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COSME - Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs 2014-2020
Monitoring Report 2015

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A. ACCESS TO FINANCE

The first specific objective of COSME, is “to improve access to finance for SMEs in the form of equity and debt” as described in Article 8 of the COSME Regulation. Specific provisions for the financial instruments are provided for in Article 16 – 19, with the Equity Facility for Growth covered by Article 18 and the Loan Guarantee Facility by Article 19.

In 2015, there were up to three actions to be financed under this specific objective with a budget of around EUR 162.9 million.

GRO/SME/15/A/N01 – Financial Instruments – Loan Guarantee Facility including the SME Initiative¹

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The Loan Guarantee Facility (LGF) under COSME is the successor of the SME Guarantee Facility established under the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme - CIP (2007 - 2013).

In line with the Europe 2020 strategy, the overall policy objective of the COSME Financial Instruments is to improve access to finance for SMEs in the form of equity and debt. Under the LGF, this will be achieved by incentivising financial intermediaries to provide financing to those SMEs which the financial intermediary would under its normal business practices not finance due to the higher risks involved, thereby providing financing to SMEs who otherwise would not be able to obtain financing.

The LGF provides:

- counter-guarantees and other risk sharing arrangements for guarantee schemes;
- direct guarantees and other risk sharing arrangements for any other financial intermediaries meeting the eligibility criteria.

The LGF consists of:

- capped guarantees for debt financing covering any type of loans, including subordinated and participating loans, bank guarantees, leasing transactions and working capital financing;
- securitisation of SME debt finance portfolios, providing guarantee coverage on a part of the mezzanine tranche of a securitised SME lending portfolio coupled with an undertaking by the originating institutions to build up a new SME loan portfolio.

The LGF covers, except for loans in the securitised portfolio, loans up to EUR 150 000 and with a minimum maturity of 12 months. The LGF may also cover loans above EUR 150 000 in cases where SMEs would not meet the innovation criteria specified under the SME window in the Debt Facility of the Horizon 2020 programme (the InnovFin SME Guarantee Facility).

Implementation arrangements

¹ Further information is available as part of the Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on financial instruments supported by the general budget according to Art.140.8 of the Financial Regulation as at 31 December 2015 ([COM/2016/675 final](#)) and the accompanying Staff Working Document ([SWD/2016/0335 final](#))

The LGF is implemented by the EIF on behalf of the Commission, as part of the single EU debt financial instrument for EU enterprises' growth and research and innovation (R&I), together with the InnovFin SME Guarantee Facility set up under the Horizon 2020 programme. The Delegation Agreement signed with the EIF ensures that the LGF is accessible for a broad range of financial intermediaries (guarantee societies, national promotional institutes, commercial banks, cooperatives, etc.) which are experienced in financial transactions with SMEs or which have the capacity to enter into financial transactions with SMEs.

Target final recipients under the capped portfolio guarantees and the securitisation transactions are SMEs without a specific sector focus. The guarantee instrument is planned to last until 31 December 2034 (until last operations are wound down). Individual guarantee agreements to be signed by the entrusted entity will have a maximum duration of 10 years.

The LGF is demand-driven meaning that the allocation of funding takes place based on the demand expressed by financial intermediaries also taking into account the need for a broad geographical distribution (e.g. through incentives to be provided from the Commission to the entrusted entity).

The EIF is responsible for evaluating and selecting the financial intermediaries by applying selection criteria and processes set out in the Delegation Agreement. The related open call for expression of interest for financial intermediaries published by the EIF is available at

http://www.eif.org/what_we_do/guarantees/single_eu_debt_instrument/cosme-loan-facility-growth/index.htm

Relationship with Horizon 2020

The LGF is part of the single EU debt financial instrument for EU enterprises' growth and research and innovation (R&I), together with the InnovFin SME Guarantee facility set up under the Horizon 2020 programme. The InnovFin SME Guarantee facility, which is also entrusted to the EIF for implementation, provides financing to SMEs and small midcaps with significant research, development and innovation (RDI) potential or investments in RDI activities, both with significant technological and financial risk provided that these are eligible under the innovation criteria as set out in the open call for expression of interest published for this facility.

Financial intermediaries are free to apply either for one or both facilities under COSME and Horizon 2020 in line with their business objectives and possibilities to reach the potential target group of the different facilities.

LGF contribution to the EU SME Initiative

The LGF may also contribute to the financial instruments deployed under the SME Initiative, a joint instrument combining EU funds available under COSME LGF and/or the InnovFin SME Guarantee facility under Horizon 2020 and ESIF resources in cooperation with EIF/EIF with a view to generate additional lending to SMEs in specific Member States. This contribution may take the form of uncapped portfolio guarantees or securitisation operations and cover the mezzanine tranche of the portfolio. The SME Initiative is conceived as an anti-crisis measure with budget commitments over 3 years (2014-2016).

3. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

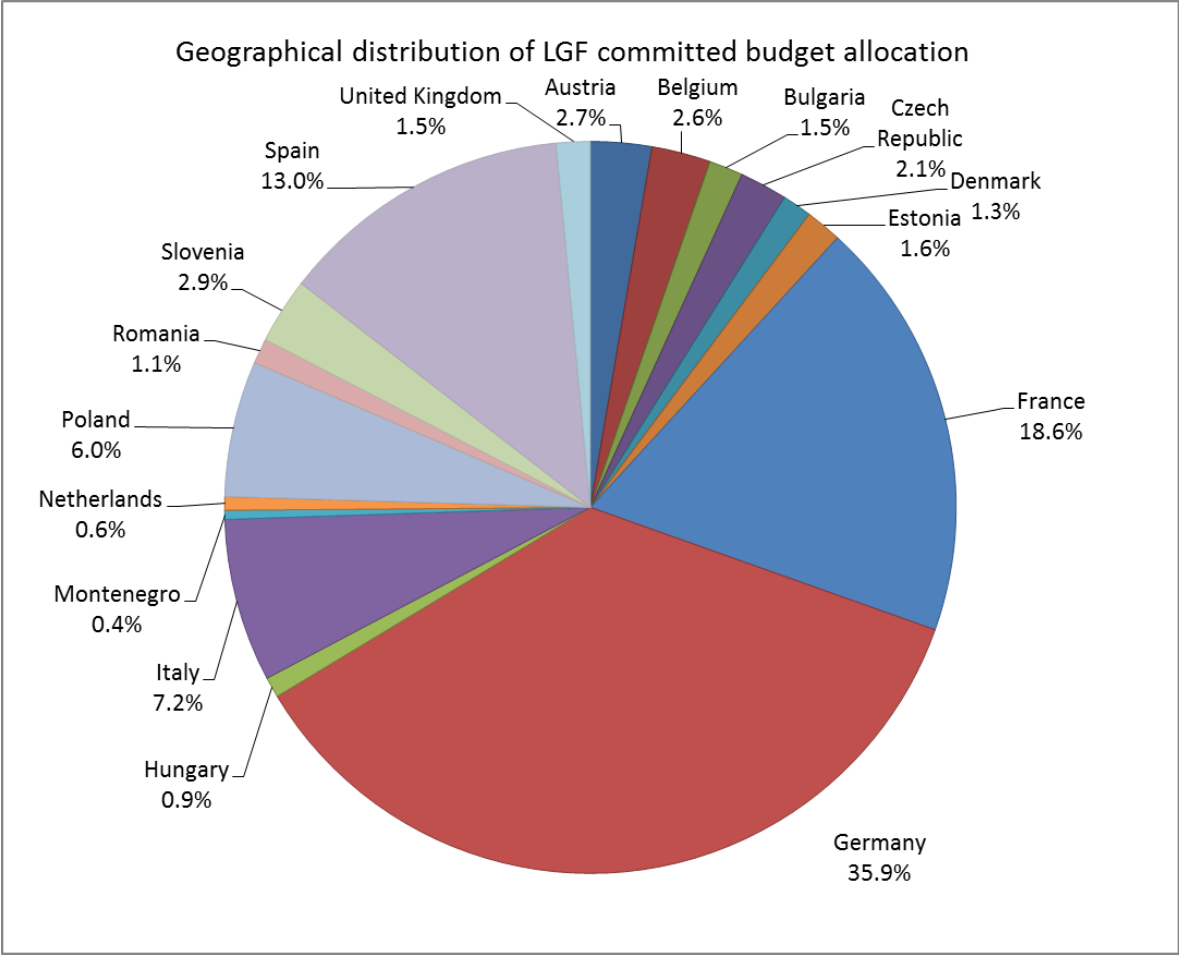
A first amendment to the Delegation Agreement was signed in January 2015 allowing for the implementation of the SME Initiative Uncapped Guarantee Instrument under COSME.

As the resources available under the LGF in 2015 were not sufficient to satisfy market demand (i.e. total of applications received from Financial Intermediaries by the EIF) for the

financing of SMEs, a second amendment of the Delegation Agreement was signed in July 2015, allowing for the combination of LGF resources with additional risk-bearing capacity under the European Fund for Strategic Investment (EFSI) so as to avoid disruption of the successful rollout of the LGF. The objective of the so-called LGF Enhancement is to bring forward in time the signature under the LGF of direct and indirect guarantee operations in the Member States.

By the end of 2015, 27 guarantee agreements² have been signed with 26 financial intermediaries located in 17 countries (16 Member States and 1 participating third country), as further detailed in the graph below.

Graph: Geographical distribution of LGF committed budget allocation in participating countries



It is expected that under these agreements, more than EUR 7 068 million of financing will be provided to around 110 000 SMEs over the whole availability period of these agreements.

As of 31 December 2015, the LGF already provided around EUR 1 292 million of financing to more than 51 000 SMEs, out of which almost EUR 347 million of financing were provided to more than 9 300 SMEs thanks to the support from the EFSI risk-bearing capacity.

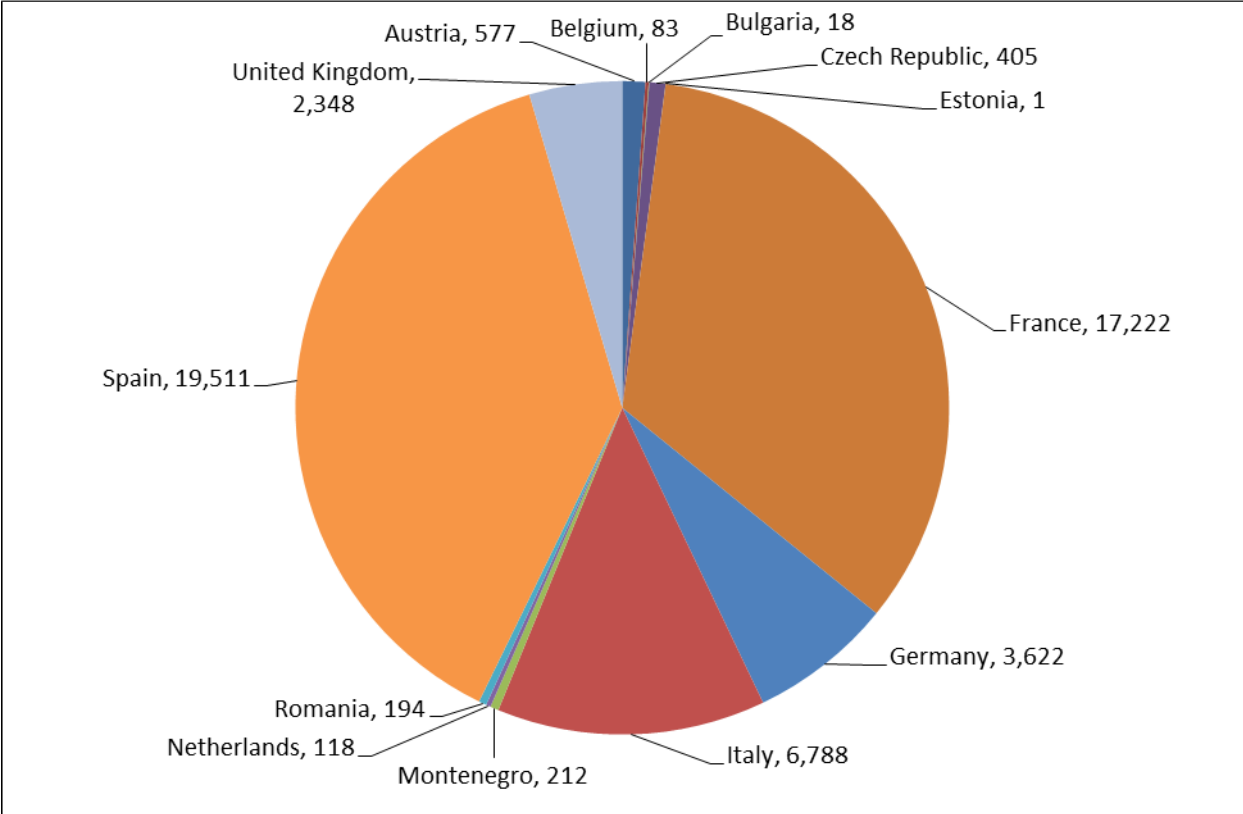
This shows that the LGF, by providing financing to riskier SMEs that otherwise would not have had access to such financing, has an important impact on the real economy in the EU and other participating countries of the COSME programme. Furthermore, the combination of

² Out of which 18 agreements signed thanks to the EFSI frontloading

resources with EFSI allows addressing sub-optimal financing situations in the Member States at a much faster pace than would have been possible under LGF on its own, significantly speeding up the much needed financing of the economy.

At the end of 2015, actual financing was already provided to SMEs in 13 countries, as set out in more details in the graph below.

Graph: Geographical distribution of SMEs (by number of SMEs having received financing)



More than 93% of the SMEs having received financing have less than 10 employees, which illustrates that the LGF effectively targets SMEs having more difficulties to get access to the financing they need³.

As regards loan sizes, only 0.5% of all SME transactions signed by the end of 2015 are above the threshold of EUR 150,000 (276 transactions out of an overall number of 53 433 transactions signed), representing less than 9% of the overall amount of financing made available to SMEs.

SME Initiative:

In the course of 2015 two Member States signed up, namely Spain and Malta. As both decided to pool resources with Horizon 2020 in order to focus on the financing of innovative SMEs and small midcaps, there was no LGF contribution to the SME Initiative in 2015.

SME Guarantee Facility:

³ As also evidenced by the latest Survey on the Access to Finance of Enterprises (SAFE) survey published in December 2015, available at http://ec.europa.eu/growth/access-to-finance/data-surveys/index_en.htm

The SME Guarantee Facility (SMEG) under CIP, the predecessor of the LGF, continues to support SMEs as for some of the operations signed under SMEG, the availability period is still open, meaning that financial intermediaries can still include new SME loans or leases in the guaranteed portfolio. In 2015, an additional 13 680 SMEs received almost EUR 1.4 billion of financing supported by SMEG. Since its start, the SMEG has supported the provision of almost EUR 21 billion of financing to more than 381 000 SMEs.

4. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

Due to the fact that the availability period under a guarantee agreement typically ranges between two and three years, financial intermediaries who have successfully rolled out new higher risk lending products under the LGF (e.g. dedicated start-up loans) will most probably apply for successor guarantees with the EIF. It is therefore expected that the very strong market demand, as evidenced by the pipeline reports received from the EIF early 2016, will continue in the following years.

It is currently foreseen that the LGF will continue to be frontloaded through EFSI until the end of 2017. It is however important to investigate additional ways of financing the LGF, both under COSME and EFSI budget, in order to help those SMEs which without the COSME support would not be able to get the financing they need.

SME Initiative:

Additional Member States, such as Bulgaria, Romania, Italy, Finland and potentially Greece, expressed interest to participate in the SME Initiative. Bulgaria, Romania and Finland opted for a combination of resources with Horizon 2020, under the uncapped guarantee option. Italy opted for a combination of resources with COSME under the securitisation option. The specific call for expression of interest published by the EIF is open until 30 September 2017 and available at:

http://www.eif.org/what_we_do/guarantees/sme_initiative/smei_italy/index.htm.

5. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

The call for expression of interest is open until 30 September 2020. New agreements with financial intermediaries can be signed until 30 June 2021.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Budget available as per revised 2015 work programme⁴: EUR 135 043 088

Budget finally committed: EUR 148 505 599 (remaining within the 20% flexibility provided for in the COSME work programme)

The increase of EUR 13 462 511 of the LGF committed amount is mainly the result of the global transfer exercise, with EUR 7.8 million transferred from budget line 02.0303 (European Chemicals Agency – Chemicals Legislation) and EUR 1 million from budget line 26.0201 (Procedures for awarding and advertising public supply, works and service contract). An additional EUR 3 million was reallocated from budget line 02.0201.

⁴ Commission Implementing Decision of 9 June 2015 amending Implementing Decision C(2014)8044 concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2015 and the financing for the implementation of the Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises

7. INDICATORS

For the 24 operations signed with financial intermediaries in 2015, the volume of financing which is expected to be made available to SMEs amounts to more than EUR 6 200 million, with an expected number of around 95 000 SMEs benefitting from financing.

On an aggregate basis, as of 31 December 2015, the LGF already contributed to provide around EUR 1 292 million of financing to more than 51 000 SMEs⁵.

Based on the aggregate 2014/2015 budgetary commitments for the LGF (EUR 237.6 million), the expected leverage⁶ for the operations signed until the end of 2015 is almost 1 to 30.

Based on the amount of financing already provided by financial intermediaries to eligible final recipients at the end of 2015, the leverage achieved at this stage amounts to 1 to 5. This leverage will significantly increase over the next two years as additional financing will be made available to SMEs under the guarantee agreements in place.

8. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

In line with Article 58.5 of the Financial Regulation, the EIF ensures appropriate annual ex post publication of information on recipients. For the LGF, this information is available on http://www.eif.org/what_we_do/guarantees/single_eu_debt_instrument/cosme-loan-facility-growth/index.htm

Recipients (financial intermediaries) as of 31/12/2015: see table below

Country	Financial Intermediary	Address	Type of support	Budgetary allocation
Agreements signed in 2014				
Germany	LfA Förderbank Bayern on behalf of other Landesbanken	Königinstraße 17 80539 Munich	Portfolio Guarantee	EUR 3,825,000
Spain	Nuevo MicroBank S.A.U.	Juan Gris 10-18 planta 10, Torre Centro Complejo Torres Cerda 8014 Barcelona	Portfolio Guarantee	EUR 35,750,000
United Kingdom	EZBOB Ltd (ex Orange Money Ltd)	The Grove, 248a Marylebone Road, NW1 6JZ London	Portfolio Guarantee	GBP 2,200,000
Agreements signed in 2015				
Austria	Austria Wirtschaftsservice GmbH	Ungargasse 37, 1030 Vienna	Portfolio Counter-guarantee	EUR 7,310,000
Belgium	Flemish Participation Fund	Oude Graanmarkt 63, 1000 Brussels	Portfolio Guarantee	EUR 3,400,000
Belgium	Sowalfin	13 Avenue Maurice Destenay, 4000 Liege	Portfolio Counter-guarantee	EUR 3,675,000
Bulgaria	CIBank	1 Tsar Boris III blvd,	Portfolio	BGN 8,000,000

⁵ For operations signed under the 2014/2015 budget - these figures will increase in the next 2 years given the fact the availability period to build up the SME loan portfolios under these operations is typically 2 to 3 years.

⁶ Being the maximum amount of financing available to eligible final recipients divided by the aggregate EU contribution committed towards the LGF

		1612 Sofia	Guarantee	
Czech Republic	CMZRB	Jeruzalémská 964/4, 110 00 Prague	Portfolio Counter-guarantee	CZK 155,000,000
Denmark	The Danish Growth Fund (Vaekstfonden)	Langelinie Allé 19, 2100 Copenhagen	Portfolio Counter-guarantee	DKK 27,000,000
Estonia	KREDEX - Credit and Export Guarantee Fund	Hobujaama 4, 10151 Tallinn	Portfolio Counter-guarantee	EUR 4,500,000
France	BPCE S.A. (Representing the "SOCAMA")	50 Avenue Pierre Mendes-France, 75201 Paris Cedex 13	Portfolio Counter-guarantee	EUR 31,500,000
France	France Active Garantie	120/122 Rue Réaumur, 75002 Paris	Portfolio Counter-guarantee	EUR 8,250,000
France	GE Capital Equipement Finance	18 rue Hoche, Tour Facto, 92988 Paris	Portfolio Guarantee	EUR 11,440,000
Germany	Buergschaftsbank Northrhine-Westphalia	Hellersbergstraße 18, 41460 Neuss	Portfolio Counter-guarantee	EUR 18,000,000
Germany	KfW (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau) ⁷	Palmengartenstrasse 5-9, 60325 Frankfurt	Portfolio Guarantee	EUR 76,800,000
Hungary	K&H Bank	Lechner Ödön fasor 9, 1095 Budapest	Portfolio Guarantee	HUF 750,000,000
Italy	Cassa Depositi e Prestiti	Via Goito 4, 00185 Rome	Portfolio Counter-guarantee	EUR 6,000,000
Italy	Credito Emiliano S.p.A.	Via Emilia San Pietro 4, 42121 Reggio Emilia	Portfolio Guarantee	EUR 13,750,000
Montenegro	Crnogorska Komercijalna Banka AD	Moskovska bb, 81000 Podgorica	Portfolio Guarantee	EUR 1,125,000
Netherlands	Qredits	Wierdensestraat 27, 7607 GE Almelo	Portfolio Guarantee	EUR 1,625,000
Poland	Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego (BGK)	Al. Jerozolimskie 7, 00-955 Warszawa	Portfolio Counter-guarantee	PLN 36,000,000
Poland	Idea Bank	Przyokopowa 33 Street, 01-208 Warsaw	Portfolio Guarantee	PLN 19,250,000
Poland	Raiffeisen-Leasing Polska S.A.	ul. Prosta 51	Portfolio Guarantee	PLN 13,520,000
Romania	Libra Internet Bank S.A.	4-6 Semilunei Street, Sector 2, Bucharest	Portfolio Guarantee	RON 13,200,000
Slovenia	Slovene Enterprise Fund	Trubarjeva 11, 2000 Maribor	Portfolio Counter-guarantee	EUR 8,100,000
United Kingdom	Iwoca	39-45 Shaftesbury Avenue, W1D 6LA London	Portfolio Guarantee	GBP 1,000,000

⁷ 2 agreements signed

GRO/SME/15/A/N02 – Financial Instruments – Equity Facility for Growth⁸

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The Equity Facility for Growth (EFG) is one of the successor instruments of the High Growth and Innovative SME Facility (GIF) established under the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme - CIP (2007 - 2013). It succeeds the GIF2 window set up under GIF to cover expansion stage investments into SMEs.

In line with the Europe 2020 strategy, the overall policy objective of the COSME Financial Instruments is to improve access to finance for SMEs in the form of equity and debt. More specifically, the EFG provides enhanced access to risk capital for which significant market gaps exist in Europe and supports the development of a pan-European risk capital market. The later will be achieved by focusing predominantly on those risk capital funds which invest cross-border.

Through the EFG risk capital funds can be supported which invest into SMEs at the growth stage, predominantly on a cross-border basis, or which help portfolio companies to grow beyond their national markets with a view to supporting the development of a self-sustainable pan-European risk capital market.

The characteristics of the EFG are:

- The entrusted entity shall make direct investments in intermediary risk capital funds providing investments for SMEs typically in their expansion and growth stage. These risk capital funds shall provide equity and mezzanine finance, such as subordinated or participating loans;
- Investments shall be long-term, normally involving 5 to 15 year positions, whereby the life of an investment shall not exceed 20 years;
- Investments may also be made into risk capital funds investing at the seed, start-up and early stage in conjunction with the early-stage Equity Facility for R&I (Research and Innovation) under Horizon 2020 whereby the investment from EFG shall not exceed 20% of the total EU investment;
- In the case of multi-stage funds, the COSME EFG and the Horizon 2020 early-stage Equity Facility for R&I will contribute pro rata to the funding of the risk capital funds based on the fund's investment policy.

Implementation arrangements

The implementation of the EFG is entrusted to the European Investment Fund (EIF).

The Delegation Agreement signed with the EIF ensures that the EFG is accessible for a broad range of financial intermediaries provided that these are professionally and independently managed and that the funds are located in one of COSME participating countries. They must display the capacity to successfully support SMEs in their growth and expansion phase (to be

⁸ Further information is available as part of the Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on financial instruments supported by the general budget according to Art.140.8 of the Financial Regulation as at 31 December 2015 ([COM/2016/675 final](#)) and the accompanying Staff Working Document ([SWD/2016/0335 final](#))

verified by the EIF during the due diligence phase). From a technical point of view, the EIF is instructed to invest on a pari-passu basis with other private and public investors. Target final recipients are SMEs in their growth and expansion stage without a specific sector focus. The equity instrument is planned to last until 31 December 2034 (until last operations are wound down).

The EFG is demand-driven, meaning that the allocation of funding will take place based on the demand expressed by financial intermediaries also taking into account the need for a broad geographical distribution (e.g. through fee incentives which the Commission has provided to the entrusted entity).

The EIF is responsible for evaluating and selecting the financial intermediaries by applying selection criteria and processes set out in the Delegation Agreement. The related continuous open call for expression of interest for financial intermediaries published by the EIF is available at

http://www.eif.org/what_we_do/equity/single_eu_equity_instrument/cosme_efg/index.htm

Relationship with Horizon 2020

The EFG is part of the single EU equity financial instrument for EU enterprises' growth and research and innovation (R&I), together with the Horizon 2020 early-stage equity facility (the 'InnovFin SME Venture Capital' facility). The InnovFin SME Venture Capital facility will focus on risk capital funds investing in seed, start-up and early-stage SMEs and small midcaps that are RDI-driven.

Financial intermediaries are free to apply either for one of the two facilities under COSME and Horizon 2020 or for both in line with the fund's investment policy. The InnovFin SME Venture Capital facility succeeds the GIF1 equity facility under the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme.

3. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

Five commitments have been signed by EIF in 2015 under the EFG for the establishment of funds focusing mainly on investments in Italy, France, the Netherlands, Greece and Germany, but being also open to cross-border investments. The expected volume of investments into eligible final recipients amounts to almost EUR 395 million and is expected to provide risk capital to around 53 SMEs⁹. Out of the five operations signed in 2015, two relate to Growth and Expansion Stage funds and three to Multi-Stage funds, in combination with the InnovFin Equity Facility for Early Stage set up under Horizon 2020. At the end of 2015, two of these operations have been unconditionally closed and the respective fund agreement with all investors have been signed. Three further signatures have occurred on a conditional basis, meaning that the EIF committed to invest in these funds provided that the fund managers are able to attract sufficient additional funding commitments from other private and public investors to reach a minimum fund size.

In 2015, the GIF (High Growth and Innovative SME Facility) instrument also continued to provide risk capital to SMEs, with equity investments into 68 additional SMEs. Since its start, the GIF has mobilised more than EUR 3.1 billion of equity finance to more than 500 SMEs. This number will continue to rise over the next years as the 5-year investment period is still ongoing for several funds.

⁹ First investments into SMEs will take place in 2016

4. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

According to relevant stakeholders, there is a significant shortage for risk capital investments in the market and lack of equity finance in Europe is a recognised key bottleneck to the provision of further overall SME funding and growth. This is also confirmed by the latest European Small Business Finance Outlook¹⁰ which indicates that despite recent generally positive developments, private equity and venture capital investment and fundraising activity continues to be far below pre-crisis years (2008/2009) level.

In this context, EU equity instruments such as the EFG have an important role to play in supporting SMEs and addressing market gaps or sub-optimal market situations, especially with respect to the ‘access to finance’ issue for early-stage enterprises, including in their expansion and growth phase.

Based on the pipeline report received early 2016, it is expected that the 2014-2016 aggregate budgetary commitments (net of fees) will be fully used for commitments to EFG operations. It has to be highlighted that, in the case of conditional closings, despite the EIF making a firm commitment of wanting to invest into a fund it may be that fund managers fail to raise the required additional private and public funding to reach the first closing of a fund.

Investments into SMEs under the fund agreements signed towards the end of 2015 started to take place at the beginning of 2016. No single investment has been made into an eligible final recipient in the course of 2015.

5. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

The call for expression of interest is open until 30 September 2020. New agreements with financial intermediaries can be signed until 31 December 2021.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Budget available as per revised 2015 work programme¹¹: EUR 50 750 000

Budget finally committed: EUR 50 750 000

7. INDICATORS

For the five operations committed to financial intermediaries in 2015, the maximum investment volume available to SMEs amounts to almost EUR 395 million. It is expected that around 53 SMEs will benefit from these investments. Based on the cumulative 2014-2015 budgetary commitments for the EFG (i.e. EUR 102,4 million), the expected leverage for the operations signed in 2015 is 3,85. However, as the first operations have been signed towards the end of 2015, no achieved leverage effect can be computed for 2015.

8. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

In line with Article 58.5 of the Financial Regulation, the EIF ensures appropriate annual ex post publication of information on recipients. For the EFG, this information is available on

¹⁰ EIF Research & Market Analysis, Working Paper 2015/32, December 2015

¹¹ Commission Implementing Decision of 9 June 2015 amending Implementing Decision C(2014)8044 concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2015 and the financing for the implementation of the Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises

http://www.eif.org/what_we_do/equity/single_eu_equity_instrument/cosme_efg/index.htm

Recipients (financial intermediaries) as of 31/12/2015: see table below

Financial Intermediary	Country of establishment of the fund	Geographical focus for investments into eligible final recipients	Fund stage	Budgetary allocation from EFG
Agreements signed in 2015				
Caphorn 2, FPCI	France	France, Multi-country	Multi-stage	EUR 14,250,000
Diorama Investments SICAR	Luxembourg	Greece	Growth & Expansion stage	EUR 19,000,000
EMH Digital Growth Fund GmbH & Co KG	Germany	Germany, Multi-country	Growth & Expansion stage	EUR 9,500,000
Panakes Fund I	Italy	Italy, Multi-country	Multi-stage	EUR 6,175,000
SET Fund II	Netherlands	Netherlands, Multi-country	Multi-stage	EUR 6,650,000

GRO/SME/15/A/N03 - FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS- ACCOMPANYING ACTIONS

2. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

1. Survey on SMEs' access to finance

Timely information on the financial situation of SMEs is necessary for evidence based policymaking. Taking into account our obligation to limit the burden that data collection places on SMEs, the Commission and the European Central Bank (ECB) designed a joint survey on the financial situation of SMEs. The Commission waves (the survey that is co-financed by ECB and Commission) is conducted once a year. The survey provides comparable results across EU Member States and other participating countries. Previous Commission waves of the survey were conducted in 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2014.

The objectives are

- To address a substantial lack of available information on the financial situation of SMEs especially with respect to timely information,
- To increase availability and quality of data on SMEs access to finance for policy-making purposes, particularly concerning the start-up and growth of SMEs,
- To limit the statistical burden imposed on enterprises by the data collection requirements imposed by the Commission and the ECB and by conducting only one comprehensive survey,
- To allow both institutions to fulfil their individual data collection task in a very cost-efficient manner by sharing.

2. Disseminating information to SMEs about access to EU sources of financing

The Access to Finance multilingual web portal (www.access2finance.eu), to be accessed through Your Business Europe, is a single information point for SMEs looking for EU financing in EU Member States and beyond. It provides regularly updated contact details of around 1,300 intermediaries, covering all financial instruments for more than €120 billion over a seven year period.

In line with the objective of providing easy access to reliable information on EU sources of SME financing, the Commission continued in 2015 updating and promoting the single web portal on EU finance.

3. Workshops

Workshops with SMEs, banks and other financial institutions are organised to monitor the market situation and to facilitate SMEs' access to finance. These workshops take place on an ad-hoc basis depending on interest/needs expressed by stakeholders, SME financing trends and political priorities.

The objectives of such workshops are:

- To bring together all stakeholders (SME representatives, banks and other organizations),
- To improve policies on financing innovation and SMEs,
- To follow, discuss and make proposals concerning SME financing in the European Union,
- To monitor the SME financing environment, exchange good practices and communicate about European Union actions.

3. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

1. Survey on SMEs' access to finance

The 2015 survey on the access to finance of enterprises (SAFE) provides information on the financial situation, financing needs, access to financing and expectations of SMEs in the six preceding months and comprises a sample of 18,000 firms across 33 countries.

At EU level, access to finance was the most important concern of 10% SMEs in 2015. Bank loans remain the relevant form of external financing for 50% of EU SMEs. Between April 2015 and September 2015, 28% of EU SMEs actually applied for a bank loan. 6% did not apply because of fear of rejection. Out of those who applied, 8% of EU SMEs bank loan applications were rejected. In addition to the problem of loan applications being rejected, 12% of successfully applying companies received less than they applied for and 2% declined the loan offer from the bank because they found the cost unacceptable. It means that in total 21% of the EU SMEs surveyed did not manage to get the full bank loan financing they had planned for during 2015.

The results are published on the website and could be used by interested parties, including Member States, analysts, academia (http://ec.europa.eu/growth/access-to-finance/data-surveys/index_en.htm).

2. Disseminating information to SMEs about access to EU sources of financing

In 2015 the website was extended to include financial instruments under the new EU programmes 2014-2020: COSME, EaSI, InnovFin (Horizon 2020), Life and the EU Investment Plan (EFSI). The website was also updated on new financial instruments supported by European Structural and Investment Funds.

During 2015-2016, the Access to Finance website was updated and extended to provide simple information how to access financial instruments from 12 different EU programmes in

39 countries. The website also provides specific information on EU financial instruments with a cleantech investment focus for climate-change objectives.

3. Workshops

The topics in 2015 were Supply Chain Finance, the European Small and Mid-cap awards jury panel meeting and a venture capital expert meeting.

As **Supply Chain Finance** (SCF) is one area where the financing potential seems not be fully utilised, a workshop with industry experts was organised in order to map available SCF practices for SMEs. The key conclusions of the workshop were as follows:

- 1) Continue work on e-invoicing at European level. More companies need to be brought onto platforms. Swift uploading and approval of invoices on platforms is key to success. Automation (e.g. third parties to have access to see status of invoice) and ease of trading invoices are crucial elements on such a platform.
- 2) Successful SCF initiatives should be looked at more closely such as those from the Netherlands and UK.
- 3) A transparent system for the registration of collateral in these transactions is necessary to avoid double assignment. Law of assignments is especially complex if it is cross-border. Certain aspects of national insolvency laws and the ban of assignments are problematic for SCF.
- 4) Information campaign: spread knowledge about SCF to SMEs. Could be done through various means such as the Enterprise Europe Network or SME Envoys.
- 5) Develop electronic signature laws.
- 6) Short tenor ABS to be given a more favourable regulatory treatment via lower regulatory capital requirements (CRR/Basel III).

The results of the workshop fed in particular into the Capital Markets Union (CMU) Action Plan where bankruptcy proceedings were identified as an action to deal with in the near future at European level. The Commission will propose a legislative initiative on business insolvency, including early restructuring and second chance, drawing on the experience of the 2014 Recommendation. The initiative will seek to address the most important barriers to the free flow of capital, building on national regimes that work well.

As regards **venture capital**, following up to a 2014 request by most of the European SME Envoys, which called for the establishment of a temporary technical group of national experts on Venture Capital financing, in early 2015 a questionnaire has been sent to national experts in the field (nominated by national SME Envoys) to gather feedback on various issues related to development of venture capital financing in Europe. The follow up analysis of such responses identified a number of issues. A working group meeting has thus been organised in October 2015 to discuss such issues with national experts, with the aim of sharing good practices among Member States' representatives on various policy measures which could be implemented to encourage the development of a well-functioning risk capital market. The following topics have been identified and discussed:

- Tax incentives policies by Member States This session investigated what tax incentives policies Member States are considering or have been implemented to support equity financing, in particular for innovative companies and start-ups.
- Member States interventions to develop larger venture capital markets This session aimed at analysing specific policies, legislative initiatives or public financing programmes in the area of venture capital financing that Member States are currently considering or that have put in place.

- Financial literacy programmes developed by Member States. This session investigated which programmes have been recently developed in member States to improve SMEs' financial literacy on the availability of alternative sources of finance and the effectiveness of such programmes.

Mr. Pieter Waasdorp, the SME Envoy for the Netherlands, *rapporteur* for 'Access to Finance', reported about these conclusions at the plenary of the SME Envoys Meeting of April 1st 2016 in Amsterdam.

4. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

1. Survey on SMEs' access to finance

The EC continues the survey on SMEs' access to finance on an annual basis, with results of the 2016 survey published in November 2016 and 2017 wave under preparation.

2. Disseminating information to SMEs about access to EU sources of financing

The EU will continue to roll-out new EU financial instruments throughout Europe and seek new agreements with local financial institutions. The Commission hence needs to continue to update and promote the Access to Finance website.

3. Workshops

In 2017 a follow-up workshop on Supply Chain Finance may be called to discuss the latest developments in the field – both in the supply chain finance sector and relevant legislation at European and national level.

Upon request of a follow up by the SME Envoys, further venture capital market analysis could be conducted.

5. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

1. Survey on SMEs' access to finance

The 2015 survey round specific contract was signed on 22/09/2015.

The SAFE survey was published on 2/12/2015.

2. Disseminating information to SMEs about access to EU sources of financing

The specific contract was signed on 14/11/2014.

The final report was received on 27/11/2015.

3. Workshops

The Supply Chain Finance workshop took place on 26/5/2015.

The European Small and Mid-cap awards jury panel meeting took place on 14/7/2015.

The venture capital workshop took place on 1/10/2015.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Budget available as per revised 2015 work programme¹²: EUR 1 280 000

Budget finally committed: EUR 778 208,26 as detailed below:

Title	Implementation mode	Committed amounts
1. Survey on SMEs access to finance	Specific contract under a framework contract	EUR 581.792,42

¹² Commission Implementing Decision of 9 June 2015 amending Implementing Decision C(2014)8044 concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2015 and the financing for the implementation of the Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises

2. Disseminating information to SMEs about access to EU sources of financing	Specific contract under a framework contract	EUR 159.415,84
3. Workshops	Specific contract under a framework contract and expert reimbursements	EUR 37.000

EUR 498 602 were reallocated from action GRO/SME/15/A/N03 to action GRO/SME/15/A/N01 (Loan Guarantee Facility).

7. INDICATORS

1. Survey on SMEs' access to finance

- Timely carry-out of the survey: All the milestones and final report were delivered on time as agreed with the contractor in the specific contract. Fieldwork started in September and final report was published on 2 December – delivering very timely, up-to-date results.
- Level of dissemination of results in media: The results were published on the website and promoted through the social media channels of DG GROW. Infographic was produced to facilitate the dissemination of the result to the general public. The results were then also commented in the press articles.
- Geographical and thematic coverage of the survey: The survey covered all EU countries and additional countries participating in COSME. All aspects of the SME access to finance were covered by the survey.

2. Disseminating information to SMEs about access to EU sources of financing

During 2015 the number of monthly page views was increased by 50% to 150 000.

3. Workshops

Positive feedback has been received from participants on quality, relevance and added value of workshops.

8. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

1. Survey on SMEs' access to finance

A framework contract for the performance of surveys on the access to finance of SMEs was signed by the ECB also on behalf of the European Commission with Panteia B.V. (the Netherlands) on 8 May 2014 for a total duration of 4 years.

2. Disseminating information to SMEs about access to EU sources of financing

A specific contract under a framework contract with reopening of competition was signed with Media Consulta on 14/11/2014 for updating and promoting the Access to Finance multilingual web portal in 2015.

B. ACCESS TO MARKETS

The second specific objective of COSME is “*to improve access to markets, particularly inside the Union but also at global level*” described in Article 9 of the COSME Regulation. Specific provisions for the Enterprise Europe Network are provided in Article 10.

In 2015, there were up to 6 actions financed under this specific objective with a budget of more than EUR57 million.

GRO/SME/15/B/N01 Enterprise Europe Network

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The objective of the Enterprise Europe Network is to ensure the support of business and innovation – in particular for SMEs – by offering information, feedback and business cooperation services, innovation, technology and knowledge transfer services as well as services encouraging the participation of SMEs in the Community framework programmes for R&D. Two measures were implemented in 2015 where the first measure relates to the activities and further development of the Enterprise Europe Network. The second measure relates to the activities put in place to organise the Annual Conference and to animate the Network. It includes services needed to operate the IT tools and to organize trainings, working groups, meetings, communication activities and services to the Network partners. The operational objectives of the Enterprise Europe Network are:

- (1) help enterprises finding partners outside their own country to develop their business, increase their export and knowledge on other markets, and improve their technology and innovation level;
- (2) provide services encouraging the participation of SMEs in the Community Framework Programme for RTD and promote EU policies and SMEs access to EU programmes and financial instruments;
- (3) develop Network recognition and awareness locally; ensure that the Network and its services are known by SMEs in the geographical areas covered;
- (4) develop an integrated service range, where services towards business development are balanced with services towards technology and knowledge transfer, and synergies among network partners are increased;
- (5) guide SMEs towards the most appropriate service provider; implement the “no wrong door” concept and build synergies with other relevant service providers within the Network as well as in the region, to offer complementary services;
- (6) continuously increase the quality and effectiveness of the integrated services provided by the Network;
- (7) contribute to the SMEs Feedback function by consulting businesses and obtaining their opinion on Community policy options;
- (8) build an efficient management system in reducing the administrative burden for all parties, for planning, reporting and monitoring.

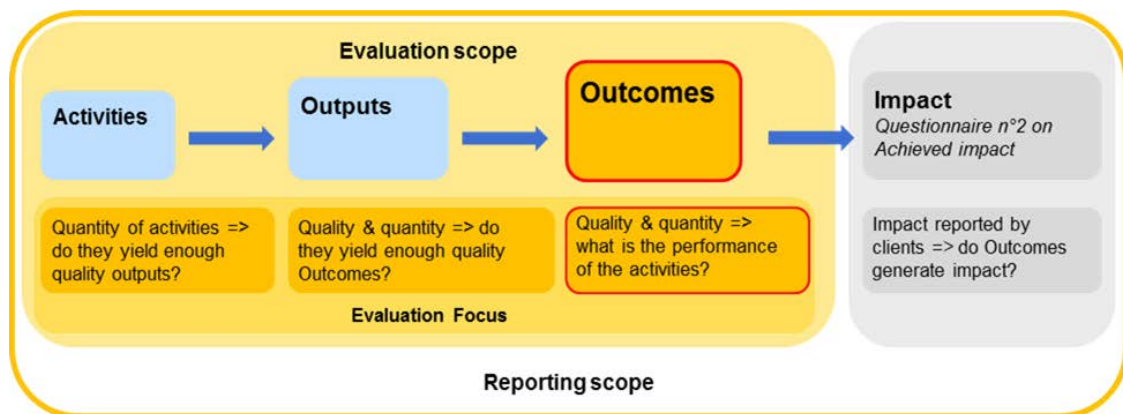
2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The year 2015 has been the first year of the Network in the COSME period with 527 participating organisations from 90 consortia covering all regions of the EU and 8 COSME participating countries, including Serbia and Armenia who joined the Network early 2016. Framework partnership agreements were put in place and specific grants agreements for the first operational period 2015-2016 were signed. The average EU contribution to the eligible

costs of Network partners is about 53%. Additionally, there were 30 cooperation agreements signed for Business Cooperation Centres in 29 third countries. They focus their activities on partnership services and have to finance their activities by their own resources. (please refer to een.ec.europa.eu for the current list of partners). Additionally, conditional terms for Associated Membership were signed with 13 organisations.

An inception survey was carried after 6 months of operation which showed that over 90% of the activities started activities as planned or with minor deviations. A smooth integration of new partners was reported by 92% of the consortia concerned and 55% reported notable major successes in the first six months of Network activity.

A new monitoring and reporting strategy was introduced in 2015 to implementing a renewed focus on quality, efficiency and impact of Network activities. The goal is to foster results-oriented Network activities achieving high numbers of quality outcomes which have the potential to generate a noticeable impact on SME's businesses. The aim is to improve both the quantity and the quality achieved with the resources invested, to reach a higher impact.



A questionnaire which monitors the implementation of the Code of Conduct by Network partners was launched. Feedback is being used to simplify and improve it to better monitor the quality and efficiency of processes behind the Network's activities and their results. Advisory Services Outcomes (ASOs) were a particular challenge for Network partners in 2015, especially on its definition as well as on the process leading to achievements. Together with the Network, EASME clarified the ASO definition, leading process, reporting requirements, and provided training and new guidelines.

The contribution of the Network's resources to Climate Action objectives is estimated at 25,4%.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

Network partners were consulted on their work programme for the years 2017-2018. The indicative budgets for each consortium for this second operational period are the same as the budgets granted in the first period.

The efficiency of the governance structure of the Network needs to be further improved, especially on the role of the Network's Steering and Advisory Group, the sector groups and the thematic contact points which have put in place in 2015. The Network's learning and development should focus more on experience and knowledge sharing using new tools such as e-learning modules and materials. Regional linkages between Network organisations and regional players involved in SME and innovation support will be further developed.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

CONSULTATION WP 2017-2018 FINISHED BY END OF 2016

STARTING DATE OF THE GRANT AGREEMENTS: 1/1/2017

END OF THE PROJECT: 31/12/2018

The signature of the specific grant agreements 2017-2018 by EASME was finalised early 2017.

The review of the SAG governance, working groups and thematic contact points was finalised by the end of 2016.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

It has to be noted that the COSME budget of 2014 together with the budget of 2015 has been used for the commitments of the first operational period covering the years 2015-2016.

Total budget available and committed for the Network Grants 2015-2016 is € 100.175.609 and is financed by:

- the COSME WP2014: € 46.492.984
- the COSME WP2015: € 53.682.625
- the budget includes the grants for the COSME 6 participating countries¹³; Serbia and Armenia joined in 2016, their budget comes from the COSME WP2016
- In total 90 consortia and 527 partner organisations are financed

In addition, a budget of € 2.937 mio was committed for the annual conference and Network animation activities.

6. INDICATORS

The reporting of the Network partners on their delivery refers to the intermediate reporting data received for the first year of the operational period 2015-2016. The below indicators are based on data collected from these reports. It gives an impression on the number of SMEs and the variety of services delivered by the about 3.000 staff in the Network. Services range from information on EU matters, company visits and awareness raising campaigns to specialised advisory services, company missions and brokerage events.

Actual number of:

- Achievements on:
 - > advisory services outcomes: 1.303
 - > business/techn./research partnerships: 2.566
- SME reached via (digital) information services: 10.5 million
- SME participating in brokerage events and company missions: 21.676
- Advisory services provided to SME: 56.244
- SME receiving support services (Information, advice, events, IPR business & technology reviews, financing etc.): will be known after final report 2015-2016
- Impact on clients businesses (turnover, jobs created/maintained, new products or services developed, new markets accessed): the survey on EEN client SMEs showed that 54 % of them had an increased market share, 64 reported an increased turn-over and 31 reported that additional jobs were created.

¹³ Turkey, Moldova, Albania, FYROM, Montenegro, Iceland, Serbia, Armenia (others expected to join soon)

- client satisfaction on the services received: survey launched in June 2017.

For Network Animation activities:

- Number of Network staff trained: 700 from 40+ countries
- Number of staff that participated in staff exchange and mentoring: 27 exchanges involving 70 members
- Social media impact continued to grow, with the main Network account's Twitter followers up 80 percent to 13,864 and just under 95,000 impressions, while Facebook 'likes' more than doubled to 5,668.

New Network launch conference in Brussels:

- Number of participants: 800
- Satisfaction of participants: +85% satisfaction rate

Other Network qualitative indicators:

- 13 'Thematic Contact Points' were created leading to a better structured overview of expertise and more efficient collaboration and synergies
- 2 working groups were started on Access to Finance and Scaling up services for young innovative companies

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Typical participating organisations are chambers of commerce, innovation agencies, regional development agencies, SME organisations, technology centres and universities. Most represented are chambers of commerce and chambers of craft (170), followed by national and regional development agencies (166). About 20% of the organisations are new to the Network bringing a wealth of new expertise as well as challenges for integration and creating impact.

GRO/SME/15/B/N02 - YOUR EUROPE BUSINESS PORTAL

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The Your Europe Business Portal aims at being the reference public information portal for enterprises interested in cross-border activities within the European Union. Your Europe Business provides a multilingual practical guide that facilitates cross-border transactions. It supports businesses expanding in other EU countries, thus contributing to exploit the full potential of the EU's single market.

Your Europe Business Portal is part of the Your Europe Portal that includes a business and a Citizens section (financed outside the COSME programme). The portal offers all the information citizens and businesses need to exercise their single market rights in Europe.

Its unique selling point is that it informs not only about the EU rules, but also how these apply in practice in each Member State. In addition, the information is multilingual (in 23 official languages of the EU (all except Gaelic) and in Norwegian for EU-level pages and in the national language(s) and English for the country pages). Thus Your Europe offers businesses, public administrations and stakeholders a centralised and easy access to practical information on doing business in Europe, and signposts to more specialised information and help services (such as the Enterprise Europe Network and SOLVIT), when relevant. After a complete revamping of the EU content, work in 2015 was focused on ensuring sustainability of national content.

This measure is the continuation of the 2014 action and was previously financed in EIP under the objective of creation of an environment favourable to SME co-operation, particularly in the field of cross-border co-operation in 2011-2013.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The Your Europe Business Portal attracted 1.6 million unique visitors in 2015 which corresponds to an increase of 21% compared to 2014.

Due to the suppression of a number of national pages and their replacement by links to national resources, there is a slight decrease in the number of visits (2.45 million compared to 2.49 million) and the number of page views (4.84 million compared to 5.54 millions).

The most visited sections are VAT and customs (44%), funding (24%), and start & grow (11%).

16% of the users come to the portal through mobile devices (mobile phone, tablet).

A new functionality allowed users who need more expert advice to send enquiries directly to a member of the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN). From January to December 2015 EEN partners received a total of 2.884 requests for information via the form hosted on the portal. Finance was the top subject followed by Expanding abroad and EU law and research.

According to a survey with portal visitors in the beginning of 2016, over 83% of users rate the portal excellent, good or satisfactory.

Your Europe Business offers information that helps entrepreneurs to comply with environment-related requirements (EMAS certification, energy labels, eco-design, EU eco label, attracting 2% of visits to the portal).

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

In line with the 2016 work programme, efforts will focus on further improving EU information, better linking with national business portals and enhancing synergies with relevant assistance services. Furthermore, awareness-raising activities are planned to ensure that entrepreneurs find Your Europe Business when needed. This includes search engine optimisation and online campaigns.

Your Europe Business is expected to contribute to the creation of a Single Digital Gateway (SDG), as announced in the Single Market and Digital Single Market strategies. Its exact role will be further defined as the SDG project evolves.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR & FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

€ 400,000 to be implemented through specific contracts under a framework contract.

6. INDICATORS

- number of unique visitors: 1.6 million
- number of page views: 4.84 million
- feedback on user satisfaction: 83% user satisfaction

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

SMEs and entrepreneurs who want to operate cross-border within the EU's single market

GRO/SME/15/B/N03 - SME Internationalisation

- European Action for Global Trade", acronym EAGLE 1&2 project
- Filling the gap on SME Internationalisation (renamed "Increasing SME readiness to internationalise – Ready2Go")

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

This measure will support further the internationalization of European SMEs, as originally proposed in the Commission Communication 'Small Business, Big World - a new partnership to help SMEs seize global opportunities'. Cooperation with the European Trade Promotion Organisations active in business internationalisation and business missions abroad. Ready2Go will focus on tailored training and coaching and kick-start international activities, via matchmaking and networking events.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

Exchange of expertise and good practice between the project partners
Organisation of a joint trade promotion mission to a third market
Providing training to the companies in order to prepare them to develop their business in third country markets
Following up of the mission in order to evaluate the mission results and capture any partnership agreements (business or technology) resulting from the mission.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

ACTION ENDS IN JULY 2017 FOR EAGLE 1&2 projects;
Ready2Go started in September 2016 for a period of 28 months with the main coaching and training taking place in Q3/2017 and the matchmaking events scheduled for Q4/2017 – Q2/2018.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

2015-2018

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

EAGLE 1&2 projects: CALL FOR PROPOSALS GRANT EUR 265 000
READY2GO – CALL FOR TENDER EUR 883 000

6. INDICATORS

-The following indicators are not yet available at the date of drafting the report:

- Number of participating SMEs in the trainings and events
- Staff exchanges between partners
- Delivering country focused events
- Joint trade promotion mission to a third market
- Preparing a guide / toolkit on organising joint trade missions and B2B events
- Exchange of best practices between the TPOs in organising the missions

- Number of meetings between EU companies and strategic partners in third countries

7. BENEFICIARIESⁱ

EAGLE 1&2 projects: LONDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE in consortium with:

- SYNDESMOS VIOMICHANION VOREIOU ELLADOS (GR),
- VIESOJI ISTAIGA LIETUVOS INOVACIJU CENTRAS (LI),
- HAJDU-BIHAR MEGYEI KERESKEDELMI ES IPARKAMARA (H)
- CONFINDUSTRIA SICILIA ASSOCIAZIONE (IT)
- CHAMBRE DE COMMERCE ET D'INDUSTRIE DE BRUXELLES (BE)

READY2GO CONTRACTORS ARE

Promos; Eurochambres, Formaper, Innovhub, Birmingham/Croatian/Spanish CCI; Dublin/Estonian/Serbian CCI; Polish/Rhone-Alps CCI.

GRO/SME/15/B/N04 - EU-JAPAN CENTRE FOR INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

To promote the development of EU-Japan cooperation with a view to improving the access of European businesses into the Japanese market, by providing them with the needed data on local conditions and by acquainting them with commercial and industrial practises which EU businesses are facing in Japan. Also to promote the training on production technologies, quality management and innovation, aiming at improving the competitiveness of EU businesses.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

On the Policy Analysis and Advise, 12 Policy Seminars were organized with a total of 1300 participants, 5 Minerva Policy Reports were delivered, while under the “EU Business in Japan” info web-portal 12 expert reports, 9 case studies, 1 video and 25 webinars were delivered.

Also on Policy advise, the Centre organized the 17th EU-Japan Business Round table Annual Meeting and delivered 70 specific recommendations.

On business training, the 52 Human Resources Training Program was held with 15 participants from 11 Member States and 2 World Class Manufacturing topical missions were organized with a total of 48 participants from 16 different Member States. The Centre has also organized 3 “LEAN in Europe” training sessions and 13 business training webinars that gathered 1077 participants.

On Vulcanus training programme, 45 European (from 20 Member States) and 17 Japanese students participated.

On Business Support, the “Enterprise Europe Network Contact Point in Japan” has continued to expand with 422 inquiries being handled, 110 new expressions of interests being received, 461 B2B meetings being arranged in the context of 18 brokerage events and 7 Partnership

Agreements being signed . On SMEs Cluster Support 2 missions were organized on Biotech and ICT with a total of 30 SMEs and cluster organizations. The “Step in Japan” on site logistic support services had 17 European users and the “Tax and Public Procurement Helpdesk for SMEs” has continued to evolve answering to 45 specific inquiries and performing quick PP market scan services for a total of 42 European SMEs. Furthermore, the Centre continued to expand its Space and GNSS industries activities.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The services and work provided are foreseen to continue under forthcoming COSME work programmes.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

1ST APRIL 2015 – 31 MARCH 2016

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Ad hoc grant without call for proposals, according to legal basis which established the Centre and its role: Council Decision 92/278/EEC of 18 May 1992 – 2.800.000€

6. INDICATORS

1. Number of seminars organised and attendance
 2. Number of enquiries addressed to the Centre and satisfactory replies provided
 3. Number of students participating in Vulcanus and their level of competence
- See results and impacts section.

7. BENEFICIARIESⁱⁱ

Institute for International Studies and Training, Japan

GRO/SME/15/B/N05 - INDUSTRIAL POLICY COOPERATION

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

Bilateral regulatory and industrial policy dialogues with key partners with relevant markets for trade and investment is the object of this action. The main objective of the Industrial Policy Cooperation is to reduce barriers to trade and investment. Industrial policy and regulatory dialogues have a clear mutual interest to reduce regulatory disparities and obstacles to investment.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The scoping exercise has been cancelled because of a change in political priorities. On the Eastern partnership, the Small Business Act Assessment was presented and discussed in all 6 Eastern partner countries in regional workshops. These regional events stressed the peer review component of the project and 'stimulate' the reform willingness of partner

countries as well as the exchange of experience among them. In addition an analysis was conducted using econometric techniques on the relationship between policy settings and SME performance in the areas of access to finance, innovation and internationalisation. The project has helped increasing awareness on the results of the SBA assessment and foster exchanges between partners. The report provides further guidance to policy makers when designing their SMEs strategies and action plans.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The Scoping exercise was to be launched in 2016 and was cancelled.
The Eastern partnership grant to the OECD terminated in May 2017

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

2016-2017

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Scoping exercise: Specific contract 250.000 through framework contract
Eastern dialogue: grant to the OECD 150.000

6. INDICATORS

Number of seminars organized and attendance
Feasibility study on technical and policy areas with certain countries
Number of regional dialogues

7. BENEFICIARIES

SCOPING EXERCISE: ACTION CANCELLED
EASTERN PARTNERSHIP : OECD

GRO-SME-15-B-N07 - Information Platform on Parcel Delivery Services

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The information platform on parcel Delivery Services aims at improving the transparency of information on existing delivery solutions, particularly for cross-border parcel delivery, and thus at facilitating cross-border development of e-retailers through the creation of a web information platform presenting and comparing existing service offer. The platform would hence act as an information hub and powerful toolbox for e-retailers wishing to fulfil shipments across Europe and is committed to be a game changer giving SME e-retailers a level-playing field to compete more effectively in the market. The project will be conducted over 23 months.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The platform was originally planned to be operational in January 2017. However in March of 2017 EASME signed a new grant agreement with the consortium, in which remedial actions necessary for further project continuation were agreed, notably hiring of an experienced independent project manager, replacement of two IT partners which had withdrawn from the consortium and extension of the project duration from 12 to 23 months.

In the second trimester of 2017 two versions of the platform have been/will be released:

The first version (v0.1) has been released at the beginning of June 2017. As from mid-June delivery operators are able to register and upload general data and data on their services (including prices) on the platform.

The second version (v0.2) will be launched at the Deliver 2 event on 27/28 of June 2017 in Berlin with the listing of identified suppliers and the publishing of service details made available via a search engine, to gain market awareness and traction.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

In the coming months it is crucial that many suppliers upload information to make the platform fully operational.

Version (v0.3) of the platform with additional functionalities (supplier rating, supplier certification) will be released in September 2017.

The platform should be fully operational end 2017

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

Publication of the Call: Tuesday, 7 July 2015

Starting date of the grant agreement: 11 January 2016

In September 2016 EASME initiated a review procedure due to the cumulated delays and unsatisfactory performance. The procedure was concluded in March 2017 with the implementation of the remedial actions identified by EASME as necessary for further project continuation (notably hiring of an experienced independent project manager, replacement of two IT partners which had withdrawn from the consortium and extension of the project duration from 12 to 23 months).

The amended grant agreement is in force since 3 March 2017.

End of the project: December 2017

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

360.000 E available budget (300.000 in the Work Programme and increased by 60.000 in the framework of the 20% flexibility rule)

5 proposals were received in total

3 proposals were ineligible

2 proposals were further considered and evaluated

1 proposal was awarded the grant equal to 360.000

6. INDICATORS

The necessary data to complete the indicators as provided by the WP will be acquired after the implementation of the action.

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

The beneficiary of the action is a consortium formed by

1. Deliver – France - (coordinator)
2. European Association of Craft Small and Medium Sized Enterprises UEAPME - Belgium - (participant)
3. Webnet (participant- IT development, functional and technical specifications) replacing former IT partners Converteo and Adveris

C. FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS FOR ENTERPRISES

The third specific objective of COSME is “to improve framework conditions for the competitiveness and sustainability of Union enterprises, particularly SMEs, including in the tourism sector” described in Article 11 of the COSME Regulation.

In 2015, there were up to 14 actions to be financed under this specific objective with a budget of more than EUR34 million.

GRO/SME/15/C/N011 - SME POLICY (SPR, SBA, outreach)

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The objective is to provide communication and information tools to promote the SME policy i.e. Small business act, its implementation in the Member States and inform SMEs, SME stakeholders and relevant public authorities about SME policy, economic developments and available support at EU and Member States level including the quantitative the SME performance review.

The measure includes:

- Monitoring implementation of SBA and SBA review & promotion (i.e. Business Planet TV magazine 4th season)
- Small Business portal
- Outreach activities SME policy and SBA implementation - brochures, campaigns

3. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

- Business Planet (Euronews TV magazine), the 4th season was produced from June 2015 to June 2016 with 24 episodes showcasing the best SBA practice (at European and national level) broadcast. The 5th season started in October 2016 and 16 episodes were broadcast so far (the 5th season will continue until October 2017 when the last 24th episode will be broadcast).
- Small Business portal: update of the content; publication of 12 success stories in 21 languages (as per the specific contract in place);
- Organisation of the SME Assembly 2015 (18-20 Nov, Luxembourg) as the central event of the European SME Week 2015 (with the European Enterprise Promotion Awards ceremony included in the programme)

4. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015-2016?

Business Planet:

- The continuation of the 4th season in 2016 (5 more episodes to be produced and broadcast until June 2016); continuation with the 5th season (under the new Framework Partnership Agreement)

Small Business portal:

- .Contract for editorial maintenance implemented in 2016 with the view of the integration of the portal content on the Europa pages

5. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT):

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT:

END OF THE PROJECT:

Business Planet (4th season): 12 June 2015 – 12 June 2016

Business Planet (5th season): 10.October 2016 – 10 October 2017

Small Business portal (contract for editorial maintenance): December 2015 - November 2016

6. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Specific grant agreement with Euronews signed in May 2015 (EUR 628,729) and in October 2016 (712.191 EUR)

Small Business portal: a new contract for EUR 60,000 signed in December 2015

7. INDICATORS

1. Business Planet: the estimated audience for the whole 4th season (13.06. 2015 to 11.06.2016) 23.7 million; all the Business Planet magazines were produced and broadcast according to schedule by Euronews as well as disseminated via the Small Business portal and EC social media;

2. SME Assembly 2015 (Luxembourg, 18-20 Nov 2015): 673 delegates attended the event; overall satisfaction rate: 95% believed it was definitely/worth attending;

3)- European SME Week: 511 local events associated with the European SME Week brand organised in 2015; 52 projects were participating at the European level of the European Enterprise Promotion Awards competition (with over 300 project competing at national level), 7 winners (6 category winners and 1 Grand Jury Prize winner were selected).

- Social media campaign around the key central events of the European SME Week (SME Assembly and European Enterprise Promotion Awards (EEPA) ceremony): the audience for all social media channels reached over 25,000 people;

- SME Assembly and EEPA ceremony: 235 mentions by traditional media outlets.

8. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

SME Policy-makers on the EU as well as national level, press and general public as well as SME stakeholders and researchers.

GRO/SME/15/C/N012 - SME POLICY (SPR, SBA, outreach)

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The SME performance review focuses on the implementation of the Small Business Act for Europe and consists of annual reports, the SBA country fact sheets and studies.

The 2016 annual report includes an overview of the size, structure and importance of European SMEs, outlines the major trends and provides a summary of recent policy developments. It also includes a specific chapter dedicated to the issue of 'second chance'.

The SBA fact sheets (35) provide more in-depth information on the country level. They are structured according to the 10 principles of the SBA and are based on core indicators which relate the individual Member States to the Union average.

The production of the fact sheets also involves cooperation with the Joint Research Centre (JRC) in Ispra on a basis of a dedicated inter-institutional agreement running for 2 years to the tune of €150000. JRC provides crucial input into the calculation of the SPR database.

A tender was launched in August 2015 for the next cycle of the SBA country fact sheets and the annual EU-SME report 2015/2016. Three tenderers submitted offers which had been evaluated in the meantime. The contract was signed with the Consortium CARSA in November 2015. Works started immediately thereafter with the final delivery date of the outputs being the SME assembly in Bratislava on 25 November 2016.

3. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The final results of the SME Performance Review 2015/2016 were published during the 2016 SME assembly on 25 November in Bratislava. They comprise of the final versions of the Annual report and 35 SBA country fact sheets.

Intended impact:

Influencing SME policy makers: The report and the fact sheets are directly presented and discussed with the MS delegates in a dedicated working group on "policy-relevant research on entrepreneurship and SMEs"; the nature of the discussion with delegates during the working group as well as during the SPR production process and post-release would establish the impact on policy-making (complemented by additional issues such as the referencing of the SPR in national policy documents, etc.); The fact sheets have become a key source of information and policy analysis for the European Semester (i.e. the country reports and the country specific recommendations)

Outreach to the wider public: the SPR 2014/2015 was, as in the years, before launched with a high-profile press conference during the SME assembly; a maximal media coverage reflected in a high number of press articles, social media references as well as hits and downloads from the SPR website would be a potential indicator of the outreach impact;

Influencing secondary policy research and informing stakeholders by making the complete data set and policy database publicly available to researchers; subsequent third-party articles citing the results of the SPR would be an expected impact in this domain.

4. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The SME Performance Review is repeated every year, so the next cycle for the SPR /2017/2018 has already started.

5. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

This annual exercise has a duration of 12 months.

The release of the Annual report and fact sheets coincided with the SME assembly in Estonia 22nd/-24th November 2017.

The 2016/2017 Annual Report on European SMEs and the SBA fact-sheets (start date: November 2016; end date: October 2017);

Meeting of the expert group on SME policy research discussing the SME annual report and the SBA country fact sheets: January and September 2017 in Brussels.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

SME Performance Review

Commitment in 2016: EUR **806.090,00**

7. INDICATORS

1. The annual report on European SMEs;
2. A complete set of SBA fact sheets (35 fact sheets for the individual countries of an average length of some 15 pages each);
3. Publication of the fact-sheets is accompanied by "satellite" documentation (press releases, technical notes, databases, website, etc.); there will also be a separate summary report summing up the main trends of the data compiled for the 35 individual fact sheets.
4. Qualitative feedback from MS delegates and other SME policy-makers on the annual report and fact sheets (as reflected in the feedback analysis of the COSME programme)

8. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

SME Policy-makers on the EU as well as national level, press and general public as well as SME stakeholders and researchers (see also 3). This measure contributes to the production of valuable, up-to-date data and analysis on EU-wide- as well as MS-level on latest SME trends and SME policy developments as a basis for evidence-based decision-making in this area, in particular with a view to the SBA implementation.

GRO/SME/15/C/N019 - Statistics for Family Businesses

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The aim of this action is to provide policy-makers and relevant stakeholders for credible, comparable and systematic information and indicators on the role of the family businesses in national economies and to offer usable and practical information to stakeholders for their decision making.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The call for proposals on "Statistics for Family Businesses" was launched in April 2015 to encourage national statistical offices and other organisations that operate in collaboration with the national statistical offices in the EU Member States and in other eligible countries under the COSME Programme, to collect information on the role of family businesses. A priority was given to projects aimed to develop for the first time statistics in those countries, which had not yet statistics on family business.

The countries covered by the call are the Netherlands, Denmark, Poland, Italy, Finland, Bulgaria and Malta. The seven projects which all started on 1 February 2016 had different durations (between 12 and 14 months). Three of them (FI, IT, NL) have finished in January

2017, one (PL) has finished in February 2017 and the last three (BG, DK, MT) have finished in March 2017.

Statistics Denmark have organized a workshop in Copenhagen on 29 March 2017 as part of their grant deliverables and invited the other 6 participating countries, the Commission and academia to discuss definitions, methods, results and the way forward.

NSI's from Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, Netherlands and Sweden participated. The agenda was:

1. Key Note Speak, Professor Morten Bennedsen
2. National experiences and results – presentations by each of the NSI's
3. Wrap-up and the possible road ahead

The presentations by the NSI's made it clear that different methods had been applied by the NSI's in order to define family businesses. Secondly, the type of data used for the delineation of a population of family businesses varied among the countries. Regarding the definition of a family business, most countries used the definition adopted by the European Commission.

Several participants expressed an interest in continued dialogue as regards exchange of methodological issues, ideas and results etc. and indicated interest in participating in possible follow-up projects by the European Commission."

The final results of this action (incl. the approved reports) should be available in Q3 2017. The information about family businesses should be used as a basis for further European, national and regional policy development. In the longer term this should lead to improved evidence bases in the area of family businesses and to an increased number of countries where such data is collected.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The Commission has to finalise the assessment of the final reports and disseminate the results (Q3 2017).

There are 7 reports in total (1 per project) and 4 have been accepted. The rest should be available by the end of Q3 2017.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL: APRIL 2015

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 1 FEBRUARY 2016

END OF THE PROJECT: MARCH 2017

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Budget in work programme 2015: 300.000

Budget finally committed: 390.817

12 proposals were received and 7 were awarded

6. INDICATORS

- 1) Completion on time – all projects completed on time
- 2) Number of MS statistical offices that will make proposals for the collection of data: 11 proposals made, 7 were awarded

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Regarding the 7 granted projects, the Statistical Offices were the project leaders (coordinators) in the following: NL, DK, IT, BG while in the rest of the projects (MT, PL and FI) they were the sole partner.

GRO/SME/15/C/N02 - EU Stakeholder Platform for Better Regulation

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The EU Stakeholder Platform on Better Regulation (REFIT Platform) bring together Better Regulation experts, Member States experts, stakeholders and support the EU2020 objective to foster smart growth by aiming to improve the regulatory environment.

This involve contracting studies on issues of regulatory fitness, for example, on best methods to measure the impacts, costs and benefits of EU regulation; on testing these methods and on evaluation etc.

IT tools are needed to support these actions and stakeholder consultations in particular.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The REFIT Platform has been settled by Commission decision C(2015)3261 on 19/05/2016 and the members appointed in the Commission decision C(2015)9063 on 16/12/2015.

Due to the late nomination of the members of the Platform, the meetings began on January 2016. The implementation of IT tools like the Better Regulation Portal already started in 2015.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The REFIT Platform members will start to meet from January 2016 till the end of their mandate.

IT tools like the Better Regulation Portal and REFIT Scoreboard will be developed.

Support studies on regulatory issues will be planned using existing framework contracts and according to the REFIT Platform needs.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIFIC CONTRACTS TO COVER THE IT DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIFIC TOOLS BY THE USE OF DIGIT FRAMEWORK CONTRACTS.

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): N/A

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 11/2015

END OF THE PROJECT: ONGOING, FIRST SPECIFIC CONTRACTS ENDED ON 03/2016.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Budget available from the programme: 600.000 €

Amount committed: 570.000 €

6. INDICATORS

Due to late implementation of the REFIT platform in 2015, meetings of the members only started in 2016.

The Better Regulation Portal has been set up but its development will continue in the coming years.

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

N/A

GRO/SME/15/C/N03 - EUROPEAN COMPETITIVENESS REPORT

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

Five studies were launched in November-December 2015 to feed into the 2016 report and European Semester:

- = The European construction value chain: performance, challenges and role in the GVC
- = The evolving composition of intra-EU trade over time
- = Single Market transmission mechanisms before, during and after the 2008/2009 crisis
- = EU wholesale trade: analysis of the sector and value chains
- = Total factor productivity growth: drivers, components and frontier firms

All five studies are in addition intended to inform policymakers when designing and implementing policies in these areas.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

In 2016, all five studies were completed and subsequently approved. The quality of the studies was high. Results of the studies were used in the Single Market Integration and Competitiveness Report 2016 (ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/competitiveness/reports/single-market-integration-competitiveness_en) as well as in the context of the European Semester.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

Contracts for a new round of studies have been signed with a view to the 2017 Report.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

FULLY IMPLEMENTED

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

700.000 available; 610.350 committed

6. INDICATORS

The reports were delivered on time and of a high quality.

7. CONTRACTORS

WIFO - Österreichisches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung

GRO/SME/15/C/N06 - Fourth European Forum on Social Entrepreneurship in Plovdiv (Bulgaria)

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The *European Fair for Social Enterprises* is a key event in Bulgaria that provides a large visibility of the sector. The Fair is a yearly event organised by the Bulgarian Government and usually takes place in Plovdiv since 2012.

In 2015, it took place from 26-29/03/2015. The event was composed of:

- An exhibition with stands of social enterprises (from Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Italy, Romania, Serbia, Norway, Greece and Malta) that presented their products and services.
- an international conference organised with speakers from various national services and organisations as well as a round table with academics and directors from various non-profit social enterprises. The conference is attended by around 200 participants from EU Member States and non EU countries.

The Commission co-financed the event via an adhoc grant.

<http://tpkunion.com/efse/>

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

- Awareness raising about the role of social enterprises in the EU economy
- Exchange of good practices in the area of social enterprises

In 2015, the European Fair gathered about 100 social enterprises and cooperatives from Belgium, Bulgaria, Italy, Romania, Spain and Turkey, and the number of visitors amounted to 30,000.

High level speakers participated in the international conference including Commission's responsible to discuss policy issues and best practices in the field of social economy.

The exhibitors showed products, household articles and services within the scope of business activities of social enterprises (especially WISE).

Considerable exhibition space was also devoted to the enterprises services intended for people with disabilities.

In 2016, a new fair took place but without the financial involvement of the Commission.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

N/A

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 23.03.2015

END OF THE PROJECT: 29.03.2015 (*END OF THE CONFERENCE*)

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Commitment: € 30 000

Project closed and final report received.

6. INDICATORS

NUMBER OF VISITORS: 30 000

NUMBER OF ENTERPRISES PRESENTED: 100

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

BULGARIAN AUTHORITIES

GRO/SME/15/C/N07 – Cluster Excellence Programme

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The overall objective of this call for proposals is to strengthen cluster management excellence in the EU in order to provide more professional business services to European SMEs through clusters, and therefore contribute to the development of more world-class clusters in the EU. In order to pursue cluster management excellence, cluster organisations would provide support services to their members and develop strategic approaches to address the innovation, growth and globalization challenges that SMEs face. This requires to strengthen the value-added encapsulated in the support services provided to cluster firms, to gain further insights into cluster members' positioning in value-chains (e.g. through value-chain analyses), to take stock of emerging industrial trends and dynamics (e.g. cross-sectoral dynamics and emerging industries)⁷, to develop a shared vision of their members with regard to collaboration with other clusters in Europe and in global markets, to consistently liaise with public authorities regarding the business support environment and coherence with regional policy, including in the framework of smart specialisation strategies⁸, and to shape-up strategic plans and roadmaps for sustained cluster development.

The action will help cluster organisations deliver innovation and business support services more efficiently and develop strategic plans to generate greater added value for their members, including through cluster collaboration across Europe.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

Undertaking a Cluster Excellence benchmarking assessment (bronze label); Mentoring, coaching and/or training towards following-up and upgrading existing Cluster Excellence assessments; Organisation and delivery of targeted training courses; Bi-lateral/team/group coaching schemes and related reports; Definition, launch and analysis of SME surveys;

The kick-off meeting took place in November 2016. The first 6 monthly reports were submitted in June 2017.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The 5 selected projects will complete the activities to be carried out under the grant agreement by November 2018.

The expected results concern enhanced insights at cluster management level, translated into concrete recommendations for uptake by cluster managers. This could materialise on

(a) learning that should be converted in guidelines for strengthening support services to cluster SMEs to generate additional added-value and facilitate transformative developments for the cluster companies' growth, innovation and competitiveness.

(b) Learning that should be converted in guidelines to develop cluster strategic plans and implementation roadmaps for cluster development.

(c) With regard to sharing knowledge on strategic approaches for the clusters, guidelines should likewise be produced with a special emphasis on better positioning SMEs in value-chains and in seeking synergies across the entire consortium.

Minimum two joint events at the level of each consortium and one inter-consortia meeting should be organised. Preferably one cluster organisation partner in the consortium should host them.

Mutual cluster study visits should be carried out.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

Publication of the call for proposals: 08.02.2016

Signature of grant agreements: October 2016

Start of the action: 16 November 2016

Duration of the projects: 24 months

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

PLANNED BUDGET: 1.500.000 €

COMMITTED BUDGET: 999.565 €

6. INDICATORS

To facilitate the monitoring, evaluation and assessment undertaken by EASME, and in order to get an overview of the progress made, successful applicants will be asked to put in place, from the outset, performance indicators for the on-going monitoring and evaluation of the project. The action will be assessed, against the following performance indicators:

Number of new or improved support services to cluster SMEs; Number of first bronze Cluster Excellence benchmarking labels obtained; Number of study visits performed; Number of training actions and trained cluster managers; Number of project-related surveys into cluster members; Number of coaching or mentoring actions; Number and type of added-value tools related to cluster management and skills enhancement; Number of bilateral/multilateral partnership agreements signed (e.g. Memoranda of Understanding); Number of cluster, value-chains and market analyses; Number of SME member's need analyses, surveys and/or alternative feedback from cluster SMEs and other cluster members; Number of cluster organisations and business networks from different EU Member States or COSME participating countries having been involved in the activities of the project; Number of SMEs having benefited from the supported actions, through the provision of more professional services; Number of events (workshops/seminars, trainings, coaching, conferences, working group meetings, etc.) organised; Number and type of participants in the events (workshops/seminars, conferences, working group meetings) organised. Projects must foresee to collect relevant data and reporting on the above-mentioned performance indicators in the

reports to be submitted on the implementation of the action. Applicants may also propose and report upon further performance indicators.

7. BENEFICIARIES

5 projects have been selected out of 13 proposals. 26 cluster organisations and business networks, as well as 44 lead managers are involved in the action from 12 countries.

INNO-DROP (Germany, Czech Republic, Spain, France) – Nano-, plasma- and water technology

TRACE-KEI (Italy, Portugal, Serbia, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria)- Agro-Food, ICT, Renewable Energy

ECRI (Spain, Italy, Greece, Poland) Life science

CLUSGRID (Poland, France, Spain, Bulgaria) Smart grids, Energy efficiency, renewable energy ICT

COSMENERG (Hungary, Romania, Germany, Poland and Serbia) Bio-energy, energy efficiency, renewable energy, environment technologies

GRO/SME/15/C/N09 - The European Resource Efficiency Excellence Centre

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The Centre provides information services by integrating, maintaining and developing the self-assessment tool for SMEs (from the previous COSME action in 2014), by developing user-friendly technological fiches, by liaising with national and regional resource efficiency services providers and EEN partners, and by providing training through capacity building workshops. The Centre integrates data and encourages data provision from relevant EU initiatives. The Centre also provides data on Return on Investment (RoI) of specific resource efficiency investments to facilitate access to finance in that domain.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

N/A (project start 09/2016)

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2014/2015?

Project start September 2016, implementation phase is 36 months.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): 13/12/2015

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: SEPTEMBER 2016

END OF THE PROJECT: SEPTEMBER 2019

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Budget available as per the work programme: EUR 2 000 000

Budget committed: 1 785 000

Indicate how many proposals/offers were received: 4

How many were awarded: 1

6. INDICATORS

Data on indicators of the WP will be available later.

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Technopolis (BE); VDI Zentrum Ressourceneffizienz GmbH (DE); The Waste and Resources Action Programme — WRAP (UK); Enviros s.r.o. (CZ)

GRO/SME/15/C/N10 - Key Enabling Technologies (KETs)

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The COSME 2014 and 2015 measures include several actions to support the implementation of the European Strategy for Key Enabling Technologies (KETs) as outlined in the Commission Communication¹⁴ of 26 June 2012. The actions help reversing the trend of de-manufacturing and accelerating the rate of transfer, use and exploitation of KETs by businesses in the EU, in order to stimulate growth and jobs.

In 2014, it was planned to sign two specific contracts covering the following domains of activity:

1. Analysis of industrial value chains in strategic areas: Identifying current and future application areas, existing industrial value chains and missing competences in the EU, in the area of additive manufacturing (3D Printing):

The aim is to identify current and future application areas as well as existing industrial value chains operating in the area of 3D printing. Based on this information, gaps in existing industrial value chains preventing to develop future application areas will be identified. The results of the study will allow to understand the current and future possible evolution of industrial value chains in the EU. The results will provide information to stakeholders allowing them to identify opportunities for future cooperation in order to develop new innovative products through 3D printing in the next few years. The analysis will help assessing future challenges and identifying cooperation opportunities with partners located in different EU regions to develop joint R&D projects, share demonstration facilities and develop new innovative 3D printed products.

2. Study on the dual-use potential of Key Enabling Technologies:

Following a recommendation from the KETs High-Level Group, the study on the dual-use potential of KETs looks at the potential of KETs for dual-use research (i.e. to identify technologies with the greatest potential for applications in the defence sector and on the other hand, identify technologies developed by the EU defence sector that could be further

¹⁴ COM(2012)34, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0341:FIN:EN:PDF>

developed for civil use). The study is identifying KETs related innovation areas with a dual use potential and of high relevance to the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base. In addition, the study is analysing possible synergies between the identified innovation areas and previous work done in Framework Program 7 (FP7), by Member States (MS) and the European Defence Agency (EDA). The study is also analysing which of these innovation areas coincide with the EU defence community's future R&I needs and which innovation fields and underlying technologies could potentially be included in future research and innovation programmes.

In 2015, it was planned to sign three specific contracts covering the following domains of activity:

3. KETs Observatory: Phase II

This action is the continuation and further development of the KETs Observatory launched in 2014 under CIP 2013. The aim is to update, expand, develop and run the KETs Observatory activities (<https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/kets-tools/kets-deployment>) for the time period 2016-2018 in order to provide business stakeholders as well as European and national/regional policy makers with data and analysis on the deployment of KETs in the 28 Member States of the European Union and in other regions of the world. This service contract will build on the results of the Phase I of the KETs Observatory which provided insights on the ability of countries to generate and commercialize new knowledge in KETs, as well as on the impact of KETs in the wider economy (first and second reports available here: <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/kets-tools/library>).

4. Market relevance for Important Projects of Common European Interest (IPCEI) in the area of KETs: Connected & Automated Driving

The aim of the study on Connected & Automated Driving is to analyse the existing and planned public support measures offered by third countries (such as US, China, Japan and Korea) in the field of connected and automated driving. Several national, regional and European small and large projects on connected and automated driving are actually running in the EU because of the strong global competition on this issue. The study will enable a better understanding of the evolution of similar projects outside the EU and gaps between EU and its competing countries. The results of the study will also contribute to the identification of financial, technological and regulatory barriers which could impede the competitiveness of European projects related to connected and automated driving.

The analysis of public support measures offered by third countries will help assessing future challenges for the European automotive sector as regards automated and connected driving and will provide useful insights in view of a potential important project of common European interest (IPCEI) in this area.

5. Promoting the access of SMEs to KETs technology infrastructures: Phase II

This action is the continuation and further development of the KETs Technology Infrastructures' action launched in 2014 under CIP 2013. Technological service centres active in the area of KETs (also called 'KETs technology infrastructures') can help SMEs to speed up the commercialisation of their innovation ideas. However, SMEs often cannot find technological services simply due to lack of awareness. As part of the action launched in 2014, a web tool has been developed to help SMEs find technological service centres active in the field of KETs (<https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/ketsobservatory/kets-ti-inventory/map>). The centres provide services to enterprises, such as help with prototyping, testing, upscaling, first production and product validation. For each centre, an SME contact person has been identified and contact details are provided. The mapping is being promoted

and disseminated through different channels such as social media and the *EEN* (Enterprise Europe Network) to raise awareness and reach out as many SMEs as possible.

As a follow-up of the Phase I recommendations, Phase II aims to (1) update the mapping of KETs technology infrastructures and (2) prepare the setting up of collaboration networks of technology infrastructures in the field of KETs, with easy and pan-European access for SMEs. The objective is to analyse the feasibility and European added-value of such networks and to foster the emergence of new networks.

All activities listed above are in line with the Political Guidelines of the Juncker Commission, notably: A Deeper and Fairer Internal Market with a Strengthened Industrial Base: "...This should ensure that Europe maintains its global leadership in strategic sectors with high-value jobs To achieve this, we need to stimulate investment in new technologies, improve the business environment, ease access to markets and to finance, particularly for SMEs, and ensure that workers have the skills industry needs."

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

1. *3D Printing study*:

The contract (under Framework contract) was signed in April 2015. Quantitative and qualitative analyses have been conducted to identify opportunities for cross-regional collaboration. The project analysed 10 application-driven case studies. The final report was delivered in June 2016.

2. *Study dual-use potential of KETs*:

EASME published the call for tenders in December 2014. The contract was signed in July 2015. On the basis of an online survey targeting dual-use experts (launched on the 9th of March 2016), two workshops (May 2016 and October 2016) will gather relevant experts to review the survey results on dual-use innovation areas by analysing both technical and impact aspects of the dual-use areas identified during the study. The final report was published in February 2017.

3. *KETs Observatory (Phase II)*:

EASME published the call for tenders on 31st December 2015. The final meeting of the evaluation committee took place on 11st April 2016. The contract was signed on 16 August 2016. The kick-off meeting took place on 1 September 2016.

4. *Connected and Automated Driving*

The contract (under framework contract) was signed on 8 April 2016. The kick-off meeting took place on 13 April 2016.

5. *Promoting the access of SMEs to KETs technology infrastructures (Phase II)*

EASME published the call for tenders on 29th August 2015. The final meeting of the evaluation committee took place on 29th January 2016. The contract was signed on 24 June 2016.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

1. *3D Printing study*

The final report was delivered in June 2016 and approved by EASME/DG GROW in July 2016. Furthermore, the final report was published on the EU bookshop webpage, DG GROW Publications and KETs webpages to make it available to a broad public and was promoted on social media (twitter).

The identified opportunities for cross-regional demonstration and collaborative projects that were identified along and across value chains are further promoted towards regional and industrial stakeholders and are feeding in into DG GROW's actions to support the work of the Smart Specialisation Platform on Industrial Modernisation (COSME 2015 action 'WATIFY II' matchmaking and networking events in the area of digital and key enabling technologies).

2. Study dual-use potential of KETs:

The final report was delivered in December 2016 and approved by EASME/DG GROW in January 2016. Furthermore, the final report was published in the EU bookshop webpage, DG GROW Publications and KETs webpages to make it available to a broad public. The study identified areas where Europe should invest to fully benefit from technologies that have a dual use in civilian and defence markets...38 areas were selected for their high relevance to the European Defence Technological and Industrial base and their contribution to the 1) strategic independence of the civilian and defence supply chains, 2) economic impact on EU growth and job creation and 3) EU knowledge base (R&D capital stock and R&D&I infrastructure). These innovation areas range from robots to biometric identification techniques or even data mining, which all have a clear dual-use potential. The policy target is to achieve better use of resources and unlock untapped potential in this domain

3. KETs Observatory: phase II

Phase II started on 16 August 2016 and will run for a period of 24 months. As part of the activities, the KETs Observatory will expand its database with statistical codes covering the digital dimension of Advanced Manufacturing. In addition, the KETs Observatory will produce 'Country profiles' and analyse what drives the performance of countries and explain the reasons behind the trends observed. Analytical reports on promising KETs-based products will be drawn up to support regional partnerships under the Smart Specialisation Platform on Industrial Modernisation and will describe promising KETs based products and their value chains and recommend policy actions to help the EU industry stay ahead of global competition. Awareness raising activities are also foreseen to disseminate and communicate statistics and observed trends towards stakeholders (policy-makers, industries & businesses, academia, RTOs) at EU, national and regional levels. The Interim Report that covers the analysis of the methodology has been approved. An expert workshop took place on 20 January 2017 in order to validate the findings. The Progress Report, the 38 country profiles and 12 analytical reports as well as three additional workshops will be completed in 2017 and 2018.

4. Connected and Automated Driving:

The final report was submitted in June 2017 and will be published on EU Bookshop and DG GROW Publications. The study analysed the strategies, funding programmes, standards, regulations and value chains for connected and automated driving (C&AD) in selected countries (France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, USA, Japan, South Korea and China). The report analysed the C&AD technologies and assessed global support measures and effectiveness of EU support measures. The comparative analysis provides a clearer picture of the EU's current position compared to its third country counterparts in the C&AD area. The content of the report and the different recommendations are helping the Commission and stakeholders to identify the right approach to promote the deployment of C&AD in the EU.

5. Promoting the access of SMEs to KETs technology infrastructures: Phase II

Phase II started in June 2016 and will run for a period of 18 months (an extension of three months has been requested by the contractor and has been approved by the agency). The contract will end in December 2017.

The action will provide SMEs and relevant stakeholders with a complete and up-to-date mapping of KETs Technology Centres (TCs) in Europe, by revising the data collected during the Phase I. The action will also demonstrate whether and how collaboration networks of such KETs technology infrastructures with one-stop shop access are expected to significantly contribute to foster SMEs' competitiveness, growth and innovation capacity. The mapping, the Interim Report, Draft Final Report and Final Report will be finalised in 2017.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

1. 3D Printing study:

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): N.A. (STUDY UNDER FRAMEWORK CONTRACT)

STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 30 APRIL 2015

END OF THE PROJECT: 15 JUNE 2016

2. Study dual-use potential of KETs:

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): DECEMBER 2014

STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 9 JULY 2015

END OF THE PROJECT: 9 DECEMBER 2016 (THE ORIGINAL END OF THE CONTRACT WAS 9 JULY 2016 BUT THE CONTRACTOR REQUESTED AND EXTENSION OF 5 MONTHS)

3. KETs Observatory Phase II:

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): 16 DECEMBER 2015

STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 16 AUGUST 2016

END OF THE PROJECT: 16 AUGUST 2018 (24 MONTHS)

4. Connected and Automated Driving:

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): N.A. (STUDY UNDER FRAMEWORK CONTRACT)

STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 8 APRIL 2016

END OF THE PROJECT: 8 APRIL 2017 (THE ORIGINAL END OF THE CONTRACT WAS 8 JANUARY BUT THE CONTRACTOR REQUESTED AN EXTENSION OF 3 MONTHS)

5. Promoting the access of SMEs to KETs technology infrastructures Phase II:

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): 28 AUGUST 2015

STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 24 JUNE 2016

END OF THE PROJECT: 24 DECEMBER 2017 (THE ORIGINAL END OF THE CONTRACT WAS 24 SEPTEMBER 2017 BUT THE CONTRACTOR REQUESTED AN EXTENSION OF 3 MONTHS)

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

1. 3D Printing study:

Service contract - Specific contract under a framework contract:

The price to be paid under the specific contract for the study in the area of 3D Printing is € 297.800 covering all tasks executed. In addition up to an amount of 8000 euro shall be reimbursed according to the provisions of the framework contract.

2. Study dual-use potential of KETs:

Service contract - Open call for tenders - Study on the dual-use potential of KETs: The price to be paid under this specific contract is € 241.706 covering all tasks executed.

3. KETs Observatory Phase II:

The budget available for the call for tenders was € 400.000. Two offers were received of which one has been chosen to be awarded the contract. The price to be paid under this specific contract is € 370.000.

4. Connected and Automated Driving:

Service contract - Specific contract under a framework contract:

The price to be paid under the specific contract is € 99.700 covering all tasks executed.

5. Promoting the access of SMEs to KETs technology infrastructures Phase II:

The budget available for the call for tenders was € 300.000. Five offers were received of which one has been chosen to be awarded the contract. The price to be paid under this specific contract is € 267.650.

6. INDICATORS

The indicators are directly linked to the implementation of, and performance under the different contracts, so it will only be possible to report on them at the end of the contracts.

The finalised studies and indicators are listed below:

1. 3D PRINTING STUDY

- Number of industrial value chains analysed: 10 (car interior components, spare parts for machines, parts for airplanes, manufacturing moulds, implants, surgical planning tools, printed food, textiles, home decoration products and houses)
- Number of identified opportunities for cross-regional cooperation: between 1 - 3 for each of the 10 analysed value chains

2. STUDY DUAL-USE POTENTIAL OF KETs

- Number of areas selected in which Europe should strategically invest: 38 areas grouped under 7 thematic fields (energy for mobility; fundamental non-dependence materials and components; health and sanitary protection; communication, navigation and surveillance systems; human assistance and robotics; security/cybersecurity systems; production and supply chain solutions)

4. CONNECTED AND AUTOMATED DRIVING

- Feedback from industry stakeholders on the degree to which the study results directly or indirectly will be taken up by the sector (through a specific workshop)
- Follow-up of recommendations in the context of the GEAR 2030 working group on automated driving (ongoing)

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

1. 3D Printing study:

Österreichisches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung (WIFO)

2. Study dual-use potential of KETs:

D'Appolonia, CEA, TNO, Oakdene Hollins (consortium)

3. KETs Observatory Phase II:

PwC EU Services EESV (Belgium), CARSA (Spain), CBT - Communication Multimedia S.L. (Spain), Erasmus University Rotterdam (the Netherlands)

4. Connected and Automated Driving:

Österreichisches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung (WIFO)

5. Promoting the access of SMEs to KETs technology infrastructures Phase II:

IDEA Consult (Belgium), Technology Centre of the Academy of Sciences (Czech Republic), Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft e.V. (Germany)

GRO/SME/15/C/N11 - Design-based consumer goods

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The objective of the action is to reinforce the competitiveness of the European SMEs active in the design-based consumer goods area. By encouraging the market uptake of new and creative solutions in the design-based consumer goods area, the action aims at multiplying the effects of foreseen solutions by mobilising a wide market uptake and reaching a critical mass and self-sufficiency during the project duration or in the short/medium term.

The measure therefore seeks to bridge the gap between research and innovation on the one hand and market on the other hand by supporting scale-up, market replication and/or first application of projects related to novel products, services, techniques or processes. By doing so, it will limit to a large extent the residual risk and will contribute to stimulating competitiveness among EU SMEs of the targeted value chains.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

Following the first call for proposals published on 5 May 2015, 27 proposals were submitted out of which 4 were awarded. In total, the 4 proposals awarded comprise 14 beneficiaries; each of the projects is led by an SME (two Italian and two Spanish companies are project leaders).

A second call for proposals was published on 10 December 2015 with a budget of EUR 4 million. The deadline for submitting proposals was 14 April 2016. 26 proposals were received, 5 proposals awarded (Project leaders: one Portuguese, one Belgian, and 3 Spanish companies. The Partnerships involve in total 15 participants (SMEs and non-SMEs).

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2014/2015?

The proposals submitted in second call for proposals have been evaluated between May and July 2016, in a shorter period than foreseen. The foreseen date of the signature of contracts is between September and December with a planned starting date January 2017.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

Publication of the Call (where relevant): 1st call: 5/5/2015; 2nd call: 10/12/2015

STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 1ST BATCH: 1 APRIL 2016. Project duration varies between 24-33 months. 2ND BATCH: Projects started in December 2016 and 1 January 2017. Project duration varies between 24-33 months.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Budget available (total): EUR 11.2 million

Budget committed after the 1st call: EUR 3.384.945 (4 proposals awarded)

Budget committed after the 2nd call: EUR 4.804.569,30.

6. INDICATORS

Number of SMEs benefitting from the measure resulting from the 1st Call: 10 SMEs and 4 other beneficiaries

Number of SMEs benefitting from the measure resulting from the 2nd Call: 10 SMEs and 5 other beneficiaries

Number of new solutions resulting from the measure: 10 after the 1st Call and 2nd Call

Number of SMEs benefitting from the measure resulting from the 2nd Call: 20 SMEs and 9 other beneficiaries (research institutes and other business support organisations)

Number of new solutions resulting from the measure (including 1st and 2nd Call): 10 projects (4 on-going grant agreements and 6 completed within year 2016).

The stage of implementation does not allow measuring other relevant indicators.

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

The actions are being implemented by SMEs who are project leaders and direct beneficiaries.

GRO/SME/15/C/N12 – TOURISM

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

In line with the Lisbon Treaty, the actions proposed under COSME 2015 aimed at contributing to the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy and the Commission priorities of boosting growth and jobs, by focusing on the enhancement of the competitiveness and sustainable growth of the tourism sector in Europe. The actions aimed in general at:

- Encouraging, directly or indirectly, the creation of a favourable environment for the development of undertakings in this sector;
- Promoting trans-national cooperation, particularly by the exchange of good practice;

Five operational objectives have been pursued: **(1) increasing tourism demand, (2) diversifying tourism offer, (3) enhancing tourism quality sustainability, accessibility, skills, information and innovation, (4) improving socio-economic knowledge of the sector and (5) increasing Europe's visibility as a tourist destination as well as of its diverse destinations.**

The following activities were implemented under the COSME 2015 Work Programme¹)
Increasing tourism flows in low season

Under this objective, several project partnerships were co-funded to facilitate the increase of tourism flows during low and medium seasons between COSME countries. The partnerships targeted particular specific groups, such as seniors (notably through specific active and healthy ageing activities) and the youth.

2) Diversifying the EU tourism offer and products

Under this objective two actions were implemented:

a) Several project partnerships (with involvement of tourism SMEs) were co-funded to promote transnational tourism offer in the fields of sustainable tourism with links to natural heritage and focus on sport and wellbeing activities, as well as in the field of cultural and industrial heritage.

b) Activities of promotion were co-funded to raise awareness about European Destination of Excellence” (EDEN), which stand for small, emerging and non-traditional sustainable tourist destinations.

3) Enhance tourism quality, sustainability, accessibility, skills, information and innovation

a) Numerous awareness-raising activities (including events and experts' meetings) targeting Commission tourism initiatives and enhancing the exchange of best practices at EU level were organised. They helped facilitate the dialog between public authorities and tourism industry. The events included among others: European Tourism Forum, European Tourism Day, EDEN Network meeting, meetings with networks and industry on the priorities for EU tourism and other communication activities (e.g.: meetings to encourage uptake of the European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS), the destination management tool which can help destinations to measure and monitor their sustainable tourism performance, meetings on digital tourism issues, accessibility, etc.). The European food-tourism week was organised in the context of EXPO Milan 2015 with the aim of raising awareness about the attractiveness of local gastronomy as element of the tourism experience. Finally, also the High-level Conference on "Attracting investment in Tourism" was organised with the aim of boosting financing, improving business environment and upgrading skills to strengthen the competitiveness of the EU tourism industry.

b) Several actions on tourism accessibility have been implemented:

1) Project partnerships have been co-funded to develop accessible tourism products (such as itinerary/trail/tourism products) and improve facilities and services for tourists with special access needs focusing on sports/outdoor activities and on cultural heritage.

2) Services to ensure the maintenance and the addition of new contents to the digital portal and accessible tourism directory Pantou were funded to keep the platform up to date and adapt it to the needs of the users.

4) Improving socio-economic knowledge of the sector

The main actions under this priority included:

(a) The production of the annual Eurobarometer survey on "Preferences and Attitudes of Europeans towards tourism" which allowed identifying the evolution of trends in the demand for EU tourism products. The survey results allow the Commission and COSME countries to shape tourism policy actions and to take management decisions in line with the needs and expectations of travellers.

(b) The provision of contents for the "Virtual Tourism Observatory"(VTO) portal and related socio-economic content, to allow public and private tourism stakeholders in Europe to easily access relevant information through a dedicated website.

(c) Focussed cooperation activities with the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) in the context of an ad-hoc grant.

5) Increasing Europe's visibility as a tourist destination as well as of its diverse destinations

Under this objective, a number of activities were undertaken in close cooperation with the European Travel Commission (ETC) in order to promote Europe as a unique set of very different destinations in third countries and increase the number of arrivals to Europe. These activities were designed in close cooperation with the National Tourism Organisation of countries participating.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

In general, the tourism initiatives funded by COSME 2015 contributed to strengthening the competitiveness of the European tourism sector. The initiatives dedicated to the increase of senior and young tourists' flows contributed to generate an extension of the tourism season, which is fundamental for the industry to gain competitiveness and to offer all year round jobs. The EU transnational thematic tourism offer has been enlarged and diversified and new

public-private partnerships supported and consolidated. The participation of small and micro enterprises in tourism partnerships have been strongly encouraged and increased. This measure should contribute not only to increasing intra-European tourism and, but also, in a longer term, it will also contribute to attracting tourists from outside Europe. The increase of tourists to Europe latter result is also obtained via the successful cooperation with ETC. The visibility of European Destinations of Excellence has been improved, which will trigger higher numbers of potential tourist arrivals and local spill-over revenues for the destinations and tourism operators. Awareness-raising activities and events generated a better visibility and up-take of tourism initiatives, such as European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN) or the European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS), but was also a platform of exchanging good practices and discussion the challenges of the EU tourism such as: better use of EU funds, innovation, digitalisation, seasonality, senior tourism, skills, etc.

More specifically:

1) Increasing tourism flows in low season

11 transnational projects aiming at the increase of tourism flows during the low season between COSME countries have been awarded with grants under this theme. 9 of these projects are targeting senior tourists (over 55 years old) and 2 projects are focused on young tourists (between 15 and 29 years old). Among other activities, senior projects aimed at designing and developing a "transnational mobility model" around a specific tourism product(s) for an age-friendly tourism. The youth projects aimed at supporting intra-EU "mobility schemes between organisations" (for example youth associations, schools/clubs, sport associations, educational institutes, volunteering organisations, etc.), in different EU countries, fostering young people travel/tourism/volunteering experiences in other EU countries. A total of 92 partners from 20 countries (19 MS and 1 candidate country - (FYROM) are participating in the consortia.

2) Diversifying the EU tourism offer and products

(a) Support to development and promotion of transnational thematic tourism products

10 transnational projects have been awarded with EU grants under this theme of the call. The projects are being will be implemented by private-public partnerships where at least two SMEs are involved. The EU funding covers the development (up to pre-commercial phase) and promotion of transnational tourism products. The projects awarded will promote in particular sustainable-tourism activities (linked to sport/wellness activity tourism in synergy with natural heritage) and cultural or industrial heritage. The awarded projects represent a wide spectrum of the themes covered (from hiking, cycling or fishing tourism to projects promoting cultural and industrial heritage) and have a great potential to diversify and raise attractiveness of the EU tourism offer. A total of 88 partners from 22 COSME countries are participating in the consortia.

(b) European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN)

13 countries will implement the transnational EDEN promotion and awareness raising campaigns 2016-2017. Grant agreements were signed with national tourism authorities in: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Poland and Slovenia. The campaigns are aiming at promotion of small, emerging and non-traditional sustainable tourist destinations (winners and runners-up of the previous European Destination of Excellence" (EDEN).

3) Enhance tourism quality, sustainability, accessibility, skills, information and innovation

(a) Awareness-raising activities (including events and meetings)

20 A number of events and meetings were organized to inform public and private stakeholders (policy makers, public authorities, destinations managers, industry representatives, associations, networks etc.) on the EU policy initiatives benefiting the tourism sector (including awareness raising about the EU funding opportunities). The final beneficiaries, tourism related stakeholders have been informed about the EU initiatives having impact on tourism, the possibility of cooperation with the Commission in the implementation of EU tourism policy actions as well as the available EU funds and programmes for tourism development. Also the cooperation and networking between different stakeholders have been strengthened.

(b) Tourism accessibility

1) The implementation of the 8 awarded projects started in the summer of 2016 (one in June and 7 in July) with the aim to develop accessible tourism itineraries (exploiting synergies with the actions for senior and low season tourism) to improve the facilities and services for tourists with special access needs. Awareness raising meetings have so far been organised with stakeholders such as local authorities and SMEs active in the tourism sector, industry representatives, associations, etc., while some projects have also been represented at tourism fairs.

1) It is expected that 8 project will start in July 2016 with aim to develop accessible tourism itineraries (exploiting synergies with the actions for senior and low season tourism) to improve the facilities and services for tourists with special access needs.

2) The online European Accessible Tourism Directory PANTOU was will be updated, enriched with new content and functionalities and better promoted.

4) Improving socio-economic knowledge of the sector

(a) The production of the annual Eurobarometer survey on "Preferences and Attitudes of Europeans towards tourism"

The reports of the 2016 Flash Eurobarometer were released in March 2016 and published into the Virtual Tourism Observatory. The survey looks at the travel patterns of European citizens in the 28 Member States of the European Union, and in Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Montenegro and Moldova. It explores a range of aspects regarding holidays in 2015 and 2016, in particular: respondents' reasons for going on holiday in 2015; information sources and tools used to book holidays; respondents' travel profiles, preferred destinations and holiday types; satisfaction with various aspects of holidays in 2015; plans for holidays in 2016, including the potential impact of the current economic situation and of the local conditions at the destination.

(b) The provision of contents for the "Virtual Tourism Observatory" (VTO) portal and related socio-economic content

In order to enhance and update the content of the VTO platform the following tasks have been carried out: revamp of the menu and the landing page with the insertion of a set of interactive charts. development of a new indicator to measure and benchmark the degree of seasonality in the tourism sector (Gini index), development of a new section collecting links on the main policies that apply to tourism in the EU, production of short reports on themes relevant to the programme of the Unit, perform ad-hoc research to feed infographics to be used in social-media campaigns, brief ad-hoc analysis to support the unit policy initiatives in tourism, monitoring of the VTO site analytics.

(c) Focused cooperation activities with the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) in the context of an ad-hoc grant

The implementation of the contract is looking to achieve, amongst others, the following objectives: increasing national experts' capacity to develop their Systems of Tourism Satellite

Account through the provision of trainings, developing a comparative report analysing main tourism trends in the EU, placing the EU in worldwide context, ensuring the promotion of the Western European Silk Road and delivery of basic tools on how to use the Silk Road brand to its maximum potential, as well as creating a platform for engagement between the stakeholders from the participating countries; as well as the organisation of the 3rd International Congress on Ethics and Tourism UNWTO.

5) Increasing Europe's visibility as a tourist destination as well as of its diverse destinations

This action will enhance inspirational "visiteurope.com" portal showcasing pan-European experiences and deploy a marketing campaign promoting Europe to USA travellers in partnership with travel industry partners.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

Given the success of the initiatives (calls for proposals/call for tenders), resulting in the submission of a higher number of proposals/bids than originally expected, as well as adaptations due to decentralisation to EASME and its necessary procedures in the management of calls, projects commencement dates were in most cases slightly reviewed. All projects commenced in 2016. The implementation will continue through 2016 and 2017. In 2016 and 2017 the implementation of the awarded projects will be closely monitored. The monitoring will be based mainly on a continuous reporting system, which will allow EASME to be updated daily on progresses and achievements, and on monitoring visits whenever necessary.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

Increasing tourism flows in low season

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): 30 April 2015

STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: March/April 2016.

END OF THE PROJECT/DURATION: 12-18 months

2) Diversifying the EU tourism offer and products

(a) support to development and promotion of transnational thematic tourism products:

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): 30 April 2015

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: March/April 2016

END OF THE PROJECT/DURATION: October 2017 / 15-18 months

(b) European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN):

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): 28 April 2015

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: January/February /April 2016

END OF THE PROJECT/DURATION: 15-18 months

3) Enhance tourism quality, sustainability, accessibility, skills, information and innovation

(a) Specific contracts under framework contracts and reimbursement of experts:

Events, meetings and communication actions took place during 2015 and first half of 2016.

(b) Enhance tourism accessibility:

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): 30 April 2015

STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: June-July 2016 / November 2015 (for Pantou)

END OF THE PROJECT/DURATION: 18-24 months / March 2017 (for Pantou)

4) Improving socio-economic knowledge of the sector

(a) the production of the annual Eurobarometer survey on "Preferences and Attitudes of Europeans towards tourism"

STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: July 2015

END OF THE PROJECT/DURATION: June 2016

(b) the provision of contents for the "Virtual Tourism Observatory" portal and related socio-economic content

STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: April 2015

END OF THE PROJECT/DURATION: April 2016

(c) focused cooperation activities with the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) in the context of an ad-hoc grant

THE PROJECT WAS REPATRIATED TO DG GROW.

5) Increasing Europe's visibility as a tourist destination as well as of its diverse destinations

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): September 2015

STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: January 2016

END OF THE PROJECT/DURATION: December 2016 / 12 MONTHS

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

1) Increasing tourism flows in low season

From a total of 65 proposals submitted to theme 1, 11 projects have been awarded with EU grants with EU co-financing of maximum 250.000 EUR per project.

A total budget of 2 million EUR was allocated in the Work Programme 2015 to this theme and 2.429.262 EUR finally committed using reallocated credits.

2) Diversifying the EU tourism offer and products

(a) support to development and promotion of transnational thematic tourism products:

From a total of 103 proposals submitted to theme 2, 10 projects have been awarded with EU grants with a EU co-financing of maximum 250.000 EUR per project.

A total budget of 2 million EUR was allocated in the Work Programme 2015 to this theme and 2,312,498 EUR finally committed using reallocated credits.

(b) European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN):

13 proposals have been awarded out of a total of 13 submitted. The budget allocated was 600.000 EUR and actually committed was 589.380 EUR .

3) Enhance tourism quality, sustainability, accessibility, skills, information and innovation

(a) Specific contracts under framework contracts for organisation of events and reimbursement of experts

Events, meetings and communication actions took place during 2015 and first half of 2016.

The total budget allocated was 800.000 EUR.

(b) Enhance tourism accessibility

From a total of 35 proposals submitted to this theme, 8 projects have been selected to be awarded with grants with a EU maximum co-funding of 125.000 EUR per project.

The total budget allocated to this theme was 1 million EUR. Actually committed: 965,498.25 EUR.

4) Improving socio-economic knowledge of the sector

(a) the production of the annual Eurobarometer survey on "Preferences and Attitudes of Europeans towards tourism"

Budget allocated in the work programme 500.000 EUR and committed: EUR 536,456.79

(c) focussed cooperation activities with the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) in the context of an ad-hoc grant

Budget allocated in the work programme 400.000 EUR corresponding to 75% contribution from EC

5) Increasing Europe's visibility as a tourist destination as well as of its diverse destinations

The total budget of this ad-hoc grant was 1 million EUR. The individual commitment has been EUR 899,482.

6. INDICATORS

1. Increasing tourism flows in low season

- Number of co-financed projects: 11
- Number of countries participating in transnational cooperation projects: 20 - good geographical representation
- Participation of a COSME (non MS) country
- Number of created public-private partnerships and number of stakeholders participating in transnational cooperation projects: 11 public and private partnerships and 92 organizations/partners involved
- Number of schools or youth associations involved in an exchange mechanism: 10 (including the European Youth Card Association that gave its input in the development of one of the two 'youth' projects)
- Increase of nights spent by EU tourists in other Member States during the low season: NA
- Increased awareness of Commission initiatives (EDEN emerging destinations and ETIS indicators scheme), through specific follow up projects
- Increased awareness of lesser known destinations and transnational thematic offers
- Tangible transnational efforts to extend the touristic seasonality spread, through initiatives relating to seniors and youths.

2. Diversifying the EU tourism offer and products

- Number of transnational cooperation co-financed projects: 10 and 88 organizations/partners involved.
- Number of countries participating in transnational cooperation projects: 22 COSME countries -good geographical balance
- Number of SMEs involved in the development of transnational cooperation projects: 32
- Number of participating countries in the promotional campaigns: 13
- Increased awareness of the lesser known EDEN destinations through different communications and promotional activities

- Increased awareness about and visibility of lesser known/emerging destinations and transnational thematic tourism offers (survey of key stakeholders)

3. Enhance tourism quality, sustainability, accessibility, skills, information and innovation

- Number of best accessible practices identified – not yet available

- Number of ICT portal hits and feedback from tourism stakeholders on the usefulness of content: no feedback available as of yet

- Uptake of (ICT) solutions and services into the business tools of SMEs (number of SMEs) - Research currently ongoing.

- Clients/users' assessment of the accessibility and user-friendliness of the proposed solutions and tools – ongoing

- Number of events, conferences, workshops, expert meetings organized: around ten major events, conferences and several smaller/experts meetings.

- Increased awareness about and visibility of the key opportunities, policy initiatives and other actions developed for the benefit of the sector (survey of key stakeholders) Stakeholder feedback reported highly positive outcome of events, workshops and conferences in terms of information and awareness-raising of policy initiatives, funding opportunities and cooperation between stakeholders.

4. Improving socio-economic knowledge of the sector

- Feedback from tourism industry stakeholders / national tourism administrations on quality, relevance and added-value of documents produced (through a survey or collected through meetings/other exchanges)

- Number of data/reports/studies (co-)produced and included in the VTO knowledge base: Eurobarometer country fiches of 2014, 2015, OECD country fiches of 2014, Member States Annual Reports 2009-2015, a few dozens of studies on various topics, approximately 30 pieces of legislation and policy papers

- Feedback from stakeholders / national tourism administrations on the degree to which the data and research results directly or indirectly benefited policy makers at European, national and/or regional level and to SMEs (through a survey or collected through meetings/other exchange)

- National tourism administrations recognized at numerous occasions during Tourism Advisory Committee meetings the usefulness of having such a data base as a single info point for analyses and statistics in tourism

5. Increasing Europe's visibility as a tourist destination as well as of its diverse destinations

- Number of web pages referencing EU communication materials: +24%; 24.672.703 impressions shown across selected Expedia sites

- Number of communication events n.a.

- Number of portal hits during the low season months : 2.400.000 total annual page views

- Number of portal hits during the high season months: 2.400.000 total annual page views

- Increased number of non EU tourists from third countries: passengers increased of 1.9% during campaigns; room nights increased of 13.7% after campaign

- Increased awareness of EU as a unique set destination: visiteurope.com registered 2.400.000 total annual page views; 10.720 banners were clicked on.

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

National and regional administrations in charge of tourism, European tourism associations, SMEs, not for profit organisations, public and private entities. The list of beneficiaries is available on the EASME internet page: <https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/cosme-projects>.

GRO/SME/15/C/N131 - European Construction Observatory

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The observatory is a 3-years action that will provide European policy makers and stakeholders with regular analysis and comparative assessments of the market conditions and policy developments related to the competitiveness and sustainability of construction sector in EU-28. The analysis and evaluations will support the exchange of experience between Member States and stakeholders regarding the definition, implementation, monitoring and assessment of the impact of policy measures related to competitiveness of construction enterprises, including the engagement with sustainable development objectives.

The main deliverables are:

- Individual country profiles for each Member State of the EU-28 regarding the market conditions and trends as well as national/regional strategies related to the five thematic priorities of Construction 2020;
- fact sheets on individual national and/or regional policy measures related to the thematic priorities of Construction 2020, identifying the process of implementation and monitoring, the likely socio-economic effects on the various actors in the construction sector and the environmental impacts on society;
- semi-annual analytical reports based on the individual country profiles and fact sheets, and other relevant sources, which clearly identify issues and formulate policy recommendations with respect to the socio-economic and environmental performance of the construction sector;
- development and update of dedicated web pages for Europa and the promotion of these web pages.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015

Progress in Work Package 1 – Country Fact Sheets

10 datasets (Excel) and Country Fact Sheets (Word) have been produced during the first year of project implementation (March 2015-March 2016), according to the project plan. The 10 Country Fact Sheets (United Kingdom, Italy, Ireland, Poland, Sweden, France, Spain, Germany, Romania and Hungary) were delivered to the Commission, reviewed, and a conform draft version send for consultation with MS experts and EU umbrella organisations.

The overall impact in terms of quality is satisfactory. This information is being used both by external stakeholders (industry) as well as internally in EU processes such as the EU Semester for the drafting of Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs). The CFS has also proved valuable to further disseminate EU studies, especially in the area of Internal Market and C&D waste. It will also contribute to analyse the level of implementation of the different Thematic Objectives of the Construction 2020 Action Plan.

Progress in Work Package 2 – Policy Fact Sheets

In parallel to the 10 Country Fact Sheets, 20 Policy Fact Sheets were produced, representing two Policy Fact Sheets per country. A model database (Access) has been delivered to the Commission and will serve as a search tool based on criteria such as: actors involved, budget, etc.

Progress in Work Package 3 – Analytical Reports

The first Analytical Report was produced and delivered to the EC in March 2016. It was focused on the Thematic Objective 1 of the Construction 2020 Strategy for the sustainable competitiveness of the construction sector and its enterprises: Stimulating Favourable investment conditions. The Analytical Report summarized the findings and lessons learned on the investment landscape of 10 analysed countries and provided specific examples of policy practices that have influences the investment conditions for the construction sector in the analysed market.

The analytical report has served to observe the impact of the developed quantitative and qualitative indicators. Especially in the area of investment a good segmentation of construction markets allows for better policy making initiatives.

Progress in Work Package 4 – Dissemination

The ECSO website is on-line as of December 2015. The final decision to host the ECSO Website under Europa represented a minor delay of publication due to content restructuration. A simple 1page design with interactive EU-map signals all available deliverables. Also specific subsections indicate additional deliverables (analytical reports & database). In the first year of existence, ECSO website traffic has been as follows:

Already available impact indicators:

<i>Country</i>	<i>% of total</i>	<i>Number of visits</i>
Austria	2,90%	28
Belgium	16,40%	159
Bulgaria	0,60%	6
Croatia	0,80%	8
Czech R.	1,40%	14
Denmark	1%	10
Estonia	0,30%	3
Finland	1,20%	12
France	6,20%	60
Germany	6,70%	65
Greece	1%	10
Hungary	0,50%	5
Ireland	0,60%	6
Italy	5,80%	56
Latvia	0,40%	4
Luxembourg	11,20%	109
Netherlands	2,70%	26
Poland	1,80%	17

Portugal	3,30%	32
Romania	1,90%	18
Slovenia	0,70%	7
Spain	7,90%	77
Sweden	1,30%	13
U.Kingdom	7,20%	70

3rd countries represent the rest up to 944 visits (129, 16,2%).

Country Number of visits

Unknown	24
India	23
United States	18
Turkey	16
Russia	8
Belarus	6
Colombia	6
Japan	5
Serbia	5
Switzerland	5
Norway	3
Albania	2
China	2
Iran	2
Panama	2
Saudi Arabia	2

The number of downloads up to 18th March was as follows:

UK:	486
IT:	240
IE:	40
PL:	35
SE:	69
ES:	86
FR:	76
HU:	31
RO:	39

Length of visits to RCSO (March 2015-March 2016)

Visit duration	Visits
0-10s	334
11-30s	48

31-60s	43
1-2min	76
2-4min	84
4-7min	65
7-10min	67
10-15min	80
15-30min	104
30min+	73

This has been achieved with no other dissemination activity than the existing website.

To strengthen the impact and use of information, the Contractor has delivered also in March 2016 a draft Communication Strategy with proposed actions. Production of promotional materials will start with the implementation of the proposed Communication Strategy in Year 2 based on the templates provided in the initial offer, and the reviewed draft Strategy of Year 1 to achieve a better coherence and effectiveness of the dissemination strategy.

Communication and dissemination activities

A workshop with stakeholders was organised in Brussels on Friday 23 October 2015. The workshop served as a discussion platform to challenge and verify the findings and structure of the Country Fact Sheets, data samples and Policy Fact Sheets.

The pilot Country Fact Sheets (for the United Kingdom and Poland), as well as the rationale behind the databases and relevant policy findings were presented and discussed with the relevant country stakeholders during the workshop in October 2015. Representatives of the Thematic Group 1 of the Construction 2020 were set up for this workshop by the EC. Industry representatives have also attended a workshop and provided valuable input into the discussion. The structure of the report was afterwards slightly modified for efficiency and better reflection of the market. More specifically, the structure of the following sections was adjusted:

1. Share of companies per sub-sector in Table 1 was replaced by the Share of the Gross Value Added of different subsectors in the GDP in order to better illustrate the value and the size of each sub-sector;
2. Indicator of the construction cost index was added to the productivity section;
3. The figure on the employment structure in the narrow construction sector was removed and replaced by written analysis to avoid duplication with the broad sector description;
4. Section on the business confidence was completed with the analysis of the Construction confidence indicator;
5. Sections on the time and cost of work permits and on the time and costs of getting licences were merged;
6. Section on the design and as-built performance was removed due to the lack of comparable data between countries.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015?

The contract was established for the duration of one year (March 2015 to March 2016). The contract was renewed for 1 year till March 2017 and then for another year till March 2018 based on the evaluation of the service provider's performance vis-à-vis the indicators described in the contract (number and quality of the deliverables; utilisation of the website; dissemination and promotion).

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

Deliverable	Volume year 1	Volume year 2	Volume year 3
Country profiles	10	18 new, 10 updates	28 updates
Fact sheets	20	25	25 to 35
Analytical report	1	6	6
Leaflet	1	1 update	1 update

*ANALYTICAL REPORTS SHOULD BE READ AS FOLLOWS:

VOLUME YEAR 1: 1 UNIT
 VOLUME YEAR 2: 2 UNITS
 VOLUME YEAR 3: 2 UNITS

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The first year contract amounted to 279.975 € (B2014), the second year contract (1st renewal) to 399.450€.

6. INDICATORS

INDICATOR 1: NUMBER AND QUALITY OF THE DELIVERABLES

- Quality of the developed methodology;
- Number and quality of the produced country profiles and policy measures fact sheets; the baseline is 10 country profiles to be produced during the first year
- Number, quality and update frequency of the produced fact sheets; the baseline is 20 policy measures to be produced during the first year
- Quality of the semi-annual comparative analytical report

INDICATOR 2: UTILISATION OF THE WEBSITE

- Number of hits of the webpages;
- Number of unique visitors;
- Number of documents downloaded by type of documents;
- Duration of visit, repetition of visitors, geographical coverage;

INDICATOR 3: DISSEMINATION AND PROMOTION

- Coherence and effectiveness of the dissemination strategy;
- Quality and completeness of the EUROPA webpages;
- Number of the disseminated leaflets.

7. BENEFICIARIES

GRO/SME/15/C/N132 - Follow-up actions on the Communication on Sustainable Competitiveness of the Construction sector.

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

Within Communication COM (2012) 433 final , the Commission has proposed an Action Plan, called “Construction 2020”, to support the construction sector, that is characterised by many SMEs, in facing challenges today and up to 2020. The action plan focuses on five key objectives:

1. stimulating favourable investment conditions;
2. improving the human-capital basis of the construction sector;
3. improving resource efficiency, environmental performance and business opportunities;
4. strengthening the Internal Market for construction;
5. fostering the global competitive position of EU construction enterprises

Implementation of the strategy requires streamlining and coordination of the numerous initiatives currently underway at EU, national and sectoral levels to create more synergies and maximise their impact in the short, medium and long term. The selected framework to enable this has been the setting up of a governance structure which combines coordination and monitoring from both a thematic and a strategic perspective, including:

A High-Level tripartite strategic Forum (Commission, Member States, sectoral representatives). The scope of the High Level Forum is:

- to provide an informed opinion on the scope and expected outcomes from Thematic Groups (see below) in accordance with the objectives of the Communication and the proposed Action Plan;
- to follow up on the recommendations of the thematic groups;
- to propose new initiatives or adjustment to existing initiatives;
- to inform about on-going national policy developments and to provide feedback on the effects of the Action Plan; and
- to make recommendations to strengthen coordination across EU initiatives

The creation of thematic groups (TGs) composed of Member States and sectoral representatives with an interest in specific priorities of the strategy, which should liaise with existing European networks and projects. The scope of these groups is:

- to map the construction sector needs and blockages to the implementation of the Action Plan with respect to the specific priority addressed by the Thematic Group;
- to comment on the measures presented in the Action Plan; and
- to make accordingly recommendations on how to proceed with concrete proposals and solutions related to legal acts and other policy instruments.

These groups were supervised by the Commission services in charge of the specific topic addressed by each group. Five thematic groups were launched in 2013:

- Thematic Group 1: Stimulating investment in building renovation, infrastructure and innovation
- Thematic Group 2: Skills and Qualifications
- Thematic Group 3: Sustainable use of Natural Resources
- Thematic Group 4: Internal Market.
- Thematic Group 5: International Competitiveness

The final aim is to:

Facilitate a more rapid adaptation of the construction sector to the evolution of the markets through a better human capital basis;

Promote a more rapid uptake of innovative approaches and research results;

Create a coherent policy and regulatory framework for the development of the enterprises and the cooperation amongst them, the Internal Market for construction products and services and industrial cooperation including with developing countries

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The implementation of the before mentioned Service Contract has contributed to the organisational support for two (2) meetings of the TGs and for one (1) of the HLF. Two (2) ad-hoc workshops were organised in the framework of EC wider policy areas relevant for the sector (energy and regional policy). Particularly in the area of TG3 (sustainability), two (2) ad-hoc task forces have met four (4) times. In the scope of TG4 (Internal Market) 2 interventions by the Contractor to present quantitative findings took place. This makes a total of 11 meetings, along with more focused challenge based actions described below. There was an active participation of SMEs in all groups.

In regards to the general secretarial tasks, Ecorys has brought significant added value to the realisation and success of the Construction 2020 Action Plan. Specifically, Ecorys:

- Provided objective background research for the benefit of developing meeting agendas for TG and HLF meetings and in support of discussions during these meetings;
- Provided objective ad-hoc research and structure to discussions between EU level stakeholders on selected topics ranging from investments, innovation, skills, sustainability, internal market and international competitiveness;
- Provided ownership and initiative in further developing new avenues or ideas for progress in certain priority areas mentioned in the Action Plan or High Level Forum meeting reports;
- Provided active support to the organisation and implementation of HLF and TG meetings as well as ad hoc workshops;
- Supported the Commission in communicating the activities and value added of the Construction 2020 Governance structure to stakeholders;
- Attended relevant events and engaged with stakeholders and promoted activities under Construction 2020 in expert public and reported back to the Commission.

As part of its contract to support the Construction 2020 Governance structure, the Commission and Ecorys agreed during a progress meeting on 18th May to pro-actively engage in a dialogue to generate a number of 'fresh' ideas for Key Actions to take forward in the second half of 2015 and 2016, including:

1. Towards a common EU Construction and Demolition waste management protocol in the EU (see http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=8983&lang=en);
2. Member States initiatives relevant to Construction 2020 (an electronic file containing all relevant data has been delivered). ;
3. Guidelines for improving consistency across MS Product Contact Points and CPR websites (completed);
4. Briefing note on Horizon 2020 opportunities for the construction sector (a living and evolving document regularly shared with stakeholders through web and direct mailing);
5. Mapping of property valuation initiatives (a brief report that contributes to a future development of a EU digital building logbook initiative.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

As the Service Contract will finish in 2016 no pending actions are foreseen.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): CFT N°333/PP/ENT/CIP/13/F/S03C13
PUBLISHED ON 02/07/2013

STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: FIRST CONTRACT STARTED ON 1/02/2014 (RENEWED TWICE)

END OF THE PROJECT: DECEMBER 2016.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

A contract value of 184.000 € was concluded for a first 11 month services duration from 01.02.2013 to 31.12.2014.

The contract was renewed with the same value twice.

A new open call for tender was launched in 2016 for these activities.

6. INDICATORS

- Number of sectoral organisations participating in the initiatives: Within the governance structure (HLF, TGs and other related groups) approximately 600 stakeholders are involved)

- Number of organised meetings related: HLF: 1; TG1: 3; TG2: 1; TG3: 2; TG4: 5; TG5: None

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Ecorys

GRO/SME/15/C/N133 - Implementation of the Action Plan “Construction 2020”- WIOD database

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The action aims at producing Environmental and Labour accounts linked to a global Input-Output Database (ELIOD) and consists of three main tasks:

1) Produce OECD-based global input-output tables for the period 2010-2013 under the ESA2010 methodology and NACE Rev.2/ISIC Rev. 4 classification with a link to labour and environmental.

2) Run one specific analysis based on the global input-output tables produced under this project to investigate the links between the global trade/production networks and the international technology transfers (modelled, for example, by international patenting).

3) Provide the necessary inputs on energy use by industries (2010-2014) as well as make available harmonised national supply-use tables in purchasers' prices for all the EU countries, USA and Japan so that the unit energy costs indicators required by the Energy Union initiative can be calculated.

The overall objective is to collect data which could be further used in economic models to assess the impact of e.g. energy, climate and environmental policies on the competitiveness and sustainability of EU enterprises, which matters in particular for SMEs.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The time series 2010 – 2014 of gross energy use was built for 28 European countries, USA and Japan to complete the existing time series (1995-2009). These preliminary data were delivered in December 2016 together with an accompanying report that illustrates the necessary steps in data adjustment between energy and economic data, which stem, for example, from different accounting principles. Results for EU countries, USA and Japan were compared in various statistical analyses and with already published data.

These data has been used by the Commission (DG ECFIN) to compute the Real Unit Energy Costs in the manufacturing sector, as one of the key indicators monitored under the Energy Union.

The action has an impact on climate change objectives (contribution: 35%).

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The action will update the energy accounts and provide environmental (energy and air emissions) and labour accounts linked to global input-output tables for the period 2010-2013 under the new statistical methodology (ESA2010 methodology, NACE Rev.2 classification). In addition, a specific policy analysis (terms to be defined) will be carried out.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

Foreseen starting date of the contract: 16/12/2015

END of the project: 15/12/2018

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The Action is implemented through an Administrative Arrangement between DG GROW, DG ECFIN and the JRC. The total budget committed by the two funding DGs is 360,000€: DG GROW finances €210,000 through COSME funding while DG ECFIN finances €150,000 on its own budget.

6. INDICATORS

Number of countries covered: 30 (all EU MS + USA and Japan); target: 40. Number of downloads of the database: 0 (the database has still not been publicly released); target: 200.

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

JRC (transfer through an Administrative Arrangement)

GRO/SME/15/C/N134 - Participation of DG GROW to the 2016 Marché International des Professionnels de l'Immobilier (MIPIM) exhibition

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The participation to this fair is an opportunity for DG GROW to profile the role of the construction sector for Europe, where SMEs play a vital role, and its leading position. GROW's presence is ensuring a follow-up to the 2012 Communication on "Sustainable Competitiveness of the Construction Sector".

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

Impact of the Commission policy initiatives was ensured through the organisation and participation to several high level conferences related to investment, growth and jobs. The organisation of specific stand events allowed for presentation and dissemination of concrete Service actions (digitisation-BIM, servitisation-Service Passport, among others). Many SMEs visited the stand and/or contributed to and participated at the events.

ARTICLE 15 OF COSME REGULATION: "INFORMATION ON THE AMOUNT OF CLIMATE-RELATED EXPENDITURE AND IMPACT OF SUPPORT TO CLIMATE-CHANGE OBJECTIVES".

Yes, one of the high level conferences was specifically focusing on the resource efficiency opportunities in the building sector (COM(2014) 445 final) called High level conference on Achieving <2 degrees Celsius: How can the real estate industry respond to meet new climate change pledges? (DG GROW co-chef de file).

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

No actions remain to be implemented.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): NOT APPLICABLE

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 14 MARCH 2015

END OF THE PROJECT: 18 MARCH 2015

Negotiated procedure via purchase order

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

16.000 € committed to pay promotional material, entrance tickets and catering.

6. INDICATORS

2 High level conferences (approx. 400 participants)

1 Symposium (approx. 40 participants).

7 stand events (approx. 105 participants)

Taking into consideration that an approx. of 28.500 participants visited the exhibition this is a high impact rate and improves by far the previous participations by DG GROW.

The overall communication strategy has proven effective; especially the social media dimension used first this year has allowed interacting with a great number of participants, in and out of the exhibition, achieving almost 3.000 views

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

ReedMidem

Triple A

Carle Organisation

GRO/SME/15/C/N141 - BIO-BASED PRODUCT MARKETS

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The "European Sustainable Chemicals Support Service" (ESCSS) is an eighteen month project commissioned by EASME to provide advisory services to a number of regional organisations interested in developing ambitious strategies with the aim to improve the investment readiness in their region and to engage them in more sustainable chemicals production.

The project has covered the following milestones:

- the implementation and operation of a user friendly online survey tool capable to assess the investment readiness level of a region,
- the development of a set of 12 reports presenting good practices examples able to motivate and inspire the reader to develop and improve regional strategies,
- the advice to Six Model Demonstrator Regions selected by the DG GROW: Andalusia, Scotland, Wallonia, Groningen-Drenthe, Kosice and Southern Ireland,
- the integration in the DG GROW web portal of a page ready to house the Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) to be used by EU regions in order to measure their readiness to attract investments in sustainable chemicals.
- and it will disseminate the results and lesson learnt in a final Conference to be held in Brussels the 14th of September 2017.

This project is contributing to EC initiatives as the European Investment Plan and the Circular Economy Package.

The results will contribute to EC objectives as: low carbon economy, resource efficiency and protection of the environment.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The project is addressed to EU regions to attract investments in the production of sustainable chemicals. Sustainable chemicals are produced from feedstocks such as organic residues, biomass or plastic waste that are alternative to oil and natural gas. Furthermore to process those feedstocks require less energy intensity industrial process than oil and natural gas. The result is a contribution to a lower carbon emissions.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016/2017?

The Project is in its final steps. The SAT is being installed in the DG GROW web page and the final conference is being organised to be held in Brussels the 14th of September 2017.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): 05/08/2015

STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 28/12/2015

END OF THE PROJECT: 18/06/2017

EXTENSION OF THE PROJECT 18/09/2017

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

budget available as per the work programme (500.000 EUR), budget finally committed (438.750 EUR).

3 offers received

6. INDICATORS

Number of users of the self-assessment tool on the "bioeconomy readiness" and the impact of the policy recommendations to the model demonstrator regions and other regions to be reported in the next months.

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Consortium Fundación CIRCE/European Chemical Industry Council (Cefic) and PNO Groep B.V.

GRO/SME/15/C/N142 - BIO-BASED PRODUCT MARKETS

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The objective is the development of a robust and user-friendly guidance that should address bio-based products in public procurement, encouraging the active change of information on bio-based products (availability and capabilities) including experiences of public procurers, allow for procurement criteria development based on available standards and finally facilitating the up-take of bio-based products. Moreover, different publication materials such as brochures and leaflets shall be prepared to further promote the dissemination of the prepared guidance document at different event types including training meetings, workshops and conferences for different target audiences. The aim would be to obtain a successful uptake of this guidance by as many as possible national, regional and local procurement bodies. This activity was linked to the Commission Lead Market Initiative and is also linked to the bio-based products activities within the Commission Circular Economy Action Plan published at the end of 2015.

The main milestones include:

- An inception report setting out the methodology and time schedule for the work.
- Interim report, the draft guidance document and draft version of the publication materials.

- The final guidance and all publication materials.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The overall goals of the project are the following. First, the knowledge base needs to be prepared by collating and compiling all relevant information from different sources useful for the preparation of robust and user-friendly guidance. This shall be performed on the basis of literary, questionnaire and web-sites review and interviews. These findings were documented in a Knowledge Base Report dated 13/01/2017. In a second step an initial draft version of the guidance was prepared allowing for testing its robustness, user-friendliness and subsequent future use by a limited number of national, regional and local public procurers. The guidance and fact sheets have been prepared and are currently being tested by public procurers at local and regional level. This guidance draws on the broader objectives of the relevant European Policy Framework, such as the ‘Circular Economy Package’, ‘Bioeconomy Strategy’ and ‘Innovation Procurement’.

In the fourth and final step different publication materials such as brochures and leaflets shall be prepared for allowing for further promotion and dissemination of the guidance at different event types including training meetings, workshops and conferences for different target audiences. The aim would be to obtain a successful uptake of this guidance by as many as possible national, regional and local procurement bodies. The dissemination materials are complete and are currently being reviewed by the steering committee and tested by public procurers.

More information on:

http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=8389

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The steering committee will meet to discuss all the final deliverables, including comments from various DGs and from the initial screening phase with public procurers. If, as a result of this initial screening, problems persist necessary updating will be performed.

The final step is to implement the dissemination strategy to make the guidance and materials broadly available to EU public procurers. Dissemination will be implemented via international networks, including the ICLEI/ European Commission Innovation Procurement Platform, and national and regional networks where available. All of this is set out in the dissemination strategy.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL: 04/04/2015

STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 29/10/2015

END OF THE PROJECT: 31/07/2017

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Budget available as per the work programme (125.000 EUR), and budget finally committed (115.560 EUR)

5 offers received

6. INDICATORS

Successful uptake of the guidance material on biobased products by a large number of national, regional and local procurement bodies. Number of users of the guidance document: The guidance has already been tested with a number of procurers as part of the screening phase. Dissemination is due to commence shortly, at which point the impact may be measured.

From the point of view of implementation, the contractors have worked well, in regular contact with EASME and DG GROW.

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Haskoning DHV Nederland B.V.

D. ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE

The fourth specific objective of COSME is “*to promote entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial culture*” described in Article 12 of the COSME Regulation.

In 2015, there will be up to 4 actions to be financed under this specific objective with a budget of more than EUR9 million.

GRO/SME/15/D/N01 - ERASMUS FOR YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs is a mobility scheme that allows potential or newly established entrepreneurs to spend a period of time collaborating with an experienced entrepreneur in another COSME participating country.

These mobility actions aim to help the entrepreneurs enrich their experiences as well as learn and network with entrepreneurs in other participating countries. This measure will expand and strengthen the existing network of Intermediary Organisations (IO) which acts as local contact points in participating countries. The IOs are in charge of recruiting and matching the entrepreneurs and facilitating the mobility actions. They also promote the programme and its benefits at local and national level.

This measure is a follow-up of the preparatory action carried out in 2009-2011 and under the EIP objective Entrepreneurship and Innovation Culture in 2012 and 2013.

The interim evaluation of the preparatory action has confirmed the added value of this action and the lack of similar schemes at national level. It also confirms the efficiency of the operational set up to fulfil the pursued objectives and the quality of the exchanges carried out.

The cross-border nature of the action makes it unique as a way of promoting entrepreneurship and is directly relevant to a key EU policy objective of internationalisation and helping new and growing businesses to take advantage of the EU’s Internal Market.

The initiative is implemented via Call for Proposals (2015 – cycle 8 call). Organisations have to apply as consortia composed of at least 5 entities from at least 4 participating countries. Entities can be public or private entities whose core activity is in the field of business support. The submitted proposals are evaluated by external evaluators.

The rate of Union co-financing is up to 90 % of eligible costs incurred by the Intermediary Organizations. The contribution shall not exceed 75 % of the programme management costs but may be up to 100 % of the sum allocated by beneficiaries (Intermediary Organizations) to third parties (sub-grantee. i.e. new entrepreneurs) participating in a mobility action. Financial assistance to new entrepreneurs participating in a mobility action takes the form of a scale of unit cost of maximum EUR 6,600 per entrepreneur within the limit of EUR 500 000 per grant.

Promotion of the benefits and achievements of the Erasmus for Young entrepreneurs and technical support to users is provided by the Support Office that further assists the EASME/Commission in the promotion, the coordination of the IOs' network, monitoring and the day-to-day support. Activities to support the network are carried out, including regular meetings with the IOs to foster networking.

This activity is implemented by a Service contract awarded to the “Support Office”.

Both the management of the grants and the service contract has been delegated to the EASME in 2014.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

A) Cycle 7 call for proposals (implementation 1/2/2015-31/1/2017)

15 projects with the total budget of EUR 6 571 464 are being co-financed. It is expected that with these projects about 2,200 new and host entrepreneurs would be involved (matched). These projects ended on 31 January 2017. The total number of entrepreneurs matched by the 111 IOs under this cycle is 1700 (completed relationships). Despite the fact that review meetings organised in Spring 2016 have helped a number of projects to improve performance, not all projects have reached the set targets. The assessment of the final reports is on-going and it is expected that most of the projects will be paid the balance throughout summer 2017.

B) Cycle 8 call for proposals (implementation 01/02/2016 – 31/01/2018)

The call for proposals was published in March 2015 and the deadline for submitting the applications was 3 June 2015. The evaluation of the proposals was done with the assistance of external experts. 33 proposals, out of 105 received (including 14 ineligible), requesting the total grant amount of 14 599 201 EUR (before corrections applied) successfully passed the threshold of evaluation. Due to limited financial resources 17 proposals requesting the total grant amount of 7 797 047 EUR are co-financed, each having a project duration of 24 months (01/02/2016 – 31/01/2018).

It is expected that with these projects about 2 500 new and host entrepreneurs would be involved (matched).

Series of review meetings for a number of projects took place during spring 2017. The 3rd progress reports are expected to be submitted in August 2017. The global impact will be known only at the end of the implementation period, after January 2018.

C) Support Office – Call for Tender

The key role of the Support Office is to assist and support EASME and the European Commission in the management of the EYE Programme and to contribute to promotion and communication activities. The Support Office coordinates the activities of the European Partnerships (EPs) and Intermediary Organisations (IOs) of the EYE Programme.

The 2015-2017 contract with the Support Office ended in April 2017. Since 1 May 2017 the same contractor (Eurochambres) continues operating as EYE Support Office (following an open procurement procedure launched under the WP 2016) for a period of 24 months until end of April 2019 for EUR 659 940 (possibility of contract renewal for another 2 years).

An Interim Report is due in May 2018. The final report is due at the end of April 2019.

3. INDICATORS

At this stage of implementation, partial data is available on some indicators. Other indicators could be measured only after the end of the implementation period after evaluating the final results of the actions:

1520 established relationships under cycle 8 by mid-June 2017;

176 intermediary organisations involved in the implementation of the programme;

31 (26 EU member states + Albania, Montenegro, Iceland, Serbia, Turkey) countries are covered by the Intermediary Organisations.

4. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

The beneficiaries include the following groups of legal entities (non-exhaustive list):
Public entities responsible for or active in the fields of economic affairs, enterprise, business support or related issues,
Chambers of commerce and industry, chambers of handicrafts or similar bodies,
Business support organisations, start-up centres and incubators,
Business associations and business support networks,
Public and private entities offering business support services.

GRO/SME/15/D/N02 - Creation of a European wide e-platform for women entrepreneurship

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

Creation of a Europe-wide e-platform for women entrepreneurship. This Platform will be a one-stop shop for women of all ages who want to start, run and grow a business, by providing educational, mentoring, advisory and business networking opportunities for women across Europe. It will also allow for exchange of good practices. The platform will bring together tools, local, national and European stakeholders and peer groups to support the new generations of women who use internet and IT technologies daily.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The platform was launched on 30 September 2016. It is regularly enriched by new information, links to national support organisations, events or success stories. As of June 2017, 486 users had registered in the e-platform.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2014/2015?

Maintenance, animation and update of the e-platform for 2016-2017, with the active participation of stakeholders.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALLS: 8 MAY 2015 AND 4 NOVEMBER 2016
STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACTS: 25 NOVEMBER 2015 AND 21 DECEMBER 2016
END OF THE PROJECTS: 24 NOVEMBER 2016 AND 20 JUNE 2019

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Available budget:
- ESN/EVERIS contract: 845 948€
- ICF Mostra contract: 399 930€

6. INDICATORS

- Timely creation and update of the e-platform.
- Feedback and degree of satisfaction of the users.
- Number of hits and time spent at the site

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Contractors : first ESN/ EVERIS, then.ICF Mostra

GRO/SME/15/D/N03: Digital Entrepreneurship (awareness raising campaign) and digital transformation of enterprises

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

Awareness raising campaign for the modernisation of Europe's industry

This action is the continuation and further development of the pan-European awareness campaign WATIFY launched in 2014 (CIP 2013 action).

The renewed campaign will continue to support the implementation of the EC actions on digital entrepreneurship, and digital transformation of industry and enterprises, in particular SMEs, as well as the implementation of the European strategy to boost the industrial deployment of Key Enabling Technologies (KETs) in Europe.

To this end it will expand and re-focus the WATIFY campaign. The new campaign will specifically target SMEs, notably in manufacturing, healthcare, finance and creative industries, that can drive economic and/or social value by creating and using novel digital technologies. As a new element, the campaign will also address Europe's regions, i.e. policy makers, to support them in translating their Smart Specialisation Strategies in the area of Key Enabling Technologies and digital transformation into concrete projects in close cooperation with industry and enterprises.

The tools used by the campaign will include European and regional awareness and communication events, cross-regional matchmaking events on KETs and digital transformation, videos of success stories, a European website and extensive promotion via social media and printed promotional materials.

The campaign and foreseen activities are in line with the Political Guidelines of the Juncker Commission, notably:

A Connected Digital Single Market: "...This should go hand-in-hand with efforts to boost digital skills and learning across society and to facilitate the creation of innovative start-ups. Enhancing the use of digital technologies and online services should become a horizontal policy, covering all sectors of the economy and of the public sector", and

A Deeper and Fairer Internal Market with a Strengthened Industrial Base: "...This should ensure that Europe maintains its global leadership in strategic sectors with high-value jobs To achieve this, we need to stimulate investment in new technologies, improve the business environment, ease access to markets and to finance, particularly for SMEs, and ensure that workers have the skills industry needs."

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The call for tenders (EASME/COSME/2015/030) was published on 22 December 2015 with a submission deadline of 29 February 2016. The final meeting of the evaluation committee took place on 28 April 2016. The award decision was taken on 1 June 2016. The award letter to the successful tenderer was sent on 28 June 2016.

The contract was signed on 13 July 2016. The kick-off meeting with the contractor took place on 7 September 2016 in order for the launch conference to be organised in December and the other activities under the contract to start in the autumn of 2016. The contract runs for 24 months.

Deliverables provided in 2016:

Analysis of the primary target groups / Expert workshop / Redesigned methodology and roadmap

Launch event on 7 December 2016

First progress report covering the first 6-month period of the contract

Monthly project meetings

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

Preparation and implementation of concept for matchmaking events; media strategy, in particular social media presence; promotional materials

Organisation of 240 awareness and communication events, including online events and 12 European flagship events; 40 cross-regional matchmaking events and a final event

Preparation of 100 technological transformation case studies, including in video format

Reviewed, redesigned and re-launched website and online guide for doing business online on Europa

Tools and mechanisms to measure and analyse the level of satisfaction of all stakeholders

Satisfaction surveys for participants of individual events/overall satisfaction survey

Monthly flash reports / two 6-monthly progress reports / final report / project

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): 22 DECEMBER 2015

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: JUNE 2016

END OF THE PROJECT: JULY 2018

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The budget available for the call for tenders was €2.3 million. Five offers were received of which one has been chosen to be awarded the contract.

6. INDICATORS

The indicators are directly linked to the implementation of, and performance under the contract, so it will only be possible to report on them at the end of the contract.

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Contractor:

Consortium led by GOPA Com.

And Consultores de Automatización y Robótica S.A. – CARSA

And Technopolis Group Belgium

And ATOS Spain

And Brainport Development N.V.

And Association européenne des agences de développement – EURADA

Represented by GOPA Com. for the purpose of the signature of the contract

GRO/SME/14/B/N10: Facilitating access to light RPAS^[1] regulation

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

Light RPAS are today regulated at national level. A number of Member States have already regulation in place. Other Member States are developing it and later on, a European regulation may enter into force.

This situation leads to a lack of awareness about safety regulations by SMEs wishing to operate business in other European countries. The difficulty to access the relevant regulation is often such that the SMEs prefer to operate outside Europe.

The measure should develop the tools (such as handbook, tutorials, advice service, web portal, etc.) deemed necessary to provide an easy access to all information relevant to RPAS operations in the 28 EU countries.

It will be adapted to light RPAS operators which are mainly operated by SMEs and entrepreneurs with limited aviation background. The measure will not only cover national and European safety regulation, but also provide information related to other important issues like privacy and data protection or insurance requirements. It will also provide information about the evolution of the regulation.

The call COS-WP2014-2-10 was postponed towards the end of 2014 in order to be better in line with the on-going regulatory developments. Proposals now have been evaluated, the selection procedure is completed and the contract was signed end of September 2015.

The initial budget of € 1 million has been fully committed.

2. WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015-2016?

The project was kicked-off upon signature of the contract at the end of September 2015. In 2016, a first release of the DroneRules.EU web portal (<http://dronerules.eu/en/>) has been put on-line and periodically updated with new services (e.g. codes of conduct, privacy and safety handbooks, cases studies, Insurance decision tree, videos, tutorials, national information sources). The section devoted to recreational users has been completed first. The section devoted to professional users will be completed in the course of 2017. Training sessions will then be organized. Full impact of the project will only be achieved after the completion of the website in 2017 and the launch of extensive promotion campaigns. Only limited impact was reported by end 2016 (1900 website unique views). The project experienced the bankruptcy of one partner which created some delays and will require a prolongation until end 2017.

3. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

Starting date of the contract: 1st October 2015

End of the project: 30 September 2017

^[1] Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems

GRO/SME/14/B/N05 IPR SME Helpdesks

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

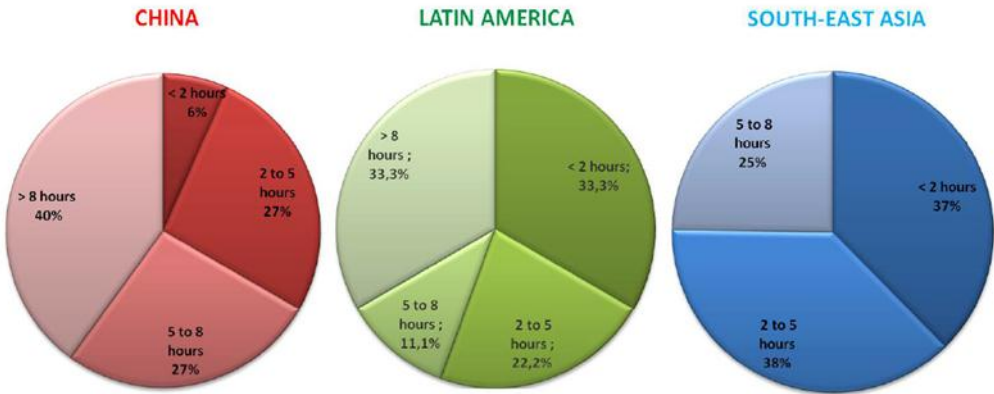
The South-East Asia, China and Latin America IPR SME Helpdesks (former ASEAN, China and MERCOSUR IPR SME Helpdesks) offer practical business advice from experienced professionals (lawyers, business executives, IPR investigators) in person, on-line, and through workshops, e-learning materials, and training.

The services cover countries and regions, with focus on high-growth markets where there are particular IPR problems of importance to European SMEs. The services are provided both 'on the ground' to European SMEs already 'in country' and 'at home' in Europe, so that the relevant information on IPR in the regions can be delivered where it is most useful / needed most, to serve European SMEs efficiently and effectively.

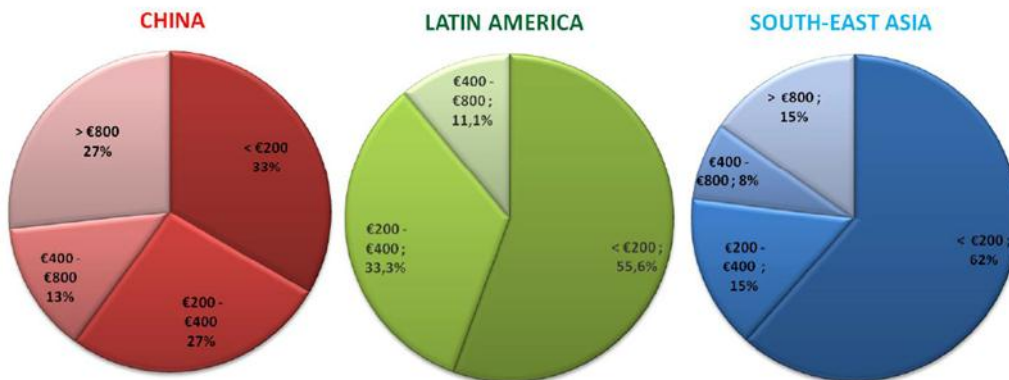
The services are offered in co-ordination with and in direct response to requests from European SMEs and their representatives. Services are co-ordinated also with relevant EU Member States SME support and trade representations. The Helpdesks offer services that could not be easily provided individually by each Member State and allow to pool expertise to be available to any EU SME. Such economies of scale also enable to customise the training or advice to specific sectors or business models. The service will also avoid duplication of technical contacts with the relevant countries administrations to 'signpost' SMEs.

The Impact Assessment surveys (further detailed below in section "RESULTS AND IMPACT") show that respondents appreciate the services provided by the three Helpdesks and are able to provide us with an estimation of the impact of the services in terms of time and/or money savings.

Could you provide an estimation of how much time would you have spent if you had managed this IPR issue without the support of the Helpdesk?



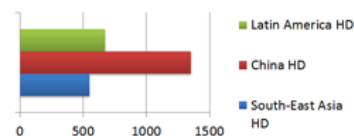
Would you mind to provide with to an estimation of how much money would you have spent if you had managed this IPR issue without the support of the Helpdesk?



2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

In 2016, the helpdesks are fully operational and clearly operating at a level within (in some cases, such as inquiries, even above) the yearly targets.

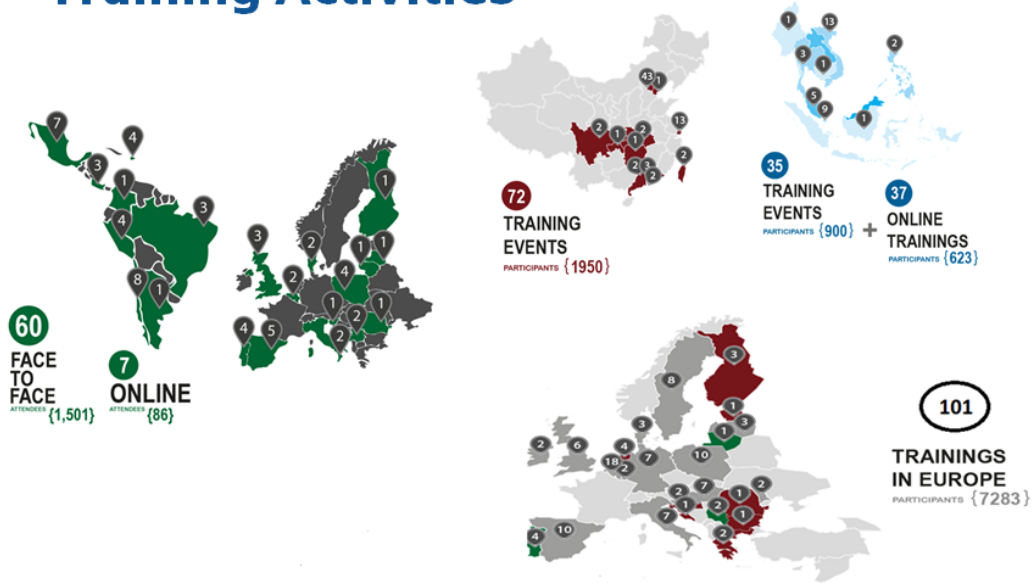
Helpline



Content material

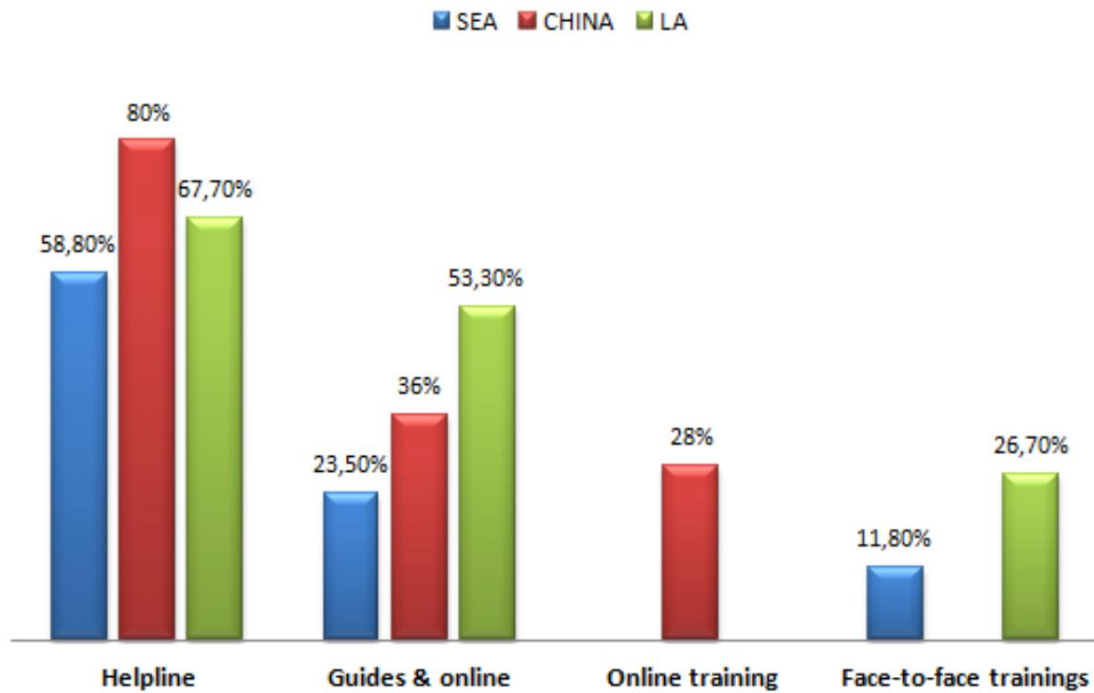


□ Training Activities

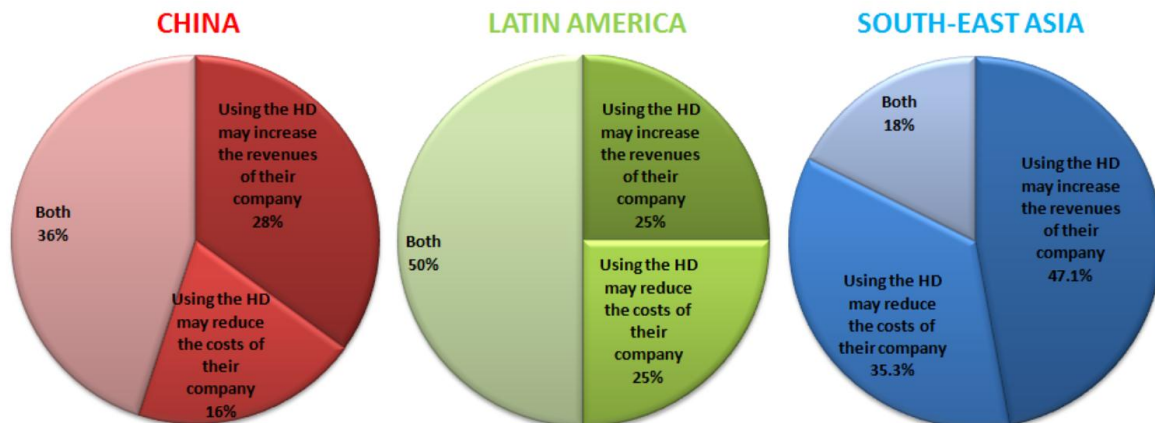


To trace evidence of the effects of the IPR Helpdesks' services in SMEs and assess the impact of the services provided by the EC IPR-Helpdesks regarding increased know-how of the usage and enforcement of the IP system and the IP rights, Impact Assessment surveys were carried out in 2015/16 as a joint exercise among the 3 International IPR SME Helpdesks. The main findings can be summarised as follows:

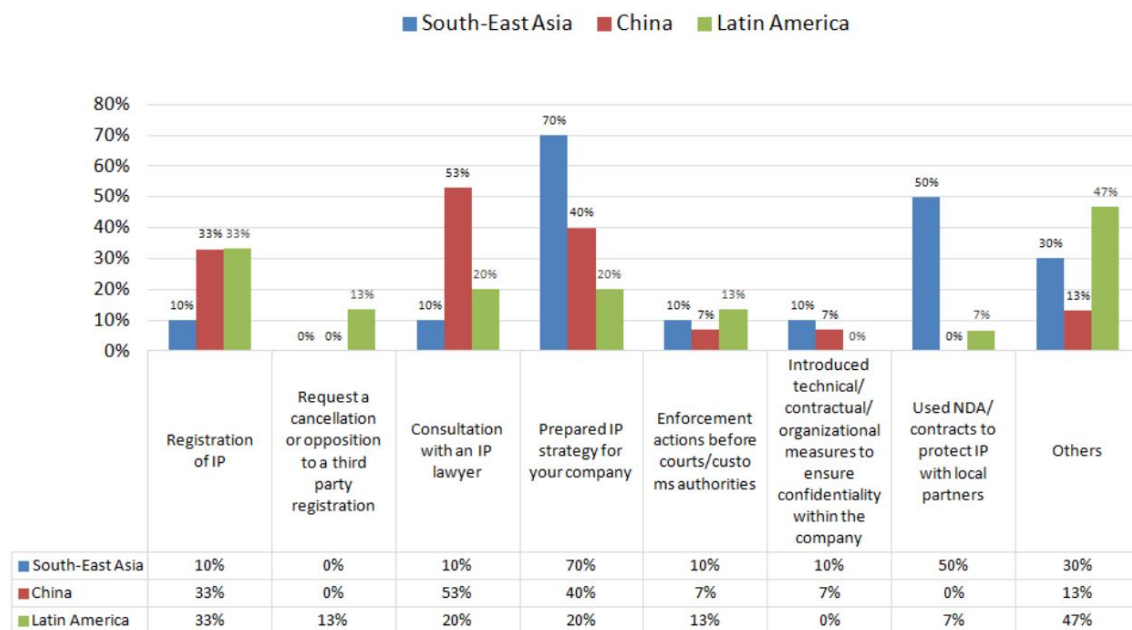
Which Helpdesk service did you find more useful? (Top 3, more than one answer is allowed)



If you used the Helpdesk it is because you consider that:



Which action have you taken, following the advice of the Helpdesks, in order to protect or enforce IP? (more than one answer is allowed)



The answers to the actions-taken query reflect that the way of operating differs from region to region:

As per the actions before National IP Offices (NIPOs) both Latin America and China show a more proactive trend in registration in the region, a 33% of the respondents in such regions have proceed to register their IPRs in one or more of the countries concerned. In South-East Asia such percentage falls to a 10%. Such trend implies that investments to protect IPR in China and Latin America made by the respondents are higher. A key feature to be assessed by future? interviews is to analyse whether such registrations are defensive – i.e. aimed at stopping infringing products in their very origin- or are focused in selling their IPR protected products and services in each region.

up to a 13% of interviewees in Latin America have proceed to oppose or request the cancellation of a third party IPR that actually or potentially conflicts with their IPRs, which shows that SMEs operating in Latin America are interested in ensuring their freedom-to-operate, defending their own IPRs, and ensuring legal certainty prior and while trading in the region.

At first sight enforcement issues does not appear as a huge priority for the three Helpdesks (between 7%-CN and 13%-LA), or only shows a lack of trust on IP enforcement system in third countries. In any event, the Helpdesks' role in enforcement is very limited: enforcement actions are usually constrained by short deadlines, therefore SMEs are very likely to directly contact an IP lawyer instead of relying on a first-line advice. In addition, the Helpdesk are not allowed to represent SMEs before authorities neither draft seizure requests, claims or other relevant writings.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The helpdesks will operate until mid-2018 under the current agreements in place. Operations beyond 2018 are planned. They all aim at increasing the number of users, continue to expand the cooperation with organisations that work directly with SMEs.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

The Call for tender was published in June 2014, and the Grants signature in February 2015 for China, April 2015 for South East Asia and July 2015 for Latin America.

The projects will operate until mid-2018.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The budget of EUR 7.2 million was fully committed and split in:

EUR 2.6 million for the South East Asia IPR SME Helpdesk;

EUR 2.4 million for the China IPR SME Helpdesk;

EUR 2 million (for 30 months) for the Latin America IPR SME Helpdesk;

EUR 0.2 million for the common website operations.

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

South-East Asia - Development solutions ltd. (lead), Euro-Cham Vietnam, TEBA (Thai-EU Business Association), EBN.

China - Development solutions ltd. (lead), EU Chamber of Commerce in China, EBN.

Latin America - Universidad de Alicante (lead), EUROCHAMBRES, Instituto Nacional da Propriedade Industrial (INPI-PT), Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey, EUROCHILE, Instituto Nacional De Propiedad Industrial (INAPI), IDS-Instituto Dannemann Siemsen.

GRO/SME/14/C/N03 & GRO/SME/15/C/N08 Cluster Internationalisation programme for SMEs

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The programme focusses on the promotion of cluster internationalisation where interested consortia have the opportunity to develop a joint international strategy and support SME internationalisation beyond Europe, especially in emerging thematic areas. It also contributes to facilitate international cluster cooperation through the further development of the European Cluster Collaboration Platform.

The measure envisages the following actions:

Action 1. Cluster Go International

Strand 1) Supporting preparatory actions for the establishment of new European Strategic Cluster Partnerships (ESCPs).

The ESCPs are composed of cluster and business network organisations from EU Member States and COSME participating countries. They develop and implement a joint strategy to promote cross-sectorial cooperation and to facilitate SME internationalisation in emerging industries, thereby supporting growth and employment in Europe. The partnerships are expected to develop a joint 'European' strategic vision with a global perspective and common goals towards specific third markets. This could include support services for the identification of strategic partners across Europe, development of a legal representation, preparation of a joint branding and marketing strategy and a roadmap for cooperation.

Strand 2) Supporting the further development and running of established European Strategic Cluster Partnerships

This could include further preparatory actions such as tailored analysis and fact-finding missions or assistance for opening of a joint office abroad, operational actions involving the cluster SMEs such as the organisation of international cluster matchmaking missions and follow-up actions providing assistance for the preparation of joint business and cooperation plans proposals.

Action 2. Support for international cluster and business network cooperation and promotion of European Strategic Cluster Partnerships through the further development of the European Cluster Collaboration Platform.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT

No results or impact in 2014 as the call for proposals for Action 1 and the call for tenders for Action 2 were published in December 2014. Twenty-nine proposals were received and 12 were awarded.

Action 1. Cluster Go International

One Call for proposals was published in 2016 on strands 1 and 2 as above, including strand 1.b for applications supporting preparatory actions in the field of Earth Observation applications. It is expected to fund two proposals for Strand 1.b, nine proposals for Strand 1.a and eight proposals for Strand 2 with starting date as of November-December 2017.

Strand 1) Supporting preparatory actions for the establishment of new European Strategic Cluster Partnerships (ESCPs).

As many as 9 ESCPs have been launched and started out activity on January 2016 regrouping 57 clusters across 18 COSME-participating countries. First interim reports have been produced. Action will run during the period 2016/17.

Strand 2) Supporting the further development and running of established European Strategic Cluster Partnerships

As many as 6 ESCPs have been launched and started out activity on January 2016 regrouping 41 clusters across 14 COSME-participating countries. First interim reports have been produced. Action will run during the period 2016/17.

INDICATORS ACTION 115

Strand 1 and Strand 2	Strand 1	Strand 2	Total
Cluster organisations and business networks having benefited from the supported actions	50	96	146
Partnership Agreements resulting from the supported actions	33	14	47
Events (workshops/ matchmaking events/ working group meetings) organised	62	43	105
SMEs having directly or indirectly benefited from the supported actions, resulting in cooperation projects	1,114	227	1,341
Increase in the percentage of the turnover from international activities, and employment in Europe, of the SMEs having benefited directly and indirectly from the supported actions, as measured through a survey by the end of the action	N/A	N/A	N/A
Impact from the supported actions in terms of number, volume (amount/funding M €) of resulting cooperation projects between the Partnerships and international cluster and business network partners for the benefit of European SMEs	2 (2.5 M €)	N/A	2 (2.5 M €)

Action 2. Support for international cluster and business network cooperation and promotion of European Strategic Cluster Partnerships through the further development of the European Cluster Collaboration Platform

The European Cluster Collaboration Platform was made operational with its main functionalities running and 107 133 page views, 19 196 users, 33 484 sessions as of between the 15th of December 2016 and the 20th of March 2017. Functionalities available include clusters profiling and mapping (632 cluster organisations and business networks as of July 2017), news items including events, call and tweeter corner, partners' search tool, profiling of COSME-supported 15 European Strategic Cluster Partnerships Going International plus 10 voluntary ones, cluster 3rd-countries landscapes, other European cluster initiatives, national cluster associations, testimonials and achievements, open community page.

¹⁵ Data as of December 2016

As many as eight international and EU-only cluster matchmaking events were organised to support international and intra-EU cluster cooperation for the benefit of SMEs with USA, Iran, Mexico, Brazil, Taiwan.

As many as four cluster landscape reports were produced in key clusters-relevant 3rd-countries: Mexico, China, Brazil, and India, identifying industrial domains for cooperation and mapping out clusters, assessment of clusters policy and programmes and recommendations.

INDICATORS ACTION 2¹⁶

Action 2	Work-package 1 ECCP Website ¹⁷	Work-package 2 Matchmaking events	Work-package 3 Reports on 10 Strategic Countries	Total
Cluster organisations and business networks having benefited from the supported actions	630	249	N/A	63018
Partnership Agreements resulting from the supported actions	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Events (workshops/	N/A	819	N/A	8

¹⁶ Data as of December 2016

¹⁷ Selected indicators: 107 133 page views, 19 196 users, 33 484 sessions. 10 MOST COUNTRY VISITORS; NR. AND % FOR THE TOTAL COUNTRIES: SPAIN: 3 670 (11 %); ITALY: 2 721 (8%); FRANCE: 2 674 (8%); BELGIUM: 2 444 (7%); GERMANY: 2 181 (6 %); CHINA: 1 605 (5 %); ROMANIA: 1 156 (3 %); UNITED KINGDOM: 1 147 (3 %); POLAND: 1 135 (3 %); INDIA: 1 038 (3 %)

¹⁸ Of which 249 supported to attend matchmaking events.

¹⁹ 6 INTERNATIONAL, 2 INTRA-EU: **EU-USA**: HANNOVER, GERMANY, 25-26 APRIL 2016, AT HANNOVER MESSE, IN THE FIELD OF ADVANCED MANUFACTURING, INDUSTRIAL AUTOMATION, ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY // **EU-IRAN**: TEHRAN, 17-19 OCT. 2016, IN CONNECTION WITH EU ECONOMIC MISSION LED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSIONER BIENKOWSKA IN THE FIELDS OF AUTOMOTIVE AND MOBILITY, TOURISM AND SPORTS, TEXTILE, BIOTECH AND GREEN TECH // **EU-MEXICO**: MEXICO CITY, 25-27 OCTOBER 2016, AT GREEN EXPO TRADE FAIR IN THE FIELDS OF RENEWABLE ENERGY, ENERGY EFFICIENCY, WASTE MANAGEMENT, WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT // **EU-BRAZIL**: LYON, FRANCE, 28-30 NOVEMBER 2016 AT POLLUTEC FAIR WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF 35 EU CLUSTERS AND BRAZIL ORGANISATIONS IN THE FIELD OF GREEN TECHNOLOGIES // **INTRA-EU: All FIELDS**, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, 30 NOVEMBER 2016 IN CONNECTION WITH THE EUROPEAN CLUSTER CONFERENCE 2016 // **EU-USA**: May 15-19th 2017 during the TechConnect World Innovation Conference, Washington DC, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Commerce, in the field of Nanotechnologies, Advanced Materials, Biotechnology & Medical, Advanced Manufacturing and Processing, Energy and Sustainability, Electronics & Microsystems, Personal & Home Care, Cosmetics, Foods // **INTRA-EU**: AEROSPACE, Paris, during Le Bourget Expo, 22nd of June 2017 // **EU-TAIWAN**: Brussels, Belgium, 26th – 27th of June 2017, in the fields of Smart Industry, Circular Economy and 5G -5th Generation Wireless Systems. An average of 15 COSME participating countries clusters have attended each of the events. Some 1674 one-to-one meetings took place in all events compounded.

matchmaking events/ working group meetings) organised				
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3. WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2014/2015?

Action 1: The selection of proposals and signature of grant agreements were finalised in the 3rd and 4th quarters 2015 and the selected projects will then implement their activities over a 24-month period during 2016-2017.

Completion of Clusters go International projects in strand 1 and strand 2.

Action 2: The selection of the service provider and signature of service contract was finalised in 3rd quarter 2015 and the action will be implemented over a 24-month period during 2015-2017.

Matchmaking event planned in Thessaloniki, Greece

Information on cluster landscape in strategic third countries: 6 countries

4. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Combined budget of EUR 3.75 million + EUR 0.650 million (from 2014 budget carryovers) available for Action 1.

Budget of EUR 1.25 million for Action 2

GRO/SME/14/C/N02: E-SKILLS FOR COMPETITIVENESS AND INNOVATION

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The objectives of this cross-sectorial measure are to promote e-skills and e-leadership for competitiveness and innovation and to increase significantly the talent pool of technology savvy entrepreneurs, managers, advanced users and business savvy ICT practitioners in all sectors. The needs go beyond ICT skills and also include leadership, entrepreneurship, management etc., as presented at the conference on “e-Skills and Education for Digital Jobs” on March 2013 in Brussels at which the "Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs" was launched. These objectives are part of the implementation of the long term EU e-skills strategy presented in the Communication on “e-Skills for the 21st Century” in September 2007.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

After spectacular declines in ICT education enrolments and graduate numbers in the first years of the new millennium, the Commission developed in 2007 a long term e-skills strategy to reverse this trend. Since 2010, the number of ICT students is growing again and the good news is that the rate of growth is quicker than expected, contributing to reduce the estimated gap at the horizon of 2020.

The “e-Skills for Jobs” campaigns contributed to this achievement and mobilised very large numbers of countries and stakeholders in synergy with the "Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs". The final report of the "e-Skills for Jobs" campaign has been released in January 2017. Over the period 2014-2016, it covered 30 countries and involved over 450 organisations. Over 5.500 events have been organised gathering 3.4 million people. Media coverage and visibility on the Internet and social networks has been extensive. Over 100 videos were produced and numerous promotional materials as well as the e-Skills Manifesto; 10.000 followers on Twitter and 7.000 fans on Facebook. Close cooperation was established with the EU Presidencies. High-level events on "e-Skills for Jobs" have been organised on 6 May 2014 in Athens (Greece), 30 October 2014 in Rome (Italy), 13 March 2015 in Riga (Latvia), 15 December 2015 in Luxembourg and 16 March 2016 in The Hague (The Netherlands). The final event took place on 18 October 2016 in Bratislava (Slovakia).

The final report on the "ICT profession" has been released in January 2017. The employment growth rate of ICT practitioners has grown[i] by around 2 million in the EU over last 10 years. The EU is facing a shortage of 370,000 in 2016 which is likely to grow up to 500,000[ii] in 2020 as the demand for highly-skilled ICT professionals is exceeding supply in the years to come. While increases in demand for management and business architecture level skilled ICT professionals and core ICT practitioners are very strong, there is a decreasing demand for lower skilled - ICT technician types of jobs. Latest research shows that the gap in the EU is growing slightly from 3.2% in 2015 to 3.5% in 2020. The US shows a similar pattern with a skills gap growing with 0.7 percentage points to 3.7% in 2020. In Japan the gap would increase from 2.2% to 8.7% in 2020, leaving a real risk that the lack of skills for new digital technologies can hold back adoption and thereby also business opportunities and economic growth[iv].

The European e-Competence Framework (e-CF) is now the official standard across Europe for ICT practitioners' skills and competences. It is maintained by the European Standardisation Committee (CEN). In the Bratislava Declaration (October 2016), stakeholders confirmed their support to the development and the implementation of a European Framework for the ICT profession based on four building blocks: European e-Competence Framework; European ICT foundational body of knowledge; European recognition of ICT certifications and qualifications; and shared professional ethics". The proposal for a European Framework for ICT Professionalism provides a blueprint for maturing the ICT profession in Europe and a major contribution to the work of the European Standardisation Committee (CEN) and its CEN Technical Committee 428 on e-Competences and ICT Professionalism and the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition. The proposed framework includes not only IT competences (as described in the e-CF), but also other essentials building blocks: a foundational body of knowledge, education and training qualification and certification, and ethical guidelines. It is making good progress with pilot implementations in Ireland, Spain and Italy. It was discussed at a conference on "The Impact of IT Professionalism on the European economy" on 14 June 2017 in Malta.

High-tech leadership skills are required to achieve successful technological innovation crucial in developing Europe's competitiveness and innovative capacity. The modern economy depends on individuals with the ability to design new business models and to seize opportunities making best use of new technologies to deliver value. The T-shape metaphor describes “future ready” professionals who are adaptive innovators with the necessary high-tech talent and leadership skills. The final report was released in April 2017 and the latest estimates reveal that there are around 800,000 high-tech leaders in EU. An average of 43,000 new digital leaders and 7,000 leaders in the KETs domain per year are needed. Europe needs to generate 50,000 new high-tech leaders per year or a total of 450,000 until 2025. They

should be provided with relevant education and training opportunities and exposed to the necessary leadership role and experience. Shortages of high-tech leaders create a severe risk for enterprises and SMEs in Europe of missing out on crucial innovation opportunities and leaving them to be taken up by their competitors. Pan-European guidelines for new curricula have been developed using stakeholder input and analysis of best practices in cooperation with Universities, and business schools. The report identifies key areas where investment is needed to ensure that Europe has a sufficient talent pool of high-tech leaders in the future and is providing guidance for action under six strategic priorities: regular monitoring of the supply and demand of high-tech talent, benchmarking policies and best practices sharing; establishing "Software Universities" and fostering programmes for research, education and training in software-based innovation; promoting a platform-based ecosystem of digital services supporting diagnosis including self-assessment tools; making more strategic use of funding, including pre-commercial procurement of innovation, and more relevant lifelong learning incentives; launching large-scale activities including a quality leap industry/university innovation leadership skills education and training programmes; ensuring a longer-term policy commitment and action plans across Europe. The 'shared concept' for a digital skills strategy presented at the launch of the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition in December 2016 is providing a good inspiration for this type of partnership and cooperation.

New developments

All these activities on e-skills have delivered very positive results and triggered considerable political interest. Digital skills is one of the ten priorities included in the Commission's Communication on "New Skills Agenda for Europe" adopted in June 2016. Building on the results of the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs and the e-skills strategy, the Commission launched the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition. This new strategy will aim at promoting a large digital talent pool and ensuring that all European citizens and the labour force are equipped with adequate digital skills. In June 2017, the new coalition is already bringing together 230 members, attracted 70 pledges and includes 17 National Coalitions: Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, UK. More are under preparation and will be launched (e.g. France in September 2017).

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The proposal for a European Framework for ICT Professionalism will provide a blueprint for maturing the ICT profession in Europe and a major detailed contribution to the activities of the European Standardisation Committee (CEN) and its CEN Technical Committee 428 on e-Competences and ICT Professionalism. The final report of the e-Skills for Jobs campaign will include a detailed description of all the activities and an-depth evaluation of its impact. Together with the results of the work on Leadership Skills for Digital and Key Enabling Technologies they will contribute to the implementation of the "New Skills Agenda for Europe" (adopted on 10 June 2016) and the implementation of a new comprehensive EU strategy on digital skills which will be announced in the "New Skills Agenda".

The final reports and all related deliverables on the "e-Skills for Jobs" campaign, the "ICT profession" and "e-Leadership" have been released in 1Q2017. Results have been presented and discussed at two European conferences: on 6 December 2016 "Fostering ICT professionalism in Europe" and on 26 January 2017 "High-Tech and Leadership Skills for Europe".

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

Three calls for tenders have been published covering: a) the organisation of communication and awareness campaign “e-Skills for Jobs” (2015-2016); b) the development of a European framework for ICT professionalism and c) the promotion of leadership skills for digital and key enabling technologies in Europe.

e-Skills for Jobs Campaign:

- * Publication of the call: 2 September 2014
- * Start of the contract: 29 December 2014
- * End of the contract: 29 December 2016

European Framework for ICT Professionalism:

- * Publication of the call: 24 December 2014
- * Start of the contract: 7 August 2015
- * End of the contract: 7 February 2017

Leadership Skills for Digital and Key Enabling Technologies:

- * Publication of the call: 18 March 2015
- * Start of the contract: 30 July 2015
- * End of the contract: 30 January 2017

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

e-Skills for Jobs communication and awareness raising campaign: 1,987,042 euros

European Framework for the ICT profession: 451,718 euros

Leadership skills for digital and key enabling technologies: 499.890 euros

6. INDICATORS

Number of participating countries and stakeholders: 30 countries, 450 stakeholders, 5.500 events, 3.4 million people, 100 videos, 10.000 followers on Twitter and 7.000 fans on Facebook.

Relevance of the recommendations and of good practices identified: the recommendations constitute the backbone of the shared concept for national digital skills strategies developed jointly by the Commission and Member States which also include links to best practices. The best of them (e.g. PROMPT – a Swedish initiative) received Digital Skills Awards in December 2016.

Satisfaction survey regarding the relevance of the results and the quality of the deliverables: results of satisfaction survey are very positive. However stakeholders are requesting a longer term involvement, scalable and sustainable efforts and greater commitment at national level.

Number of follow-up measures taken by the Commission, public authorities and stakeholders: Launch by the Commission of the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition and the Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills under the New Skills Agenda for Europe in 2016 building on the results of the EU e-skills strategy; 17 national digital skills and jobs coalition have been launched and 11 Member States launched national digital skills strategies. All Member States are expected to have national coalitions and digital strategies before 2020. In addition, six new targeted actions have been included in the COSME 2016 Work Programme. Fifty stakeholders launched the IT Professionalism Europe Network in 2016.

Improvement of the talent pool and reduction of the e-skills and e-leadership skills shortages: The employment of ICT specialists has grown by around 2 million in the EU over last 10 years. The EU faced a shortage of 370,000 in 2016 which is likely to grow up to 500,000 in 2020 (which is an improvement compared to an estimate of 900,000 released in 2013). Supply is now increasing but the demand for highly-skilled ICT professionals will remain very strong for the years to come.

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

e-Skills for Jobs Campaign:

- * Digitaleurope, aisbl, 14 rue de la Science, 1040 Brussels, Belgium
- * European Schoolnet, aisbl, 61 rue de Trêves, 1040 Brussels, Belgium

European Framework for the ICT profession:

- * Capgemini Nederland b.v, private law body, Reykjavikplein 1, 3543 KA Utrecht, The Netherlands
- * Ernst & Young spa, private law body, Via Fernanda Wittgens 6, 20123 Milan, Italy
- * IDC Italia srl, private law body, Viale Monza 14, 20127 Milan, Italy

Leadership skills for digital and key enabling technologies:

- * Empirica Gesellschaft für Kommunikations-und Technologieforschung mbh, private law body, Oxfordstrasse 2, 53111 Bonn, Germany

GRO/SME/14/C/N11 - The European Resource Efficiency Self-Assessment Tool for SMEs - EASME/COSME/2014/005

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The objective of this measure is to enable European SMEs to increase their understanding of their resource efficiency performance and which measures could be taken to increase their resource efficiency. It will provide all European SMEs with an easy-to-use common tool that also enables benchmarking of SME resource efficiency across countries and sectors.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

Implementation started in 2015, by a service provider. The contractor has developed the self-assessment tool which is being tested with SMEs, as well as a catalogue of resource efficiency improvement measures to enable European SMEs to increase the understanding of their resource efficiency performance and identify what steps could be made to improve it. In parallel, the European Database of the information on the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of different types of resource efficiency improvements, collected from SME self-assessments is being created.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2014/2015?

The tool, including the catalogue and the database, is conceived as the first module towards the establishment of a European Resource Efficiency Excellence Centre (COSME 2015)

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): 30 AUGUST 2014
FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: DECEMBER 2014
END OF THE PROJECT: DECEMBER 2016

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Budget available as per the work programme: EUR500.000,00
Reallocation: EUR 100.000,00 has been allocated to the recruitment of an external contractor to implement the tool within the EC webpages (Specific contract under FWC DESIS III for the recruitment of an external IT consultant)
Budget finally committed EUR 383.950,00.
Indicate how many proposals/offers were received: 9
How many awarded: 1 (+specific contract for the external consultant)

6. INDICATORS

Data on all three indicators listed in WP will be available by end of 2016.

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Technopolis Group

GRO/SME/14/D/N03 - DIGITAL Entrepreneurship Monitor

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The digital entrepreneurship monitor is a three year project aiming to develop appropriate tools to monitor in a systematic way emerging digital trends and their potential impact on businesses. The digital entrepreneurship monitor is designed in this context and with the following objectives:

- increase knowledge on the evolution of digital transformation in Europe, notably by extending the development and operation of monitoring tools to follow emerging technology developments and market needs, as well as the digital opportunities for European businesses;
- identify new business opportunities for European established companies and entrepreneurs in the digital world and improve awareness raising;
- support the dialogue among industry, science, and politics with the view to develop a common and coherent vision on the position of European enterprises in the digital world;
- continue the annual operation of a digital transformation scoreboard to measure progress at national, EU and global level.

The information gathered through the monitor and the different deliverables is accessible to any interested party through the digital transformation monitor portal, currently hosted at <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/dem/monitor>. In addition, the portal provides access to statistics to compare the uptake of digital technologies across the member states and display the results of a dedicated digital transformation survey, focusing particularly on the uptake of digital technologies.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

EASME published the call for tenders in August 2014. The Digital Entrepreneurship Monitor started in February 2015. The work advances according to schedule:

The existing monitoring methodology of DEM and the DEM web site has been updated. Based on the preliminary assessment of the existing methodology, new layers as well as some modifications have been developed: to analyse emerging trends in ICT and business opportunities in EU; to monitor and identify relevant public policies of the EU, individual Member States' and competing economies' to foster digital entrepreneurship; to provide overall insight on all sectors in terms of digital uptake; to update the DEM portal with the deliverables of the project.

The consortium continued to provide technical support to dialogues and networking between politics, business and science, notably to the Strategic Policy Forum on Digital Entrepreneurship established by the EC in 2014 and the Member States Board on Digital Entrepreneurship under the guidance and supervision of EASME and DG GROW. The support was comprised of everything from logistics to content generation and moderation, covering the activities and tasks to be done both before and after the meetings.

Since March 2015, five Strategic Policy Forum on Digital Entrepreneurship meetings and four Member States Board on Digital Entrepreneurship meetings have been organised. The Strategic Policy Forum on Digital Entrepreneurship (2014 – 2016), was a GROW think tank to reinforce dialogue among industry, science, civil society and politics. The final deliverables of the Forum have been published and include:

The 'High-level Conference on the digital transformation of Europe's industry and enterprises' took place in Brussels on 16 February 2016. Hosted by Commissioner Bieńkowska and bringing together three other members of the Commission – VP Katainen, Commissioners Moedas and Oettinger – and more than 400 participants and 30 speakers, this event illustrated boldly that the Commission works together to enable European industry seize the unprecedented opportunities of the high-tech era. The conclusions of each session were brought together in a conference declaration which calls for immediate action by Europe's business leaders and policymakers in seven areas.

The monitoring methodology for digital transformation refers to the production of reports covering different aspects of the digital transformation process of EU industry and enterprises. The monitoring reports therefore focus on the following four main dimensions: policies, challenge, industry and technology. The first batch of reports has been published in April 2017 including technology reports, industry reports, challenge report, policy initiatives at national level, and at local level. The first set of national policy initiatives selected for an in-depth analysis stand as follows and have been published at the first European Stakeholder Forum for Digitising European Industry in Essen on 31 January:

- Germany – Industrie 4.0
- France – Industrie du Futur
- Netherlands – Smart Industry
- Italy – Intelligent Factory Cluster
- Sweden – Produktion 2030
- UK – The Catapult Programme – HVM Catapult
- Spain – Industria Conectada 4.0 (Connected Industry 4.0)

The first batch of publication of policy reports at local level include the 8 following reports:

- Rejuvenating Barcelona with technology

- Bristol: the world's first open city
- Cote d'Azur: anchoring its leading position
- Espoo: an established high-tech spot
- Hamburg: capitalizing on its entrepreneurs
- Lisbon's engines for growth
- Tallinn: a city of the future
- Trento: building on past achievements

In January 2017, the Digital Transformation Scoreboard 2017 has been published at the European Stakeholder Forum for Digitising European Industry in Essen. The aim of the Scoreboard is to provide evidence on the extent of digital transformation in Europe. This will help policy makers at EU and national level to create policies supporting EU companies in digital transformation processes. It will enable companies to understand why digital technologies are important and how they can create or reinforce their own digital strategy.

The scoreboard is based on two main tools: the qualitative part, focusing on monitoring digital transformation based on the survey results; and the quantitative part, revolving around monitoring digital transformation based on indicators enabling us to statistically monitor progress on the enabling conditions for digital transformation.

The survey captures the most recent uptake of digital technologies and digital transformation at firm level. It measures the output dimension at firm level, and results are then aggregated and segmented at national and sectorial levels. The target audience for the survey was companies in the automotive, mechanical engineering, healthcare and pharmaceutical sectors across the 28 EU Member States.

The country profiles in the Scoreboard present a 'snapshot' of the digital transformation performance of an EU country at a specific time and serve as a basis for the European Member States to measure progress, account for results and identify areas for improvement in their efforts towards the digital transformation of their industries and enterprises.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

It is planned (COSME 2017) to further develop and expand suitable mechanisms to observe and analyse the current diffusion and adoption dynamics of novel digital technologies, especially in the fields of mobile, cloud, social media, data analytics, digitisation, design, prototyping, testing and proof of concept, and collaborative technologies based on the experience of the Digital Entrepreneurship Monitor. Together with the KETs-Observatory both tools will regularly nurture the entrepreneurial discovery process of the Smart Specialisation Strategies of European regions and countries with sound and objective statistical evidence, notably to support their regional SMEs & innovation ecosystems. This action will provide relevant data on how regional authorities can facilitate the uptake of promising technologies by their local SMEs.

The DEM action is accompanied by the awareness campaign for digital transformation and speeding up digital transformation and the uptake of advanced technologies at regional and local level (WATIFY - CIP 2013 & Awareness raising campaign for the modernisation of Europe's industry - COSME 2015).

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

The Digital Entrepreneurship Monitor will run until February 2018

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Service Contract – open call for tenders – Digital Entrepreneurship Monitor: 2.823.000 euros

6. INDICATORS

1. Overall quality of the Digital Entrepreneurship Monitor, the scoreboard and the relevant reports: The detailed methodology to monitor and capture the key strategic technology trends for the upcoming years will allow to evaluate and assess the impact of these strategic technologies on digital entrepreneurship across a number of sectors in Europe.
2. Number of countries and policy initiatives covered: The statistical analysis of up-to-date indicators will provide continuity in the comparative assessment of the factors supporting the development of digital entrepreneurship in the EU28 Member States. The target audience for the survey will be companies across the 28 EU member states. It will cover both companies in traditional industries and emerging technology providers. Country comparisons will be performed with the purpose of highlighting the diversity of countries in terms of digital transformation and its enabling conditions.
3. Number of case studies and business paradigms developed: 6 technology and industry reports (Mobile and Mobility, Internet of Things, 3D printing, Healthcare and pharmaceuticals, Automotive industry, Mechanical engineering) which make an emphasis on the role the emerging trends in information technologies have in Europe's business landscape and address the market requirements and societal needs they generate. Strategic Policy Forum Reports: Big data and B2B digital platforms: The next frontier for Europe's industry and enterprises"; Blueprint on cities and regions as launch pads for digital transformation; Toolbox for reskilling the workforce: digital skills for industry; Digital toolkit for digital pop-up experiences.
4. Number and geographic coverage of relevant policy initiatives deployed: Per selected country, 2-4 key public support measures / initiatives at regional and national level will be identified.

8. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

PriceWaterhouseCoopers Luxembourg, Carsa, ESN, IDATE

GRO/SME/14/D/N05 - Entrepreneurship Education (Pan-European Entrepreneurial Learning Initiative)

However the title of the project is now "The European Entrepreneurship Education NETwork" (EE-HUB.EU).

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

In line with proposals included in the Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan, the initiative aims to support a network and virtual hub on entrepreneurial learning at European level bringing together existing European and national expertise. This is driven by policy makers and experts with a strong knowledge of the topic and who commit themselves to facilitate progress and increase coordination of the efforts made by countries and regions. The action encourages and supports networking in order to stimulate progress in broadening the spread and impact of entrepreneurship education across Europe, based on learning from existing best practices and on sharing information.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

A launch event was held on 5-6 May 2015;
A broad European network on entrepreneurship education with 42 experts was established;
A public website (www.ee-hub.eu) was created with a content bank (e.g. Good Practice presentations);
68 Good Practices were published in the content bank under 6 themes.
EE-HUB partners organised 12 targeted webinars addressing different stakeholders needs (policy makers, business representatives, and educators).
5 Round Table events were organised.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The final conference will take place on 11-12 July 2017, and two Round Table events remain to be organised.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

Publication of the call for proposals: 11/06/2014
Signature of grant agreement: 17 March 2015
Start of the action: 17 March 2015
End of the project: 17 March 2018

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

PLANNED BUDGET: 350 000 €
COMMITTED BUDGET: 349 998.53 €
12 proposals were received and 1 was awarded.

6. INDICATORS

The awarded organisations together cover all EU Member States and pre-accession countries.
A network of 42 experts was established.
12 targeted webinars and 5 Round Table events were organised so far.
It is still too early however to assess how many countries participated in the activities of the network and benefited from this project.

7. BENEFICIARIES

JA Europe (leading partner), the South East European Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning - SEECCEL, EUROCHAMBRES and EUproVET.

GRO/SME/14/C/N04: CLUSTER EXCELLENCE PROGRAMME

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The overall objective of this call for proposals is to pursue the EU efforts aimed to strengthen management excellence in the EU as a way to provide more professional business services to European SMEs through clusters and therefore contribute to the development of more world-class clusters in the EU. Six projects have been funded.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

In 2016 the six projects almost completed the tasks linked to the benchmarking (with 22 organisations benchmarked) and performed preparatory tasks for the organisation of the trainings and study visits (1 consortium started the trainings in 2016 and 2 consortia had the first study visit). Dissemination activities were also started.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The six selected projects will complete the activities to be carried out under the grant agreement (benchmarking, trainings, study visits, dissemination, impact assessment and follow up activities)

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

Publication of the call for proposals: 13 May 2015

Signature of grant agreement: November-December 2015

Start of the action: 1 January 2016

End of the project: 1 project will end September 2017, 5 projects will end December 2017

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Planned Budget: 1.500.000 €

Committed budget: 1.453.579,60 €

6. INDICATORS

Overall 31 clusters and business network organisation from 14 countries are participating in the selected consortia – 39 lead managers are involved in the action and more than 10 000 SMEs are potentially benefiting from the action.

7. BENEFICIARIES

6 projects have been selected out of 42 proposals

- Cecil: in the field creative industries (Consortium members: Stowarzyszenie Rozwoju Społeczno-gospodarczego Wiedza - Poland - (participant), Madrid Plataforma ICT Audiovisual - Spain - (coordinator), Ibec limited*Irish Business and Employers Confederation

- Ireland - (participant), Danmarks Tekniske Universitet - Denmark - (participant), Cap Digital - France - (participant)
- Clustem: textile and machinery sector (Consortium members: Next Technology Tecnotessile Società Nazionale di Ricerca r.l. - Italy - (Coordinator), Is ve Insaat Makineleri Kumelenme Dernegi - Turkey - (Participant), Huddersfield & District Textile Training Company Limited - United Kingdom - (Participant), Asociacion de Empresarios Textiles de la Region Valenciana - Spain - (Participant)
- 5forexcellence: cross-industry value chain excellence (Consortium members: Vidzemes Planosanas Regions - Latvia - (Participant), Netport Science Park AB (SVB) - Sweden - (Participant), Latvijas Logistikas Asociacija - Latvia - (Participant), Latvian Information Technologies Cluster - Latvia - (Coordinator), Eesti Infotehnoloogia ja telekommunikatsiooni liit - Estonia - (Participant)
- Materialix : industrial new materials value-chain (Consortium members Plastipolis - France - (Participant), Consorzio per la Promozione della Cultura Plastica PROPLAST - Italy - (Participant), Associacao POOL-NET Portuguese Tooling Network - Portugal - (Coordinator), Asociacion Valenciana DE Empresarios DE Plasticos - AVEP - Spain - (Participant)
- Rue Aero: excellence in Aerospace cluster management (consortium members Wachstumsinitiative Suderelbe Aktiengesellschaft - Germany - (Participant), PEMAS-Associacao para a Valorizacao e Promocao da Oferta das Empresas Nacionais para o Sector Aeronautico - Portugal - (Participant), Hamburg Aviation EV - Germany - (Coordinator), Fundacion Helice - Spain - (Participant), Distretto Tecnologico Aerospaziale della Campania SCARL - Italy - (Participant), Berlin-Brandenburg Aerospace Allianz E.V. - Germany - (Participant), Association Pegase - France - (Participant), Asociacion Cluster de Aeronautica y Espacio del Pais Vasco - Spain - (Participant), Aerospace Valley - France - (Participant)
- TCE: energy technology and forest industry sectors (Cpnsortium members The Paper Province Ekonomisk Foerening - Sweden - (Participant), Oy Merinova Ab - Finland - (Coordinator), Cluster de Energia - Spain - (Participant), Associacao PCTE - Polo de Competitividade e Tecnologia da Energia - Portugal - (Participant)

GRO/SME/14/D/N08 Senior Entrepreneurs Best Practice Exchange

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The 'Senior entrepreneurs: Best practice exchanges' project was designed to contribute to the overall EU Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan by directly addressing the third objective of developing role models and reaching out to specific groups. Supporting the transition of seniors to become entrepreneurs (or mentors to younger entrepreneurs) presents an important segment for potentially increasing economic and innovation activity.

This measure organised two Laboratories for experts, representatives of business support organisations and policy makers to share approaches and details of such actions where retired or senior entrepreneurs serve as mentors, coaches or advisers to new entrepreneurs, or are given support and advice to enable them to become entrepreneurs for the first time themselves.

The Laboratories serve as a platform for the exchange of experience and resulted in the publication of good practice examples, recommendations and guidance.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

Two Laboratories were organised to mobilise exchange of existing practices and developing new approaches: one on seniors as mentors for young entrepreneurs and one seniors as entrepreneurs.

A Good Practice Manual was published, with examples of successful programmes aiming to support seniors as entrepreneurs or to help seniors who want to become mentors for young or new entrepreneurs.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The action was completed.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

29/12/2014	Signature of the contract
16-17/06/ 2015	First Laboratory on seniors as mentors for young entrepreneurs, London
17-18/09/ 2015	Second Laboratory on seniors as entrepreneurs, Barcelona
07/11/2016	Final publication of the Good Practice Manual

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The budget was committed for EUR 436 734. Six offers were received after an open call for tenders and the contract was signed with Development Solutions Europe Ltd, UK.

6. INDICATORS

The two Laboratories held in London and Barcelona facilitated best practice exchange between 54 and 55 participants respectively. Participants represented a broad variety of actors involved in supporting senior entrepreneurship and mentoring.

In the Good Practice Manual 24 examples of good practice coming from 11 EU countries are presented; the Manual also includes practical recommendations and guidelines for support to senior entrepreneurship.

7. BENEFICIARIES

Service contract EASME/COSME/2014/002

Direct beneficiary:

Development Solutions Europe Ltd., UK

SUPPORT MEASURES

GRO/SME/15/F/114 - Studies on Smart Grids: Smart Grids Lighthouse Projects (Lot 1)

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

Study to analyse Smart Grid lighthouse projects and what has already been achieved so far in this area. The final report will serve as a guide to investors on opportunities in the area of smart grids and complement the Commission's work in industrial policy. It is LOT 1 of 2 Lots launched with the above title.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The final report of the study was delivered in March 2017 and will be published together with the report (Lot 2) on Smart Grids: barriers and opportunities for deployment when that is finalised in July 2017 and should help provide a detailed picture of exemplary projects that are already in operation so as to identify why these projects are successes and therefore encourage further investment in Smart Grid technologies.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The study will be made available on the Commission's website in August 2017 and follow-up measures such as a conference may be considered.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): The call for tender was published on 28/07/2015

STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 22/12/2015

END OF THE PROJECT: 01/08/2017

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The Budget allocated for this Lot was 300 000 euros. The contract was signed for an amount of 294 860 euros.

Nine offers were received.

6. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

The contract was awarded to a consortium comprising of Ecofys and Tractebel Engineering

GRO/SME/15/F/S115 - Membership fee International Rubber Study Group (SM 2015)

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

Participation in the IRSG, of which the EU is a member (Council Decision 2012/283/EU). This entailed the payment of the annual contribution to the IRSG's budget in amount of 115,521 EUR.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-16

Participation in the IRSG supports the competitiveness of the European tyre & rubber industry, by rendering more predictable the developments on the world market of an essential input – natural rubber. It is directly relevant for COSME's Objective 1 (Actions to improve framework conditions for the competitiveness and sustainability of Union enterprises). Reaching this objective is supported also by other projects which the IRSG has carried out: impact of new tyre legislation on rubber demand; future butadiene supply and its impact on synthetic rubber; current dynamics of the reclaim rubber market; impact of re-treading tyres in emerging markets.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The payment of the annual contribution to the IRSG budget is mandatory during the whole duration of EU's membership to the Group.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

Membership fee -> Commitment in summer 2016; IRSG Secretariat issues the invoice for the annual budget contribution in July of each year.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Membership fee -> Commitment in summer 2016; IRSG Secretariat issues the invoice for the annual budget contribution in July of each year.

Initial allocated budget: 115.000 EUR

Committed: 115.521 EUR

Paid: 115.521 EUR

IMPLEMENTED BY EASME.

6. INDICATORS

Participation in the activities of the IRSG.

7. BENEFICIARIES

IRSG

GRO/SME/15/F/117 - Studies on Smart Grids: Barriers and Opportunities for Deployment (Lot 2)

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

Study to analyse existing obstacles to smart grids and opportunities for deployment of these technologies in the EU to help identify appropriate policy responses. The final report will also serve as a guide to investors on opportunities in the area of smart grids and complement the Commission's work in industrial policy. It is LOT 2 of 2 Lots launched with the above title.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The final report of the study should be available in July 2017 and should help provide an indication of where the barriers to smart grid deployment are most serious as well as a preliminary view of the opportunities that exist.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The final report of the study should be available in July 2017 and will be made available on the Commission's website together with the report on Smart Grid lighthouse projects in August 2017. Follow-up measures such as a conference and other actions may be considered.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): The call for tender was published on 28/07/2015

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: THE CONTRACT WAS SIGNED 1/04/2016

END OF THE PROJECT: 10/08/2017 AUGUST 2017

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The Budget allocated for this Lot was 300 000 euros. The contract was signed for an amount of 298 300 euros.

Nine offers for this Lot were received.

6. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

The contract was awarded to a consortium led by Tecnalía and including 5 other partners.

GRO/SME/15/F/S119 - Composition and drivers of energy prices and costs: Case studies in selected energy intensive industries"

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

Recent developments in energy prices and costs are a major concern for European governments, citizens and businesses and they affect Europe's global competitiveness. They particularly impact SMEs.

In June 2014, energy ministers called the Commission to produce by 2016 a follow-up review of its January 2014 analysis of the composition and drivers of energy prices and costs in Member States, with a particular focus on the impact on households, SMEs and energy intensive industries, and looking more widely at the EU's competitiveness vis-à-vis its global economic counterparts.

In response to this request and building on previous related actions, DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) aimed at contributing to the overall Commission's work by carrying out ad hoc case studies with the objective to complement information available at macro level with bottom-up evidence about electricity and natural gas prices at micro (i.e. plant) level for a number of selected (sub-) sectors amongst energy-intensive industries (EIIs).

The importance of the work to be carried out and its implications for decision-making in key policy areas was further emphasised by the Commission in its Communication on Energy Union adopted in February 2015, setting a strategic vision for a secure, sustainable, competitive and affordable energy coupled with ambitious climate policy objectives.

In this Communication, the Commission indeed indicated that it will "*ensure greater transparency in the composition of energy costs and prices by developing regular and detailed monitoring and reporting, including on impacts of energy costs and prices on competitiveness. Particular attention will be paid to public interventions such as regulated tariffs, energy taxation policies and the level of public support, as well as their impact on pricing mechanisms, including electricity tariff deficits*".

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The contractor submitted all the required deliverables in accordance with the conditions agreed.

The results of the activity were published in a stand-alone document and also integrated in the broader Commission analysis of the composition and drivers of energy prices and costs in Member States, released within the 'Clean energy for all' package in November 2016.

In this respect, the results of the activity contributed to assess trends and explore their possible causes, drawing conclusions which will support dialogue with a broad range of stakeholders (SMEs, industry, NGOs and MS) and ultimately help inform policy decisions.

Given the nature of the activities conducted (i.e. case studies collecting bottom-up evidence about electricity and natural gas prices at micro level in a number of selected energy-intensive industries), no direct impact can be envisaged or budget assigned in terms of climate change objectives. Yet, the action is fully integrated in the broader context of the Energy Union strategy, therefore contributing to the achievement of related objectives, which include climate change.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

No activities remain to be performed.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): 20/10/2015

STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 16/12/2015

END OF THE PROJECT: 13/05/2016

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

€250,000 available and €229,900 committed.

3 offers were received in response to the call for tender and one contract awarded.

6. INDICATORS

Given the nature of the activity (i.e. case studies collecting bottom-up evidence on energy prices in a number of selected energy-intensive industries) and the limited timeframe, no specific indicators were defined for the implementation and monitoring of the activity. Still, the activity produced as a final outcome the five case studies foreseen, which were built using an agreed questionnaire for primary data collection and providing good overview of the sampling strategy adopted as well as of the level of representativeness of responses received.

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

The action was implemented by a contractor selected in the context of Framework Contract 409/PP/2014FC – Lot 1

GRO/SME/15/F/S120 - Supporting study for the fitness check for the construction sector – second phase on EU environment and occupational health & safety legislation

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

A study was launched to support the fitness check on the construction sector, in the field of the EU environment and occupational health & safety legislation. This study aimed at identifying the potential overlaps, gaps, inconsistencies and obsolete measures affecting the sector and at assessing the cumulative impacts of EU legislation in those two fields on the sector, both in terms of costs and benefits.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The study was contracted out under FWC 409/PP/2014 Lot 5, the specific contract was signed on 25 November 2015 for a duration of 9 months. The works are in progress. The final report was delivered in 24 August 2016 and published in Oct. 2016 (see https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/construction/fitness-check_en).

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The result of this study together with those of another parallel study focussing on the EU internal market and energy efficiency legislation will feed into the Fitness check Staff Working Document scheduled for the fourth quarter of 2017.

The fitness check on construction will provide a comprehensive, evidence-based assessment of whether the current regulatory framework has delivered its objectives at sectorial level and whether the costs can be considered proportionate to the benefits achieved. Such synthesis will form a thorough state of play, based on evidence, to be used as a reference document for any further initiative.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): *NA*

STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: *25.11.2015*

END OF THE PROJECT: *24.08.2016*

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Specific contract under FWC 409/PP/2014 Lot 5.

Commitment: € 162.615

6. INDICATORS

The results and findings of the study were qualified satisfactory according to the quality required from evaluations carried out for the Commission (evaluation standards and relevant quality assessment).

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Risk and Policy Analysts Ltd, UK.

GRO/SME/15/F/S121 - Study international comparison of cumulative costs for the chemicals industry and their impact on competitiveness

International Comparison of Cumulative Regulatory Costs for the Chemical Industry – Considerations on competitiveness concerning the sector

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The action is an evidence-collection exercise, no policy conclusion will be drawn at the end. It will serve as a basis for future REFIT and better regulation activities.

Specifically, the study will:

- Analyse the overall cost structures of main international competitors and compare them with the EU chemical industry;
- Identify the relevant chemicals-related legislation in selected third countries and assess, in a qualitative manner, cumulative costs effects it engenders in comparison with cumulative costs resulting from chemicals-related legislation in the EU;
- Carry out case studies on the cost effects of the most relevant chemicals-related legislation in selected third countries, with the objective to compare them also in quantitative terms with the costs engendered by chemicals-related legislation in the EU and to assess their potential impact on the international competitiveness of EU chemicals companies;
- Validate the results from the study with relevant stakeholders

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The Open CFT was launched in Dec. 2015 with submission deadline on 29th of January 2016. The contract between the Commission and Technopolis Group (the contractor) was signed on the 2nd of May 2016. The kick-off meeting will take place on 20 May 2016. The study will be carried out in 2016-2017 and will last 15 months. The Final Report is foreseen to be delivered in May 2017. The publication of the Report will follow in Q3 2017.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

In the course of 2016 the study will be carried out. Inception report foreseen to be delivered in August 2016, 1st Interim report to be delivered in November. Remaining phases of the project to be carried-out in 2017 (2nd Interim report due in February 2017, Final Report due in May).

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): 10 DECEMBRE 2015 (CN)

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 2 MAY 2016

END OF THE PROJECT: AUGUST 2017

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

BUDGET ALLOCATED: 225.000 €

OFFERS RECEIVED: 2

OFFER AWARDED: 1 (TECHNOPOLIS GROUP)

BUDGET FINALLY COMMITTED: 216.472,50 €

6. INDICATORS

The study is now ongoing. The project shall provide valuable inputs for further competitiveness analysis of the sector, and for better regulation activities. In first place, the results of the study, that will be provided with the Final report in 2017, will feed into the Fitness Check for Chemical Legislation (other than REACH).

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

CONTRACTOR: TECHNOPOLIS GROUP

GRO/SME/15/F/S122 - Competitiveness and climate change, environment, energy and transport policies – EU competitiveness and the 2030 framework: An industry perspective [ENT/SME/14/F/S108, GRO/SME/15/F/S122 and GRO/SME/16/F/S109]

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The action gives insights on the impact of climate change and energy policies on the competitiveness of EU industry at sectorial and MS levels, linked with the jobs, growth and investment priority of the Commission.

The study is a follow up of previous studies in the field, which all build on the PACE model, a powerful macro-economic modelling tool to assess globally and in a detailed way the long-term socio-economic impact of environmental policies.

For the study, the PACE model is refined and updated in accordance with the latest developments in the climate change and energy policy area, including on the international scene.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

Preliminary results were submitted by the contractor and discussed with Commission services. The delivery of final results was postponed to 2017 due to quality issues.

The study serves to inform climate and energy policies and help DG GROW for elaborating its positions in these policy areas. To that respect, the action has an impact on fulfilling climate objectives with an estimated contribution of 100%.

The study is also part of a longer-term exercise to increase DG GROW's modelling capabilities.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2014/2015?

The study is still on-going. Once submitted by the contractor, the final results will be presented and discussed at a final Conference with external stakeholders and made publicly available for further dissemination.

The contract has been renewed in 2016 for one more year (until November 2017), with the possibility to extend it by one more year

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): n/a

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 27 May 2015

END OF THE PROJECT: 30 November 2017 (initial contract + 1 year renewal) (possibility to renew up to 30 November 2018)

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

A provisional budget of €166,360 was foreseen for the study (ENT/SME/14/F/S108). However, the actual value of the initial contract is €165,419.42. A provisional budget of €50,000 per contract renewal (GRO/SME/15/F/S122 and GRO/SME/16/F/S109, respectively) was also foreseen. However, the actual value of the first renewal contract is €45 889.20.

Only one proposal was received as the action is implemented through the negotiated procedure.

6. INDICATORS

It was finally decided to postpone the final Conference due to result quality issues. This final Conference did not take place in 2016 as initially planned but will take place at a later date. The number of participants at the final Conference will be known only after the event has taken place.

The delivery of the final study report was postponed to 2017 due to result quality issues. The number of downloads of the study report will be monitored once it has been published

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Zentrum für Europäische Wirtschaftsforschung (ZEW)

GRO/SME/15/F/S123 - Cumulative Costs Assessment of the European Glass and Ceramics industries

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

As part of its smart regulation policy, the European Commission announced in its Work Programme for 2013 that, *"to keep current regulation fit for purpose, the Commission will*

begin reviewing, from this year onwards, the entire body of legislation in selected policy fields through "fitness checks". The purpose is to identify excessive burdens, overlaps, gaps, inconsistencies and/or obsolete measures which may have appeared over time." Four pilot projects were launched in 2010, covering specific policy areas.

As a result of the studies on **Cumulative Cost Assessments (CCA)** that have been conducted in a number of sectors (steel, aluminium), the European Commission foresees in the Communication for a European Industrial Renaissance in 01/2014 that CCAs are performed in others in an effort to estimate ex-post the joint costs of different strands of national and EU regulations on industrial sectors. This study has been launched within this context with a view at undertaking a comprehensive review of the competitiveness and regulatory frameworks in the Ceramics and Glass industrial value chains, using a cumulative cost assessment.

This assessment will cover the overall regulatory framework for the EU Ceramics and Glass industries, in order to identify excessive administrative burdens, examine regulatory overlaps, gaps and inconsistencies, as well as the cumulative impact of legislation, covering in particular the following EU policy areas: construction, energy, transport, environment, climate change, health and safety and trade. The findings will serve as a basis for drawing conclusions for the future policies.

- Previous measures on the same topic.

There is no similar measure for Ceramics and Glass undertaken so far in this area by the European Commission.

- European added value

This action looks at the impact of the EU policies and legislation on the Ceramics and Glass industries at the European level, and thus the European Commission is best suited to carry-out such a study rather than individual or group of Member States.- The annex III – Refit actions to the Commission Work Programme 2015 Communication²⁰, published in December 2014, lists this study under the title ‘Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs’.

The Cumulative Cost Assessment for the glass and ceramics industry has been foreseen in Annex III – Refit actions to the Commission Work Programme 2015 Communication²¹, published in December 2014, which lists under the title ‘Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs’. Also the Industrial Policy Communication published on 22 January 2014²² announced that cumulative cost assessments will be launched to estimate ex-post the joint costs of regulation on specific industrial sectors and to provide input for the review of their competitiveness.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2016-2017

Final results are the identification of elements that can contribute to the improvement of European regulation to reduce regulatory burden on ceramics and glass industries. Climate legislation, in particular ETS, are among the legislation subject to analysis.

The contract was signed on 19/11/2015.

A Kick-off meeting took place on 26/11/2015.

²⁰ Annex III REFIT-actions to the Communication from the European Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions, "Commission Work Programme 2015 / A New Start", COM(2014) 910final

²¹ Annex III REFIT-actions to the Communication from the European Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions, "Commission Work Programme 2015 / A New Start", COM(2014) 910final

²² Communication from the European Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: "For a European Industrial Renaissance", COM(2014) 14/2

So far, the Final Reports have been approved. Following meetings and steps have been reached:

- Inception report, 1st Intermediate report, 2nd intermediate report, Draft Final reports have been received and approved prior to the delivery of Final reports on 14/6/2017 and their approval on 19/06/2017.
- 4 Meetings of the Interservice Steering Group on 15/03/2016, 16/06/2016, 14/11/2016 and 13/03/2017
- 4 Meetings of both Mirror Groups on 16/03/2016, 16 and 20/06/2016, 15/11/2016 and 14/03/2017
- Open Mirror Group on 26/04/2016 and Validation Workshop on 24/01/2017

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

Further to the approval of the Final Reports, payment of the balance and publication of Reports (July 2017).

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): 02/06/2015²³

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 19/11/2015

END OF THE PROJECT: 06/2017

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Available budget: 550 000 EUR

Budget committed: 519 500 EUR

Budget available: 207 800 EUR (30% Prefinancing paid on 7/12/2015 and 30% Interim payment made in 10/2016)

3 bids were received. The contract was awarded to consortium led by CEPS and composed of CEPS, Economistii Associati and ECORYS.

6. INDICATORS

Final reports approved on 19/06/2017.

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Contractor: consortium led by CEPS and composed of CEPS, Economistii Associati and ECORYS

GRO/SME/15/F/S124 - Study on the review of the list of Critical Raw Materials for 2016 (3rd revision)

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

²³ [457/PP/GRO/SME/15/F/S123.- Study — cumulative costs assessment \(CCA\) of the EU ceramics and glass industries.](#)

The study will identify those raw materials that are deemed critical to the EU. In the 2011 Communication on raw materials, the Commission formally adopted a list of 'Critical Raw Materials'. It also made a commitment towards the Member States and the European Parliament (Raw Materials Initiative) to update the list at least every three years. The latest revision took place in May 2014 and was published through a Commission Communication of 26 May 2014. In order to be able to deliver a revised list of Critical Raw Materials in 2017, the Commission needs a new study performed by expert-consultants. The list of 2017 will be the first list of CRMs for which the revised CRM methodology developed by JRC, will be used.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The study serves as a basis for identifying the raw materials that will be included on the next list of Critical Raw Materials in 2017. It should help to incentivise the European production of critical raw materials and facilitate the launching of new mining and recycling activities. The list is also being used to help prioritise needs and actions. For example, it serves as a supporting element when negotiating trade agreements, drafting legislation, challenging trade distortion measures or promoting research and innovation (Horizon 2020).

The study will also deliver detailed fact sheets for every raw material assessed (more than 80 raw materials)

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

In 2017 the study shall be finalised and published along with the revised list of CRMs and the reviewed methodology developed by the JRC. The Commission will also publish a report on 'CRMs in the Circular Economy' which should also be published together with the new list of CRMs.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): 01.06.2015

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 30.11.2015

END OF THE PROJECT: 24.05.2017

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

397.350,00 EUR.

4 bids – one bid did not make the threshold and was excluded. 1 bid was awarded.

6. INDICATORS

Not applicable.

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

The consortium coordinator is Deloitte. Other partners are BRGM, BGS and TNO. The consortium closely collaborates with DG GROW and DG JRC but also the Ad hoc Working Group on Criticality which is a sub-group of the European Commission's expert group the "Raw Materials Supply Group".

GRO/SME/15/F/S212 – Side event on EU Food SMEs at EXPO Milano 2015: Feeding the Planet

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

- **The International Exposition (EXPO)** took place in Milan, Italy, from May until October 2015. EXPOs take place every 5 years, and are centred on one theme, this edition was "Feeding the planet, energy for life", focused on nutrition and the food sector in general. DG GROW was one of the leading DGs in organizing several events at the EU pavilion, due to the link between the EXPO theme and its activities. In particular the DG organized a big initiative, the EU Food and Drink week, in collaboration with FoodDrinkEurope. Each day of the week was focused on one major issue related to the food sector, for instance sustainability, innovation, competitiveness and employment. It was very successful; a high number of participants attended the event. EXPO provided therefore a unique and highly visible opportunity to relaunch the competitiveness of the EU industry in different fields, related to the Commission priorities.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

- The results achieved at EXPO Milano in 2015 were tangible and important. Indeed, by participating to this major international event, DG GROW supported the organization of initiatives aimed at promoting the competitiveness of the EU food sector. SMEs for instance were able to attend business to business events organized in collaboration with major EU trade partners, which allowed them to find new opportunities internationally. We also promoted the EU food sector, and in particular its strengths and qualities, to a broad audience, in order to bring closer EU citizens to the key role played by the EU institutions in supporting the development of a sustainable economy, as well ensuring high quality nutrition standards. It was also the occasion to showcase excellences of Member States in the field of food and drinks to an international public.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

- As regards EXPO Milano, the European Commission and particularly DG GROW and our unit will follow up on the conclusions of this major event, by continuing the work aimed at supporting competitiveness of the EU food sector, as well as promoting a sustainable and fair food supply chain.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

- N/A

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Order forms under FWCs.

As regards EXPO Milano, 6.000 euros committed, 4.381,87 euros was finally spent.

6. INDICATORS

N/A

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Marsh, Pomilio.

The body that implemented the actions related to EXPO Milano are unit D3 in collaboration with other units in DG GROW.

GRO/SME/15/F/S213 – Regional integration workshops in the area of defence

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

These workshops were organised in support of Commission Communications (2013)542 and (2014)387 which highlighted the need to support defence-related SMEs in the EU. One action envisaged to raise awareness of companies, clusters and regions of the potential of EU funding of dual use business activities and projects. The purpose of the two regional events was threefold: (a) inform representatives of regional stakeholders on this potential, (b) exchange best practices and approaches between regions and (c) inform SMEs about the opportunities at EU level. EASME carried out the implementation.

The first event was a workshop entitled "Regional strategies and dual use technologies" co-organised with Aquitaine Développement Innovation in Bordeaux on 11-12 June 2015.

The second event was an international conference entitled "Dual use technologies within the framework of RIS3 strategies in Europe" co-organised with IDEA in Seville on 27-28 October 2015.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The workshop in Bordeaux was attended by about 30 people, from regions in France, Spain, Poland and Denmark as well as regional defence-related SMEs. During the event the first peer review at EU level of 4 regional dual use strategies (Aquitaine, Bretagne, Podkarpacie and Andalucía) took place which resulted in a fruitful exchange of best practices. The participation of SMEs helped to discover how such strategies could be of benefit to their dual use businesses.

The conference in Seville was attended by about 220 people, of which 67% were SMEs. The rest consisted of larger companies, national and regional authorities, research institutes, and European institutions. EEN Partner CESEAND facilitated 165 B2B meetings. The event showed how dual use approach can make sense for regions (growth and jobs) by an exchange of best practices, involving regions from Croatia, France, Spain, Poland, Portugal. It also resulted in the so-called Seville Declaration, which was signed off by participants, and consisted of a set of 7 recommendations addressed to regional, national and European policymakers.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The two regional events provided many insights, from both operational as well as content point of view, that are useful in preparation for the next step, which will be the launch of a European network of defence-related regions. This objective is also announced in the aforementioned Communications of 2013 and 2014. This network has been set up as an action in the COSME 2016 WP.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

END OF THE PROJECT: 28 OCTOBER 2015

The implementation by EASME was via different low value contracts.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Total budget available: €60,000. Total budget spent: €41,155.

6. INDICATORS

- 2 workshops (250 participants from 7 EU countries),
- 165 B2B meetings in Seville
- Adoption of the Seville Declaration by participants

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Low value contracts were made with various local suppliers (e.g. catering) in Bordeaux and Seville.

GRO/SME/15/F/S214 - Raw Materials Diplomacy Events (RMDE)

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The Raw Materials Diplomacy Events promote the dialogue with government representatives and stakeholders (MS, national government bodies of third countries, industry stakeholders including SME's, research community, NGO's) on the topic of raw materials, promoting the exchange of best practices on mining policies and technology. These dialogues are also used to identify concrete ways for co-operation between the EU and the third countries which are part of these dialogues, based on mutual interests. The dialogues are in line with the first and second pillars of the Raw Material Initiative: Access to raw materials on world markets at undistorted conditions and Foster sustainable supply of raw materials from European sources.

There have been three events undertaken between 2014 and 2016 and one foreseen in June 2016:

Budget 2014

1.- II EU-Latin America dialogue on Raw Materials. 22-23/09/2015. Cartagena de Indias (Colombia)

The second EU-Latin America dialogue on raw materials, which targeted Governments, industry and organizations of Latin America and the European Union, held sessions on the subjects of governance, technology and innovation, research and in concrete cooperation projects as Horizon 2020, Erasmus +and Copernicus. The last subject focused in particular on remote sensing under the Copernicus Programme, and on how to set up a platform for the European Union and Latin America having a structured and co-ordinated co-operation on raw materials. An idea-mapping exercise supported how these concepts are to be developed with the support of the "Partnership Instrument".

2. Workshop on best practices on mining policies and technologies. 15-16/10/2015. Brussels (Belgium)

The workshop on "best practices on mining policies and technologies" focused on knowledge exchange in three key subjects concerning raw materials and mining: i) good governance; ii)

mining waste management and mine rehabilitation and iii) minerals knowledge base and data availability and management. EU strategies to support international cooperation on raw materials were addressed and an update on recent developments in the EU trade strategy for raw materials and on the EU initiative on responsible sourcing of minerals originating from conflict zones was given in the plenary session, both highlighting the importance of each of the three aforementioned subjects concerning raw materials and mining.

The series of thematic sessions on best practices on good governance focused on the three pillars of sustainability, highlighting the complex nature of governance. The series of thematic sessions on mining waste management and mine rehabilitation focused on exchange of knowledge on mine waste management from various types of mines and opportunities for resource recovery from waste. The series of thematic sessions on mineral knowledge base and data availability and management focused on availability of reliable, accurate, timely updated minerals data and information and promoted worldwide knowledge sharing, discussed data and information management models and ways to contribute to formation of a ‘global minerals data and information network/coalition’.

Budget 2015

3. EU-Latin America Dialogue on Raw Materials: enhancing the co-operation. 25-26/04/2016. Santiago de Chile (Chile).

The EU-Latin America dialogue on raw materials, which targeted Governments, industry and organizations of Latin America and the European Union, held sessions on the subjects of good governance, technology, infrastructure, services and investment in the mining sector, international cooperation as well as research and innovation in concrete cooperation programmes and projects at European (Horizon 2020) and national level.

4. Exchange of best practices on mining policies and technologies: challenges in the current state of the global economy. 28-29/06/2016 Brussels (Belgium)

The workshop on exchange of best practices on mining policies and technologies was organized in June 2016 focused on knowledge exchange in three key subjects concerning raw materials and mining: i) challenges for the mining sector in the current state of the global economy and the commodity prices; ii) mining waste management and iii) EU actions on international co-operation on raw materials.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

ARTICLE 15 OF COSME REGULATION: “INFORMATION ON THE AMOUNT OF CLIMATE-RELATED EXPENDITURE AND IMPACT OF SUPPORT TO CLIMATE-CHANGE OBJECTIVES”.

The results of the Raw Materials Diplomacy Events organized under the budget of 2015 consist on enhancing dialogue and cooperation among the different stakeholders participating in the events. The RMDE have allowed strengthening the international cooperation, share best practices and promote common understanding of the needs and challenges faced by the sector.

Strong mobilization and participation, including at political level, from all the countries part of both dialogues (Latin America and advanced mining countries).

Identification of common interests for future co-operation between the stakeholders from the EU and third countries in the areas covered by the events.

Several concrete actions for co-operation were identified and started already implementation, as it is the case of the **EU-Latin America Mineral Development Network Platform**, a project developed under the Partnership Instrument. This project, with the indicative budget

of 1,5M€, will establish a network platform for continuous and structured cooperation on a mutual benefit basis between EU and LA¹ authorities, industry, business (including SMEs), academia geological surveys and other relevant entities for the mining sector, in the fields of technology, consulting services, infrastructure, investment, trade, training and skills, health and safety, good governance and other relevant areas of the mining value chain (from exploration to mining rehabilitation and post closure). The project will have three components: (i) a study comprising a comprehensive analysis of the extractive sectors and related technologies and services in each of the target countries and a thorough stakeholders' mapping exercise; (ii) the development of an information and knowledge digital service; (iii) the organisation of a EU-LA mining exploration convention & trade show for all stakeholders.

This network platform is to build on existing relevant initiatives in the EU and Latin America. The stakeholders are competent EU and LA mining authorities, industry, business (including SMEs), academia, geological surveys and other relevant entities related with the mining value chain.

In addition, many representatives, both from research entities and from industry, both from the EU and Latin America, reported progress and achievements facilitated by the existing RMDD.

Details can be found at the reports from each event.

¹Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru, Mexico and Uruguay.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

Organisation of the last set of RMDE: EU-Latin America (8&9 May, Buenos Aires, Argentina) and EU-Advanced mining countries (November, Brussels) in 2017.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT):

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT:

END OF THE PROJECT: JULY 2016

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Events of 2015 (budget 2014 – EASME implementation) : 154.862,01€ finally paid for the 2 events

Events of 2016 (budget 2015): 164 915,73€ finally paid for the 2 events

6. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Budget 2014 – ICF Mostra

Budget 2015 - INTRASOFT international SA

GRO/SME/15/F/S215 - Follow-up to the HL Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

- The High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain ended its mandate in 2014, and in June 2015 was renewed for another 4 years, until 2019. The first plenary High Level Forum meeting, where Commissioners, Ministries and high level representatives of European associations participated, took place on 15 December 2016. Four Sherpa meetings took place on the new Forum took place in February 2016, June 2016, March 2017 and June 2017. In spring 2017 the experts groups on food price composition indicator, digitalisation, and barriers to internal market for food and private labels has been launched. The first High Level Forum meeting, where Commissioners, Ministries and high level representatives of European associations will participate, will take place in September.

The Forum is a key initiative in fostering the competitiveness of the food sector at EU level, by bringing around the table all major actors of the food supply chain: producers, retailers, industry, consumers and NGOs. It focuses its work on major issues, such as employment, fair relations among actors of the chain, internal and external industrial competitiveness, digitalisation, price transparency and sustainability which are related to the Commission policy priorities. The High Level Forum was also task by the European Council of 9 March to address the issue of dual food quality.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

- The High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain was renewed in June 2015 for 4 years. Two Sherpa Its first meeting at Sherpa level meetings took place in February 2016 (from budget of 2016, under non-COSME budget line) , and was the opportunity to define the priorities of the new Forum, which are: fight against unfair business to business trading practices, promote the competitiveness of the EU food sector, and support price monitoring. Second Sherpa meeting agreed on a draft Work Programme to submit to the High Level Forum. Important discussions also took place with relation to the input of the Group to the potential initiative on unfair trading practices. These 3 areas on which the Forum will focus its efforts at EU level will have major benefits for SMEs, producers, consumers as well as national and local authorities.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

- Further issues on which the work of the Forum will focus, and which will benefit companies, consumers as well as Member States will be digitalisation, sustainability and jobs creation, dual quality of foodstuffs, barriers to single market, sharing knowledge on private labels and creation of the EU level price composition indicator - #foodeuro.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

- MEETINGS FORESEEN: SHERPA MEETINGS; TWO EXPERT GROUP MEETINGS AND HIGH LEVEL FORUM MEETING. THE MANDATE OF THE FORUM WILL EXPIRE IN 2019.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION.

- Foreseen initial budget 10.000 EUR. Finally no budget (0 EUR) was committed in 2015 under COSME.

6. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

- N/A

As regards the High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain, the implementing body is unit D3 of DG GROW.

GRO/SME/15/F/S217 - Activities related to the work of the Expert Group for Bio-based Products

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The bio-based products industry has been selected for the Lead Market Initiative being considered as a sector with potential for creation of high-skill jobs and growth. The Commission Expert Group for Bio-based Products has as one of its tasks to propose to the European Commission demand-side industrial policy actions conducive to the market uptake of bio-based products and processes, including public procurement and other market pull measures. For this purpose the Expert Group has been gathering insights, experiences and best practices regarding public procurement programs from policy makers, industry and public procurers. These have been used as input for the development of concrete recommendations for setting up policy actions.

The workshop presented and gathered feedback on the draft recommendations and findings, which have been elaborated by the Working Group on Public Procurement. The aim was to receive critical input and a "reality check" by national and regional public procurers from different Member States, in order to make sure that the policy recommendations are clear, effective and feasible.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

Based on the input received in this workshop, the Expert Group for Bio-based Products finalised its recommendations on the public procurement of bio-based products and published them on 12 April 2016. <http://ec.europa.eu/DocsRoom/documents/21463>

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The Expert Group has prioritized the implementation actions of its recommendations. The recommendations will be part of the final report which shall be published at the end of the Expert Group's mandate by end of 2017.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT):

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT:

END OF THE PROJECT:

n.a. – action is implemented

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Low value procedure under 15.000 Euro, order form under FWC with AMEX. 25.000 Euro initial budget available and committed – 13.472,37 Euro paid.

6. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

PNO Consulting, AMEX.

GRO/SME/15/F/S218 – International BIO Convention

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The BIO International Convention is the world's largest life science, pharma and biotech event which takes place annually attracting more than 15,000 attendees from ca. 60 countries. Since 2004 is the EC (DG ENTR, RTD, SANCO, EMA) present at the BIO Convention as an exhibitor.

The main objective of the measure is to support the European biotechnology and pharmaceutical sector and boost its innovativeness, global competitiveness and visibility. Besides disseminating information on the EC's biotechnology, healthcare and SME/industry related activities (research and SME funding instruments, industrial and pharma policy, health legislation and regulatory environment, cluster support, etc.), the Commission's presence serves also as a meeting and networking hub for the European biotech and health care related networks, clusters, industry and trade associations which otherwise would not be able to afford a presence at the BIO Convention.

- Rent for the exhibition space
- Logistics, installation, maintenance and dismantling of the EC pavilion (via a competent operator)

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

More than 500 visitors passed by at the EC pavilion gathering information materials. All together we carried out more than 50 one-on-one talks at our pavilion informing interested visitors in-depth about our activities, programs and initiatives mostly regarding the EMA's regulatory work, public funding program for research and drug development (Horizon 2020, COSME), cluster support, etc. 12 mini-workshops took place at the EC pavilion organised by our stakeholders (European Medicines Agency, Innovative Medicines Initiative, Enterprise Europe Network, cluster and business associations, etc.). The mini-events were well attended with an own pavilion. DG GROW D3 organised and moderated a session in the Educational Programming. It focused on the biosimilar competition in Europe and featured our work on biosimilar medicinal products.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The funding of the BIO Convention project by DG GROW was discontinued. The Commission's presence will be ensured by DG RTD in the future.

4. INDICATORS

Number of visitors: 500+

Number of mini-workshop at pavilion: 12

GRO/SME/15/F/S219 - Industrial Policy Initiative for the pharmaceutical industry

- MULTISTAKEHOLDERS WORKSHOP ON THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY (15/4/2015, RIGA, LATVIA).
- MULTISTAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP ON UPTAKE OF AND ACCESS TO BIOSIMILAR MEDICINAL PRODUCTS (6/10/2015, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM)

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The objective was to facilitate exchange of information/views on issues relating to pricing & reimbursement decisions on pharmaceuticals, on uptake of biosimilar medicinal products and pharmaceutical policies in general, between member states representatives and other relevant stakeholders such as the pharmaceutical industry, patients, insurers, etc. Pricing and reimbursement decisions are exclusively national competency so any exchange of information is important for involved parties.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The topics discussed in multi stakeholders meetings (including the workshop on uptake of biosimilars) enabled exchange of views on national policies relating to pricing & reimbursement of pharmaceuticals and the impact of biosimilar competition on their uptake. This type of collaboration has been taken forward by the current Dutch Presidency; it is mentioned in a set of Council Conclusions scheduled for adoption by EPSCO Council in June 2016. The draft text underlined the importance of continuing multi stakeholders meetings in the area of pharmaceuticals.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

Continue facilitation of this kind of collaboration, based on the interest expressed by the participants.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

Further concrete steps not decided yet (the next stakeholder workshop on biosimilars took place on 20 June 2016).

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation under existing FWCs (order forms).

65.000 EUR initially allocated, 47.500 EUR committed, 17.500 EUR reallocated, 39.434,62 paid.

6. INDICATORS

MULTI STAKEHOLDERS WORKSHOP ON THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY (15/4/2015, RIGA, LATVIA):

The targeted participants were all present: 29 MS and EEA countries, 6 organisations of public interest, 6 organisations of private interest, 4 Commission services and a decentralised agency (EMA).

Two meetings per year back to back with a Presidency event sponsored by DG GROW on related subjects (CAPR).

Detailed minutes approved by the participants published on CIRCA.

MULTI STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP ON UPTAKE OF AND ACCESS TO BIOSIMILAR MEDICINAL PRODUCTS:

The target number of participants (80) have been reached (98). The target number of participants from Member States and public interest organisations (patients and doctors, each 15) have been reached as well (19 MS, 20 doctors', 21 patients' representatives).

Report on biosimilar competition and on event outcome published on website (number of hits: *to be added*). http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=8969

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Marsh, AMEX, Eurest, expert.

The action is beneficial to all participants who can network and learn from each other on current trends regarding pricing and reimbursement and sustainability of their systems. These meetings are especially important for the industry, as they have very few opportunities to discuss with MS in particular on pharmaceuticals and notably issues concerning pricing and reimbursement policies of pharmaceuticals.

GRO/SME/15/F/S224 - Conference on construction with the Latvian presidency

Ad-hoc grant to Latvian Presidency of the Council for the organisation of a conference to raise the political profile of construction regarding its contribution to the achievement of Europe 2020 - EU Construction Week 2015 in Latvia

SI2.708821

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The objective of the action, the EU Construction Week 2015 in Latvia, was to address some of the specific topics for the construction sector, in particular energy efficiency, standardisation and safety aspects and also to add the visibility to the sector, in line with relevant COM policies. The action brought together professionals working in various aspects of commercial and residential construction, research, planning and design, inspection as well as policy makers from the Baltic Sea Region and the EU level. The event provided a forum for the exchange of ideas and best practice in promoting sustainable construction for SMEs.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The action was implemented via a series of events focusing on various construction topics on 2-5 June 2015. Seven events/meetings/conferences were attended by more than 600

participants (local, regional, European). The topics primarily discussed were energy efficiency, standardisation and safety in the construction sector, which all matter for SMEs in the sector. The events served as fora for awareness raising, exchange of information, good practice, views on tackling the future challenges and overall vision for the discussed topics, at level appropriate to the participants.

A short overview and summary of the action is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HXhr4CJ9Bg>

The action tackled the climate change indirectly, as the energy efficiency in the construction sector was one of its prominent topics.

The action was fully implemented, primarily during that week. Latvia will repeat the action also in 2016 (31/5-3/6), although at national level only.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The action was fully implemented on 19/5-18/6 2015, no follow-up funded from COSME is expected. Latvia will repeat the action also in 2016 at national level, and plan to do it in 2017 as well.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): NO

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 19 MAY 2015 (RETROACTOIVITY CLAUSE)

END OF THE PROJECT: 18 JUNE 2015

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Awarded amount: 39.245,12

Finally paid amount: 22.063,38

It was a grant to Presidency, so no other offers were received.

6. INDICATORS

The objective of this measure was to enhance dialogue with various stakeholders in order to discuss how to address challenges of the Union economy, to build and disseminate sectorial knowledge, to increase coherence and cooperation between Member States. Also to raise the political profile of construction regarding its contribution to the achievement of Europe 2020 targets.

The events of the action took place, with a good participation of local, regional and international experts. The relevant topics were discussed, conclusions were adopted and information about that was widely disseminated. The most of the events were part of a "long term process" of addressing the challenges to the construction sector. The action is possible to see as another step in achieving the EU goals in the construction sector at national, regional and EU level, especially in the areas of energy efficiency, standardisation and safety aspects.

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

The action was implemented by the Latvian Presidency, represented by the Construction State Control Bureau of Latvia.

GRO/SME/15/S226 - EBO - European Business Organisations

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

Support the EBO Worldwide Network (<http://www.ebowwn.com/>) in order to prepare international activities/visits and disseminate EU information in the interest of the European Industry abroad

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015

The two meetings of the network organised per year (one in Brussels – earlier this week) and one outside the EU (last one was in Seoul in Dec. 2016) aim at ensuring a two-way flow of information between EBOs and the Commission and EEAS, including several DGs (TRADE, DEVCO, ECFIN, FPI, etc.) on different topics such (i) harnessing globalisation, (ii) economic diplomacy, (iii) FTA implementation, (iv) various EU programmes supporting business internationalisation, (v) EU-Africa new impetus for partnership.

The network of EBOs help also them to share best practices in terms of e.g. governance, financing, preparation of individual position papers. This is helpful for preparing the ground for setting new EU chambers of commerce and industry in other countries, e.g. in Latin America or Africa (but EBOs remain a bottom up initiative in the hands of European businesses – we don't fund them). GROW support is only for the travel and accommodation cost of the two annual meeting of EBOWWN, not to fund EBOs as such.

EBOWWN also prepare joint position papers, such as the one EU economic diplomacy available on the website. Representative of EBOWWN presented it at the EPSC event on economic diplomacy organised in Brussels last year.

In general EBOs and the network provide precious info from European business on the ground in third country markets, opportunities, problems and possible solutions. They are well connected to the EU Delegations as well as to the MS chambers of commerce and industry, the MS Trade promotion organisations, and the EU initiatives on the ground such as the EU SME center in China, ELAN biz in LA, etc., therefore contributing to a more joined-up Europe regarding the internationalisation of EU businesses.

All EBOs member of the EBOWWN are registered in the transparency register.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

YEARLY SUPPORT MEASURE

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

1ST JAN 2015 – 31 DEC 2015

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

EXPERT REIMBURSEMENTS: 85.000€

6. INDICATORS

Number of meetings organised per year and attendance by the EBOs: 2 in 2015
Improved access to markets inside the Union and at global level

7. BENEFICIARIESⁱⁱⁱ

European Business Organisations

GRO/SME/15/F/S228 - Workshop on the cumulative impact of EU regulations in the chemicals industry

VALIDATION WORKSHOP FOR STUDY ON THE CUMULATIVE COST ASSESSMENT (CCA) FOR THE EU CHEMICAL INDUSTRY, 21 September 2015, CC Albert Borschette
http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=8389

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

As specified in the technical specifications of the CCA study, after more than a year of managing the contract for the study on Cumulative Cost Assessment, the **Validation workshop** took place, gathering a big and balanced audience of stakeholders which expressed interest in testing the plausibility of the preliminary results achieved. The representatives from Member States, industry associations, chemical companies, trade unions and environmental associations, as well as our colleagues from inside the Commission who closely followed the process – DG GROW, ENV, DG CLIMA, SG, JRC Petten, and the European Chemicals Agency ECHA – were present in order to comment upon the work done by the contractor.

The draft results were presented for the first time.

The study results are linked to a broad **Better Regulation agenda**. REFIT evaluations feed into future policy making. Chemicals legislation has been identified as the one among the most burdensome areas for the EU SMEs. CCAs are a tool under REFIT used to contribute to other **complementary studies** (i.e. international comparison of the regulatory costs = CCA Phase 2), broader **fitness checks** and **review of REACH**.

A **Communication on REFIT** (SWD(2014) 192 final, June 2014) highlights that "A package of initiatives covering regulatory fitness of the chemical sector will be launched in 2014, including a Cumulative Cost Assessment and a Fitness Check of the most relevant chemicals legislation other than REACH" and "Two CCAs on the steel and aluminium industries have already been completed, a CCA has started on the chemical industry and more work is planned for the forest based industries, the ceramics and glass industry and the construction sector. CCAs provide industry-wide assessments of a variety of key cost factors. Given their limited scope and the focus on regulatory costs rather than benefits, CCAs cannot be the sole basis for policy recommendations. Their results will feed into evaluations, Fitness Checks and impact assessments."

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The study as such also analysed the regulatory cost of the climate change legislation among other priority legislative areas. While it has been a fact-finding exercise, not intended to produce any policy recommendations at this stage, its findings will be further assessed under other follow-up actions as part of the overall regulatory environment for the EU chemical industry.

The results show that "emissions and industrial processes" legislative package is responsible for 1/3 of total regulatory costs of the EU chemical industry. Thus, the climate change legislation under this package and possibilities for reduction of regulatory costs, without compromising on other objectives, will continue to be an important study area under the follow-up actions.

The Validation workshop on the Cumulative Cost Assessment (CCA) for the EU chemical industry, chaired by DG GROW.D2, was attended by the consultant Technopolis Group, several chemical companies that contributed with the data, industry associations from the chemical field (detergents, crop protection, chemical distributors, petrochemical producers...), a few MS representatives, the Commission services (GROW, CLIMA, ENV, JRC Petten, SG), ECHA chemical agency and one European trade union, as well as by Mr Daniele Colombo, who performed the peer-review. The workshop as attended altogether by ~ 42 participants.

For the first time the results of the study were presented by the consultant Technopolis Group to the audience. The workshop served for testing the draft results on the regulatory costs of the assessed chemical subsectors and how to put them into a broader context. It discussed how to demonstrate the soundness of the results of the CCA study, possible additional validation steps to reinforce the study and interpretation of conclusions which were tested with the opinion from the audience. The feedback on the results and charts were cross-checked with the sectorial knowledge from participants. The analysis and discussion on this "fact-finding" exercise helped to spot weak points and areas that shall be further studied as case studies under the 2 related studies, i.e. the International comparison of regulatory costs and the Fitness Check of the chemical legislation (other than REACH).

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

Follow up actions:

- 1- International comparison of the EU regulatory costs
- 2- Fitness check of the chemical legislation (other than REACH)
- 3- REACH review 2017 [as a preparation to the next evaluation of REACH in 2017, DG GROW is launching or has conducted already several studies:
 - Study to monitor the impacts of the REACH Regulation on innovation, competitiveness and SMEs (finalized in December 2015) and 2 upcoming studies – under GROW.D1 responsibility.]

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

Workshop already took place: 21 September 2015 in Brussels.

Related:

- 1) study International comparison of cumulative regulatory costs for the chemical industry - Considerations on competitiveness issues concerning the sector – end of the study expected in Q3 2017, publication of the call = 10/12/2015 (contract notice), starting date of the contract 02/05/2016.

2) Fitness check of the chemical legislation (other than REACH) – to be completed in 2017 (end of the key supporting study expected in Q4 2016). Further detail in the published roadmap.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Initially reserved amount: 15.000 euros

Committed: 2.600 euros (sandwich lunch & payment of the independent peer reviewer included)

no travel expenses offered

Low value procedure < 15.000 euros used.

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Expert performing a peer-review of the study and actively participating in the Workshop.

GRO/SME/15/F/S229 - High-level Conference on Sustainable and Clean Industries

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

One-day conference.

Panellists from different sectors and different company sizes, from global conglomerates to innovative SMEs.

Two commissioners and a vice-president gave speeches.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

SMEs have shown an active participation in the conference.

The success of the conference inspired the creation of the High Level Expert Group on Energy Intensive Industries, first meeting of which took place 18th of December 2015.

The outcome of the conference has contributed to the development of EURICS (European Integrated Research, Innovation and Competitiveness Strategy that has an important SME dimension.

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

Due to budget restrictions follow-up conferences have not been foreseen.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): N/A

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: N/A

END OF THE PROJECT: 03.03.2015

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

13013.93€ COMMITMENT (SI2.702011) FOR PAYMENT OF HOTEL INVOICE– NEGOTIATED PROCEDURE VIA PURCHASE ORDER.

6. INDICATORS

150 PARTICIPANTS

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

N/A

GRO/SME/15/F/S230 - Conference on Social Economy and Social Enterprises under the LU Presidency.

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

The Luxembourgish EU Council Presidency organized a **Conference on Social Economy and Social Enterprises** on the 3rd and 4th of December 2015 in Luxembourg (Plateau du Kirchberg).

Social Economy was one of the priorities of the Luxembourgish Presidency. The Luxembourgish government is convinced that social economy can contribute to an economic transformation that would serve employment, social justice and sustainable development, both nationally and at EU level. The Conference was in line with our policy carried out via the Social Business Initiative and dedicated actions for the development of social economy.

The Conference is the continuity of the conferences organized by the Greek Presidency in June 2014 in Heraklion and the Italian Presidency in November 2014 in Rome. The targeted audience consisted in experts and representatives of the different administrations of the Member States (economy and finance and/or social affairs mainly) as well as of national and European organizations /institutions.

The Commission co-financed via an Adhoc grant the event.

[HTTP://WWW.EU2015LU.EU/EN/AGENDA/2015/12/03-04-CONF-ECONOMIE-SOCIALE/INDEX.HTML](http://www.eu2015lu.eu/en/agenda/2015/12/03-04-conf-economie-sociale/index.html)

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The conference gathered around 350 persons to discuss issues related to social enterprises. It was an opportunity to comment the Council Conclusions on Social Economy adopted the same week.

A GECES meeting took place in Luxembourg at the same time in order to progress on the expert report that was published in October 2016.

During that conference, the representatives of the Governments of France, Italy, Luxembourg, Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Spain adopted a declaration paving the way for a more comprehensive ecosystem for social economy enterprises in Europe.

<http://www.eu2015lu.eu/fr/actualites/communiques/2015/12/04-declaration-luxembourg/>

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The GECES report was endorsed in October 2016 and led to the preparation of different actions for the social economy. Those actions are currently being implemented at European and MS level. Based on the success of the LU Conference, SK prepared another Conference in December 2016 in Bratislava.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT):

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 01.11.2015

END OF THE PROJECT: 04.12.2015 (*END OF THE CONFERENCE*)

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Commitment: € 100 000

Final report received.

6. INDICATORS

Number of persons present: 350

Numerous best practices exchanged within stakeholders to overcome challenges of the social economy, to build and disseminate knowledge and to increase cooperation between them.

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Luxemburgish Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social and Solidarity Economy (MTEESS)

GRO/SME/15/F/S234 - European Smart and Living City Conference 2015

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

European Smart and Living City Conference 2015

The objectives of this conference was to bring together high-level European, national and regional cluster, entrepreneurship and SME policy makers, business organisations and business representatives, researchers and practitioners to present and debate the latest policy priorities, opportunities and challenges for making better use of smart city and mobile applications/services to support growth and a more entrepreneurial and competitive Europe.

Day 1 of the conference consisted of 4 modules, each including public and private perspectives, concrete case study illustrations as well as interactive roundtable discussions: Digital for growth (EU & Lux policy initiatives); Smart skills for smart cities (competences, co-working & collaborative innovation platforms); Smart buildings for a better living (sustainable building, green electricity, living city); Paris Smart City 2050.

Day 2 was organised as a series of parallel co-creation workshops where participants co-created Luxembourg's Living City concept, highlighting elements that would be replicable in other European cities.

The conference was organized by Luxinnovation, the national innovation agency, and Neobuild, the technological innovation pole for sustainable construction, under the auspices of the Luxembourg EU Presidency in close collaboration with EASME and the Commission services.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The 1 1/2 day conference, which took place in Luxembourg on 1-2 December 2015, was entitled "Disrupt Your City to Smarten It Up!", and it brought together more than 300 stakeholders from across Europe with a strong presence of smart city & digital entrepreneurs.

Bringing stakeholders from across Europe together to exchange concrete experience and views on pertinent topics related to smart city development and urban living has ensured that different regional and national policies, initiatives and practices have been shared and disseminated across Europe. Especially the co-creation workshops directly engaged participants in dialogues on what works and what doesn't, under which circumstances and how best to go about implementing new smart solutions in cities. These exchanges should inspire future initiatives and actions in Europe and open up for more networking and collaboration across regions and between cities.

On 25 March 2016, the Lux organisers together with the Luxembourg Smart City Institute held a workshop "Smart and Living Cities" as a follow-up to the conference to extract lessons from the conference and continue the reflections on how to best design the cities of the future. The workshop gathered representatives of city administrations, developers, energy providers, urbanists, architects and entrepreneurs.

The final report was submitted on 28 September 2016 and the final payment effected on 8 December 2016.

YouTube video of the event: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yNIHZC8M0GY>

3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

N/A.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT):

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 17 JULY 2015

END OF THE PROJECT: 16 JULY 2016

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The budget available for the conference was €150.000 representing max. 60% of total costs.

Ad-hoc grant to Luxinnovation and Neobuild in the context of the Luxembourg EU Presidency.

6. INDICATORS

1. N° of participants attending the conference: While the target was 350 participants, 200+ persons attended the event. The shortfall was mainly due to 'competition' from other LUX

Presidency events which were clustered around the same dates as well as the popularity of the Smart city concept in other international events.

2. Level and quality of invited speakers and experts: As planned, the level and quality was high which was clearly reflected in the participant evaluations.

3. Degree of satisfaction with conference content, format and practical organisation as measured through post-conference evaluation survey of participants and speakers: The overall satisfaction rate was high.

7. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Luxinnovation & Neobuild.

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENDITURES

GRO/SME/15/F/S015 - Corporate communication campaign on COSME benefits for SMEs

1. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED MEASURE

As the COSME programme was not well known yet, a corporate campaign was necessary to raise awareness of its benefits for SMEs. Moreover, the campaign contributed, in certain cases, to the achievements of COSME's objectives (by calling, for example, SME owners for the action of making use of the EEN's local support services).

The corporate communication campaign on COSME benefits for SMEs targeted 9 million SMEs owners in Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy and Spain. The Member States were selected on the basis of different criteria: (i) low economic outlook, (ii) bad framework conditions for SMEs, and (iii) lack of engagement with the European project and rising euro scepticism. It was rolled out in two phases: Spring 2015 (radio) and Autumn 2015 (online and print advertising).

The objectives of the communication strategy for SMEs were:

- >Filling the gap between SMEs needs and available opportunities
- >Bringing corporate and political communication together
- >Defining the narrative with a "go local" approach
- >Continuously assessing the impact of our actions

This action is therefore in line with the long-term strategy on how best to communicate the COSME programme.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT IN 2015-2016

The campaign was properly customised for each target Member State depending on the current situation of the media market and the SMEs sector. The main target group included owners and managers of SMEs and, indirectly, potential entrepreneurs and the general public.

The implementation of the campaign was based on a mix of communication tools combining traditional media (such as radio, print and outdoor advertising) and digital media (such as online newspapers and news media).

A quick look at the impact:

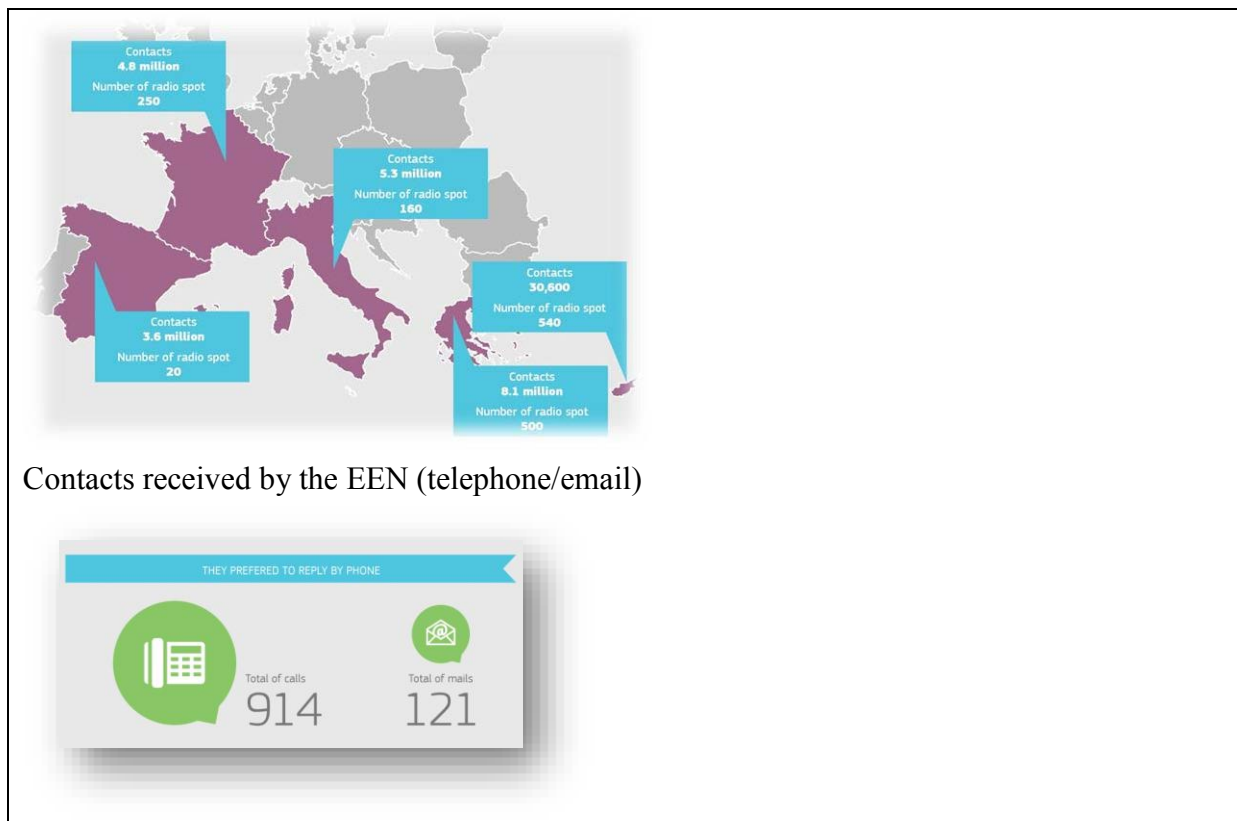
First phase (radio advertising): from 27/04 – 30/06/2015 in all countries

- > 5 million listeners (among SMEs owners) and
- > 23 million contacts

Second phase (print and online advertising): from 11/09 to 30/10/2015 in 3 countries

- > 13 million readers and
- > 16 million of ad -impressions/views and an average Click Through Rate of 0.14%.

More specifically, the impact of the radio campaign (27/04 – 30/06/2015) was:



3. OUTLOOK: WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER 2015/2016?

The campaign finalised by end of 2015 and the results were indeed presented and communicated to different Commission services such as the External Communication Network, and to stakeholders.

4. IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

PUBLICATION OF THE CALL (WHERE RELEVANT): INVITATION TO TENDERS WERE SENT (BY EMAIL AND POST) ON 29 JULY 2014

FORESEEN STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT: 5 DECEMBER 2014

END OF THE PROJECT: NOVEMBER 2015

5. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The available budget (€ 863,614.00 on budget line n° 02.010401) was committed, since the contract for the implementation of the campaign was awarded to Mostra for a total amount of € 862.591,80.

6. BENEFICIARIES/CONTRACTORS

Mostra