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Review and analysis of programmes and tools of public support in smart specialisations, innovation and internationalisation available in Baltic Sea Region (BSR)

Vidzeme, 2018



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This guideline is created by Vidzeme Planning Region (Latvia) by aggregating 7 regional reports from Podlaskie region (Poland), Hamburg (Germany), Lithuania, South Estonia (Estonia), Vidzeme (Latvia), South Denmark (Denmark), Kouvola region (Finland).

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Introduction

The main aim of GoSmart BSR is to increase capacity of innovation actors (innovation intermediaries, authorities, research institutions, enterprises) to apply smart specialisation approach. To reach that aim many activities are carried out, including reviewing the existing support system for internationalization, smart specialisation and innovation, as well as understanding the barriers and interests for development straight from SMEs themselves.

During this activity, eight “GoSmart BSR” partners from seven regions reviewed and analysed recent and ongoing support programs and tools used for smart specialisations, innovation and internationalization in their respective regions and countries based on agreed methodology: grants, debt instruments, non-financial support programs and tools, by taking into consideration support that is available in NUTS2 level. At this point a number of support mechanisms are present for boosting investments by enterprises into R&D and innovations, however most of them take on the RIS standard approach where smart specialisations are defined at the regional or national level, with almost no perspective on the transregional or transnational context. Of course, some RIS focus areas would fit into international, European or even global specialisations, hardly this happens as a result of informed and evidence supported policies.

The report focuses on identifying interventions which work well (and not so well) in relation to smart specialisations and internationalization, their usability for SMEs and other S3 actors, etc. Mapping of programs and tools provides a broad but very informative basis for the formulation of Transnational Innovation Brokerage System (TIBS) logic and scope, as well as creation of the right relations with existing support systems to avoid duplication, overlaps, and less effective solutions. The analysis relies on prior evaluations of support programs and tools, which provides quantitative and qualitative assessments of the relevance, effects and effectiveness of existing support.

Methodology of the review

Experts from each partner-region identified support programs and instruments that are available for small and medium sized entrepreneurs (SMEs) from the partner-regions and support, firstly, internationalization and, secondly, innovation and smart specialisation.

- Scope of support programs and instruments included in the review: transnational, national, regional and local.
- Type of support programs and instruments included in the review: grants, debt instruments, non-financial support, other.

Review includes approx. 20 support programs or tools from each partner region that focuses on non-commercial tools and are available or have been available during period of 2013-2020. When reviewing transnational support, collecting state developed programs and tools, as well as already developed instruments from other projects (Interreg, Horizon 2020) are considered if that gave support for the region, country.

In cases of reviewing transnational support programs and tools, it may appear that the same tool is being reviewed by two or more of partners. In such situation all reviews are being kept in this aggregated report to see the difference how the same support tool works in national level, regional or even local level – where partners are coming from.

Strengths and weaknesses of each support program and tool are listed, lessons learned for creating TIBS are identified, possible transferability options are identified. Aggregated report points out main strengths and weaknesses that are listed in whole Baltic Sea Region, summarizes 7 reports from partner regions and defines recommendations for developing TIBS to be taken in consideration during upcoming project GoSmart BSR activities.

All support programs and tools are listed and ranked in table in Appendix 1. Although the ranking does not show the good or bad practices, quality of the instrument in comparison with other instruments, because they are developed to serve different needs. Ranking table do not show that instruments with the highest score are the best instruments, but they show that those instruments serve the needs that are complex and are identified to be common for TIBS. Instruments with the highest score are built on model that can be taken in consideration while developing TIBS, although the rest of the tools points our good examples for possible TIBS services.

Several of the instruments will be pointed out as a good practices or good examples for review in aggregated report as well. All the instruments are reviewed by the regional experts from each involved region.

Summary on each partner-region business support system

Poland, Podlaskie region

For the Podlaskie region 27 programs and tools were reviewed. More than half of them are available at national level (56%). Only three programs are dedicated for enterprises coming from Podlaskie region (11%). Generally reviewed support programs and tools are available for all kind of enterprises and 40% from them focus on special needs of SMEs. Not always they relate to RIS3 priorities of the region. Only 25% of them support development of Smart Specialisation Strategy in given areas. More than half of reviewed programs and tools develop innovations, but rather existing ones than creation of a new one. They provide either only financial support or only knowledge and know-how. Only 25% of them provide financial support along with knowledge and other intangibles. Generally, the vast majority of studied programs ensure sustainable results and engaged public funds bring a moderate result.

The review of support tools and programs indicates that enterprises in the SME sector have many opportunities to develop and increase their competitiveness. They really affect the potential and innovation skills of small enterprises. On the other hand, it is possible to observe, that often-analysed programs and instruments are based on the traditional model of small business development - they do not unambiguously counteract the problem of conservatism of enterprises in the SME sector. Too little attention is paid to the change of attitudes of small enterprises often focused only on achieving the status quo and not long-term benefits. Considering the dynamics of the environment, there is no possibility of long-term development without international cooperation, based on building a cooperation network.

From the practical experience with supporting internationalization process in enterprises in Podlaskie region there are more detailed conclusions. Regional institutions closely cooperate with SME networks such as: clusters, chambers of commerce, associations, business clubs and supporting institutions like business incubators, science and technology parks on regional, national and international level. In regional/national supporting programs funds are aiming at internationalization business model development for SMEs that want to plan expansion to foreign markets in EU or other continents. In these programs' companies can purchase software, advisory services, necessary certification services, and attendance to trade fares, company missions and B2B meetings. Based on experience in work with enterprises in Podlaskie region both national and regional programs are related to the regional RIS3 and regional/national smart specialisations. Some of the programs require consistency with smart specialisation for at least two regions.

SME and institutions from Podlaskie region can apply for funds aiming at international activities. They can receive support from Enterprise Europe Network which works actively in bigger cities in the region and w supports SME in internationalization

process (Business review, looking for potential technology or business partners, organisation of B2B meetings and company missions internationally). If SME or institution decide to start international cooperation there are supporting tools and services available. The problem is that sometimes SME are not aware about such support or they think that they could do it completely by themselves instead of using help from professionals.

Latvia, Vidzeme region

Vidzeme region SMEs are using services of national level support organisations as there are very limited opportunities to receive many types of support from regional level support organisations. Several main support organisations have their branches in Vidzeme. The support from national support players is unified in whole Latvia as Latvia is one NUTS 2 regions according to EU classification.

Strong and established support exists in company establishment phase and internationalisation, however the support mechanisms for innovations and product development are not sustainable from the applicants' point of view.

There are several support institutions involved in the ecosystem in Latvia, Vidzeme. We consider Latvian Investment and Development Agency (LIDA) as one of the most important ones managing wide range of support instruments in Latvia. Currently business incubation programme is the one that covers whole territory of Latvia. In spite the fact that decision-making is centralized, local activities are carried out quite successfully. In Vidzeme Planning region there are 2 business incubators present – in Valmiera and Madona. Another programme that is of great popularity is Promotion of International Competitiveness. Despite some application process issues companies have claimed, this programme was used very actively and currently there is no available funding in this activity. Also, LIDA Foreign Economic Representatives network has been evaluated as a respectful option for companies willing to internationalize.

However, in some programs we see that marketing should be powered up. In some also criteria are not the best for applicants. In some cases, programs are promoted in the capital of Latvia, even though also regional companies are eligible to apply. It could be linked with managerial capacity of programme owners, or maybe other internal or external factors.

Another significant support mechanism is ALTUM and its various programs. Financial and consultative support is available for SMEs at a wide scope, from the early start-up phase till mature business, from local activities till export promotion. ALTUM works very proactive, they actively seek for new clients, marketing is at the best glance.

Despite state and regional support instruments there are also numerous local activities in the municipalities. These are e.g. coworking space, small grants, tax relieves and consulting. Some of municipalities – like Valmiera city and 3 neighbouring municipalities (Kocēni, Burtņieki and Beverīna) even go further: they join the forces and provide together budget for entrepreneurial support in their municipalities through ZĪLE Innovation Support

Programme. This is a fine example of cooperation, started just a few months ago and this year is a pilot case. Ease of application process, fast evaluation process indicate that small bureaucracy is what companies really are looking for.

There is a very high dependence on EU funds in R&D policy instruments as well as further commercialisation of innovations. One of the challenges of Latvia with regard to support mechanisms are to ensure sustainability of these structures and bodies, as the most of them are established and are functioning with support of EU and other foreign funds. When funding is over, it becomes challenging to ensure continuity of the work of those bodies and to provide services in quality responding to actual needs and demands of stakeholders.

In Estonia the role of business supporter and developer is directed to Enterprise Estonia. The institution is established in 2000 and it promotes business and regional policy in Estonia and is one of the largest institutions within the national support system for entrepreneurship by providing financial assistance, counselling, cooperation opportunities and training for entrepreneurs, research institutions, the public and non-profit sectors.

Estonia, South-Estonia region

In Estonia the role of business supporter and developer is directed to Enterprise Estonia. The institution is established in 2000 and it promotes business and regional policy in Estonia and is one of the largest institutions within the national support system for entrepreneurship by providing financial assistance, counselling, cooperation opportunities and training for entrepreneurs, research institutions, the public and non-profit sectors.

The activities contribute to the achievement of long-term strategic goals of the Estonian economy. To this end, the development of companies that have export capacity and create higher added value are supported. Long term goal of EAS is to help Estonia become one of the most competitive countries in the world.

The support programs and instruments are divided by categories: development of the company, digitalisation of industry, export, foreign investments, product development and design, tourism. There is no special focus on supporting smart specialisation strategies, but some programs give an advantage to the applications that are directly connected to smart specialisation areas.

Most of the support programs and instruments provided in Estonia are focused on export growth. There are lot of discussions in Estonia that remarkable amount of public funds is directed to develop universities to provide free higher education but the cooperation between universities and enterprises have wide cap. It is expected that educational institutions will start to contribute to business development. More and more support systems are now developed to grow cooperation between enterprises, universities, science and research institutions.

Mainly all the support programmes in Estonia have a national scope. There are not so many programs that have been developed transnationally. Only very few are directly

connected to internationalisation of the SMEs. The support program financed by Interreg Estonia-Latvia is remarkable as it enhances cross-border cooperation by expecting SMEs from Estonia and Latvia jointly apply for product and service development.

Lithuania

The programs that have been reviewed are mostly available at national level, just one of them – Baltic Innovation Fund – has a transnational scope. This instrument was launched by respective financial institutions in three Baltic states with an aim to provide investment funds and boost private equity investment in SMEs. This programme is not the only one in Lithuania which provides funding and investment opportunities for various size companies, but usually funds like – Invega, The Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund – focus on the companies which are on start-up or scale-up stages. These investment funds do not pay attention to national smart specialisation strategy consequently, investors support each area that could be profitable in the near future.

Nevertheless, there are a lot of programs which focus on research & development and innovation projects (79%), the significant part of these instruments provides financial and non-financial support for those companies which are going to develop new innovative products (63%) and 3 policy-instruments encourage a further development of existing technologies. However, not all these innovation support instruments are related to RIS3 strategical areas, 45% of these instruments do not strengthen the Smart specialisation. On the other hand, it gives an opportunity for various kind of enterprises to submit for a public support. Furthermore, there is specific instrument – Eco-innovations LT – which strengthens the horizontal priority and fosters the eco-innovations in different sectors. Overall, the studied programs focus on innovations development and research activities, even though some of them do not strengthen smart specialisation. However, investment and funding to innovations are always subjected to a higher risk, therefore just a little more than half of these instruments (60%) could ensure sustainable results, but all these instruments is expected to bring moderate results.

Lithuania has a very small market therefore, most of the innovative enterprises are export-oriented. The local authorities have an aim to create a friendly and inclusive support eco-system which provides export-oriented SMEs with an all-around support. That kind of programs range from non-financial support like export training, advice on market research, advice on language and cultural issues, introduction to international trade business networks (look at “export academy” or first flight) to financial support which gives grants on various purposes – acquisition of necessary certificates, participation in international expos, safeguard of IP and etc. SMEs and especially micro-companies indicate this kind of support as the most relevant as usually these companies lack of financial and human resources, consequently the public support is essential on scale-up stage.

Apart from supporting Lithuanian export industry, the instruments are directed to foster the collaboration between business and research institutions. Enterprises are motivated with various grants (innovation voucher, Intellect LT, Inocluster LT) to search for a partner from universities or research institution which could elaborate scientific research and contribute to the product development. These grants support only these collaboration initiatives when two national entities are agreed for a common project, however, programs do not encourage Lithuanian enterprises to search for a research partner in foreign countries.

Finland, Kouvola region

The international and national programs and supporting tools cover more widely and umbrella-like the sectors and priorities they are directed at. Their objectives are quite alike, all aiming at growth, employment, prosperity and cooperation. Thus, these programs/instruments do not directly focus on smart specialisation strategies.

However, the supporting tools that are available regionally in Kymenlaakso/Kouvola region, are closely related to the regional RIS3. In most of the cases, the justifications for applying funding need to take into consideration the regional strategy. The funding is appointed –if possible- for those projects and actions that implement this strategy.

There is a Regional Programme that covers a four-year period (current one 2018-2021), and it includes development objectives based on regional possibilities and needs, culture and other special characters, a description of the important projects for regional development, and other essential actions, cooperation agreements for reaching the targets and a plan for financing the programme. The Kymenlaakso RIS3 is based on this Regional Programme.

There is also an implementation plan for this Regional Programme, and this plan is made every 2 years (updated every year if seen necessary). The implementation plan includes proposals for projects and actions implementing the regional programme, a statement for national ERDF themes, calls and plans and their regional participation as well as a focus where national and EU funding should be targeted.

Next time this implementation plan will be checked in August-September in order to update implementation plan for 2019-2020. Kinno is invited to participate into this work with the Regional Council of Kymenlaakso. Kinno is an expert having the knowhow of the local/regional SME field and needs. The regional programs and plans are always planned together with stakeholders and possible beneficiary groups to make them as real and actual as possible.

There are supporting tools both for public organisations and for companies, mostly for SMEs. Very often, an emphasis is put on those actions that are aiming at internationalisation, international activities and/or cooperation.

It seems that if a company or any organisation wants to go international, there are supporting tools and services available. The problem is rather in finding the right one/ones,

since the programme/instrument field is abundant and shattered. The regional supporting tools are quite often related to and depending on the availability of nationally shared and directed resources (e.g. the EU funding and/or the government funding channelled through national ministries towards regional organizations).

Germany, Hamburg

The programs differ not only in their focus group but also in their geographic scope and the means of support. Insofar, the programs on regional, national and transnational level work are complementary and show relatively few overlaps. It becomes apparent that transnationally-focused programs (for instance on a European level) mostly have research, development, networking and market exploitation in focus while regional programs mostly focus on entrepreneurship and measures of founding.

Most regional programs on the level of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg do not offer financial grants but consultancy in terms of other existing support programs on other levels, potential contact persons for further action, legal issues, bureaucracy or hedging of risks (see “Handwerkskammer Hamburg-” and “Handelskammer Hamburg Außenwirtschaftsberatung”). The regional institutions strongly depend on close cooperation not only with their regional network of business and supporting institutions but also on close coordination with national and transnational institutions to act as an intermediary between regional companies and superior programs and institutions. Online portals such as “IXPOS” work in a comparable manner as intermediaries. The idea to combine European and regional level is also reflected in “Enterprise Europe Network” being physically present in most cities to foster the initiation of business contacts over borders.

On the contrary, national programs such as “ZIM-Kooperationsnetzwerke” offer a relatively high rate of grants (up to 95 percent in this specific example) whereby the focus is on transnational cooperation but with a strong focus on the German partners as the only ones to benefit from the grants. Of course, there are also programs that offer only small grants, e.g. for business trips, fairs and networking measures to exploit new markets (see “BMW Markterschließungsprogramm”).

Moreover, a variety of German programs appear to be motivated mostly by marketing for the location of Germany and to increase the prominence of German companies and innovations rather than really establishing transnational cooperation on eye level. This can also be observed when looking at the countries in the focus of German programs: These include mostly European countries as important export markets and developing / developed countries as future markets (see “Travelling Conferences”). The programs are not to confuse with altruistic development aid. Programs with cooperation on eye level are limited to other industrialized countries (see “2+2-Projekte”).

National support programs with a thematic specialisation mostly have those economic sectors in the focus that Germany has an advantage in (automatization of industry e.g.) or that have the potential to become defining megatrends (e.g. climate, environmental and energy sector, resources efficiency). Again, cooperation with developing countries appears to be motivated to exploit new markets for the German export industry (see CLIENT II). Also programs to spread the German way of vocational training have a potential benefit

for German companies and institutions in mind (see "Förderung der Forschung zur Institutionalisierung der Berufsbildung").

Apart from internationalisation support by information and networking approaches, Germany also supports its export industry by financial guarantees coming along with political support in case of business disruptions in certain countries (see "Hermesdeckungen" and "Direktinvestitionen Ausland"). Both are not focused on improving transnational cooperation but to unilaterally hedge international activities of German companies. Also, the German KfW bank offers loans to favourable conditions to German export companies to secure the competitiveness of the economy (see KfW IPEX Bank").

Transnational programs, on a European level, are not that limited in their thematic focus but offer a broad range of supportable areas if the idea of transnational cooperation is fulfilled. In this case, the rate of grants can be quite high (up to 100 percent with "Horizon 2020"). Moreover, these programs are open for participation not only for research institutions or companies but for both in all sizes.

Denmark, South-Denmark region

It is important to Danish businesses that an efficient business support system is available providing services and instruments matching the needs of SMEs and Startups.

Danish companies have access to a complex and widespread range of private and public business support actors, programmes and instruments.

Hence, the public Danish business support system is being reformed in 2019-2020.

SMEs meet business support actors and contact points at three levels

- State
- Regional (> Subregional)
- Local (> Subregional)

Resulting in 110 responsible authorities, 30 coordinating organs and 216 operators.

See figure 1, right.

Further, the programmes and instruments to be added.

The actors described and ranked above are expected to continue with some adjustments after implementation of the reform, though we do not know yet.

Among the vast pool of business development programmes, instruments, initiatives and business development actors, we have only described 28 items – more or other could have been selected.

The criterias are that the instruments described have to be important to SMEs and directed towards innovation and internationalisation of SMEs. Further instruments promoting smart specialisation have been taken into consideration.

On top of all these business development actors, business faces a (perceived) complex system of more or less volatile programmes and instruments. Hence, most of the 28 instruments described were chosen either because they are "back bone" instruments or actors, or well known to SMEs or with a long track record/period on the market.

Innovation - Danish SMEs have access to a lot of contact points, programmes and instruments providing financing, know-how and partnering for innovative projects, especially, new technologies or high degree of novelty.

Contact points for personal guidance and assistance are important to SMEs and Startups.

National funding and financial instruments are mainly provided by The Innovation Fund Denmark as soft money and by The Danish Growth Fund as hard money.

SMEs prefer national funded programmes rather than EU programmes, as the “on boarding” and administration is more adaptable to SMEs.

Internationalisation - It seems as less programmes and instruments with a specific focus on internationalisation available to SMEs are often implying non-financial support, grants for market development regarding novelties or financing instruments, “hard money”.

National support is important to SMEs. The Trade Council, Export Credit Agency and regional business development centres are important contact points and providing important financial instruments, grants and non-financial support to SMEs on internationalisation. EU offers programmes and instruments supporting internationalisation of SMEs, however only a small number of SMEs apply for grants.

Smart specialisation - Most actors, programmes and instruments with a specialisation focus also addresses innovation and internationalisation, - or the instruments and contact points addresses subregional and local specialisations and strongholds or “burning platforms”.

Most of the ranked business development actors, programmes and instruments have a national scope. However, clusters, the regional business development centres, The South Denmark European Office as well as the EU programmes and instruments of The Trade Council and Export Credit Agency have transnational focus.

Further considerations - Regarding transferability – it is assumed that most of the programmes and instruments are transferable with adjustments to level, organization and financing options.

Instruments and programmes supporting Qualified Workforce and access to competences are very important to Danish business development but not described as it is not part of the GoSmart focus. However, the Danish business development system, municipalities, national authorities and private branch associations are all allocating focus and resources to the subject as it is crucial to a sound business development.

Ranking of the programs/instruments for Baltic Sea Region

All reviewed support programs and tools are listed and ranked in the table in the Appendix 1. They were assessed considering following criteria:

- ✓ creation of a cooperation network;
- ✓ development of Smart Specialisation Strategy in given areas;
- ✓ ratio between expected/estimated results of the programme/tool and the public funds engaged into it;
- ✓ support of the innovativeness;
- ✓ sustainable results;
- ✓ kind of support (financial, knowledge and know-how);
- ✓ focus on particular needs of SMEs.

The programme/tools with the highest score (TOP 10) available for SMEs in BSR are:

- Digitalization Boost (Denmark)
- Inogeb LT (Lithuania)
- One String Public Business Development System (Denmark)
- Regional Business Development Centre - e.g. Southern Denmark (Denmark)
- Local Business Development Centre - e.g. Business Aabenraa (Denmark)
- Latvian High Added value and healthy food cluster (Latvia)
- InnoFounder (Denmark)
- GTS - Advanced Technology Group (Denmark)
- Southdenmark European Office (Denmark)
- Subregional Business Development - e.g. Development Council of Southjutland (Denmark)

Although the ranking does not show the good or bad practices, quality of the instrument in comparison with other instruments, because they are developed to serve different needs. Ranking table do not show that instruments with the highest score are the best instruments, but they show that those instruments serve the needs that are complex and are identified to be common for TIBS. Instruments with the highest score are built on model that can be taken in consideration while developing TIBS, although the rest of the tools points our good examples for possible TIBS services.

Mainly Top 10 programs and tools provides support and networking possibilities for business to business and more than one of any other Quadruple helix actors, provides support for development of S3 in given areas, provides both financial and knowledge support. Those instruments are focused mainly on particular needs of SMEs and achieve higher results that the effort put in the support. When reviewing transnational support programs and tools, some of partners reviewed same instruments to show the difference in how one instruments can be affected by scale of the region, represented organisation etc. criteria.

Four support instruments are reviewed by two or three partners (table 1).

Table 1. Joint support programmes and tools

| Program/tool | Country, region | Score | Justification | Conclusions |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------|--|---|
| Horizon 2020 | Finland, Kouvola region | 15 | Ratio between funds engaged and the results are weak in Estonia; Hamburg points out that cooperation within H2020 happens B2B to only one of Quadruple helix actor; H2020 do not support S3, do not support new product/ process innovations. | In smaller regions results of such instrument are usually hard to find/see. Horizon 2020 program should work identical no matter the involved country, region etc., but the possible misunderstanding of actors may appear. |
| | Estonia, South Estonia region | 13 | | |
| | Germany, Hamburg region | 10 | | |
| Interreg Baltic Sea Region 2014-2020 | Finland, Kouvola region | 12 | B2B + more than one Quadruple helix actor VS. B2B + 1 Quadruple helix actor; In Hamburg do not support S3, but Hamburg experience point out sustainable results. | Program misunderstandings are identified, as the program works identical in whole BSR. Difference in implemented projects can raise the question of sustainability of results. |
| | Germany, Hamburg region | 10 | | |
| Enterprise Europe Network | Latvia, Vidzeme region | 13 | In Hamburg EEN works only in B2B model, while in other partner-regions, network is wider. In Hamburg EEN works with specific SME needs. Meanwhile ratio between funds and results are lot better in Hamburg. Poland in EEN seeks for new product and process innovations | EEN must concrete their work criteria and network actors to achieve better results. Otherwise if the audience is too wide, performance of the instrument is not high quality. |
| | Germany, Hamburg region | 12 | | |
| | Poland, Podlaskie region | 10 | | |
| Eurostars-2 | Denmark, South-Denmark region | 12 | Latvia do not see Eurostars-2 supported actions as sustainable. | Eurostars-2 point in Latvia must work on receiving trust and popularizing instrument. |
| | Latvia, Vidzeme region | 10 | | |

Main strengths and weaknesses of existing support programs and tools in BSR

Main strengths and weaknesses of existing support programs and tools in BSR are defined by aggregating 7 regional reports within whom 152 support programs and tools are reviewed. A few of transnational support programs/instruments are reviewed by 2 or 3 partners, but the total number of instruments that are reviewed more than once, are not bigger than 5. Each of the strength or weakness wrote below is associated with more than one support program or tool and are grouped into several themes: 1) finances, 2) management, 3) usability, 4) added value for the region, 5) availability in the region, 6) networking. These strengths and weaknesses that are listed below show the picture of main qualities that entrepreneurs are looking for to be received from business support organisations and authorities.

Strengths

Finances:

- Ongoing – not based on calls or EU funds for limited period;
- High percentage of financial support for loans, guarantees;
- The funding decisions are made locally/regionally;
- Fostering private investments.

Management:

- Bottom-up management based on regional needs and strengths, support is differenced;
- Support is aimed for SMEs that cannot cover all the expenses for internationalisation events themselves;
- Proactive work on publicity and client attraction;
- Investment sessions are recorded, so after the sessions, wider audience can be reached to gain possible support and attention, if session itself failed;
- Support instrument is developed in cooperation with business organisations, consultants;
- Local representative for international support program/tool;
- Strong and wide regional/national network for support program/instrument.

Usability:

- Low administrative burden both for beneficiaries and administrators;
- Simple application process as an online platform with strong support while applying;
- Possible to apply in different business development stages;
- No need for consortium, support can receive SME alone as well;
- Results of support received must be very practical, concrete;
- Electronic system for the coach search and competences and needs matchmaking.

Added value for the region:

- Asks to attract innovative solutions with strong internationalisation potential;
- Are oriented on smart specialisation by supporting the fields and businesses that are potentially giving highest value to the region;
- Support tool is divided in several priority areas of smart specialisation and applicants compete only within that priority area;
- Support is aimed to unite cross-sectoral, cross-regional and cross-border businesses for developing new products and services;
- Support is created by local action groups that are focusing the support system on local, regional needs;
- Support allows businesses to attract high skilled employees;
- Supports activities and investments that are aimed to rural areas, outside capital.

Availability in the regions:

- Available and highly used in the regions – statistically proved.
- Trainings and seminars are recorded, so later can be broadcasted to larger audience, including rural areas.

Networking:

- Ensures networking possibilities with foreign entrepreneurs, investors, that helps our SMEs establish relationship with possible client before expanding business there;
- Builds strong network and ecosystem in the region around physical place - connects science and business world;
- Very strong information flow;
- Large investor, experience and knowledge network, database;
- Peer learning – gain insights and experience from a range of exchange and learning opportunities with other partners across Europe;
- Increase knowledge on other market needs, certifications, laws, taxes etc.;
- Open to participation of researchers around the world, not only national public institutions.

Weaknesses

Finances:

- Pre-funding required;
- Dependence on EU funds;
- The company needs to pay first and then ask for a reimbursement.

Management:

- Due to top-down management, regional needs are not taken in account as priority;
- Not clearly defined criteria, definitions or priority areas for receiving support;
- Some of target indicators are created with Large company mindset, that are not possible to reach by SMEs, even though the support is created for SMEs as well;

- Private scientific institutes are often excluded from cooperation network;
- Strong human factor is playing role in success of the support program and instrument because: are they working proactively and with interest, are their networks wide enough;
- People that are managing the support tool often are not educated constantly - they receive the knowledge needed at the beginning and continue to work for years with the same knowledge;
- Time from application to receiving support can take months;
- Fees for exact services are not listed;
- Statistics of the program/instrument are not available, so the level of trust decrease.

Usability:

- Too heavy bureaucracy that scares SMEs, because it asks for big HR and time resource;
- Companies are afraid to use such instrument if in case of project failure costs are not eligible;
- Investor attraction is paid service;
- Not possible to use more support tools at the same time, even if there are no interest conflict;
- Very high expectations, not everyone can be heard during application process;
- No benefits for Startups, funds aimed at later stage SMEs;
- Length of support tool is too short to implement all activities planned;
- A lot of support programs and tools provides financial support, however, SMEs very often need non-financial support, such as guidance, mentoring, networking possibilities, market research etc.;
- Support instrument cannot ensure the quality of provided products/services. They can ensure only financial safety;
- limited number of markets that are supported – some companies may be willing to internationalize onto other markets;
- Focus on research institutes rather that companies with research services;
- Limited activities are supported.

Added value for the region:

- Export as a highest priority for receiving support doesn't give highest added value to the region;
- High profit potential is needed for receiving support (that excludes innovative solutions with possible profiting in longer time);
- If support is made for implementing exact activities or create businesses, they often end after the support stops.

Availability in the regions:

- Inconstancy: when planning period ends or for similar reason, support end as well, or comes with changes, so when entrepreneur goes after support, it may not be what was expected anymore;
- Potential users often don't know about the support program or instrument due to lack of publicity, informational flow or marketing;
- Hard to get funding for regional company because support is taken by leading field companies that are in capital;
- Support is available in regional centres mostly, so rural entrepreneurs, if support is available in municipality, they do not look for solutions outside the borders of municipality;
- Existing stereotype that you cannot get a beneficial service for free (nor mentoring, nor pilot-programme, nor any project related activity).

Networking:

- Networking events are mostly organised in the capital;
- Where there are economic representatives abroad, often they lack the capacity to serve all interests in biggest countries;
- Developing countries are mostly seen as a market rather than partners.

Common strengths are mostly identified under management, networking possibilities and added value for the region, such as bottom-up management, targeted on regional S3 and innovative solutions, and are developed in strong cooperation with local/regional action groups and organisations. It means that those support programs and tools are built deliberately to reach exact needs and niches of the region, and very much suits the criteria that are obligatory for the TIBS. Wide networking possibilities allows even smallest regions find partnerships, corporations and expertise outside their region borders.

Most of common weaknesses are listed under management, usability and availability of the region, such as unclearly defined criteria for receiving support, dependence on human factor, heavy bureaucracy that takes too much time and human resources of SMEs. It means that support is created and managed wrongly, so the usability is unpractical, conditions are unclear or too heavy, and availability of the support in the region is very low. That shows high amount of centralised support that is not working for regions outside the capital cities.

Main strengths and weaknesses of already existing support programs and tools allows GoSmart BSR team to learn things and processes to avoid or consider for building Transnational innovation brokerage system in Baltic Sea region. Main lessons learned are collected into the next section of this report.

Lessons learned and actions needed for developing TIBS

Lessons learned from reviewing all previously mentioned instruments and programs that are supporting internationalisation, smart specialisation and innovation are collected further by putting them into several sections relating TIBS development phases:

- TIBS framework – basic processes and actions needed for creating TIBS are mentioned;
- TIBS management – key factors of qualitative management are collected;
- TIBS services – ideas and needs for TIBS services are listed;
- TIBS usability – factors mentioned for building user friendly system;
- TIBS collaborations – possible collaboration partners, forms, activities;
- TIBS dissemination – communication activities as well as introduction of TIBS;
- TIBS sustainability – what could happen to TIBS after September 2020 when project GoSmart BSR ends?

TIBS framework:

TIBS needs to be built with bottom-up principles because this is possibility for regions themselves create a valuable instrument for entrepreneurs. Involvement of local, regional and national stakeholders – both private and public – action groups, organisations, universities, entrepreneurs themselves, business support organisations, NGOs are obligatory. During TIBS establishment process those stakeholders must be involved for identifying potential gaps in current support system, identify possible collaborations among support instruments to ensure strong linkages and networks afterwards. Entrepreneurs themselves must be involved to ensure field data with actual status quo on barriers and needs for business support system developing.

Criteria table for identifying possible support receivers must be made to ensure that time, human resources and finance resource are spent for those companies willing to bring high added value to the local regions as well as whole Baltic Sea region, and are willing to internationalize not only for strengthening export, but also for transferring knowledge, developing new product and process innovations etc. Although, sometimes all the conditions can't be defined absolutely. How to solve subjective cases that does not follow all the descriptions, it is questioning to be discussed.

Support system in generally must be made to fulfil indicators and reach targets that are set in smart specialisation strategies in regions and/or countries. In GoSmart BSR case, common Trans-S3 fields are identified, so TIBS need to establish collaborations among those ones for developing higher added value products and services for Baltic Sea region.

Brokers who are working within TIBS are specialists who see the whole picture and do not take municipal, regional or national borders as the main factor for giving support. Schemes how to include partners from different countries and backgrounds and how to ensure equal participation can be looked up in the guidelines of Horizon 2020.



For GoSmart BSR a broader thematic focus would be needed on later stages of TIBS development (at least covering the economic sectors that potential for cooperation is seen in due to regional specialisation) and the number of participating countries is to be expanded (to all EU countries). If the GoSmart BSR analysis suggests increasing the focus on environmental issues and sustainability due to their relevance for the economy, the project can be a fruitful source of ideas.

- Criteria for receiving support must be clearly defined. Ranking table could be made for giving extra credit for companies that fulfil more needs of the region (new workplaces, innovative solutions, smart specialisation, takes care of degraded territories etc.)
- sufficient knowledge of the regional SME field and their potential (+ motivation) versus EU expectations (e.g. S3) is crucial and the basis for development and success on a wider than just local scope (international, multinational markets/competition)
- The good and user-friendly platform should be designed for companies which must involve the list of services that could be provided by TIBS system. And even the list of entities that are looking for a cooperation.
- Elaborating a coaching programme for local enterprises. International network of coaches could be created, according to the need of local companies or clusters intermediaries could invite mentors from other countries to give market-entry advices for particular economic sectors.
- The non-financial services for export-oriented SMEs should be proposed on a one-window manner, especially if those SMEs have little or no export experience, the legal, market research, advisory and other assistance should be easily accessible.

TIBS management:

Management of TIBS must be centralised from project and Baltic Sea region perspective but decentralised from content and support providing perspective. Support in each of participating region must be operated in decentralised way where representative of each region – broker – strengthens local ecosystem by bringing together field experts with start-ups, private organisations with public, research institutions with researchers etc., because in such way new, innovative solutions and ideas can be born. Brokers link local ecosystems with transnational ecosystems from other participating with other regions, as each of participating regions are with its own specialities, development status and priorities.

Human factor of TIBS management is very important. Strong linkage among all TIBS representatives, brokers makes a significant network of contacts and possibilities. Regular training and educating for TIBS brokers are needed to ensure constant quality of the provided support. Informational flow among brokers must be very strongly built, so relevant information on new trends, opportunities, cooperation possibilities etc. can be easily transferred.

Guidelines for brokers for providing same services in terms of quality and quantity in each region should be made. Each broker then would be taught how to work with SMEs, therefore a consistency among different host organisations is maintained no matter which

country they are from. TIBS could benefit from implementation of this guidelines system, to ensure consistency and high level of quality of the services provided.

- The efficiency indicators must be proposed and applied for TIBS services to evaluate how it contributes to the internationalisation and success of our target groups. As brokerage system should have certain aims, which later could be used as an argumentation for local authorities why certain policy instruments and grants are needed.
- Organizing various types of trainings, seminars aiming at change of the SMEs course from the status quo to long-term strategies.

TIBS services:

Programs could be invented to support particular priorities like eco-innovations, health for all or mobility. TIBS should be valuable for companies which are starting their internationalisation process or thinking about broadening its range what also requires new human resources and its capacities. TIBS services should be available in each phase of the product and process development; the results of the process should be measured to keep quality of services high.

Our strength could be that for specific sectors each country could provide their own expertise - how to enter into their market, what homework should be done, how much companies must invest to have a successful campaign. This kind of professional knowledge could be the main advantage of our TIBS system.

The preparation work and scanning of relevant markets could save a lot of time and other resources which could be spent for other activities. Before exporting, company need to know the target export markets to use the resources effectively and purposefully.

Clearly indicated the need for trade mission, exhibition etc. support. TIBS in such way can fulfil this need of entrepreneurs by linking companies directly.

The support for various means of SMEs clusterization should be involved among TIBS services. It must be emphasized that the role of clusterization is crucial in the development of SME sector, as SMEs may benefit from economies of scale and extend the operation limits.

For TIBS very useful services for entrepreneurs would be entrance to external expertise, market data, market research, technology & market trends review, organisational support for attracting finance. Also, common marketing approach.

We should consider if it is possible to create a collaboration among clusters from different countries, otherwise, we might think about the opportunity for innovative enterprises to share their equipment and infrastructure to collaborate and create innovative products. This could be the scheme how new international value chains could be created.

As we are going to support innovations and R&D activities, which contribute to the development of new products and solutions. The protection of intellectual property is very essential for their creators to secure their competitive advantage. Also, these consultations are significant for those companies which are looking for an internationalisation

opportunity. Because companies usually lack knowledge about intellectual property and their rights, especially when they need to protect it in foreign markets.

While creating a TIBS it is essential to pay attention to external effects that companies might have during internationalisation process. That they would need to protect their intellectual property internationally to be more competitive and get an advantage in particular market. Or they could need legal advices and so on. Therefore, our support services should include this kind of services or at least we should know partners to whom we could redirect them for a consultation or inform them how they could get a financial support.

Conducting a training or meetings, support online in a form of a webinar allows the Agency to have a large-scale event without the need to incur high costs related to lecture hall rental, catering, etc. It may be less expensive than real-life training; however, some costs such as expert's remuneration, IT hardware and software, website hosting etc., need to be taken into consideration when estimating the final costs of such event.

What can be useful while offering TIBS is targeted training, but it would have to revise what is the quality of offered trainings and how do enterprise assess them.

We can develop the idea of system/base of coaches/mentors divided to sectors. Also, system of selection of dedicated coaches can be transferred. SME receive a list of coaches/mentors with their CV (experience) and can decide which one would be the best for their needs.

The focus should not only be on networking and being a first contact for companies but also including consultancy on innovation processes and strategies, helpful advice on funding and then lead to initiating possible transnational cooperation projects in research. For this, a database of companies interested in cooperation need to be established and various events offered to bring potential cooperation partners together.

Bringing together partners from different countries by doing research on issues that all partners can benefit from is a promising approach also for the GoSmart BSR project.

It is a promising approach also for the GoSmart BSR project to divide markets according to their most promising economic sectors. Within the program, e.g. Ecuador is qualified as a partner for energy and resources and Brazil for the health economy. Using regional specialisations to derive which economic sectors could have the largest benefit in cooperation with a country or region would be helpful. One could create a portal that shows regional specialisations so that companies interests in international cooperation only need to check where their sector is dominant. Transnational cooperation could be fostered this way.

The expertise on different countries, market analyses and conclusions on economic trends can be used also within the project when it comes to establishing new cooperation measures.

EU prefers rather bigger than small consortiums (today's trend), but the activities always defines the number of partners though. The lack of SMEs in the projects is a challenge, so therefore GoSmart BSR could create a needed mass of suitable SMEs willing and motivated to participate into H2020 actions.

- Support services must be combined for companies, research institutions and universities
- Different kinds of support (e.g. capacity building, transnational research, promotion of successful educational measures, establishment of cooperation networks) must be created
- Make use of easily accessible (!) databases / portals and events such as conferences and networking meetings
- Divide markets / countries according to their most promising economic sectors
- an innovation broker should be available for the SME needs (ready for digging info, helping in networking, opening doors, etc.)
- like above, a clear –if possible- roadmap should be created for SMEs to follow = which instruments and/or tools to use at which paths and crossroads
- the role of a TIBS innovation broker as a link between SME entrepreneurs, research institutions and universities, local/national/EU organizations, etc. is needed, and it seems that at the moment there is a lack of such intermediary “player”
- Programs could be invented to support particular priorities like eco-innovations, health for all or mobility. With this kind of programs, it is easier to direct financial support for the most important priorities.
- Ensuring the complex service for companies – from start to the end. The company should have the opportunity to develop its business internationalisation model with the assistance of professionals.
- Creating the system/base of coaches/mentors divided to sectors as well as system of selection of dedicated coaches. SME receive a list of coaches/mentors with their CV (experience) and can decide which one would be the best for its needs.
- Organizing workshops focused on very specific subjects which are of interest of the companies willing to cooperate internationally.

TIBS usability:

From already performing support instruments we can learn that criteria for getting support from TIBS must be very strictly and realistically defined, so the broker has capacity for performing as it was planned.

Database of the companies involved must be easy operated, with an information minimum, and it must be filled with entities: various research institutions should be installed in TIBS system, this would help for private companies to find appropriate research partners in every BSR country. The next important question – the budget – from which sources it would be collected. Another issue – the international experts who evaluate the submitted applications for this measure.

- Implementing the guidelines system for consultants providing services. The exemplary guidelines related to services, meetings, etc. are freely available on the European Enterprise Network website and can be downloaded immediately.

TIBS collaborations:

Collaboration with other support programs and tools is recommended to access wider networks, strengthen already existing support system, strengthen local, regional and national scale ecosystems, ensuring strong information flow among private-public triple-helix actors in the region etc. Collaboration with other support programs and tools are advised to avoid competition, and to fulfil each other.

TIBS should strengthen not only cross-border and cross-sectoral cooperation, but also strengthen value chains in the Baltic Sea region that involves SMEs from different countries and fields.

It might be helpful to not establish a whole new online infrastructure but to make use of cooperation with existing offers, firstly, to benefit from their prominence and, secondly, to reduce the effort and cost for GoSmart BSR. Not offering everything by oneself but close cooperation with experts and the role of an intermediary can also be a considerable approach for GoSmart BSR.

There are already some possible collaborations highlighted:

There are 5 technology scouts working currently in Latvia. Basically, they already cover several RIS3 areas of Latvia: bio economy, smart materials/technologies/engineering, ICT. TIBS actually could cooperate with these scouts when linking the companies and research in national level.

Entrepreneurship specialists in municipalities or regional councils are key persons to get information also regarding TIBS clients. There are many niche product developers at early stages of their businesses, so they are still not visible on regional or state level, not even to talk about transnational level. By working closely TIBS and entrepreneurship specialists would make these success stories to develop on a wider scope.

TIBS and IBs in Finland could take a role in bringing the EU issues and requirements into regional level and making them more understandable to entrepreneurs and decision makers.

FinnCham kind of networks that are operating in Finland could be implemented at least in those GoSmart BSR regions/countries, where FinnCham operates through its European partners: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. For the whole consortium it could be difficult to transfer but could be worth trying if the national chambers of commerce would be interested. This instrument needs the chambers of commerce involvement in any case.

Foreign Chambers of Commerce should be used as information source. They have strong network and lobbying power in target countries.

Providing support for clusters we could involve the larger number of companies into our TIBS system.

Possible collaborations are identified already during existing support program review, but each region task is to work closely with existing support program and tool providers to link possible collaborations and find the best “puzzle piece” whom to put TIBS on.

The state's strategy of driving up growth by collaborating with private stakeholders involved to develop local business its infrastructure, attract inward investment, focus on new technologies as well as encouraging and supporting SMEs through a mutual guarantee scheme is a similar approach adopted by other regions and transferable to other countries.

- TIBS role among others = not to copy but to complement.
- the “shattered jungle” of support tools and instruments should be simplified (focusing on those realistic enough for regional SMEs), the SMEs should not be bothered with programme rules and application trivia -> how to solve this is an eternity question
- Creating a good promotional tool for example in the form of a platform designed for efficient and goal-oriented networking. The best practice can be used by designing this kind of tool (e.g. b2match tool).

TIBS dissemination:

Communication and publicity of TIBS must be correctly and proactively organised to, firstly, reach wider networks and SMEs, and, secondly, to gain their trust for TIBS. There is an existing stereotype present that good support cannot be received free of charge, so GoSmart BSR team must show the opportunities of TIBS and their possible value for participating.

Central events in core countries to present the benefits of transnational S3 can be a way of sharing the idea as long as these events are focused on issues that promise large involvement (i.e. a conference on the benefits of cooperation in the area of logistics in regions where logistics play a major role). The approach to foster internationalisation through information campaigns and transparent databases can be a helpful input also for GoSmart BSR.

- TIBS marketing very essential in the early stage of activity.
- Conducting educational campaigns and trainings aimed at strengthening the relational and cooperative skills of small and medium enterprises.

TIBS sustainability:

TIBS sustainability is not only the factor that is needed for project implementation to be successful, but especially for each participating region to keep the gained knowledge, keep the linkages and networks that are created during the project lifetime. The function of each broker needs to be transferred to already existing business support organisation or be developed as a new position in already existing organisation.

Each GoSmart BSR partner must work proactively and look for possible solutions for TIBS sustainability already now. Regional and national initiatives are expected to bring up already before it is officially asked in project application to ensure input for working package 5 – “Making TIBS services sustainable”.

Stable funding is needed for TIBS sustainability as the growth of regions and countries is interest of both – public and private sector. Public-private cooperation are solution for ensuring TIBS sustainability.



By using the results of the GoSmart BSR project we can show positive impact of cross-border cooperation in supporting entrepreneurship. More successful projects to serve as evidence for feeding into EU and national policies can be identified as bottom-up policy input.

- TIBS sustainability should be not linked to EU funding referred to planning periods. It must be developed as a regional/national support system that are independently and permanently maintained.

Recommendations for the first steps of building TIBS

Based on review and analysis of the support programs and tools in the regions, recommendations for the upcoming TIBS development were worked out. They are structured in following four categories: human factor, dissemination, support mechanism and sustainability.

1. Human factor

Starting TIBS process the first action needed would be finding **the best appropriate candidate** for broker's duties. A TIBS innovation broker should **be available for the SME needs** (ready for digging info, helping in networking, opening doors, etc.). Broker should play the role as a link between SMEs, research institutions and universities, local/national/transnational organizations etc., and it seems that at the moment there is a lack of such intermediary “player”.

It's crucial to ensure the **complex service** for companies – from start to the end. The company should have the opportunity to develop its business internationalisation model with the assistance of professionals.

The non-financial services for export-oriented SMEs should be proposed on a **one-window manner**, especially if those SMEs have little or no export experience, the legal, market research, advisory and other assistance should be easily accessible.

2. Communication

Effective marketing activities are required at the early stage of the process, first of all, **educating potential clients** about the services they can receive, as well as receiving their trust.

Sufficient knowledge of the regional SME field and their potential and motivation versus EU expectations (e.g. S3) is the basis for development and success on a wider than just local scope (international, multinational markets/competition). Following activities can be considered by designing the TIBS:

- Creating a good promotional tool for example in the form of a **user-friendly platform** designed for efficient and goal-oriented networking. The best practice can be used by designing this kind of tool (e.g. b2match tool).
- Creating the **system/base of coaches/mentors** divided to sectors as well as system of selection of dedicated coaches. SME receive a list of coaches/mentors with their CV (experience) and can decide which one would be the best for its needs. Also, clusters intermediaries could invite mentors from other countries to give market-entry advices for particular economic sectors.
- Implementing **the guidelines system** for consultants providing services. The exemplary guidelines related to services, meetings, etc. are freely available on the European Enterprise Network website and can be downloaded immediately.
- Organizing workshops focused on **very specific subjects** which are of interest of the companies willing to cooperate internationally.
- Conducting educational campaigns and trainings aimed at strengthening the **relational and cooperative skills** of small and medium enterprises.

- Organizing various types of trainings, seminars aiming at **change of the SMEs course** from the status quo to long-term strategies.

3. Support mechanism

Another task for building TIBS would be understanding the big scope of differences compared to other existing programmes (e.g. LIAA Technology scouts, LIAA Foreign representatives). In other words – there should be a clear understanding what are the differences not to copy existing support tools but to complement each other - fill the gaps in existing support instruments.

The problem with the “shattered jungle” of support programmes and tools should be solved. The SMEs should not be bothered with programme rules and application trivia. It should be simplified focusing on **tools realistic enough for regional SMEs**. By creating a clear, if possible, roadmap SMEs can choose which instruments and/or tools to use at which paths and crossroads.

The **appropriate set of selection/access criteria** for companies being potential participants in TIBS must be clearly defined. Ranking table could be made for giving extra credit for companies that fulfils more needs of the region (new workplaces, innovative solutions, smart specialisation, takes care of degraded territories etc.)

Programs and tools could be invented to support **particular priorities** like eco-innovations, health for all or mobility. With this kind of programs, it is easier to direct financial support for the most important priorities.

The efficiency indicators must be proposed and applied for TIBS services to evaluate how it contributes to the internationalisation and success of our target groups. As brokerage system should have certain aims, which later could be used as an argumentation for local authorities why certain policy instruments and grants are needed.

4. Sustainability

Sustainability scenarios for TIBS after GoSmart BSR project ending must be identified. This is something that should be figured out already well in advance. System will be developed but its sustainability is under big question mark. If some of TIBS regions would fail in ensuring sustainability, whole network would suffer since there will be a hole in the process. TIBS sustainability should be **not linked to EU funding** referred to planning periods. TIBS services should be so attractive for companies and responding their needs that they are **willing to pay** for them.

Appendix 1

Ranking of the programs/instruments for Baltic Sea Region.

| Partner | Name of the programme/instrument | Score |
|---------|---|-------|
| PP8 | Digitalization Boost | 20 |
| PP5 | Inogeb LT | 19 |
| PP8 | One String Public Business Development System | 19 |
| PP8 | Regional Business Development Centre - e.g. Southern Denmark | 19 |
| PP8 | Local Business Development Centre - e.g. Business Aabenraa | 19 |
| PP3 | Latvian High Added value and healthy food cluster | 18 |
| PP8 | InnoFounder | 18 |
| PP8 | GTS - Advanced Technology Group | 18 |
| PP8 | Southdenmark European Office | 18 |
| PP8 | Subregional Business Development - e.g. Development Council of Southjutland | 18 |
| PP5 | Inocluster | 17 |
| PP5 | Technology transfer | 17 |
| PP1,2 | Internationalisation of National Key Clusters (PARP_ Smart Growth OP) | 16 |
| PP3 | Innovation Support Program ZĪLE | 16 |
| PP3 | Interreg Estonia-Latvia (EST-LAT) | 16 |
| PP3 | EEZ Financial Mechanism (Norway grants) | 16 |
| PP5 | Inoconnect | 16 |
| PP6 | South-East Finland – Russia CBC 2014-2020 | 16 |
| PP8 | InnoBooster | 16 |
| PP8 | Clusters and innovation environments | 16 |
| PP1,2 | Innovoucher | 15 |
| PP3 | SEDA (VIAA) Post-Doctoral Research Aid | 15 |

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|-------|--|----|
| PP5 | InoCluster LT | 15 |
| PP5 | Intellect LT | 15 |
| PP6 | Horizon 2020 | 15 |
| PP6 | FTI | 15 |
| PP6 | Interreg Central Baltic | 15 |
| PP3 | Seed Forum | 15 |
| PP3 | LIDA Support for Commercialization of Scientific Research Results | 15 |
| PP8 | Export Steps | 15 |
| PP8 | Fast Track to Innovation | 15 |
| PP8 | Interreg 5A | 15 |
| PP8 | The Danish Growth Fund | 15 |
| PP3 | Rural Support Service LEADER program | 14 |
| PP3 | Latvian Business Angels Network (LatBAN) | 14 |
| PP3 | Support for new product and technology development in Competence Centres Programme | 14 |
| PP3 | LIDA Innovation vouchers | 14 |
| PP3 | LIDA (Latvian Investment and Development Agency) Regional Business Incubators | 14 |
| PP3 | ALTUM & LatBAN Business Angels pilot program | 14 |
| PP4 | Investment aid to shared service and research and development centers | 14 |
| PP4 | Innovation voucher | 14 |
| PP5 | Business cluster | 14 |
| PP6 | Vitality from the Northern Growth Zone 2014–2020 (ERDF + ESF) | 14 |
| PP8 | Rural Growth Pilot | 14 |
| PP8 | LAG - Local Action groups | 14 |
| PP3 | Enterprise Europe Network | 13 |
| PP1,2 | Go to Brand | 13 |

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|-------|--|----|
| PP3 | Entrepreneurship specialists in municipalities | 13 |
| PP3 | Foreign chambers of commerce | 13 |
| PP3 | LIDA Foreign Economic Representatives | 13 |
| PP4 | Horizon2020 | 13 |
| PP7 | “2+2-Projekte” | 13 |
| PP8 | Innovation Check | 13 |
| PP1,2 | Internationalisation of SMEs (PARP_Operational Programme Eastern Poland) 1.2 | 12 |
| PP3 | LIDA Start-up Support Program | 12 |
| PP3 | Cluster Program (MoE) | 12 |
| PP4 | Export grant for creative industries | 12 |
| PP4 | Joint product or service development | 12 |
| PP5 | Innopatent | 12 |
| PP5 | Innovation Voucher | 12 |
| PP6 | Interreg BSR | 12 |
| PP6 | SME Instrument | 12 |
| PP6 | FinnCham network | 12 |
| PP6 | Research, development and piloting funding of Business Finland | 12 |
| PP7 | COST – European Collaboration in Science and Technology | 12 |
| PP7 | Enterprise Europe Network – Contact point TuTech GmbH | 12 |
| PP7 | Forschungscampus | 12 |
| PP8 | Eurostars | 12 |
| PP1,2 | Polish Tech Bridges (Smart Growth Operational Programme) | 11 |
| PP1,2 | KAM2East Coaching /mentoring for SME Instrument (Horizon 2020) | 11 |
| PP1,2 | Location Consulting for Polish Investors | 11 |
| PP1,2 | Action 1.4.1 “Promotion of entrepreneurship and raising the investment attractiveness of the voivodship” in frames of Regional Operational | 11 |

| | Programme for Podlaskie Voivodeship | |
|-------|--|----|
| PP5 | Competence Voucher | 11 |
| PP6 | Development support for companies | 11 |
| PP6 | Into –funding services of Business Finland | 11 |
| PP6 | Trade fair grant of Business Finland | 11 |
| PP8 | Guarantees by the Danish Growth Fund | 11 |
| PP8 | EKF - Export Credit Agency | 11 |
| PP1,2 | Enterprise Europe Network | 10 |
| PP3 | LIDA Support programme: Promotion of International Competitiveness | 10 |
| PP3 | ALTUM Accelerator Funds Program | 10 |
| PP3 | ALTUM Social Entrepreneurship Program | 10 |
| PP3 | Eurostars-2 | 10 |
| PP4 | Sourcing for foreign enterprises | 10 |
| PP4 | Enterprise development program | 10 |
| PP4 | Development voucher | 10 |
| PP5 | Eco-Innovations LT | 10 |
| PP5 | Export academy | 10 |
| PP5 | First Flight | 10 |
| PP5 | Technoinvest | 10 |
| PP6 | Team Finland's programs for growth | 10 |
| PP6 | Export networks of Business Finland | 10 |
| PP7 | Außenwirtschaftsportal IXPOS | 10 |
| PP7 | CLIENT II – Internationale Partnerschaften für nachhaltige Investitionen | 10 |
| PP7 | Handelskammer Hamburg Außenwirtschaftsberatung | 10 |
| PP7 | BMWi-Markterschließungsprogramm | 10 |
| PP7 | Horizon 2020 | 10 |

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|-------|---|----|
| PP7 | Handwerkskammer Hamburg Außenwirtschaftsberatung | 10 |
| PP7 | Interreg Baltic Sea Region Program | 10 |
| PP7 | Interreg North Sea Region Program | 10 |
| PP7 | European Cluster Collaboration Platform | 10 |
| PP8 | SME Guarantee | 10 |
| PP8 | Grow | 10 |
| PP8 | Loans by the Danish Growth Fund | 10 |
| PP8 | Loans for Entrepreneurs by the Danish Growth Fund | 10 |
| PP1,2 | Investment incentives | 9 |
| PP3 | ALTUM Export Credit Guarantees | 9 |
| PP4 | Grant for international events and conferences | 9 |
| PP5 | Expo Certificate LT | 9 |
| PP5 | PIPE | 9 |
| PP6 | Regional development money | 9 |
| PP6 | Regional countryside programme | 9 |
| PP6 | Development support for companies in the countryside | 9 |
| PP7 | Auslandsmesseprogramm der Bundesrepublik Deutschland | 9 |
| PP7 | Zentrales Innovationsprogramm Mittelstand | 9 |
| PP8 | Export Credit Guarantee | 9 |
| PP8 | Buyer Credit Guarantee | 9 |
| PP8 | Export Guidance | 9 |
| PP7 | Förderung der Forschung zur Internationalisierung der Berufsbildung | 9 |
| PP1,2 | Podlaski Capital Fund | 8 |
| PP4 | Foreign recruitment grant | 8 |
| PP4 | Large investor support scheme | 8 |
| PP6 | Regional innovations and trials (AIKO) | 8 |

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|-------|---|---|
| PP6 | Finnvera funding | 8 |
| PP7 | “Travelling Conferences” | 8 |
| PP8 | SME Instrument | 8 |
| PP4 | Advisory service to enter foreign market | 7 |
| PP4 | Intellectual property services | 7 |
| PP4 | Joint stands in international fairs | 7 |
| PP4 | Start-up grant | 7 |
| PP5 | Baltic Innovation Fund | 7 |
| PP6 | Kiito -funding services of Business Finland | 7 |
| PP7 | Exportkreditgarantien der Bundesrepublik Deutschland „Hermesdeckungen“ | 7 |
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