Awards in English) are given to Belgian companies within the printmedia industry who have been particularly active in training activities for its employees. One award is awarded per each Belgian province (11 in total). The award is supported by two regional sectorial funds, this is, GRAFFOC (the sector and training fund for workers in printmedia industry in Flanders) and CEFOGRAF (the sector and training fund for workers in printmedia industry in Wallonia). The awarding event is used also as an opportunity to stress the importance of training as a key tool for enterprises to keep abreast of technical change and retain competitive advantage in the fast-evolving printmedia sector. There are no public evaluations of the award. Notwithstanding this, and from a qualitative perspective, these types of events can be very useful as a wakeup call for other companies to stress that innovation and training are important elements for sustaining the competitiveness and survival of sector companies, particularly exposed to changes derived from innovation and digitalisation.							

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References:

<https://www.grafoc.be/>
<https://cefograf.be/>

Country	BE						
ID	BE_05						
Name in English	BE_05 Acerta starting platform						
Name in local language	<i>“Het startersplatform van Acerta” in neerlandais, “Le plateforme de démarrage d’Acerta” in French</i>						
Year of implementation	Unclear (at least since 2009)						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					
The Acerta starting platform is an initiative managed by Acerta, a Human resources service provider that operates at national level (Belgium) for starters, self-employed persons, employers and accountants. Acerta is participated by different private and semi-public stakeholders. Among other services, Acerta offers free personal coaching services for people who want to be self-employed and start their own business, offering personalised and customised step-by-step guidance services. In this regard, and within the Acerta starting platform, Acerta runs the so-called ‘starter academy’, where free workshops for starters in small groups are offered, always led by an expert that provides training in a variety of relevant topics for business starters (e.g., regarding financial issues, mobility, legal issues, HR, how to write business plans, financial plans, marketing and sales plans, work-life balance, digital entrepreneurship, etc). In addition to these counselling possibilities, Acerta assists new companies in alleviating their administrative burdens associated with the starting-up phase (particularly administrative and legal obligations). The Acerta starting platform has already been active for more than 10 years, filling an information and guidance gap experienced by people who want to start their own business. The relevant legislation, norms, requirements, documents, registrations, permits, etc. that are required and need to be complied to are very complex and may seriously discourage (innovative) people who want to start their own business. Any guidance and support to facilitate these procedures is much welcomed. There are no evaluation studies on the activities of Acerta starting platform.							

Drafted by: Mike Smet

References:

NL: <http://www.ikwilstarten.be/>
FR: <https://www.jedebute.be/>

Country	BE						
ID	BE_06						
Name in English	BE_06 Learning guide and learning scan						
Name in local language	<i>Leergids and leerscan</i>						
Year of implementation	Unclear , however, Leerscan was the result of a project that was conducted from 01/07/2011 to 30/06/2012. So Leerscan was probably introduced in the second half of 2012 or in 2013.						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
					X		
The Leergids (Learning Guide) and the accompanying Leerscan (Learning Scan) were developed in 2013 by Vlerick Business school, an international business school with campuses in Brussels, Ghent and Leuven (all three located in Belgium). Both tools were supported by the European Social Fund (ESF project titled 'Towards lifelong learning: stimulating a positive learning culture in the organization') and in collaboration with VOKA (Flemish network of enterprises). Both tools aim to support the learning process within each individual company, basically creating a positive learning climate amongst the three key players within companies (this is, HR managers, (general) managers and employees). More specifically, the Learning Guide is a handbook aiming to create awareness and present specific advice regarding how to improve learning within individual companies (including MSMEs). Meanwhile, the Learning Scan is an online tool where the three main players (HR managers, (general) managers and employees) independently and as a company as a whole can assess their role in learning activities within the company, identifying main strengths and weaknesses in relation to training developed within the company. Based on these results, firms can gain also as a whole insight into the strengths and challenges within their organisation and receive tips on how to take actions and define priorities to optimally create a positive learning climate within the company.							

Drafted by: Mike Smet

References:

<http://leerscan.vlerick.com/>

<https://www.werkbaarwerk.be/werkbaarwerk/tools-en-voorbeelden/leergids-leerscan>

<https://www.esf-vlaanderen.be/nl/projectenkaart/naar-een-leven-lang-leren-stimuleren-van-een-positieve-leercultuur-organisaties-1>

Country	BE						
ID	BE_07						
Name in English	BE_07 Artificial Intelligence in Business						
Name in local language	<i>Artificial Intelligence in Business</i>						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X	X	X		
Year of implementation:							
In October 2019, Agoria (Belgian sector federation for firms in the technological sector) launched a free online course on Artificial Intelligence (AI) for companies and employees. The course was co-created in collaboration with more than 20 companies (e.g., Microsoft, IBM, Brussels Airport, ...). The course includes learning about business opportunities derived from AI and practical guidance about how to start. The aim is to increase the use of AI in Belgian industry by improving the digital knowledge of all employees. The online course can be followed at the own pace of employees, and involves topics such as recognizing and creating opportunities involving AI, preparing data, developing strategy and projects, ethical aspects, etc. After completing the training, the employee receives a certificate. As of May 15, 2020, more than 2 000 Belgian employees had completed the course. The course was first available in English only, but the language scope has now been enlarged to Dutch and French too. In this way, Agoria aims to reach 5 000 Belgian employees by the end of 2020. Agoria further plans to regularly update the course with new cases. There are no evaluation studies, although it could be argued that this type of initiatives are very much welcome in order to increase the knowledge on the emerging IA issue amongst Belgian workers and companies.							

Drafted by: Mike Smet

References:

<https://www.agoria.be/nl/Artificiele-intelligentie-Agoria-lanceert-eerste-gratis-online-cursus-voor-en-door-bedrijven-in-Europa>

Country	BG						
ID	BG_01						
Name in English	BG_01 Support for Sustainable Business						
Name in local language	Support for Sustainable Business						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X					
The Managing Authority of the Operational Programme "Human Resources Development" has announced the start of applications the procedure "Support for Sustainable Business" in 2019. Potential beneficiaries of the operation are enterprises supported by OPHRD procedures or by measures under the Employment Promotion Act. The purpose of the operation is to expand and complete the cycle of planned OPHRD support for the development of entrepreneurship and starting a successful business. The total budget of the procedure is BGN 5.86 million (EUR 3 million). Applicants can receive a grant of up to BGN 5 000 (EUR 2 556). This grant could be used for the purchase of specific consultancy services – e.g., for business strategy, marketing, IT, HRM and so on. Those services should be focused on the achievement of a concrete result, related to the sustainability of the business. In addition, the programme sets ceilings for the hourly payments of consultants – e.g., BGN 15.5 (about EUR 8) per hour for experts with higher education and at least 4 years of experience in the particular sphere. Enterprises established by participants in OPHRD scheme "Entrepreneurship Support" projects and self-employed persons who have started a business through participation in the same operation can apply with their projects. The procedure is also open for applications for micro-enterprises, self-employed persons and social enterprises that have received funding through a financial mechanism under OPHRD. Projects can also be submitted by social enterprises that have received support from different ESF schemes. The support under the announced procedure is aimed at providing business services for enterprise development. The aim is to initially strengthen their activities, better governance and create conditions for successful and sustainable business development. Approved candidates will gain access to a variety of management and organizational business services. The use of various sources of information and contacts will ensure a more favourable environment for the successful start and development of unfortified enterprises. At the time of this research, the procedure was to be re-launched in early 2021 (https://eumis2020.government.bg/en/s/Procedure/Info/6c22d56d-5993-4e1f-a1e6-e5d5d2af1ca6). About 1 170 SMEs should be covered by this measure. In the context of need to improve the environmental indicators of the country, the measure could be very useful. At the same time, the amount of the grant is relatively low which might prevent part of the companies to apply. The ceilings for the consultants' hourly fees are also low, so many consultants will not be attracted to provide services under such an operation.							

Drafted by: Vassil Kirov

References:

<https://esf.bg/procedures/podkrepa-za-ustojchiv-biznes/>

Country	BG						
ID	BG_02						
Name in English	BG_02 My Competence						
Name in local language	My Competence						
Year of implementation	2009						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
					X		
Since 2009, the largest employer's organisation in Bulgaria the 'Bulgarian Industrial Association - Union of the Bulgarian Business' is implementing the My Competence project. The project seeks to enhance labour market adaptability and effectiveness, as well as to improve the labour market by developing a system to assess workforce competence according to sectors and regions. The project's specific objectives included establishing a Bulgarian Competence Assessment Network by Sectors and Regions (BUCAN) and a Workforce Competence Assessment System (CASSY) and updating them according to the current and future labour market demand. While the project was co-funded by the European Social Fund from 2009 to 2019, in September 2019, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) assumed the system's ownership and copyrights and continued to run it. MyCompetence currently exists as an online platform for human resource management and development. It offers information on models of sector competences for key positions, job descriptions, assessment tools, e-learning resources and other specialised services for assessment and development of workforce competencies. Most resources in the system are free of charge, but the users should register. MyCompetence's primary users include enterprises (managers, experts, human resources management specialists); ministries, agencies and other institutions and organisations related to the labour market, education, continuing education, staff selection and career counselling; vocational high schools, licensed vocational training centres; organisations providing services in selection, management, training and development of human resources; under-employed persons as well as those seeking employment; pupils and students; and any person who would like to assess their knowledge and skills to develop their competencies. MyCompetence was developed because of the need to address challenges related to knowledge, skills and competencies of workers. The main elements of MyCompetence include sector models, competence assessment, e-learning and economic sectors information. E-learning provides a large variety of trainings (https://mycompetence.bg/en/elearn/). The project's first phase had 625 training courses at the workplace, consulting at least 125 people and organisations and training at least 2500 people in key competences. In 2018 about 5 000 have followed e-courses, proposed by My Competence (https://www.bia-bg.com/news/view/24653/). The positive evaluations of MyCompetence include a November 2019 report (https://mycompetence.bg/bg/static/82) - Key policy messages report: Peer Review on 'Competence Assessment System: MyCompetence', Sofia (Bulgaria) that outlines several success factors, but also the need for more flexibility and consideration of the future of work and digital skills. An additional strength is that an employers' organisation launched this operation and later transferred it to the MLSP.							

Drafted by: Vassil Kirov

References:

<https://mycompetence.bg/bg/static/1>
<https://www.bia-bg.com/project/view/arc/21108/>
<https://en.bia-bg.com/project/view/arc/21108/>

Country	BG						
ID	BG_03						
Name in English	BG_03 Workers' education and training college (WETCO)						
Name in local language	<i>Kolej za rabotnichesko obuchenie</i>						
Year of implementation	2003						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X				
The Workers' education and training college (WETCO) (Kolej za rabotnichesko obuchenie) under the umbrella of the largest Bulgarian trade union CITUB (Confederation of Independent Trade Unions in Bulgaria) was established on April 24, 2003, to respond adequately to the challenges of the dynamic socio-economic changes, affecting industrial relations at national, European and worldwide. Its founders are: Confederation of Independent Trade Unions in Bulgaria and the Institute of Industrial Relations and Management "OKOM". WETCO (http://www.wetco.knsb-bg.org/index.php/en/) supports opportunities for acquiring systematic and proactive knowledge, acquisition of necessary skills, qualification, competencies and forming attitudes towards enhancing the competitiveness. More concretely, WETCO offers on-site training and distance learning; key competencies training; language courses; trade union training; vocational education and training; career guidance, information and counselling. WETCO is involved in a number of EU supported projects in the field of lifelong learning (examples are provided at: http://www.wetco.knsb-bg.org/index.php/en/2011-07-26-14-40-51) and provides training under the OPHRD in Bulgaria. The exact funding formulas depend on the particular ESF funded or nationally funded programmes. In addition, WETCO is a licensed provider of training with vouchers to the Employment Agency under the Operational Program "Human Resources Development" and again has the opportunity to provide training in key competencies and professional qualifications in occupations and specialties for employed and unemployed in various fields, according to the program procedures. WETCO also provides trainings for individuals that might be employed in MSMEs for professions such as: operator, woodworker, animator in tourism, office manager, office assistant and so on. There are no publicly available evaluations of WETCO. It belongs to the largest trade union CITUB, but the CITUB Congress reports where such evaluations could be found are not public. In general, WETCO plays a very positive role as it provides training services not only to trade union members, but also to employed or unemployed persons who might need training.							

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References:

<http://www.wetco.knsb-bg.org/index.php/en/>

Country	BG						
ID	BG_04						
Name in English	BG_04 Specific trainings						
Name in local language	Specific trainings						
Year of implementation	2017						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						

The operation "Specific trainings" under the ESF Operational Programme "Human Resources Development" 2014-2020 provides grants and support for company-based trainings. The call for proposals was launched in 2017 by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy through the General Directorate "European Funds, International Programs and Projects", and the results have been approved in 2018 (<https://esf.bg/procedures/specifichni-obuchenija/>). The idea behind this scheme is based on the need to meet the needs of the labour market in some of the most dynamically developing and competitive sectors of the Bulgarian economy. The focus is on overcoming the mismatch between the quality of education and the number of graduates and the needs of companies in the sectors based on knowledge, high technology and ICT and the processing industry with higher added value of labour (e.g. from sectors such as ICT-based economic sectors: Code 61 Telecommunications; Code 62 Information technology activities or Code 63.1 Data processing, hosting and similar activities; web portals; the manufacturing industry with higher added value of labour – e.g. Code 30 Manufacture of vehicles, except automobiles or Code 10 Manufacture of food products and so on).. Employers will be able to provide specific continuing training for their employees or to hire unemployed people to be trained in the specific knowledge needed to work in the company. Under this measure the co-funding depends on the size of the companies, respectively - For micro and small enterprises - co - financing by the candidate / partner (s) - 10%; For medium-sized enterprises - co-financing by the applicant / partner (s) -20%; For large enterprises - co-financing by the applicant / partner (s) - 30%. This co-funding percentages should be applied to all the expenses in the respective projects. The maximum allowable value of the grant, for one trainee in total for all trainings may not exceed BGN 3 000 (in the amount are specific trainings and specialized foreign languages are included training). According to the decision of the Managing Authority, 42 proposals have been awarded (part of them coming from SMEs) (<https://esf.bg/procedures/specifichni-obuchenija/>) and are under implementation or have been completed. They include specific training objectives, developed by the applicant company in a project proposal. An example of a concrete project could be found here: <https://www.danlex.bg/hr/> . According to the beneficiary (SME) improved quality and reliability in the implementation of processes key to the company's business success by providing: specialized foreign language training in Business English in the area of non-intrusive inspection systems (NIIS) and specific trainings for risk assessment and risk management in NIIS investment projects; NIIS maintenance service management and Preparation of NIIS technical and training documentation. The main indicator for this measure is the number of participants who acquired a qualification upon leaving the operation. As this operation is relatively recent, there have been no available official evaluations. According to the national expert, the measure is necessary in the context of (re)-skilling needs of the companies, but its success will depend on the choice of appropriate curricula and trainers.

Drafted by: Vassil Kirov

References:

<https://esf.bg/procedures/specifichni-obuchenija/>

Country	BG						
ID	BG_05						
Name in English	BG_05 Vocational Training Centre						
Name in local language	<i>Vocational Training Centre</i>						
Year of implementation	1996						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
				X			X
Year of implementation:							
Founded in 1996, Bulgarian Industrial Capital Association (BICA) is one of the largest organizations of Bulgarian employers. It is also the most dynamically developing organization of Bulgarian businesses, which is represented at national level. Members of the Association are active in over 90 branch chambers, representing more than 75% of the economic activities in this country, and over 10 000 enterprises that employ almost 500 000 people. BICA has a network of regional chambers in 2/3 of the municipalities in the country. BICA has a Vocational Training Centre, licensed by the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training (NAVET) in 35 professions and 52 specialties. The efforts of the centre are aimed at raising the qualification and retraining of the employees in the enterprises, members of BICA, as well as at providing an opportunity to all those wishing to acquire a new qualification or to improve their professional skills. The Centre for Vocational Training at BICA implements the schemes "Adaptability", "I can", "Qualification services and training for employees" and "Development" under the Operational Programme "Human Resources Development". The trainings could be financed under different programmes that could take in charge the totality or a percentage of the expenses. Among the beneficiaries of the VTC are employers, MSME and large companies, wishing to train the employed staff. The trainings for acquisition of key competencies offered by the Centre for Vocational Training are aimed at: communication in native language; communication in foreign languages; mathematical competence and basic competences in natural sciences and technologies; digital competence (ICT); learning skills; public and civic competencies and initiative and entrepreneurship. The centre has licences for a large number of professions. The most used indicator is about the number of trainer persons. Further indicators are provided under specific programmes (e.g., the ones mentioned above and co-financed under ESF). There is no specific evaluation of the training centre available, but its activity is important for BICA and its member companies.							

Drafted by: Vassil Kirov

References:

<http://bica-bg.org/%d0%be%d0%b1%d1%83%d1%87%d0%b5%d0%bd%d0%b8%d1%8f/>

Country	BG						
ID	BG_06						
Name in English	BG_06 A knowledge Alliance in Eco-Innovation Entrepreneurship to Boost SMEs Competitiveness "SMecoMP"						
Name in local language	<i>SMecoMP - Dissemination of knowledge about environmental innovation in order to increase the competitiveness of SMEs</i>						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
				X	X		
Year of implementation:							
In 2018 BIA launched the implementation of a two-year international project "SMecoMP - Dissemination of knowledge about environmental innovation in order to increase the competitiveness of SMEs." (https://www.bia-bg.com/news/view/24076/) The project is funded by the European program INTERREG "Balkans - Mediterranean Sea 2014 - 2020" and has a total budget of EUR 945 510, and its implementation includes eight partner organisations from four Balkan countries - Bulgaria, Greece, Cyprus and Macedonia, including: [Greece (University of Macedonia, Federation of Industries of Greece), Cyprus (Cyprus University of Technology, Cypriot Enterprise Link), Bulgaria (Bulgarian Industrial Association, Trakia University) and North Macedonia (St. Clement of Ohrid University of Bitola, Agency for Promotion of the Entrepreneurship of the Republic of Macedonia). The SMecoMP project concerns the development of an educational framework and appropriate training tools to improve the skills of business executives in Eco-Innovation Entrepreneurship. The project has set the following specific objectives: - to study the existing and assess the requirements of SMEs in the field of eco-entrepreneurship programs, knowledge and skills for management and innovation; - to review existing and develop new formal and non-formal educational learning processes and other initiatives that take into account the competence acquired by developing an innovative training framework, through cooperation between strategic partners (HEs, VET centres and SMEs), - to support the modernization of education and lifelong learning for SME staff, develop curricula based on learning outcomes, jointly with higher education centres and vocational education and training centres and labour market participants, based on identified training needs; developing and providing specialized training modules adapted to entrepreneurial knowledge and skills in the field of environmental innovation. This project is financed under "INTERREG Balkan-Mediterranean 2014-2020". Under those projects, the percentage of Union co-financing to the total budget is fixed to 85%. The national co-funding should be 15%. The project develops a broad framework of curricula, incl. courses, instructional and mentoring tools, seminars, motivational resource creation groups provided in a learning or virtual environment. Within the framework of the project, SMEs benefit from receiving training for their staff and managers in eco-management practices, from sharing experiences and know-how, improving economic performance and competitiveness. In this way, SME staff will improve their skills and competences, enhancing their performance at current occupation and also their employment opportunities. The participation of SMEs in those activities is free of charge, because it is covered by the budget of the project. There are no publicly available evaluations of SMecoMP. However, this cooperation in the field of training provision to SMEs in the Balkan region seems innovative and relevant.							

Drafted by: Vassil Kirov

References: <https://www.smecomp.eu/>

Country	CY						
ID	CY_01						
Name in English	CY_1 Advice for Small Businesses (ASB)						
Name in local language	Συμβουλευτικές Υπηρεσίες για Μικρές Επιχειρήσεις στην Κύπρο						
Year of implementation	2015						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						
Year of implementation:							
In May 2017, the Ministry of Energy, Commerce and Industry (MECI) of the Republic of Cyprus and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) signed a cooperation agreement for the implementation of the "Advice for Small Businesses (ASB)", a three-year programme that supports small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) registered and operating in the Republic. The programme was co-funded by the Republic of Cyprus and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), with a budget of EUR 2.2 million. The programme is targeted at helping over 120 SMEs, over the course of three years, in order to improve competitiveness, strengthen performance, and drive growth. For this purpose, the programme supports the temporary engagement of consultants/advisors as well as the access to demand-driven training. Specifically, the programme co-finances the cost of business advisory service projects for Cypriot SMEs being in operation for at least two years, in order to solve their business needs. Business advisory service projects have to be delivered by local consulting companies. The support (in the form of grant) includes a 65% of the net costs of these advisory services (excluding VAT), with a ceiling of EUR 10 000 per advisory service (in fields such as Strategy, Export promotion, Marketing, Organisation -including human resource management and skills development-, Operations, ICTs and Engineering solutions, Quality management, Energy/resource efficiency, Accounting and financial reporting). Also, the programme includes the development of a series of demand driven training interactive workshops to develop essential skills like business planning, online marketing, financial management or ICT use in business. In the time period 2017-2020, a total of 121 business advisory service projects and 109 beneficiary companies have benefitted from the programme. Donor verification audits have taken place regularly, concluding successful implementation of the scheme. The only limitation of the programme refers to the limited funds available for the programme, thus depriving significant number of SMEs' access to this type of services.							

Drafted by: George Stavrides

References:

<https://www.ebrd.com/work-with-us/advice-for-small-businesses/cyprus-overview.html>
<https://www.ebrd.com/news/2017/ebd-eu-and-republic-of-cyprus-strengthen-small-business-support-.html>
<https://www.ubaconsultants.com/en/funding-schemes/subsidy-schemes/386-programme-«small-business-support-programme-in-cyprus»-by-ebd>

Country	CY						
ID	CY_02						
Name in English	CY_2 Scheme for the Enhancement of Female Entrepreneurship						
Name in local language	Σχέδιο Ενίσχυσης της Γυναικείας Επιχειρηματικότητας						
Year of implementation	2015						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X		X				
In 2015 and 2017 the Cypriot Ministry of Energy, Commerce & Industry (MECI) launched two calls for applications for the scheme “Scheme for the Enhancement of Female Entrepreneurship”, aimed at women aged 18 to 55 to help them to set-up their own business. This scheme was developed within the framework of the Operational Programme (OP) “Competitiveness & Sustainable Development 2014-2020” and co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Specifically, the scheme aimed to develop, support and promote entrepreneurship initiatives amongst unemployed/ not economically active women aged 18 to 55. The scheme foresees that successful applicants must engage themselves either as self-employed entrepreneurs or establish a company of limited liability or a partnership (in these two last cases, female entrepreneurs should hold at least 75% of the shares), properly registered with the Value Added Tax authorities. The Scheme foresees a maximum grant (non-refundable financial aid) of up-to EUR 70 000 for new business initiatives in manufacturing, and EUR 50 000 for other activities (excluding primary sector-related activities). The minimum award is EUR 5 000. Eligible expenses include five main types of expenses, namely i) Buildings/equipment/renovation etc.; ii) Training; iii) Promotion/advertising; (iv) Working capital and, finally, (v) Other expenses. In relation to training activities, the scheme foresees the support to the attendance to specific ad-hoc seminars, held at home or abroad, and related to the core business of the new business activity. Eligible expenses training fees as well as related transport expenses can amount up to EUR 3 000. The total amount spent on the Scheme was EUR 5.4 million (budget EUR 5.75 million) in the two calls, supporting a total of 160 projects. The number of projects awarded was 68 and 92 for each one of the two calls, (for a total budget of EUR 2.3 million and EUR 3.1 million, also respectively). From a qualitative perspective, there are no evaluations available on the measure. Notwithstanding this, the scheme is relevant for the country, with positive impact on the national economy, beneficial spill-over effects in the society and long-lasting viability. Specifically, the intervention enhances the role of women in the business community and emphasises the importance of gender equality in entrepreneurial roles (usually low in the Cypriot case), focusing on how gender equality contributes to a more sustainable society in both economic and social terms. The Scheme for the Enhancement of Female Entrepreneurship is complementary and in synergy with the Scheme for the Enhancement of Youth Entrepreneurship. However, limited availability of funds restricts the number of grant recipients, despite the interest shown by qualified applicants to join the Scheme.							

Drafted by: George Stavrides

References:

[http://www.mcit.gov.cy/mcit/sit/sit.nsf/FD851247B530EA3BC22581F5001F7D77/\\$file/Αναθεωρημένος_Οδηγός_Σχεδίου_Γυναικείας_2η_προκήρυξη_19_12_2017.pdf](http://www.mcit.gov.cy/mcit/sit/sit.nsf/FD851247B530EA3BC22581F5001F7D77/$file/Αναθεωρημένος_Οδηγός_Σχεδίου_Γυναικείας_2η_προκήρυξη_19_12_2017.pdf)
<https://www.structuralfunds.org.cy/Evaluations>

Country	CY						
ID	CY_03						
Name in English	CY_03 Scheme for the Enhancement of Youth Entrepreneurship						
Name in local language	Σχέδιο Ενίσχυσης Νεανικής Επιχειρηματικότητας						
Year of implementation	2015						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						

The aim of the scheme is to develop, support and encourage entrepreneurship amongst young people between the ages of 20 - 40, who seek to establish an enterprise in the sectors of manufacturing, services, tourist activities and e-commerce. It concerns young people (employed or unemployed) who have not had any previous business activity in any sector, for at least a period of six months before the date of the submission of their proposal.

Successful applicants have to carry on business as self-employed entrepreneurs or establish a company of limited liability or a partnership. If they choose to establish a company of limited liability or a partnership, they should hold at least 75% of the shares and register with the Value Added Tax authorities. Emphasis is given to the development of new technologies, the use of innovative methods of production and promotion of products and services, the growth of business skills in the sector and, generally speaking, the creation of dynamic and competitive enterprises. The "Youth Organisation" is responsible for the promotion of the Scheme. To this effect they organise promotion meetings and seminars nation-wide for attracting young persons interested in setting up their own company.

Eligible candidates may participate in only one proposal. The grant is offered as a percentage (50%) on the approved budget with a maximum amount of EUR 70 000 for the manufacturing sector, and EUR 50 000 for other sectors. Eligible expenses include (i) Buildings/equipment/renovation etc, (ii) Training, (iii) Promotion/advertising, (iv) Working capital (v) Other.

Concerning training expenses, they cover seminar attendance and related transport expenses up to a maximum amount of EUR 3 000 for eligible partners only. Training can be held in Cyprus or abroad and the choice of seminars to attend should be in connection with the new company's core business. Payments to grantees are made against invoices covering eligible expenses. Value Added Tax is not an eligible expense. Grants are not refundable.

During the Programme period 2014-2020 the Ministry of Energy, Commerce and Industry (MECI) invited two calls in 2015 and 2017, and 435 projects received grants for a total amount of EUR 16.4 million. Monitoring and control are carried out by the provider of the Scheme. The Scheme is based on the Operational Programme 2014-2020 for "Competitiveness and Sustainable Development", intended at supporting and encouraging youth entrepreneurship. The scheme is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Republic of Cyprus.

The Scheme for the Enhancement of Youth Entrepreneurship is complementary with another scheme called "Scheme for the Enhancement of Female Entrepreneurship". Entrepreneurship rate in the country is low, while the intervention is expected to generate positive effects on entrepreneurship and employability of young persons-driven businesses. From a qualitative perspective, and despite the fact that no public evaluations are available, the scheme can be regarded as a good practice with positive spill-over effects on the national economy. Limited availability of funds restricts the number of grant-recipients, despite the interest shown by qualified applicants to become beneficiaries of the scheme.

Drafted by: George Stavrides

References:

[http://www.mcit.gov.cy/mcit/sit/sit.nsf/70EBD272D55EE2CEC22581F0003F221C/\\$file/Αναθεωρημένος_Οδηγός_Σχεδίου_Νεανική_2η_προκήρυξη_19_12_2017.pdf](http://www.mcit.gov.cy/mcit/sit/sit.nsf/70EBD272D55EE2CEC22581F0003F221C/$file/Αναθεωρημένος_Οδηγός_Σχεδίου_Νεανική_2η_προκήρυξη_19_12_2017.pdf) <https://www.structuralfunds.org.cy/Evaluations>

Country	CY						
ID	CY_04						
Name in English	CY_04 Scheme for the Enhancement of Digitalisation of Enterprises						
Name in local language	Σχέδιο Ψηφιακής Αναβάθμισης των Επιχειρήσεων						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						

The Scheme aims to strengthen the integration of digital technology to financially sound new or already existing SMEs. Its ultimate goal is to help businesses to use ICTs extensively to increase their productivity and become more competitive in domestic and international markets. It is implemented according to the objectives of the National Strategy for Digital Entrepreneurship and adapted according to Regulation Commission Regulation (EC) No 1407/2013.

The Scheme provides financial support through non-refundable grants for certain eligible costs for enhancing digital entrepreneurship and for supporting the implementation and use of digital tools within SMEs. The grant amounts to 50% of the approved eligible investment programme with a maximum ceiling per company of EUR 25 000 for manufacturing activities and EUR 20 000 for other activities (agricultural and related activities are not eligible for grant). Eligible expenditure should be at least EUR 5 000. The grant supports several items, including the costs of equipment, "off the shelf" software, specialised software systems, other software and IT services, training activities (related with the use of new hard and software versions) or consulting services (limited to EUR 600). Eligible costs of new SMEs should cover only investment in e-commerce. Participating SMEs have to prove evidence that they have the financial capacity to undertake the costs not covered by the grant.

The Scheme is co-financed by the Government of Cyprus and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) within the framework of the Operational Programme "Competitiveness and Sustainable Development 2014-2020". The responsible authority is the Cypriot Ministry of Energy, Commerce and Industry (MICE), in charge of monitoring all the different stages of the scheme (from application to implementation stages). The total amount allocated for the first call of the Scheme (December 2019) amounted to EUR 6 million. In this first call, there were 506 applicants, and so far, 225 SMEs have been declared eligible for grant amounting EUR 3.3 million. EUR 2.7 million is pending for allocation until the end of 2020.

From a qualitative perspective, the scheme is in line with the target and objectives of the National Digital Strategy. It is a well-designed and good practice intervention expected to have a positive impact on SMEs and the national economy, beneficial spill-over effects in the society and long-lasting viability. As a criticism, it could be said that the foreseen budget is low.

Drafted by: George Stavrides

References:

[http://www.mcit.gov.cy/mcit/sit/sit.nsf/D01840125D87A50DC2258409001BB768/\\$file/Οδηγός%20Σχεδίου%20Ψηφιακής%20Αναβάθμισης_v.1.1.pdf](http://www.mcit.gov.cy/mcit/sit/sit.nsf/D01840125D87A50DC2258409001BB768/$file/Οδηγός%20Σχεδίου%20Ψηφιακής%20Αναβάθμισης_v.1.1.pdf)

Country	CY						
ID	CY_05						
Name in English	CY_05 Scheme Promoting e-Government and Digital Skills Systems						
Name in local language	Έργο Προώθησης Συστημάτων Ηλεκτρονικής Διακυβέρνησης και Ψηφιακών Δεξιοτήτων						
Year of implementation	2017						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
					X		
					Promoting the participation of MSME employees in external CVET opportunities offered to individuals		
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
Information and communication technologies (ICTs), especially those related to the internet, impact both the traditional way of doing business and everyday human activities in general. The Cypriot Government has assigned the Cyprus Productivity Centre (CPC) to undertake and implement, with the cooperation of Department of Electronic Communications (DEC) as far as training is concerned, the National Digital Strategy 2012-2020. Within the context of this Strategy, the CPC embarked in 2017 on the development of several training activities/workshops, funded by the national budget, to meet the current training needs of several specific groups. Specifically, the CPC has been running several activities, including (i) workshops promoting digital skills addressed to employees and the unemployed (age 20-55) in different digital fields (basic digital skills, ECDL and advanced levels in Microsoft Word, Excel and Microsoft PowerPoint, e-government, etc) The training activities/workshops are offered free of charge to participants. Participation in the programmes is high. Although activities are not addressed directly to enterprises but to employees, they have an important impact on MSMEs in terms of upgrading the digital skills of the workforce. The activities are assessed by the participants, and the training contents are modified according to their opinions and the prevailing business and social needs. At the time of this research, the scheme was to be continued. During 2017-2018, a total of 303 sessions were run under the scheme, attended by 4 053 individuals; during 2019 the figures were 131 and 1 545, respectively. A survey conducted at end of 2018 by an external independent evaluator showed that the scheme was positively or very positively evaluated by 79% of the participants, with only a 1% having a negative opinion.							

Drafted by: George Stavrides

References:

<http://www.kepa.gov.cy/Mathisi/BusinessDirectory/Company/CompanyHome.aspx?CompanyId=2cd62e90-7afa-4b02-8981-e2640be13001>

Country	CZ						
ID	CZ_03						
Name in English	CZ_03 Project Education and training of employees						
Name in local language	Projekt Vzdělávání zaměstnanců						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X		X	X			
The Project Education and Training of Employees is an example of a project that is carried out under the Operational Programme Employment and is funded by the European Social Fund and the State Budget of the Czech Republic (Call No. 03-19-110, in which 160 grants were awarded for the development of education in small and medium-sized enterprises in 2019-2022, totalling CZK 1 500 000 000 (EUR 59 405 940). The aim of the project is to increase the level of knowledge and skills of employees of MSMEs in the Moravian Silesian Region, ensuring compliance of their qualifications and competences with the requirements for work activities carried out. The training is intended for members of the Regional Economic Chamber of the Moravian Silesian Region. Membership in the Economic Chamber (EC) is voluntary, therefore providing services such as education is motivating for entry into the EC. This is already the second project of the same purpose and focus within this programme period. The project will see training courses aimed at acquiring soft and managerial skills, accounting, economics, legal, foreign language and IT skills, as well as technical and other vocational training. The most sought-after training are courses in management skills, rhetoric, presentation skills and other soft skills. Participants obtain a certificate of completion. The first courses took place in Autumn 2019, with the end of the project planned for 2022. MSMEs can choose from a prepared menu of around 100 courses, but they can also order a tailored course for their staff. Courses are free for EC members (within de minimis rules). The total amount of funding within this project is CZK 13 663 044 (EUR 541 110). Over 300 courses in management skills, accounting, economic, legal, language and IT skills, and technical and other vocational training were implemented in the previous project, Education for companies (2017-2019), which was also funded by the ESF and the state budget of the Czech Republic. Almost 1 300 employees of EC MSR member firms were involved. Participants have obtained a certificate of completion after training and meeting pre-determined conditions. It is expected that a similar number of courses (300) will be organised, and a similar number of beneficiaries (1 300) will participate in the current project Education and Training of Employees. Among the requirements is a condition that 10 % of beneficiaries will be 54+. Due to COVID-19 the courses have been moved online. Similar projects focused on adult learning under the same call 03_19_110 within the Operational Programme Employment are implemented by 30 other regional and district ECs throughout the Czech Republic. No evaluation of the project is available yet, so the following expert remarks are of a general nature. Adult learning is almost exclusively funded by the ESF (and co-funded from the state budget) in Czechia. Business interest organisations, such as regional and local chambers of commerce, welcome the opportunity to receive grants supporting education of their members' employees. Available allocation of funds of the aforementioned call was exceeded within minutes of its opening. Unfortunately, this dependency on EU funding does not promote and develop long term and sustainable training of employees.							

[Assessment of projects funded from ESF have their own specific - mostly financial - conditions for approval before and after the project period. Qualitative evaluations on the impact and relevance of projects are not usually carried out. In my opinion qualitative assessments would be beneficial for evaluation of the whole programme (the Call No. 03-19-110 for the support of training). Without qualitative indicators and any information from the beneficiary (the chamber of commerce), assessment of this project would be purely speculative. For example, it is not clear to me how the whole programme is protected against any possible misuse of funds (or various forms of local business network influence).]

Drafted by: Milada Stalker

References:

<https://www.khkmsk.cz/o-nas/sluzby/projekty/vzdelavani-zamestnancu/>

Country	CZ						
ID	CZ_04						
Name in English	CZ_04 Scale-up your business						
Name in local language	Scale-up your business						
Year of implementation	2008						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X			X	

The Technology Centre of the Czech Academy of Sciences (TC CAS) has extensive expertise in innovation management, knowledge and technology transfer and in support of highly innovative technological companies on national and European levels. The Technology Centre CAS coordinates the Czech part of the Enterprise Europe Network since its establishment by the European Commission in 2008.

Apart from cooperation with well-established MSMEs, TC CAS also supports development of promising young Czech companies with innovative products, technologies, or services. These companies are 3 to 7 years old, and they are getting ready for foreign expansion. In this transition period, start-ups face management challenges and often need investment. The expansion must be carefully planned and targeted. TC CAS's aim is to help young companies innovate, grow, and internationalise via better access to knowledge and finance. TC CAS support for companies, often provided as free of charge services, is supplied via a detailed assessment followed by the programme "Scale-up your business", which consists of mentoring, experience sharing and workshops/seminars. TC CAS mentors together with business owners and CEOs help to analyse all key aspects of young companies' business, including strategy and vision, innovations, leadership, company culture, cash flow etc. Mentors also create conditions for mutual sharing between young companies and experienced experts, representatives of serial entrepreneurs, business angels, venture capital funds and corporations.

During the presentation days, young companies present their innovative business plans and receive valuable feedback from experts. This activity increases the chances of companies to target growth, define the products or services that can win the market and enter new markets successfully. It is also an opportunity for companies with high market potential to spread awareness of their ambitious projects and learn how to present them effectively and attractively. These presentation skills are also important for success in specific European programmes dedicated to MSMEs, e.g., funding schemes of European Innovation Council (EIC).

"Scale-up your business" has been running successfully for three years and has supported almost 40 young Czech MSMEs, i.e., it supports about 15 companies annually. The success of the pilot phase in 2017 was followed by full implementation in 2018. So far, all programme activities have been free. While there is no specific budget set for this programme, it is estimated that the costs of the Scale-up your business programme are about CZK 505 000 (EUR 20 000) annually. Services of the Enterprise Europe Network are funded by EU from the COSME programme and are co-financed by the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic.

The programme is evaluated internally twice a year, but no report was provided. There are specific criteria set for the procedure when companies are selected for this programme.

There is no external and/or objective assessment of this programme, therefore the expert's assessment is based solely on input (e-mail and phone conversations) from implementors of this programme. It was presented as very valuable and relevant, based on claims of participating companies' success in national and international competitions, though no names of any particular company or competition were provided. According to the person interviewed, participating companies find the opportunity to get feedback and support very useful.

References:

<https://www.enterprise-europe-network.cz/aktuality/scale-up-your-business-2020-otvirame-jiz-treti-rocnik-mentoringoveho-programu-pro-firmy-v-obdobi-rustu>

Country	CZ						
ID	CZ_07						
Name in English	CZ_07 Network of assistance centers for Industry 4.0 in Vysočina Region in 2020						
Name in local language	Síť asistenčních center k problematice Průmysl 4.0 na Vysočině v roce 2020						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X				X	
The project 'Network of Assistance Centres for Industry 4.0 in Vysočina Region in 2020' is being implemented by the Regional Economic Chamber with financial support from the Regional government. The aim and endeavour of the project is to enhance the Region's prosperity by promoting "Industry 4.0" activities, sharing examples of best practices not only within the business environment but also towards the wider public. This deepens ties to the region, encourages cooperation with other institutions in the area of "Industry 4.0" in the Region and alleviates negative turnover of young people in particular, who are then missing on the labour market in the Vysočina Region. A shortage of young talented people can hamper the growth of individual firms. The aim is also to increase the attractiveness of the Region to citizens and to strengthen the cooperation of business entities with the Regional government. The network consists of the coordination body of Regional Economic Chamber Vysočina and four local branches in Třebíč, Žďár n. Sázava, Havlíčkův Brod and Jihlava. The Centres' activities include sharing of contacts of Industry 4.0 companies including examples of good practice, consulting on the possibility of using Industry 4.0 tools to address issues for firms, providing subsidy advice, linking requirements from a business environment with the Regional Government, workshops and conferences. Enterprises are also informed on funding opportunities. No specific types of enterprises are targeted, and any company based in the Vysočina Region can participate including non-members of the Regional Economic Chamber. There is no targeted group and there are no eligibility criteria for inclusion. All services are free of charge. The network was established in 2019 as a one-year project and because of positive feedback the project continued in 2020. Nevertheless, the interest of companies, probably due to COVID-19 pandemic, was much lower, and it was not clear whether the project would be renewed again. The activities of the network are funded solely from the budget of the Region, with an annual contribution of about CZK 1 500 000 (EUR 59 406). The network is monitored by the Region Vysočina. The coordinator, the Regional Economic Chamber Vysočina, submits annual reports, where all activities (number of supported enterprises, consultations, workshops, conferences) are listed. The network's impact would be difficult to measure, especially now during the pandemic. According to the director of the Regional EC Vysočina, the main added value of this network is provision of contacts for experts on the Industry 4.0 topic, so companies can find new solutions in their businesses. Examples of good practice are shared at www.vysocina40hub.cz; and at www.facebook.com/vysocina40.							

Drafted by: Milada Stalker

References:

<http://www.khkvysocina.cz/3-projekty/10-sit-asistencnich-center-k-problematice-prumysl-40-na-vysocine-v-roce-2020.html>
<https://www.facebook.com/vysocina40>
<http://www.vysocina40hub.cz/>

Country	CZ						
ID	CZ_09						
Name in English	CZ_09 BIC Plzeň (Business Innovation Centre Plzeň)						
Name in local language	BIC Plzeň) (Podnikatelské a inovační centrum Plzeň)						
Year of implementation	1992						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X				X	X
BIC Plzeň (Business and Innovation Centre Plzeň) has supported the establishment and development of innovative new businesses in the Plzeň region since 1992. It was founded by the City of Plzeň as a limited liability company with an aim to help young and innovative companies grow. This goal is a part of a long-term strategic development plan of the Plzeň region. BIC Plzeň is a member of international networks that support business and innovation (European Business and Innovation Centre Network – EBN and Enterprise Europe Network - EEN), working in partnership with numerous other national and international partners at the regional, national and international levels. BIC Plzeň is a member of the Science and Technology Parks Association CZ (SVTP) and the Smart Plzeň Region Cluster (Klastr Chytrý Plzeňský kraj). It is funded by the regional government and co-funded by EU grants. Among targeted types of enterprises are start-ups and MSMEs but any company can ask for consultation. BIC Plzeň offers consultations to start-ups and helps them to develop their investment projects, formulate goals and minimise risks. BIC organises professional training and networking events for start-ups and beginning entrepreneurs. In cooperation with the University of West Bohemia's Faculty of Economics and the faculty's Business Centre, BIC Plzeň organises regular workshops and talks for students interested in entering business. BIC Plzeň can connect clients with research and development organisations or other partners both nationally and internationally. BIC also helps companies apply for grants (e.g., grants for training from the project POVEZ II funded by the ESF) and leases them spaces at their premises at favourable rates. BIC organises workshops and seminars for companies interested and upon request can recommend an expert in specific areas (ICT, green economy etc.). An important activity is networking and connecting companies and research organisations. During its lifetime BIC has helped local companies to get EUR 80 000 000 from various funds (mainly EU funds). No specific topic/area is covered. While consultations within EEN is free of charge, other services are for a fee. BIC charges companies typically about 10 % of the costs and 90 % of the costs are covered by the regional government. Start-ups and innovative companies are targeted and preferred in counselling and no exclusion for large and other well-established companies exists. Counselling is individualised and depends on clients' needs. Some companies prefer just one or two consultations, while others opt for as much as twenty or more hours of consultation. BIC Plzeň has long contributed to the development of collaboration between companies and research institutions, especially universities, with the aim of stimulating development at companies. BIC Plzeň is also active in the Pilsen Region Council for Research, the Development and Innovation SVTP Committee, the Danube – Vltava Working Group, the Enterprise Europe Network sector group and the World Trade Centres Association (WTCA). Yearly budget is around CZK 2 000 000 (EUR 75 000). Profits are invested in the development of their premises. Annual reports are submitted to the EC and the Plzeň City Council. A number of companies supported is an indicator of BIC productivity. No thorough external evaluation of the BIC is available, and the main source of the description is a BIC consultant. Therefore, it is difficult to assess BIC's impact objectively.							

Drafted by: Milada Stalker

References: <https://en.bic.cz/services>

Country	DE						
ID	DE_01						
Name in English	DE_01 Consulting on HRD/HRM for SMEs						
Name in local language	<i>unternehmensWert:Mensch</i>						
Year of implementation	2012						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X					
This nationwide consulting programme supports small and medium-sized enterprises in developing a sustainable and employee-oriented human resources policy. To this end, support is provided for advisory services in four fields of action: Personnel Management, Equal Opportunities and Diversity, Health and Knowledge and Competence. In these areas, professional consultants work together with management and employees to develop tailor-made concepts and measures for a successful personnel policy. The counselling process includes three phases: initial consultation, implementation support (up to 10 person days) and final consultation. Depending on their size, companies can get funding for between 50 (10 to 249 employees) to 80 percent (<10 employees) of the consulting costs. The project is funded by means of the ESF and the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. After a pilot phase that had started in 2012, the programme was launched over the whole country in October 2015. In 2017, the programme was complemented by a specific line of consulting in the area of digital transformation (unternehmensWert:Mensch plus). At the time of this research, the funding period was to be prolonged until 30 June 2022.							

Drafted by: Eva Steinheimer

References:

<https://www.unternehmens-wert-mensch.de/startseite/>
<https://www.unternehmens-wert-mensch.de/uwm-plus/uebersicht/>

Country	DE						
ID	DE_02						
Name in English	DE_02 Competence Centres Digitalisation for SMEs						
Name in local language	Competence Centres Digitalisation for SMEs						
Year of implementation	2011						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
					X		
In 2011, the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy launched an initiative to support SMEs in issues related to digitalisation and industry 4.0 under the German name Mittelstand-Digital. The overall programme has changed its focus over the years from providing support for the implementation of electronic modes of business relations and communication processes to the promotion of digital processes. The core activities as of today include the provision of 26 regional and thematic SME 4.0 competence centres, that figure as provider-neutral contact points over the whole country raising awareness and providing information and training. Among the thematic competence centres are, for example, those covering e-standards, communication or usability; other competence centres address certain sectors, such as crafts, retail, construction or textile industry. SMEs, with an emphasised attempt to reach out to crafts enterprises, are addressed to experience potential advantages of digitalisation through practical examples, information events and mutual exchange. The regional competence centres provide their services across economic sectors based on regional consortia of organisations active in research and development. Instruments used to support SMEs include checks on the degree of how prepared a company is to address digital change and counselling on ways forward, workshops and training as well as support in implementation projects. Network activities with role model companies are promoted. Since 2016, an external research institute (Wissenschaftliches Institut für Infrastruktur und Kommunikationsdienste) has been conducting scientific monitoring, accompanying evaluation.							

Drafted by: Eva Steinheimer

References:

<https://www.mittelstand-digital.de/MD/Redaktion/DE/Artikel/Mittelstand-4-0/mittelstand-40-kompetenzzentren.html>

Country	DE						
ID	DE_03						
Name in English	DE_03 Guidance for integration issues						
Name in local language	<i>Guidance for integration issues</i>						
Year of implementation	2016						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
					X		
					Providing work experience or on-site training spells to non-employees		
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					
Since 2016, the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy has been funding so-called "Integration Guides", which support SMEs in integrating refugees in work and training. In 2019, 170 integration guides were employed by 110 different chambers of trade, chambers of industry and commerce, chambers of the liberal professions and other non-profit organisations in the business world and are currently active throughout Germany. Since September 2017, large companies have also been able to take advantage of the programme for all questions relating to the integration of refugees into training, work experience or employment. The integration guides visit the companies on site, provide guidance for the field of topics including "securing skilled workers" and advise them on the legal framework. They suggest suitable refugee applicants to interested companies and provide individual support in bureaucratic and practical questions. They also provide information on regional and national funding and support offers and help with the necessary formalities. In 2017, the guidance programme helped to fill about 1 960 apprenticeship spots. 2018, 2 850 apprenticeship spots and more than 1 220 job positions were filled. In addition, the measure contributed to arranging more than 3 700 internships and 1 390 entry-level qualifications. From March 2016 until August 2019, a total of 21 187 internships, apprenticeships, entry qualifications, trainings and jobs have been filled with the help of the welcome guides. The programme was evaluated in 2018 (not publicly available). Based on the findings of the evaluation in the first half of 2019, the measure was revised and adapted to the current challenges. On September 11, 2019, the prolongation of the measure for another four years was announced.							

Drafted by: Eva Steinheimer

References:

https://www.bafa.de/DE/Wirtschafts_Mittelstandsfoerderung/Fachkraefte/Willkommenslotsen/willkommenslotsen_node.html

Country	DE						
ID	DE_04						
Name in English	DE_04 Promotion of Business Knowhow						
Name in local language	<i>Promotion of Business Knowhow</i>						
Year of implementation	2016						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X					
The support programme “Promotion of Business Knowhow” (Förderung unternehmerischen Knowhows) was launched in January 2016 based on a framework directive. The measure is co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) of the European Union and the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy. The Federal Office of Economics and Export Control (BAFA) is responsible for implementation. The programme combines a number of pre-runner projects from an earlier funding period into a new measure. The main goal of “Promotion of Business Knowhow” is to provide support for counselling services for SMEs. The support programme is aimed at companies that are already established. Consultations prior to founding a company can be subsidised under different programmes. Within “Promotion of Business Knowhow”, there are two funding lines, general and specific counselling. The first one includes economic, financial, HR and organisational issues. Further education is explicitly mentioned as one of the key topics often addressed among HR related issues. The second funding line addresses specific target groups, as for example female entrepreneurs, entrepreneurs with migrant background or disabilities, and specific topics including recruiting and retaining skilled personnel, creating an elderly-friendly work environment or sustainable development. Participating SMEs are free to choose an extern consultant that meets formal and quality assurance criteria defined by the programme. The programme grants subsidies between 50% and 80% of consulting costs up to EUR 4 000 (companies in the first two years) respectively EUR 3 000 (companies in business more than 2 years). Shares of fundable costs differ between regions and are in most cases higher in the “new” Länder. In April 2020, the programme’s target groups were expanded by SMEs facing difficulties as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic. Already in June 2020, the means provided for that purpose had been consumed.							

Drafted by: Eva Steinheimer

References:

https://www.bafa.de/DE/Wirtschafts_Mittelstandsfoerderung/Beratung_Finanzierung/Unternehmensberatung/unternehmensberatung_node.html

Country	DE						
ID	DE_05						
Name in English	DE_05 Counselling network for SMEs						
Name in local language	<i>Counselling network for SMEs</i>						
Year of implementation	2015						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					X
In Schleswig-Holstein, a counselling network has been established in order to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the field of skills retention and recruitment. The measure is based on regional and ESF funding and implemented by a variety of organisations around the country including chambers, trade unions and related agencies as well as business development agencies. The specialist counsellors of the network support above all small and micro enterprises in recruiting skilled workers and securing the availability of such workers. The range of topics that can be addressed includes questions of personnel development and securing young talent, family-friendly personnel policy, company health management to maintain and expand the employability of older employees, work organisation, equal opportunities and diversity management, especially the promotion of women and employees with a migration background. In a first counselling interview that is free of charge for companies, needs for action are identified and possible adaptation measures are suggested. In cases, where companies need guidance for a longer period of time, they can be recommended to a programme coordinated by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (unternehmensWert:Mensch) that offers support for further counselling in HR related matters. The counselling network in Schleswig-Holstein was launched in 2015. For the whole ESF-funding period (2014-2020), a goal of at least 5 900 companies was targeted to be reached.							

Drafted by: Ev Steinheimer

References:

https://www.schleswig-holstein.de/DE/Fachinhalte/A/arbeit/beratungsnetzwerk_FKsicherung_a1.html

Country	DE						
ID	DE_06						
Name in English	DE_06 National coaching network for mobility in VET						
Name in local language	<i>Berufsbildung ohne Grenzen</i>						
Year of implementation	2008						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X					
The major aim of the support programme “Training without borders” is to raise awareness among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs, defined as enterprises with no more than 249 employees and an annual turnover not exceeding EUR 50 million or a balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 43 million) and their apprentices and young professionals on the opportunities for transnational mobility during and after training. The programme was first introduced under the ESF framework in 2008 by the Federal Ministry of Work and Social Affairs in cooperation with the German Chamber of Industry and Trade (Deutschen Industrie- und Handelskammertag (DIHK)) and the German Confederation of Skilled Crafts (Zentralverband des Deutschen Handwerks (ZDH)). In December 2015, the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy took over the funding of the scheme. On January 2020, a new funding directive came into force that is limited until 31 December 2023. Applications can be submitted continuously until 31 October 2022. Support is provided for mobility advice for SMEs and their apprentices, young professionals and vocational training staff, addressing, informing and individually advising companies, trainees, young skilled workers and vocational training staff on opportunities for placements abroad. In addition, support is provided for the organisation and follow-up of assignments of the company's own trainees and young skilled workers or the admission of foreign trainees and young skilled workers and for travel by VET personnel. Funding can also be provided for accompanying measures to establish national and international cooperation for the implementation and continuation of mobility projects as well as support for the central coordination and management of a nationwide network of mobility counselling services. Up to 70% of the total eligible expenditure, in particular project-related personnel expenses, expenses for necessary travel and certain administrative expenses, can be subsidised.							

Drafted by: Eva Steinheimer

References:

<https://www.berufsbildung-ohne-grenzen.de>

Country	DE						
ID	DE_07						
Name in English	DE_07 Continuing Education Consultants in Bavaria						
Name in local language	<i>Continuing Education Consultants in Bavaria</i>						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X					
In Bavaria, the regional Ministry of Labour funds a counselling support programme for SMEs regarding further training to cope with the challenges of digital change as part of the implementation of the “Pact for Continuing Professional Development 4.0” (Pakt für berufliche Weiterbildung 4.0) which was signed in June 2018. The so-called “Continuing Education Initiators” (Weiterbildungsinitiator*innen) have the role of consultants and coordinators that closely work together with companies and their employees to identify training needs, develop individual training concepts with the participants – thereby suggesting the type of measures to be taken, how to organise and finance implementation – and to accompany the implementation process if necessary. The consultants also distribute the Bavarian training voucher, a lump-sum grant of EUR 500 for vocational training in the field of digitisation for employees. The aim is to supplement the guidance services provided by the public employment services. Close coordination with the employment agencies, existing advisory services on site, the companies and the interests of the employees is in focus. The Ministry of Labour assigned a number of service providers (including organisations for further training or vocational rehabilitation) for implementing the task in a procurement procedure. The procurement specifications include descriptions of the tasks, target groups and overall aims of the project as well as a minimum qualifications profile for the counsellors to be. Provider contracts are concluded for two years. The contact network is spread over the whole country. There are no numbers of funding sums or beneficiaries available publicly so far.							

Drafted by: Eva Steinheimer

References:

<https://www.bayern.de/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/pakt-fuer-berufliche-weiterbildung-4.0.pdf>

Country	DE						
ID	DE_08						
Name in English	DE_08 Promotion of training ability and quality (dual VET) in small and micro enterprises in Hessen						
Name in local language	<i>gut ausbilden - Förderung der Ausbildungsfähigkeit und -qualität in Klein- und Kleinstunternehmen</i>						
Year of implementation	2015						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X				
In Hessen, the Ministry of Economy, Energy, Transport and Regional Development launched an ESF funded programme to support micro enterprises that offer or want to offer apprenticeships by providing further training for trainers and support for qualifications of apprentices that exceed the standard curriculum („gut ausbilden - Förderung der Ausbildungsfähigkeit und -qualität in Klein- und Kleinstunternehmen“). While VET in the dual system is of continuous importance in the German education and employment system, small and micro enterprises often have difficulties providing high quality training and/or attracting young people of different reasons. This programme aims to support such enterprises in attracting and retaining apprentices and training them in sustainable and competitive quality. Various qualification and advisory modules are promoted, such as: training courses for instructors; qualification/consulting of company owners or managing directors or training personnel on the topics recruiting new staff, starting training and practice-oriented vocational education; exam preparation for trainees; external training periods of trainees; additional qualifications for instructors or trainees; job-related German lessons. The implementation of the measure started in 2015 targeting micro enterprises. After a first evaluation in 2016 showing participation rates far below the expected, the criteria for participation were adapted to open the measure for small companies (<50 employees), simplify the application procedure and allow to exceed the maximum of two times up to EUR 2 000 of support per apprenticeship position in case of a follow up application after the first 12-month period. Companies have to proof the real cost of the qualification measure and co-payment of at least 50%.							

Drafted by: Eva Steinheimer

References:

<https://www.esf-hessen.de/esf-hessen/foerderprogramme/kmu/gut-ausbilden/gut-ausbilden-qualitaet-in-kleinen-betrieben-439772>

Country	DE						
ID	DE_09						
Name in English	DE_09 Coaching for SMEs in Baden Württemberg						
Name in local language	<i>Coaching for SMEs in Baden Württemberg</i>						
Year of implementation	2015						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X					
In Baden-Württemberg, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration has been promoting the performance of SMEs in regional and global competition since 2015 through ESF funded grants for external coaching in order to expand their innovative capacity, retain and attract skilled workers and make SMEs more resistant to crises. SMEs can apply for coaching for six different thematic priorities: innovation projects and restructuring/change processes, climate-friendly business activities, company transfers, successful training, growth orientation of women-run companies (for solo self-employed and women-run micro-enterprises with less than 50 employees), HRD (for SMEs with at least 10 employees). The level of support has changed several times since 2015. Since 2018, the maximum support per thematic priority group has been EUR 6 000 (15 person days à EUR 400).							

Drafted by: Eva Steinheimer

References:

https://www.esf-bw.de/esf/fileadmin/user_upload/Download_Center_2017/Foerderbereich_Wirtschaft/Foerderprogramme/Merkblatt_Coaching_KMU_Juni_2018.pdf

Country	DK						
ID	DK_01						
Name in English	DK_01 SME:Digital						
Name in local language	SMV:Digital						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X	X				

In 2018, the Danish government established the national 'SME:Digital' programme as a part of the 'Denmark's Digital Growth' strategy. The Ministry for Industry, Business and Financial Affairs supervises the programme administrated by Denmark's six business hubs. Municipalities finance these hubs spread across Denmark to promote and coordinate businesses. The Danish government funds the programme with DKK 70 million (EUR 9.4 million) covering 2018-21. The programme helps develop digital competences and the use of digital tools within SMEs in Denmark. It has a range of different funds focusing on either digitalisation, green transition or E-commerce.

SMEs can seek support to participate in already planned workshops such as on digital security. The workshops include a masterclass-presentation, company-cases and idea exchange and feedback from other like-minded enterprises. Furthermore, SMEs can apply for funding for specific areas within digital transition such as business intelligence, digital security, IT management and robot technology. Participating SMEs can sign up to different online and free training sessions and workshops within the area of digital transition. SMEs can also apply for counselling support that depends on the size of the company:

- A grant of DKK 25 000 for counselling on digital transition for companies with 2-20 full-time employees
- A grant of DKK 100 000 for counselling on digital transition for companies with 3-249 full-time employees and a yearly turnover above DKK 2 million
- A grant of DKK 250 000 for counselling on digital transition for companies with 3-249 full-time employees and a yearly turnover above DKK 2 million and a clear strategy for the digital transition.

No evaluation is available yet. However since the 'SME:Digital' programme started, new funds have been launched. Different online sources show that the programme has received a lot of interest from companies and many applicants for the different grants.

Drafted by: Amanda Thor Andersen & Johann Secher

References:

<https://smvdigital.dk/>

Country	DK						
ID	DK_02						
Name in English	DK_02 Business counselling and skills development						
Name in local language	Forretningsmæssig sparring og kompetenceudvikling						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					
The six existing business hubs in Denmark are offering specialised counselling focusing on business operation and development for MSMEs in Denmark. Together with the municipalities of Denmark and the online business promotion platform (an online guide for enterprises supported by the Government), the business hubs are the centre of the decentralized business development in Denmark. These business hubs are financed by the municipalities and should promote business and increase the collaboration across Denmark. For instance, the Business Hub of Northern Jutland offers 12 counselling meetings over 6-8 months with a fixed counsellor. The offer is a part of the programme called "Willingness to Grow", specifically targeting smaller enterprises with an ambition to grow. For instance, and amongst other topics, the business counselling meetings focus on clarification of competences, preparation for certificates, human resource management and new business strategies. Business Hub Northern Jutland refunds between 50-100 percent of the cost to the enterprises participating. The programme is supported by the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund.							

Drafted by: Amanda Thor Andersen & Johann Secher

References:

<https://smvdigital.dk/>

Country	DK						
ID	DK_03						
Name in English	DK_03 Digital Catalyst						
Name in local language	<i>Digital katalysator</i>						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
				X			
Digital Catalyst is a research programme funded by the Danish Industry Foundation. The project director is the University of Aarhus working with SDU, DTU and Business Hub Central Denmark. The project funding was DKK 6.71 million (EUR 0.9 million) when running from 2018-2020. The programme targets the management boards of SMEs in Denmark with the aim of creating short- and long-term growth. The programme specifically focuses on equipping the SME management boards to handle digitalization and innovation as part of their strategic management to develop and implement a strategy. The programme consists of three parts. • The first part is a research study identifying the main challenges and barriers within SME management boards in generating growth through the use of new digital technology. The first part of the study finished in 2019 resulting in the report "The SME-board in a digital age". • The second part develops three different models for digital competence management to be tested and evaluated in 45 SME-boards. The models focus on how Danish SME-management boards can better handle digital initiatives and innovation as part of their strategic management, in order to develop and anchor a strategy • The third part is an open-source tool that will enhance SME management board ability to develop a strategy for digital initiatives and innovation ensuring growth. The project is working not only to create growth but to ensure that the management and employees of SMEs continue to develop new strategies, tools and working patterns.							

Drafted by: Amanda Thor Andersen & Johann Secher

References:

<https://law.au.dk/digital-katalysator/om-projektet/in-english/>

https://law.au.dk/fileadmin/ingen_mappe_valgt/SMVbestyrelsen/DigitalTidsalder_Rapport.pdf

Country	DK						
ID	DK_04						
Name in English	DK_04 Competence Development targeting Growth						
Name in local language	Vækstrettet kompetenceløft						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X	X				
The Business Hub of Southern Denmark, Danish Food Academy and four other partners developed the programme “Competence Development targeting Growth” targeting SMEs in the food, steel, robot and construction industry in the Region of Southern Denmark. The programme offers initially an individual analysis covering the individual SME’s existing and missing competences needed to ensure growth, and secondly, a tailored training offer for the company employees. Any SME interested needs to apply to get into the programme to get the analysis and the detailed training offer for its employees. The specific courses are planned according to the four selected sectors (food, steel, construction and robots). The programme funds at least 50% of the training costs. SMEs working within the food, construction, steel, or the robot industry can apply to get in the programme. The programme is supported by the European Social Fund and is running from 2018-2021. The aim of the programme is to increase the competences of 890 employees, create 370 new jobs and increase the enterprises’ turnover with more than DKK 241 million (EUR 32.3 million) within the relevant sectors. No evaluation studies on the measure have been conducted yet.							

Drafted by: Amanda Thor Andersen & Johann Secher

References:

https://ehfyn.dk/vaekstrettet_kompetenceudvikling

Country	DK						
ID	DK_05						
Name in English	DK_05 eGuidance						
Name in local language	eVejledning						
Year of implementation	2017						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
					X		
With the Tripartite agreement on strengthening the flexibility and quality in adult education and training from 2017, the guidance platform “eGuidance” has become the main entrance for adults and enterprises seeking information on further education and training for adults. eGuidance is a digital guide with information on all adult training programs in Denmark. Its scope is therefore national. eGuidance is not specifically targeting MSMEs. Notwithstanding this, individual guidance about existing public training courses and support possibilities is very relevant for smaller enterprises as they often do have limited experience with the public educational system. The team at eGuidance both guide about further education and training possibilities for employees and employers and about the financial support possibilities. eGuidance is covering the whole of Denmark, the platform is open for questions seven days a week and the conversations are anonymous. The system for further education and training in Denmark is often seen as particularly complicated and confusing for SMEs. Denmark has got a good and huge support system, with lot of funding and supporting possibilities, but they often require a deep knowledge and overview of the market. eGuidance therefore provides a good and easy way to access all relevant information, and it is expected to be a success. The platform is part of the tripartite negotiation’s goal to make the educational system in Denmark simpler and more transparent for MSMEs. eGuidance collaborates and refers to the Public Employment Service, trade unions and business interest organisations in Denmark.							

Drafted by: Amanda Thor Andersen & Johann Secher

References:

<https://www.stil.dk/aktuelt/stil/2018/aug/180821-ny-indgang-til-vejledning-for-voksne-og-virksomheder>

Country	DK						
ID	DK_06						
Name in English	DK_06 Competence development in SMEs						
Name in local language	<i>Kompetenceudvikling i SMV'er</i>						
Year of implementation	2020						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						
Due to the current covid-19 crisis, a lot of SMEs in Denmark have experienced economic difficulties and a changed market. Last 20th April 2020, the Danish Executive Board for Business Development and Growth released a new temporally fund supporting those SMEs especially hard hit by the crisis. The fund consists of DKK 86 million (EUR 11.5 million), supported by the European Social Fund. SMEs, educational institutions, business development agencies and other autonomous institutions can apply for funding before the 18th of June 2020. The fund supports the development of competences within SMEs both focusing on management and employees, and the development of new and relevant competences within digitalisation or green transition. Furthermore, the fund supports educational institutions, business development agencies and other institutions that want to develop new courses for SMEs, focusing on the new competences needed to adapt to the changed market. The aim of the new temporary fund is to help SMEs survive the crisis and better adapt to a new and changed market. Specifically, eligible activities for companies applying to the fund include: • Strengthening of management competences through education, network meeting, counselling, or mentor schemes. • Development of competences of the existing employees through a mapping of the competence-needs, education or training. • Competence development through the hiring or association of new persons with relevant competences. The applicants can only apply for a maximum of 50% of the total funding (60% in the Region of Sjælland). No evaluations are available yet.							

Drafted by: Amanda Thor Andersen & Johann Secher

References:

<https://erhvervsfremmebestyrelsen.dk/86-mio-kr-til-kompetenceudvikling-i-smaa-og-mellemstore-virksomheder-saa-de-rustes-til-aendrede>

Country	EE						
ID	EE_01						
Name in English	EE_01 Online platform Visiidid.ee						
Name in local language	Online platform Visiidid.ee						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
					X		

As a small open economy, Estonia has been putting particular emphasis on export-oriented industries. More recently, business diplomacy was enhanced by the creation of a centralised web environment for high-level visits. The new environment facilitates communication between the organisers and the companies operating in Estonia with ambitions to enter new markets and connect with global investors.

The website visiidid.ee launched at the end of 2018 provides a calendar plan and description of all scheduled high-level visits, which include accompanying business delegations. The website covers the visits organised by the President of Estonia, the Prime Minister, ministers and ministries, Enterprise Estonia and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Visiidid.ee is part of a broader business diplomacy strategy, which aims to combine public and private sector efforts to work towards common goals. The targeted enterprises are 'enterprises with global ambitions' that is either export-oriented and/or seeking foreign investors, including start-ups. Companies must be either registered in Estonia or having subsidiaries in Estonia.

The digital platform aims to make it easier for Estonian SMEs and businesses in general to (i) participate in high-level visits; (ii) present Estonia as a reliable export partner; (iii) give participating businesses extra credibility; and (iv) 'open the doors' to remote and difficult markets.

All businesses registered in Estonia and owned at least partially by Estonians can apply to participate. Participation is subject to acceptance by the organisers of the visit. Business representatives have to cover their own travel and accommodation costs, as well as relevant local and organiser's costs. There are no costs related to organising the visits, which is handled by Enterprise Estonia as a separate measure.

The platform is managed and funded by the Enterprise Estonia (national promotional agency) in cooperation with the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Ministry of Foreign. Between mid-December 2018 (when it was launched) and March 2019, the website had 17 500 visitors and facilitated 40 high-level visits. It is still too early to make any assessment of the impact and effectiveness of this tool. However, the initial feedback of the businesses is positive and new business partnerships have been started.

Drafted by: Olga Mikheeva

References:

<https://visiidid.ee/>; Small Business Act for Europe (SBA) Estonia Fact Sheet 2019

Country	EE						
ID	EE_02						
Name in English	EE_02 Work-based learning						
Name in local language	Töökohapõhise õppe						
Year of implementation	2003						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
					X		
					Providing work experience or on-site training spells to non-employees		
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						
To meet labour market needs better by improving vocational education and training, Innove Foundation (established in 2003 under the Ministry of Education and Research and financed from the national funds and ESF) has national responsibility to promote adult learning and vocational education and training. Innove promotes workplace-based learning and cooperates with the Estonian Confederation of Employers, Entrepreneurs and Vocational Education Institutions. Innove works to develop an apprenticeship scheme to increase the number of apprentices. An education institution has responsibility for one-third of the education and two-thirds comes from supervision/mentorship in a company. Work-based learning is open for both young people entering their first profession and for adults who want to retrain or acquire another qualification. Employers' state their needs for worker skills and vocational education schools create study places. The contract between an employer and vocational education school determines the distribution of the costs and benefits related to the work-based training according to the following criteria: employers are compensated up to 50% of costs related to supervision of a trainee (supervisor/mentor's salary); the trainee receives a salary (no less than a minimum wage) and allowance through the school to cover transportation expenses (based on performance results, a trainee can also receive a study allowance.); and a vocational education institution receives public funding that covers 50-100% of all work-based learning expenses. Innove Foundation also initiates various models of work-based learning in vocational education institutions and for companies; facilitates cooperation and mutual learning between companies and vocational schools; monitors international practices in work-based learning and can help develop legislative changes related to work-based learning. During 2015-18, 1 426 people completed the programme. In 2018, 4 200 students participated in the programme. In 2020, the target increased to 7 200 students. According to the studies (Kantar Emor 2018 and Innove Foundation 2019), the graduates greatly valued the programme with 96% receiving information about the programme from the employer and 95% of participants evaluating their experience with the school as 'good'. However, they were less satisfied with the study curriculum, which suggests a constant need to improve and upgrade both the curriculum and the qualifications of teachers/instructors. The study indicated that 83% of participants passed the qualification exam but, in many cases, companies did not provide sufficient instructions during the practical training. The 2018 study identified a need to harmonise the level of subjects taught, levels of teaching and equipment in all of the schools; to widen the network of companies that offer practical training and to monitor the instructors (at workplaces); to increase the individual practical work (by allowing working with the actual equipment/devices) and to implement experience-based learning.							

Drafted by: Olga Mikheeva

References: <https://www.innove.ee/prom/tookohapohine-ope/>

Country	EE						
ID	EE_03						
Name in English	EE_03 Counselling startups – StartUp Estonia						
Name in local language	<i>Counselling startups – StartUp Estonia</i>						
Year of implementation	2013						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X				
Startup Estonia aims at facilitating the development of Estonia's eco-system for high-growth companies and start-ups. It was established in 2013. The financial volume of this incentive is EUR 7 million. It is financed by the European Regional Development Fund within the Smart Specialisation programme. Startup Estonia targets start-ups which are defined as innovative enterprises (no more than 10 years old or less in case of a non-Estonian company) which have a replicable business model and aim to develop and/or implement an innovation and/or technological solution that has high-growth global potential and that greatly contributes to the Estonian business environment. The focus of the Startup Estonia Programme is to develop the national start-up ecosystem while focusing on three key areas: CyberTech, EdTech and Ida-Viru region (Eastern Estonia). In 2020, Startup Estonia financed training/adult learning activities (on its own as well as through private service providers) of some EUR 330 000. In terms of areas supported: EdTech received EUR 47 000, CyberTech EUR 25 000 and Ida-Virumaa some EUR 35 000 in 2020. Startup Estonia organises various trainings and mentoring seminars for start-ups typically in collaboration with private service providers. These support organisations cover a wide range of services: consulting and mentoring, incubators and accelerations, investments, training, co-working, maker spaces, and such. Training of start-ups is one of the key activities and targets various aspects: from investor relations to internationalisation strategies. Private service providers are selected through competitive bidding (public procurement). Overall, in Estonia counselling and mentorship services can be obtained from 100 various service providers: from business consulting companies, legal and accounting consultants, NGO and public sector organisations, R&D centres and universities. In addition, Latitute59 and Startup Day are the two main annual events (multi-day) organised by Startup Estonia where seminars and trainings are provided. A lot of activities are directed towards mentoring both start-up entrepreneurs and investors in order to further develop the national start-up ecosystem. Startup Estonia also runs an online database of Estonian start-up companies and keeps an updated list of key legal documents related to employment, investments, business governance, etc. Such an approach contributes to the transparency of regulations. In addition, Startup Estonia accepts start-up visa applications from both, local companies that wish to bring foreign talent to Estonia and from foreign individuals who wish to establish a startup or further develop an innovative and high-tech idea in Estonia. Based on recently published Startup Estonia Strategy 2021-2027 (March 2020), the three main indicators that were in use during 2015-2020 were fulfilled: the number of start-ups (legal persons) reached 1013 firms in early 2020 (as compared to the target of 1 000), the number of people employed by start-up companies reached 6 304 at 2019 year-end (as compared to the target of 8 000 by 2020), the number of support organisations that form Estonian start-up ecosystem reached 100 and that provide services for various start-up stages (ecosystem development has been the main task of Startup Estonia). According to the same strategy, the number of start-up entrepreneurs should reach 8000 by 2023; there will be 3 start-up firms introducing a product/service to the market by 2023; and 5 start-up companies that after 3 years of receiving support would attract international capital of more							

than 1 m EUR. In terms of services, Startup Estonia recognises the demand from start-up enterprises to deepen the network with the global start-up players, including start-up companies and investors. [The activities of Startup Estonia have been well received by the start-up ecosystem actors and the project will continue during the next programming period 2021-2027. The respective strategy document has been already published.]

Drafted by: Olga Mikheeva

References:

<https://startupestonia.ee/>; <https://kredex.ee/sites/default/files/2020-10/Startup%20Estonia%20strateegia%202021-2027.pdf>

Country	EE						
ID	EE_04						
Name in English	EE_04 Retraining programme – “Vali IT!” (Choose IT!)						
Name in local language	Retraining programme – “Vali IT!” (Choose IT!)						
Year of implementation	2017						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X				

“Vali IT!” (Choose IT!) is a retraining programme for adults with an objective to increase the availability of workforce with digital skills, particularly in software development. The programme is fully funded from the ESF with a total budget of 1 419 522 EUR, implemented by Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications for the duration of 4 years, from 2016 to 2020. The rationale behind the scheme is that according to the sector-based labour market studies, Estonia will need some 2 600-4 500 professionals with software development skills by 2020. The training costs are covered (EUR 2 387 is the estimated budget for each trainee), no transport or accommodation costs are eligible. The funding is indirect, that is, the trainee does not receive any funds but instead does not pay the training fees.

The training is offered 4-6 times a year and lasts for 14 weeks. It consists of 6 weeks of full-time study (40 hours a week) at the training centre and 8 weeks of full-time internship (40 workdays, 8 hours a day) in a company. Studies are provided in groups (up to 20 people) while companies can take up to 6 interns at a time. Entry requirements: language skills at B2 level (Estonian and English) and at least 3 years of work experience. Upon completion of the programme, re-trained professionals are expected to be able to programme, to integrate developed solutions with other systems, to test and to fix the code, if needed, and to deal with related documentation.

The programme also benefits local MSMEs where trainees undergo practical training. The programme reports on selected trainees that have been hired by the ‘hosting’ MSMEs at the end of the training period. In the long-run, MSMEs can also benefit from the enlarged pool of retrained IT professionals as the need for IT professionals is increasing with digitisation and automation of Estonian MSMEs.

The programme has provided over 500 additional specialists during 2016-2020 and the course will continue operating in 2021 onwards, therefore the programme can be considered a successful one. The content of the course (the curriculum developed together with the IT industry) and its design will remain intact while the funding structure will change: participants will need to either pay full fees (EUR 2 387 per a person) or apply for existing financial instruments to support adult learning provided by the Unemployment Insurance Fund (e.g. labour market training with a training card; training grant for employers).

Overall, the support measure was very well received, and the demand was very high. The intensity of the training as well as the need to screen the applications was noted by the training providers. COVID-related adjustments included moving from class-room based activities to providing courses via digital tools, which will help continue with the training through 2021.

Drafted by: Olga Mikheeva

References:

<http://vali-it.ee/projekt/>; <https://www.mkm.ee/en/objectives-activities/information-society/it-skills-and-knowledge#--retraining-course-choose-it13>

Country	EE						
ID	EE_06						
Name in English	EE_06 Digital audit for enterprises						
Name in local language	<i>Digidiagnostika</i>						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X			X		
Digital diagnostics grant has been provided by Enterprise Estonia (EAS) since 2018. Although it does not target the training of employees directly, it provides an opportunity for enterprises, particularly MSMEs, to increase the level of automation and digitisation. Another explicit target of digital diagnostics is to increase awareness and understanding of digitisation needs among MSMEs in Estonia. Financed from the national budget (from the end of 2020 will be fully financed from ERDF), this support measure aims to provide an overview of the bottlenecks in an enterprise's management, business model, and operations vis-à-vis digitalisation; to provide solutions of tackling these bottlenecks as well as cost estimates for digitalisation; to provide an estimate on the economic impact of digitalisation on company's performance. The target enterprises for the audit are the enterprises in mining and manufacturing sectors (excluding processing and preserving fish with an average sale for the last 2 years of at least EUR 200 000). The digital audit is carried out by certified and approved professionals in consultation with the EAS. With the total earmarked budget of EUR 1.1 million, this support measure can vary from EUR 5 000 to EUR 15 000 paid in grants, depending on the size of an enterprise (measured in annual revenues). The grant covers up to 70% of total costs. As of September 2020, a total of 125 companies that underwent the digital diagnostics were supported with the total cost of EUR 1.25 million. The last round of applications closed 14 September 2020. The support measure is meant as the first step in encouraging MSMEs towards digitisation. After performing the digital diagnostics, companies can apply for the Digitisation Grant which is meant to cover actual digitisation costs and is (only) meant for companies that completed the digital diagnostics supported and/or approved by the EAS. Digital diagnostics will continue after a short break at the end of 2020 but will be financed from the European Regional Development Fund. The implementing authority (Enterprise Estonia) conducted a survey among companies during Summer 2020 with broad questions regarding implementation. The summary of this survey is an internal document, not in the public domain. The support measure was well received by the business community and a few companies are in the process of implementing suggested digital solutions. The support measure will continue after a short break (end of 2020), which is related to changes in the funding structure and some changes in implementation. Namely, grants will be smaller in size, but the range of supported sectors will be expanded beyond manufacturing and will cover service sectors.							

Drafted by: Olga Mikheeva

References:

https://www.eas.ee/teenus/digital_diagnostics/?lang=en

Country	EE						
ID	EE_07						
Name in English	EE_07 Enterprise Development Programme grant						
Name in local language	Ettevõtte Arenguprogramm						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X					

With a total budget of EUR 63 million funded by the European Regional Development Fund, the Enterprise Development Programme, implemented by Enterprise Estonia (EAS, the National Promotional Agency), is a multi-phase support measure that aims at stimulating the competitiveness and export potential of MSMEs. The Enterprise Development Programme combines financial (grant-based) and non-financial measures with the latter focusing on counselling and coaching MSMEs on various aspects of business performance and business plan development.

The programme targets companies that have been in operation for at least 3 years, have minimum 8 employees, and have already recorded exports or have been increasing sales volumes by 5% each year (10% for companies operating in the areas of Smart Specialisation).

The grant-based support within the Programme covers various expenses, including hiring of new employees, development of new processes, sales and marketing activities, development of products and services, purchase of equipment, etc. The support covers 25-45% of the project total costs (depending on the size of an enterprise). An essential part of the Programme is composed of consulting and mentoring services provided by the EAS and associated experts. As of April 2020, 218 companies have benefitted from the Programme.

The programme was partly evaluated together with other support measures directed towards Entrepreneurship and R&D and was generally considered as effective and synergies were identified with export promotion activities (Evaluation of the effectiveness of entrepreneurship and innovation support in the Operational Programme for Cohesion Policy Funds 2014-2020). However, it is difficult to measure any effects of the programme as yet due to long-term orientation of its outcomes. The programme's start was delayed, and the distribution of recipients was skewed towards the Northern Estonia (Harju county), which surrounds Estonia's capital city (Tallinn). Based on the feedback from enterprises, the resources deployed by the support programme were sufficient but inflexible: business development might result in unexpected outcomes thereby deviating from the development plan (and particularly the types of eligible costs) initially agreed upon.

Drafted by: Olga Mikheeva

References:

<https://www.eas.ee/teenus/enterprise-development-programme-2-2-2/?lang=en>

Country	EE						
ID	EE_08						
Name in English	EE_08 Digitalisation grant						
Name in local language	Digitoetus						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X			X			

With a total budget of EUR 3 million, digitalisation grants aim to finance 10-50% of digitalisation expenses of enterprises deciding to digitise its operations. One of the conditions of the grant is the digital diagnostics performed by one of digitalisation experts approved by Enterprise Estonia.

This support measure was launched in 2019 and Enterprise Estonia, the main national promotional agency, which manages the implementation of this support mechanism while the funds come from the Estonian Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications. The support measure contributes to the sub-objective of the Estonian Entrepreneurship Growth Strategy 2014-2020 and is expected to help Estonian manufacturing companies increase the value-added and provide innovative services. Companies that are eligible for the grant should be operating in manufacturing or mining industries and have average sales exceeding EUR 200 000 annually for the last three years. The maximum amount of the grant is EUR 200 000 and depends on the size of an enterprise.

The digitalisation grant supports projects no longer than 18 months with the closure in December 2020 (the last round of applications was in October 2020). It is expected that the grant will help enterprises to increase the digital and automation component in their production line, to streamline and increase effectiveness of the value chain, and to increase the value-added per an employee at least by 10% within the two financial years after completing the digitalisation project.

The grant explicitly targets acquisition of staff training as one of supported activities. Fees of the digitisation/automation/robotization training provider and advisory and consultation services linked to the digitisation project are among the eligible costs. De minimis aid regulations and block exemptions, both apply. Other activities/costs that are supported by the grant are: investments in material and non-tangible assets, purchase of licenses, development of prototyping, cloud technologies, optimisation of supply chain planning and processes, remuneration of employees directly working on implementation of the project.

The implementation of projects supported by the grant will continue through 2021 and based on intermediate feedback from the enterprises, the support measure was well received, and digitalization will be further supported by the government, albeit through other types of instruments. The amount of the grant was quite limited and when faced with the choice, enterprises tend to opt for fewer but more capital-intensive purchases (equipment, machinery) as compared to smaller-scale activities, such as training. This has made the training component very modest among the varieties of activities supported by this instrument. At this stage, the needs to invest in expensive machinery dominate over more systematic need to hire dedicated trainers, although the need for qualified operators is continuously growing.

Drafted by: Olga Mikheeva

References:

<https://www.eas.ee/teenus/digitalisation-grant/?lang=en>

Country	EL						
ID	EL_02						
Name in English	EL_02 Innovation and Entrepreneurship Unit						
Name in local language	Μονάδα Καινοτομίας και Επιχειρηματικότητας (ΜΚΕ)						
Year of implementation	2010						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X				

This measure, called “Innovation and Entrepreneurship Unit” is an ad-hoc unit within the Athens University of Economics and Business (AUEB) intended at creating a system of promotion and reinforcement of entrepreneurship at AUEB with the ultimate aim of developing positive attitudes and entrepreneurial culture and the undertaking of entrepreneurial initiatives amongst students (undergraduate, post-graduate and doctoral). The Unit is active since 2010.

Other objectives include the i) development of entrepreneurship in the university community; ii) Promotion of the concept and culture of entrepreneurship; iii) Development of entrepreneurial skills; iv) Involvement of young people in new entrepreneurial actions, developing their personality and career and promoting the development of the Greek economy

Specifically on training activities, the Unit is active in several activities:

- Promotion of experience-based education by organizing specialized business game workshops, business plan development, specialized seminars, networking and connection to practice.
- Provision of up-to-date educational material, invitation of speakers to courses, systematic information of teachers and framing of entrepreneurship and innovation courses in all departments of the Economic University of Athens (EUA).
- Organization of various training programmes on business development of start-ups.
- Access to the MKE Knowledge Centre with Business Plan Development Guides, Financial Plan Development Software for Business Plans, Teaching Chapters on Current Issues and Entrepreneurship and Innovation Case Studies.

The activities conducted are free of charge for students, and funding comes primarily from companies that participate and sponsor the activities, complemented with national and EU funding.

From a qualitative perspective, the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Unit is well embedded in the Economic University of Athens, a well-established and credible institution with long-term experience in education and training. This initiative is relevant for supporting entrepreneurship from the early stages in life as it is established within an academic institution. Also, the Unit has been successful in helping to create a number of innovative small companies in the sectors inter alia of digital solutions, green economy, sales and retail, amongst others. Thus, and since its creation, close to 90 start-ups have been incubated in its premises and received business direction and active support, coaching and mentoring.

Drafted by: Dimitris Karantinos and Marili Parissaki

References:

https://www.uoa.gr/to_panepistimio/ypiresies_panepistimiakes_monades/monada_kainotomias_kai_epicheirimatikotitas/
<https://www.aueb.gr/mke>
<https://acein.aueb.gr>

Country	EL						
ID	EL_03						
Name in English	EL_03 The Hub of Innovation and Entrepreneurship						
Name in local language	<i>The Hub of Innovation and Entrepreneurship</i>						
Year of implementation	2014						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X	X		X	X
INNOVATHENS, the Hub of Innovation and Entrepreneurship of Technopolis City of Athens, is a modern, functional and cooperative 63ithout63cer in the city centre of Athens, operating since May 2014 in collaboration with Athens Synergies and Samsung Electronics Hellas as a strategic partner. The key objectives of INNOVATHENS seek to: i) Create sustainable technical and organizational preconditions (physical and digital space) to attract innovative ideas and new groups or entrepreneurs; ii) Provide open innovation services of high added value to the start-up community; iii) Encourage joint projects promoting the diversification economic activity with the utilization of ICT solutions; iv) Network with ecosystems, funding opportunities within and outside Greece; v) Capacity building. The measure targets particularly i) young people of the City of Athens, and beyond, who have the ambition to create an innovative enterprise - Individuals and/or working groups, which already have dared their first entrepreneurial attempts; ii) Groups of students and/or graduates with creative new ideas who intent to transform them to sustainable businesses; iii) Enterprises being in the establishing phase; iv) Innovative enterprises wanting to develop their business model and enter the global market. Specifically in the training domain, INNOVATHENS carries out following activities: • Training activities, with a purely training/educational character. They include seminars, workshops and seminar cycles for the development of soft skills, entrepreneurial skills, technical, digital and programming skills, as well as workshops on educational robotics, micro-science, animation and coding for children and teenagers, in cooperation with specialised trainers, recognised companies and groups of companies, universities and research centres • Business accelerator. It is a three-month programme for the support of business activities that offers identification of needs, seminars, personalised mentoring and coaching to start-ups and enterprises. It also offers a co-working space, networking with recognised organisations/institutions and individuals, support for identification of funding opportunities (e.g., EU funding, crowdfunding, etc.) and pitching sessions with businessmen and investors. Some of these training activities are free of charge (Information seminars, training seminars/workshops addressed to young people (18-25), people in education or unemployed), whereas other require an attendance fee (workshops on specific skills), depending on the type of the event or the target group and other factors. Participation in the business accelerator programme is free of charge, including seminars on entrepreneurship The project "INNOVATHENS" total budget is 2.35 million euro, of which the ERDF contributes with 1.99 million euro from the regional OP "Attica" for the 2007-2013 programming period. Funding comes mainly from the municipality of Athens but there is some funding from EU programmes. Samsung also sponsors some of the free of charge seminars, notably the ones on digital skills, therefore also provides funding. There is no evaluation, but an internal report states achievements, notably approximately 200 participants on average per month in informative seminars (free of charge) as well as 100 participants on average per month in free of charge training workshops. From a qualitative perspective, INNOVATHENS is well known as a dynamic centre of networking, interaction, exchange of knowledge							

and experience in the creative and business ecosystem of Athens. The Training activities are relevant for start-ups and young people who want to develop and put their entrepreneurial ideas into practice.

Drafted by: Dimitris Karantinos and Marili Parissaki

References:

https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/projects/greece/innovathens-promotes-and-supports-the-local-knowledge-and-ict-based-entrepreneurship (description of INNOVATHENS as an ERDF funded project)
<https://www.innovathens.gr/our-community/>

Country	EL						
ID	EL_04						
Name in English	EL_04 Knowledge and Partnership Bridges						
Name in local language	<i>Knowledge and Partnership Bridges</i>						
Year of implementation	2017						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
						X	X
The “Knowledge and Partnership Bridges” initiative was introduced in 2017 by the National Documentation Centre (EKT) of the Greek Ministry of Economy and Development. The initiative is funded by public national sources, and activities are free of charge for participants. It is targeted at networking Greek scientists, either located in Greece or abroad, bringing high quality human capital resources together and creating collaboration links between them. Entrepreneurs, professionals, academics, researchers in every field of social and economic life, can be part of this global digital community, with the final aim to bring benefits to all partners involved. More specifically, the initiative operates under an online platform based on three main pillars: • The creation of a global network of Greek scientists, professionals and entrepreneurs, wherever they are located, who organise on a regular basis different online training seminars bringing together participants from different parts of the world • Updates on funding opportunities in Greece • Mapping of highly skilled Greeks who live and work abroad. The initiative is an excellent opportunity for international networking, bringing together high skilled professionals around the world and addressing the brain drain phenomenon in Greece. Approximately 1 700 persons are inscribed in the platform, and approximately 2 000 members belong to the Facebook group. The web page has received more than 250 000 visits up to January 2020.							

Drafted by: Dimitris Karantinos and Marili Parissaki

References:

<https://www.ekt.gr/el/magazines/features/21433>

www.knowledgebridges.gr

Country	EL						
ID	EL_05						
Name in English	EL_05 Mentoring Greek women towards their professional goal						
Name in local language	<i>Mentoring Greek women towards their professional goal</i>						
Year of implementation	2012						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X		X	X	
The Greek NGO 'Women on Top' (WoT) empowers women with the ultimate objective of achieving greater equality at work. Specifically, WoT offers several services, including mentoring and learning, Consulting and Changemaking services. It targets both employed and unemployed women, as well as businesses and organisations that wish to prioritise the equal representation of women at work. More specifically, and related to the skill domain, WoT is active as follows: Mentoring and learning, primarily aimed at individual women: • Mentoring topics include inter alia moral and practical support in cases of unemployment risks, discrimination, sexual abuse, lack of work-life balance, change of career direction, insufficient professional orientation, etc. • At the same time, through the so called "WoT Learning Hub", WoT offers professional development workshops and networking opportunities. Training topics cover the development of professional skills such as inter-personal, leadership, IT and other skills. • In addition to this, the NGO runs summer camps for unemployed, employed and self-employed women. The camps involve professional development workshops on soft skills, digital skills and entrepreneurial skills. • In addition to this, it is expected to initiate in the coming months several educational interventions in schools and aimed at training teachers at all educational levels for the elimination of any type of gender-related discrimination and stereotypes in the educational process. Usually, learning activities like seminars and other skill development activities are either free of charge (if implemented in the context of an internationally funded programme or supported by a private company) or at a low cost, usually also sponsored by a private company. Meanwhile, mentoring activities are paid by participants (although mentors cooperate with WoT on a non-profit basis). From a qualitative perspective, the different activities conducted by WoT are highly rated by participants, including mentoring and learning activities. Overall, the work of WoT seems to inspire a mindset shift both at the individual and at the company level. Meanwhile, and from a quantitative perspective, over 350 mentoring partnerships have been organised since the association was founded. Meanwhile, and in 2019, a total of 6 skills camps were organised with 260 participants. Also, 50 workshops were carried out on different topics.							

Drafted by: Dimitris Karantinos and Marili Parissaki

References:

2019 Annual Report: https://womenontop.gr/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/WoT_AnnualReport_2019_Final.pdf
<https://womenontop.gr/en/>

Country	EL						
ID	EL_06						
Name in English	EL_06 Accelerator Programme						
Name in local language	Πρόγραμμα Επιτάχυνσης						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X	X		X	
The Accelerator programme is an initiative of the Hellenic Chamber of Hotels intended at supporting Greek start-ups in the hospitality sector. The main objective of the programme, initiated in 2019, is to offer a rich content addressing the business needs of the participating start-ups (management, 67ithou to finance, internationalisation, marketing, etc), provide learning opportunities for them as well as guidance on how to scale up their business in the travel & hospitality market. The initiative is funded by the Hellenic Chamber of Hotels. The programme is offered to the selected candidates free of charge and 67ithoutt Any financial requirements. Eligible candidates to secure a place in the programme must be tech start-ups with a completed business proposal, must have at least a working prototype to showcase live and a team with at least 2 founding members to support the venture. Also, the start-up must have been incorporated less than 4 years and must have received funding of less than EUR 500 000. After applying and being accepted to the programme, the start-up enters a 3-month acceleration programme including workshops, mentoring, and networking opportunities. These include activities with a direct training component (e.g. learning through workshops and presentations; open events and inspirational speeches; on-site group visits to partners and industry related businesses) and activities where learning is an indirect outcome (e.g. participation in industry exhibitions and conferences; networking opportunities in Greece and abroad; synergies and collaborations with the tourism industry, business community, academia and start-up ecosystem in Greece; meetings with industry leaders and established start-uppers). Participants have the option to stay as a resident additionally for 3 months and continue to use the facilities for free. From a qualitative point of view, it is a well-structured and methodically designed initiative that is relevant for the provision of mentoring and capacity building to start-ups in a key sector of the Greek economy, the tourism sector.							

Drafted by: Dimitris Karantinos and Marili Parissaki

References:

<https://www.capsuleaccelerator.gr>
www.grhotels.gr/

Country	EL						
ID	EL_07						
Name in English	EL_07 Athens Startup Business Incubator (Th.E.A.)						
Name in local language	Θερμοκοιτίδα Επιχειρήσεων Αθηνas						
Year of implementation	2014						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X			X	X

The Athens Startup Business Incubator is an initiative of the Athens Chamber of Commerce and Industry, aiming at boosting entrepreneurship in areas related to technological innovations. It offers counselling services, networking and investment opportunities. The initiative aims to support start-ups in sectors related to new technologies and technological innovations as well as in some traditional sectors with a strong development potential linked to the introduction of new technologies.

There is a strict selection procedure with a detailed evaluation of business ideas put forward by the business team that wishes to be housed in the incubator and receive its services. Following selection, the selected start-up receives various types of services including inter alia specialised counselling on a wide range of topics, including human resource issues and skills related advice/counselling.

Specifically, the Incubator offers a range of services to hosted start-ups, offered through dedicated mentors. Selected start-ups can benefit from different phases, all of which include some counselling and training component, namely:

- Phase A' Pre-incubation Program (duration: 3 weeks): start-ups receive full hosting services, coupled with extensive counselling and empowerment support.
- Phase B' Incubation Program (duration: 6 months): in this phase start-ups are supported inter alia by mentors and coaches and training for the development of their skills, particularly related to the development of marketing and business plans.

Topics covered by counselling include inter alia market analysis, accounting, business plan development, intellectual property rights, management of innovation, availability of and access to financial/funding tools

The initiative was established in 2014 as part of an EU funded project and supported by the municipality of Athens (in the context of the ERDF operational programme of the Attiki region). Currently, it is a self-financed initiative under the auspices of the Athens Chamber of Commerce and Industry and supported at various levels by the region of Attiki. Costs are fully covered by the initiative, so participation of start-ups is free of charge for them.

From a qualitative perspective, the initiative is relevant for start-ups, particularly for offering extensive counselling and mentoring on all types of topics related to the creation and development of enterprises (business/marketing plan, legal issues, human resource issues, etc.).

Drafted by: Marili Pariassaki

References:

<http://www.theathensincube.gr>

https://athensib.gr/images/EFD_FILES/2014/Entaxeis/465418_Apofash_Enta3hs.pdf

<http://www.theathensincube.gr>

Country	ES						
ID	ES_01						
Name in English	ES_01 Digital Enterprise						
Name in local language	<i>Enpresa Digitala</i>						
Year of implementation	Unclear (since early 2000s)						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X	X	X		
This regional initiative is promoted by the Basque Government within the framework of the Basque Country 2020 Digital Agenda and managed by SPRI (Basque Agency for Business Development). It facilitates small and medium-sized enterprises to apply new ICTs and digital tools within their organizations, with the aim of improving business competitiveness and providing their human resources with the necessary training to cope with the new digital economy, as well as contributing to the development of new businesses on the Net. The incentive has been running since early-2000s, with minor changes since its inception. To this end, "Enpresa Digitala" promotes several lines of actions (specifically, Digital Awareness, Digital Training and, finally, Digital Support) through an infrastructure of 4 support centres in the 3 Basque provinces, thus adapting digital tools to the specific competitive fabric of each area. Specifically on the Digital Training area, the initiative organizes courses, seminars and training/dissemination days carried out on a regular basis and addressing issues such as cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, Marketing Digital, Industry 4.0, Big Data, Creation and management of web pages, use of different computer programmes, time management or teleworking, among others. This latter element has been reinforced as a result of Covid-19, in the sense that some specific courses on teleworking have been recently organized. Due also to the Covid-19 crisis, all courses are currently provided via online. Enpresa Digitala is mainly aimed at SMEs that wish to address the application of new ICTs in their business processes, as well as at entrepreneurs whose business idea is based on the intensive and extensive use of the Internet. The participation in each training action is open to interested persons/SMEs, who have to pay between EUR 30-50 per participant (for courses that may last between 6-9 hours). Costs are therefore co-financed by participants and SPRI, who assumes 75-80% of total costs (independently of the profile of participants). The latest data available corresponds to 2018. In this year, SPRI organised more than 300 training activities and 9 700 people of SMEs participated in the different activities of the initiative. Approximately, and for 2020, the available budget within SPRI for digital-related training activities is of EUR 0.2 million. The Enpresa Digitala initiative can be regarded as a very important instrument within the digitalisation strategy of the Basque Country, in the sense that it provides key skills for those SMEs and entrepreneurs interested in digitalising their businesses. The supply of courses is annually updated and renewed in order to keep up with the latest trends and innovations in the ICT area that might be of interest for participants.							

Drafted by: Iñigo Isusi

References:

<https://www.spri.eus/euskadinnova/es/enpresa-digitala/index.aspx>
<https://www.spri.eus/euskadinnova/es/enpresa-digitala/enpresa-digitala/que-es/140.aspx>
<https://www.spri.eus/euskadinnova/es/enpresa-digitala/enpresa-digitala/134.aspx>

Country	ES						
ID	ES_02						
Name in English	ES_02 Digital Micro-Enterprise Training						
Name in local language	<i>Mikroenpresa Digitala Formación</i>						
Year of implementation	2004						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X				
“Mikroenpresa Digitala Formación” focuses on those self-employed and micro-enterprises (less than 10 workers) who want to improve their business competitiveness by applying new information and communication technologies (ICT) and digital tools in their businesses. Since its initial implementation in 2004, the initiative offers free basic courses of 2 hours with the aim of promoting digital skills amongst self-employed and micro-enterprises. Basically, the Initiative has not significantly changed since 2004, only the supply of courses offered (which are annually updated and changed in order to keep up with the latest relevant innovations). It is an initiative developed by the Basque Government in collaboration with SPRI (Basque Agency for Business Development) and EJIE (Basque Government Information Society) that covers training actions at a regional level. Among the activities developed, the following stand out: courses oriented towards e-commerce (online sales), the use and positioning through social networks (Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter), digital marketing (corporate blog, e-mailing, video marketing), tools to improve productivity (task and customer management, teamwork), telematic relations with the administration (e-administration) and, finally, cyber-security. In 2018, a total of 446 courses were held, with 2 662 participants. The budget available for 2020 amounts to EUR 200 000 (all covered by the Basque Government). From a qualitative basis, the Initiative “Mikroenpresa Digitala Formación” can be regarded as an important tool for promoting digital skills amongst self-employed and micro-enterprises, precisely the group less active in using these ICT and digital tools within their enterprises. The fact that the initiative is running since 2004 provides a good indication of its success and suitability for the Basque self-employed and microenterprises.							

Drafted by: Iñigo Isusi

References:

<https://www.spri.eus/euskadinnova/es/enpresa-digitala/mikroenpresa-digitala-formacion/648.aspx>
https://www.contratacion.euskadi.eus/w32-kpeperfi/es/contenidos/anuncio_contratacion/expjaso29333/es_doc/es_arch_expjaso29333.html?ruta=w32-kpeperfi/es/v79aWar/comunJSP/v79aSubmitBuscarAnuncioFiltro.do?origenSubHome=busquedaPersonalizada

Country	ES						
ID	ES_03						
Name in English	ES_03 Technology Workshops						
Name in local language	<i>Barnetegi Teknologiko</i>						
Year of implementation	2007						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X		X	X	X
The Basque Agency for Business Development (SPRI) and the Basque Department of Economic Development and Infrastructures collaborated to launch the Technology Workshops in 2007. Funding for this initiative comes from regional funds of the Basque Government. The initiative's main objective is to raise awareness and disseminate new technological trends among Basque SMEs in order to speed up their digital transformation. The contents of these Technology Workshops have been constantly updated according to the new and emerging ICT innovations available for companies. The initiative focuses on managers and high-rank individuals within their companies who can disseminate information within their organisations. It consists of short intensive seminars (up to seven hours) carried out in an isolated space (such as rural hotels) in one or two days, so participants may better use their time to understand the new technological trends/tools and their expected impacts on their organisations. These workshops follow the 'learning by doing' model of training participants on the selected subject using a hands-on approach. The work in group sessions (with expert advice) emphasises the subsequent promotion of the topic within their respective organisations. In 2020, the workshop topics related to data analysis - business intelligence, digital transformation, industry 4.0, cybersecurity, digital marketing, ICTs and personal productivity. Participants pay a fee for each workshop, which can vary from EUR 50 to 100 (depending on the accommodations for two-day sessions). Although the initiative has not been comprehensively evaluated, the most recent version (at the time of this research) organised 40 workshops with 475 participants, more than half of them women. The participants generally gave a very high evaluation (4.5 out of 5), which shows a very big satisfaction amongst participants. There are no data available on budgets. During the COVID-19 crisis, these workshops were cancelled.							

Drafted by: Iñigo Isusi

References:

<https://www.spri.eus/euskadinnova/es/enpresa-digitala/barnetegi-tecnologico/index.aspx>
<https://www.spri.eus/es/teics-comunicacion/aumenta-la-presencia-de-mujeres-en-el-programa-spri-barnetegi-tecnologico/>
<https://www.spri.eus/es/teics-comunicacion/arrancan-las-nuevas-convocatorias-de-barnetegis-teknologikos-2019/>

Country	ES						
ID	ES_04						
Name in English	ES_04 Support for the Forecast and Identification of Training Needs						
Name in local language	<i>Ayudas para la Prospección y Detección de Necesidades Formativas</i>						
Year of implementation	2016						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X					
In 2019, the Regional Government of Castilla-La Mancha renewed the annual call for financial aid to companies for the skill promotion of the regional employees. This incentive is funded and managed by the Regional government's Department of Economy, Enterprises and Employment. Specifically, three actions are subsidized: i) forecasting and identification of emerging training needs, ii) design, programming and dissemination of the existing training supply for employees in the region, and iii) advice to SMEs in order to facilitate and generalize training activities for their employees. The amount earmarked for financing the call amounts to EUR 2 million and each eligible action has its own individual credit. Maximum amounts to be subsidized are established: EUR 50 000 per project for the actions defined in sections i and ii, and EUR 350 000 per project for the actions specified in section iii. The beneficiaries of the aid are, indirectly, SMEs, in the sense that beneficiaries can be business and trade union regional organizations, regional organizations representing self-employed and the social economy employees, as well as other organisations that may represent the interests of regional SMEs and their employees. This initiative was first implemented in 2016 and since then it has been bi-annually renewed. In the last year for which information is available (2017), 24 training-related projects from different regional social agents were approved. The incentive can be regarded as relevant for the regional SMEs in general, since it helps representative organisations to develop several training-related activities for the regional SMEs that are aimed at a large number of them. Interestingly, a good indication of the interest of the measure lies on the fact that the incentive has been renewed on a bi-annual basis since 2016, and the last call refers to the period 2020-2021.							

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Country	ES						
ID	ES_05						
Name in English	ES_05 Support Programme to Technological and Innovative Entrepreneurship 2018-2020						
Name in local language	Programa de Apoyo al Emprendimiento Tecnológico e Innovador 2018-2020						
Year of implementation	2015						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X				
The programme aims to identify, attract and facilitate the set-up, acceleration and growth of new innovation/technology-based companies in the region of Castilla y León, whatever their maturation phase might be. Therefore, the programme is aimed at promoters of entrepreneurial ideas and projects with a technological and/or innovative base, at any stage of maturity (this is, entrepreneurs who have started or are considering starting a business activity and need support for the validation, start-up or growth of their project). The programme is financed with own resources by the Institute for Business Competitiveness of Castilla y León (ICE), which depends on the Council of Castilla y León, and it is managed by the four public Universities located in the region of Castilla y León (namely, University of Valladolid, University of Salamanca, University of Leon and, finally, University of Burgos (for instance, the Science Park Foundation of the University of Valladolid (PCUVa) manages the programme in the provinces of Valladolid, Segovia, Palencia and Soria). The programme has been developed within the Regional Strategy of Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Self-Employment 2016-2020. It has a budget of EUR 1.5 million for the period 2018-2020. The participants can benefit from several activities, structured around two main phases, this is Phase 1 (Business Idea incubator, for those companies still at an early stage) and Phase 2 (Project acceleration, for those companies that are sufficiently mature to start market activities or grow). Specifically for those companies in phase 2 (acceleration phase), the programme offers, among other services, specialized training given by outstanding professionals in different areas (legal, digital marketing, sales, business strategy and business plan, intellectual property, digital product design or new technologies (big data, JavaScript, html languages, etc)). These training activities are complemented with other services, including finance searching, Tech Days (encounters with well-established technological companies) or, finally, individual specialised consultancy activities aimed at defining the critical strategic aspects for each project. All these services are free of charge for participating companies. In the specific case of the province of Soria, and in accordance with the Economic and Demographic Revitalization Plan of this province, the programme also includes some specific activities focused on endogenous entrepreneurship, as well as several ad-hoc training-related activities in new technological skills (see description in next table). In the specific case of the PCUVa, up to 106 enterprises have been supported in the provinces of Valladolid, Segovia, Palencia and Soria, with more than 621 hours of training and more than 531 hours of individualised consultancy services. The programme can be regarded as successful, in the sense that it fulfils an important role in fostering new technology-based companies in a region characterised by a traditional manufacturing base.							

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Country	ES						
ID	ES_06						
Name in English	ES_06 Support Programme to Entrepreneurship in the province of Soria 2018-2020						
Name in local language	<i>Programa de Apoyo al Emprendimiento en la provincia de Soria 2018-2020</i>						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X				
This entrepreneurship support programme is financed with own resources by the Institute for Business Competitiveness of Castilla y León (ICE), which depends on the Council of Castilla y León, and it is managed by the Science Park Foundation of the University of Valladolid (PCUVa). It is part of the "Support Programme to Technological and Innovative Entrepreneurship 2018-2020", previously described, but focused solely on the province of Soria. The programme has been developed within the Regional Strategy of Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Self-Employment 2016-2020. Basically, the programme aims to identify, attract and facilitate the set-up, acceleration and growth of new innovation/technology-based companies in the province of Soria, whatever their maturation phase might be. Therefore, the programme is aimed at promoters of entrepreneurial ideas and projects with a technological and/or innovative base, at any stage of maturity (this is, entrepreneurs who have started or are considering starting a business activity and need support for the validation, start-up or growth of their project). Also, and in accordance with the Economic and Demographic Revitalization Plan of this province, the programme includes some specific activities focused on endogenous entrepreneurship (this is, sectors traditionally relevant within the provincial economy such as (agri-food sector, ecological production, natural forestry resources, metal-mechanics,...). In both cases, and in addition to other services, specific training activities are organized via free courses on different topics such as Digital Marketing, Industrial and Intellectual Property, Sales Strategy and Business Plan, ICTs, as well as specific workshops aimed at the agri-food industry and the wine sector (packaging, soil treatment, agronomic indexes, diseases ...). All these services are free of charge for participating companies. Finally, and also specific to Soria, the programme is developing several training-related activities. On the one hand, free ad-hoc training activities in new emerging technological tools (big data; GWO Basic Safety Training Onshore; VM Ware y Veeam Ware; QlikSense Developer, etc), for VET/university students as well as local companies. On the other hand, the programme foresees several studies to identify new skill needs in several sectors, including the strategy to cover these skill needs. The programme covers the period 2018-2020, therefore it is still running today [no evaluation study so far]. There is no specific information on budget and/or beneficiaries (see data for the whole programme for Castilla y Leon in previous table). Notwithstanding this, the programme can be regarded as successful, in the sense that it fulfils an important role in fostering new entrepreneurship and new companies in the province of Soria, characterised by an important economic and population decline in the last years.							

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Country	ES						
ID	ES_07						
Name in English	ES_07 SME of the Year Award						
Name in local language	<i>Premio Pyme del año</i>						
Year of implementation	2017						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
					X		
The Spanish Chamber of Commerce and Banco Santander, with the collaboration of the provincial Chambers of Commerce, organises the “SME of the Year” Award. Its aim is to reward the efforts and contribution made by small and medium-sized enterprises to their local/regional environments. In addition to the award, four runner-up prizes are awarded in four specific categories (Internationalisation, Innovation and Digitalisation, Training and Employment, and Responsible Business). These awards are granted first at the provincial level and then the winning enterprises compete for the national award. Participating enterprises must be SMEs, this is, they should have less than 250 employees and a turnover of less than EUR 50 million per year. The prize was initially implemented in 2017 and in its last edition (2019) a total of 1 449 companies participated, establishing a record number of candidates for the award, taking into account that in the 2018 edition there were 570 participating SMEs. This Prize is important, in the sense that it gives a lot of public projection to the winning companies, both at provincial and, eventually, at national level. The differentiation in four specific categories allows to highlight those companies who are particularly active in the employment and training domain, including a description of their practices in the domain.							

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<https://www.camara.es/premio-pyme-2019>

Country	ES						
ID	ES_08						
Name in English	ES_08 Support for innovative business groups (clusters) in the Autonomous Community of Galicia						
Name in local language	<i>Axudas ás agrupacións empresariais (clúster) innovadoras na Comunidade Autónoma de Galicia</i>						
Year of implementation	2013						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X					X	X
The Regional Government of Galicia, in collaboration with the Galician Institute for Economic Promotion (IGAPE), is promoting innovative business groups (clusters) in the Autonomous Community of Galicia. The purpose of this aid is to promote competitiveness, innovation and business cooperation in different sectors of economic activity in Galicia. Main clusters are grouped around key sectors in Galicia, including Car manufacturing, Biotechnology, Aquaculture, Textile, Shipbuilding, Wooden industry, Tourism, Health, Food processing or ICTs. Clusters must promote collaborative projects among sector companies in different domains, including R&D&I or internalisation projects as well as collaborative training projects aimed at improving workers and managers' skills in areas related to Industry 4.0, eco-industry, sectorial innovation challenges or digital transformation. These training areas have to be well aligned with the Galicia Industry 4.0 Competitiveness Agenda. The initiative is aimed at legal not-for-profit entities (clusters) that develop and manage cooperation projects of a cluster group composed by a significant share of regional companies belonging to each specific sector. Established Galician large and small and medium-sized companies are supported indirectly. The public support may cover 50% of the investment costs. The 2019 call is the third one, having organised two previous calls in 2013 and 2016. In the last edition, a total of 11 clusters were subsidized and the volume of aid reached EUR 1.9 million for the years 2019, 2020 and 2021. In 2016, the data were quite similar (11 clusters and EUR 1.6 million), but in 2013 the budget was significantly higher (EUR 3.8 million distributed among 12 clusters). Funding comes from regional own financial sources. No public evaluation of this incentive is available but it could be suggested that it is important: it supports the development of several key sectors within the regional economy of Galicia, fostering collaborative projects among companies in different domains (including human resources and skill development). The fact that the incentive has been renewed several times suggests the importance attributed to it.							

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Country	ES						
ID	ES_09						
Name in English	ES_09 Support to cluster organisations in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country						
Name in local language	Ayudas de apoyo a las organizaciones dinamizadoras de clústeres de la Comunidad Autónoma del País Vasco						
Year of implementation	2016						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X			X	X
The Cluster Programme, promoted by Basque government's Department of Economic Development seeks to support cluster organisations in the Basque Autonomous Community. The programme mainly develops the general competitiveness of SMEs and the Basque economy. Cluster organisations act as facilitators of cooperation between its member companies. A cluster's strategic plan identifies common challenges and promotes joint actions to improve the companies' competitiveness in areas such as internationalisation or technological and business innovation. The Basque government's incentives support those legal non-for-profit organisations that develop cooperative actions to promote the cluster. Eligible organisations must consist of at least 30 enterprises whose total turnover is at least 1% of the Basque GDP. Also, at least 60% of the participating enterprises in these eligible organisations must be SMEs. Therefore, the incentives indirectly benefit SMEs. In 2019 and 2020, the programme had a annual budget of EUR 2 968 000. Subsidised actions included internationalisation development, benchmarking actions and strategy planning, provision of advanced services, organisation and dissemination of conferences, meetings and (training) events/seminars, dynamization of forums, promoting and developing the cluster and communication (e.g., websites, newsletters), and technological innovation. The incentive subsidises up to 50% of the total costs of (training) events and seminars, with a limit of EUR 8 000 per year. Regional resources fund the budget. Existing Basque clusters cover the main existing productive sectors, including aerospace, food, automotive, bio-health, construction, audio-visual and digital content, energy, railway equipment, foundry (metal castings), habitat, wood, furniture, maritime industries, environment, paper, steelworks and equipment, advanced manufacturing, ICTs, transports and mobility and logistics. In Basque industrial policy, this programme has an important role in supporting and developing regional clusters. Recent evaluations show that firms belonging to the clusters have higher innovation, quality and internationalisation indicators than those enterprises in a control group not associated with the clusters.							

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Country	ES						
ID	ES_10						
Name in English	ES_10 Internationalisation support programme 2020						
Name in local language	<i>Programa apoyo a la Internacionalización 2020</i>						
Year of implementation	2013						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						
This initiative, launched by the Department of Economic Promotion of the Provincial Council of Bizkaia, aims to increase the access and presence of innovative Biscayan SMEs in international markets, supporting their export activities to new countries. To this end, the Provincial Council is promoting a series of economic aids aimed at companies in Biscay, with a workforce of between 3 and 100 people and belonging to certain productive sectors. The programme was first implemented in 2013 and since then it has been annually renewed. In 2020, it has a budget of EUR 2.5 million, with a maximum amount of EUR 60 000 per beneficiary enterprise. The subsidy percentage will be variable (up to 60%, depending on the score obtained by the project). Eligible expenses include, among other items, staff training expenses in internationalisation, with the possibility of enrolling in courses or seminars given by the Bilbao Chamber of Commerce or other official bodies with the aim of training and educating staff in subjects directly related to the company's internationalisation process (excluding language courses). The maximum eligible expenditure for training expenses will be EUR 3 000 per beneficiary enterprise. A total of 92 internationalisation projects have received the corresponding subsidy in the last year 2019 (one company can present up to 2 internationalisation projects in the same year). There are no public evaluations of the policy measure. Notwithstanding this, this policy initiative can be regarded as an important one within the provincial context of Bizkaia, in the sense that it facilitates an additional financial support to local companies involved in internationalisation activities. It is an open question whether companies would develop these activities with or without the programme (deadweight effect).							

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Country	ES						
ID	ES_11						
Name in English	ES_11 Programme to the Competitiveness of the Retail Sector						
Name in local language	<i>Programa de Apoyo a la Competitividad del Comercio Minorista</i>						
Year of implementation	2013						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X				
The Spanish Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism and the Spanish Chamber of Commerce, with the support of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), are running this programme. The programme was initiated in 2013, and it has been renewed on an annual basis since then. For 2019, the whole Programme has got a total budget of EUR 6 million (EUR 2 million provided by the Spanish Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism and the remaining 4 million from the Spanish Chamber of Commerce, whose funds come from the ERDF). A total of 38 000 Spanish retail businesses are expected to benefit from these funds in 2019. The main objective of this programme is the promotion of the Spanish retail trade sector. Specifically, the programme is structured around several actions, including the promotion of business innovation and adaptation to new commercial and consumer trends, the commercial revitalization of commercial areas and equipment, promotion of shopping tourism, the boosting of digitalization and e-commerce and, finally, the organisation of joint training sessions in different domains (organised by the Chamber of Commerce). Specifically in this last case, the joint training sessions cover different strategic issues for the sector, where these topics are updated according to the specific annual goals of the programme. In 2019, these training activities were focused on the digital transformation of the Spanish retailers, including topics such as Digital Customer, Electronic Commerce, Digital Marketing, Shopping Tourism or Sales Techniques. These training sessions are free for the business participants (basically SMEs and self-employed belonging to the retail sector). Since 2013, the year in which the programme began, the number of joint training sessions and participants has increased over the years. Thus, and whereas in 2013 around 125 training sessions were organised with 3 763 business participants, this figure has increased to around 550 to 600 training sessions and 11 000 to 11 500 businesses in 2018-2019. It is important to stress that these joint training sessions are held in the different Spanish regions, maximising therefore the geographical diffusion of the results. According to the latest available figure for 2017, a total of EUR 0.9 million were devoted for these joint training sessions. The activities of the programme are annually reviewed, where the different activities conducted are monitored, including the number of beneficiaries, their geographical location or the different supported activities (see for instance the monitoring report for 2018).							

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Country	FI						
ID	FI_01						
Name in English	FI_01 Training programmes for the management and key personnel of SMEs						
Name in local language	Yritysten kehittämispalvelut, Koulutus						
Year of implementation	2010						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X				
The national network of PES (Regional Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment) organises three types of training programmes for management and key personnel of SMEs. The training courses are available in all regions. Trainings are organised in three topics: managing growth, managing finance and productivity, and managing marketing and customerships. The development and piloting of these trainings begun in 2010 and they were introduced in full scale in their current form in 2012 (regulation 916/2012 and 1073/2012). The fundamental rationale for these trainings stems partly from economic (growth) and innovation policy and partly from labour market (employment) policy. The aim of these trainings is to increase the competences of SME key personnel to enable business development, growth and employment. The training consists of five 2-day team training sessions (typically one 2-day session per month, 10 days total, total duration approx. 6 months) plus 2 consulting days (one prior to the team training sessions, one after). The purpose of the training is to identify barriers and areas the SME should develop in view of its business objectives in one of the three topics areas of the trainings (growth, finance and productivity, marketing and customerships). Trainings are organised by the regional PES. Providers of the training courses (educational service providers e.g., educational institutions, consultants, etc.) are selected into a framework agreement through a national procurement process, and courses are organised based on demand from the SMEs. Costs are subsidised by the government (70%, de-minimis) and the remaining price per participant is EUR 1 470 (excl. VAT) (30%). Funding for these originates entirely from national government budget. The funds allocated to these trainings was EUR 3.262 million in 2018 (767 trainees), EUR 2.665 million in 2017 (582 trainees), and EUR 2.419 million in 2016 (672 trainees). The implementation of these trainings is monitored by using funding volumes and numbers of trainees, as well as surveys/questionnaires implemented by the PES. These trainings have been evaluated several times in 2012, 2013, 2016 and most recently in 2019. According to the 2019 evaluation, the biggest impact as perceived by the companies themselves was on increasing business, sales and marketing competences, productivity and turnover. Networking was also referred to as an additional benefit. The more negative comments were mostly related to the training being too generic (not enough tailored, not detailed or advanced enough) or the insufficient competence of the trainers.							

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Country	FI						
ID	FI_02						
Name in English	FI_02 Consulting services for SMEs						
Name in local language	Yritysten kehittämispalvelut, Konsultointi						
Year of implementation	2010						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					
The national network of PES (Regional Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment) offers support for SMEs (min. one full financial year and 1 employee) to use consultancy to facilitate business development. Consultancy is offered for: growth and renewal, finance and productivity, marketing and customerships, management and personnel, and commercialisation of innovations. The relevant one here is consultancy offered for management and personnel. It focuses on mapping and devising strategic plans for developing the quality of management, well-being at the workplace, and staff competences in view of the company's future goals. The development and piloting of these trainings begun in 2010 and they were introduced in full scale in their current form in 2012 (regulation 916/2012 and 1 073/2012). The fundamental rationale for these trainings stems from economic (growth) and innovation policy. The aim of these consultations is to identify and address key needs of SMEs to enable business development, innovation, and growth. The national network of PES manages a network of certified consultants, which the SME may choose from. SMEs have access to a database they can use for identifying and selecting the consultant. Consultancy is available in all regions. A precondition for this consultancy is that the SME has undergone an analysis of its current challenges and identified areas for further development. For this, they can use another service offered by the PES (Analysis, 1–2-day consultancy, de-minimis subsidised, standard price EUR 220 /day (excluding VAT), price during the COVID-19 crisis EUR 30 /day). The consultancy depends on the needs of the SME and is typically 2-5 consulting days. The SME can use this consultancy several times as long as the volume doesn't exceed 15 days over any 3-year period. Costs are subsidised by the government (70%, de-minimis) and the remaining price per participant is normally 300 EUR/day (excl. VAT) (30%), but during the COVID-19 crisis/restrictions it has been lowered to 30 EUR/day. Funding for these originates entirely from national government budget. The funds allocated to consulting was EUR 8.432 million in 2018 (1 883 assignments), EUR 6 231 million in 2017 (1 385 assignments), and EUR 5 135 million in 2016 (1 463 assignments). The implementation of these training is monitored by funding volumes and numbers of assignments, as well as surveys/questionnaires implemented by the PES. The consultancy has been evaluated several times in 2012, 2013, 2016 and most recently in 2019. According to the 2019 evaluation, the biggest impact perceived by the companies themselves was on increasing business, sales and marketing competences, productivity and turnover. The more negative comments were mostly related to the consultations being too limited (not enough time).							

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Country	FI						
ID	FI_03						
Name in English	FI_03 Joint purchase training						
Name in local language	Yhteishankintakoulutus						
Year of implementation	1991						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X	X	X		X	
Regulation 763/1990 made possible the joint purchase trainings first launched in 1991. During the 1990s and until 2008, the regulation's provisions had varying applications. After establishing regional PES (Regional Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment) and some adjustments to the payment shares at the end of the 2000s, in 2012 the government adopted the current system of the three types of training. The joint purchase trainings resulted from a policy to bring more flexibility into labour market trainings, make the trainings more oriented to companies' needs and encourage companies to contribute to costs. The SME and the local PES organised joint purchase training for three different purposes: (1) Targeted training for the existing staff, (2) Restructuring coaching for laid-off workers, and (3) Recruitment training to find new employees. In all of these, the local PES and the company jointly design the training funded by the local PES. Funds cannot support normal orientation and staff training or training which employers organise to comply with national training standards. (1) Targeted training involves vocational training tailored to the needs of an employer, which is typically an SME, but can also be a public sector organisation. It should help upgrade the skills of the existing workforce in organisations undergoing major changes or prevent redundancies and lay-offs (during or instead of temporary lay-offs). The SMEs and the government (through the local PES using active labour market policy funds) pay for these targeted trainings. The SMEs contribute 30–50% of the total price depending on the size, revenue or balance sheet of the company. (2) Restructuring coaching (also referred to as change training helping workers find new jobs or change careers when SMEs need to lay them off. The coaching lasts from 10 days up to a maximum of two years. Restructuring coaching helps SMEs comply with the legislation concerning employee protection during corporate restructuring that leads to lay-offs. The Government funds cover 80% of the costs of the restructuring coaching. (3) Recruitment training is a minimum of 10 days, but typically lasts three to nine months with courses tailored to SMEs needs. These training courses should close the gaps between the skills of current job seekers and those needed at the company. The local PES designs the service together with the company and then procures it. The company pays 70% of the training costs and government covers the rest. Public funding for joint purchase training was EUR 30.13 million in 2016 (total of 279 475 training days), EUR 23.94 million in 2017 (total of 346 964 training days), EUR 18.7 million in 2018 (total of 282258 training days) and EUR 20.62 million in 2019 (total of 254 059 training days). Employability serves as a main indicator in monitoring the training impact. The targeted trainings have the goal of all trainees maintaining their jobs. Restructuring coaching results in around 45% of trainees finding employment within three months after completing the training; this increases to close to 60% after 6 to 12 months. In recruitment training, 70-80% of trainees find employment after the training. PES have a dedicated system (OPAL) to collect feedback from both trainees and companies. The feedback survey focuses on the quality of the trainings, impact on skills development, and impact on employability. No formal evaluation has been made since 2012.							

The joint purchase trainings seem to address the needs they were originally designed for, even though not always fully reaching objectives on employability. These training activities support the trainee as well as SME ability to adapt to the changing skills needs of businesses and labour markets. The main criticism of these training activities relates to some of the requirements (such as minimum duration of 10 training days, minimum financial cost to companies) and to the administrative burden.

Drafted by: Jari Romanainen

References:

<https://www.suomi.fi/services/targeted-training-centre-for-economic-development-transport-and-the-environment/b5bec6c7-1661-42af-9034-4a58f10219d0>

<https://www.suomi.fi/services/restructuring-coaching-centre-for-economic-development-transport-and-the-environment/504cdb80-6216-44bc-848f-c86ef236f73a>

<https://www.suomi.fi/services/recruitment-training-centre-for-economic-development-transport-and-the-environment/cf2f0b1a-3014-4994-8e2a-ca2811f419e9>

Country	FI						
ID	FI_04						
Name in English	FI_04 Mapping and training of digital skills						
Name in local language	digiportaati						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X				

Digiportaati is a project partially funded from the ESF funds and initially planned to be operational between October 2018 and December 2020. The project has since been extended until the end of September 2021. It offers a cost-free mapping of the digital skills for the local SMEs, and training courses based on the identified skills gaps.

The project is based on the Etelä-Savo regional smart specialisation (RIS3) strategy, Etelä-Savo county development strategy and the national structural funds strategy. The purpose is to improve the understanding of digital skills and their importance among local SMEs and thereby to help them develop those skills and adopt and benefit from digitalisation. Mappings will also scope the needs of companies and support the development of trainings focusing on the specific needs of local companies.

The mapping is done with an expert and takes about 2 hours. The trainings are implemented in multiple formats and partly remotely.

The cost for SME is EUR 100 (excl. VAT) or EUR 300 (excl. VAT) per training course depending on turnover (below or above EUR 70 000). The rest is covered from the project funding.

One SME may send 1-2 people to participate in a training course.

The aim is to perform 300 mappings for at least 165 companies. More than 250 companies have already been mapped and participated in the related trainings by October 2020. The project has developed a network of digitalisation mentors as well as various digitalisation and related guidelines. The impact of the project is measured by the number of mappings, number of participating companies and number of trainees. Another approach to measuring the impact is an annual study on digitalisation among companies located in the region. This is based on the data collected through the mappings. Furthermore, the project collects feedback from trainings for quality purposes.

No evaluations of this on-going project have yet been conducted. The strengths of the project are easy access (local, low cost, limited time need), close support (local), and focus on an issue which is both necessary and at the same time may offer new opportunities. Downside is likely the limited duration of the project as well as the somewhat limited training offering. However, as an introductory scheme this is likely to significantly increase awareness, which companies can later translate into action using their own resources or other support schemes.

There are several other similar projects aimed at awareness raising and small-scale training courses for SMEs in areas like digitalisation, complying with new market requirement, internationalisation, etc.

Drafted by: Jari Romanainen

References:

<https://www.esavo.fi/maakuntastrategia> (Etelä-Savo county strategy)

http://strategia.esavo.fi/resources/public//Maakuntaliitto/Julkaisut/SE5111_Esavo_AES_strategia_NET.pdf (Etelä-Savo smart specialisation strategy)

https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/fi/atlas/programmes/2014-2020/finland/2014fi16m2op001 (national structural funds programme for 2014-2020)

<https://www.theseus.fi/handle/10024/267891> (latest annual digitalisation study from 2019, the one for 2020 is currently in preparation)

<https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/1qYFCXMppS4XpJuVKQx7?domain=digiportaati.fi>

Country	FI						
ID	FI_05						
Name in English	FI_05 Digibenefit						
Name in local language	Digihyöty						
Year of implementation	2020						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X				

TIEKE is an association dedicated to the development of a knowledge society. TTS is a private company providing training and development services to the companies focusing on productivity and work safety. TTL is the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, a government entity under the Ministry of Education and Culture. These institutions are implementing Digihyöty (Digibenefit) project. The Digihyöty project is implemented between March 2020 and August 2022, and it supports the upgrading of digital skills and adoption of digital solutions among SMEs. It targets both key personnel as well as all staff of the participating SMEs. It also aims to improve management and staff interaction related to design and adoption of digital solutions, and support networking between companies.

Company participation is estimated at 1-2 days per participating person, plus company internal implementation of related digitalisation developments. Participation cost varies between EUR 120 and EUR 880 depending on the size of the company.

The project is funded from European Social Funds by the Häme Regional Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment. The project's total budget is EUR 572 460 of which EUR 517 418 is funded from European Social Fund and the rest by the participating public organisations themselves.

The underlying rationale for the project lies in the wide range of national and sectoral policies and strategies emphasising the needs and opportunities of digitalisation.

The project is expected to result in a portfolio of tools tailored and tested to address the specific needs of micro-, small, and medium size companies, so that they can digitalise their business activities and better integrate into digital service and product value networks.

Monitoring of project results and impacts is based on the following indicators:

1. development of digital competences of the participating companies and staff
2. collaboration between companies and digitalisation experts
3. degree in which needs of the needs of different size MSMEs are being addressed
4. adoption of digital Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) among MSMEs
5. development of staff participation in digitalisation in companies
6. the impact of digitalisation (measured with indicators 1-5) on workloads, work processes and well-being in the workplace.

As the project was only recently launched and planned to continue until 2022, no formal evaluations are available at this time. As digitalisation of business processes among large number of Finnish SMEs is still limited, the relevance of this project is high. Emphasis on the impact of business process digitalisation on company staff can be expected to result in tools and applications, which can make digitalisation faster and more fluent in companies, and also help identify staff training needs and support staff learning.

Drafted by: Jari Romanainen

References: <https://www.eura2014.fi/rrtiepa/projekti.php?projektiikoodi=S21856> (detailed description of the project in the Finnish Structural Funds project databased, Finnish language)
<https://tem.fi/en/business-digitalisation-for-companies> (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment digitalization initiatives)
https://www.tts.fi/tutkimus_kehitys/hankkeet/t

Country	FI						
ID	FI_06						
Name in English	FI_06 Digital skills to entrepreneurship						
Name in local language	Digiosaajasta yrittäjyyteen						
Year of implementation	2021 (actual trainings)						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X				
Digital skills to entrepreneurship is a project operational between August 2020 and May 2022, with the actual trainings being offered during 2021. The project targets adult students and is planned to offer approx. 30 weeks of training focusing on five main topics: (1) Customer understanding, (2) Design Thinking, (3) Future Digital skills, (4) Globalisation and networking skills incl. import/export practices, and (5) personal profiling in the future labour markets, incl. entrepreneurship as a career option. The training will be implemented remotely using digital applications. Students for the training will be selected in collaboration between the 7 universities of applied sciences participating in the project and their local public employment authorities (TE-services). The rationale for the project is to support employment in the region, secure the demand for skilled labour among the local companies, address the local structural employment problem (available unemployed workforce, but without the digital skills needed by companies), and increase labour mobility and employability of those not currently in active labour markets, e.g., immigrants. The structural employment issues and the need to address them have been identified in various economic forecasts, situational reviews of the regional PES, concerns raised by industry and entrepreneurial associations, and the Ministry of Education and Culture foresight forum report "Osaaminen 2035". The project targets 100 adult students, who after completing the training will have better employment opportunities in the local labour markets as well as increased interest and better skills for establishing their own enterprise. The impact of the project is measured by (1) collecting feedback from the students about increased skills, improved employability, entrepreneurial intents, and career options; (2) collecting feedback from the local PES and municipalities about employability and entrepreneurial activities of the students, as well as how the training has improved the employment rate and alleviated the structural unemployment problem locally. The project total budget is EUR 500 000, and it is funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture from the European Structural Funds. Possible impacts are too early to assess as the project was very recently launched. It is likely to have a positive impact but is not possible to assess to what extent at this time. There are several other similar projects aimed at awareness raising and small-scale training courses for SMEs in areas like digitalisation, complying with new market requirement, internationalisation, etc.							

Drafted by: Jari Romanainen

References:

<https://www.xamk.fi/tutkimus-ja-kehitys/digiosaajasta-yrittajyyteen/>
<https://minedu.fi/en/-/erityisavustus-jatkuvan-oppimisen-ja-osaamisen-kehittamiseen>
<https://www.oph.fi/fi/tilastot-ja-julkaisut/julkaisut/osaaminen-2035>

Country	FI						
ID	FI_07						
Name in English	FI_07 Smart Automation						
Name in local language	Älykäs automaatio						
Year of implementation	2021						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X				
Smart Automation is a training programme targeted at engineers with BSc or MSc degree from University or University of Applied Sciences, or a person with similar skills and competences gained in working life or on-going engineering studies. The main objective of the project is upgrading of digital skills of engineers to allow local companies to invest in further digitalisation. The nominal training time for a full-time student is 1.5 years, but the training can last any time between 1-2 years depending on the student's prior skills and competences. The training will be tailored for each student and majority of it is organised remotely, allowing also part-time studies for employed engineers. The training is organised simultaneously in two regions – Lapland and Ostrobothnia – each offering the training for 25 students (i.e., 50 in total). The training is planned to begin early 2021 and last until end of 2022. Companies need to increasingly invest in digitalisation. In manufacturing and process industries the focus is on increasing automation and making it smarter e.g., by using robotics. The underlying rationale for the training programme is to offer engineers the possibility to upgrade their skills and competences so that companies can have the necessary skills and competences to make these investments. National industrial and innovation policies and strategies emphasise the need to encourage and facilitate digitalisation in all industrial sectors. The regional economy is characterised by manufacturing and process industries, which need to develop further skills and competences in order to make advancements in digitalisation. This training programme is supported by 14 large companies and SMEs active in the two regions. The training covers topics, such as automation, automation networks and systems, cyber security, smart instrumentation, cloud services, virtual deployment, robotics, programming, collaborative and mobile robotics, IoT and smart automation. The training includes practical implementation projects. The impact of this training will be measured by feedback from students and by monitoring their employment after the training. The project total budget is EUR 420 000, and it is funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture from the European Structural Funds. Possible impacts are too early to assess as the project was very recently launched. It is likely to have a positive impact, but it is not possible to assess to what extent at this time. There are several other similar projects aimed at awareness raising and small-scale training courses for SMEs in areas like digitalisation, complying with new market requirement, internationalisation, etc.							

Drafted by: Jari Romanainen

References:

<https://www.lapinamk.fi/fi/Hakijalle/AMK-tutkinnot/Insinoori,-alykas-automaatio-muuntokoulutus>
<https://opintopolku.fi/app/#!/korkeakoulu/1.2.246.562.17.14441236495>
<https://minedu.fi/en/-/erityisavustus-jatkuvan-oppimisen-ja-osaamisen-kehittamiseen>

Country	FR						
ID	FR_01						
Name in English	FR_01 Word-based training action (AFEST)						
Name in local language	<i>AFEST – Action de formation en situation de travail</i>						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X				
The initiative Workplace training actions¹ – <i>Action de formation en situation de travail AFEST</i> – is a novel instrument for both training based in the workplace and for funding such activities under the same conditions as traditional CVT courses in external centres. In 2014, a pilot project began that was confirmed by law in 2018. The instrument aims at simultaneously overcoming two challenges. First, training is often more effective and efficient when provided in the learners' workplace with pedagogical cases based on real challenges encountered when working. However, the training offered to MSMEs often does not have these approaches of workplace based CVT: they are an underdeveloped form of provision in France compared to Germany and Scandinavian countries (Duclos, 2021). Second, since the introduction of the training levy in 1971, French funding almost exclusively provides for class-room-based, standardised training, leaving little space for the workplace approaches. This mirrors a challenge found in many frameworks to fund training in enterprises, including MSMEs. AFEST defines a structure for eligible training projects, so that learning reflects the participant's current work situation. However, the learning project must allow for acquiring generic, transferable skills. This requires a fully developed pedagogical approach and must not merely be adapted to current needs of a workplace and daily work routine. AFEST has two sequences: First, the company prepares in advance a work situation for trainees. Second, the trainees and the trainer discuss what happened during the work situation and identify acquired skills. Preparation for AFEST requires a diagnosis (reasons to use AFEST for an employee or a group of employees), as well as a feasibility study to determine the skills to be developed, the approach to be followed or the selection and training of professionals to become AFEST trainers. Trainers experienced in the approach need to carefully develop the pedagogical design for the specific workplace. Each of the eleven sectoral Opérateur de compétences (OPCOs) implement AFEST. The OPCOs expand their portfolio of available training actions and maintain communities of CVET trainers with professional knowledge on how to support learning by using this approach. The evaluation of the pilot projects (2014-16) revealed the particular suitability of AFEST to the constraints of small and micro companies because it can fully adapt training to an organisation's needs and can fund learning processes typically considered informal or not in line with the eligibility criteria for public co-funding. However, because the learning situation is tailored to a small number of participants, costs per participants are high. Since 2018, AFEST has been regularly (co-)funded. The relevant OPCOs should fund the AFEST project foreseen in the development plan of companies with less than 50 employees. Employees can participate as part of their individual learning accounts. Researchers and policymakers have paid considerable attention to the initiative (OECD, 2021, p.145) because it can simultaneously address two key challenges of supporting training in MSMEs.							

¹ Translation taken from Duclos, 2021

However, as of 2020, no formal evaluation of full implementation of the AFEST has been available (Duclos, 2021).

Drafted by: Isabelle Recotillet

References:

<https://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/demarches-ressources-documentaires/documentation-et-publications-officielles/rapports/article/rapport-l-experimentation-relative-aux-actions-de-formation-en-situation-de>

Country	FR						
ID	FR_02						
Name in English	FR_02 Business offer to companies						
Name in local language	Pôle Emploi						
Year of implementation	2015						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					

In France, Pôle Emploi is in charge of the public employment services. It offers services to job seekers, to unemployed people and to companies. Regarding companies, Pôle Emploi has developed specific services to help companies, including SMEs, in the identification of their skills and recruitment needs. By supporting companies in the recruitment process and by offering training tailored to job seekers, Pôle emploi plays a significant role in terms of skill matching.

In this regard, Pôle Emploi has devoted resources to design special solutions to companies, including the development of dedicated tools to support companies in their recruitment process. In the case of SMEs, this support is provided by local agencies and the regional network of the PES counsellors, whereas very large enterprises are supported by the General Direction of Pôle Emploi. Particular attention is paid to economic sectors experiencing shortages. Partnership with professional branches (dealing with treatment of job offers, vocational training, identification of companies' needs) have been developed by Pôle Emploi. As part of these solutions, Pole Emploi has introduced the following innovations:

a) Introduction of the concept of skills since 2015 in the definition of job seekers profiles, with the objective of putting forward technical skills and soft skills. A huge work has been undertaken to classify the soft skills in a national classification, involving professional branches and skills operators (OPCO).

b) Development of a simulation-based recruitment method, intended at verifying the validation of the skills that job seekers declare to hold in order to facilitate the recruitment. In case some skills are missing, a short vocational training period is organised by Pôle Emploi to prepare the job seeker to get the job.

c) At local level, the network of local counsellors in local PES agencies has been revised: two categories of counsellors have been created in 2015, one devoted to job seekers and the other one to companies. The support of SMEs is done via counsellors in local agencies via different activities such as definition of a job profile/job offer/training needs. Once a job seeker is being recruited, the action of Pôle Emploi is finished.

An evaluation has been conducted on these innovations. However, this report containing the findings of the evaluation is not available to people outside Pôle Emploi. The evaluation shows limited added-value resulting from targeting SMEs in their recruitment process.

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References:

<https://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/emploi/tpe-pme/gerer-mes-ressources-humaines/prestation-conseils-rh>

Country	FR						
ID	FR_03						
Name in English	FR_03 Counselling for SMEs						
Name in local language	<i>Conseil en ressources humaines auprès des TPE-PME</i>						
Year of implementation	2016						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					
The national Plan “Tout pour l’emploi dans les TPE-PME” (“Everything for the Employment in MSMEs” in English) was launched the 9th of June 2015 with the main objective to sustain employment, develop economic activity, foster entrepreneurship and reduce administrative formalities for SMEs. One of the instruments of this national Plan is the “Conseil en ressources humaines auprès des TPE-PME” (“Counselling in human resources for MSMEs” in English). It was implemented since the 1st of January 2016 by the Regional Directorate for Enterprise, Competition, Consumption, Labour and Employment (Direccte). A total budget of EUR 10 million was allocated to the instrument. The innovation relies on the individualisation of the support, by identifying the human resources needs of the companies. In many SMEs, the issue of human resources management does not receive appropriate time allocation nor budget; Also, in many small companies, the management of human resources is conducted by the manager/owner himself, who often has limited knowledge on the issue. An individualized support is seen as a powerful tool to foster economic development of the company and a way to secure path for employees. Eligible companies are companies with less than 300 employees, which are not member of any large group and who do not have a human resources department. The duration of the support is variable and adapted to the constraints that the individual companies face. The individual support can be short (from 1 to 10 days) or long (10 to 20 days) over 12 months. The number of days is determined by the provider. No public evaluations of the measure are available.							

Drafted by: Isabelle Recotillet

References:

https://www.constructys.fr/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Constructys_convaincus_BD_1710_VF.pdf

https://www.constructys.fr/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/La-Formation-Comportements-attentes-et-impacts-dans-le-BTP_web.pdf

Country	FR						
ID	FR_04						
Name in English	FR_04 Plan Micro Enterprises Competences GoalNA Plan						
Name in local language	Plan TPE Objectif Compétences						
Year of implementation	2015						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X		X			X

Constructys is the Skills Operator (OPCO) in the construction sector. Generally speaking, one of the main objectives of OPCOs is to support MSMEs in human resources management, including re-skilling of employees. The network of counsellors of OPCOs support SMEs by counselling and diagnosing their HRD policies, including training needs.

In the construction sector, 98% of the companies are less than 20 employees, where adult learning is mostly informal and recruitment issues are important. In 2015, a sectoral Plan for Skills development called “Plan TPE Objectif Compétences” was launched by Constructys for companies with less than 11 employees for a total of EUR 30 million.

The core of the Plan was to intervene within individual micro companies on a two-step process:

- Step 1 is based on the elaboration of an individualised diagnosis to each company
- Step 2 relates to the provision of individual support to the elaboration of a training plan and its implementation, including the search for funding and the fulfilment of any required administrative activities for this purpose.

A counsellor contributes to the definition of the training plan of each individual micro company and assists these micro companies in managing training funds and fulfilling administrative formalities, including also the provision of advice to managers on opportunities for training.

The main innovation of this plan is the provision of an individualised support provided by counsellors from Constructys to help Micro enterprises to define and implement a global strategic skill plan including formal or non-formal training. Activities are free of charge for participant microenterprises.

An analysis of the “Plan TPE Objectif Compétences” was carried out by an independent researcher. Findings were published in 2018 and 2019. The report demonstrates that adult learning should be adapted to the objectives of the company to be fully effective. In particular, it illustrates the prominent role of managers of the companies, of the management approach (collective or individual), and how adult learning is perceived (a risk, a cost, a leverage). This opens the door to renewed approach to adult learning development in small companies.

Drafted by: Isabelle Recotillet

References:

[https://www.constructys.fr/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Constructys_convaincus_BD_1710_VF.pdf]

[https://www.constructys.fr/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/La-Formation-Comportements-attentes-et-impacts-dans-le-BTP_web.pdf]

Country	FR						
ID	FR_05						
Name in English	FR_05 AGEFOS SME						
Name in local language	AGEFOS PME						
Year of implementation	2014						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X			X		
Supporting small and micro enterprises in their skill development policies is a key objective of the national and regional Operational Programme “Employment and inclusion” of the European Social Fund over the period 2014-2020. The eligible interventions aim at increasing employee and manager awareness regarding adaptability and skills development, particularly when micro and small companies face strategic changes. Practically, enterprises benefit from support from a dedicated counselling provider (as the the local branches of the AGEFOS SME), including human resources support and operational support. At regional level, interventions are supported by the Regional directorate for enterprise, competition, consumption, labour and employment (Direccte). This allows the emergence of regional/sectoral plans frequently managed by OPCO. An illustration of this is given by the intervention of AGEFOS PME in the Region Rhône-Alpes. AGEPOS PME is the skill operator (OPCO) for SMEs. The main innovation and strength of the instrument is to gauge the companies’ training needs in order to offer individualised support. The objective is to propose adapted (individual or collective) training actions for skill development in the companies, in order to improve the employability of the employees. As it can be seen, the provision of training action is not included in the incentive. AGEFOS PME targets activity sectors not covered by the Regional directorate for enterprise, competition, consumption, labour and employment (Direccte). The duration of training actions is adapted to the small companies who generally declare a lack of time for the training of their employees.							

Drafted by: Isabelle Recotillet

References:

Interview with project manager Ingela Håkansson, 17 November 2020
 Framtidskompetens i Blekinge (2020): En kort sammanfattning av FIB inför workshop för implementering 2020-09-08. (A short summary on the project for the implementation Workshop on 8 Septemb

Country	FR						
ID	FR_06						
Name in English	FR_06 INNOVATION AWARDS						
Name in local language	INNOV'TROPHEES						
Year of implementation	2017						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
					X		
The innovation Awards were launched in 2017 by the FPSPP (Fonds paritaire de sécurisation des parcours professionnels, a bipartite body supporting lifelong learning for French employees), the COPANEF (replaced by France Compétences in 2018) and Centre Inffo (an organisation in charge of developing information on training development, laws, reforms...). The first awards were attributed in January 2018. The main goal of this Award is to reward innovation in training. In 2018, <i>Innov'Trophées</i> awarded five winners for innovative actions belonging to five categories: • Actions supported by training providers, • Actions supported by companies, • Actions to support individuals in their training paths, • Pedagogical actions, • European actions. So far, the awards have been given on an annual basis. There has been no evaluation studies of the framework available. To give an example, one of awarded actions was supported by the Erasmus Agency and aimed at training workers in the construction sector to energy transition (https://agence.erasmusplus.fr/projets/former-les-professionnels-du-batiment-a-lefficacite-energetique/). The main objective was to upward the level of qualification of construction workers by elaborating a European certification for technicians ("Certification européenne de technicien de la performance énergétique du bâtiment" – "Buildings energetic performance technician European certification, TEPEB). The training programme was established over three years (2014-2017) and gathered several European partners (Spain, France, Turkey). The number of beneficiaries is not displayed in official documents.							

Drafted by: Isabelle Recotillet

References:

<https://www.fpspp.org/innovation/innovtrophees/>

Country	FR						
ID	FR_07						
Name in English	FR_07 U-Spring Award						
Name in local language	<i>Trophée U-Spring</i>						
Year of implementation	2016						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
					X		
The U-Spring Award supports French companies with innovations promoting employment, trades and skills. This initiative is supported by BPI-Group, a private company which supports enterprises in their human resources development practices. In April 2016, 550 human resources managers, training managers, learning and development managers, as well as Ministry representatives met to present and explore the best training and learning practices in order to foster skills development. Fifteen companies received the first U-Spring Awards. The U-Spring Award project has been repeated yearly and the last one has been held on October 2020. This award primarily seeks to sustain and publicly recognise instruments that improve competitiveness through employability. It targets pedagogical, technological and organisational actions. U-spring Award produces shared knowledge around innovative actions dedicated to training, human resources development and employment. It also supports the public image of awarded companies.							

Drafted by: Isabelle Recotillet

References:

<https://www.u-spring.com/content/trophees>

Country	FR						
ID	FR_08						
Name in English	FR_08 FIT Integrated Training at Work						
Name in local language	<i>Formation intégrée au travail (FIT)</i>						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
					X		
					Provision (on-site or external) to the employees of one organisation		
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X		X				
FIT is an innovative action introduced in 2018 in the construction sector by Constructys (the skill operator of the construction sector) in the Hauts-de-France Region. The project is funded by the French government, the European Social Fund and ADEME (Agence de la transition écologique – Public agency dedicated to ecological transition). The initiative primarily seeks to improve the access to training for construction workers by bringing training directly to building sites and therefore overcoming typical barriers (lack of time, time limits). The aim is also to increase the skill levels of low-qualified workers within the construction sector. The construction projects selected as suitable for being a site of learning involve various activities following an environmental agenda. Workers involved learn about the general foundations of sustainable, low energy construction and renovation in class-room session (delivered on site, e.g. in specifically prepared containers) and acquire practical and tacit knowledge by implementing related project work together with experienced team members ². The theoretical and practical curricula are typically broken down into short units (4 to 7 hours), with a total amount of tuition of 10 days, however, arrangements are flexible and adjusted to the needs for a specific sites/the participating employees. Learning units are provided by vocational teachers, experts or practitioners of the construction sector. By the time of this research, 29 building sites have experienced the FIT action, of which 11 have ended. Overall, 192 workers have been trained in 69 companies.							

Drafted by: Isabelle Recotillet

References:

<https://www.constructys.fr/constructys-hauts-de-france/actualites-regionales/formation-integree-travail-fit/>

² As one example for a construction site turned into a learning site, see [Spotlight on Integrated Work Training \(FIT 2.0\) | CREFAB - Regional Training Centre for Craft Enterprises in the Building and Public Works sector](#)

Country	HR						
ID	HR_01						
Name in English	HR_01 Counselling for SMEs						
Name in local language	Savjetovanje za poslodavce						
Year of implementation	1995						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					

The Croatian Employment Service (CES) offers counselling services to companies, including SMEs, in the following areas linked to CES services: information about the measures for education and training of employees, information about the measures for employment, support in finding a suitable employee, support in finding a suitable employee including a selection process, opportunity to arrange a meeting with the CES counsellor. The service is accessible in all CES regional branches (22 branches) and their local offices. The scheme was first implemented in 1995 and is financed from national means. The Croatian Employment Service Statute defines list of activities in a framework describing the CES mandate. The CES mandate proceeds from the Croatian Labour Market Law.

The service is offered to SMEs who are expanding their business and are in a need for new employees, as well as SMEs which are restructuring and companies which need to lay off some employees. The service is offered in the CES premises as well as in the format of "CES mobile teams" which visit the companies and provide counselling to SMEs and employees. It is also possible to send an online request to national CES office which will then redistribute the request to regional branches, in cases when needed.

In case of employees who will most probably lose their job, CES will provide counselling and offer them re-training, re-qualification or any other form of education and training that could increase their potential for new employment.

In 2019, CES mobile teams offered counselling to 24 companies and their 1 747 employees. Companies targeted were those in restructuring and companies forced to lay off more workers. In 2018, CES mobile teams offered counselling to 21 companies and their 208 employees. Companies targeted were those in restructuring and companies forced to lay off more workers. In 2017, significant attention has been paid to start-up entrepreneurs through counselling, providing support through self-employment support and post-start-up counselling to prevent leaving an entrepreneurial venture early. During 2017, employment counsellors visited 1 529 start-up entrepreneurs and provided counselling and support. In 2017, mobile team advisors in 27 companies conducted individual counselling and group information for 419 workers. The CES received 40 notifications from employers about the collective redundancy of workers, which included 3 581 workers.

[CES does not conduct evaluation of its activities and it is not clear how the CES collects internal data and whether they can be verified. The CES is mainly focused on statistical data related to employment and unemployment and this data is made public and available on the CES website. Other types of data are very limited and only some can be found in yearly reports – yearbooks.]

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References:

CES official website; Services for employers: <https://www.hzz.hr/usluge-poslodavci-posloprimci/#tab-poslodavci>

Croatian Employment Service Statue (2020), Official Gazette 18/20, https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2020_02_18_471.html

CES Yearbook 2019 (2020) <https://www.hzz.hr/content/stats/HZZ-Godisnjak-2019-v2.pdf>

CES Yearbook 2018 (2019) <https://www.hzz.hr/content/stats/Godisnjak-2018-HZZ.pdf> CES Yearbook 2017 (2018) https://www.hzz.hr/UserDocImages/HZZ_Godisnjak_2017.pdf

Country	HR						
ID	HR_03						
Name in English	HR_03 Recommendations on educational enrolment and scholarships						
Name in local language	<i>Recommendations on educational enrolment and scholarships</i>						
Year of implementation	2010						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
					X		
From 2010, onward, the Croatian Employment Service (CES) conducts analysis funded from a national budget of the labour market trends and performs forecasting of the labour market needs for certain occupations. The analysis and forecast of the labour market needs for individual occupations are conducted on the basis of available statistical data and relative indicators on employment of unemployed persons according to the educational programme they completed, data on the lack of workers for individual occupations obtained by the employer survey, and qualitative impressions of counsellors gained through employment mediation experience. In addition, the strategies and plans for economic and sectoral development at national, regional and local level are taken into account. Based on the projected position of certain vocations on the labour market, recommendations are made regarding the need for the increase or decrease in the number of students enrolled in certain educational programmes. Analyses, forecasts and recommendations are made at the level of local labour markets as determined by the regional and regional offices of the CES. The recommendations, which are qualitative in nature, apply also to scholarships for secondary and higher education students. As described by CES, "the changes in educational enrolment and scholarship policies based on the recommendations of the CES will contribute to harmonizing education with labour market needs, i.e. reducing the structural mismatch between labour supply and labour demand, which is one of the main long-term problems of the Croatian labour market". Recommendations are provided per county and per educational level. The information provided can be used by policy makers for development of educational and scholarship policies which directly influences the potential for available labour workforce for SMEs. The scholarship policy enables crafts and SMEs to award scholarships to students of different educational profiles which, after the study period is finished, can be employed directly by the employer awarding the scholarship. This enables the potential employer to invest in and educate the student for the particular needs of the SME. There is no available information regarding the indicators. [There is no evaluation to what extent the CES recommendations are taken into account from the side of the Ministry of Science and Education when developing enrolment quota. The CES does not receive the feedback from the Ministry.]							

Drafted by: Marija Pavkov

References:

https://www.hzz.hr/content/publikacije-skole/2020/hzz_preporuke_obrazovna_i_upisna_politika_stipendiranja_2020.pdf
Publication: Recommendations for Educational Enrolment and Scholarship Policy (Preporuke za obrazovnu upisnu politiku i politiku stipendiranja), 2019

Country	HR						
ID	HR_04						
Name in English	HR_04 Certificate Employer Partner						
Name in local language	<i>Certifikat Poslodavac partner</i>						
Year of implementation	2005						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
					X		

The Employer Partner Certificate project was initiated by SELECTIO (private company), in 2005, with the support of their partners. It aims to recognise and promote organisations focused on quality human resources management which is reflected in employer-employee partnership relationship and the ability of employers to impose themselves as employers of choice to best employees.

The project's mission is to raise larger public awareness of the human resources management (HRM) importance; promote the importance of quality HRM in business and other organizations, and concurrently reward the best among them; promote HRM departments/function; and upgrade HRM processes and increase HRM standards. The overall approach can be used as a tool for evaluation, design and implementation of HRM processes.

The Certificate is awarded for a duration of 12 months to organizations of any size that comply with the HRM quality standards. The Certificate also allows employers to show how successful they are and to substantiate their appeal to best employees available on the labour market. The re-certification is conducted on yearly bases. Companies finance the human resources management audit in which HR practices are mapped and analysed according to the defined Certificate award standards.

The Certificate is awarded based on the Book of Standards and assessment of 45 HRM processes in five main areas: strategy, recruitment and selection, performance management, training and development, and employee relations. In the area of training and development, the following aspects are assessed: analysis and identification of educational needs, educational plan development and implementation, training performance assessment, training availability and diversity, information on annual employee training investment, promotion of knowledge sharing and competency development culture, and talent management. The Book of Standards is revised every four years and the latest amendments have been made in 2016 and 2020 (ongoing). There are several evaluations of the project done on a yearly and bi-annual basis listed below:

a) Bi-annually (last one in 2018) – research on the opinion of job seekers through SELECTIO candidate database. It is researched whether the job seekers are aware of the existence of the Certificate and to what extent the Certificate is an important aspect when looking for an employment. 95% respondents stated that they would select a company with the Certificate compared to the company without the Certificate. Certificate holders are perceived more professional, fair and offering better career development opportunities.

b) Bi-annually (last one in 2018) - research on the behaviour of job seekers through the job advertising online portal MojPosao.hr, a partner company of SELECTIO. It is researched whether job adds with Certificate Employer Partner logo receive more applications compared to other job adds. There is a 35% higher response rate to job advertisements publicized by companies owning the Certificate.

c) Yearly: participating companies are assessing the extent to which the job seekers participating in job interviews for a job position in that particular company, state that the fact that the company owns a Certificate is important to them. 90% of job seekers participating in job interviews state that the Certificate is relevant to them and influences their decision making regarding the job application.

Currently (in 2020), there are 59 companies certified.

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References: <https://www.poslodavacpartner.org/en>

Country	HR						
ID	HR_05						
Name in English	HR_05 ZICER (Zagreb Innovation Centre), Startup Factory						
Name in local language	<i>Zagrebacki inovacijski centar, Startup Factory</i>						
Year of implementation	2016						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X				
Established in 2016, the Startup Factory is the first publicly funded pre-accelerator programme in Croatia at city level (Zagreb city) and beyond, that includes intensive training. This comes as eight programme modules and support from top mentors for teams and start-ups younger than 12 months that are developing high-tech solutions and consist of 3 to 5 (at least 18-year-old) members with complementary skills. In addition, the Startup Factory also provides Zagreb Innovation Centre's (ZICER's) infrastructure, promotional support, and networking. The programme was successfully completed by 56 teams across four generations. Over four years (2016-2019) over a total of 22 top team winners (entrepreneurs) and 203 team members were allocated over HRK 3 million (EUR 396 615) for their innovative development. The main recommended areas of innovation are: health and quality of life, energy and environmental sustainability, transportation and mobility, safety, food and bioeconomics, education, robotics, fintech, tourism and data and artificial intelligence. More than 134 workshops were held, 137 trainers and 116 mentors were engaged. The topics entrepreneurs could learn from: Design Thinking/Ideate and Validate, Customer Journey Map, Business Development, Finance and Legal, Branding & Marketing Strategy, Pitch Training Intensive. The training topics are offered to start-ups irrespective of their field of innovation because the topics offered are of a general nature. The knowledge acquired through the trainings could be supportive for the learners in developing their business in general. Areas in which entrepreneurs could receive counselling in the form of guidance for the development of skills and competences for the development of competitiveness/innovation: Taxes, Product development, Company development, Pitch improvement (text, topics, performance, speech, body language, etc.), Marketing/LinkedIn, Business consulting (strategy, marketing, business model, business development, business analysis and planning), ICT product development, IT system architecture, Grants & funding, Financing, Venture Capital, Fintech, cybersecurity, Business and financial modelling, User experience, Design thinking, sales; IBM free technology for start-ups, Start-up development, Taxes, Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, Risk analysis, Big data analysis, Law, Marketing and branding for start-ups, How to Make Sales in a B2B Business Model, Product/service positioning and market research. Participation in workshops and trainings, mentoring, and counselling are free of charge. In 2020, there are 37 active start-up companies after completing the Startup Factory Programme. This is an indicator that the support provided (financial and non-financial) has equipped the start-ups with the knowledge and equipment needed to develop innovative products and to broaden the business to the new markets.							

Drafted by: Marija Pavkov

References:

ZICER (2018) Poslovno izvjesce (ZICER Business Report 2018), <https://www.zicer.hr/content/download/7498/105024>
ZICER (2017) Poslovno izvjesce (ZICER Business Report 2017), <https://www.zicer.hr/content/download/6834/92066>
RAZA – Development Agency Zagreb (2016) Poslovno izvjesce (RAZA Business Report 2016), <https://www.zicer.hr/content/download/5408/55016>

Country	HR						
ID	HR_06						
Name in English	HR_06 Zagreb Innovation Centre (ZICER) – training and mentoring / counselling for start-ups						
Name in local language	Zagreb Innovation Centre (ZICER) – training and mentoring / counselling for start-ups						
Year of implementation	2016						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					
At different stages of company development (start-up incubation, post-incubation, acceleration), there is a need for specific training and mentoring/consulting to address specific development problems. These are the most common dilemmas or problems related to the way on how to enter certain foreign markets, the introduction of quality management systems, the possibility of finding alternative sources of financing, ways and forms of protection of industrial property, etc. Experts providing this type of assistance are entrepreneurs with personal experience in dealing with this type of problems. Education, mentoring/consulting services for entrepreneurs are an integral part of the pre-incubation, incubation and accelerator programs at Zagreb Innovation Centre (ZICER), established in 2016. The project is financed from the regional budget of Zagreb, capital city of Croatia and one of the 21 regions in Croatia. The costs of the project are fully covered, and the trainings and mentoring are free of charge for the start-ups. The trainings are offered to start-ups depending on particular needs of their development phase: start-up incubation phase, post-incubation or acceleration phase. Trainings are offered in parallel to mentoring services and therefore complement each other. The topics in which the entrepreneurs had the opportunity to be trained and mentored are as follows: Project management; Small Business Leadership; Preparation of tender documentation for applying for EU funds; How to make a good pitch; How to Sell a Service; Branding and positioning of products or services in the market; Negotiating with difficult negotiators; Presentation skills with business English; Successful sales formula; Digital marketing; Using social networks in business; Development of a marketing plan; Marketing communication; Successful bargaining strategies and tactics; GDPR; How to make a product visible; Development of project idea and Application of projects to EU funds; VAT EU; Gamification in business processes. In 2019, there were 26 mentors in the database; 13 mentorship engagements and 60 mentoring hours were realised. In 2018, there were 28 mentors in the database; 151 mentorship engagements and 230 mentoring hours were realised. In 2017, there were 50 mentors in the database; 39 mentorship engagements and 312 mentoring hours were realised. In 2016, there were 26 mentors in the database; 25 mentorship engagements and 120 mentoring hours were realised. Evaluation of the overall activity has not been undertaken. [Training and mentoring participants are positive in regard to receiving the free support they needed; it is evident that they have improved their skills and competences in different areas since the start-ups continued their work and operationalisation even after the support ended. There is a high level of interest for participation in free programmes, in particular because the trainings and mentoring offered cover business-related aspects and legal aspects that are very much needed for further start-up development. Majority of start-ups mainly possess specific professional knowledge.]							

Drafted by: Marija Pavkov

References:

ZICER (2018) Poslovno izvješće (ZICER Business Report 2018), <https://www.zicer.hr/content/download/7498/105024>
ZICER (2017) Poslovno izvješće (ZICER Business Report 2017), <https://www.zicer.hr/content/download/6834/92066>

RAZA – Development Agency Zagreb (2016) Poslovno izvješće (RAZA Business Report 2016),
<https://www.zicer.hr/content/download/5408/55016>

Country	HR						
ID	HR_07						
Name in English	HR_07 Aid to preserve jobs in the textile, clothing, footwear, leather and wood sectors						
Name in local language	Potpore za očuvanje radnih mjesta u sektoru proizvodnje tekstila, odjeće, obuće, kože i drva						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						
The measure was introduced in 2018 and is implemented by Croatian Employment Service as one of the measures within the Active Employment Policy Measures programme. The measure is focused on retaining jobs at employers in the manufacturing industry, most commonly in the textile, clothing, footwear, leather and wood sectors, which have difficulty in business because of the reduced competitiveness caused by technological changes in business processes and the relocation of production to countries and regions with extremely low labour costs, insufficient investments in technology and innovation, and their commercialisation with a non-competitive workforce. Eligible employers who can apply for the measures need to be active in manufacturing sector, in particular in textile, clothing, footwear, leather and wood sectors or have to have a surplus of workers due to the an increase in the labour cost of non-competitive workers which is conditioned by an increase in the minimum wage and / or an increase in the labour cost of non-competitive workers directly related to manufacturing jobs that cannot achieve the prescribed standards and have a reported financial loss. Further eligible employers are those in the manufacturing industry who have or will experience a temporary decline in business activities and / or a financial loss in business activity directly related to manufacturing jobs, thereby detecting a potential surplus in the number of workers who are at risk of losing their jobs. Eligible target groups are employees over 54 years of age employed in the manufacturing industry in the eligible sector for the indefinite period of time (directly related to manufacturing jobs); employees with lower level of education (basic education, ISCED 1); employees with lower secondary education (ISCED2) and unfinished elementary school employed in the manufacturing sector in the eligible sectors and for an indefinite period of time (directly related to manufacturing jobs); employees with secondary vocational education (ISCED 3) employed in the manufacturing industry in the eligible sector and on part-time bases (directly related to manufacturing jobs). The employer is paid a subsidy of 50% of the minimum wage plus contributions to the wage base of HRK 2 366 HRK (EUR 318) for 2020. There is a possibility of implementing training and retraining programmes for workers covered by the Job Preservation Program (measure Aid to preserve jobs listed in CEDEFOP 2015 database) with 100% funding of the cost of education/training. In 2018, one person and in 2019, 2 466 persons participated in this support scheme. Evaluation of the overall activity has not been undertaken. [In general, CES does not conduct evaluation of its activities and measures and in particular the new measures. However, from the data available it can be seen that the first year of the implementation did not achieve significant results. After the measure was extensively promoted both in 2018 and 2019, this resulted in higher number of persons involved in 2019.]							

Drafted by: Marija Pavkov

References:

CES Yearbook 2019 (2020) <https://www.hzz.hr/content/stats/HZZ-Godisnjak-2019-v2.pdf>
CES Yearbook 2018 (2019) <https://www.hzz.hr/content/stats/Godisnjak-2018-HZZ.pdf>

Country	HR						
ID	HR_08						
Name in English	HR_08 Business Incubator PISMO – Digital Innovation Hub						
Name in local language	<i>Poduzetnički inkubator PISMO – digitalni inovacijski centar</i>						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X	X				
PISMO, established in 2019, is the first digital innovation centre located in Sisak-Moslavina County, established with the aim of enabling easier and more successful transition from traditional to modern industries, by providing services to companies wishing to adopt digital technologies in a predominantly traditional industrial region. The rationale of the project is to be found in the history of industry sectors present in Sisak-Moslavina County (metallurgy and metal processing industry) that have reduced their activity in the last decades. There is a need to upskill and train the existing employees with skills and competences relevant for the future (e.g., gaming industry). PISMO will focus on a great number of SMEs in the field of metal processing and production of smaller finisher products. These SMEs have their most valuable asset in skilled workforce emerged from large collapsed companies, but what they lack are modern technologies, innovations and access to global market. The goal is to create a strong partnership based on trust with a focus on job creation and strengthening the economy of Sisak-Moslavina County and Croatia. DIH PISMO mission is to create working environment for digital transformation, metal processing and gaming industry by offering education, mentoring, facilities, and networking services. PISMO operates as part of the Sisak-Moslavina County Development Agency (SIMORA) with the main goal of supporting job creation. The main activity of PISMO is the construction of smart skills - improving the existing and creating a new workforce for smart specialization. The PISMO also focuses on the provision of services in the metal processing sector, and the metal products industry (excluding machinery and equipment). Through DIH PISMO It is expected to achieve following outcomes: students certified (e.g., Unity) – at least 50% of participants, new games launched (3 per year), increased revenues of existing companies, new jobs created (20 per year). More precisely, DIH PISMO has focused on the digitisation and modernisation of metallurgy sector and entering in new market niche - the gaming industry. Another sector where PISMO focuses its activities is metal processing industry. PISMO offers 6-month long extensive gaming education for start-ups completely free of charge, and a unique set of equipment for game development. In addition, PISMO offers legal assistance in starting a business, financial support in entering new markets, marketing and development of social and management skills. In relation to the companies in metallurgy sector, PISMO provides support for upskilling their existing workforce to achieve digital transformation; support through consultation services with the aim of identifying financial sources for future operations; provides education/mentorship for the employees; organise marketing activities with the aim of attracting potential investors. Education and training activities are organised in the following topics: gaming development (unity and blender programs), marketing, financial administration, establishing and scaling up of start-ups, social entrepreneurship, etc. Mentorship is offered for the following areas: 1. business plans creation, 2. technical and economic advice, 3. support in project implementation, 4. networking, 5. sales educations and trainings. Education and training programmes for gaming development (programs Unity and Blender) are organised in six-month tours; first group was held from September 2018 - February 2019 for 40 unemployed people; education and training for second group is held from April –September 2019, also for 40 unemployed people.							

No evaluations have been performed yet since the mechanism is rather new.

Drafted by: Marija Pavkov

References:

Business Plan and Action Plan, DIH PISMO, DIHELP Programme (2019)
http://inkubator-pismo.eu/uploads/DIH_Business_Action_plan.pdf#page=2&zoom=auto,-22,717

Country	HU						
ID	HU_01						
Name in English	HU_01 National Entrepreneurship Mentor Program						
Name in local language	Országos Vállalkozói Mentorprogram						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					
The National Entrepreneurship Mentor Programme was established in February 2019 with the aim of introducing indirect support tools to increase the competitiveness and efficiency of SMEs. The total volume of funding of the project is HUF 3 300 000 000 (EUR 9 752 925). It is implemented through the Operational Programme for Economic Development and Innovation (GINOP) financed by the European regional development fund. At the time of this research, the project was expected to run until 31 December 2020. It is targeted at small and medium size enterprises in general. There are three target groups for personal entrepreneurial mentoring: Women entrepreneurs, young entrepreneurs and family businesses facing generation change. In the course of personal entrepreneurial mentoring, the mentor shares his professional-business knowledge, experience and wisdom with the mentee who is able and willing to use all these for stabilizing his business or put it on a growth path. The duration of the mentoring process ranges from 9 to 12 months. During this period, a mentor works together with two or three mentees. Before starting the programme, the mentors received a two-day professional training in order to learn professional skills of the mentoring work. A total of 500 SMEs can benefit from professional mentoring. In addition, further 1 500 SMEs receive free entrepreneurial and financial advice.							

Drafted by: Eva Farkas

References:

<https://seed.hu/en/news/mentors-and-mentees-are-invited-to-the-seed-foundation>
https://www.vallalkozztudatosan.hu/?page_id=270
<https://mkik.hu/orszagos-vallalkozoi-mentorprogram>
<https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/38662/attachments/14/translations/en/renditions/native> (2019. SBA Fact Sheet Hungary, Chapter 4.)

Country	HU						
ID	HU_02						
Name in English	HU_02 Modern Enterprises' Programme						
Name in local language	<i>Modern Vállalkozások Programja</i>						
Year of implementation	2015						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X		X		
The Modern Enterprises' Programme is a 5-year project established in 2016 which focuses on the development of digital competences of SMEs, reduction of the primary (digital illiteracy) and secondary (low degree of utilisation) digital divide, enabling micro and small enterprises to recognise business opportunities resulting from the introduction of ICT systems and to make use of those opportunities, as well as making available the benefits of the digital ecosystem to those lagging behind more durable (e-inclusion). The programme particularly helps rural enterprises and strives to leverage physical assets, software and methodologies during SMEs lifecycle which replaces the original paper-based work and/or results by changing the existing, basic information solutions. The programme has 4 professional pillars: (1) Free audit and advertising by National Advisory Network (27 people); (2) Qualified suppliers, products and services; (3) Information dates, events; (4) Knowledge portal (library) for digital businesses. Planned indicators: 10 000 registered SME partners; 6 000 on-site IT and business review; 400 qualified IT suppliers, 127 events. The total budget of the project is EUR 18.8 million for the period 2015-2019 within the framework of the Operational Program for Economic Development and Innovation (GINOP) financed by the European regional development fund. Until November 2020 the following results can be identified: 18 801 registered SME partners; 13 277 on-site IT and business review, 443 events; establishing National Advisory Network (27 people). Based on the results achieved so far, the programme has received additional trust and has been extended until May 31, 2021.							

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References:

<https://vallalkozzdigitalisan.hu/>
https://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/image/document/2019-32/country_report_-_hungary_-_final_2019_0D30BE02-9661-9403-6F972D2CCBB689B0_61210.pdf
<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/1417/modern-enterprises-program/>
<https://www.facebook.com/vallalkozzdigitalisan/>
<https://mkik.hu/hirek/folytatodik-a-modern-vallalkozasok-programja>

Country	HU						
ID	HU_05						
Name in English	HU_05 Support facility for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and large companies to be able to apply for training grant under EDIOP 6.1.5-17 and EDIOP-6.1.6-17						
Name in local language	<i>Munkahelyi képzések támogatása mikro-, kis- és középvállalatok és nagyvállalatok munkavállalói számára indított képzések szakmai támogató programja</i>						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					
The project 'Support facility for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and large companies to be able to apply for training grant under EDIOP 6.1.5-17 and EDIOP-6.1.6-17' (Munkahelyi képzések támogatása mikro-, kis- és középvállalatok és nagyvállalatok munkavállalói számára indított képzések szakmai támogató programja) supplements EDIOP 6.1.5 and 6.1.6 to facilitate the application of companies and provide professional support to workplace learning. The main aim of the projects is to support the financing of vocational or language training for employees of MSMEs and large enterprises, thus helping the employability of employees and increasing the competitiveness of enterprises by improving the skills and competences of employees in the workplace. A further aim is to improve the access to training for MSMEs and large enterprises and to encourage employers to continuously improve the skills of their employees and to ensure that as many of their employees as possible participate in training, complementing their own resources. The amount of support that can be applied for is minimum HUF 3 000 000 HUF (EUR 8 866) and maximum HUF 50 000 000 (EUR 147 771). The total budget of the project is HUF 2 700 000 000 (EUR 7 979 666) within the framework The Operational Program for Economic Development and Innovation (GINOP) financed by the European Social Fund. The Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry provides information days and events and operates a website (https://munkaerokepzes.hu/) with a list of training programs. By the end of 2018, 34 information events had taken place, in which 645 companies participated. The duration of the project is from 1 February 2018 to 31 December 2020. No evaluation study has been conducted.							

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References:

https://ginop617monitoring.nive.hu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1:ginop-6-1-7-17-2018-00001&catid=2&Itemid=101
<https://munkaerokepzes.hu/>

Country	HU						
ID	HU_06						
Name in English	HU_06 Counselling and training support for businesses by the National Employment Service						
Name in local language	Tanácsadás és képzési támogatás a vállalkozások számára						
Year of implementation	1991 (Legal background: Act 4 of 1991 on the promotion of employment and unemployment benefits)						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X	X				
Jobseekers and at-risk groups are offered training opportunities through the National Employment Service (NES) and central, regional and county labour market programmes. Participants are selected by the labour centres (currently part of government offices), which also assist them in choosing the specific field of training and a training provider. Most of the supported courses award state-recognized qualifications. Public workers (in national legislation are those registered in public work programmes for the unemployed), also subsidised by the NES. NES also offers guidance, counselling, training programmes and financing for companies to support training for employees whose continuing employment cannot be guaranteed without training (for example where employment is anticipated to end in one year and the employer reported it to the employee and the employment centre) or that hire people younger than 25 years old (especially school leavers), people over 55 years old, long-term jobseekers, women on/returning from maternity leave, unskilled workers, mothers with three or more children returning to work. Programmes offered by the NES from 1991 are financed from the National Employment Fund. In 2015 1 574 persons, in 2016 2 493 persons, in 2017 3 002 persons, in 2018 3 214 persons took part in training organized by employers and supported by the NES.							

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References:

<https://nfsz.munka.hu/>

https://nfsz.munka.hu/nfsz/document/6/7/doc_url/stati_foglalk_politikai_eszk_2017.pdf

<https://munka.hu/>

https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2019/Vocational_Education_Training_Europe_Hungary_2018_Cedefop_ReferNet.pdf

Country	HU						
ID	HU_07						
Name in English	HU_07 Industry 4.0. "Model Factory" Program						
Name in local language	<i>Ipar 4.0. Mintagyár Program</i>						
Year of implementation	2017						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X		X		
The Model Factory Programme (Ipar 4.0. Mintagyár Program) established in June 2017 helps SMEs to start digitalising. The programme raises awareness, changes the mindset and approach of SMEs and educates them about their opportunities. It has three elements: (1) demonstration (visiting model factories); (2) knowledge transfer (organising training for SMEs on digitalising, Industry 4.0 and designing A3 strategy); (3) A3 strategy (design a one-page storyboard on A3 paper that helps SMEs visualize their future goals). The programme provides the following services to SMEs: business consultation, workshops, training programmes, professional events, 'the night of modern factories' special event, visiting model factories and entrepreneur portal . Planned indicators: 1 000 SMEs in the demonstrations; 380 SMEs in trainings; 350 SMEs in A3 strategy design. The total budget for the project period from June 2017 to December 2019 is EUR 7 315 273.							

Drafted by: Eva Farkas

References:

<https://www.ipar4.hu/>
<https://ipar4.hu/page/orszagjaras-program>
<https://www.i40platform.hu/>
https://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/image/document/2019-32/country_report_-_hungary_-_final_2019_0D30BE02-9661-9403-6F972D2CCBB689B0_61210.pdf
<https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/38662/attachments/14/translations/en/renditions/native> (2019. SBA Fact Sheet Hungary, Chapter 3.7.)
https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/dem/monitor/sites/default/files/DTM_IPAR_HU_v4.pdf

Country	HU						
ID	HU_08						
Name in English	HU_08 Information for Business						
Name in local language	VALI – Vállalkozói információ - Válaszok a vállalkozások számára a koronavírus helyzet kezelésére						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X			X		
The Business Information webpage created in 2019 offers the following services for businesses and individuals: governmental information on COVID-19, useful information and guide, restrictions, new regulations, health and safety advice, etc.; frequently asked questions and answers; labour documents templates; labour law of the coronavirus epidemic; available on-line training courses compliant with the new state of emergency adult education regulations. The training search engine available on the Information of Business webpage offers available on-line training courses compliant with the new state of emergency adult education regulations. Both businesses and private individuals can participate in these training programmes. The organization operating the website doesn't organize or implement training programmes. The training search engine only collects all on-line remote training opportunities that are compliant with the new adult education regulations effective under the coronavirus pandemic, in one place.							

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References:

<https://vali.ifka.hu/en>

<https://vali.ifka.hu/>

<https://vali.ifka.hu/en/page/training-opportunities>

Country	HU						
ID	HU_09						
Name in English	HU_09 Knowledge to Money Club						
Name in local language	<i>Knowledge to Money Club</i>						
Year of implementation	2016						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					
Some of the activities of the Hungarian Export Promotion Agency (HEPA) support also innovation in SMEs: under the 'Workshops and guidance for SMEs by HEPA' measure, innovation assessments and consultation for SMEs are offered so that they can build up their innovation capacities. Getting finance is one of the biggest challenges for entrepreneurs and SMEs. There are various possibilities for SMEs to get financial support from national, EU and other different international funds. The 'Knowledge to Money Club' provide help to achieve these funds. It is a private initiative founded by 3 individuals who also act as business coaches. The 'Knowledge to Money Club' is a quarterly free of charge event organised by HEPA, which informs Hungarian SMEs about Horizon 2020 SME Instrument opportunities and helps them apply for grants. Entrepreneurs who already received grants can share their experiences during these events. As a part of the HEPA's customized business and financial advisory services, they help to SMEs to improve their business, work on their project plans on how to step into foreign markets and find the suitable financial funds for their development goals. With the help of HEPA funding map they provide up to date information about grants, loans, combined loan and venture capital opportunities in Hungary. The 'Knowledge to Money Club' was established in 2016. A total of 151 entrepreneurs participated in 'Knowledge to Money Club' events in 2018.							

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References:

<https://hepa.hu/en>

<http://www.k2m.club/>

<https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/38662/attachments/14/translations/en/renditions/native> (2019. SBA Fact Sheet Hungary, Chapter 3.7.)

Country	IE						
ID	IE_01						
Name in English	IE_01 Skills to Advance_National						
Name in local language	<i>Skills to Advance_National</i>						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X					X
Skills to Advance is a national initiative that provides: i) upskilling and reskilling opportunities to employees in entry or lower-level positions, and to those currently employed in vulnerable sectors; ii) helps SME employers in identifying skills needs and investing in their workforce by providing subsidized education and training to staff. The target group for the programme is SMEs. The scheme is in operation from 6 April 2019 until 31 December 2021. Funding is provided by the National Training Fund and administered through regional Education and Training Boards (ETBs). The primary target groups are: i) Employees in all parts of the workforce whose skill level is below level 5 on the national framework of qualifications, with a particular focus on employees in jobs with a low skill requirement, 50+ years of age, and in sectors/occupations at risk of economic displacement; ii) All SMEs and other organisations with limited capacity to identify and meet address development needs of their employees in lower skilled work, in particular employees at risk of displacement. Employers are supported in developing their training expertise, including identifying upskilling needs of their workforce and providing training solutions; iii) Industry sectors with particular skills needs, arising from emerging opportunities or as a result of economic vulnerabilities. Support to upskill and reskill employees in lower-skilled work will be provided to employers of all sizes in industry sectors that are experiencing particular changes in work practices, technology and markets. The scheme offers up to 50% of the eligible training costs, with an increase to 70% of eligible costs, should the following criteria be fulfilled: i) 10% increase if the aid is granted to medium-sized enterprises and; ii) increase by 20% if the aid is granted to small enterprises. The scheme has three access routes to relevant ETB provision for employees and employers: i) direct employee access; ii) access via enterprise engagement (employees access training through their employer partnering with an ETB); iii) regional initiatives (employees participate in ET as result of a particular identified regional skills development initiative). Projects that are related to training needs identification or training activities address a company's upskilling and reskilling needs of their employees are eligible. Project applications must contain the SMEs name, size, sector, number of employees, description of training support needed (if known), and suitability for Skills to Advance training support. The eligible costs of a training project related to identification of training needs, training development, design, delivery and learning support services shall include: (a) trainers' personnel costs, for the hours during which the trainers participate in the training; (b) trainers' and trainees' operating costs directly relating to the training project such as travel expenses, materials and supplies directly related to the project, depreciation of tools and equipment, to the extent that they are used exclusively for the training project. (c) costs of advisory services linked to the training project; (d) Trainees' personnel costs and general indirect costs (administrative costs, rent, overheads) for the hours during which the trainees participate in the training. Accommodation costs are excluded except for the minimum necessary accommodation costs for trainees' who are workers with disabilities. The aid provided can not exceed 50% of the eligible costs, although it may be increased up to a maximum of 70% of eligible costs as follows:-(a) by 10% if the aid is granted to medium-sized enterprises and (b) by 20% if the aid is granted to small enterprises.							

At the time of this research, the Skills to Advance programme had only just completed the first year of implementation and an evaluation report was not yet available. The allocated budget for 2019 was EUR 6 million to allow for the upskilling of an additional 3 000 people in the workforce. The target was to engage over 40 000 workers and 4 500 SMEs to be engaged in the scheme by 2021. According to a country expert interview, approximately 5 000 workers were reached in the first year of implementation, with a significant increase in the second year, attributed by the interviewee to the joint effects of COVID-19 preparedness (such as health and safety training), Brexit (customs and certification training) and an overall higher awareness of the scheme within the private sector.

Drafted by: Frederick Elliott Gaved

References:

<https://www.solas.ie/programmes/skills-to-advance/>

Country	IE						
ID	IE_02						
Name in English	IE_02 Local Enterprise Offices_National						
Name in local language	Local Enterprise Offices_National						
Year of implementation	2014						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X				
Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) are established across Ireland and aim to promote entrepreneurship, foster business start-ups and develop existing micro and small businesses to drive job creation and provide accessible high-quality support for businesses. There are 31 LEOs in Ireland and they are intended as the First Stop Shop for anyone starting or seeking to grow a business. The LEOs were established in 2014 and are targeted principally at micro enterprises, although support is given to all SMEs looking to expand. The short-term training courses are provided free of charge to participating businesses/self-employed persons. The LEOs provide a wide range of business support, including training and mentoring to support skills development, including connecting businesses to the appropriate State resources for businesses, such as enterprise support, business loans, start-up relief, and business courses. A particular feature is that the LEOs also connect MSMEs with education and training organisations, such as the Education and Training Boards, Skillnet Ireland and Enterprise Ireland. The LEOs also provide training programmes themselves (Start Your Own Business Programme, Accelerate Management Development Programme) and a mentoring programme that is designed to link small businesses to experienced practitioners. Between 2014 and 2018, 144 830 businesses participated in LEO-run training courses and 40 577 businesses received mentoring. The uptake of skills and ET for employers is only seen as a positive side effect of the improvement in organizational performance. The non-financial incentives address the knowledge related barriers that can limit training provision in SMEs. By providing a comprehensive set of training support and available financial incentives, this supports MSMEs helps to overcome cost barriers.							

Drafted by: Frederick Elliott Gaved

References:

<https://www.localenterprise.ie/Discover-Business-Supports>

Country	IE						
ID	IE_03						
Name in English	IE_03 MentorsWork						
Name in local language	<i>MentorsWork</i>						
Year of implementation	2020						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					

MentorsWork is a free business mentoring support scheme for businesses in any sector. It is a structured support that pairs a business with an experienced mentor to address the specific needs of a business, including in the identification and development of skills through education and training. MentorsWork is delivered by the Small Firms Association (SFA) in partnership with Skillnet Ireland. The scheme was launched in 2020, with the initial support limited to 300 eligible businesses from any sector.

Support is structured and is based on the development of an action plan formulated between the business owner/managers and the mentor, addressing the specific needs of a business. This is conducted as a virtual programme and is designed as 'bootcamp' mentoring and is specifically designed to tackle 'right now' issues faced by companies (especially those as a result of Covid-19). Support is delivered remotely (via phone and online), with the initial consultation being a 4-hour session between businesses and appointed mentors to discuss the unique nature of the business, the key business issue they are facing, and potential business plan strategies in the short term. A staged plan will be developed, followed by a second scheduled session within four weeks to review the impact of the actions on the business and schedule additional actions to be taken.

MentorsWork is targeted at SME owner/managers and senior leadership teams. Any private sector business with fewer than 250 employees is eligible to participate. Organisations that are not eligible are private sector business with over 250 employees, public sector organisations, NGO or not-for-profit organisations, and businesses based outside the Republic of Ireland.

The programme is considered relevant, as it provides a specific support and tailored training to companies through a 'mentor matching' approach, alongside masterclasses and workshops. This approach is limited in terms of the intensity of learning and the potential further upskilling benefits to anyone beyond the participant. While this is a training programme for CEOs, there is no specific focus on upskilling employees. Similarly, this incentive is not available to the majority of workers due to the focus on CEOs.

Drafted by: Frederick Elliott Gaved

References:

<https://mentorswork.ie>

Country	IE						
ID	IE_04						
Name in English	IE_04 Leadership 4 Growth						
Name in local language	Leadership 4 Growth						
Year of implementation	2006						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					
Leadership for growth (L4G) is a programme specifically designed for CEOs whose companies have the ambition and potential to achieve significant scale in their chosen markets. It is an important element of Enterprise Ireland's strategy to accelerate the development of world-class Irish companies by helping them to build and enhance their leadership capabilities. The stated overall objective of Leadership 4 Growth is to "develop and enhance the leadership ambition, mindset and capability of the participating CEOs to lead innovative, scalable companies, capable of achieving sustained international growth". The focus of the programme has changed in response to the priorities of enterprise Ireland. In 2006, the programme was targeted at the software sector, in 2008 and 2010 the focus shifted to the construction sector following the financial crisis. The eligible group for this programme is CEOs from all sectors with well-established businesses with the potential to achieve significant scale in their chosen markets. The programme aims to support business leaders/CEOs to: • Identify their own personal leadership potential and capability through development of leadership style, ambition and confidence; • Strategically analyse and evaluate their own business to make strategic choices for rapid growth; • Create a Strategic Growth Action Plan and robust strategic management / deployment framework for rapid growth and sustainability; • Identify and grow personal leadership with C-Suite and Board to grow a strong effective team to execute and implement step changes arising from the Growth Plan; • Understand the behaviours required to operate a culture of coaching / learning for continuous transformation and employee engagement. It has a focus on SMEs although all size organisations can apply. Only eligible Enterprise Ireland or sister economic development agency clients (Invest Northern Ireland, IDA) can apply. The programme can support business leaders in the development and expansion of their education and training support to employees, although this is not the main focus of the scheme. In 2018 there were 31 participating organisations. This incentive is focussed on management and leadership of SMEs. The impacts will therefore be considerable on individual participants but may not be significant for employees of the participants or in terms of the wider national picture. The scheme is therefore considered to be relatively low impact (indeed, it is replicated by several other similar offers provided through Enterprise Ireland) at the macro-level. The strength of the programme is the intensity and focus of the counselling provided, which seems to provide a deep focus on the topics covered. However, the limitations and weaknesses are the relatively low number of participants per year (only 31 organisations in 2019) and the lack of any significant evidence of further 'knock-on' effects within the organisations led by participants.							

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References: <https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/funding-supports/Company/Establish-SME-Funding/Leadership-4-Growth-Programme.html>

<https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/3-1-PLM-Leadership-4-Growth-Programme.pdf>

Country	IE						
ID	IE_05						
Name in English	IE_05 Online Retail Scheme						
Name in local language	<i>Online Retail Scheme</i>						
Year of implementation	[No information given]						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						
The Online Retail Scheme supports eligible retailers to develop a more competitive online offer. It is a competitive procedure, with applicants submitting their proposal for evaluation prior to approval. The purpose of the fund is to enable retailers to increase their customer base and build a more resilient business in the domestic and global marketplace both online and offline. It should be noted that the current Online Retail Scheme call for proposals is targeted explicitly at supporting businesses through the COVID-19 pandemic. The applicant must be an Irish-owned retail enterprise that had 10 or more full-time employees on a full-time equivalent basis on or before 29 February 2020 and has the potential to sustain or create jobs, generate growth in online transactions and with an ambition to internationalise their business in future. Applicants are awarded funding of a maximum of 80% of the project eligible costs with a maximum grant of EUR 40 000. Typical costs include training (alongside research, consultancy for strategy development and implementation). Training Course fees are not eligible, however in-house training provided by an external provider to enable a company to develop and maintain a robust online retail operation are eligible. This can include training for CMS, eMarketing, catalogue management, e-commerce systems, and SEO. The funding is eligible for Irish-owned retail enterprises with 10 or more employees before 29 Feb 2020 and has the potential to sustain or create jobs, generate growth in online transactions, and have an ambition to internationalize their business in the future. This is a focussed training that is highly targeted towards up-skilling in the area of online retail and commerce. The impacts of this scheme will be significant at both the individual participant and enterprise level, meaning that this scheme is considered relevant. There is no data available on number of participants, so it is unclear what the overall impact of this scheme may be nationally. The weakness of the scheme is that many enterprises will not be eligible for this training/incentive.							

Drafted by: Frederick Elliott Gaved

References:

<https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/funding-supports/Online-Retail/Online-Retail-Scheme/>

Country	IE						
ID	IE_06						
Name in English	IE_06 Future Skills Programme						
Name in local language	Future Skills Programme						
Year of implementation	2017						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
				X			X
The Future Skills Programme is used by Skillnet Ireland to champion innovation in enterprise learning and maintaining a supply of future skills essential for the growth of Irish enterprise. The FSP facilitates innovation and collaboration in new programme design and industry-based research on the future of work and learning. The FSP also facilitates collaborations between enterprise, academic institutions and industry training providers to develop innovative new programmes to address the future skills needs of businesses and emerging skills gaps within growth sectors. The outcomes of the FSP is the provision of a new and industry-relevant education or training programme, such as Ireland's first Masters in Artificial Intelligence in collaboration with Technology Ireland ICT Skillnet. Other innovative programmes developed include new courses in the areas of Blockchain, Internet of Things, Sustainable Finance, Animation, Software Product Management, Fintech, Cyber Security and Design Engineering for medical technologies. This is a partnership programme between enterprises, academic institutions and government, with the target groups varying by sector and focus area. The Future Skills Programme also is focused on enhancing SME management capacity (as a general focus of Skillnet Ireland) and therefore supports the development of innovative new programmes in management development and leadership. The FSP also provides courses with NFQ certification. In 2017, 31.3% of courses were Level 8 or Level 9 certified, 22.6% of courses were Level 6 certified, and 10.4% were Level 7 certified. In 2017, the FSP was delivered through 23 networks and involved a total spend of EUR 0.8 million. In 2018, 46 new FSP initiatives were launched, and 129 learners participated in FSP-based schemes. The Future Skills Programme can thereby be seen as a significant contribution to the development of CVET in the prioritised (sub-)sectors. A large number of companies and employees are being trained through this programme. The limitation of the incentive is that there is only a set number of focus areas and sectors that are then delivered through a 'closed' set of partner organisations. Therefore, the wider private sector is not able to benefit directly in the opportunities made available. Enterprises working outside priority sectors can only try to make a case for the inclusion of their particular subsector to the list of activities eligible for support. The applied prioritisation limits the number of eligible/engaged enterprises significantly each year. As the focus of this fund is on emerging skills needs in innovative or growth industries, this approach is logical but has limiting effects in terms of impact and relevance.							

Drafted by: Frederick Elliott Gaved

References:

<https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/funding-supports/Online-Retail/Online-Retail-Scheme/>
<https://www.skillnetireland.ie/publications/#tabs-2>

Country	IT						
ID	IT_01						
Name in English	IT_01 Interest-free credits for new enterprises						
Name in local language	<i>Nuove imprese a tasso zero</i>						
Year of implementation	2016						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						
Interest-free credits for new enterprises initiative aims to support, since 2016, throughout Italy, the creation of micro and small enterprises. It provides interest-free financing of business projects with expenses of up to EUR 1.5 million and can cover up to 75% of total eligible expenses. For the remaining 25%, co-financing by the enterprise, either from its own resources or bank financing, is requested. 5% of the funding may be for training. This form of support is applicable to the following economic fields: - production of goods in the sectors of industry, crafts and processing of agricultural products - provision of services to businesses and individuals - trade in goods and services - tourism. The support is aimed at companies composed mainly of young people between 18 and 35 years or women of all ages, throughout the country. The companies must be established as companies for no more than 12 months, compared to the date of submission of the application. Natural persons may also apply for funding, provided that they establish the company within 45 days of admission to the facilities. At the end of May 2020, projects funded were 462, for a total of investment of EUR 100.8 million. Location of start-ups: 67.53% Southern Italy; 25.11% Central Italy; 7.36% Northern Italy. By sector, most represented are services to persons (31.6%) and production of goods (25.11%). No data on impact evaluation were retrievable.							

Drafted by: Gigliola Paviotti

References:

<https://www.invitalia.it/cosa-facciamo/creiamo-nuove-aziende/nuove-imprese-a-tasso-zero/cose>

Country	IT						
ID	IT_02						
Name in English	IT_02 Funding projects promoting SMEs networking						
Name in local language	<i>Contributi per progetti di aggregazione di rete per le PMI</i>						
Year of implementation	2013						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X				X	X
SMEs can receive contribution to project costs in case they join a network of SMEs. This type of funding, governed by the "Regulation concerning criteria and procedures for the granting of incentives for the implementation of network aggregation projects in implementation of Article 15 of Regional Law no. 4 of April 4, 2013" (hereinafter "Regulation") is managed on a provincial basis by the legally competent Chambers of Commerce of Friuli Venezia Giulia. The rationale for introducing the instrument was to support competitiveness of MSMEs by promoting their cooperation and networking. SMEs participating in one 'network aggregation project' or, alternatively, the network already established as legal entity, which is therefore already carrying out the aggregation project may benefit from the incentives. Beneficiary MSMEs (or networks as legal entity) must meet the following requirements on the date of submission of the application: - be registered in the Commercial Register - be active and have registered office or operational unit(s), to which the project refers, in the regional territory. The instrument grants up to the 50% of the total project cost up to EUR 150.000 for each project. Project mainly cover the costs of joint organisational development and innovation activities (e.g., joint marketing actions; the joint use of a technological facility) of the SMEs forming the network. Learning is mainly delivered by specialised consultancy services brought in in the process and by the providers of the services ordered (e.g., technology providers, marketing specialists). Overall, the framework allows for a high variety of projects to be funded The following three different phases of 'network aggregation development projects' may be supported: - preparatory work (including guidance and training for setting up the network/designing the project) to support network creation; - design of the actions; - implementation of the actions. As regards guidance and training, the eligible costs refer to part 1 (propaedeutic to the network establishment) as follows: "Acquisition of consultancy and training services concerning the participation of at least one representative for each SME participating in the networking project in the work sessions, promoted and implemented by the support bodies, concerning guidance, training and networking." Where the beneficiaries are SMEs participating in the networking project, the networking project must be carried out by two or more SMEs, of which at least one is a small or micro enterprise. Where the beneficiary is a network with legal personality, at least one enterprise participating in the network must be a small enterprise or micro-enterprise with a registered office or business unit in the regional territory and the majority of the enterprises participating in the network must be enterprises with a registered office or business unit in the regional territory.							

The total budget allocated for this programme is EUR 1.55 million.
Results for call 2020 had not been available at the time of this research. In 2018, 5 projects received in total of EUR 312.852,61 of contribution for Trieste province; 12 projects, EUR 810.604,91 for Udine province; 3 projects, 257.458,14 EUR for Pordenone province.
(http://www.vg.camcom.gov.it/allegati/fondogorizia/490_2018%20Allegato.pdf)

Drafted by: Gigliola Paviotti

References:

<https://www.regione.fvg.it/rafv/cms/RAFG/economia-imprese/industria/FOGLIA350/FOGLIA351/#id1>
(http://www.vg.camcom.gov.it/allegati/fondogorizia/490_2018%20Allegato.pdf)
(http://www.regione.fvg.it/rafv/export/sites/default/RAFG/economia-imprese/industria/FOGLIA350/FOGLIA351/allegati/All_ARE_avviso_RETI2019_DEF_24102019.pdf)

Country	IT						
ID	IT_03						
Name in English	IT_03 AIF Award for Excellence in Training						
Name in local language	<i>AIF Award per le eccellenze nella formazione</i>						
Year of implementation	2015						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
					X		
The AIF Award for Excellence in Training – is an yearly based award inspired by the figure of Adriano Olivetti - aims at spreading good practices concerning innovative paths of learning and development of people and organizations. To this end it aims to identify and report professionals, training institutions, companies, public administrations, groups and people who have designed and implemented training projects and human capital enhancement and who have stand out for the learning and evolutionary results obtained at individual, team and organizational level. In 2019, there was the V edition. Categories of participants: - Professional Trainers - Associated professional studios - Small and Medium Enterprises - Large public and private enterprises - Local Authorities and PA - Bodies and Training Agencies - Foundations and Associations - Universities and Schools Thematic areas and methodological sections: thematic areas covered by the award are 10, namely Research and Innovation, Communication and Fundraising, Ethics and Social Responsibility - Export and Internationalization, Personal and Organisational Security, Health, Personal and Organisational Well-being, Art, Culture and Tourism - Markets and Competitiveness, Administration and Finance, Quality and Environment. Each of these areas are divided into 6 sections: Traditional, Experiential, New Technology and Digital, Cinema/Theatre, One to One, Blended/Mixed. Each participant can enter the desired number of entries in each Section, counting his or her entry fee according to the procedures described in the entry form. The jury is composed by reputed Professionals and experts from each specific area of specialization identified among teachers, researchers and personalities from the world of training and human resources working in universities, research institutes, companies and training schools. The Jury for is coordinated by a President who formalises the result of the selection based on the ranking expressed by the jurors. The Jury will examine and select the best projects at its sole discretion and on the basis of the following criteria: - Innovation - Presence of original elements (e.g., design methods, teaching methods, supporting technologies); - Change - Implementation of changes in the people or organizations in which they operate; - Transferability - Possibility of transferring the models and practices underlying the Project in the same or different areas); - Effectiveness - Results achieved.							

In 2019, the jury was composed by 161 jurors (<http://associazioneitalianaformatori.it/giurie-premio-per-leccellenza-nella-formazione-v-edizione/>)
The AIF does not use public funding to organise the competition. Participation to the award requires payment of a fee (from 189,00 EUR for one project to 790,00 EUR for 10 projects).

Drafted by: Gigliola Paviotti

References:

<http://associazioneitalianaformatori.it/giurie-premio-per-leccellenza-nella-formazione-v-edizione/>

http://associazioneitalianaformatori.it/download/premi/2019/Olivetti/VPremioAIF_Olivetti.pdf available in Italian only

Country	IT						
ID	IT_04						
Name in English	IT_04 Technical assistance programmes						
Name in local language	<i>Programmi di assistenza tecnica</i>						
Year of implementation	2016						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						
The SIMEST is one of the operational groups supporting the Italian Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (Deposits and Loans Fund), which is the National Promotional Institution, with the public mandate to support the growth of the Italian economy and invest in the competitiveness of the country. Among its activities, the SIMEST manages programmes for 'technical assistance' to companies. This programme is aimed at supporting training programmes for companies' internationalisation in Third Countries. The programme offers low-interest financing of staff, travel, accommodation and consultancy costs incurred in setting up a training programme for operational staff abroad. All SMEs and MSMEs based in Italy may apply for the facility, either individually or in network, and which have filed with the Companies Register at least two financial statements for two complete years. Eligible expenditure: all training costs of staff (to travel, accommodation, fees, etc.), including remuneration costs for time spent on on-site training. The funding covers 100% of the budgeted costs, up to a maximum of 12.5% of the average revenues of the company resulting from the last two approved and deposited financial statements. The maximum amount that can be financed is EUR 300 000. The duration of the financing is 4 years at from the date of conclusion of the contract, of which 1 year of pre-amortisation in which only interest and 3 years of amortization are paid for the repayment of the capital and of interest. Agriculture, fisheries and meat production are not eligible sectors. The programme is financially supported by means of the Fondo rotativo (Revolving fund) for SMEs, linked to National Operational Plan (PON) which makes operational structural funds of Europe.							

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References:

https://www.simest.it/programmi-di-assistenza-tecnica?_ga=2.264554054.836764912.1587634237-583919870.1587634237

Country	IT						
ID	IT_05						
Name in English	IT_05 Start-up and spin off						
Name in local language	<i>Start-up and spin off</i>						
Year of implementation	2017						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X				
The Calabria Region offers a framework for facilitating the establishment of new innovative businesses through the integrated provision of guidance, training, coaching, mentoring and incentives. By the support available, graduates should be encouraged to create start-ups or research spin-offs. The programme was launched in 2018. Beneficiaries can be university graduates, however, irrespective of age. The programme is divided into two phases: Phase one includes the presentation and selection of proposals of business ideas by applicants who, if selected, will benefit from the provision of a short cycle of training on business culture, as well as of assistance and support services for the preparation of a business plan. Phase two includes the provision of financial support (under de minimis regulation) for starting up a business. Training is tailored to the particular needs of the respective entrepreneurs, with a duration of max 90 days; this is carried out directly by Fincalabria S.p.A., through the Calabriainnova team. In October 2020, two calls were carried out and 88 beneficiaries received training (phase 1).							

Drafted by: Gigliola Paviotti

References:

http://calabriaeuropa.regione.calabria.it/website/portalmedia/bandi/2017-11/BANDOSTARTUP_%20Azione%201.4.1%20-%206_ottobre_2017.pdf

http://calabriaeuropa.regione.calabria.it/website/portalmedia/bandi/2019-03/ALLEGATO%201%20_%20PROPOSTE%20STARTUP%20AMMESSE.pdf

[http://calabriaeuropa.regione.calabria.it/website/portalmedia/bandi/2018-03/selection%20\(2\).pdf](http://calabriaeuropa.regione.calabria.it/website/portalmedia/bandi/2018-03/selection%20(2).pdf)

Country	IT						
ID	IT_06						
Name in English	IT_06 Historical enterprises toward the future						
Name in local language	<i>Imprese storiche verso il futuro</i>						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						
The action aims at keeping a regions' traditional products and commercial shops high in esteem and support the maintenance of their production and the sites of business. It is addressed to MSMEs companies included in the regional register of craft and historical companies of the Region Lombardy. The facility consists of the granting of a non-refundable grant equal to a maximum of 50% of only the expenditure considered eligible net of VAT. The contribution is for both single and groups of enterprises. It is granted up to a maximum of EUR 30 000 and the minimum investment is set at EUR 10 000 without VAT. Current expenses are recognized up to a maximum of 15% of the total cost of the funded project. Among the funded activities (which can be also restoration or digitalisation), the following includes training, up to the 15% of the overall project costs: 1. Generational turnover and business transfer eligible costs: - Training allowing for the transmission of skills held by the owners/managers of the historical and traditional activities, to entrepreneurs taking over the business, respectively to young people that intend to take over historical and traditional activities. - Organizational, financial, commercial and technical consulting for the start-up of the succession of generations turnover program. - Specific training for the development and consolidation of digital skills. The call is funded by the European Regional Development Fund of the European Union, implemented by means of the Operational Regional Plan of Lombardy (POR Lombardia) and managed by Unioncamere Lombardia (Union of the regional Chambers of Commerce). It does not plan monitoring of the programme or evaluation: the only indicator is "number of beneficiary companies". Allocated funds (2019-2021) EUR 2 300 000. The first call was launched on February 10th, 2020, deadline April 29th, 2020: 51 companies have been granted, up to the fund availability; a second instalment from the region would possibly include also other companies which were admitted, but not funded. On 17/11/2020 the scheme was enriched with additional funding of EUR 3 423 057.							

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References:

Referring to Regional Decree <https://www.regione.lombardia.it/wps/wcm/connect/d6ef4908-7e0d-420b-93d4-c7aceeb75007/Delibera+n+2174+del+30+sett+2019+Criteri+bando+Imprese+storiche+verso+futuro.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=ROOTWORKSPACE-d6ef4908-7e0d-420b-93d4-c7aceeb75007-m-G0L9P>

Country	IT						
ID	90						
Name in English	IT_07 Consultancy and guidance for training						
Name in local language	<i>Consultancy and guidance for training</i>						
Year of implementation							
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X					
Year of implementation: [No information given]							
Companies, MSMEs in particular, are eligible for free counselling and related support activities for preparing requests for the funding of training projects submitted to Interprofessional Funds or other funding providers. This vignette introduces into the complex interplay of the provision of guidance and support by a broad range of intermediate bodies and the funding of the related activities as part of the eligible costs by Interprofessional Funds for Continuing Training. Generally, broad variety of intermediate bodies provide free consultancy services to companies, helping them to identify their learning needs, design training plans and then submit related requests for funding to funding providing agencies, including Interprofessional Funds. Companies may use the consultancy services in relation to training provided by any training provider included in the regional registers of authorised training providers, and covering all topics related to upskill, update or re-skill of employees, including general topics like foreign languages or ICTs. MSMEs are the main beneficiaries of this type of consultancy services, as they often do not have a human resources unit that takes care of employees' training needs. These consultancy services are not compulsory and provide support for accessing any type of public funding available, whether it is provided by frameworks established at national, regional or sectoral level (as in the case of the Interprofessional Funds). Consultancy providers need to have an overview of all opportunities available, irrespective of their own field of specialisation. In practice, while enterprises are entitled to apply directly for funding from Interprofessional Funds, the required work for submitting the proposals is done on behalf of the enterprises by intermediate organisations. MSMEs are the main users of the support services offered. The services are provided by a broad range of intermediate bodies specified at a regional level. Intermediate bodies include sectoral organisations as well as selected training providers or counselling providers working on behalf of sectoral organisations or other bodies, including the Interprofessional funds. For example, sectoral organisations provide for their members related consultancy services within their general services offered. If sectoral organisations do not have internal units devoted to training, they usually have agreements with specific training providers or other intermediary organisations for providing these types of services on their behalf. The following illustrates the argument above, CONFIMI INDUSTRIA ROMAGNA represents the SMEs of manufacturing of the provinces of Ravenna, Forlì-Cesena, Rimini and Ferrara. Among their services, they provide support for accessing Interprofessional Funds for training, however, the service is implemented on behalf of the organisation by a commissioned training agency, Sviluppo PMI, located in the area Confimi is responsible for. To conclude, the providers of the relevant consulting services differ across place and time, depending on the arrangements locally implemented. The costs for the services provided (design, development and submission of requests							

for funding requests of training projects) by the various organisations active in the field of supporting MSMEs are (partly) covered by Interprofessional Funds as part of the eligible costs, in case the submitted requests receive funding.

The general guidelines on the eligible of costs for preparatory counselling for submitting training proposals are available from ANPAL (<https://www.anpal.gov.it/documents/20126/38307/Circolare-1-del-10-04-2018-Linee-guida.pdf/72398d52-a877-4f4b-920c-8a0fe8c9ce58> - in Italian). However, each Interprofessional Fund specify further criteria with regard to the related costs eligible. For example, the Fonditalia fund specifies that only costs for consulting are eligible incurred within 30 days prior to the submission of the request for funding - <https://www.fonditalia.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/ManualeRendicontazione2013.pdf> . As another example, For.TE fund set a limit for the eligible costs for the preparation projects, ranging from 15% for planned training costs below EUR 100 000, to 6% for those over EUR 500 000 - https://www.fondoforte.it/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/allegato_8_-_costi_ammissibili_a_forte.pdf).

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References:

<http://www.admform.it/Consulenza/FondiInterprofessionali> (training organisation, Rome, Lazio Region)

<http://www.confim Romagna.it/sviluppopmi/> (association of manufacturing enterprises, Region Emilia-Romagna: this refers to another institution that is in charge of training: <https://sviluppopmi.com/>)

Country	IT						
ID	IT_08						
Name in English	IT_08 Integrated training for enterprises (internationalisation)						
Name in local language	<i>Formazione integrata per le imprese</i>						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X				
Calabria Region, in association with the ICE (Italian Trade Agency), offered in 2019/2020 courses aimed at encouraging more structured and effective internationalization processes of regional enterprises. This vignette represents an example on how the State supports Regions (through the ICE) for promoting internationalisation of enterprises – the programme has been made available to all regions. The programme was financed by the Calabria Region, within its Operational Regional Plan (POR – structural funds of the European Union) on the basis of strategic guidelines for the international promotion of the regional system 2017/2020. Target: SMEs, consortia, business networks and start-ups. Cost: free, under de minimis scheme Two training courses were carried out: Export PASSport and Digital Export Academy. Both courses were addressed to support internationalisation capacities of companies through staff training, with a combination of F2F learning, online learning and coaching for each enterprise. The Export PASSport training programme was successfully carried out between June and November 2019, according to the news section of the Region; the Digital Export Academy training programme was expected to take place from the end of October and the end of November 2020.							

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References:

<http://www.exporthtraining.ice.it/it/attivita-e-servizi/lista-corsi/320-convenzione-ice-regione-calabria-formazione-integrata-per-le-imprese.html>

Please note: the ICE has similar agreements also with other regions of Italy (e.g. Sardinia, Sicily) for the same training programme.

Country	IT						
ID	IT_09						
Name in English	IT_09 Incentives for micro and small craft enterprises						
Name in local language	<i>Incentives for micro and small craft enterprises</i>						
Year of implementation	2020						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X			X			
The incentive was meant to support competitiveness of craft companies by favouring the introduction of innovative process and/or product solutions, improving the commercial strategies and client relations and strengthening management systems. Therefore, the incentive aims at supporting investments for - the development of processes using new technologies and new materials, - the development of new product and design applications, organizational innovations through the use of TLC, the adoption of new methods that aim to increase enterprise performance, the adoption of new cloud computing solutions, - the implementation of marketing actions involving significant changes to product promotion or pricing policies, e-commerce, - the improvement of the company's environmental performance, - the improvement of safety levels in the workplace. Among eligible activities, training is applicable up to the 30% of the total investment. Projects costs should be comprised between a minimum amount of EUR 10 000 and a maximum amount of EUR 50 000 (VAT not included). The facilities are granted under the "de minimis" scheme in the form of a non-repayable grant, up to a maximum of 50% of the total eligible expenditure of the expenditure programme, up to a maximum amount of EUR 25 000. The total allocated to the programme was EUR 10 million. This programme is funded through the Operational Regional Fund (POR Campania, which uses structural funds of the European Union) and managed by the development agency of the region. On July 2020, granted companies were 50 for a total investment of EUR 804 622. In October 2020, investment projects were ongoing.							

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References:

<https://www.sviluppocampania.it/2020/02/03/incentivi-per-le-micro-e-piccole-imprese-artigiane>

Country	LT						
ID	LT_01						
Name in English	LT_01 EU-funded business productivity measure – “Industry digitization LT”						
Name in local language	<i>ES finansuojama verslo produktyvumo priemonė – „Pramonės skaitmeninimas LT”</i>						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X			X			
Industry digitization LT is an EU-funded measure aimed at encouraging small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to carry out technological audits to assess the potential and prospects of digitization of production processes. As such, the measure is intended to ensure the purposefulness, efficiency and benefits of enterprise investments in digitization of production processes and to create conditions for the growth of labour productivity in enterprises by introducing digital technologies in production processes. One of the targets of this measure is an increase in productivity of the SMEs that received the subsidy by 187.38 per cent by 2023 December 31. By that time, the measure should reach 163 companies. This measure was operational in 2018-2020 (first call 04-05-2018 / last call 07-07-2020) as part of the Lithuanian Operational Programme for EU Structural Funds Investments for 2014-2020. Specifically, it served as one of the measures for promoting competitiveness of small and medium-sized business. The rationale of introducing this measure is related to the overall aim of the OP Priority Axis 3 of boosting SME competitiveness, digitalisation being one of the surest way to do so in a country which has exhausted other sources of fast productivity growth. Overall volumes of public funding allocated to the measure amounted to over EUR 91 million, with an expected private contribution of at least EUR 155 million. The funding conditions of the measure provides for the costs of technological audit and the purchase and installation of new production process equipment and facilities with integrated digitization technologies. Training for employees in order to develop their skills in using the equipment is also covered, provided that training-related costs are included as part of equipment purchase costs. Training for employees is provided by the supplier of equipment (the majority of procurement contracts for purchasing equipment within projects carried out by subsidy recipients include this as a requirement). Projects under this measure are co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (45% for micro and small enterprises and 35% for medium enterprises) and private companies' investments. The maximum amount of funding for the project for micro and small enterprises is EUR 1 million, and EUR 2.9 million for medium-sized enterprises. The maximum amount of funding available for the technological audit of industrial SMEs is EUR 20 000. One additional requirement for enterprises to apply: they must be in operation for at least one year. 97 unique companies were supported until 2020 November 26. A 2019 evaluation report determined that business productivity measures (of which this measure is a part of) are expected to have the biggest effect out of all EU-funded business competitiveness measures (compared to measures boosting business internationalisation, entrepreneurship or eco-innovation). The measures are in high demand, recipients of subsidies for business productivity report their intention to continue investing into business productivity on their own. However, at the time of evaluation not enough companies had applied for a subsidy from “Industry digitalization LT” to carry out a counterfactual impact evaluation. NB: there were a number of other measures similar to the measure described above, however, the last call for applications ended before February 1, 2020:							

Regio invest + (09-01-2015 / 10-03-2017) DPT for industry LT+ (29-03-2016 / 21-06-2017) Regio potential LT (23-11-2018 / 25-02-2019)
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Drafted by: Audrone Sadauskaite

References:

Description of the measure: https://www.esinvesticijos.lt/lt/finansavimas/patvirtintos_priemones/pramones-skaitmeninimas-lt
Implementation plan of the OP measures (2020-10-21): <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/232bee7087cb11e495dc9901227533ee/asr>
Funding conditions (2018):
https://www.esinvesticijos.lt/media/force_download/?url=/uploads/main/documents/docs/10119_03be3beca8f60bd04335650857a5703c.docx
2019 evaluation report (summary in EN available): <https://www.esinvesticijos.lt/lt/dokumentai/veiksmu-programos-3-prioriteto-smulkiojo-ir-vidutinio-verslo-konkurencingumo-skatinimas-poveikio-vertinimas>

Country	LT						
ID	LT_02						
Name in English	LT_02 EU-funded business innovation promotion measure – “Experiment”						
Name in local language	ES finansuojama verslo inovacijų skatinimo priemonė - „Eksperimentas“						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X			X			
The EU-funded measure, ‘Experiment’, seeks to encourage companies to invest in R&D activities and infrastructure necessary for developing innovative products, services or processes. More specifically, it aims to increase activities related to research, experimental development and innovation in the private sector. This measure was implemented in 2019-20 as a part of the Lithuanian Operational Programme for EU Structural Funds Investments for 2014-20. Total volumes of public funding allocated to the measure amounted to over EUR 153 million, with an expected private contribution of at least EUR 99 million. By 31 December 2023, the measure should reach 224 companies and create 160 new workplaces for researchers. Eligible applicants for funding are private legal entities, including MSMEs, and public institutions carrying out R&D activities (excluding research and study institutions) in the areas of the RIS3 (Smart Specialisation) strategy. Eligible funding includes R&D activities and initial investments into R&D and innovation infrastructure which cannot be accessed publicly or through clusters. Purchase and installation of innovative infrastructure makes up about 30% of all the R&D projects. The measure also covers the costs of training employees using the purchased computer and other equipment as well as software. The European Regional Development Fund covers 45% of the costs of micro and small enterprises, and 35% for medium enterprises. The maximum amount of support depends on the activities implemented within a particular project: R&D activities, EUR 1 200 000; initial investment by enterprises in the R&D and innovation infrastructure, EUR 3 000 000; certification of new products/technologies and related activities, EUR 200 000. Up to November 2020, 154 unique companies had been supported. A 2019 evaluation of measures fostering business research and development under the 2014-2020 Operational Programme determined that these measures do not replace private investment. Recipients of this type of subsidies reported their continued willingness to continue private investment in activities started within EU-funded projects. The measures’ short-term impact could not be measured with counterfactual impact assessments; however, the assessment indicates that the measures probably will have long-term impacts.							

Drafted by: Audrone Sadauskaite

References:

Description of the measure: https://www.esinvesticijos.lt/lt/finansavimas/patvirtintos_priemones/eksperimentas
Implementation plan of the OP measures (2020-10-21): <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/232bee7087cb11e495dc9901227533ee/asr>
Funding conditions (2019): https://www.esinvesticijos.lt/media/force_download/?url=/uploads/main/documents/docs/109349_a63770f4565379f957887d9a321db740.docx
2019 evaluation report (summary in EN available): <https://esinvesticijos.lt/lt/dokumentai//2014-2020-m-europos-sajungos-fondu-investiciju-veiksmu-programos-prioriteto-moksliniu-tyrimu-eksperimentines-pletros-ir-inovaciju-skatinimas-poveikio-vertinimas>

Country	LT						
ID	LT_03						
Name in English	LT_03 National Mentors' Network						
Name in local language	Verslo mentorių tinklas						
Year of implementation	2015						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X				X	

National Mentors' Network is a virtual platform where experienced professionals share their knowledge and experience with young entrepreneurs. This platform was launched in 2015 by a Lithuanian business promotion agency "Enterprise Lithuania". The aim was to transform the already existing informal mentorship network into a more structured system which has an easier communication mechanism and is accessible to all entrepreneurs. The Platform's main objective is to create an environment which helps a new entrepreneur to learn business management and improve other necessary entrepreneurial skills. This incentive does not provide any funding. Mentorship is carried out as a voluntary not-for-profit activity.

National mentorship network is aimed at entrepreneurs that own a traditional business for 1 – 2 years or start-ups. Mentors of this network are successful Lithuanian businessmen/women that run businesses over 4 years, also experts of particular fields with extensive experience and knowledge in their area of expertise, investors, business angels, people who have a lengthy experience in IT and other start-ups (more than 200 mentors).

Registered users (mentees) are able to send mentors private messages or book a time slot for a live or online mentoring session. Participants can receive counselling in the following areas of mentoring: business, finance, marketing and communication, international relations, start-ups, business law, HR management and training, social business. In 2018, 51 official cases of cooperation between business mentors and start-up entrepreneurs were registered. In the first three quarters of 2019, 20 mentoring sessions took place and 60 cases of cooperation obligations of business mentors and start-up entrepreneurs were registered.

Statistical data about the number of participants is not available.

[There is limited statistical data/no evaluations of this measure. Enterprise Lithuania shares 'success stories' on their website: <https://mentoriai.verslilietuva.lt/sekmes-istorijos/>. However, I would estimate that impact of this measure is limited and the group of participants in the mentorship activities is comprised of entrepreneurs that would probably have succeeded anyways without the possibility to participate in the network activities (i.e., self-selection bias)]

Drafted by: Audrone Sadauskaite

References:

<https://mentoriai.verslilietuva.lt/>
<https://www.verslilietuva.lt/paslaugos/nacionalinis-mentoriu-tinklas/>
<https://www.enterpriselithuania.com/en/services/national-mentors-network>

Country	LT						
ID	LT_04						
Name in English	LT_04 Accelerator Funds						
Name in local language	<i>Akceleravimo fondai</i>						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						
The Accelerator Fund was established in 2018 and is implemented through the fund-of-funds 'Business Financing Fund' that is funded from the European Regional Development Fund (under the Operational Programme for EU Structural Funds Investments in 2014-2020). The Accelerator Fund falls under the Priority Axis 3 measures that aim at fostering SME competitiveness, and, more specifically, fostering entrepreneurship. INVEGA manages the fund-of-funds, which is founded by the Ministry of Economy and Innovation, the Ministry of Finance and INVEGA. The Accelerator Fund is comprised of two pre-seed venture capital funds and two accelerator funds. There are two managers under the instrument of Accelerator Fund: Startup Wise Guys and 70 Ventures. Both companies manage one pre-seed venture capital fund and one accelerator fund each. The pre-seed venture capital funds provide training and knowledge of business development, while the accelerator funds co-invest in young enterprises at an early stage. 70 Ventures provides a revenue accelerator for B2B start-ups. Startup Wise Guys have so far organised acceleration programmes for start-ups in the following areas: - B2B SaaS: Business-to-business Software as a service start-ups; - Sustainability: accelerator programmes oriented at B2B AgriTech, FoodTech, MedTech, EdTech, SexTech, Smart city, Mobility, Energy, and Supply Chain start-ups; - FinTech: dedicated to Fintech, PropTech, RegTech, InsurTech, Analytics and Cybersecurity start-ups; - Cyber: Defense AI and cybersecurity-focused acceleration program. Startup Wise Guys and 70 Ventures have so far invested into respectively 36 and 24 companies as part of their pre-seed funds, and into respectively 3 and 7 companies through their accelerator funds. The overall volumes of funding available via the measure 'Accelerator fund' is EUR 16.4 million, out of which EUR 13.5 million are ERPF funds. The official target for the measure 'Accelerator fund' as a whole are investment into approx. 45 beneficiaries. One additional requirement was that the fund managers attract at least 10% additional funds from private investors (a requirement which was met by the fund managers). A 2019 evaluation report found that measures promoting entrepreneurship (of which this measure is a part of) are expected to improve conditions for new business creation and as a result have a long-term impact on the level of entrepreneurship. Financial measures, especially venture capital funds, are expected to contribute to it the most significantly, as such instruments help shape business and investor behaviour that favours new business creation. Large amounts of planned investment accompanied by mentoring should have a long-term impact on the viability and development of the SMEs that received investment. The evaluation also found that the Accelerator Fund covers one of the most significant gaps of the Lithuanian start-up ecosystem- fostering start-ups at the early stages of idea generation (many other financial support measures target start-ups already at later stages of development). The evaluation did not find robust evidence of impact of measures upon the viability of the start-ups (the Accelerator Funds measure was not subject to a counterfactual impact evaluation).							

Drafted by: Audrone Sadauskaite

References:

<https://invega.lt/en/venture-capital/accelerator-programmes/>

<https://invega.lt/lt/rizikos-kapitalo-investicijos/dokumentai/>

<https://startupwiseguys.com/>

<https://www.70v.com/>

2019 evaluation report (summary in EN available): <https://www.esinvesticijos.lt/lt/dokumentai//veiksmu-programos-3-prioriteto-smulkiojo-ir-vidutinio-verslo-konkurencingumo-skatinimas-poveikio-vertinimas>

Country	LU						
ID	LU_01						
Name in English	LU_01 Personnel working time arrangement						
Name in local language	<i>Aménagement personnel du temps de travail</i>						
Year of implementation	2006						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
							X
Employees working for a company with flexible working hours may request Personal working time arrangement (<i>Aménagement personnel du temps de travail</i>), a measure that makes it easier for them to attend training courses due to the allowances provided by the flexible management of working hours. Thanks to the flexible working hours, the employee can manage the hours and length of his/her working day to fit his needs for training. This arrangement should be applied in compliance with: the requirements of the company department and the justified wishes of other employees; the legal limits for working time – e.g. apart from legal exceptions, working time cannot exceed 10 hours per day or 48 hours per week; the pre-defined rules in the context of regulations for flexible working hours. The process is the following: as there is no universal system for the management of flexible working hours, only recommendations are proposed for the parties involved in managing regulations for flexible working hours. Regulations for flexible working hours may mean that: the management of working hour deficits noted at the end of the reference period may be subject to specific solutions. In this case, the maximum deficit amount for each reference period can be increased for the employee undertaking training, and similarly the deadline for clearing the deficits can be extended; core time during which employees must be at work can be adjusted on an individual basis, according to the specific constraints of those undertaking training; the total range (start and end of working hours) including core and flexible time can be extended beyond the normal limits. Companies can refuse to provide this arrangement but should motivate their decision. This arrangement was negotiated and included in the legislation in 2006 (http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/rgd/2006/03/30/n2/jo). This measure is applied for a long time, but there is no evaluation about its scope. However, my expert evaluation would be that it is a successful measure, because facilitates the training process in terms of flexible solutions.							

Drafted by: Vassil Kirov

References:

<https://www.lifelong-learning.lu/Detail/Article/Aides/amenagement-personnel-du-temps-de-travail/fr>

Country	LU						
ID	LU_03						
Name in English	LU_03 Luxembourg Digital Skills Bridge						
Name in local language	<i>Luxembourg Digital Skills Bridge</i>						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X				
The Luxembourg Digital Skills Bridge programme aims to develop a common national strategy and support mechanism to aid in the future skills development of the national workforce and assist companies in their response to the digital transformation of their businesses. The project has been launched in May 2018 (https://gouvernement.lu/en/actualites/toutes_actualites/communiqués/2018/05-mai/02-digital-skills-bridge.html). More concretely, Luxembourg Digital Skills Bridge aims to provide technical and financial assistance to upskill employees in companies facing major technological disruption. Skills Bridge intends to help those companies to invest in the future of their employees and business by developing the competencies of the employees so as to better anticipate and adapt their organisation to emerging technologies. The funding for this programme is national (https://digital-luxembourg.public.lu/initiatives/luxembourg-digital-skills-bridge#). Its governance is ensured by the Conjoncture Committee (“Comité de conjoncture”), which is a tripartite official body gathering government representatives from the administrations directly involved in the project, representatives of employer associations and trade unions benefitting from national representation. The “Comité de conjoncture” is co-chaired by the Minister of Labour, Employment and the social and solidarity economy and the Minister of the Economy. More concretely, the programme intends to coach and upskill employees – whose jobs will be impacted by the digitalisation – and advise them on new placement opportunities (internal or external mobility). The pilot project is open to all companies, regardless of their sector of activity or their size (https://cms.refernet.lu/View/Document/luxembourg-digital-skills-bridge/fr). There is no specific target group, the operation could be applied in all types of companies that will be hit by the digital transformation. During the pilot stage all the expenses of participating companies have been fully covered. The specific topics of training covered include soft and digital skills, provided by four bodies, selected through a tender (https://cms.refernet.lu/View/Document/luxembourg-digital-skills-bridge/fr). According to the Annual Report of the Public Employment Service ADEM for 2018 (https://adem.public.lu/en/publications/adem/2019/RA2018.html), in 2018 more than 300 employees from ten companies have already benefited from the actions implemented as part of this innovative and recognized programme at European level. For the moment there are no official evaluations of the programme as it is rather recent. However, Luxembourg Digital Skills Bridge has been recognised by the Financial Times, Google and leading European policy makers as one of 100 digital pioneers in Europe (https://cms.refernet.lu/View/Document/luxembourg-digital-skills-bridge/fr). The programme is also highly appreciated by large companies, because of the role of the state in the anticipation of labour market changes.							

Drafted by: Vassil Kirov

References:

Annual Report of the Public Employment Service ADEM for 2018 (<https://adem.public.lu/en/publications/adem/2019/RA2018.html>)

Country	LU						
ID	LU_04						
Name in English	LU_04 Fit 4 Digital						
Name in local language	<i>Fit 4 Digital</i>						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X					
The Chamber of Skilled Trades and Crafts and the Chamber of Commerce guide and help businesses with digital transformation. Their support includes raising awareness, providing information, diagnosing business challenges, providing recommendations and helping implement the suggested IT solutions. The Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Skilled Trades and Crafts use services offered by Luxinnovation's - Luxembourg's central business development and innovation agency - 'Fit 4 Digital' to support SMEs with digital technologies. More specifically, SMEs wanting to start or develop their digitisation process contact the professional chamber with whom they are registered. The businesses must fill an application on Luxinnovation's website in order to benefit from the 'Fit for Digital' programme. They then must choose a consultant from Luxinnovation's 'Fit 4 Digital' programme who will analyse how their different departments (such as human resources, purchasing, accounting) use information and communications technologies (ICT). The consultant assesses the digital maturity of the business and potential for improved use of ICT. After diagnosing the business, the consultant provides recommendations for implementing IT tools. The concrete benefits and added value for each business shape each support proposal. During the digitalisation process, businesses may benefit from different types of financial aid granted by the Ministry of the Economy. This digitalisation programme for SMEs focuses on SMEs in commerce, industry, crafts or the hotel/restaurant/café sector and who hold a business permit from the General Directorate for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises. According to a government site, immediately after accepting the application for the 'Fit for Digital' programme, the Ministry of the Economy will send, without any other formality, a 'voucher/Chèques-services enterprise' to the applicant that will cover diagnostic expenses up to the amount of EUR 5 000 excluding VAT. Businesses which decide to implement the proposed measures may also use the SME aid scheme to cover the cost of consultancy services provided by external specialists, and benefit from investment aid to cover equipment and software investments relating to the Fit 4 Digital project. During implementation, the programme may pay for continuing vocational training for the necessary digitalisation and operation of new IT tools. Data on participating enterprises were not made available and no evaluation study had been implemented by the time of this research.							

Drafted by: Vassil Kirov

References:

[<https://guichet.public.lu/en/entreprises/financement-aides/regime-fit-for/fit-4-digital/aide-digitalisation.html>]
<https://www.cc.lu/en/news/detail/fit-4-digital-packages-un-nouveau-programme-de-digitalisation-tout-en-un-pour-les-tpe/>

Country	LU						
ID	LU_05						
Name in English	LU_05 Fit 4 Innovation						
Name in local language	Fit 4 Innovation						
Year of implementation	2015						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						

Fit 4 Innovation is a subsidised programme aimed at supporting SMEs, developed by LuxInnovation in partnership with the Ministry of the Economy. This programme supports the improvement of the companies' ability to innovate and to develop and ensure its continued existence by sustainably increasing activity. Luxinnovation is assisted in this task by organisation consultants and change management experts who have extensive experience of such projects. The state agency Luxinnovation offers a wide portfolio of services to companies and public research organisations in order to foster innovation, thus supporting the Government's economic development objectives. The agency also ensures that Luxembourg continues to attract international investment, companies and skills that are a perfect fit for the country. The Fit 4 Innovation programme is aimed at all small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) that carry out their activity in Luxembourg. The purpose of this programme is to assist SMEs in optimising their operations and freeing up resources (both human and financial) by resorting to the use of external experts. The freed-up resources can be assigned to medium- and long-term innovation projects. The levers of action are set so as to eliminate inefficient processes, increase productivity and quality, and in particular to identify areas of innovation. The Ministry of the Economy supports this approach by granting the participating business a capital grant to cover the cost of external consultants (The capital grant covers 50 % of the fixed cost for the consultant). Only the costs for the consultant working on the project are eligible (<https://guichet.public.lu/en/entreprises/financement-aides/regime-fit-for/fit4innovation/fit4innovation.html>). The fixed cost for the consultant is capped at EUR 15 000 excl. VAT. (ibid.). The intervention of external consultants/experts leads to the acquisition of new knowledge and skills in SMEs. The programme is recent, launched in 2015 (<https://luxtimes.lu/archives/12047-smes-in-luxembourg-to-receive-boost-with-fit-for-innovation>). According to the cited article (see previous link), seven companies took part in the pilot phase of this project. There is no statistics available publicly, but in the Luxembourgish media there are articles about some of its beneficiaries - <https://paperjam.lu/article/digitalisation-pme-luxembourg-> In 2018, according to the Annual Report of Luxinnovation (<https://www.luxinnovation.lu/fr/news/publication-du-rapport-annuel-2018-de-luxinnovation/>), 85 new companies benefitted from the scheme, showing an increasing interest in its activities. This recent initiative is also very useful for the small companies in Luxembourg, that might receive public support for innovation activities.

Drafted by: Vassil Kirov

References:

[<https://guichet.public.lu/en/entreprises/financement-aides/regime-fit-for/fit4innovation/fit4innovation.html>]
<https://www.luxinnovation.lu/innovate-in-luxembourg/performance-programmes/fit-4-innovation/>

Country	LV						
ID	LV_01						
Name in English	LV_01 Support for Longer Working Life						
Name in local language	<i>Atbalsts ilgākam darba mūžam</i>						
Year of implementation	[No information given]						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
					X		
					Provision (on-site or external) to the employees of one organisation		
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					
The objective of this ESF-funded support measure implemented by the State Employment agency is to facilitate employment and competitiveness of older employees in order to mitigate their unemployment. Thus, it is a preventive measure dedicated to the employed individuals. Any employer, who employs persons older than 50, may apply for participation in the measure, provided that at least one of these criteria is met: 1. The employee's health has recently deteriorated to point where they no longer are able to perform their duties. 2. The employee has not attained higher education level than general or vocational secondary education or is employed in low skilled jobs despite having higher education. 3. The employee is unable to work normal hours due to having to care for a family member. 4. The employee works part-time and has income below 80% of the minimum wage. To implement the project a team of experts will assess work environment to provide the employer with aging management plan detailing results of the assessment, including reports on each employee of the target group, and suggest a plan of action. Eligible costs of the measure include personnel costs if respective person is employed at least at 30% of time and project management costs for the company employing the person. The instrument provides career consultation and adjusting workplace to the needs of elderly. This support is all covered by the budget of the instrument on no co-funding from the employer is requested. The following support will be provided to the employees: • Career consultation • Mentoring - the elderly employee will either become a mentor to another employee or be mentored by another employee themselves. A subsidy will be provided to compensate mentor for their time (no more than half of the minimum wage for no more than two weeks) • Measures to raise competitiveness by taking part in individual and group activities aimed at improving person's skills or health. • Adjusting workplace in accordance with ergo therapist recommendations. • Health improvement activities as recommended for each employee in their individual assessment. State Employment Agency implements the measure at national level. The measure is a response to ageing of workforce. In 2017, one third of workforce in Latvia were in the age group of 50-64 and people in this age group face several problems in competing in the labour market. It is expected that the measure should support at least 500 elderly people. No evaluation of the instrument has been performed. The instrument is a new type of initiative for the companies and unemployed people in Latvia. Knowing the aging of the population it is very timely and most likely will have some effect on reconsideration of involvement of elderly people in employment. However, the scope and resources for the instrument are limited and substantial changes in the perceptions on this problem are required to reach significant impact.							

Drafted by: Anete Vingre

References: <http://www.nva.gov.lv/index.php?cid=446&mid=622>

Country	LV						
ID	LV_02						
Name in English	LV_02 Practical training in the employers' facilities						
Name in local language	Apmācība pie darba devēja						
Year of implementation	2015						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
					X		
					Providing work experience or on-site training spells to non-employees		
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X		X				
This ESF-funded measure aims to train unemployed persons according to the needs of the employer. The instrument is in line with the strategic focus of "Inclusive Employment Guidelines 2015-2020" developed by the Ministry of Welfare. The guidelines emphasise active labour market policy to help unemployed people to access quality jobs. The implementing body of a measure is the State Employment Agency of Latvia. Training is performed at the facilities of the employer to ensure access to real life work environment and provide training that best suits the needs of employer. Training can be provided only to unemployed persons not involved in other employment measures. Training should last at least 6 months and the employer is obliged to employ the trained persons for at least 3 months after the completion of the training. Training can not be performed for low-skilled jobs. No specific types of enterprises are targeted and enterprises of all sizes and sectors can participate in the scheme. The measure provides monthly co-funding to cover the salary of the trained persons for 6 months as well as co-funding for the salary of training manager at the company. Co-funding is also available in case the new employee is disabled and the workplace needs to be adjusted for the needs of disabled. The enterprise employing unemployed person has to cover part of the monthly salary and cover social security payments for the employed persons. No evaluation of the scheme has been performed so far. The measure is implemented since 2015 and the demand for it increases every year. In 2019, 180 SMEs have used the measure and 428 unemployed persons have been trained. The most popular training is for qualification of cook, sewer, operator of sewing machines, food processor, retail workers, client managers. No evaluation of the scheme has been performed so far.							

Drafted by: Anete Vingre

References:

www.nva.gov.lv

Ministry of Welfare of Latvia, 2015. Inclusive Employment Guidelines 2015-2020. Available at: http://www.lm.gov.lv/eng/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=82858

Country	LV						
ID	LV_04						
Name in English	LV_04 Web portal on life-long learning opportunities						
Name in local language	Mājas lapa						
Year of implementation	2015						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
					X		
Web portal www.muzizglitiba.lv provides an interactive map with information on adult education opportunities across the country. The map provides links to institutions providing the education and lists education programmes. The portal provides also good practice examples from companies engaged in employee training, news section, overview of available programmes, information on national policy in the field of adult education as well as calendar of relevant upcoming events. Sometimes the portal is used by the Ministry of Education and Science to organise surveys on adult education. Target audiences are general public interested in adult education, employers and local municipalities. Information about the web portal is published and advertised in the main national public services portal and the web portal on life-long learning opportunities is marketed as the main source of information on the topic. The web portal has been designed and sustained by the Ministry of Education and Science of Latvia with funding from Erasmus+ programme. The website was launched in 2015 in the scope of Erasmus+ project coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Science. The project is completed, but the information on the website is regularly updated and this is funded from state budget resources. Statistics on the use of the portal is not collected. According to the Ministry of Education and Science some 1 000 people have signed – up for regular updates from website. The operation of the website has not been evaluated so far. The website is somewhat relevant since it summarizes the information on training availability in regions, but it is not very much advertised thus probably reaches limited audience. Website of State employment agency and local municipalities are more likely approached than this particular site.							

Drafted by: Anete Vingre

References:

www.muzizglitiba.lv

Country	LV						
ID	LV_05						
Name in English	LV_05 Training of unemployed persons at the employer request						
Name in local language	<i>Bezdarbnieku apmācība pēc darba devēja pieprasījuma</i>						
Year of implementation	2016						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
					X		
					Providing work experience or on-site training spells to non-employees		
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						
Employers can receive support from the State Employment Agency to train the unemployed according to the needs of the company. The training is organised by the Agency in any licensed vocational education programme, informal education programme or programme ensuring the qualification for driver's licence. The employer has an obligation to employ the trained persons for at least six months after the completion of the training. No specific types of enterprises are targeted and enterprises of all sizes and sectors can participate in the scheme. The employer is directly involved in the selection process of the unemployed persons to be trained as well as in the selection of specific training programmes. If necessary, the employer can develop new and targeted training programme in cooperation with the training provider. The State Employment Agency covers all costs, and the programme is funded by the ESF. The scheme was introduced to address both unemployment problem and the need for employees with specific skills that are not readily available in the labour market. Thus, the instrument tries to address the mismatch between the demand of employees and the actual competences available among unemployed. The Ministry of Welfare has identified need for more targeted measures to support unemployed persons and introduction of this incentive was a step in that direction. Since the introduction of the programme in 2016, 43 companies have participated, and 159 unemployed persons have been trained. Most frequently used training is for acquiring driver's licence, training for security guards and hotel administrators. Demand for the programme has increased in 2018 as a result of more active popularisation of the programme among employers. However, according to the assessment of Ministry of Welfare, this programme has unexploited potential, and the number of beneficiaries should be further increased.							

Drafted by: Anete Vingre

References:

www.muzizglitiba.lv

Country	MT						
ID	MT_01						
Name in English	MT_01 Aid for Research and Development Projects (Tax Credits)						
Name in local language	<i>Aid for Research and Development Projects (Tax Credits)</i>						
Year of implementation	[No information given]						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						
The measure providing aid for research and development projects is implemented since 2017 in Malta. It is administered by the Malta Enterprise Corporation, which acts as the country's economic development agency with the objective (among others) to facilitate the growth of existing operations. The measure allows companies to claim tax credits on costs incurred directly or indirectly in carrying out Research & Development (R&D) projects or projects relevant to the company's trade. More specifically, eligible projects should seek advances in science or technology and through the resolution of scientific or technological uncertainty. The scope of the incentive is limited to industrial research and experimental development. It is implemented at national level. Costs covered eligible for a tax credit include qualifying employee training costs, contracted R&D expenditure, materials & utilities, software, and supporting activities. Training costs related to the R&D project are eligible for cofunding. Beneficiaries will receive a tax credit calculated at twenty-five percent (25%) of the eligible expenditure. The applicable percentage rate depends on the size of the company: Preferential treatment is provided for medium sized enterprises receiving a tax credit of 35% of the eligible costs, and small enterprises a tax credit of 45% of the relevant costs. The maximum budget is EUR 15 million per beneficiary/ enterprise.							

Drafted by: Jakob Weiss

References:

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/1417/modern-enterprises-program/>

Country	MT						
ID	MT_02						
Name in English	MT_02 Investing in Crafts						
Name in local language	<i>Investing in Crafts</i>						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X					
Through this incentive, artisans get support in the process of transferring their skills to other persons and to assist artisan start-ups. It is administered by the Malta Enterprise Corporation, which acts as the country's economic development agency with the objective (among others) to facilitate the growth of existing operations. It is implemented since September 2018. For the purpose of this measure, a craft is defined as an occupation or trade requiring skill with hands in creating unique items which may have a functional or decorative use. Aid under this measure is given in a form of a cash grant, covering the time dedicated to skills transfer (up to EUR 10 000) and the purchase of materials required for its implementation (up to EUR 2 000). The maximum duration is of 24 months. An additional bonus of up to EUR 1,000 shall be awarded to the mentor if they employ the trainee after the training, or if within 6 months from the completion of the skills transfer programme the trainee establishes a new business based on the skills attained. The scheme also supports the trainees who after receiving the training start a new craft related business based on the knowledge skills and expertise gained. The Cooperation assists the start-ups in the development of a training programme and facilitates the interaction between the craftsman and the trainee. The overall budget of the measure is EUR 740 000. No evaluation study has been conducted.							

Drafted by: Jakob Weiss

References:

<http://justiceservices.gov.mt/DownloadDocument.aspx?app=lom&itemid=12926&l=1>
<http://maltaenterprise.com/support/investing-crafts>

Country	MT						
ID	MT_03						
Name in English	MT_03 Skills Development scheme						
Name in local language	<i>Skills Development scheme</i>						
Year of implementation	[No information given]						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X					
This scheme supports business undertakings to provide training to acquire and update the skills and knowledge of their workforce, address skills shortages, facilitate re-skilling, tackle skill mismatches and work towards developing a knowledge-based workforce. It is administered by the Malta Enterprise Corporation, which acts as the country's economic development agency with the objective (among others) to facilitate the growth of existing operations. This scheme has a budget of EUR 30 000 000. In principle the aid is granted in the form of a tax credit, however the Malta Enterprise Corporation may consider awarding assistance in the form of a cash grant. The maximum support is of EUR 2 000 000 per skills development project. Eligible costs include consultancy costs for developing the training programme, wage costs of trainees and trainers, travel expenses and other costs such as rental of training rooms and equipment. Aid intensity varies between 50% and 70% depending on the size of the beneficiary. Training which is mandatory for the role of the employee is not eligible for funding. No evaluation study has been conducted.							

Drafted by: Jakob Weiss

References:

<https://www.maltaenterprise.com/support/skills-development-scheme-2020>

Country	MT						
ID	MT_04						
Name in English	MT_04 Family Business Support Services						
Name in local language	<i>Family Business Support Services</i>						
Year of implementation	[No information given]						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X				
This measure is intended to support the development of Family Businesses in building internal capacities and supporting them in the transfer of their business activity. The support includes advisory services during business transition and access to specific training deemed beneficial in facilitating the growth of Family Businesses. It is administered by the Malta Enterprise Corporation, which acts as the country's economic development agency with the objective (among others) to facilitate the growth of existing operations. The scheme supports a family business to cover the cost of legal, notarial or accountancy advisory services required in carrying out the process of transferring the business from the current owner to either a person or persons related to the owner or to third parties. It also covers arbitration costs. With regard to training, the scheme supports the participation in training by owners of family businesses and their employees to seminars and information sessions endorsed by the Regulator as beneficial for the development, growth and better administration and management of the family business. After attending a listed training event a family business may request a refund of costs by submitting a claim. This measure has an annual budget of EUR 250 000 and an overall budget of EUR 1 000 000. The maximum support per undertaking may not exceed EUR 4 500 in any single year.							

Drafted by: Jakob Weiss

References:

<https://www.maltaenterprise.com/support/family-business-support-services>

Country	MT						
ID	MT_05						
Name in English	MT_05 Cooperate for growth						
Name in local language	<i>Cooperate for growth</i>						
Year of implementation	[No information given]						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X					X	
This incentive complements other schemes supporting innovation and aims to support undertakings that are willing to establish new markets, or to introduce a new service or product in an existing international market. It is administered by the Malta Enterprise Corporation, which acts as the country's economic development agency with the objective (among others) to facilitate the growth of existing operations. The scheme supports the participation in planned meetings between two or more parties organised for the purpose of technology transfer, knowledge sharing, developing business, facilitating research collaborations, venture funding and similar business interaction. The applicant is required to demonstrate that the ultimate scope of the action is to develop, increase or enhance economic activities through cross-border collaboration. It is only possible to receive support if the person attending the meeting is an employee of the applicant, the meeting is not held in Malta, and the person attending is not resident in the country where the meeting was held. The total budget for this scheme is EUR 50 000 for the duration of the scheme with an average annual expenditure of EUR 15 000.							

Drafted by: Jakob Weiss

References:

<http://maltaenterprise.com/support/cooperate-growth>

Country	MT						
ID	MT_06						
Name in English	MT_06 Certify (Tax Credits) 2018 – 2020						
Name in local language	<i>Certify (Tax Credits) 2018 – 2020</i>						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						
Certify (Tax Credits) 2018 - 2020 is a fiscal measure administered by the Malta Enterprise Corporation to encourage eligible undertakings to continuously improve the quality of their products, services and processes through the attainment of industry recognised certifications. The scheme is intended to boost awareness of the added value that may be achieved through certification when competing in international markets. While the support for training related to certification process or as a requirement for becoming certified is not explicitly mentioned among the goals of the approach, it is well documented that many certification procedures require an increase of training activities, either for specific assigned roles (e.g. with regard to quality management, environmental protection etc.) or for implementing the approach (e.g. regular workshops for all employees involved in one process). Support for certification therefore can be seen as a particular lever for increasing training activities in enterprises. The incentive will award tax credits to single undertakings that achieve qualifying Certifications awarded by a Certifying Body. According to the regulations, the certifications must be required to either improve the processes, products or services of the undertaking or to achieve growth in international markets. The objective is to make it easier for undertakings to carry out investments that lead to superior products, services of higher value and more efficient processes. The total aid that may be awarded to any single undertaking through this measure is capped at EUR 25 000 per certification. Consultancy costs are capped at EUR 2 500 per certification.							

Drafted by: Jakob Weiss

References:

<https://www.facebook.com/vallalkozzdigitalisan/>

Country	NL						
ID	NL_01						
Name in English	NL_01 Validation of Prior Learning system for 'green employees'						
Name in local language	VPL-pilot						
Year of implementation	2017 [single action; now structurally embedded in HRM-policy of the local authority of Emmen; this is an exemplary demonstration of an approach of first piloting, then evaluating and finally structurally embedding VPL-systematics into HRM-policies of local authorities]						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
					X		
					Promoting the participation of MSME employees in external CVET opportunities offered to individuals		
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						
In 2017, the local city of Emmen initiated a "Validation of Prior Learning" (VPL)-pilot. It is an approach intended at helping to obtain qualifications but also help in strengthening employability of target groups. VPL in general focuses on 'preventing unnecessary learning/education and focus on just what's needed to add to someone's skills. The project was funded by the local authorities themselves. Target groups of the measure include unskilled and low skilled workers (self-employed, employees) from SMEs in the 'green' (public gardeners, maintenance, etc) and 'grey' sectors (sewer maintenance, garbage, etc). Their educational level varied between none (no 'start qualification') and EQF 2. Specifically, the local authority Emmen organised, in collaboration with Libereaux (VPL-provider) a collective information meeting to inform employees about the procedures. After the collective meeting, employees could sign up for a personal intake. After intake, in which the personal urge and profit was discussed, the procedure started. Provided services were free of charge for participants. There is no formal evaluation of the measure. Notwithstanding this, some of the main results of the project included the following ones: • 110 workers invited to collective information meeting. These employees came from local SMEs • 90 workers present during collective information meeting. • 85 workers went to a personal intake with a personal coach of Libereaux. • 40 workers started and finished the procedure. For those workers who finished the procedure, they got a new job opportunity in a different (higher) job position, as well as further training and education opportunities • 45 workers never started a procedure or quitted quickly after intake.							

Drafted by: Ruud Duvekot

References:

<https://www.libereaux.nl/cases/7/gemeente-emmen/>

Country	NL						
ID	NL_04						
Name in English	NL_04 Learning Working Desks						
Name in local language	LeerWerkloketten						
Year of implementation	2009						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X			X		
This programme, called Learning Working Desks (LeerWerkLoketten in Dutch) was created in 2009 from the Learning and Working Program of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (SZW). Commissioned by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, UWV (Employee Insurance Agency) manages these Desks. Every labour market region has a Learning Work Desk and each Learning Work Desk is funded by at least three partners, namely the municipality(-ies), ROC (upper secondary vocational education institutes) and UWV. In total, there are 35 Leerwerkloketten throughout the country. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (SZW) makes a structural contribution of EUR 4.5 million a year to the services provided by the Desks (EUR 1 million national project costs, EUR 3.5 million implementation in the labour market region). In addition to this funding from SZW, the participating partners must jointly finance at least 50% of the basic amount of EUR 100 000 per Learning Desk. Each Leerwerkloket advises jobseekers, employees, pupils, students and entrepreneurs about retraining and further training, learning while working and apprenticeship trajectories. Also, the advisers of the Learning Work Counters conduct career / labour market advice interviews, conduct competency tests, help with the preparation of a CV and the preparation of job interviews, provide group information and contribute to the realization of regional work placement trajectories with entrepreneurs. Specifically, and as far as jobseeker, employee, self-employed or students are concerned, each Leerwerkloket provides some of the following services: • Provide career and training advice to participants. • Map out talents and interests together. • Identify professions and career choices better adapted • Identify right training and further training opportunities. • Support in finding a new job. For employers, each Leerwerkloket provides some of the following services: • Provide tailor-made advice on training and development of employees. • Conduct career orientation and development advice discussions with your employees. • Guide and advise in setting up work-study trajectories. • Provide info on existing financial arrangements. Services of the Leerwerkloket are free for users. The programme has been extended several times since 2009, due to its importance and success, and it is expected to being extended in the coming years too.							

Drafted by: Ruud Duvekot

References:

<https://www.lerenenwerken.nl/>

Country	NL						
ID	NL_05						
Name in English	NL_05 SME Idea						
Name in local language	MKB !dee						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X			X			

In 2018, the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs designed the MKB !Dee [SME Idea] programme to help entrepreneurs devise innovative solutions that improve the skills of their staff and stimulate the learning culture in SMEs, as well as resolve bottlenecks discouraging companies from investing in training and development. The programme can, for example, support experiments with e-learning modules or innovative plans to improve the learning culture or sustainable employment within the company.

The programme 2020 budget of EUR 10 million devotes at least EUR 2.7 million to applications submitted by small enterprises or firms partnering with at least one small enterprise.

The minimum subsidy per enterprise is EUR 25 000 and the maximum amount is EUR 124 999 including VAT. Projects with higher costs are also eligible for a subsidy, but only up to those limits. The programme covers all reasonably incurred costs directly related to implementing the project, including wages and costs for engaging third parties.

A platform shares results to maximise the enterprises possible benefitting from the experiences.

Entrepreneurs have found solutions for problems such as:

- too little time or money for staff training;
- discovering relevant developments in technology, digitisation, energy and climate;
- mismatch between education and the labour market;
- uncertainty on yields from an investment in learning and development;
- lack of knowledge about human resource methods or tools;
- finding the desired training.

In 2019, the programme gave high priority to projects related to technical sectors, energy, climate and digitisation.

The programme has not yet been evaluated but it is a strong incentive for developing innovative HRM practices amongst companies, particularly SMEs. Up to December 2018, the programme supported 14 projects; by December 2019 this had increased to 47. The 2018 budget allocated EUR 2 million to projects. In 2019 this increased to EUR 7.5 million.

Drafted by: Ruud Duvekot

References:

<https://mkbideenetwerk.nl>

Country	NL						
ID	NL_06						
Name in English	NL_06 oZone (Online learning platform for the technical sector)						
Name in local language	oZone (Online learning platform for the technical sector)						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
				X	X		
oZone is an online learning environment developed since 2019 for and by companies in the technical sector. The platform consists of basic learning material (the library) that can be used immediately. This library is open to everyone, not just companies. oZone has been developed by several Dutch training funds (A+O Metalektro, OOM and OTIB) The oZone library contains up-to-date learning materials that deal with the development of (technical) craftsmanship. Topics vary from welding, turning, milling and heat pump systems to measuring, drawing reading and materials knowledge. oZone is suitable for those who already work in technology and want to increase their knowledge, but also for those who want to orient themselves into the technical sector. Students who follow a technical training can also use it. In addition to the ready-made learning content, companies affiliated with the training funds (A+O Metalektro, OOM and OTIB) can also make their own materials for oZone. These companies use the platform to increase the technical skills of their employees and to facilitate learning in the organization. They can also share more technical knowledge not only with employees, but also with chain partners, other companies and trainers. They can also create their own modules in oZone, prepare learning paths for their employees and monitor progress. Participation in oZone is free of charge for companies affiliated with A + O Metalektro, OOM and OTIB. Meanwhile, and for those companies not affiliated with one of these training funds, they have to pay EUR 1 500 per year (including VAT). There are no results from evaluation studies. Notwithstanding this, the initiative can be regarded as very interesting, since it facilitates companies and employees in a number of ways, such as: • It increases the technical craftsmanship of employees. • It helps to develop learning modules and complete learning paths specific to your company. • It records the knowledge of experienced employees in a structured way. • It speeds up the familiarisation process of new employees and side-entry staff. • It easily follows the progress of your employees. • It exchanges knowledge about new developments, such as robotisation and the energy transition.							

Drafted by: Ruud Duvekot

References:

<https://www.ozone.nl/voor-bedrijven/>

Country	NL						
ID	NL_07						
Name in English	NL_07 House of Skills Regio Amsterdam						
Name in local language	House of Skills Regio Amsterdam						
Year of implementation	2017						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X			X	X
House of Skills is a public-private partnership set up in September 2017 that aims to transform the current labour market in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area into a more skills-oriented labour market. Businesses, industry organizations, employee and employer organizations, knowledge institutions, education and administrators from the region collaborate with each other in this House of Skills. Examples of partners include FNV, James, Gemeente Amsterdam, Metropoolregio Amsterdam, TNO, Manpower, Randstad, UvA, VU, SEO, ROC van Amsterdam, HvA, NOVA, Techniekraad, UWV, Windesheim Flevoland, Hogeschool Arnhem Nijmegen, Saxion Hogeschool, SBB, AWWN). House of Skills develops various tools for employers, employees and jobseekers in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area, including: • Skill taxonomy / ontology (ESCO, O'NET and Competent) • Assessments and competency scans • Skill passport • Career advice • Modular vocational education offer based on skills • The 'Fitting Room', a skill matching tool where employees and jobseekers can compile their own skills profile and, based on this, receive suggestions for professions that match their skills and open positions that match them. • MijnHouseofSkills Platform, an online tool to map work experience and skills and match them to existing vacancies and training opportunities. It is also a skills-based recruitment channel for employers Some services provided are free of charge, whereas in other cases costs are paid by employers, employees or job-seekers agency/community Target groups of this policy measure include: • Employees in a sector threatened by job loss (MSMEs and bigger companies). • People who have been unemployed for less than 1 year. • Special target groups of the municipalities of the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area with labour market potential. There is no info on available results obtained by the measure. Projects and initiatives are introduced on the website. Notwithstanding this, House of Skills can be identified as a successful initiative in upgrading the skill content of the Amsterdam labour market. The broad partnership-engagement is at the root of its success.							

Drafted by: Ruud Duvekot

References:

<https://www.houseofskillsregioamsterdam.nl>

Country	NL						
ID	NL_08						
Name in English	NL_08 SLIM, subsidy scheme for learning and developing in SMEs						
Name in local language	SLIM, subsidieregeling leren en ontwikkelen in het MKB						
Year of implementation	2020						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X					
The national SLIM subsidy was introduced in 2020 by the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment. The aim of SLIM is to contribute, by means of subsidies, to initiatives aimed at stimulating learning and competence development within Dutch SMEs and large companies. Specifically, the subsidy scheme is intended for three groups of applicants: individual SME companies, partnerships of (at least) two SMEs and, finally, individual large companies in the agriculture, catering and recreation sectors. SLIM subsidy can be used for various activities within companies, this is: • Identification of training needs within a company, development of a training plan • Development of career advice for company employees • Introduction of new methods for fostering employees in the company to further develop knowledge and skills • Provision of practical learning places/apprenticeships positions within companies. Eligible costs to be covered by the SLIM subsidy include external costs actually incurred in implementing an eligible initiative, as well as direct labour costs of the persons involved in the implementation of the initiative, amongst others. The grant is awarded on a co-financing basis, in the sense that it amounts to 60% of the eligible costs for medium and large companies, and 80% in the case of small enterprises. Eligible costs must be at least EUR 5 000 or more. The maximum amount of subsidy ranges from €25,000 in the case of individual SMEs to EUR 200 000 in the case of individual large business companies. There are not yet results from evaluation studies. For year 2020, the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment has made EUR 48 million available annually for the next 4 years for projects initiated by SMEs, and EUR 1.2 million for initiatives of large companies in the agriculture, catering and recreation sectors.							

Drafted by: Ruud Duvekot

References:

<https://www.uitvoeringvanbeleidszw.nl/subsidies-en-regelingen/slim>

Country	NL						
ID	NL_09						
Name in English	NL_09 NL keeps on learning						
Name in local language	NL leert door						
Year of implementation	2020						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					
This initiative, namely “NL leert door [NL keeps on learning]” is being implemented since 2020 by the Policy Implementation Department of the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment is increasingly working with employers to retrain workers and unemployed persons to a profession particularly in some emerging topics (technology, healthcare, education, ICTs), often with a job guarantee. The initiative’s main goal is to provide employed (including flex workers, self-employed persons and entrepreneurs) and unemployed individuals with a free of charge career advice support by a qualified career advisor. This advisor gives participants insight into the future prospects of their current work and their chances on the labour market, help them choose the right training and further training if necessary and, finally, give them tips on alternative professional career paths. Employers can also use ‘NL leert door’ for obtaining tailored career advice for their employees. The costs of this personalised career-advice are free of charge for the users. During the Covid-period also in some cases actual training is also provided. To participate in the programme, participants apply to a career advisor, who takes care of the registration and financial settlement. No results are available yet on the initiative.							

Drafted by: Ruud Duvekot

References:

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/coronavirus-financiele-regelingen/overzicht-financiele-regelingen/now/now-nl-leert-doo>

Country	PL						
ID	PL_01						
Name in English	PL_01 Database of Development Services						
Name in local language	<i>Baza Usług Rozwojowych</i>						
Year of implementation	2016 (DDS was launched in 2016, but the ESF co-funded project which aim was to develop the DDS started in 2015)						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
					X		
Year of implementation:							
The Database of Development Services (DDS - or BUR in Polish) is an online tool which contains offers of training, post-graduate studies, vocational courses, counselling, e-learning and other services that support enterprises (and individuals) in developing competences required on the labour market. DDS, which is administered by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development, was launched in 2016, replacing the previous largest search engine of training services - "Investment in Human Resources". DDS development and maintenance is financed within EU-funded project (with 84% of EU co-financing). The main rationale for establishing the DDS was to provide the opportunity to choose the training provider and the topic/scope of training programme in line with specific training needs of the enterprises or individuals. Moreover, launching the registry of development services (DDS at present) was part of the Partnership Agreement for the programming period 2014-2020. To assure high quality of services available through DDS, all training providers registered in DDS are verified by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development before entering to the database. Moreover, all participants of training programmes provide evaluation of the service once it is completed – as a result new users of the DDS can see the ratings of each training provider to make informed decision when choosing training offer. DDS is available for all companies and individuals. However, DDS is linked to the Entity Financing System and the programme “Academy for Managers in SMEs” in such way, that these MSMEs which are granted co-financing to training activities are obliged to select training/counselling programme and provider from DDS.							

Drafted by: Łukasz Arendt

References:

<https://uslugirozwojowe.parp.gov.pl/>

Country	PL						
ID	PL_03						
Name in English	PL_03 Academy for Managers in SMEs						
Name in local language	Akademia Menadżera MŚP						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X			X	

The programme “Academy for Managers in SMEs” is managed at national level by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development; however, services are delivered by the institutions/operators selected in the tender procedure at the NUTS1 level. The scheme is financed through the ESF. The programme, which started in 2018, has a total financial volume of PLN 47 million. Its aim is to enhance the managerial skills in the Polish SMEs to make them more innovative and competitive on the European and global markets, as 86% of managers in SMEs reported the need of developing management skills. These deficits are perceived as one of important reasons for relatively low competitiveness of the Polish SMEs compared to SMEs from other EU countries. The objective is to increase the adaptability of the enterprises by providing training and consultancy services. The quantitative target for the current (second) phase of the initiative is to train at least 4 000 managers of SMEs.

The current phase was launched in March 2019 and will last till June 2021 (in three NUTS1 regions) or December 2022 (in two NUTS1 regions). The scheme is addressed to MSMEs - in fact to individuals at managerial positions (owners, managers or employees who are going to be promoted to managerial position). It covers training and counselling for MSMEs managers in the field of universal managerial competences. However, the analysis of company's development needs, which is done for each enterprise, is going to show the scale and scope of training needs of managers which helps to select best the training programme. It is implemented by external consultants.

Support within the scheme covers:

- a) diagnosis of company's needs,
- b) diagnosis of competency gaps of the managers
- c) providing development activities to the managers: consultancy and training programmes available in the Database of Development Services.

MSMEs selected to take part in the Academy for Managers in SMEs take advantage on co-financing of the cost of provided support up to 80% of its value. The maximum value of co-financing depends on the enterprise size and NUTS1 region - for microenterprises from PLN 10 000 to PLN 14 244; for small ones from PLN 12 560 to PLN 59 322; for medium ones from PLN 12 880 to PLN 93 055. The maximum amount of co-financing per person (manager) varies between PLN 9 216 and PLN 12 000. Overall, 4 000 managers are going to be supported in this phase of the programme.

Drafted by: Łukasz Arendt

References:

<https://www.parp.gov.pl/component/grants/grants/akademia-menadzera-msp#opis>

Country	PL						
ID	PL_04						
Name in English	PL_04 New start						
Name in local language	Nowy start						
Year of implementation	2020						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X				
The programme "New Start" is managed at the national level by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (Polska Agencja Rozwoju Przedsiębiorczości - PARP). The aim of this programme is to support entrepreneurs (and their employees) from MSMEs, who have failed in business and restarted their business. The rationale for this programme is to use the potential and experience of entrepreneurs (MSMEs) who have experienced business failure. It is also important due to the fact that companies established by people who restart their business activity have higher turnover and employment growth as well as they show greater decision-making caution compared to companies run by entrepreneurs who run their first business or have never failed. PARP indicates that at the same time, by promoting and supporting the possibility of re-starting business activity, it is possible to have a positive impact on the entrepreneurial attitudes of the entire society. Support offered within this programme is delivered by four operators selected in 2019 through a tendering procedure (three of them deliver their services in whole Poland, one of them in selected voivodeships). The offer of those companies differs to some extent from each other, however, their main task is to provide to the entrepreneurs: (a) training activities, in particular on analysing the causes of failure under previous business activities, planning enterprise development and on analysing competency gaps in their enterprises; (b) training activities related to support in running current business activities, including training of already employed employees; (c) advisory activities directly related to the above mentioned training activities. This support offer is assumed to be tailored to the individual needs of entrepreneurs who have restarted their business. Each operator implements its project for this purpose: ☐ Academy of Positive Change (implementation period: 03.2020-12.2021) https://www.polbi.pl/akademia-pozytywnej-zmiany-projekt-ue/ (delivering support in all regions, with the aim to reach 200 MSMEs). This operator provides the following scope of training and counselling: - o Stage I: Interview including training needs analysis. - o Stage II: Trainings (2 days each): Internet Marketing Course; Social media service course; Course in the field of obtaining EU funds; Managerial course. - o Stage III: Analysis of the business failure of a given enterprise and analysis of the consulting needs (3 hours). - o Stage IV: Post-training counselling (24 hours) - the result of cooperation between the entrepreneur and an expert/advisor is (depending on the needs): preparation of a website, marketing strategy, application for investment co-financing or development strategy. - o Stage V: Meetings with a coach or business psychologist (5 hours) ☐ Professional restart (implementation period: 01.2020-12.2021) http://www.eurocapitaldotacje.pl/restart/ (delivering support in all regions, with the aim to reach 200 MSMEs). This operator provides the following scope of training and counselling: - o Stage I: 8 hours of training and 5 hours of individual post-training consultancy – both mainly in the field of analysis of the causes of failure under previous business activity, planning of the entrepreneur's development directions and analysis of the competency gaps of entrepreneurs, resulting in a failure analysis and development plan.							

o Stage II: 16 hours of training and 18 hours of individual post-training consultancy – the exact thematic scope of the support within this stage depends on the needs identified in the stage I and it is tailored to the needs of the particular entrepreneur. The support may focus for instance on: (a) management: strategic/change/crisis management, leadership, incentive systems, data analysis, etc.; (b) finances: accounting, controlling, auditing, financial analysis, investments, etc.; (c) law; (d) interpersonal skills: negotiation, mediation, business psychology.

□ New Start – New Perspective (implementation period: 01.2020-06.2022), <https://efs.seka.pl/msp/> (delivering support in all regions, with the aim to reach 365 MSMEs)

□ 'Ster na cel' (implementation period: 01.2020-12.2022) <https://avsipolska.org/projekt-ster-na-cel/> (delivering support in three regions, with the aim to reach 270 MSMEs)

All the costs related to the above-mentioned activities are considered to be eligible.

The "New Start" programme is addressed to entrepreneurs from the MSME sector restarting their business activity, and more specifically to those who ceased business activity within 24 months before joining the project, and then (within 6 months before joining the project) resumed business activity in the form of sole proprietorship or as partners of a commercial law company.

The activities of the operators are differently spread over time, but they jointly cover the period from January 2020 until December 2022.

The aim of the programme is to support at least 1000 MSMEs that re-start their business activity. The average cost of support for each enterprise restarting its activity may not exceed 15 000 PLN. The programme budget is 15 000 000 PLN. The support for MSME entrepreneurs is financed from the European Social Fund and the state budget. Neither operators nor entrepreneurs have to make their own contribution (de minimis rules apply).

No evaluation study has been conducted yet. The goals of the program are relevant, and the scope of support is appropriate to the needs of entrepreneurs - the individual approach to entrepreneurs and the requirement to adjust support to the situation and needs of a given enterprise should be particularly appreciated. However, a significant obstacle may be the period in which the program is implemented - due to the pandemic, both the recruitment of appropriate beneficiaries and the provision of training and counselling are difficult. In 2020, companies often suspend their activities, and if they fail, they do not reactivate their businesses now, which is a requirement of the program.

Drafted by: Łukasz Arendt

References:

<https://www.parp.gov.pl/component/grants/grants/nowy-start-1>

Country	PL						
ID	PL_05						
Name in English	PL_05 Business mentoring in the Opolskie Voivodeship						
Name in local language	<i>Mentoring biznesowy w Województwie Opolskim</i>						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X			X	
The Business Mentoring Programme in the Opolskie Voivodeship seeks to popularise the idea of business mentoring as well as to transfer the knowledge and successful experiences of Opole entrepreneurs to SMEs with high growth potential. Successful entrepreneurs from Opole serve as mentors willing to share their knowledge and experience. The mentees are young entrepreneurs managing SMEs registered in the Opolskie Voivodeship, operating on the market for no more than five years, willing to discover and develop their potential through the relationship with the mentor. This initiative is financed from the State and the EU budgets (the European Regional Development Fund) as part of two projects 'Cooperative Opolskie - professional business environment' (within Regional Operational Programme of the Opolskie Voivodeship for 2014-2020). The project's first edition was carried out from January 2016 to June 2018, and the second from September 2018 to August 2022. Both editions primarily intend to increase the region's competitiveness by improving business-related services to develop an innovative economy, as well as help promote innovation and entrepreneurship. The training, guidance and mentoring activities include: • training workshop for mentees preparing for participation in the programme; • training workshop for mentors preparing for participation in the programme; • training workshop for mentees on legal, economic and managerial issues (before the start of a specific edition, workshop subjects are developed in consideration of the mentees' needs and conclusions drawn from previous editions of the programme); • at least five meetings (minimum one hour each) between the mentor and the mentee (the exact number and thematic scope depends on the mentee's needs; usually there are more meetings, and its main aim is to analyse the business activities of mentee, the situation and needs of its enterprise as well as to develop the development strategy); • legal advice for mentees; • visits to SMEs run by mentees; • a conference summarising and evaluating a given edition (exchange of experiences of mentors and mentees from a given year and collecting conclusions for the next year) and ceremonially ending of the edition. The mentors and mentees do not need to achieve any specific targets or indicators. This programme primarily seeks to help transfer knowledge and experience as well as develop a relationship between mentors and mentees that often continues even after the end of the particular programme edition. The partner institutions implementing this programme consist of Business Centre Club - Opole Lodge (leading role), Opole Chamber of Commerce, Chamber of Commerce Silesia, Chamber of Crafts in Opole, Opole Centre for Economic Development (Opolskie Centrum Rozwoju Gospodarki). The programme's fourth edition ran from March 2020 to November 2020. Each edition has approximately 10 mentors and 10 mentees. The participants do not incur any costs and mentors do not receive any remuneration (considered as a pro bono activity). The State and the EU budgets (ERDF) fund all necessary organisational and material costs. The mentee receives a certificate by attending at least 80% of the scheduled meetings and actively participating in mentoring meetings.							

The programme should be assessed as useful and necessary - both from the point of view of promoting the idea of mentoring and increasing the competitiveness of young enterprises by acquiring knowledge from more experienced entrepreneurs. The programme is not large, but important from a local and regional point of view, and may be scaled up in the future.

Drafted by: Łukasz Arendt

References:

<http://www.ocrg.opolskie.pl/pl/projekty/mentoring-biznesowy-20.html>

Country	PL						
ID	PL_06						
Name in English	PL_06 HR Leader - managing a multigenerational team						
Name in local language	<i>Lider HR - zarządzanie zespołem wielopokoleniowym</i>						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					
The goal of the "HR Leader" project, which is implemented by Małopolska Regional Development Agency (Małopolska Agencja Rozwoju Regionalnego – MARR), is to develop or update an age management strategy for employers, and then implement its elements through advisory support and coaching. The project's activities fit in with the goals of the Regional Operational Program of the Małopolskie Voivodeship for 2014-2020 which main objective is to increase the competitiveness of the Małopolska Region, ensuring in parallel the improvement of the living conditions of its inhabitants. Therefore, its funding priorities cover increasing productivity of SMEs, increasing employment and labour mobility as well as promoting social cohesion. The project is addressed to SMEs (employing more than 9 employees) located in Małopolska Voivodeship (having an office or a branch office there) and employees from the Małopolska Voivodeship (living within the meaning of the Civil Code or working or studying in Małopolska), with particular emphasis on employees aged over 50 years old. The support is provided to enterprises in two stages: • Stage I: Advising on the development or updating of the Age Management Strategy. The result of this stage is development of the Strategy. It is prepared in close cooperation with the beneficiary. The management staff of particular company is involved in this stage (the number of persons depends on size of the enterprise and the decision of the entrepreneur). As a rule, approx. 2 meetings are planned between project experts and beneficiary, but the approach is flexible and if more meetings are needed, they are organized. • Stage II: Advising on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Age Management Strategy. Workshops and meetings are organised for the representatives of the beneficiary within that stage. Usually there are approx. 3 workshops/meetings, but the approach is flexible and if more meetings are needed, they are organized. The thematic scope of the workshops depends of the needs identified within first stage. The employer may involve additional employees in the workshops (the number of persons depends on size of the enterprise and the decision of the entrepreneur). The scope of support and the strategy itself cover 8 areas of HR management (however depending on the enterprises' needs defined within stage I, the support and attention is focused on selected areas, usually 2-3 of them), i.e. recruitment; education, training and other forms of professional development; career planning and development; flexible working hours and forms of employment; health protection and promotion, workplace ergonomics; reskilling and changing job position; termination of employment and retirement; motivating. Therefore, the incentive does not go much beyond counselling on HRD. The Beneficiary is obliged to implement all the recommendations resulting from the Strategy within 6 months from the completion of consultancy in Stage I, but not later than by the end of July 2021. Consulting services in the Project are provided by certified HR Business Partners who have knowledge and experience in the field of increasing efficiency in key areas of personnel management. Age management - as explains the MARR - is a set of various activities that allow for the effective use of HR by taking into account the needs and potential of the employees of all ages. Considering age management by the employer in the practice of HR management it requires the implementation							

of specific tools increasing the efficiency of employees, and thus bringing benefits to companies from their employment.

The project implementation period started in September 2019 and should end in February 2022. The recruitment to the project is carried out on a continuous basis until 220 enterprises are recruited. The enterprise needs to submit the application including fulfilled diagnostic questionnaire to take part in the recruitment.

The project budget is 5 129 528 PLN. The project is co-financed by the European Social Fund under the activity: 8.6.1. Implementation of employee retraining programs and support for employers of the Regional Operational Programme of the Małopolskie Voivodeship for 2014-2020. The costs related to the above-mentioned project activities, i.e., training and advisory support to enterprises, are considered eligible and they are covered in full. The enterprises being beneficiaries of the project do not incur any costs and do not receive any remuneration. The de-minimis regulation applies.

No evaluation study has been conducted yet. This project raises an important socio-economic problem of managing a group of employees of all ages, including the elderly, and the challenges associated with it. The multifaceted nature of the issues discussed in the project should be assessed positively. Undoubtedly, the project is necessary and important. Unfortunately, its implementation may be affected by the pandemic, during which entrepreneurs struggle with many other problems.

Drafted by: Łukasz Arendt

References:

<https://www.marr.pl/liderhr/>

<https://www.tovarnapodjemov.org/>

Country	PL						
ID	PL_07						
Name in English	PL_07 Competences for sectors (Training or counselling following the recommendations of the Sectoral Skills Councils)						
Name in local language	<i>Kompetencje dla sektorów (Szkolenia lub doradztwo wynikające z rekomendacji Sektorowych Rad ds. Kompetencji)</i>						
Year of implementation	2020						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X					
The instrument is managed at the national level by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (Polska Agencja Rozwoju Przedsiębiorczości - PARP). The instrument is co-financed from the ESF within Polish Operational Programme Knowledge Education Development 2014-2020. The overall objective of this instrument is to increase the number of enterprises covered by activities aimed at improving management, human capital development and supporting innovation processes. It is assumed to be achieved by providing support to MSMEs in the area of training and consulting. The overall budget of the instrument is PLN 50 700 000 (including the maximum value of co-financing PLN 45 630 000; the support for entrepreneurs is maximum 80%). Training and consulting activities are understood as all activities that allow for the development of people/enterprises/institutions, i.e., training, e-learning, postgraduate studies, consulting, mentoring, coaching or an exam that allows to acquire specific qualifications. The financial support within the instrument for above mentioned activities is available for MSMEs which plan to train employees and meet the conditions for obtaining de minimis or state aid. The supporting offer is targeted at enterprises operating only in the following sectors: construction, financial, tourism, IT, fashion and innovative textiles, health care, social assistance and automotive, including electromobility, and concerns the topics specified by recommendations of the Sectoral Skills Councils. Moreover, the services are generally provided through the Database of Development Services (Baza Usług Rozwojowych – BUR). The support is available from March 2020 until August 2023. This period is divided into rounds during which the entrepreneurs can apply for funding. In each round, other sectors are supported. The aim is to provide training or counselling support to 5 070 people (output indicator that has been split between the sectors: (a) construction, financial, health care and social assistance, automotive and tourism - 748; (b) IT, fashion and innovative textile sectors – 665). Whereas the result indicator is 4 563 and it refers to the number of employees who improve their competences in the scope recommended by the Sectoral Skills Councils. No evaluation study has been conducted yet. The programme may have important impact on improvement of employees' competences since the scope of the training and consulting support is based on reliable recommendations of the Sectoral Skills Councils.							

Drafted by: Lukasz Arendt

References:

<https://www.parp.gov.pl/component/grants/grants/kompetencje-dla-sektorow#programy>

Country	PT						
ID	PT_01						
Name in English	PT_01 E-Commerce Programme						
Name in local language	<i>Programa Comércio Digital</i>						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X		X		

The E-Commerce Programme– Programa Comércio Digital is an initiative launched in 2019, promoted by ACEPI (Associação Economia Digital), supported by the Portuguese Government and co-funded by Compete 2020, Portugal 2020 and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The instrument was established in response to the challenges Portuguese micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) of the trade sector are facing, more specifically to respond to the demands of an increasingly digital economy.

The programme aims at supporting enterprises to reach three main goals, namely, i) enlarge their network of customers (at the physical and digital levels), ii) access new national and international markets and iii) optimize their management processes and organisational structure. To accomplish this, the instrument foresees a set of initiatives fostering the mobilization of Portuguese MSMEs for the digitalization of their businesses by stimulating an increase in their digital presence, incorporating technology in their business models and using ICT tools to support the cooperation with suppliers and customers, including:

- 1) The Digital Academy, an online platform in which MSMEs can access free of charge training contents and materials for the capacitation of their staff about the digital economy.
- 2) A voucher 3 in 1, that includes a domain.PT for one year, an e-mail inbox and tools for the design of a website.
- 3) A set of practical guides and tutorials on how to select and use digital tools in their business.
- 4) Roadshows, consisting of awareness sessions and workshops related to digital businesses.

The Digital Academy and the practical guides and tutorials are the two initiatives particularly related to the capacity building and training domain. The Digital Academy is a free access online platform having, where training courses are organised in seven lessons:

- Diagnosis and E-Commerce Plan
- Registrations of the website domain, e-mail accounts and e-mail marketing
- Design of a website
- Digital Marketing – Social Networks
- Digital Marketing – Digital ads and monitoring
- Content aggregator Platforms for Online Selling
- Online Store

In each lesson, the participants have access to an online video (any time and place) and activities/exercises to consolidate their knowledge. Once registered in the training course, the participants will have a set of supporting materials available (presentations, Digital Consultant Kit, action plans, practical guides and glossary, studies and presentations) to complement their training and improve their knowledge on e-commerce.

Meanwhile, the practical guides and tutorials are available at the website of the E-Commerce Programme (<https://www.comerciodigital.pt/>), where it is possible to access the following resources:

- Practical Guides – Google My Business; Publicity for online business; Reasons for investing in digital marketing; WhatsApp for businesses: learn how to use it; How to design and send a newsletter.

- Tutorials: How to create a website; How to activate the voucher 3 in 1; Marketplaces; How to create an online store; How to pay with MB WAY - QR CODE, NFC or E-Commerce; Social Networks for Business.

After a year since the launch of this instrument, there is no publicly available information related to its impact in the MSMEs, workers or sector. However, until April 2019, 11 sessions (roadshow) were promoted in 11 cities, involving 1.000 participants (Compete 2020 news. Comércio Digital - Qualificar Empresas do comércio e serviços para a Economia Digital. 10/04/2019). Overall, it is forecasted a total of 150 roadshow sessions and set about 50.000 companies in the digital economy. An evaluation of the impact, relevance and indicators achieved by the programme is expected to be performed at the beginning of 2021.

Drafted by: Andreia Monteiro and Pedro Costa

References:

- <https://www.comerciodigital.pt/>
- Sobre o Comércio Digital. Available at: <https://www.comerciodigital.pt/pt/comercio-digital/>. Accessed in: 29/04/2020.
- Comércio Digital – Qualificar empresas do comércio e serviços para a Economia Digital. Available at: https://www.compete2020.gov.pt/noticias/detalhe/NL_Proj36349_ComercioDigital. Accessed in: 17/04/2020.
- Reviewed based on the information sent by ACEPIV.

Country	PT						
ID	PT_02						
Name in English	PT_02 BEST – Business Education for Smart Tourism						
Name in local language	<i>BEST – Relações Positivas e Captação de Talento</i>						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X				
BEST is a sectoral initiative released in 2018 by “Turismo de Portugal” (a public organisation to promote tourism in Portugal) in partnership with Confederação do Turismo de Portugal (CTP) (a private organisation representing business associations, entrepreneurs and trade unions of the tourism sector). The instrument is funded by the State General Budget (National), through “Turismo de Portugal”. The instrument was designed to support the training and capacity building of entrepreneurs and managers of tourism enterprises (including MSMEs), allowing them to increase their strategic management skills and the competitiveness of their business in a global context. It consists of the promotion of training activities in thematic fields related to digitalization, marketing, financing models, financial and operational management and human resources management, areas identified as critical for the profitability and future of the sector. Every school year, an initiative is promoted at the national level and is made available to all companies in the sector, free of charge. Each initiative consists of a set of sessions (workshops and seminars of 3h to 5h duration) that are implemented during 1 school year in different cities and prepared and promoted by one of the partners of the BEST initiative. Since its launch, 92 face-to-face sessions have been promoted in different cities, but not all have been delivered: 35 sessions in 2019 and 57 sessions in 2020, out of these, 53 sessions were cancelled due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Additionally, under this programme, two editions of the “BEST Live Online Training” were launched and successfully promoted in April 2020, to better cope with the COVID-19 constraints. The numbers of beneficiaries and participants involved in these actions is not available. However, companies and professionals in the sector are widely attending the sessions, whose attendance capacity often runs out. The instrument is filling a gap of the sector in terms of the provision of training and capacity building. There is no evaluation of the instrument in terms of impact and results.							

Drafted by: Andreia Monteiro and Pedro Costa

References:

- Programa BEST: relações positivas e captação de talento. Available at: <http://business.turismodeportugal.pt/pt/Agenda/Eventos/Paginas/programa-best-captacao-talento.aspx>. Accessed on: 17/04/2020.

Country	PT						
ID	PT_03						
Name in English	PT_03 SME's Academy						
Name in local language	Academia de PME						
Year of implementation	2009						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X				
In 2009, the IAPMEI - Instituto de Apoio às Pequenas e Médias Empresas e à Inovação set up the SME's Academy ("Academia PME" in Portuguese), an initiative that provides training contents and courses aimed at developing competences and entrepreneurial good practices within SMEs. The initiative SME's Academy is co-funded by the European Social Fund. Specifically, the instrument was aimed at three main goals: • enlarge the number of companies benefiting from capacity building opportunities tailored to their needs and scope; • provide consultancy services to SMEs combined with training courses, maximizing their competitiveness and innovation capacity; • support companies in strategic areas for their economic growth and sustainability, such as business strategy and management; internationalization and new markets; capacitation the organizations and of human resources; creativity and knowledge management; partnerships and innovation. Different actions (e.g., thematic workshops, awareness sessions, training courses) are being implemented regularly and related to different topics, including digital transition, circular economy, financial management, entrepreneurial management, business recovery mechanisms and training/consultancy programmes. These are face-to-face events, open to companies from all the country with up to 100 workers, which can attend the events free of charge. The duration of the activities depends on its type (e.g., thematic workshop, awareness session, training course), and on the topic, so they can last from 2h to 30h. No evaluation studies are available yet showing results and impact. In any case, it can be suggested that the instrument fulfils an important role in Portugal in sustaining national SMEs.							

Drafted by: Andreia Monteiro and Pedro Costa

References:

Academia de PME. Available at: <https://www.iapmei.pt/PRODUTOS-E-SERVICOS/Assistencia-Tecnica-e-Formacao/Academia-de-PME.aspx>. Accessed in: 17/04/2020

Country	PT						
ID	PT_04						
Name in English	PT_04 THEIA - Technological and Holistic Engagement for Industry 4.0						
Name in local language	THEIA - Modelo de Avaliação de Maturidade da Indústria 4.0						
Year of implementation	2017						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
					X		
COTEC Portugal - Associação empresarial para a Inovação (Business Association for Innovation) is a non-profit association that aims to promote the competitiveness of enterprises through the development and diffusion of a culture and practice of innovation. In this regard, COTEC promotes the “Plataforma Portugal i4.0” (THEIA), a project which intends to train and qualify the national SMEs to face the challenges of the Industry 4.0 paradigm, aligned with the Portugal i4.0 initiative launched by the Portuguese Ministry of Economy. Within this framework, and established in 2019, THEIA is a self-assessment online tool for SMEs, allowing them to understand what is their positioning and preparedness level to respond to the new paradigm of Industry 4.0, while enabling the identification of those areas in which they should invest to develop their digital maturity and capacity. The tool is therefore aimed at fostering the innovation skills and competitiveness of companies. THEIA is suitable for all types of companies, of different dimensions and sectors of activity. The sample of 320 companies that allowed the standardization of the model, represents, statistically, the Portuguese business and industry. Furthermore, the dimensions of Industry 4.0 considered in the instrument can be applied by any Portuguese company. When registering and using THEIA, each company is confronted with a set of questions that require self-reflection on its capabilities and on the way the company intends to position itself in the future. By measuring their level of maturity, companies can easily establish the path for the desired/needed digital transformation. Based on the results from the online self-assessment tool, companies can access a set of guidelines to increase their level of digital maturity and, by this way, define capacity building programmes or training courses to be implemented internally. From a qualitative perspective, the instrument provides two important tools to companies: 1) an online self-assessment instrument, essential to analyse and check companies their level of digital maturity and the areas in which they need to invest to proceed with their digital transformation; 2) a methodology to guide and support companies in the analysis of the results from the self-assessment and draft of an action plan for digital transformation. There are no evaluation analysis or studies on the impact of this instrument.							

Drafted by: Andreia Monteiro and Pedro Costa

References:

Autodiagnóstico de maturidade digital. Available at: <https://theia.cotec.pt/pt>. Accessed in: 20/04/2020.
Reviewed based on the information provided by COTEC.

Country	PT						
ID	PT_05						
Name in English	PT_05 Entrepreneur Support Office						
Name in local language	<i>Gabinete de Apoio ao Empresário, GAE</i>						
Year of implementation	2009						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					
Promoted by the local and/or regional authorities (but mainly by municipalities), these GAEs (Entrepreneur Support Offices) are the main interface support provided by local authorities to entrepreneurs or potential entrepreneurs, through the delivery of activities supporting entrepreneurship. GAEs date back to 2009 and are funded by the State's Budget (National). The services offered by GAEs seeks to provide useful and accurate free-of-charge information regarding financial support and incentives available, procedures for setting up companies, relevant training offers, rules and procedures related to licensing, applicable legislation, and contacts of interest. It is GAEs' responsibility to promote entrepreneurship and encourage individuals' professional development, design and organize conferences, seminars, information sessions and thematic meetings aimed at the local business sector needs. GAEs also promote professional training courses, allowing to reduce gaps in professional skills detected in the local business environment. A large number of the Portuguese municipalities have set up their GAE facility and services (even small cities) and any person (established entrepreneur, or willing to become one) can ask for support whenever needed. All the services and activities within these offices are managed and provided by the staff of the City Councils and, in some cases, in partnership with the IEFP (the Portuguese Employment Service) or other training providers (e.g., for the provision of training courses). The type of training offered by GAEs differs from municipality to municipality and is addressed to entrepreneurs, potential entrepreneurs and other economic agents. The courses address a variety of topics, according to the interests and specialisation of the regions where each GAE is located. Nevertheless, common training topics include business management, agriculture, heritage and culture, project management and implementation, environment, among others. The services available are completely free for the user entrepreneurs. Another example of the services provided includes the organization of seminars or conferences, either held at the municipality facilities/GAE offices or, in some cases, in the companies' premises requesting the service. Usually, there is a regular agenda of seminars and conferences, free of charge but that require prior registration. In the past years, there has been a significant increase in the number of offices created across the country. The GAEs are strategic to provide the necessary support and information to local companies, especially to micro and small companies, recently created business and to individuals. In this respect, GAEs play an important role in boosting the local development and competitiveness, supporting also the processes of the revitalization of regions affected by geographical isolation or low-density territories.							

Drafted by: Andreia Monteiro and Pedro Costa

References:

<http://www.portoenorte.pt/pt/investidor/gabinete-de-apoio-ao-empresario/enquadramento-tpnp/>

Country	PT						
ID	PT_06						
Name in English	PT_06 Mentors National Network						
Name in local language	<i>Rede Nacional de Mentores, RNM</i>						
Year of implementation	2012						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X				X	
IAPMEI - Instituto de Apoio às Pequenas e Médias Empresas e à Inovação (Institute of Support to Small and Medium Enterprises and Innovation) is an organization that aims to promote the competitiveness and business growth, through the design, execution and evaluation of policies related to innovation, entrepreneurship and business investment. Managed by IAPMEI and established in 2012 (although launched only in 2014), the Mentors National Network (Rede Nacional de Mentores - RNM) aims to support entrepreneurs and start-ups in the development of their business ideas and projects, through mentoring activities that might encourage the informal capacitation of entrepreneurs. Specifically, the target groups include: • entrepreneurs with an innovative business idea or entrepreneurship project, with growth potential and capacity to respond to a market need and who are appointed by a RNM partner to access a mentoring programme; • entrepreneurs with a business project approved by IAPMEI, within the scope of support programs for entrepreneurship. This network is composed by professionals and entrepreneurs (mentors) with wide and relevant experience in the field of business creation and management acting in the national entrepreneurship ecosystem and from entities providing structured and continuous support to entrepreneurs and businesspersons (e.g., Incubators, High-Education institutions, R&D centers, Science & Technology parks, consultancy providers, SMEs, policy-makers among others). The RNM depends on the involvement and willingness of both mentors to share their experience and entrepreneurs (mentees) to invest in the development of their competences and in the growth of their idea or business. The mentoring support to an entrepreneur can have a maximum duration of 12 months, and its overall duration is defined according to the project of the mentee. The programme includes regular contact between the mentors and mentees, face-to-face or virtually and it is up to both to define the duration, type and number of sessions to hold, as established by the Guiding Principles regulating the RNM. No specific formal training is provided during this mentoring relationship, although one of the results from it can be a training or a capacity building plan aligned with mentees' needs and expectations. Since 2016, this instrument is integrated in the programme StartUP Portugal – National Strategy for Entrepreneurship. There is no evaluation study or report available about this initiative. Notwithstanding this, the initiative is very interesting since it provides a platform and framework to support mentoring relationships focused on business acceleration.							

Drafted by: Andreia Monteiro & Pedro Costa

References:

Rede Nacional de Mentores. Available at: [https://www.iapmei.pt/PRODUTOS-E-SERVICOS/Empreendedorismo-Inovacao/Empreendedorismo-\(1\)/Rede-de-Mentores.aspx](https://www.iapmei.pt/PRODUTOS-E-SERVICOS/Empreendedorismo-Inovacao/Empreendedorismo-(1)/Rede-de-Mentores.aspx). Accessed in: 20/04/2020.

Country	RO						
ID	RO_01						
Name in English	RO_01 Romania Hub						
Name in local language	Romania Hub						
Year of implementation	2014						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X		X	X	
The programme Romania Hub - Romania, the Country of Young Entrepreneurs is one of the actions envisaged in the "Government Strategy for the development of the sector of small and medium enterprises and the improvement of the business environment in Romania - Horizon 2020". The programme aims to encourage and stimulate the establishment and development of small and medium enterprises and start-ups being implemented by the Ministry for the Environment of Business, Trade and Entrepreneurship (MEBTE). The implementation of the programme started in 2014. The activities of the programme take place in the spaces of the department for Small and Medium Enterprises, Business Environment and Tourism through the Directorate for Small and Medium Enterprises and the 8 Territorial Offices for Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperation, using their spaces, infrastructure, material base and the existing staff, without using additional funds from the state budget. There is no specific lump sum budget assigned; staff does these activities as part of their regular job. ROMANIA HUB is an integrated training programme that offers students, entrepreneurs and potential entrepreneurs, information, support, technical assistance and counselling, as well as an institutional framework for developing entrepreneurial capacities and increasing competitiveness on the local and international market of small and medium-sized enterprises. The main objective of the programme is to support both students to acquire the theoretical knowledge and practical skills, necessary for starting and developing a business, as well as entrepreneurs and potential entrepreneurs to develop their entrepreneurial capacity, with the aim of increasing the competitiveness of SMEs in the local and international markets. Through the programme, the target group has access to information, technical assistance and advice regarding different available programmes with non-reimbursable financing from the state budget, as well as on the external financing projects, carried out by the MEBTE. For the secondary school and higher education students, training workshops ("I want to be an entrepreneur") are available, aiming to develop their knowledge, skills and competences to start and develop a business. Secondary school and higher education graduates and their counsellors can attend internship workshops ("Closer to young people"), organised by the Bucharest/the County Territorial Offices for SMEs and Cooperation (TOSMEC). For the SMEs representatives, information sessions ("Sources of financing for SMEs") are available, on the programmes with non-reimbursable financing from the state budget, as well as on the external financing projects carried out by MEBTE in order to support the establishment and development of SMEs in Romania. Furthermore, the governmental institutions involved in the activity of SMEs organise informative meetings ("The state closer to SMEs") with representatives of the business environment. The counselling is provided for small groups in workshops. Annually, approx. 100 persons from the target group are involved in the programme (in 2019 the number was 109, according to the Report on the implementation of the National Reform programme 2019 and the Specific Country Recommendations 2019). Eligible costs include: editing promotional and presentation materials, editing/multiplying background documents materials, organisation of workshops, renting spaces, utilities, purchasing or rent of fixed assets and/or inventory items necessary for the conduct of							

workshops, facilitators and speakers fees, travel and accommodation expenses for participants. Counselling of the target group is done by pre-established experts (employees of the SME territorial offices).

[The programme is beneficial for the target group and the counselling component offered is relevant for their needs. However, the number of supported persons (on average 100 annually) is very low compared to the number of persons in need for such support.].

Drafted by: Dana Stroie

References:

[https://sgg.gov.ro › new › uploads › 2019/12 › RAPORT](https://sgg.gov.ro/new/uploads/2019/12/RAPORT)

<http://www.imm.gov.ro/ro/programul-romania-hub/>

Country	RO						
ID	RO_02						
Name in English	RO_02 EMPRETEC						
Name in local language	EMPRETEC						
Year of implementation	2003						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X			X	
EMPRETEC is a capacity-building programme of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) aiming to support the development of entrepreneurial and management skills of entrepreneurs and managers of SMEs. Currently it is implemented in 40 developing countries in Central America, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East. Romania is the first European country implementing the EMPRETEC programme. The programme is fully financed by the Romanian government from the state budget. The scheme is implemented in Romania since 2003. The EMPRETEC programme is coordinated by the Ministry of Economy, Energy and Business Environment of Romania, through the Directorate of Entrepreneurship and Programs for SMEs. EMPRETEC provides a one-stop-shop for know-how, business training, motivation and access to a mass of successful, committed entrepreneurs or wanna-be entrepreneurs. The basic product offered to the participants in the EMPRETEC programme is the workshop for the development of entrepreneurial competences developed by Harvard University together with Management Systems International and McBeer & Co, which lasts 9 days (72 training hours). The workshop is based on a behavioural approach and the methodology allowing tailor-made adaptation for different target groups – both people with high expertise in business as well as beginners and people belonging to vulnerable groups. The target group of the program consists of existing or potential entrepreneurs as well as top managers, including specialists from public or private organisations presumed to behave in an entrepreneurial or managerial manner. The individuals who want to participate in the program have to meet the following eligibility criteria: a) have a Romanian citizenship, b) have completed secondary or upper education with baccalaureate/license diploma or certificate of studies completion, c) have not participated in past EMPETREC workshops, d) state on their own responsibility that they will continuously participate in all the activities of the workshop during all the 9 days of the course, under the sanction of prohibiting their further application to other national programmes carried out by the ministry of economy for a period of 3 years, e) enroll in the activities referred in the program by filling in the subscription form. The general objectives of the EMPRETEC programme are to support the development of small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs), to create new jobs, to increase the number of small and medium-sized enterprises capable of coping with competition in the conditions of globalisation of markets. Successful entrepreneurs are identified, their entrepreneurial skills and managerial capacity are developed and there is support for SMEs to exchange good practices and network at international level. Between 2003-2013, workshops have been organised, with a total participation of 2 000 persons. In 2014 and 2015, the budget allocated has been of 1 000 000 RON/209 336.40 EUR with 320 beneficiaries each year. In 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 the annual budget allocated has been of 500 000 RON/104 668.20 EUR with 120 beneficiaries each year. The elaborated evaluation of the program at global level is presented by the EMPRETEC UNCTAD Headquarters. The program is a positive change vector, a great networking opportunity for promising entrepreneurs to get together and a SMART way to put their ideas into action and achieve sustainable business growth.							

Drafted by: Dana Stroe

References:

<https://empretec.unctad.org/>

<http://www.imm.gov.ro/ro/2020/02/26/anunt-republicarea-proiect-procedura-programul-unctad-empretec-romania-pentru-srijinirea-dezvoltarii-intreprinderilor-mici-si-mijlocii-2020/>

Country	RO						
ID	RO_03						
Name in English	RO_03 Community Centers for Lifelong Learning						
Name in local language	<i>Centre comunitare de învățare permanentă</i>						
Year of implementation	2017						
Type of instrument	Target support		Mediated support		Outreach		
					X		
					Promoting the participation of MSME employees in external CVET opportunities offered to individuals		
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X				X	

he Methodology for the establishment and functioning of the Community Centre for Lifelong Learning (CCLL) was approved by Governmental Decision in 2017. According to the Methodology, the CCLL is a public entity subordinated to the local public administration, set up by decision of the local authorities, with the aim of implementing, at community level, policies and strategies in the field of lifelong learning, for the development of the local community. The expected medium and long term result of this initiative is to contribute to a significant increase of the current participation rate in education and training of adults (with the age between 25-64 years); in 2017, as this participation rate at national level in Romania was 1.5%, (the lowest in EU).

CCLLs are expected to have a significant role in the training/retraining and professional counselling of SMEs' employees as well as in supporting the development of cooperation networks of public and private entities, SMEs included. For the SMEs' employees, CCLL may organise training programmes for qualification, retraining, conversion and further training, non-formal education programmes, certification programmes for key competences. A special attention will be paid to career counselling part: testing of personal interests and skills, facilitating meetings with people who work in human resources to identify the need for professional development, etc. Furthermore, CCLL support networking/partnerships of SMEs with public and private bodies, non-governmental, trade union and employer organisations.

At the present time, at local level, there is a number of initiatives to develop CCLL, generally with the support of different international funds (ESF, Swiss contribution to the EU development, etc). In the Western Region of Romania, a project co-funded from the Swiss contribution to the EU development has started in 2015, in partnership with the local authorities from the rural communities of the four counties: Timiș, Hunedoara, Caraș-Severin, Arad. The applicant organisation and the project coordinator is the Romanian Institute of Adult Education, in partnership with: the Swiss Federation for Adult Education (SVEB), the German Foundation (FRG) and the Foundation for Rural Assistance (CAR). 4 CCLLs have been set up in 4 rural areas. For the target group, participation was free of charge. The total value of the project was CHF 247 524.75, of which financial assistance was CHF 222 772.27, with a 90% of the total budget co-funded from the Swiss contribution to the EU development and 10% of the total budget financed jointly by the project's partners. Starting with 2018, these CCLLs have been fully financed from the local budgets.

According to the legislation, any CCLL can be funded by the local public administration authorities, grants or other types of internal and/or external financing, donations and sponsorships; in the case of grants, the co-financing rate might be applicable (usually of 2-10 %, depending on the grant type). In the CCLL, the number of counselling days is not prescribed, as it depends on the type of counselling services provided. The counselling services are individualised to the specific needs of each beneficiary and depend on the professional training, personal needs or skills that the each person wish to acquire; it can include counselling in the process of choosing the educational path,

training and internships, counselling in the use of tools developed at European level (Europass and Youthpass), language passport; information and advice on mechanisms for validating learning outcomes in non-formal and informal contexts.

The concept of CCLL is extremely valuable in the Romanian context, where the need for individualised support and counselling, especially for persons coming from the vulnerable groups is high, but currently their development is still in an incipient phase and significant efforts are needed to extend them and to assure their efficient functioning. The Education and Training Monitor 2019 for Romania underlines: "Further efforts are needed to increase participation in adult learning.

Community centres for adult education are still to be extended, while quality assurance mechanisms have not yet been developed. A system for continuing professional development of adult learning professionals is not yet in place. The system of adult learning might also benefit from a more reliable and comprehensive data collection system, clearer institutional arrangements and the establishment of a coordination body".

Drafted by: Dana Stroe

References: <https://www.bucuresti.educities.eu/ce-este-centrul-de-invatare-permanenta-nevoii-specifice-de-invatare-la-nivelul-comunitatii/>

Country	RO						
ID	RO_04						
Name in English	RO_04 Business Incubators in Romania						
Name in local language	<i>Incubatoare de afaceri in Romania</i>						
Year of implementation	2006						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X			X	
Business incubators are business support structures that offer support for a fixed period of time to newly established SMEs, aimed at helping them to develop in the early stage, by providing common facilities and the necessary managerial support. The implementing body is a specialised body of the central public administration with attributions in the field of business incubators. In the pre-incubation period (up to 6 months prior to entering the programme), the entrepreneurs are supported in identifying and developing the business idea, evaluating the potential of the business idea and developing their business plan; entrepreneurial training and legal advice are also offered. In the incubation period (up to 3 years), the business incubator provides residents with managerial counselling and cooperation support between residents, access to training services for analysing market needs, professional financial, accounting and legal services, mentoring from successful entrepreneurs, consulting on access to financing sources, investments and/or working capital, contacts with potential investors, higher education, and research institutions. The support offered to the entrepreneurs is individualised and offered in direct correlation with their specific needs. Each incubator resident signs an incubation contract with the business incubator administrator, where rights and responsibilities of each part involved are clearly defined; according to the incubation contract, the resident of the business incubator has the right to use the infrastructure of the business incubator and to benefit from the services offered by the business incubator for a maximum duration of 3 years. Counselling is provided either on an individual basis or in small groups, through workshops. All these facilities create a favourable, sustainable environment to help them reach stability and autonomy before leaving the Incubator. At the end of the incubation period, SMEs should have increased competitive power and higher chances of long-term market survival. The idea of business incubators was first implemented starting with 2006, as a pilot programme with governmental support. 3 incubators were set up, with a lifespan of 3 years and provided support for 60 businesses; 56 of them finished the 3-year incubation period successfully, creating 255 new jobs in 2009. In a second phase, 10 other incubators were set up in other regions of the country, each business incubator housing between 16 and 24 businesses for a period of 3 years. At the end of 2015, 330 businesses were "incubated", creating more than 700 new jobs. Due to the great success of this programme, in 2016, the Government decided to enforce the concept by Law (Law 102/2016). According to it, all the associated costs specific to the pre-incubation and incubation periods are paid from the local public budgets and/or private budgets, international funds included. In 2019, the Law was revised in order to simplify the operational procedures and to introduce the Business accelerator as a: "Program which provides residents, in stages, access to financing sources, for the purpose of launching a product or service on the market, within 3 to 6 months. The program may include entrepreneurial education, mentoring and networking activities in order to grow the business rapidly". All the associated costs are paid from the local public budgets and/or from private budgets, international funds included. There is no available information on lump sum budget; in case of ESF projects, 85% of the costs are from EU co funding and 15% from the national budget. In order to support business incubators, a ESF call for projects was launched in December 2017, with a total							

budget allocation of RON 529.4 million/ EUR 110.82 million, estimated to support approx. 140 SMEs. At the end of 2019, 4 contracts totalling EUR 6.05 million have been signed and 7 other applications were under evaluation.

The performance indicators for the business incubators are: a) the SMEs' survival rate 3 years after leaving the business incubator (the ratio between the SMEs that are active and the total number of supported SMEs), b) occupancy rate of the incubator (the ratio between the area occupied by residents and the total space of the incubator).

There is no available evaluation of the business incubators activity, and little is known about the business incubators' impact on the start-ups they support and the wider business ecosystem. In terms of positive developments, it is important to mention that the number of business incubators has grown over the last few years and the feedback offered by the start-ups who benefited from their support underlines that the contribution of the incubator or accelerator they attended has been significant or even vital to their success. However, due to the fact that business incubators are highly selective, selecting only the highest quality business to take part, selected start-ups are expected to be more successful than those not accepted, regardless of the value added by the programme. The most important challenges refer to the availability of qualified personnel, unwillingness of entrepreneurs to commit sufficient time to participate in the supporting programmes and insufficient ability of entrepreneurs to incorporate feedback in an efficient and effective way.

The 2019 Small Business Act for Europe Fact Sheet – Romania underlines that “the area with the most significant progress <...> was skills & innovation, thanks to the launch of five measures. These included an initiative on fostering SME collaboration with clusters in the ICT sector, the creation of business incubators and innovation vouchers, as well as two programmes supporting technology transfer and boosting research”.

Drafted by: Dana Stroie

References:

<https://sgg.gov.ro> › new › uploads › 2019/12 › RAPORT <http://www.imm.gov.ro/ro/mmaca/mediul-de-afaceri/>

Country	RO						
ID	RO_05						
Name in English	RO_05 National Agriculture Advisory Service						
Name in local language	<i>Serviciul national de consiliere agricolă</i>						
Year of implementation	2009						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X	X			
The National agricultural advisory service was established in 2009 with the objective of increasing the managerial performances of farmers, micro-enterprises and small enterprises in the rural area, as well as for applying competitive production practices at the level of farmers' associations and producer groups. The national agricultural advisory service offers professional training, technology transfer and know-how in the field of agriculture, free of charge for the target groups. The technical and methodological coordination of this national service is performed within the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development through the Department of Consulting and Vocational Training. It is implemented at county and local level, as the national agricultural advisory service operates locally in all 42 counties, in approximately 450 local centres that provide direct links with farmers and representatives of agriculture micro and small companies. The activities of the programme take place at the Department of Consulting and Vocational Training, within the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and in the national agricultural advisory service, using their spaces, infrastructure, material base and the existing staff. There is no specific lump sum budget or specific number of days, as staff does these activities as part of their regular job. The service has 850 advisers specialised in agriculture and fields related to rural development, including technological improvements and innovative actions. Regular training of the advisers is organised in order to update them with the current requirements regarding use of fertilisers and plant protection products, Code of Agricultural Best Practices, etc. In order to support the enhancement of the agricultural advisory service, with the support of ESF, a call for applications was launched in 2019; Nine contracts were signed in 2019, providing professional training and advisory services for farmers operating in small farms, young farmers and agricultural producers to establish and develop associative forms in the agricultural sector. The support offered in the project goes beyond counselling and includes: mobilisation for the establishment of cooperatives and producer groups, preparation of documents for establishment of agricultural associations, information on available development funds and support in drawing up funding applications, development of business plans, support in production marketing, technological, legal, financial consulting. A number of 10 000 farmers will be supported for setting up 350 agricultural associations. The costs with the implementation of the project are fully reimbursed. The projects are in the implementation phase and an impact study on the results is unavailable yet. However, there are strong assets to foresee a significant impact of their implementation. According to Eurostat data, currently in the European Union, out of a total of approximately 10.8 million farms, approximately 3.6 million are located in Romania, representing about 33.3% of the total. The average size of a farm in the EU is 16.1 hectares, in Romania it is only 3.5 hectares, i.e. more than four times smaller than the European average. The advantages of the existence of associative forms are recognised worldwide. However, currently in Romania, less than 1% of Romanian farmers are part of an associative form, compared to the European Union, where the average organisation is 34%. Moreover, agriculture remains the main source of income in the rural areas of the country. In this context, the encouragement of associative forms in the agricultural sector becomes a priority for development in Romania, showing that the benefits of cooperation in such forms as the agricultural cooperative and							

the producer group lead to a sustainable development of this sector locally, regionally, nationally and in the European context).

The report "Agricultural consulting in Romania: evolution and public policy proposals" elaborated by the Romanian Centre for European Policies underlines that "in Romania there are 2686 communes and 450 Local Agricultural Consulting Centres (which are usually represented by a single agronomist engineer from the town hall) can not cover all the farmers' needs. The problem of human resources in agricultural consulting can no longer be ignored: now an agricultural consultant in the public system serves 12 000-13 000 farmers. The experience of European states shows that an optimal proportion would be 1 consultant per 65-100 farmers". The report states that it becomes essential "to develop a system of integrated consultancy in a regional ecosystem comprising clusters, universities, information centres, research institutes, etc.". In this respect, the projects supported by ESF can have a significant added value, but due to a limited geographical coverage and implementation duration, it has to be complemented with a comprehensive national approach.

[The program is beneficial for the target group, but it needs to be further developed, as currently there are only 450 Local Agricultural Consulting Centres for the 2 686 communes at national level]

Drafted by: Dana Stroie

References:

Report on the implementation of the National Reform Program 2019 and the Specific Country Recommendations:

<https://sgg.gov.ro/new/uploads/2019/12/RAPORT>

Agricultural consulting in Romania: evolution and public policy proposals: https://www.crpe.ro/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/CRPE-Policy-Memo-75_Consultan%C8%9Ba-agricol%C4%83-%C3%AEn-Rom%C3%A2nia.-Evolu%C8%9Bie-%C8%99i-propuneri-de-politici-publice-1.pdf

Country	RO						
ID	RO_06						
Name in English	RO_06 Support for emerging sectors						
Name in local language	Sprijin pentru sectoarele emergente						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
					X		
					Promoting the participation of MSME employees in external CVET opportunities offered to individuals		
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						
Actions aimed at improving the quality of the workforce, developing partnerships between higher education, enterprises and the research sector, better correlating education with labour market requirements, encouraging creativity and entrepreneurship and economy based on resource efficiency, is of particular interest in the context of strengthening economic competitiveness. In this context, a special emphasis is placed at national level on supporting vocational training programmes that develop the skills and competences of the SMEs' employees, necessary to practice the occupations that have changed their content or of the newly emerged ones as a result of the introduction technological progress. Employees from emerging sectors such as "green economy", environmental protection, creative and cultural sectors, organic farming, social sector, automotive and ICT sectors are targeted. Training programs, correlated with the job requirements, of the employees from economic sectors with competitive potential/areas of intelligent specialisation, evaluation and certification of the skills obtained in non-formal/informal ways and workplace-learning for employees benefit from the funds allocated from the ESF and national contribution. In 2018, a call worth RON 414 968 935.02 / EUR 86 868 104.46 was launched. The call is targeting specifically the SMEs employees, by the end of 2019, 99 projects were approved and are currently under implementation (worth EUR 64 908 867.71), with the main objective of increasing the competitiveness of human resources; according to the data declared by the beneficiaries, 893 micro and small and medium-sized enterprises will be supported in order to adapt the workers, the enterprises and the entrepreneurs to the changes of the labour market. Furthermore, in 2019, the financing of 2 projects, worth EUR 282 201.63, aiming to anticipate qualification and skills requirements and to provide training programs at the workplace organized in the context of changing the structure of occupations was approved from the ESF funds. [The incentive is highly relevant, as it targets the employees from emerging sectors such as "green economy", environmental protection, creative and cultural sectors, organic farming, social sector, automotive and ICT sectors, with a significant future development potential. Furthermore, the number of targeted SMEs (893) is significant. However, it is too early to assess the success/ impacts and strengths/ weaknesses of the incentive, as these projects are all in early implementation stage].							

Drafted by: Dana Stroe

References:

<https://www.fonduri-ue.ro/apeluri/details/2/159/apeluri-pocu-ap-3-pi-10-iii-os-3-12-%C3%AEembun%C4%83t%C4%83%C8%9Birea-nivelului-de-cuno%C8%99tin%C8%9Be-competen%C8%9Be-aptitudini-pentru-angaja%C8%9Bi>

Country	RO						
ID	RO_07						
Name in English	RO_07 Digital Competences for SMEs' employees						
Name in local language	<i>Competențe digitale pentru angajați</i>						
Year of implementation	2020						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X				X		X
Digital competences are essential for Romania's transition to a knowledge-based economy and to lifelong learning, as well as for the successful introduction of electronic public services. However, in 2012, the EU-27 survey indicated that compared to the EU average of 47%, in Romania, 85% of persons between the ages of 16 and 74 years do not have computer skills. Because of this, the Romanian government declared, through the National Strategy on the Digital Agenda, the strategic objective of increasing digital competencies of all public and private employees (especially SMEs) and also improving the digital business environment. To reach this goal, the ESF launched in December 2019 a call for applications to develop digital competences of SMEs employees (or those with an interest in) operating in potentially competitive economic sectors and in areas of intelligent specialisation. The allocated budget of EUR 20 million (with a maximum budget of EUR 1 million per project) supports activities such as digital skills training programmes, evaluation, validation and certification for digital competences related to job requirements, support to companies organizing workplace learning programmes to develop employees' digital skills, organizing and conducting SMEs awareness campaigns. Applicants accepted for this call include employers' organisations (associations, federations, confederations or territorial employers' unions), business associations, chambers of commerce and industry. These projects should not last more than 18 months and should improve digital competences of up to 5 000 SMEs. Public debate on the draft guide for this call continued until the end of February 2020.							

Drafted by: Dana Stroe

References:

<http://mfe.gov.ro/am-pocu-a-lansat-in-consultare-publica-doua-ghiduri-pentru-finantarea-competentelor-digitale-ale-angajatilor-imm-urilor-si-intreprinderilor-mari/>

Country	RO						
ID	RO_08						
Name in English	RO_08 National programme for the development of SMEs' women entrepreneurs						
Name in local language	<i>Programul național pentru dezvoltarea antreprenoriatului în rândul femeilor din sectorul întreprinderilor mici și mijlocii</i>						
Year of implementation	2016						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X				X	
The Ministry for the Environment of Business, Trade and Entrepreneurship (MEBTE) initiated a national programme to support women in setting up and developing successful SMEs, financed by the national annual budget. It is an integrated programme that supports the start-ups and development of private economic structures established by women, promotes an information and training system to facilitate the mobility of women in the labour market and develops their entrepreneurial skills to involve them in private economic structures, in the context of issues related to maintaining the work-life balance and existing prejudices at the local level. A national conference dedicated to women entrepreneurs/potential entrepreneurs takes place every year aiming to present them the support facilities offered by the Ministry for the Environment of Business, Trade and Entrepreneurship (MEBTE) and introduce the relevant topics to strengthen their knowledge of entrepreneurial culture and competitiveness. 4 workshops are also organised for a maximum of 160 businesswomen participants, with the theme of developing their leadership and communication skills, business relationships, ways to motivate a team, effective delegation of tasks. The workshops are not organised in the format of a training session and training is not directly provided, but indirectly addressed by providing counselling and examples of good practice to recent/potential women entrepreneurs from successful businesswomen. Furthermore, 4 international business to business events, for a maximum of 80 women participants, are organised on a yearly basis, with the aim of increasing the skills of women who lead SMEs in the formation of external partnerships. The total estimated budget yearly allocated by the law to the de minimis scheme was RON 500 000 / EUR 103 566.8 in 2016 and 2017 and increased to RON 1 000 000/ EUR 207 133.7 starting with 2018. The programme is fully funded by the government, therefore being free of charge for the participants. Eligible costs include: editing promotional and presentation materials, editing/multiplying conference materials, publishing brochures, organisation of round tables, workshops and presentations, renting spaces, utilities, arranging conference spaces, purchasing or rent of fixed assets and/or inventory items necessary for the conduct of events, facilitators' and speakers' fees, travel and accommodation expenses for participants. By implementing the program, approx. 160 beneficiaries are supported every year (in 2019 the number was 169, according to the Report on the implementation of the National Reform Program 2019 and the Specific Country Recommendations 2019). The KEYFSIN study "Women entrepreneurship, a decade of challenges. Era 4.0" emphasises that, taking into account companies with a strictly positive turnover, approximately 135,000 local Romanian companies (25% of the total, over 50% of the capital) were controlled mostly by women in 2018. The turnover of these companies was RON 88 billion (EUR 19 billion) in 2018 and constitutes approximately 6% of the total country turnover. The number of women shareholders increased between 2014 and 2018, especially in the major cities. Most of the businesses in which Romanian women operate as majority shareholders (> 50%) have five employees on average and a turnover of up to 550 000 RON/112 835.58 EUR, being part of the category of micro-enterprises. The need for developing/updating the women entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial competences and leadership skills is therefore significant and constantly increasing. This national programme is beneficial and relevant in this respect. However, the number of supported women (on average 160 annually) is very low compared to the number of women entrepreneurs in need for such support.							

Drafted by: Dana Stroie

References:

<https://sgg.gov.ro › new › uploads › 2019/12 › RAPORT>

<http://www.imm.gov.ro/ro/2020/02/26/anunt-republicare-proiect-procedura-programul-national-multianual-pentru-dezvoltarea-antreprenoriatului-in-randul-femeilor-din-sectorul-intreprinderilor-mici-si-mijlocii-2020/>

Women entrepreneurship, a decade of challenges. Era 4.0: <https://www.keysfin.com/#!/Pages/News/KeysFin-Business-Studies/Archive-studies>

Country	RO						
ID	RO_09						
Name in English	RO_09 Innovation Checks in Romania						
Name in local language	<i>Cecuri de inovare in Romania</i>						
Year of implementation	2012						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X		X	X		X	X
The Innovation check is a flexible tool for supporting SMEs in the productive sector in order to modernise technology and increase the degree of innovation. SMEs are encouraged to develop partnerships with research and innovation institutions to create innovative products and services based on advanced technologies. Innovation checks can be issued in any economic or scientific field and will lead to an acceleration of technology transfer between research institutions and SMEs. The implementing body is a specialised body of the ministry of education and research, with the mission of promoting quality and leadership for higher education, research, development and innovation. The main objective of the Innovation checks is to lead to an acceleration of technology transfer between public research organisations and SMEs. They should address specific Research/Development/Innovation problems of SMEs, which cannot be solved internally, and which require an approach with real potential for new products/services with a market impact. Innovation checks are settled on a period of maximum 6 months from the date on which they were issued. After a period of 12 months at the end of the project, an impact report is presented which aims to capitalise on the results of the project to the beneficiary. Eligible activities include training/coaching/mentoring the SMEs staff and mainly refer to: industrial research and development, studies for the purpose of introduction into manufacturing; realisation and testing of experimental models, design and testing products for introduction into manufacturing, based on the research of the SME or transferred from a research-development design unit; technological evaluation and audit; product certification, tests, measurements, laboratory analyses; assistance in the application of research results obtained by SMEs through their own efforts or transferred from a research-development unit; assistance with investments in intangible assets, such as patents, licenses, or know-how; national technology transfer; assistance for industrial property rights; consultancy for patenting, following the research results of the SME or transferred from a research-development unit. The maximum value of an innovation check approved for a SME is 50 000 RON/10 467 EUR of which maximum 90% of the total value (45 000 RON/9 420 EUR) is provided from the state budget. The competition is organised at national level; it started in 2012 and is still running to this day, on an annual basis. The total budget allocated in 2012 was 6 450 000 RON/1,350,220 EUR, in 2013 was 7 750 000 RON/1 622 357 EUR, in 2014 was 1 300 000 RON/272 137 EUR, in 2015 and 2016 was 4 500 000 RON/942 014 EUR, in 2017 was 7258 000 RON/1 519 363 EUR, in 2018 and 2019 was 5 641 050 RON/1 180 877 EUR. Annually, the scheme runs on a continuous basis until it runs out of money. The applications for Innovation checks are evaluated against 3 main criteria: 1. Technical quality of the project proposal - the innovative character, the technological risk, the commercial risk, the scientific quality, the necessity and the objective of the project are mainly followed. The weight of this criterion is 50%. 2. Socio-economic impact - the aim is to develop turnover, create jobs, launch new products/services, increase product quality, analyse indicators of status and progress in accordance with the proposed objectives, operate the resulting business, deliverables. The weight of this criterion is 30%. 3. Human resources and services provided by the provider - the human resources of the implementation team and the experience of the service provider are pursued. The weight of this criterion is 20%.							

The implementation body elaborates an annual report presenting the number of beneficiaries, statistical data on the main domains in which they function and publish the most significant “success stories”.

A synthetic evaluation of this instrument is available in the Report on the Development of the administrative capacity of Ministry of Research and Innovation to implement the actions established in the National Strategy for Research, Technological Development and Innovation 2014-2020. The report emphasises the success of this instrument: “It can be seen that of all the instruments, applicable to the field of smart specialisation, energy, environment and climate change, the highest success rate was registered for the Innovation checks instrument (53.7%). Page 6”. The report includes a detailed evaluation of the Innovation checks for 2017, underlining that the most requested areas in which the submitted projects received funding were: bioeconomy, followed by energy, environment and climate change (with 3 subdomains: energy, environment and climate change, and the smart city). The main specific result of the research activity was the number of patent applications registered in 2017 - a total of 53 patent applications were registered, of which 15 were in the field of energy, environment and climate change.

The 2019 Small Business Act for Europe Fact Sheet – Romania underlines that “the area with the most significant progress <... > was skills & innovation, thanks to the launch of five measures. These included an initiative on fostering SME collaboration with clusters in the ICT sector, the creation of business incubators and innovation vouchers, as well as two programmes supporting technology transfer and boosting research”.

Drafted by: Dana Stroe

References:

The 2019 Small Business Act for Europe Fact Sheet – ROMANIA:

<https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/38662/attachments/24/translations/en/renditions/nativ>

Country	SE						
ID	SE_01						
Name in English	SE_01 Counselling for SMEs						
Name in local language	<i>Mind the Gap</i>						
Year of implementation	2020						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					

In Skåne, the regional government started a development project funded by Tillväxtverket (Agency for economic and regional growth) in late 2019 with the goal to develop an instrument called 'Mind the Gap' which is supposed to support SMEs in identifying skill gaps and develop strategies to address them. In parallel, the region was granted a project funded by the Interreg North Sea Region programme under the name 'Right', that focuses on different ways of dealing with the skills shortage in different parts of the manufacturing industry in northern Europe. This allowed to implement a number of pilot project among which one also uses the 'Mind the gap' tool.

The approach of 'Mind the Gap' aims at promoting a strategic approach to skill formation as part of an organisation's overall business plan. Against the backdrop of an economic foresight exercises and the specification of organisational goals for the near future, upcoming skill needs are anticipated. Anticipated skill needs inform upcoming training plans for existing staff and specifications of upcoming job offers.

In early 2020, the project started to test the instrument by officially inviting companies to participate in counselling on HRD related activities through the local site of the business development agency (Almi Företagspartner) and IUC Syd (a non-profit member organisation for industrial companies in Skåne aiming for strengthening growth and competitiveness in the member companies). The first addresses companies across all economic sectors as part of the development project while the latter focusses on manufacturing companies in part of the region as part of the Interreg project. Companies with 20 to 100 employees are particularly targeted. Participating companies take part in two three-hour workshops, thereby developing a strategic action plan for competence development. For SMEs, participation in the workshops requires no fees. By November 2020, 30 enterprises have used the offer. In the meantime, a digital version of the instrument has been developed which is planned to be tested in the next phase. SMEs have to fill in a survey before and after participation to support the assessment of the instrument and a possible roll-out of a support measure beyond the project.

It is still too early to give an assessment on the success of the measure. It appears that by developing a digital tool, the project team have made an important contribution to new counselling formats during the ongoing pandemic. In the long run, the availability of funding for a permanent measure will decide on the continuation.

Drafted by: Eva Steinheimer

References:

Project website (Swedish): <https://www.almi.se/nyheter/skane/mind-the-gap/>

Country	SE						
ID	SE_02						
Name in English	SE_02 The robot boost						
Name in local language	Robotlyftet						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X		X			
Robotlyftet (in English: 'The robot boost') funds automation projects including related training costs for SMEs. The measure is part of the government's national programme 'Smart Industry' and has been implemented by Tillväxtverket (Agency for economic and regional growth) since 2018. The Ministry of Economic Affairs made available SEK 100 million (EUR 9.5 million in 2/2020) for the period 2019-21. The programme targeted 4 500 SMEs in the manufacturing sector to increase knowledge and uptake of automation projects. It tried to reach 500 SMEs in the manufacturing sector that fit the Swedish Standard Industrial Classification (SNI) based on NACE revision 2. Implementation of the initiative is arranged by a broad network of organisations active in business development in the manufacturing sector (e.g., IUC network, Automation Region, Robotdalen, RISE and SWIRA). The nation-wide programme has regional development agencies that provide services tailored to sub-sectors and regions. Robotlyftet foresees a stable work programme in each company. First, the expert team provided by Tillväxtverket analyses the current production process and the related business model, then it identifies options for automation. Companies can apply for up to SEK 150 000 (EUR 14 000) for the process and for related training activities in six-month projects. The funding formula foresees funding 75% of eligible costs for small companies (2-49 employees) and 50% for companies with 50-250 employees. Moreover, mutual learning is supported by seminars and workshops provided free of charge. There is no evaluation study available yet (at the time of this research), but a yearly event presents the results achieved and experience made with projects of the 'Smart Industry' programme. In February 2020, Robotlyftet had reached 1 100 participants in workshops, with 165 pilot studies implemented since the project start in 2018.							

Drafted by: Eva Steinheimer

References:

Tillväxtverket (2020): Robotlyftet en del av Smart industry. Stöd till automatisering i små och medelstora företag. Presentation. Download: <https://docplayer.se/165914554-Robotlyftet-en-del-av-smart-industri-stod-till-automatisering-i-sma-och-medelstora-foretag-tillvaxtverket-i-samarbete-med.html>
<http://www.robotlyftet.se>
<http://www.iucsyd.se/vaar-verksamhet/digitalisering/robotlyftet/>

Country	SE						
ID	SE_03						
Name in English	SE_03 Sting Accelerate - grow faster and smarter (for startups)						
Name in local language	<i>Sting Accelerate - grow faster and smarter (for startups)</i>						
Year of implementation	[No information given]						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X	X			X	
The private not-for-profit organisation Sting provides business development support and coaching for established tech companies and on a competitive base, a venture capital offer for start-ups, which is accompanied by training and coaching opportunities for firms participating in the contest. The programme Sting Accelerate invites digital start-ups to compete for venture capital. Sting is a non-profit company, and its activities are financed with public funds, from Electrum and the main partners Vinnova, KTH (Technical University in Stockholm) and Stockholm County Council; and with private funding from partners, as well as through self-funding. Sting is owned by the Electrum Foundation. There are both public and private organisations in the foundation: Stockholms stad, KTH, Ericsson, ABB, research institutes in Kista and Kista Science City Företagsgrupp and Kista Science City Fastighetsägare. Sting has worked with more than 300 start-ups in several programmes since its foundation in 2002. Twice a year, eight participating start-ups are selected for support. The winners of the contests are awarded with a SEK 500 000 venture capital (in form of a convertible bond by the investment firm Propel Capital V.). Moreover, successful applicants are granted free office space in Stockholm for up to six months and tailored coaching for a period of four months. During this time the start-ups are invited to a weekly 30-minutes exchange with all companies across the Sting programmes, two days a week workshops with internal and external experts on a wide range of business topics are provided. Companies get two hours of individual coaching by internal coaches per week on various activities such as sales, financing, marketing, product development, recruitments, etc. In addition, they can use 30 hours of coaching in specific areas by external coaches. Events with the occasion to meet investors and mentors complete the offer. There is no evaluation report available so far, according to the website internal satisfaction survey show that 9 of 10 participants recommend other start-ups the participation in the measure. In the annual report for 2019, Sting presents success figures (across all their programmes over time), 69% of all start-ups they supported are still in business which is a high share compared to the success rate of all start-ups, yet, has to be seen in the light of the strict selection process, only 7% of all applicants are chosen for the programme.							

Drafted by: Eva Steinheimer

References:

Project website (English): <https://sting.co/program/accelerate/>
Sting (2020): Annual report 2019. Download: <https://sting.co/app/uploads/2020/07/Sting-annual-report-2019-final.pdf>

Country	SE						
ID	SE_04						
Name in English	SE_04 Future Skills in Blekinge						
Name in local language	Framtidskompetens i Blekinge						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X				X
Olofströms Näringsliv AB, a fully owned municipal company with the goal to develop and strengthen the business community in Olofström municipality, coordinates a two-year 100% ESF funded project under the name Future Skills in Blekinge (Framtidskompetens i Blekinge) starting in March 2019. Project partners are Blekinge Business Incubator (BBI), Blue Science Park and NetPort Science Park together offering a platform for more than 200 companies of different industries. The project budget amounts to SEK 8 752 489. Like in many Swedish regions, the labour market in Blekinge is characterised by skills-mismatch in several branches. The Future Skills project aims at supporting SMEs to develop their ability and processes and gain higher efficiency and sustainability in HRM/HRD. Participating companies profit from coaching and training in the areas skills transfer, talent acquisition, recruitment and employer branding. SMEs with difficulties in recruiting highly skilled employees for key positions are supported in finding new ways of thinking in recruitment by applying a new strategy of competence development of existing staff for higher positions thereby free positions that are easier to fill following the concept called Competence stairway (Kompetenstrappa) which was developed by the project partners in the aftermath of the financial crisis in 2008/09 with the aim to support companies in the process of attracting and retaining staff. Key activities provided to participated companies include a programme with training and workshop elements focusing on HR topics, a shorter programme to train 'change agents' (förändringsagenter) who are supposed to spread knowledge on alternative leadership and equality in their companies and other activities addressing for example executives. All activities are free of charge for the companies. The training programme was implemented between April 2019 and December 2020 and consisted of 15 half-day training sessions (guest lectures on specific topics, e.g., strategic skills planning, leadership, recruiting, equality management etc.), 9 half-day workshops open for exchange and two individual coaching sessions per company held by experts of the consortium organisations. At the time of the project start, 18 small and medium-sized industrial and digital service enterprises with together 776 employees, were targeted. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic the targeted number of participants could not be achieved. Enterprises had to focus on meeting the negative effects of the pandemic and many employees were on short-time work. Until autumn 2020 approx. 200 employees were reached. Many activities were performed online or postponed. As a consequence, the project budget was reduced to approx. SEK 7 million. The half-term evaluation is not available publicly, but so will be the final evaluation after the end of the project. The circumstances during the ongoing pandemic severely affected the implementation of the project, but similar programmes are expected to be established in the future as these target a key challenge of SMEs in the region.							

Drafted by: Eva Steinheimer

References:

<https://techtank.se/projekt/framtidskompetens-i-blekinge/>
<https://www.esf.se/Resultat/Projektbanken-2014-2020/Alla-Projekt/Framtidskompetens-i-Blekinge/>

Country	SE						
ID	SE_05						
Name in English	SE_05 Regional development projects						
Name in local language	<i>Regional development projects</i>						
Year of implementation	[No information given]						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						

Closely interrelated with the framework “Regional Business Support” project activities (Projektverksamhet för regional tillväxt) form part of the regional growth measures. The regional projects are often used as a co-financing instrument (ERDF) to release EU funds. The aim of these projects is to promote new initiatives, start new cooperation and establish new ways of work. A number of projects include or address SMEs in different ways.

Including co-financing, the regional projects include an investment of 3,376 million SEK. Across all projects funding comprises of 32% EU funds, 40% national, 8% regional and 10% municipality funds, approx. 10% are private funds. Within national means the support dedicated exclusively to the framework for ‘Regional Business Support’ comprised approximately SEK 888 million in 2018. This corresponds to an increase of SEK 83 million compared to 2017, but it is within the framework of the normal variation, as the support has fluctuated between SEK 801 million in 2011 and SEK 860 million in 2016. A significant part of the regional project funds is used to co-finance ERDF initiatives and several initiatives were completed in 2018, which has created room for new 3-year decisions during the year.

The monitoring of the Regional development project shows that seven regions prioritize innovation issues, while entrepreneurship is the most important focus area in the remaining 14 counties. This indicates that regional growth framework is implemented in a similar way around the country, at least on an overall level, despite significant differences in demographics and business structure.

Funding for projects in the area of innovation were supported with approx. SEK 346 million in 2018, the largest share compared to other subject areas corresponding to 39 percent of all regional project activities. Within the innovation initiatives that are implemented, most money is spent on various forms of cooperation, skills development and knowledge exchange. The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth therefore states that innovation-promoting work is based on soft instruments, rather than hard investments into such as services, products or infrastructure.

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References:

Tillväxtverket (2019): Finansiering för regional tillväxt 2018. Uppföljning av regionala företagsstöd, stöd till projektverksamhet och stöd till kommersiell service. [Financing regional growth 2018. Monitoring of regional business support, regional development projects and support for commercial service.] Stockholm. Download: <https://tillvaxtverket.se/download/18.44e3775616dbc4404f9c47e4/1571929166096/Finansiering%20f%C3%B6r%20regional%20tillv%C3%A4xt%202018%20rapport%200303.pdf>

Country	SE						
ID	SE_06						
Name in English	SE_06 Regional business support						
Name in local language	<i>Regionala företagsstöd</i>						
Year of implementation	2015						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X	X				
Under the framework “Regional business support” (Regionala företagsstöd) regulated by directive in national law* a variety of support measures is provided for companies. The current directive has been in force since 2015. For the period before, a similar framework was in place (Tillväxtverket, 2015). The framework forms part of the implementation of the Swedish Regional Growth Strategy (National Strategi för hållbara regional tillväxt och attraktionskraft 2015-2020). The overall aim of the framework is to promote sustainable growth and increased competitiveness in small and medium-sized enterprises and thus sustainable regional growth. The support is meant to contribute to offer sustainable economic, social and environmental conditions. The current framework covers 17 different instruments. SMEs are a major target group besides companies in the sparsely populated regions in the North of the country. Several of the instruments cover different types of non-financial incentives. Funding is based on national (by Tillväxtverket (Agency for economic and regional growth) and regional means or the combination of both. The opportunities for support vary depending on where in the country the company operates and the type of business the company conducts. SMEs addressing a market that extends beyond their own region are eligible to apply. In order not to distort competition, the market situation is always assessed, though. Requirements that have to be met by the applying SMEs include: that the company conducts operations on market terms; the support is always paid afterwards, that means after the costs are paid and reported; the working environment must be satisfactory and employment benefits must at least be equivalent to the applicable collective agreement; the support must not be greater than is necessary with regard to other financing options. The aid is based on percentages of the approved costs. In most cases, a maximum of 10 to 35 percent, but for some types of support, the proportion of support may be higher. An individual assessment of the size of the aid is made in all cases, taking into account the importance of the investment for society and growth. Consideration is also given to the type of investment, investment cost, type of company and where in the country the company operates. The measures under this framework are implemented by the various regions in cooperation with Tillväxtverket. The measures are followed up in a yearly reporting system (Tillväxtverket, 2019). Groups of support instruments: Support for investments (Investeringsstöd) (2018: SEK 493 million) Support can be provided for investments in, for example, buildings and machinery, fixtures, labour costs for jobs as a result of new investment, training, skills development and consulting services. The support for investments can be granted for a maximum of 25 to 50% of eligible costs, with the highest share for sparsely populated and structurally weak regions. Promotion support (Främjandestöd) (2018: SEK 203 million) Furthermore, support can be granted for the participation in projects, product development, marketing, research and development, process and organizational innovation or energy efficiency and more. Examples for instruments: (all numbers for 2018) • Support for participation in trade fairs (SEK 0,3 million)							

Support may only be provided for a company's costs for an initial participation in a trade fair. The support may not exceed SEK 1 800 000 in total according to the funding directive.

- Innovation support (SEK 2,9 million)

- Support of counselling (e.g., for competence development, HR) (SEK 24,9 million)

Support for consultancy services for SMEs shall relate to product development, marketing, competence development or other similar purposes and may not exceed SEK 150 000 per case.

- Process- and organisations innovation (SEK 0,2 million)

No evaluation is available, but a regular reporting system provides information on the monitoring of the measure. [Similar frameworks with some variations have been in place for a longer stretch of time and certainly form an important support for regional businesses, especially in the sparsely populated regions in the North of Sweden which are affected most by demographic change. The measures relevant for this research are of minor importance though.]

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References:

<https://tillvaxtverket.se/vara-tjanster/utlysningar/utlysningar/2019-01-07-regionala-foretagsstod.html>

Directive 2015:210 (https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/forordning-2015210-om-statligt-stod-for-att_sfs-2015-210)

Directive 2015:211 (https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/forordning-2015211-om-statligt-stod-till_sfs-2015-211)

Country	SE						
ID	SE_07						
Name in English	SE_07 Regional development projects						
Name in local language	<i>Regional development projects</i>						
Year of implementation	2014						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X					
The project Counselling for entrepreneurs is an example for regional growth measures that are based on ERDF cofunding. The goal of the project is to ensure that all companies in the region Halland can be offered a basic level of quality assured counselling on business development, regardless in which municipality the company operates. Region Halland finances the consultancy to stimulate the development and growth of Halland's entrepreneurship. The municipalities are responsible for administration. The first funding period was 2014-2016, the present funding period lasts from 2017-2020. There is a cost ceiling of SEK 3 million per year, which is governed by the companies' demand for services and each municipality is allocated a sum based on the number of inhabitants in the municipality. All entrepreneurs active in the region and those who intend to take up a business are eligible. Each entrepreneur that registers for the measure is granted up to five counselling hours with one of around 50 external consultants with an accreditation of the municipality/region. The offer covers seven major topics including: business plan, business strategy and business development; finance and law; marketing, sales, social media, branding and public procurement; management, organizational development, HR and employment; product / service development and import / export; digitization, technology and automation; environment, social, ecological sustainability and CSR. An evaluation for the years 2014 and 2015 shows that the service attracts a wide range of entrepreneurs of different ages, active in different industries from different parts of the region. The majority of participants are women (nearly 1 000 of 1 500) and that the typical participating company has a turnover of less than SEK 500 000, no employees and an ambition to grow slowly but surely. 84.7% of the participants believe that the service works very well or well over the whole process. They are also very satisfied with what the consultants deliver and consider that the business development meets their expectations, the treatment is professional, new relevant knowledge is added and the advice is adapted to their needs.							

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References:

<https://www.timbanken.se/halland/>

<https://naringsliv.varberg.se/sidor/service/timbanken.html>

Timbanken Halland (2016): Uppföljning av Timbanken. 2014-2015. (Short evaluation of Timbanken. 2014-2015). Download:

<https://docplayer.se/40093105-Uppfoljning-av-timbanken.html>

Country	SE						
ID	SE_08						
Name in English	SE_08 Medtech4Health – skills enhancement for small companies						
Name in local language	<i>Medtech4Health: kompetensförstärkning i småföretag</i>						
Year of implementation	2020						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X		X			

The programme Medtech4Health – skills enhancement for small companies was initiated in 2015 and is coordinated by Vinnova, the Swedish Innovation Agency, within the framework of a range of strategic innovation programmes promoted by Vinnova together with the Swedish Energy Agency (Energimyndigheten) and Formas, a government research council for sustainable development with the goal to strengthen international competitiveness and sustainable solutions for global challenges in society. The implementation is based on national funding means.

Micro and small businesses developing innovative medical technology products are invited to participate in a call to apply for funding. Applications are assessed at eight occasions during this period. The total budget for a two-year period (2020/21) is SEK 4 million while projects can be granted up to SEK 200 000. At least 50% of the total project costs have to be covered by the company.

The key idea of the programme is to finance the cost of external competence that enables the development or implementation of an innovative idea for a medical technology product (the development of pharmaceuticals is not eligible for funding). Eligible costs cover the purchase of services of an external consultant or through temporary employment of an expert during the project period (up to one year). Companies are required to demonstrate how they plan to transfer the knowledge and experience provided by the external expert and retain it in the company in the long run.

In June 2020, eight projects are reported to be funded under the 2020 call so far, with one exception all making use of the highest possible funding sum of SEK 200 000.

A first evaluation was published analysing the first three years of implementation of the project. The assessment concludes that the strengths of the programme include the well organised establishment of a programme with an important focus, well developed collaboration between stakeholders, a good investment and communication strategy. Weaknesses and areas for further development included the marginal inclusion of patients as stakeholders in the activities, challenges in measuring the effects and the underdeveloped European perspective of the funded projects.

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References:

Sara Modig, Christopher Palmberg och Monica Schofield (2018): Utvärdering strategiska innovationsprogram – Första utvärderingen av MedTech4Health, InfraSweden2030, Drive Sweden, RE:Source och Smart Built Environment [Evaluation of the strategic innovation programme. Först evalauation of MedTech4Health, InfraSweden2030, Drive Sweden, RE:Source and Smart Built Environment], R7:2018, Formas: Stockholm. Download: <https://docplayer.se/107007394-Utvärdering-strategiska-innovationsprogram.html>

Country	SI						
ID	SI_01						
Name in English	SI_01 Lifelong Career Guidance for companies and employees						
Name in local language	<i>Lifelong Career Guidance for companies and employees</i>						
Year of implementation	2016						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					

The point of the national coordination mission is to support integration and coordination of all stakeholders, implementation of trainings, providing tools for development (particularly for schoolchildren and unemployed) and training for their use as well as concern for quality standards and the promotion of Lifelong Career Guidance.

With the systematic approach to the development of Lifelong career guidance, the project contributes to the greater capacity of the institutions involved in this field and thereby increase access of services to individuals.

Objectives of the project are caring for system operation of Lifelong Career Guidance, including strengthening the profession, tools development, especially for young people, quality assurance of Lifelong Career Guidance, education of career advisors, employed in various organizations as well as promotion and awareness of professionals working in the field of employment policies in the public sector and non-governmental organisations, as well as employers, unions etc. and other individuals about the importance of Lifelong Career Guidance.

The services implemented by the ESS include: labour market information, independent career management, in-depth career counselling, learning skills and career management, Lifelong Career Guidance services for educating youth.

In 2017, the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities granted 15 concessions for the provision of Lifelong Career Guidance services. Workshops for granted concessionaires began in June 2017. The concessionaires carried out activities of learning career management skills, which include different types of workshops aimed at acquiring skills to learn about individual interests and competencies and opportunities in the environment, as well as learning decision-making and achieving employment and career goals. Generally, the workshops within the programme last one or two days. In 2016, 465 workshops by the concessionaires were carried out; 831 participants (14% of attendees) got employment. In 2017, 919 workshops by the concessionaires were carried out; 3 545 (30% of all participants) got employed afterwards. In 2018, 690 workshops were carried out; 2 581 (28%) of participants got employment. From 2019, the concessions were not granted for concessionaires, the lifelong career guidance has been carried out by the ESS exclusively since then. Due to changes in the labour market, fewer workshops of the concessionaires were held than planned in the period 2016–2018, as the number of unemployed in 2018 decreased by about 30% compared to 2015.

Intended audiences are labour market institutions as well as others working in the field of Lifelong Career Guidance (Employment Service of Slovenia, the National Education Institute, Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training, Slovene Human Resources Development and Scholarship Fund, the HR department in companies, NGOs, Career Centre for Students, Primary and Secondary Schools, The Program Providers of Lifelong Career Guidance and Ministries, caring for system placement of Lifelong Career Guidance).

In order to reach quality implementation of the programme, the cross-sectoral guidelines that include quality standards were confirmed by the inter-ministerial Expert Group for Lifelong Career Orientation as a key strategic document. The document encourages cooperation and coordination between

various institutions that are connected to career guidance in Slovenia. The implementation of each workshop within the programme is evaluated by the participants at the end of the event. Available evaluations show that participants are in general very satisfied with the workshops (its contents, methodologies, implementation).

The project is funded by the EU - European Social Fund (80 %) and by the Republic of Slovenia (20 %) and is free of charge for its users. 3.49 million EUR is intended for the project. The intended duration of the project is from 13th June 2016 to 31st October 2022.

Drafted by: Tomaz Dezelan

References:

http://english.ess.gov.si/about_ess/projects/current-projects/project/service-development-of-lifelong-career-guidance

Country	SI						
ID	SI_02						
Name in English	SI_02 Competence Centres for Human Resources Development						
Name in local language	<i>Competence Centres for Human Resources Development</i>						
Year of implementation	2010						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X		X	X		X	X
The programme is co-financed by the Slovenian Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (20%) and the European Union under the European Social Fund (80%). Depending on their requirements and needs, companies determine the key positions of employment and the desired competencies as well as train employees. The model identifies needs for competences which then serve as the basis for a training plan. Competence Centres connect companies through partnerships for human resources development. They provide an important incentive to use employee development as a strategic tool for achieving greater competitiveness and better business results. The programme's partnerships for human resource development use competence models for sector profiles and exchange of knowledge, experiences and good practices. They also train employees and improve their competencies, productivity, creativity and innovation. As a consequence, this strengthens the competitiveness of the Slovenian economy. The competence centre projects have the main objectives of strategic HR development (improving the level of employee and manager qualifications) and collaboration of companies through sharing knowledge, preparing and implementing trainings and ensuring that participants have a great experience. The programme supports all trainings that develop key competencies within partnerships and covers project office and training costs. The de-minimis scheme reimburses 100% of the project office's work. The government aid scheme 'Training aid' reimburses 50% to 70% of the training costs depending on the size of the company. The largest share is devoted to developing technical competencies, followed by training for management and sales skills and acquiring new knowledge in marketing, design, change, ecology, digitalisation, etc. In the programme's first period of implementation, beginning in 2010 and ending in 2015, it supported 19 industries including 300 different companies, trained more than 14 000 employees and invested more than EUR 7 million. In 2017–18, it supported 11 competence centres for human resources development, which included 250 companies with more than 35 800 employees. In 2019–2022, the programme supported 10 competence centres for human resources development, which included 327 companies and an estimated 22 352 participants in training. The diverse industries supported include computer science, telecommunications, toolmaking, glassmaking, accounting, chemistry, robotics, papermaking, design management, woodworking, logistics, trade, construction, trade, waste management and security. The companies supported ranged in size from micro and small to medium and large enterprises.							

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References:

<https://www.sriips-rs.si/en/human-resource-development/competence-centers-human-resources-development>

Country	SI						
ID	SI_03						
Name in English	SI_03 SPOT Slovenian Business Point						
Name in local language	SPOT – Slovenska poslovna točka						
Year of implementation	2005						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					
The idea behind the establishment of SPOT – Slovenian Business point - was to provide a comprehensive system of free state support services for businesses under a single brand. Thus, businesses can obtain all important information on the legal requirements and procedures in one place. The administrator of the measure is the Ministry of Public Administration. The system is funded by the Republic of Slovenia, the EU under the European Regional Development Fund and SPIRIT Slovenia, a public agency. The SPOT system targets business entities, entrepreneurs, and potential entrepreneurs. It offers information for businesses (that are legally registered in Slovenia) of all sizes and from all industries. It offers them electronic services, information and counselling services (including sharing information about activities, trainings, workshops, tenders and events in the field of entrepreneurship), informational and promotional workshops and trainings (with the purpose of strengthening knowledge, skills and competencies of participants in areas related to the promotion of entrepreneurial culture), exchange of good practices and opening of new business opportunities, and a wide range of services in the field of internationalization and foreign investment. As a first component, the SPOT system provides a web portal which ensures easy, fast and free business of entrepreneurs and companies with the state. As a second component, the SPOT system runs "registration" points to support business entities. The third component of the system comprises of 12 regional SPOT consulting points, where professional assistance is provided in various fields in the form of information and counselling; organisation of free workshops and trainings for entrepreneurs and potential entrepreneurs; exchange of good practices and opening business opportunities; regional networking and co-creation of business support environment. The fourth level of the SPOT system is the national point SPOT - SPIRIT Slovenia, a public agency that provides a wide range of services in the field of internationalisation and foreign investment intended primarily for exporting companies and investors. In 2005, which was the first year of the system's implementation, more than 4 000 applications were submitted via the e-VEM (SPOT) portal. In 2019, already more than two million applications were submitted via the portal. The SPOT – Slovenian Business Point is a very relevant system that provides free and comprehensive information and activities concerning legal requirements, business opportunities, counselling and trainings targeting all entrepreneurs regardless of the size of their companies or the industries they are active in.							

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References:

<https://evem.gov.si/info/sistem-spot/>

Country	SI						
ID	SI_04						
Name in English	SI_04 Slovenian Enterprise Fund						
Name in local language	<i>Slovenski podjetniški sklad</i>						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						
The Slovenian Enterprise Fund has incentives in the form of small-value vouchers that support innovative young companies with fully-funded international training for high-tech companies. The fund seeks to provide effective incentives for SMEs, thus filling gaps in SMEs' access to helpful resources for increasing their competitiveness and raising added value per employee. The fund specifically targets SMEs as well as start-ups. The Republic of Slovenia (Ministry of Economic Development and Technology) and the European Union under the European Regional Development Fund provide resources for the fund. The Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy decided to support the 'Establishment of a comprehensive voucher system of small value incentives for SMEs 2019-23'. In its first year in 2019, its 2 714 vouchers issued exceeded the original plan by 724%. The 2 631 vouchers had an allocation of EUR 10.1 million. The 13 public calls distributed vouchers for raising digital competences, quality certificates, patents, models, trademarks, market research of foreign markets, participation at international forums, participation in economic delegations abroad, group presentations of the Slovenian economy at international fairs, digital marketing, preparation of a digital strategy, cyber security, status transformation of companies, introduction of business excellence according to the EFQM model in small and medium-sized enterprises, and transfer of ownership. The Fund's 2019 annual report indicated that business support exceeded the planned levels.							

Drafted by: Tomaz Dezelan

References:

<https://podjetniskisklad.si/en>

Country	SI						
ID	SI_05						
Name in English	SI_05 University Incubators						
Name in local language	<i>Univerzitetni inkubatorji</i>						
Year of implementation	2001						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X				
The University Incubators offer free educational workshops, equipped business spaces for carrying out activities, and business counselling and mentoring. There are three university incubators operating: Business Incubator of the University of Maribor 'Tovarna podjetnov' (Podjetniški inkubator Univerze v Mariboru Tovarna podjetnov), Ljubljana University Incubator (Ljubljanski univerzitetni inkubator), and University Development Centre and Incubator of Primorska (Univerzitetni razvojni center in inkubator Primorske). The Business Incubator of the University of Maribor was established in 2001; the Ljubljana University Incubator was established in 2004; and the University Development Centre and Incubator of Primorska was established in 2005. They are financed by the Republic of Slovenia (Ministry of Economic Development and Technology) and the European Union under the European Regional Development Fund. The University Incubators are in line with the goals of entrepreneurship development and the flow of knowledge from the academic sphere to the economy which are the orientations mentioned in the strategic documents of the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology. One of the key activities of the University Incubators is organization of a series of entrepreneurial workshops, trainings, forums, circles and conferences, through which participants can acquire entrepreneurial knowledge and skills, as well as learn about good practices and network between each other. These events (including workshops and trainings) are intended for founders of start-up (spin-off and spin-out) companies and other entrepreneurial individuals. The goal of such activities is teaching entrepreneurial thinking and promoting entrepreneurial activities. They also offer counselling and mentoring with the aim of successful development of the following: entrepreneurial idea, business plan, business model, market research, preparation of marketing strategy, assessment of the value of a start-up company, investment negotiations. Many companies and entrepreneurial groups have been active under the incubators and some of them have already succeeded in Slovenian and foreign markets and have obtained important investments, as well as won international entrepreneurial prizes.							

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References:

<https://www.tovarnapodjemov.org/>
<https://lui.si/>
<http://www.uip.si/>

Country	SI						
ID	SI_06						
Name in English	SI_06 Start:Up Slovenia						
Name in local language	Start:up Slovenija						
Year of implementation	2004						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X				

Start:Up Slovenia is an independent open platform that supports innovative entrepreneurship in Slovenia. Start:Up Slovenia exists since 2004 and is funded by the Republic of Slovenia (Ministry of Economic Development and Technology) and the European Union under the European Regional Development Fund. Their aim is to recognize the best Slovenian innovative start-up companies in the earliest development phase and professionally support and promote them to the general public. The activities of the platform go in line with the key goals of strategic documents of the Ministry of the Economic Development and Technology (development of entrepreneurship and commercialization). Start:Up Slovenia offers different financial and non-financial incentives for start-ups and innovative entrepreneurial projects. The non-financial incentives include organization and implementation of workshops, trainings, and counselling for start-ups. In 2020, they organized and implemented 12 of such training programs. The topics of the programs include acquisition of general entrepreneurial skills and development of a business idea; acquisition of appropriate knowledge for applying for the Start:Up Slovenia's tender for the part covering the business plan; finalisation of the business plan for the best possible ranking in the Start:Up Slovenia competition; networking with other entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial professionals. Other topics include issues of financing, support environment services, marketing, etc.

Start-ups of all sizes can participate in the events.

Start:Up Slovenia has been implementing activities that include informing, preparing different events, including the most important start-up and technology conference in this part of Europe 'Podim'.

Since 2008, they have been organizing Start:Up Slovenia competition where they award the best Slovenian start-up of the year. Almost 1000 start-ups have participated in the competition so far.

Their key tool is website Startup.si, which was also recognized by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia in the framework of the Action Plan "Slovenia - the country of start-ups" adopted on 21 March 2018. Being co-founders of European Startup Network and Startup Europe CEE Network, they are also internationally well networked.

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References:

<https://www.startup.si/en-us>

Country	SK						
ID	SK_03						
Name in English	SK_03 Sectoral councils						
Name in local language	Sektorové rady						
Year of implementation	2015						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
					X		
Sectoral Councils are voluntary, independent associations of experts made of employers, trade unions, educational institutions, state and regional institutions whose role is to monitor labour market needs in various sectors of national economy and to suggest changes of National Qualification Framework based on the observations made, as well as recommendations to public education policies. 24 councils are divided based on main branches of the economic activities in Slovakia. The councils are organised on behalf of the State Institute of Vocational Education under the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic and funded from the national budget since 2015. A dominant share of the Councils does not include representatives of MSMEs. Some representatives of enterprises between 25 and 50 employees are present in specific Councils such as tourism and gastronomy, but MSMEs are generally underrepresented in the Councils. There is no available evaluation of the Sectoral Councils. The Sectoral Councils present an association of experts with a long tradition, established for a long time, with existing national as well as regional connections. On the other hand, they are rather closed to newly emerging stakeholders in the sectors. Measures aimed to assure openness and representativeness could be enforced.							

Drafted by: Miroslav Stefanik

References:

<https://www.kvalifikacie.sk/sektorove-rady>

Country	SK						
ID	SK_04						
Name in English	SK_04 Award of the Association of Adult Education Institutions						
Name in local language	<i>Cena Asociácie inštitúcií vzdelávania dospelých</i>						
Year of implementation	2013						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
					X		
Association of Adult Education Institutions (AIVD) grants an Award to outstanding projects, initiatives and individuals in the field of adult education in Slovakia, targeting adult education providers. The Award is granted on annual basis and funded from a national budget. In 2020 AIVD Awards candidates are based on these categories: the most outstanding educational project, contribution to adult learning, popularisation activity, governance and age management initiative. Since 2018 this initiative is supported also by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic. In 2019, the award was granted during the “Week of lifelong learning” in October, with multiple accompanying dissemination activities (discussions, lectures, etc.). Since its establishment in 2013, in the category of outstanding educational projects, the Award was granted exclusively to MSMEs, or non-profit organizations. There are no available evaluations of the Award of AIVD. AIVD is a value for money organisation, well visible with a small-scale budget. It is widely based on and driven by personal connections of experts in the field of adult education.							

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References:

<https://www.tcu.sk>
<https://www.tcu.sk/cena-aivd>

Country	SK						
ID	SK_05						
Name in English	SK_05 Counselling and training provided by the Slovak Business Agency						
Name in local language	SBA: Poradenstvo a vzdelavanie						
Year of implementation	1993						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X					
Slovak Business Agency (SBA) is a semi-state funded organisation supporting small and medium businesses in the country since 1993. Besides the state support (including EU funding) also business associations contribute to its operation. SBA is jointly supported by the Ministry of Economy together with employers' associations. EU funding (including funds from ESF, ERDF or ERASMUS+) presents an important source of SBAs funding. One of the activities of SBA is counselling and training provided to support creation and operation of MSMEs. Currently, a one-hour information session and three hours of counselling are provided completely for free; for any additional (up to 36) hours of counselling participants need to co-finance 20 percent of the costs. The objective of the scheme is supporting small and medium businesses in dealing with their everyday operation by providing financially accessible information in counselling and training. Covered topics focus on problems related to everyday operation of MSMEs, in areas such as management, marketing, budgeting, preparing project proposals, taxes and accounting, public procurements, e-commerce or legislation. Through sub-contracted educational institutions SBA provides this type of training and counselling to individuals before they register their business. The target group includes unemployed, immigrants and other vulnerable groups. The scheme shelters short-duration training tailor-made for the MSMEs before entering practice. Training is provided in a long-term, but without an exact regularity. Only approximately one hour of training/counselling is completely covered by the SBA, additional hours require co-financing from the participant. Last open call was published in 2015. The monitoring information is collected on the number of supported beneficiaries, costs related to financial indicators. No information on the budget, or the number of participants was made publicly available. The level of co-financing (own contribution) is high, presenting a potential barrier to some members of the target group. Openly provided counselling could be prolonged and made more widely accessible.							

Drafted by: Miroslav Stefanik

References:

<http://www.sbagency.sk/poradenstvo-a-vzdelavanie>

Country	SK						
ID	SK_06						
Name in English	SK_06 START2ACT Project						
Name in local language	Projekt START2ACT						
Year of implementation	2019						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
					X		
					Provision (on-site or external) to the employees of one organisation		
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X			X		
Funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme and implemented by Slovak Innovation and Energy Agency (SIEA), starting from 2019 the mission of the START2ACT project was to support young SMEs and start-ups to save energy and cut costs at their workplace. To fulfil this mission, national partners were offering free of charge mentoring and training activities in nine European countries. A key aim of START2ACT was to increase energy efficiency through behavioural change in office equipment, the fastest growing energy user in the business world, consuming 15% of the total electricity used in offices, which is expected to rise to 30% by 2020. START2ACT aims to trigger the use and uptake of the many available tools and solutions offering a great potential for energy and money savings, yet still not adequately used due to lack of understanding of how to use them in practice and due to insufficient engagement of people towards changing behaviour in everyday life. START2ACT sheltered three types of capacity building activities: Business breakfasts with SMEs, On-site trainings for SMEs and Mentoring start-ups. The project concluded in mid-2019, but the e-learning platform providing online courses (also in Slovak) was still on in the first half of 2020. E-learning courses are offered on: i. Energy Efficiency at the Workplace, ii. Energy Efficiency at Home, and iii. Smart Energy Management. Courses are supported also by an online knowledge base and graduates receive a certificate of participation. There is no available evaluation of this project. However, the project appears to be designed in a useful way.							

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References:

<https://sk.start2act.eu/>

Country	SK						
ID	SK_07						
Name in English	SK_07 Slovak Business Angels Network						
Name in local language	<i>Klub podnikateľských anjelov Slovenska</i>						
Year of implementation	2011						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X				X	
The Slovak Business Angels Network connects young starting entrepreneurs with potential investors. It is based on its own fundraising (private funds). It collects information on new emerging entrepreneurial business projects and networks the foremost Slovak investors since 2011. Additionally, it also organises regular meetings and workshops for young Slovak entrepreneurs. Workshops usually include training and mentoring on how to elaborate a business project, or how to start a business in Slovakia. The Slovak Business Angels Network was an initiative of the Young Entrepreneurs Association of Slovakia, networking young entrepreneurs, younger than 40. Its main role is in sharing experiences, mentoring and networking. It actively looks for business projects suitable for an investment from The Slovak Business Angels Network. This is done mostly by organising networking events and workshops on topics related to setting up a business plan. Potential associated financing comes from private resources and is considered as an investment. The usual financial support ranges between EUR 10 000 to 80 000. Besides the financial support, strong emphasis is on supporting the starting entrepreneurs with relevant experience and mentoring. There is no available evaluation of the project. The Slovak Business Angels Network is a small-scale, well visible project.							

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References:

The Slovak Business Angels Network connects young starting entrepreneurs with potential investors. It is based on its own fundraising (private funds). It collects information on new emerging entrepreneurial business projects and networks the foremost Slovak investors since 2011. Additionally, it also organises regular meetings and workshops for young Slovak entrepreneurs. Workshops usually include training and mentoring on how to elaborate a business project, or how to start a business in Slovakia.

The Slovak Business Angels Network was an initiative of the Young Entrepreneurs Association of Slovakia, networking young entrepreneurs, younger than 40. Its main role is in sharing experiences, mentoring and networking. It actively looks for business projects suitable for an investment from The Slovak Business Angels Network. This is done mostly by organising networking events and workshops on topics related to setting up a business plan. Potential associated financing comes from private resources and is considered as an investment. The usual financial support ranges between 10 000 to 80 000 EUR. Besides the financial support, strong emphasis is on supporting the starting entrepreneurs with relevant experience and mentoring.

There is no available evaluation of the project.

The Slovak Business Angels Network is a small-scale, well visible project.

Country	UK						
ID	UK_02						
Name in English	UK_02 Princess Royal Training Awards (PTA)						
Name in local language	Princess Royal Training Awards						
Year of implementation	2016						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
					X		
Awareness raising instruments/incentives: Awards (for SMEs in particular) The PTA is awarded to organisations for learning and development and who can show how their training is impacting on their employees and organisational performance. The award was founded in 2016. The award is based around 3 'Hallmarks of Excellence': i) training/learning and development is integral to the applying organisation: demonstrating a strategic approach and a sustainable learning culture; ii) the education and training programme is designed and delivered efficiently and effectively: supported through planning and delivery and measurement to show success; iii) the programme has an impact on the success of the organisation and on individuals. The PTA provides some evidence that the award rewards organisations, with effects including higher budget contribution to further training support in winning companies, supporting recruitment, and securing of investment for future training programmes. There is also a supporting Alumni network made up of 250 HR and L&D professionals. The PTA rewards both multinationals and SMEs.							

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References:

<https://www.princessroyaltrainingawards.com>

Country	UK						
ID	UK_03						
Name in English	UK_03 Innovate UK						
Name in local language	Innovate UK						
Year of implementation	2007						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X			X		X	X

Innovate UK is part of UK Research and Innovation, a non-departmental public body funded through a grant-in-aid from the UK government. The purpose of Innovate UK is to drive productivity and economic growth by supporting businesses to develop and realise the potential of new ideas, including leveraging the UK research base. Innovate UK is responsible for driving growth by working with companies to de-risk, enable and support innovation. This includes connecting businesses to partners, customers and investors, funding business and research collaborations to accelerate innovation and drive business investment in research and development. Innovate UK is available in all UK regions, economic sectors and value chains. Since 2007, Innovate UK has invested around GBP 2.5 billion to support businesses, with match-funding from industry taking the total value of supported projects above GBP 4.3 billion. Innovate UK publishes an annual delivery plan to explain how they will fund and connect businesses to develop new products, processes and services. The range of services and actions that Innovate UK can take to support businesses is wide and not exclusively focussed on training. Innovate UK funding can be used to pay for training costs should they be professionally relevant to the purpose of the project funding

In 2019, enterprises in the following sectors were targeted:

- AI and the data economy;
- Ageing society, health and nutrition;
- Clean growth and infrastructure;
- Mobility, manufacturing and materials;

Support also targets 'innovative businesses and entrepreneurs with the potential and ambition to grow'. There is no specific training component offered. The support can include investment in management skills to boost the number of researchers and entrepreneurs with business relevant knowledge to understand the route to commercialisation. The focus is on developing skills that lead to stronger innovation and economic growth.

According to the 2019 Delivery Plan, GBP 14 million is allocated towards the skills plan of Innovate UK. This is allocated mainly towards mapping and analysing skills needs of innovative businesses and only a small amount may be available to support training. Overall, this is currently viewed as a low impact and low relevance incentive. However, in the future this funding agency may become more significant in the provision of training to enterprises who are supported by UKRI funding.

Drafted by: Frederick Elliott Gaved

References:

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/innovate-uk-completing-your-application-project-costs-guidance/partner-finance-form-guidance>). Innovate UK has an evaluation framework (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-framework>) and produces funding reports that assess the impact of the programme (<https://innovateuk.blog.gov.uk/2017/08/29/innovate-uks-201617-funding-reports-what-do-they-tell-us/>) <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/innovate-uk>; <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/INUK-250920-DeliveryPlan2019.pdf>

Country	UK						
ID	UK_04						
Name in English	UK_04 ReAct						
Name in local language	ReAct						
Year of implementation	2014						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
					X		
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X						
ReAct provides a package of support help people gain new skills, overcome obstacles and improve their chances of returning to work in the shortest possible time following redundancy. ReAct combines financial and non-financial incentives in the 3 components that make up the scheme: i) A vocational training grant for individuals who need to update their skills to return to work; ii) Extra support to help remove any barriers to vocational training; iii) A contribution towards wages and help with training costs for recruiting employers. ReAct is available for those who have become unemployed within the last three months before the application, are under a current notice of redundancy, are resident in Wales, and not currently undertaking any training funded through public funds. For employers, ReAct can make a contribution of up to GBP 3 000 towards the costs of employing an eligible person for 25 hours a week or more and provide employer training support (50% net cost of work related training, not exceeding GBP 1000). This is a significant incentive for training in Wales. The project is aimed primarily at the recently unemployed/redundant workers and is therefore not that well-targeted towards encouraging employers to invest in training or upskilling. There is an element of financial support for recruiting employers and this is aimed at gaining new skills for a new employer. This will have an impact, although it is not clear how many employers are participating in the scheme, but this may not be significant.							

Drafted by: Frederick Elliott Gaved

References:

<https://gov.wales/react-employers>

Country	UK						
ID	UK_05						
Name in English	UK_05 Skills development support						
Name in local language	<i>Skills development support</i>						
Year of implementation	[No information given]						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X	X					
The skills development support is comprised of a portfolio of activities to help businesses identify and develop skills of their staff effectively. The skills development portfolio identifies training needs and helps to improve employee skills, motivation and willingness of staff to provide feedback. The activities include: 1. Training Needs Analysis (TNA) workshops: workshops are free to attend, open to all businesses and held at various locations. There are two types of workshops, with TNA workshops providing insight into the tools and techniques used by learning and development professionals to analyse training needs and 'training needs to training plan' workshops, which support businesses in the formulation and management of a training plan (including objectives, costs and effective management). 2. Skills Advisor Support: A help-desk facility to provide 1-to-1 support for companies to assist them in identifying training needs and help in developing a plan to address these needs. The service is available to InvestNI customers and is free. 3. Skills Advancement Grant: this grant is available to small companies who are customers of Invest NI. Support is available for external training, travel and accommodations costs up to 50% with a maximum GBP 15 000 available. The grant does not cover mandatory training. 4. Skills for Growth for SMEs: This provides SMEs with financial support for SME training activities, including support for trainee wages, internal trainers, external trainers, and travel and accommodation costs. The support is targeted at SMEs (Skills Growth for SMEs), Large enterprises (Skills Growth for Large Enterprises), FDI (Skills Growth for Foreign Direct Investors) and only existing InvestNI customers are eligible for the support. Overall, a range of support is offered with different co-funding rules. For the Skills Advancement Grant, support for external training, travel and accommodation costs at 50% up to a maximum of GBP 15.000. Skills Growth for SMEs, up to 50% of eligible costs is available for trainee wages, internal trainers. External trainers, travel and accommodation costs. Skills Growth for Large Enterprises/FDI offers grant support up to a maximum of 50% of eligible training. This is a highly relevant incentive for eligible businesses. It combines non-financial and substantial financial elements, providing a strong package of support for enterprises to invest in skills for their workforce. Similarly, the annual expenditure in skills support in 2019-20 was GBP 46 million, a substantial budget for this instrument. The scheme is limited by the regional focus (Northern Ireland) and the eligibility criteria (being a customer of InvestNI). For eligible businesses, this is considered a significant incentive and there is case study evidence of positive effects/impacts on participating enterprises (https://www.investni.com/support-for-business/skills-development).							

Drafted by: Frederick Elliott Gaved

References:

<https://www.investni.com/support-for-business/skills-development>

Country	UK						
ID	UK_06						
Name in English	UK_06 Skillmakers						
Name in local language	Skillmakers						
Year of implementation	2016						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X			X	
Skillmakers is a free-to-use business advice service and support available to local businesses so they can access skills, information and networks. This is based on an online hub supported by a team to help support businesses to find solutions to training, recruitment and other business needs. A central feature of Skillmakers is that it engages businesses with charities and community groups. Skillmakers is a collaboration (West Herts College, Oaklands College, Watford Borough Council) supported by the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership. For skills support, Skillmakers provides a wide range of support activities to help businesses identify training needs and undertaking staff upskilling training. The range of activities includes: - Staff training: delivery of high-quality training through a 'business employer training' programme, tailored to fit the needs of the business; - Employer Training Needs Analysis: Identifying training needed to improve organisational effectiveness; - Support in identifying the right local training for staff and business needs: covering advice on support available for basic skills, apprenticeships, leadership & management, mentoring, traineeships, internships, work trials, regulated qualifications, and guidance on qualification difficulty levels; - Accessing training and improving skills: through a 'Building Better Opportunities' programme; - Dedicated local training provider: Together Training is a new venture set up to directly meet the needs of Apprenticeship-Levy paying employers; - Support on funding, grants and other support: including Apprenticeship Incentive Funding, Funding Rates, Learning Support and Adult Learner Loans; - Guidance on understating the UK Skills System and specialist bodies; - Introduction to Apprenticeship reforms and Levy. Skillmakers also supports businesses to identify new talent and employees with the right skills and how to participate and support in their local community. All types of businesses targeted, but to be eligible businesses must be in the region covered by the scheme. There are no fixed co-funding rules, as individual packages are designed in partnership with employer/businesses accessing the scheme. The incentive provides a comprehensive range of counselling services to support businesses to train or upskill their staff. The support is relevant to the needs of business, due to the tailored component. The strengths are the regional focus, tailored advice, and 'one-stop-shop' style approach. The weaknesses are the limited number of partners, indicating a relatively small scope of support available. This incentive will only ever (by design) reach a small, focussed set of beneficiaries.							

Drafted by: Frederick Elliott Gaved

References:

<https://skillmakers.co.uk>

Country	UK						
ID	UK_07						
Name in English	UK_07 People and skills support						
Name in local language	<i>People and skills support</i>						
Year of implementation	2010						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X		X		X	
Business West is the Chambers of Commerce covering Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, West of England, Gloucestershire, Swindon and Wiltshire, and Dorset. The purpose of Business West is to help businesses of all sizes take advantage of opportunities to successfully start, grow, export and innovate. Business West offers a range of services to their members (20,000 businesses), including in the area of skills and training. In particular, Business West has skills advisers to help identify and tackle skills gaps in businesses, including connecting businesses to local and national training providers to ensure relevant education and training. Funding advice and support is also provided, including apprenticeship standards and funding. Business West also produces annual Sector Skills Statements that provide local sector knowledge and expertise and wider national intelligence. The focus is to cover sectoral skills challenges in a number of sectors. Business West also provides High Impact Scale-Up Coaching Grants to SMEs (supported through the ERDF), which provides coaching grants to help businesses overcome barriers to growth through intensive and strategic companies. Grant payments of GBP 5,000 are available to successful applicants. This programme will conclude in 2021. Grant funding was recently increased to help businesses cope with the impacts of COVID-19. Members of Business West can access the support, with only members being eligible. The incentive includes skills support for businesses, with skills advisers helping enterprises to identify and tackle skills gaps in their business. The support includes: - Advice on new apprenticeship standards and funding (covering 90% of training costs); - Help to identify skill and training needs; - Advice on the best training solutions; - Access to relevant training providers; - Guidance on how to attract and retain the best people; - Advice on how to raise the profile of employment opportunities. Some grants are available as part of this programme in the areas of 'High Impact Scale Up Coaching Grants' (up to GBP 5,000), with one topic that qualifies for this grant coaching in 'upskilling management staff'. The incentive provides a comprehensive range of counselling services to support businesses to train or upskill their staff. The support is relevant to the needs of business, due to the tailored component. The strengths are the regional focus, mixing of financial and non-financial support, tailored advice, and 'one-stop-shop' style approach. The weaknesses are the limited number of partners, indicating a relatively small scope of support available. This incentive will only ever (by design) reach a small, focussed set of beneficiaries.							

Drafted by: Frederick Elliott Gaved

References:

<https://www.businesswest.co.uk/grow/skills>

Country	UK						
ID	UK_08						
Name in English	UK_08 10,000 Small Businesses						
Name in local language	10,000 Small Businesses						
Year of implementation	2010						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
	X						
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
		X	X			X	
The 10,000 Small Businesses programme is designed to provide high-quality, practical education and business support to leaders of high-growth small businesses and social enterprises across the country. The programme was launched in 2010 to address the support gap for small enterprises, to help them unlock economic and job creation potential of their business. There are a range of higher education institutions as partners (Said Business School at Oxford University, the Aston Centre for Growth at Aston University, Leeds University Business School at University of Leeds, and the Manchester Metropolitan Business School at Manchester Metropolitan University). The programme brings together leaders of small businesses and creates networking and peer-learning opportunities, based around a core of 100 hours of educational content (online and in-person). The programme includes 3 residential sessions. Eligibility criteria include: - The applicant must be the primary owner / co-owner of the business, or the most senior decision-maker if the business is not limited by shares - The business must have been operating for at least three years and will generally have between five and 40 employees - The business should have an annual turnover of at least GBP 250 000 - Social enterprise applicants must be commercially operated businesses that achieve their social purpose through trading rather than grant funding - The business must be scalable and capable of generating additional local employment - Applicants should not have extensive recent management education Preference will be given to those businesses operating in or on behalf of disadvantaged communities or regeneration areas. In terms of co-funding, all training activities are free of cost. Travel/accommodation expenditure for participants, e.g., for in-person training, are not explicitly covered. Although not the sole focus of the programme, there is a component of the teaching focussed on building skills and enhancing education and training opportunities for employees, as is shown by the impact indicator 'increased training opportunities for staff' in the Progress Reports. The programme is offered on a fully funded basis to small business and social enterprise leaders who desire to grow their businesses, create local employment and have scalable business models, along with a set of technical criteria (see link below). Over 1200 small business owners have completed the programme. An impact report is available. Indicators include the number of participants that are: - Increasing training opportunities provided to staff after graduating; - More effective business leaders; - Taking on external financing; - More confident managing growth; - Introducing new business processes; - Launch a new product or service in the year after completing the programme; - Use financial data more in decision-making. The latest Progress Report finds that 74% of participating businesses increase the training opportunities they provide to their staff following graduation, 71% take on external financing (twice							

the rate of UK small businesses), 97% report being more effective business leaders, 94% are more confident managing growth, 90% introduced new business processes; 62% launched a new product or service in the year after completing the programme, and 84% use financial data more in decision-making.

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References:

<https://www.goldmansachs.com/citizenship/10000-small-businesses/UK/about-the-program/>

<https://www.goldmansachs.com/citizenship/10000-small-businesses/UK/news-and-events/building-business-britain-f/report.pdf>

Country	UK						
ID	UK_09						
Name in English	UK_09 Business Basics Programme						
Name in local language	<i>Business Basics Programme</i>						
Year of implementation	2018						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
	X			X			
The Business Basics Programme is designed to test innovative ways of encouraging small and medium sized enterprises to adopt existing technologies and management practices to improve their productivity. The 4-year programme is running from 2018 to 2022, with a GBP 9.2 million budget. Grant funding is allocated to projects through the Business Basics Fund. The objective of the programme is to raise the productivity of SMEs and drive innovation and enable better investment decisions at local and national level. A number of the funded projects cover the effect of education and training on SMEs, including the projects: 'Headsup! Boosting performance amongst micro firms through take-up of digital technologies', 'Developing management system to boost productivity via online and peer-to-peer learning among SMEs in manufacturing sectors', and 'Design Thinking Training for SME's'. This recipients of funding for this programme are consortia, often research or academic institutions, who test the viability of their project to achieve the programme goals. As such, training and skills development is offered to selected businesses as participants in the research, rather than developed to support demand. Successful applications receive full funding costs of their project, which may include upskilling training. Three currently funded projects are identified of relevance for this database: People Skills+ (innovative management and leadership approach to boosting SME productivity) & ADAPT – Adoption of Digital Automation of Processes and Technology, which includes a training element, and 'Developing management system to boost productivity via online and peer-to-peer learning among SMEs in manufacturing sectors. This incentive scheme is not highly relevant to the uptake of training, with funded projects only tangentially related to training uptake or upskilling. In addition, the funding of the projects is not high (only GBP 350 000) and are more research focused than implementation. This project will have limited impact effects on the overall incentivisation for training in the UK.							

Drafted by: Frederick Elliott Gaved

References:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/business-basics-programme>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/838492/business-basics-programme-progress-report-october-2019.pdf

Country	UK						
ID	UK_10						
Name in English	UK_10 Chartered Institute for Professional Development (CIPD)						
Name in local language	<i>Chartered Institute for Professional Development (CIPD)</i>						
Year of implementation	[No information given]						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
			X				
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
			X	X			
The Chartered Institute for Professional Development is the UK professional body for experts in people at work, founded as a registered charity in 1913. The aim of CIPD is to champion better work and working lives for the benefit of individuals, businesses, economies and society. CIPD offers a wide range of certified qualifications and knowledge products to members. Of particular interest for this study are the learning solutions that are available to support organisations. CIPD works with organisations (including SME members) to help identify learning needs and create a programme that is aligned to organisational goals. A range of options are available, including face-to-face, online and blended learning. Learning and development training is offered as part of the learning support activities. These services are fee-based for members. The core topics of training support are in Professional Development, HR and Leadership Development. While overall indicators are not available, for Leadership Development the following results for the latest financial year (2018/19) are available in the Annual Report and Accounts: - 29 participants completed the LD programme; - 44 classroom-based events with 239 participants; - 16 individuals supported to gain a professional qualification; - 13 people participated in short courses delivered by associates; - Eight people took part in coaching programmes; - Eight virtual Lunch and Learn events accessed by an average of 72 people; - GBP 4 000 per month contributed to the apprenticeship levy; - 297 people accessed the digital learning platform, watching an average of 15 videos. This incentive is of high relevance to a small set of eligible organisations. There is no financial component (the CIPD generates income through the provision of training), so this is not a mixed or particularly innovative incentive. The available figures (from the Leadership Development) programme suggest a very small number of annual participants in the training components of the CIPD activities, limiting the impact that this incentive can have.							

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References:

<https://www.cipd.co.uk>

https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/cipd-annual-report-and-accounts-2020-new_tcm18-86469.pdf

Country	UK						
ID	UK_11						
Name in English	UK_11 Learnwithunite						
Name in local language	Learnwithunite						
Year of implementation	2013						
Type of instrument	Targeted support		Mediated support		Outreach		
					X		
					Provision (on-site or external) to the employees of one organisation		
	Funding	Counselling	Tailored provision	Knowledge creation	Awareness	Networking	Interest aggregation
							X
Learnwithunite is the Union's learning environment, offering a wide range of courses to benefit members. The scheme has been running since 2013. The approach uses Union Learning Representatives (ULRs) to create robust relationships between employers and education providers, underpinned by learning agreements. This has led to thousands of members being able to increase their personal skills and qualifications through a range of courses. The 2014 annual report states that 650 ULRs within the English Regions completed ULR stage 1 courses in two years, with 45 new learning agreements with employers, any of which secured clearly defined time off to learn arrangements and/or learning centres at workplaces. The programme also offers a range of learning offers at the Unite offices, which include ICT courses, continuous professional development, ESOL & English courses, fully funded courses, short courses and tasters, and higher-level skills. To be eligible, Unite members with the same employer must request or develop support. As this is a support aimed at helping union members, there is no co-funding or financing element. For more information see also the UK case study.							

Drafted by: Frederick Elliott Gaved

References:

<https://learnwithunite.org/home/>

Annex 1

Table 1. Overview of the collected examples of instruments relevant for targeted support

Type of instrument	As the main instrument	As part of the mix of instruments
Funding	BG_04; IE_01; NL_08; PL_07	DE_01; DE_06, DE_07, DK_04; FI_03; HU_06; IT_07; NL_05; SE_07; SI_02 : UK_05
Organisational counselling	AT_01; BE_05 CZ_09; DE_01; DE_05; DE_06; DE_07; DE_08; DK_04;; FI_02; FR_02; FR_03; FR_05; HR_01; HU_01; HU_05; HU_06; IE_02; IE_03; IE_04; IT_07; IT_07; NL_04; NL_09; PL_03; PL_06; PT_05; PT_06; RO_04; RO_08; SE_01; SE_04; SE_07; SI_01; SI_03; SK_05; UK_05; UK_06	BG_03; FI_03; FI_04; FR_04; HU_08; IE_01; IT_02; IT_07; LT_03; NL_07; NL_08; PL_04; PL_07; SI_06; SK_07; UK_07; UK_08
Tailored provision	BG_03; FI_04; FR_01; PL_04; SI_06	DE_08; DK_04; FI_03; HU_06; IE_02; NL_07; PL_03; RO_04; SE_04; SI_02; UK_06; UK_08;
Knowledge creation	FI_03; FR_04; NL_05; NL_06; UK_07	BG_05; SI_02
Awareness raising	BE_03; BE_06; BG_02; DK_05; ES_07; FR_06; FR_07; HR_03; HR_04; HU_08; IT_03; LV_04; PL_01; SK_03; SK_04; UK_02	FR_05; NL_04; NL_06
Networking	EL_04; LT_03; SI_02; SK_07; UK_08	CZ_09; FI_03; IT_02; NL_07; PL_03; PT_06; RO_04; RO_08; UK_06; UK_07
Interest aggregation	BG_05; IT_02; LU_01; NL_07	CZ_09; DE_05; EL_04; FR_04; IE_01; SE_04; SI_02

Table 2. **Overview of the collected examples of instruments relevant for mediated support**

Type of instrument	As the main instrument	As part of the mix of instruments
Funding	AT_05; BG_01; CY_01; CY_02; CY_03; CY_04; DE_04; DE_09; DK_06; EE_06; EE_08; ES_04; ES_10; HR_07; IE_05; IT_01; IT_04; IT_06; IT_09; LT_01; LT_02; LT_04; LU_05; MT_01; MT_02; MT_03; MT_06; SE_03; SE_05; SE_06; SE_08; SI_04; UK_04; UK_09	AT_02; AT_03; AT_06; CZ_03; DK_01; EE_07; ES_08; HR_08; LU_04; MT_05; RO_09; RO_07; SE_02; SE_03; UK_03
Organisational counselling	DK_02; EE_07; EL_05; ES_05; HR_06; HU_09; LU_04; MT_04; SE_02; SI_05	AT_05; AT_06; BG_01; CZ_04; CZ_07; DE_04; DE_09; DK_01; EE_03; EE_06; ES_04; ES_06; HR_05; HR_08; HU_02; HU_07; IT_05; MT_02; MT_03; PL_05; PT_03; RO_01; RO_02; RO_03; RO_05; SE_03; SE_06; SE_08
Support for CVET related to innovation	CZ_03; DK_01; EE_03; EE_04; EL_02; EL_03; EL_06; ES_02; ES_03; ES_06; ES_09; ES_11; FI_01; FI_05; FI_06; FI_07; HR_05; HR_08; HU_02; IT_05; IT_08; LU_03; PT_01; PT_02; PT_03; RO_01; RO_02; UK_10	BE_07; CY_02; CZ_04; EL_05; EL_07; ES_01; ES_05; HU_02; HU_07; MT_04; PL_05; RO_09; RO_05; SE_03; SE_06; SI_05
Knowledge creation	AT_02; AT_06; BG_06; DK_03; ES_01; IE_06; RO_09; RO_05; UK_03	BE_07; CZ_03; EE_08; EL_03; EL_06; IT_09; LT_01; LT_02; SE_02; SE_08; UK_09; UK_10
Awareness raising	BE_07; DE_02; EE_01; HU_07; PT_04	BG_06; EE_06; EL_05; ES_01; ES_03; HU_02; PT_01; RO_01; RO_07
Networking	CZ_04; CZ_07; MT_05; PL_05; RO_03	AT_03; EL_03; EL_05; EL_06; EL_07; ES_03; ES_08; ES_09; RO_09; RO_01; RO_02; SE_03; UK_03
Interest aggregation	AT_03; ES_08; RO_07	EL_03; EL_07; ES_03; ES_09; IE_06; RO_09; UK_03

Table 3. **Overview of the collected examples of approaches relevant for cooperating with MSMEs in outreach**

Type of approach	As the main approach
Promoting the participation of MSME employees in external CVET opportunities targeting individuals	CY_05; NL_01; RO_03; RO_06
Providing work experience or on-site training spells to non-employees	BE_01; BE_02; DE_03; EE_02; LV_02; LV_05
Provision (on-site or external) to the employees of one organisation	FR_08; LV_01; SK_06; UK_11

Table 4. **Examples of budgets applied (for a 12-month period) for targeted support**

Type of instrument	Examples sorted by yearly budget applied	Public funding (available within 12 months, in million EUR)
Organisational counselling	UK_05 <i>Skills development support</i>	27 (2020)
	FI_02 <i>Consulting services for SMEs</i>	8.4 (2018)
	HU_05 <i>Support facility for MSMEs and large companies</i>	1.1 (2020)
Tailored provision	IE_01 <i>Skills to Advance</i>	6.0 (2019)
	ES_09 <i>Support to cluster organisations in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country</i>	3.0 (2020)
	PL_04 <i>New start</i>	1.1 (2020)
Knowledge creation	NL_05 <i>SME Idea</i>	10 (2018)
Awareness	[no budget figures available]	
Networking	[no budget figures available]	
Interest aggregation	IT_02 <i>Funding for network aggregation projects of SMEs</i>	0.3 (2017)

Table 5. Examples of budgets applied (for a 12-month period) for mediated support

Type of instrument	Examples sorted by yearly budget applied	Public funding (available within 12 months, in million EUR)
Funding	LT_01 <i>Industry digitization LT</i> DK_06 <i>Competence development in SMEs</i> CY_03 <i>Scheme for the Enhancement of Youth Entrepreneurship</i> UK_09 <i>Business Basics Programme</i>	30.3 (2020) 11.5 (2020) 8.2 (2017) 3.6 (2020)
Organisational counselling	SE_05 <i>Regional development projects</i> NL_08 <i>SLIM, subsidy scheme for learning and developing in SMEs</i> ES_05 <i>Support Programme to Technological and Innovative Entrepreneurship 2018-2020</i> MT_04 <i>Family Business Support Services</i>	86.0 (2018) 48.0 (2020) 0.5 (2020) 0.3 (2020)
Support for CVET related to innovation	FI_01 <i>Training programmes for the management and key personnel of SMEs</i> DK_01 <i>SME:Digital</i> CZ_03 <i>Project Education and training of employees</i> EE_04 <i>Retraining programme – “Choose IT”</i>	3.3 (2018) 2.4 (2020) 0.5 (2020) 0.4 (2020)
Knowledge creation	DK_03 <i>Digital Catalyst</i> ES_01 <i>Digital Enterprise</i> RO_00 <i>Innovation Checks in Romania</i>	2.2 (2020) 2.2 (2020) 1.5 (2017)
Awareness	HU_07 <i>Industry 4.0. “Model Factory” Programme</i>	2.4 (2019)
Networking	RO_03 <i>Community Centers for Lifelong Learning</i> CZ_07 <i>Network of assistance centers for Industry 4.0 in Vysočina Region in 2020</i> MT_05 <i>Cooperate for growth</i>	0.2 (2017) 0.1 (2020) 0.015 (2020)
Interest aggregation	RO_07 <i>Digital Competences for SMEs’ employees</i> ES_08 <i>Support for innovative business groups (clusters) in the Autonomous Community of Galicia</i>	2.9 (2020) 1.9 (2021)