

Report

on the

Danube Transnational Programme Capitalisation Workshop of Priority Area 8 (EUSDR) and Pole 1 (Innovative ecosystem for SMEs) 6th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region in Budapest - 19.10.2017 -

The Main Objective – Supporting the innovation and Technology Transfer Process in EUSDR.

Introduction

The objective of the **Paper** is to identify common challenges among the area in the thematic field of Pole 1 (Innovative Ecosystems in SMEs), with a special focus on contribution to the achievement of EUSDR PA8 objectives, on the one hand, and presenting solutions identified by the projects on the other. The highlighting of potential synergies by addressing the challenges can enhance the implementation of the EU strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) and could serve as a basis for the work of the Priority Area Coordinator(s) of the EUSDR (PAC 7/8/9).

For the further work of the Paper, the Steinbeis-Europa-Zentrum used experiences made during the last years of coordination of Working Group (WG) - Innovation and Technology Transfer in **Priority Area PA8** (PA 8) "To support the competitiveness of enterprises", coordinated by the Land Baden-Württemberg (Germany) and Croatia. These experiences and the expertise gained within PA 8 were the basis for the organization of a '**Capitalisation session**' (**workshop**) by the DTP, in collaboration with the DTP Pole 1 Coordinator, during the Annual Forum of the EUSDR.

The Workshop had an interactive format by engaging the participants to give their contributions on the topic. In addition to that, the workshop was structured into a quantitative part in the form of a self-assessment survey, including the specific objectives (targets) of the PA7, PA8 and PA9, as well as a qualitative part in the form of an interactive matrix in order to identify challenges and ideas for practical solutions. Around 35 representatives of the EUSDR Priority Area - Competitiveness of Enterprises (PAC 8), the DTP Poles - Innovative ecosystem for SMEs (Pole 1), and of the DTP Managing Authority as well as the Joint Secretariat participated in the DTP Capitalisation Workshop. The interactive workshop was moderated and organized by the DTP Pole 1 Coordinator (Daniela Chiran, Senior Project Manager – Steinbeis-Europa-Zentrum, Germany) and the Priority Area Coordinator 8 of the EUSDR (Dr. Judit Schrick-Szenczi, Ministry for Economic Affairs, Labour and Housing Baden-Württemberg, Germany). After the finalisation of two-part workshop, a short summary for each group followed.

The final results based on the self-assessment questionnaires and the classified challenges and solutions shall be the subject of the **Paper**.

After the welcome and introduction part, held by representatives of the DTP and the Ministry for Economic Affairs, Labour and Housing Baden-Württemberg, the participants were split in thematic groups which were formed to address the similar topics within the thematic fields, with a special focus on contribution to the achievement of EUSDR PA8 objectives.

Each of the target groups was asked to perform two tasks, whereby each group had a moderator (assigned project coordinators from running DTP Projects) who was responsible for the time management and for providing support if clarifications were needed.

The first task involved the self-assessment survey (10 min) in the form of a questionnaire including the specific objectives (targets) of the PA7, PA8 and PA9. The aim of this task is to evaluate the contribution of running projects in order to achieve the PAs' objectives. In a second step, the challenges and ideas for practical solutions (15 min) were identified. The participants were asked to identify challenges (red cards) as well as to bring up ideas for practical solutions (green cards) and place them in the different fields of the matrix. Each thematic group was provided three paper based matrixes, including the objectives of the respected PA and the relevant stakeholders (table 1).

Objectives PA8	SMEs	Higher Education and Research	Public Authorities	Civil Society
To foster cooperation and exchange of knowledge between SMEs, academia and the public sector				
To eliminate cross border barriers and bottlenecks to people and business Seamless Europe for a liveable Danube Region				
To improve business support to strengthen the capacities of SMEs for cooperation and trade.				
To improve framework conditions for SMEs in areas where competitive infrastructure is missing.				
To support enterprises through high performing training and qualification schemes.				
To prioritise the effective implementation of measures provided for under the Small Business Act for Europe.				
To modernise the Danube fleet in order to improve environmental and economic performance				
To develop further Intelligent Traffic Systems by using environmental-freindly technologies, especially in urban regions				

Table 1: Objectives of Priority Area 8 of the EUSDR and stakeholders involved

Starting from the above presented workshop design, the Paper will focus on the main areas of priority 8, in respect of the related PAs 7 and 8, to present recommendations and possible activities on how to support and foster the priorities and the work of the Priority Area Coordinator(s) of the EUSDR.

Results of the self-assessment survey, including the specific objectives of PA8

How do you evaluate the contribution of the projects in which you are involved in achieving the objectives of the EUSDR Priority Area 8?

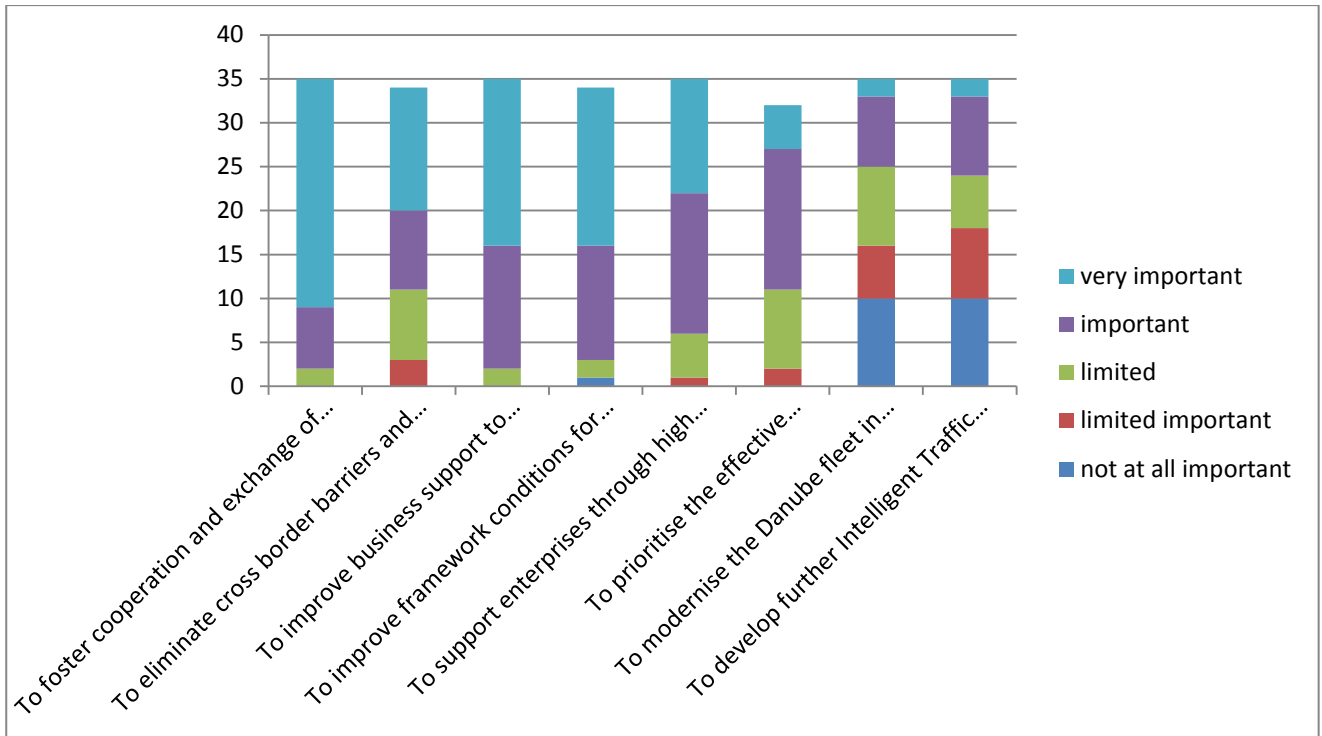


Table 2: Self-assessment on the objectives of Priority Area 8 of the EUSDR regarding the importance

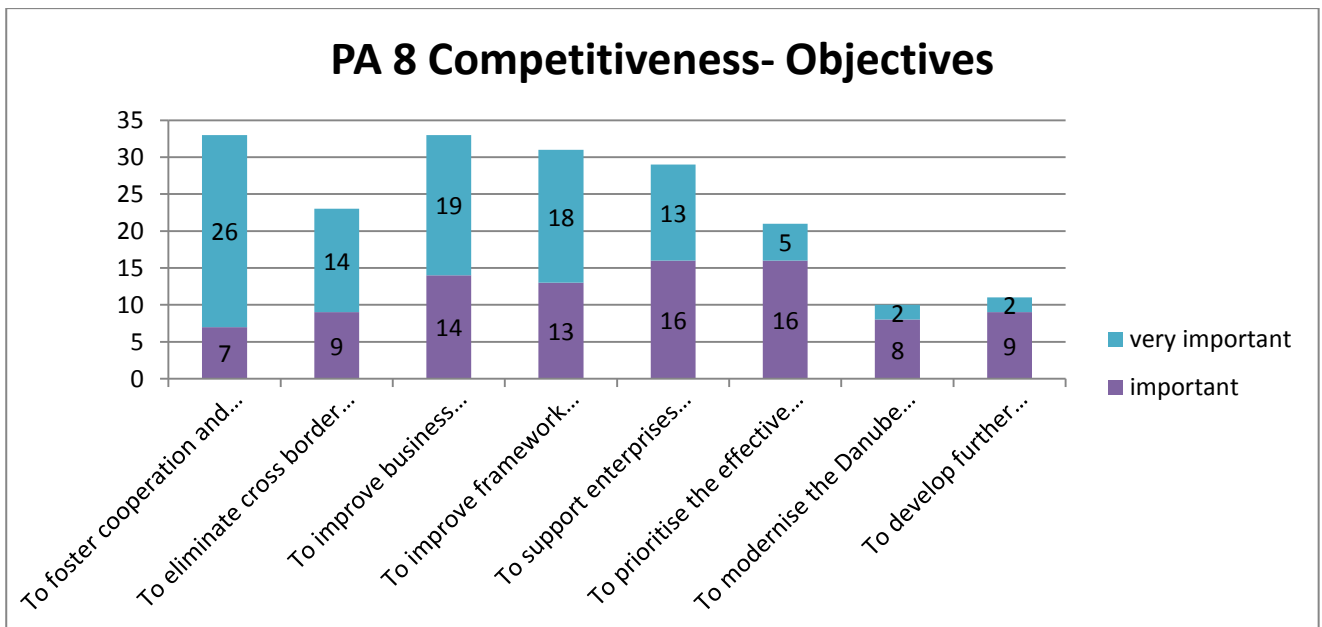


Table 2: Self-assessment on the objectives of PA 8 of the EUSDR regarding the most value importance

Results of the self-assessment survey, including the most valued specific objectives of PA8

Within the Priority Area 8 section, the following objectives were voted most important or very important in the self-assessment questionnaire:

- To foster cooperation and exchange of knowledge between SMEs, academia and the public sector
- To improve business support to strengthen the capacities of SMEs for cooperation and trade
- To improve framework conditions for SMEs in areas where competitive infrastructure is missing
- To support enterprises through high performing training and qualification schemes

How do you evaluate the contribution of the projects in which you are involved in fostering the cooperation and exchange of knowledge between SMEs, academia and the public sector?

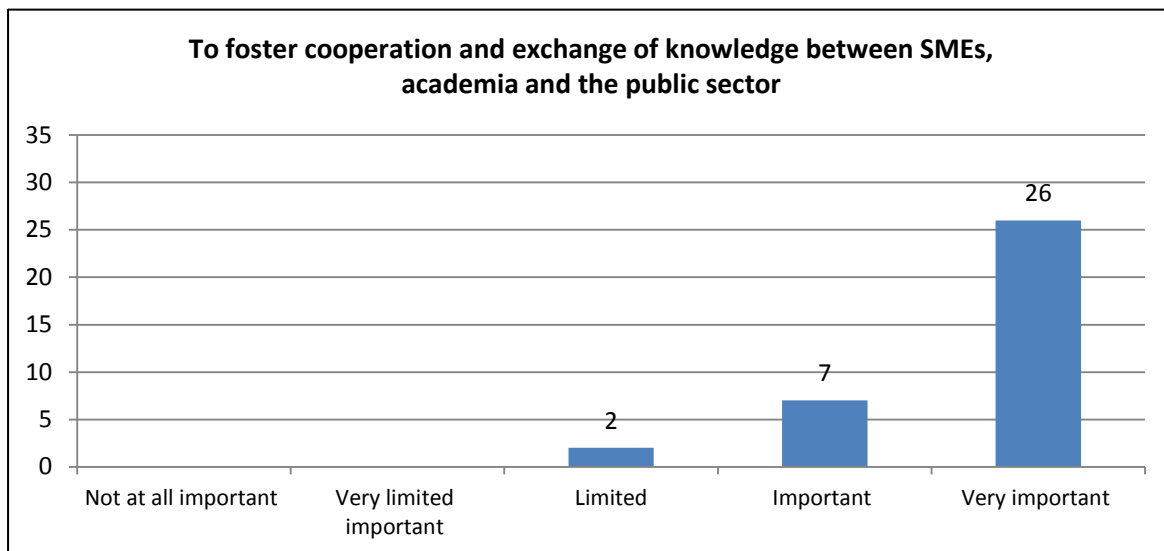


Table 3: Self-assessment on the most valued objective of PA 8 of the EUSDR

Results of the self-assessment survey, including the specific objectives of PA 7

The evaluation of the contribution of running projects within PA 7 showed three objectives were voted most important or very important:

- To increase the effectiveness of investment in R&I through establishment of a funding coordination network
- To enhance regional research and education co-operation to reach 20% of academic mobility within the region by 2020
- To develop RIS3 in all Danube countries (or their regions) by 2020

Results of the self-assessment survey, including the specific objectives of PA 9

Regarding the self-assessment questionnaire within Priority Area 9, the following specific objectives (targets) were voted most important or very important:

- To contribute to a closer cooperation between educational, training, labour market and research institutions, in particular on transnational, regional and bilateral level
- To improved educational outcomes and relevant skills and competences in the Danube Region, focusing on learning outcomes for employability, entrepreneurship, innovation, active citizenship and well-being

Results of the identification of challenges and ideas for practical solutions, including the specific objectives of PA 8

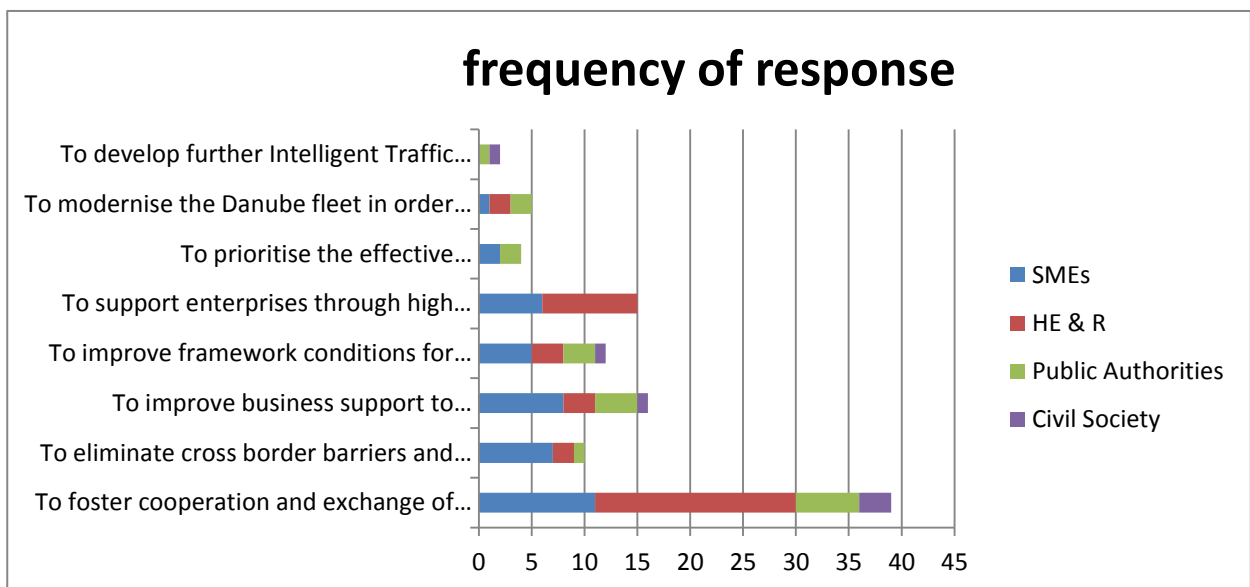


Table 4: Objectives of PA 8 of the EUSDR regarding the frequency of response among the actors involved

The frequency of response regarding the objectives of Priority Area 8 of the EUSDR shows a strong contribution on fostering cooperation and exchange of knowledge between SMEs, academia and the public sector. With regard to the high education and research group, the contribution on the topic is particularly high.

Therefore, the following analysis addresses the challenges and ideas identified by the relevant stakeholders involved, regarding the most valued objective: To foster cooperation and exchange of knowledge between SMEs, academia and the public sector.

To foster cooperation and exchange of knowledge between SMEs, academia and the public sector			
SMEs	Using clusters to enhance cooperation		
	Trainings for SMEs & business support organisations		
	Innovation audit		
	Business incubators (pre seed + seed funding)		
	More match-making opportunities		
	Central EU SMEs are suppliers - no pull for innovation		
	Low level of sharing knowledge between research and SMEs		
	Innovation management		
	Real needs of SME's		
	Identification of needs		
	Lack of local CF platform & awareness on alternative finance		
	Different p.o.v. on similar topic due to different expectations		
Skills and competences development (HE, training)			
More information on cooperation opportunities/benefits of cooperation			
Support the knowledge by staff exchange, joint trainings			
Triple helix stakeholder trainings			
Create open mobility platform			
Training for understanding			
Co-funding schemes for cooperation SME-HE & R			
Innovation management and trainings			
public funded technology transfer projects			
Systematic match-making			
Entrepreneurial thinking has a space in the HE of all disciplines			
Lack of interest of the SME's due to lack of confidence in the expected benefit			
Increase mobility in the western Balkan countries			
Funding from local/regional government is missing			
Lack of trust from both sides			
Lack of trust (IPR)			
Lack of common language			
Lack of devotion of the public sector			
Different working procedures & approaches of different sectors			
Improving communication			
Different working procedures and approaches of different sectors			
Trust issues (lack of trust)			
Lack of institutional capacities			
Entrepreneurial mindset missing			
Low interest of SME to collaborate with public institutions and academia			
Improve clustering policy			
From virtual cooperation to practical solutions			
Low involvement of civil society			
contribution on the most valued PA 8 objective			

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