

REPORT

PARTNER:

CLEANTECH BULGARIA

EVENT:

**REPORT FROM REGIONAL CASE STUDY IN
BULGARIA**

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I. GENERAL OVERVIEW

1. General content



The entrepreneurship environment and culture in the Danube macro-region is weaker and less developed comparing to other EU countries. Young innovators (YIs) in the region often fail to turn their ideas into marketable solutions for variety of reasons, including lack of experience and knowledge, inadequate business support and information, or insufficient funding.

The Danube Energy+ project's general objective is to create an enabling environment that will support Young innovators to pioneer a change in the energy efficiency area by setting up highly innovative start-ups

in the Danube macro-region.

Main activities envisaged for implementation under the project to achieve the set goal

1. Danube Energy+ Ecosystem package – development of an innovative learning system for key actors of regional ecosystems (Public administration, Universities, Business Supporting Actors, SMEs) to advance their knowledge in industry challenges, models and practices for identification, motivation and connection of YIs.
2. Danube Energy+ Tool – establishment of a pre-seed / pre-acceleration learning system for Young innovators (YIs) to support their highly innovative idea in the energy efficiency field.
3. Mutual learning process at transregional level - carrying out of 2 physical and 8 virtual workshops to increased knowledge of project partners (PPs) and indirectly support also YIs through expert knowledge-based Tool and Package.
4. Learning package for regional ecosystem actors – development for advancing their knowledge during the Pilot of Danube Energy+ Package on regional level through their participation in several regional activities aside of project partners.
5. Pilot of Danube Energy+ Package in all regions – development and implementation of Package to build capacities of ecosystem actors to create enabling environment for Young innovators + facilitate further cooperation inside ecosystem.
6. Training scheme for Young innovators – development and implementation of training scheme in which the Young innovators are taking part in the Pilot of Danube Energy+ Tool which will directly benefit from learning process within the pre-acceleration scheme.

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7. *Mutual learning during implementation of Pilots* - Partners and ASPs will learn mutually from each other on transregional level through joint Package Pilot implementation, monitoring and impact measurement process.

Expected Results: Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to increase competences for business and social innovation (survey based composite indicator)

Expected Outputs: Danube Energy+ will result in establishment of enabling environment for Young innovators to further strengthen innovation ecosystem and entrepreneurial spirit, especially in area of energy efficiency. This enabling environment will be built on three key elements achieved by the project, each relevant to one specific objective: to advance knowledge of key regional stakeholders in boosting Young innovators (Specific Objective 1), to boost Young innovators towards successful ventures (Specific Objective 2) and to set-up sustainable structures in regional ecosystems to create long-term enabling environment (Specific Objective 3).

Project will intensify cooperation of stakeholders through their engagement in the Danube Energy + ecosystem Package by joint design, pilot monitoring, evaluation and by the development of Action plans. It will engage 9 regional public administrations, 90 Young innovators who were selected for Danube Energy+ Tool Pilot, 9 Regional Alliances, 9 Regional Hubs & 2 working groups (responsible for content of the learning scheme).

Young innovators will benefit from strengthened competences gained through pre-acceleration learning scheme, which will further develop their general business knowledge (business development, marketing, sales, finance) & specific industry knowledge in the energy efficiency sector.

Through improved enabling environment, participating territories will benefit from strengthened entrepreneurial spirit resulting in new business ventures oriented towards the sustainable energy in long-term period.

Project partners

<p>Lead Partner: KIC InnoEnergy Germany GmbH Address: Albert-Nestler-Str 26, D-76131 Karlsruhe, Germany Legal status: public Website: www.innoenergy.com/office/germany/</p>	<p>Partner's Name: SEE ICT Address: Savska 5/1, 11000 Beograd, Serbia Legal status: private Website: www.startit.rs</p>	<p>Partner's Name: E-KLASTER Czech Republic a.s. Address: Bohdalecká, Michle 1460/8, 101 00 Praha 10, Czech Republic Legal status: private Website: www.e-accelerator.cz</p>
<p>Partner's Name: Asociatia Central Start-up Transilvania Address: Pitesti Street 19/2 Cluj-Napoca, Romania Legal status: private</p>	<p>Partner's Name: Фондация 'Клийнтех България' Address: TsarigradskoShousse, Sofia Tech Park, Business</p>	<p>Partner's Name: ABC Accelerator, razvoj start-upov in mladih podjetij, d.o.o Address: Šmartinska cesta 152, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia Legal status: private</p>

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Website: www.start-uptransilvania.ro	Incubator building, ground floor 111 B, 1784, Sofia, Bulgaria Legal status: private Website: www.cleantech.bg	Website: https://abc-accelerator.com/slovenia/
Partner's Name: Optimizacija Address: Istarska ulica 47, 10 000 Zagreb, Croatia Legal status: private	Partner's Name: Центр європейських ініціатив Address: Shvabskaya street, 71a, 88018 Uzhhorod, Ukraine Legal status: public Website: www.iardi.org/partners/tsentrv-evropejskyh-initsiat	Partner's Name: Civitta Slovakia, a.s. Address: Ilkovičova 2, 842 16 Bratislava, Slovakia Legal status: private Website: www.neulogy.com

Danube Energy+ Ecosystem Package (Package)

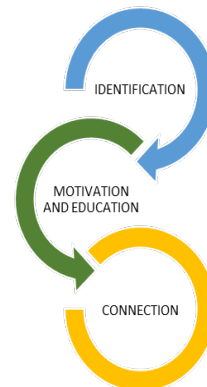
The Package including a Tool is designed with the aim to tackle the aforementioned challenges and is piloted in 9 regions. Thus, engaging Young innovators (YIs) in this region and unlocking their potential to address the energy efficiency specific challenges in the region is a top priority for innovation ecosystem actors.

The Package is developed through learning interaction among project partners and inclusive design process involving key actors of regional ecosystems - regional public authorities, universities, BSOs, SMEs and industry representatives. The Package is composed of **two main elements**:

- 1) best practices, models and experiences in identification, motivation and connection of YIs to ecosystem actors
- 2) Danube Energy+ Tool development as a pre-acceleration learning scheme for YIs boosting their competences to start successful ventures.

The Package helps create an enabling environment for innovation by guiding ecosystem actors in:

- 1) Identification of YIs in their ecosystems
- 2) Motivation of YIs to further develop their disruptive ideas to marketable solutions
- 3) Implementation of the Danube Energy+ Tool to boost knowledge of YIs to scale-up their ideas to ventures
- 4) Connection of YIs with other key stakeholders in regional ecosystems



2. Objective of this document

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The primary goal of the Regional case studies is to give users opportunity to see the partner's step-by-step approaches and lessons learned during the implementation of the project for creating an enabling entrepreneurship environment to unlock YIs potential in Danube macro-region.

3. Management summary

This case study shows how regional ecosystem actors gain first-hand experience and knowledge from the whole process of implementation of the Tool based on the Danube Energy+ Ecosystem Package presented in the following structure:

1. General description of the pilot in 9 partner countries (identification, motivation and connection process of Young innovators and boost regional ecosystem cooperation)
2. Outcomes:
 - a) Effectiveness of applied methods for reaching out to YIs (lessons learned, cooperation with, traps)
 - b) Lessons learned from the pilot from different perspectives
 - c) Success stories and regional impact

The imposed restrictive measures on the spread of the coronavirus pandemic in the partners' countries reflected on the implementation of the Tool based on Danube Energy+ Ecosystem Package. The degree of readiness of the individual project partners to address these challenges led to a scenario in which these Tool Pilots were taken at two 'speeds' or in two time periods as follows:

January - July 2020: Germany, Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, Serbia and the Czech Republic

January - October 2020: Slovenia, Ukraine and Slovakia

The partners decided to develop the Regional case studies as an open document. The information has to be supplemented periodically according to the implementation of the Pilot's steps per each of the individual project partners.

II. SUMMARY OF PROJECT PARTNERS' CASE STUDIES

Breeding ground of Bulgarian Young innovators ideas

1. General description of the pilot

The implementation of the pilot scheme in Bulgaria was carried out on the basis of consistent application of the steps defined in Danube Energy+ Ecosystem Package, as well as on the previous experience and lessons learnt by the Cleantech Bulgaria's team in identifying, motivating and developing young technological entrepreneurs in the region.

Identification and motivation phase.

The half-a-day visits were organized in the framework of a series of lectures led by leading experts from different leading universities in the country, where the objectives of the project and the benefits for the participating Young innovators were presented, such us:



- ✓ *New Bulgarian University*: 1) Department of Information Technology; 2) Department of Management and Business Administration, 'Risk Management' class and 3) MSc 'Business Management';
- ✓ *Technical University Sofia*: 1) international BSc class 'Production strategies', 2) as well as an open-door session open to all students from all programs of the Technical University of Sofia;
- ✓ *University of National and World Economy*: 1) Faculty 'Economy of natural resources' and 2) Innovation Management BSc – English;
- ✓ *Sofia University, Economics Faculty*: Master program Business Administration;

Several Cleantech Bulgaria' networking events were used as a platform for the identification of young people, such us:



- ✓ Demo Day of the EIT Climate-KIC Accelerator program.
- ✓ 2020 edition of EIT Climate-KIC professional mobility program for climate innovation 'Pioneers into Practice' in Bulgaria
- ✓ Cleantech Bulgaria's Annual Networking Event.

The events were attended by a large audience, including potential applicants for the Danube Energy+ Tool like students, Young innovators, young professionals and start-ups, but also investors, members of the Regional Alliance, representatives of the Bulgarian Associated partner Sofia Tech Park, representatives of public institutions (e.g. Ministry of Economy), different universities, research institutes and business.



2 motivational workshops named 'Founders info day: Green entrepreneurship opportunities 2020' were organized within the Puzl Co-working space and the New Bulgarian University. To maximize outreach, a Facebook event was created jointly by Cleantech Bulgaria and the venue-owner Puzl co-working space. Members of the Regional Alliance were also invited. As a real-life example of this scene, Dr. Vanyo Vezirov was invited in the New Bulgarian University to share his experience in green entrepreneurship. Vanyo is the

founder and CEO of OSImplants – a company which produces sustainable 3D-printed implants for surgical operations. OSImplants was supported through a start-up acceleration program, thanks to which the company refined its business model, made its first prototypes and found clients. Dr. Vezirov shared his story. He also brought a prototype of the product of OSImplants which truly impressed the participants.

Application phase.

The Bulgarian Open Call for Young innovators was launched on 28th of January and the application deadline was in 13th of March 2020 and 14 application forms were obtained. The Open Call for mentors and evaluators lasted from the 28th of January until the 28th of February 2020. The evaluation committee was composed of three experts that started working in the beginning of March 2020. Due to the specifics of the application platform, the evaluation committee was given time to check the admissibility of the applicants and to evaluate the applications. The evaluation process went smooth since the evaluators had previous experience in this. Thus, the evaluation process was complete on the 6th of April 2020 and the applicants were informed about the final decision on the 7th of April 2020. 11 teams were approved: 10 teams or individual YIs, and 1 team of innovators up to 35 years old. The YIs ideas are in the following general business fields: Cleaner electricity production; Sustainable bio farming; Environment; Circular economy; Air flight control; Energy Efficiency.

Training phase.

The Bulgarian Pilot was organized in 4 x 6-hour sessions with all participants. Additionally, the participants were given homework assignments which they did in their own time and it is estimated at approximately 12 hours of work. Each team had 2x one-on-one sessions to practice their pitches and receive individual feedback on them.

The Pilot was implemented virtually with 10 YIs team using the professional version of the online conference system **Zoom**. Google Hangouts was used for the one-on-one sessions. Additionally, the platform [Miro](#) was used to fill in some of the materials (e.g. lean business model canvas).

The whole program went extremely well. The sessions with the successful start-up representatives were very much appreciated by the Young innovators such as:

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- ✚ Jivko Stefanov from Gamera - a successful Bulgarian energy start-up producing sustainable clean energy-efficient household heating stoves was invited to present his success story. The participants found that the motivational start-up brought a lot of added value to the program.
- ✚ The Guest speaker from TokWise (an AI-driven, data-centric platform that helps energy market players increase profit margin) inspired the YIs with stories of their roadmap and advises.

YIs found that combining the theoretical parts with practical examples (e.g. talking about business models – sharing the business model of a successful start-up), gave them a more intuitive understanding of the material at hand.

The complete Pilot **Demo Day** was held virtually on the 30th of April 2020 (due to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak) using the professional version of Zoom, which gives access to private ‘rooms’ where participants can be split to have conversations one-on-one rather than with all participants.

The event was split into three main parts:

- **the introductory session**, during which the Danube Energy+ project and Ecosystem Package was presented by the project’s communication manager;
- **the Demo Day session**, during which the accepted teams that participated in the Pilot of the Danube Energy+ Tool pitched their developed business ideas in the sustainable energy sector;
- **the networking session**, during which the Young innovators connected to the attendees of the event and have a discussion.

The 10 teams pitched their ideas:

- Sun Power Invest - ‘Profitable option for your savings, with great impact to the world.’
- InnoFarm - ‘Reinventing Agriculture’
- BUTMA/project Hors - ‘Digitalizing the Sky’
- Utilaste ‘Making the most out of your waste.’
- Gordost Na Fermera - ‘Gordost Na Fermera helps small farmers increase the shelf life and market value of their perishable fruits, vegetables, and herbs through the introduction of innovative solar food dehydrators.’
- Commuty - ‘Connecting urban commuters’
- JT Mobile - ‘New era of long-range efficient e-SUV’s powered by recyclable batteries and sun energy’
- Flowertising ‘Beneficial advertizing to the business and their customers.
- Hec Sustainability - ‘Bring sustainability into your everyday life’
- Kostadin Chonkov - ‘Integrated solution for customers of district heating systems and centralized heating’

The event ended with an online networking session, during which a discussion was held between the Young innovators and some members of the audience. During this discussion session, overall

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feedback on the Pilot of the DE+ Tool was exchanged, as well as questions and comments regarding the Young innovator's ideas.

Connecting events.

Five connecting events were organized for 4 highly motivated and hardworking YIs team in person. The aim of the meetings is to connect YIs with experienced experts who will give them feedbacks and insights important for successful development of ventures. During the meetings, the YIs presented their business ideas and progress in their implementation. Expert and in-depth feedback is provided to the participating YIs to help them in the next steps of development. Contacts have been made with representatives of the Bulgarian innovation ecosystem. The cooperation between the team of Sofia Tech Park proved to be effective, providing various opportunities for Young innovators to present their business ideas at various investor's fora and events.

2. Outcomes

The Tool Pilots in figures	BG
Students reached	110
Young innovators trained	22
Highly innovative ideas created, developed and shared	10
Mentors engaged in the intense program	5
People attended the Demo Days!	56
People familiar with the DE+ project	520

a. Effectiveness of applied methods for reaching out to YI

The implementation of the pilot scheme of the project was organized in the beginning of 2020 according to the project schedule. Choosing the right approach to identify and motivate Young innovators is essential to achieve the goals set in the project in order to unlock the potential of young entrepreneurs in the region. The Cleantech Bulgaria team uses various channels to reach and activate Young innovators such as:

- ✓ well established contacts with leading universities in the country
- ✓ networking events of Cleantech Bulgaria
- ✓ EIT Climate KIC formats for Young innovators
- ✓ Posting at social medias
- ✓ Networking with local ecosystem

Activities to motivate Young innovators were carried out in person before the introduction of restrictive measures in relation to the coronavirus pandemic, which increased their effectiveness. The

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half-day visits were realized in the months of January and February with well-selected partners - leading universities and locations of the target group.

The two motivational events were followed by both approaches - a popular shared co-working space and a university, as well as an online connection with invited representatives of the ecosystem and the target group of Young innovators. As guests they were invited to present their businesses several successful start-ups of the Accelerator Program of Cleantech Bulgaria.

An important focus for promoting the project and motivating Young innovators to participate was placed on the annual events of Cleantech Bulgaria such as: The Demo day of the Accelerator Program and the Annual Meeting of Cleantech Bulgaria Stakeholders and Partners. Furthermore, information about the project was disseminated among the network of the Bulgarian ecosystem, and personal contacts with representatives of the target group were also used.

b. Lessons learned from the pilot from different perspectives

i. General – from the perspective of the PPs – organizer

Application phase. For the purpose of the call, using the platform F6S was unnecessary. The reason for this is that the applicants were very early-stage (as this is the target group of the Danube Energy+ Tool), so many of the questions they had to answer as part of their registration for F6S were unnecessary (e.g. team description for those applicants who don't have a team; funding record etc.). As F6S is an open platform, there were applicants from ineligible regions (e.g. India), as they had discovered about the Danube Energy+ Tool through the platform.

Furthermore, there was no way to directly mark the eligibility criteria questions, specifically so that the applicants who do not fulfil them would be automatically removed. This meant that it will be better to make the application form in a survey form with specific targeted questions about the program, rather than in F6S, which is more complicated to use and is not so popular among early-stage entrepreneurs, such as the Young innovators applying. Although no direct information can be given, it can be assumed that people who would have applied for the Pilot of the Danube Energy+ Tool did not apply due to the extra steps required through F6S.

Training phase. An initial scanning was performed on the applications (before the ranking was realized by the expert evaluators) jointly between the project team and the mentors. Based on this scanning, it was seen the applicants were a mix of ideas, teams, and individuals. Based on this knowledge, the exact structure and agendas of the sessions were defined to best suit the needs of the applicants. The topics and their structure were based on the developed Danube Energy+ Tool document that was agreed upon with the partners.

The main positive and negative conclusions of the *Demo Day* are as follows:

- The main outcome was that all participating teams successfully pitched their developed business ideas.

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- The negative aspect related to the fact that the networking and connection between YIs and stakeholders works better when realized in person, as it adds a more natural sense to the event.
- The main benefit of the online implementation of the 3rd RNT/Demo Day was the fact that an international audience was present, which would have been impossible with a physical event. Members of the transnational Danube Energy+ project team attended the event, as well as international stakeholders from the network of Cleantech Bulgaria. Among the attendees were: representatives of the Municipality of Emilia-Romana, Italy; representatives of an American start-up accelerator; representatives of the Bulgarian business and education sector (including members of the Regional Alliance), as well as university students.

ii. Feedback from YIs (general)

Application phase. The opportunity to participate in the project was met with interest by the representatives of the target group. One of the concerns of the target group, shared during the half-day visits to the universities was that they do not have enough expertise to generate ideas in the field of energy, which can be eliminated by creating a team of Young innovators with different technical expertise.

During the training phase the most valuable themes for YIs are:

- Understanding the customer's needs and the role of the client in their venture
- How to optimize various aspects of their marketing strategy and determining the price that customers are willing to pay for the YI's solution within a Successful viral growth technique as Minimum Viable Product (MVP).
- Attracting funding and other resources – not only by pitching to potential investors, but different funding sources, as well as strategies to attract relevant experts to become members of their team. Although this knowledge is somewhat specific to the business idea, definitely more thorough guidance on these matters would be of use for the participants.
- Individual meetings for each team with the mentors. During the meetings teams pitched their ideas and received feedback and advice on how to improve their pitches.

The following general feedback from the participants was collected:

- A session on attracting the necessary funding and resources to further develop the YI's ideas would be very beneficial
- More time (so more than 1 lecture and 2 one-on-one sessions) about presentation and pitching skills would be of use to the participants
- The participation of successful energy start-ups was very much appreciated by the participants and acted not only as a motivational factor for them, but also as a strong learning incentive

- Mixed feedback was provided regarding the online format of the Pilot: some participants indicated that they were very satisfied with it, while other participants indicated that they would have appreciated physical sessions (which due to the COVID-19 pandemic was unfortunately impossible).

Connecting events. Young innovators learned that pitching trains the storytelling skills and practicing helps being clear and compelling. Having a clear and strong call to action allows the audience potentially to follow up with the team. Also focusing on the two main purposes of a call to action: to tell the audience what they should do and give them the motivation to do so.

iii. Feedback from other stakeholders (incl. mentors)

The Regional members Alliance experience confirmed the conclusion that founders with passion, commitment, and attachment to the problem in hand are more likely to deliver long term results. It was summarised that the diligence is a key quality to success and mentoring plays a very important role in the development process.

c. Success stories and regional impact

i. Success examples

Name of the start-up company: **BUTMA**



copyright: @ NASA, [Emerging regulations, UAS traffic management news](#)

Business field: *IoT and digitalization*

Short presentation of the business idea and problems resolving:

The fully digitalized advanced air mobility and airspace traffic management tool is a system that speeds up the process which relieves both the operators and the authorities. The purpose of the tool is to safely share flight data between authorities/air traffic controllers/drone operators that need it and have authorization to view it. The tool will be slightly different from the Air Traffic Control system used by the ANSP and CAA in the current commercial flights.

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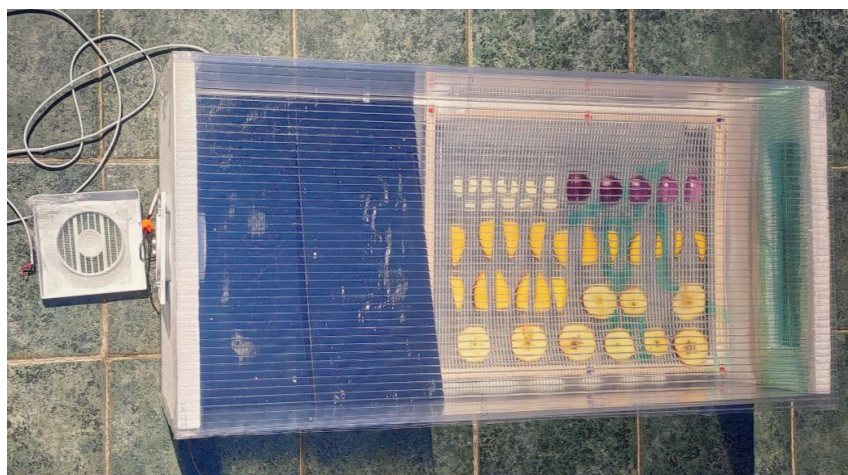
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Main advantages of the business idea:

In May 2019, Europe agreed on a set of rules and procedures for the operation of drones. These rules will be implemented by the Member States and the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) by mid-2020. The YI ambition is for Bulgaria to fully participate in the process of creating regulations for drones. The YI created a blog and soon after established contacts with the DroneRegIM initiative of UVS International - an organization recognized as an advisor to the European Aviation Safety Agency.

Name of the start-up company: **Gordost na fermata (Pride of the farm):**



copyright: @Bhushan, Gordost na fermata

Business field: *Sustainable eco farming*

Short presentation of the business idea and problems resolving

The business idea aims to solve one of the main problems facing small farms producing fruits and vegetables: „Produce goes bad quickly; Farmers are under time pressure; Which makes them sell at dump prices“.

The ambition of the young innovator Bhushan is to complete the pilot prototype of a solar dehydrator for fruits and vegetables with rapid removal of moisture at a regulated drying temperature of up to 58 degrees Celsius, and in short term to have connections to big companies, who are ready to take the farmer's produce for a socially aware line of products.

Main advantages of the business idea:

 <p>1 NO POVERTY</p>	<p>To be an income-generating/boosting asset for extremely small-scale farmers living under the poverty line of Bulgaria.</p>	 <p>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p>	<p>To increase the productivity and profitability of small-scale farmers by focusing on value-added food products.</p>
 <p>7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY</p>	<p>To be affordable and powered by Sun's energy. Adopting these will increase Bulgaria's share of renewable energy in the total mix.</p>	 <p>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p>	<p>To help preservation of food by drying and increasing its shelf life. This significantly reduces food wastage post-harvest.</p>

The most active Young innovators received support from the team of Cleantech Bulgaria through information and consultations for open opportunities (programmes of other donors in the country, operational program 'Innovation and competitiveness, etc.) for further development of their ideas. For example, **Stefan Hristozov (BUTMA) – joined another acceleration program after DE+ - the program of the Carol Knowledge Foundation 'Entrepreneurs in Science' (<https://karollknowledge.bg/>).**

Due to the accumulated knowledge within DE+ and 'Entrepreneurs in Science' of the Carol Foundation, in August 2020 Stefan registered his first company with a platform for training drone operators, an idea inspired by the COVID-situation in the country and the world. This will enable it to accumulate the capital it needs to achieve its main goal, the drone traffic management system establishment. 'We have decided that we have to defragment the proposed system - currently we have people working on an online training platform for drone operators and people working on geo-awareness maps. This will serve as MVP.' Their proposal was qualified for the Grand Final of the Jumpstarter Programme of EIT Health, one of the knoweadge community of European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT). The Grand Final will be organised on 25th November 2020.

The founder of the company "**Gordost na fermata**" **Bhushan** joined the "Pioneers into Practice" Program of Climate KIC, implemented in Bulgaria by the partner Cleantech Bulgaria. This gave him the opportunity to work and share experiences with other young innovators to reduce the effects of climate change in various fields.

The **Commuty team** has been invited by [Innovation Capital](#) to take part in the race to join their Accelerator. At this stage, they are not approved for participation, but the team continues the technical development of the platform for car sharing in urban space.

ii. Impact on other stakeholders (e.g. learning)

Through the 5 connection events, Sofia Tech Park, a project associate partner and member of Regional Alliance committee got in contact with the participants and identified collaboration opportunities with the YIs such as InnoFarm, Commuty and BUTMA.

Prior to the meetings, the Young innovators filled out a questionnaire to a platform (<https://www.f6s.com/stiprogram/apply>) with the purpose of Sofia Tech Park team to get better acquainted with the companies, their profile and their business idea, as well as to plan possible interaction with the laboratories on the territory of the Park. Various opportunities for developing the ideas of Young innovators were discussed. Options for joining interest clubs have been suggested, with contracts such as the biotechnology club - <https://groworking.space/biotechnology-life-sciences-club/>. Also, they given them the floor to present in Clubhouse in front of stakeholders and other start-up companies.

3. Interviews with participating YI and their short idea 'pitches'

Bulgarian Young innovators quote about the participation in the implementation of Danube Energy + Pilot Tool, August 2020:

InnoFarm: Producing leafy greens vegetables in a sustainable and innovative fashion by growing them in controlled environment (vertical farming) while having a clean production free of pesticides, locally grown.



'I particularly enjoyed the most the fact that active Bulgarian entrepreneurs were invited to the event to give us valuable feedback and advices. Moreover, the program had an important theoretical part, which was introduced to us in an entertaining and interactive fashion. It laid the foundations, on which we then attempted to build our own start-up concepts.'

Nikolay Gechev, InnoFarm

Commuty: Car sharing services app to provide to citizens living and working in the urban areas and outskirts.



'The Danube Energy+ program equipped me and my teammates with the tools and knowledge to approach the problems we seek to solve with our solution in mind at the starting phase. It helps you explore the breeding ground for your idea'.

E. Vaklinov, Commuty

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BUTMA: Fully digitalized advanced air mobility and airspace traffic management tool - a sharing system speeding the process to up to minutes relieving both the authorities and the operators. Communication channel between authorities/air traffic controllers/drone operators in case of need. Security and Safety boost sharing flight data with whom has right to view it.



'Cleantech Bulgaria and Danube Energy+ Programme gave us the opportunity to work with extreme professionals and to crystallize our business idea. I really hope we will keep the good working contacts.'

Stefan Hristozov, BUTMA

Gordost na fermata (Pride of the farm): A solar dehydrator for fruits and vegetables with rapid removal of moisture at a regulated drying temperature of up to 58 degrees Celsius is under development.



„Danube Energy is a well-crafted program for early stage ideas. It helps you carve the raw ideas into a solid business design. It is an interesting experience because it broadens your perspective but at the same time narrows your focus on important aspects of making your idea into a reality'.

Bhushan, Gordost na fermera

Sun Power Invest: A platform, that will be able to buy solar PV in big quantities, with better prices. And will offer a FREE installation of 5-30kw to any home - supporting all families with solar energy.



'Thanks to Cleantech Bulgaria and Danube Energy+ Programme, I build my idea, and soon I will have my first renewable energy project!'

Kaloyan Bardarov, Sun Power Invest