



Integrated capacity building and training programme for DANUBE area labour and business support organisations, local industry and entrepreneurs to enter innovative transnational value CHAINS as PEER-level collaboration partners

## Transfer toolbox for BSO/LSO

Deliverable D.T2.4.2

Lead Contractor of the Deliverable: LP Business Upper Austria

December 2022

Project co-funded by European Union funds (ERDF, IPA)



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## Introduction

The main objective of the deliverable D.T2.4.1 is to present a ready-for-rollout guideline for enabling BSO and LSO for a sustainable use of the project results related to SME support.

According to the application form this includes:

At project end, a toolbox consisting of the capacity building methodologies for LSO+BSO as well as the training programme to qualify entrepreneurs and SME, and including the adaptations issued by the evaluation during piloting, will be ready for transfer to further LSO+BSO beyond partnership.

Accordingly, this deliverable aggregates the summary reports and deliverables from several activities from WP T2 and WP T3.

## Capacity building for LSO and BSO

### Methodology for capacity building (D.T2.1.3)

The methodology has been developed as a modular approach for peer-to-peer capacity building among either Labour market stakeholders or Business support organizations and related stakeholders.

As a first step the partner BSO/LSO introduces the Danube Diamond methodology to the invited stakeholders, by explaining the elaboration procedure in detail. Further the PPs can show the already developed Danube diamonds of the 3 selected value chains Wood & Furniture, Mechanical Engineering, Mechatronics & Electronics, for showcasing a practical application of the Methodology.

As a second step the partners explain the outer layer – either the so-called “labour market frame” or the “business innovation frame” – to the stakeholders of the labour market / business support organizations.

The third step tackles the interrelation between the already discussed topic and according elaborated Danube Diamond, and the current situation of either the labour market or the economic situation. This offers the opportunity to focus not only on general issues but also quite new aspects that were raised recently.



### Implementation of Capacity building workshops with LSO and/or BSO (D.T3.1.2)

All project partners invited and engaged local/regional business support organizations' and labour market support organizations' employees, as well as other multipliers (e.g. industry associations), to transfer knowledge about DanubePeerChains approaches and Danube Diamond Methodology, developed within the project activities. These regional peer-level capacity building workshops offered the opportunity to develop, in joint learning interactions, new activities for strengthening the cooperation between regional LSOs and BSOs.

The main aim of this capacity building activity was to introduce the methodology to representatives of LSOs and BSOs and to enable them to use the Danube Diamond methodology for creating transformative activities as well as support measures tailored to their target group.

Peer-to-peer capacity building meetings were held in all partner regions, in native language, in a face-to-face or online setting. All together, 217 stakeholder from the 9 partner countries participated in the 14 implemented workshops.

### Assessment of capacity building activities with LSO and/or BSO (D.T3.3.2) and proposals for improvement

The purpose of assessing the LSO and BSO capacity building workshops was to determine their effectiveness as well as the achieved results. It included determining whether the objectives of the workshops were achieved, seeing how the knowledge and skills learned in the workshops are put into practice, assessing the impacts, assessing whether the workshops were suitable in terms of the contents, timing, participants, and other aspects, and potentially identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the workshops.

Based on the collected data immediately after the LSO/BSO workshops, it can be concluded that most of the workshops met expectations and that the participants managed to learn something useful and practically applicable. Most of the participants managed to recognize the value that these workshops were intended to bring to the representatives of LSO and BSO organizations, as well as to declare in advance that they believe that the content of the workshop can help improve business and strengthen cooperation on the labor market.

On the other hand, several workshops showed inadequate results and somewhat unfulfilled goals and based on the responses of the participants, the reason for this is that the content was not adapted to the target group of participants, who failed to recognize the importance for themselves and the organization they represent.

The according findings are that it is of high importance that the facilitating party adapts the content to the training participants' background, so that they can recognize the way of use in daily business, as well as the organization of on-site workshops instead of online ones, so that they are implemented with maximum quality and that all aspects meet the standards participants are satisfied with.



Further, the project partners were asked to give feedback about the LSO/BSO workshops from their personal point of view and to describe their lessons learnt. The following survey was filled in by all PPs:

1. What is your overall impression about the capacity building workshops?  
(1 ... not that good, 6 ... great) average result: 5,25
2. In your role as organizers, did you have the feeling that the methodology was easy to understand / to follow for the participating BSO / LSO?  
(1 ... not really, 6 ... yes, they easily understood) average result: 5,0
3. Do you rate the Diamond methodology beneficial for capacity building workshops with LSO/BSO?  
(1 ... not really, 6 ... very beneficial) average result: 4,92
4. Do you think, that the Diamond methodology is appropriate for defining potential cooperation topics?  
(1 ... not really, 6 ... very beneficial) average result: 4,92

#### Open questions

5. What are your lessons learnt from the capacity building workshops with BSO / LSO?

##### Answers:

- Both BSOs and LSOs are dealing with similar problems, just in different fields, and all of them are seeking for the same solutions when it comes to the development.
- That it is important to use a result-oriented methodology, closely related to the needs of the participants. Therefore, a correctly chosen methodology in relation to the goal, means a good motivation of the participants to actively search for the best solutions of the challenges.
- The cooperation and structure of target group is very important for identification of transformative activities. The group of participants from workshop should include stakeholders from policy, research & education, civil society and entrepreneurs. Priority areas should be more specific and correlated with participants' mission and core business.
- The group should be not too big, so that everybody can contribute to the discussion.
- Simplifying the methodology (i.e. only one of the outer frames) is advisable if the schedules are tight / and easier to understand for first-time users.
- It is important to choose a challenge that is of high relevance and immediacy for the region as a framework for the development of the Diamond.



6. How would you improve the capacity building, to make it more beneficial for LSO/BSO?

- Greater results would be if the capacity building was held in person rather than online, since in that way an open discussion could be opened for all of the participants to actively participate.
- To introduce such workshops regularly, with intensive and continuous cooperation in the triangle company-LSO/BSO-educational institution
- By multiplying joint LSO/BSO events (i.e. within the technology transfer fairs) and in neighbouring countries starting from digital needs on value chains
- joint LSO+BSO workshops lead to better insight of the challenges of each other

Concludingly, it can be said that the methodology itself is found as appropriate for identifying the actions needed in the regions.

However, it is important to prepare the capacity building workshops thoroughly (relevant / hot topics ) and to invite stakeholders with diverse background (but not too many) to enable an interactive discussion leading to the development of valuable and appropriate actions.

## Training programme to qualify entrepreneurs and SME

### Training methodology (D.T2.2.1)

Regarding the methodologies for qualifying entrepreneurs and SME employees, we strongly capitalized on the know-how gained in previous projects, and in place at selected project partners, respectively.

In particular, in the deliverable D.T2.2.1 several training formats and methods are described, for the different types of trainings which we focused on:

- Face-to-face trainings
  - Seminar
  - Hands-on training
- Online trainings
  - Webinars
  - Video-based lectures
  - Hybrid trainings

In webinars interaction with the participants require much more effort, e.g. through workshops, polls, etc. to enable intensive discussions. On the contrary, Hands-on trainings have the highest rate of active methodologies, since the participants are required to practically apply their knowledge and are therefore constantly activated.

### Value chain oriented training programme (D.T2.2.2/3/4)

The DanubePeerChains partnership has developed a training programme for their local SME and entrepreneurs to enable them to participate in transnational value chains.

The training programme contains an introduction part about digitalization in general, the most relevant digitalization technologies, organizational aspects and human resource topics, business implications of digitalization. These four aspects have been tackled by a basic training, implemented in all partner regions. Further, the project partners have organized regional specialists trainings, about topics that were demanded by their local companies.

The project partners have developed online training modules which specifically focus on the value chain aspect, and/or are related to the value chains that have been closely explored during the project.

1. Sustainability challenges and opportunities in the wood and furniture industry;
2. Enhancing competitiveness through transnational value chains;
3. The importance of digital lean and augmented reality technology for a successful digital transition of business and education;
4. Additive manufacturing and its opportunities in various value chains.

### Implementation of trainings (D.T3.2.2/3/4/5, D.T2.4.1)

The trainings were mainly aimed at promotion of digitization and advanced technologies in the 3 selected value chain fields of Wood & Furniture, Mechanical Engineering, Mechatronics & Electronics.

At project level, 10 basic and 10 specialist trainings were conducted in all project regions. In total, more than 270 participants attended the basic training and/or specialist trainings. Target participants were company employees and entrepreneurs of SMEs and Enterprises. In total, 139 SMEs and 57 enterprises have been upskilled during basic and specialist training.

The companies (mainly SME) that are one chain element of the transformative activities or at least interested in being part of a new value chain, have been supported by PPs and external experts with in-depth know-how in dedicated coaching sessions to generate best benefit from the value chain cooperation. At the project level, 11 Coaching sessions were conducted in all project regions, with ca. 150 participants.

After the project partners agreed on the structure, content, and form of the value-chain oriented online training modules, they had to make them digitally available for target groups, mainly SME/industry representatives and entrepreneurs.

A suitable and highly visible online platform was chosen, and that was LearningKey, an innovative, cloud EdTech platform that enables educators (institutions, organizations, companies, schools, universities, coaches, and trainers) to design and implement comprehensive and interactive learning experiences using just one app for the whole learning process. In summary, the 9 training courses with 17 relevant subtopics on the LearningKey platform, consist of 98 educational videos and were viewed by 90 persons.

### Assessment of training activities (D.T3.3.2, D.T2.4.1) and proposals for improvement

The evaluation process of the basic and specialist trainings (pilot actions to qualify digitalization specialists) was done in two stages - the training participants filled out one evaluation form immediately after the training, in order to share the most recent impressions and observations, and the second evaluation form six months after the end of the training, in order to measure the level of performance and application of acquired knowledge and skills in practice and daily business.

In general, the two feedback rounds was very positive. The results collected through the answers show that a large number of training participants managed to apply the acquired knowledge and skills in practice and improve their business, as well as the business and results of the company they represent. A large number of participants shared their impressions of how the learned tools and models were applied, and the largest percentage made it clear that the trainings first of all helped personal and professional development, and then the improvement of the company's work.





The trainers who held the trainings, their professionalism, expertise, communication, and ability to transfer knowledge and skills was rated as outstanding.

The criteria that should be considered and potentially adapted in future implementations refer to:

- The content of the trainings could be complemented so that it significantly affects the job performance of the participants and really improves their daily business;
- The content of the trainings should provide practical knowledge and skills, so the participants could be ready to implement what they have learned, without significant problems, in their businesses;
- Technical aspects, which are always particularly challenging, should be constantly improved, so that, for example, the selection of an online training platform does not affect its performance and quality.

## Summary

This deliverable contains an overview of the creation, pilot implementation and feedback & proposed improvements for a huge variety of methodologies and training opportunities. This enables BSO and LSO to support their local companies, and in particular SME to become actively engaged in transnational value chains, by means of upskilling in Industry 4.0 – related topics, and also capacity building with focus on transnational cooperation.

