EU SME Strategy and SME Support

European Cluster Alliance Webinar on Growth and competitiveness of SMEs, start-up/scale-up

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SME WEIGHT IN THE EU ECONOMY

99.8%

enterprises

66%

jobs

56%

of value added

European Commission

ONE OF PRIORITIES OF THE NEW COMMISSION: **A DEDICATED SME STRATEGY**

- High level recognition of the economic weight and growth potential of SMEs, while recognizing their diversity.
- Addresses key challenges; **sustainable (green/social) – digital**, and will help companies to **build resilience** (« triple transition »).
- Builds on and does not replace existing policy and support framework
  - As a key tool for the post-crisis recovery

European Commission

SME STRATEGY –**KEY ACTIONS**:

Digitalisation & Sustainability

Focus on capacity building:

- Sustainability services under the EEN, EREK support
- European Innovation Council, EIT KICs
- Digital Innovation Hubs
- Leveraging talents – Update of Skills Agenda for Europe

Access to finance

Closing the market gap:

- InvestEU SME window, promoting EU priorities
- SME IPO fund
- ESCALAR

Cutting red tape and tapping into markets

Reducing burden and prompting payments:

- Single Digital Gateway as one stop shop
- Cross border pilot
- Enforcement of Late Payment Directive
- Start-up Standard

Recovery and ecosystems: Clusters and EEN to ensure SMEs' access to ecosystems

European Commission

EVIDENCE BASED POLICY: EUROBAROMETER CONFIRMS SME STRATEGY'S PRIORITIES

2020 **Eurobarometer** (over 12.000 SMEs) confirms relevance of the SME strategy

- It addresses the most prominent problems of SMEs:
  - **Regulatory obstacles** or **administrative burden** (**55%**)
  - **Payment delays** (**35%**)
  - **Poor access to finance** (**21%**)
  - **Lack of skills** (**17%**)
- Identifies **sustainability** and **digitalisation** as priorities for SMEs
  - ➢ all key areas of the new SME strategy
  - ➢ crucial for the recovery period
  - ➢ Data also shows that SMEs that are parts of Industry clusters or business support organisations perform higher than other SMEs on sustainability and digitalisation

GOVERNANCE - **A PARTNERSHIP FOR DELIVERY AND MONITORING OF SME POLICY**

EU SME ENVOY

EP, Council, CoR, EESC

Local and regional authorities

Annual report to COMPET Council

European Commission

NEW!
Regulatory Scrutiny Board

Fit-4-future platform

Single market enforcement task force

SMEs, Startups and Business Organisations

NEW!
Strategic Entrepreneurship Ambassadors

Member States/ National Envoys

NEW!
European Semester

Enhanced SME Performance Review

More information on National Envoys: https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/sme-strategy/sme-envoys_en

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ILLUSTRATION: RECOVERY FUNDS SUPPORTING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SME STRATEGY

- Under the recovery package, **Cohesion Policy Funds REACT-EU and the Just Transition** Funds will be important new instruments to support SMEs.
- They will be complemented by the new **Recovery and Resilience Facility**, worth more than EUR 670 billion. It can support SME relevant investments and reforms related to the green and digital transitions, to help create jobs and sustainable growth and make the Union more resilient.
- Examples:
  - MS/regions could **scale up support services (eg sustainability services** by the EEN) with cohesion policy funds.
  - MS could use RRF or cohesion policy funds to implement and expand **the Single Digital Gateway** to facilitate doing business in the Single Market.

ILLUSTRATION: SME SUPPORT AND REGIONAL POLICY

Download here

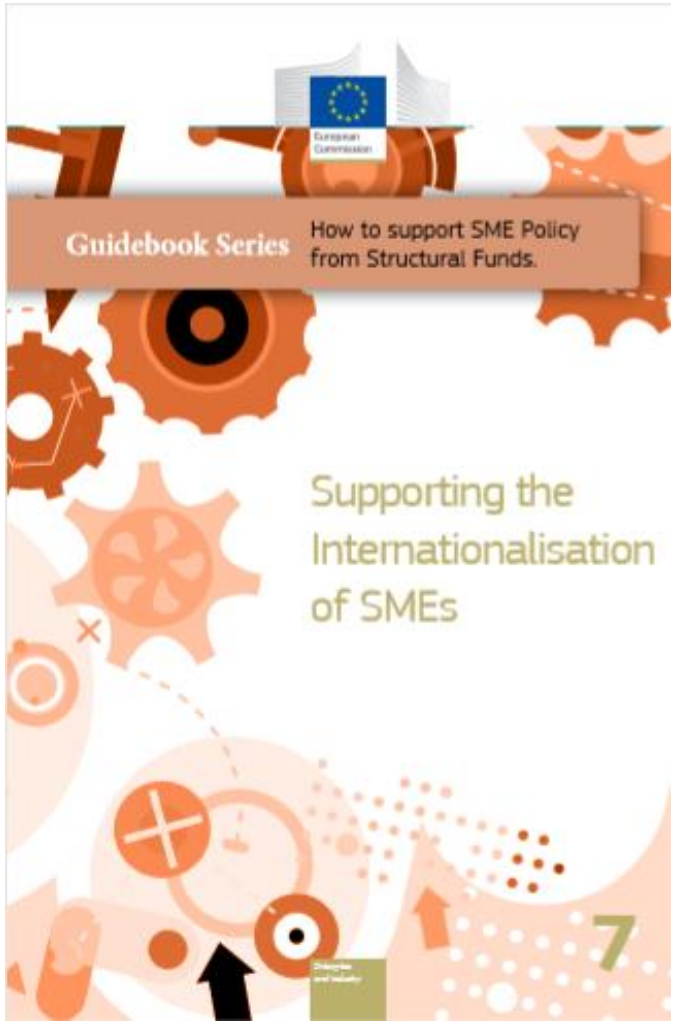

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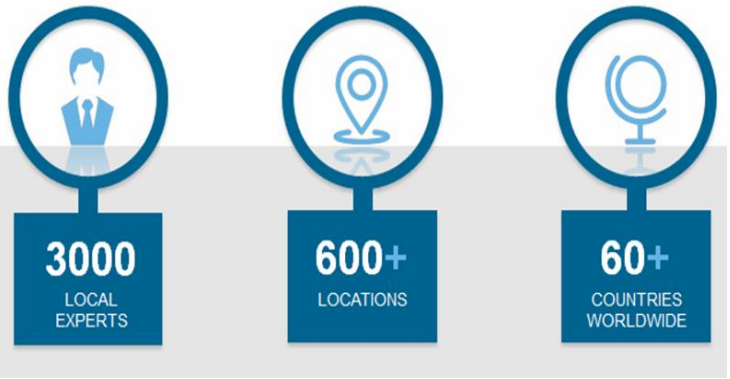
ILLUSTRATION: EEN AND THE ERDF



ADVISORY SUPPORT	INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS	INNOVATION SUPPORT
Advice on EU laws and standards	Partnering – for B2B and H2020 projects	Technology transfer
Market intelligence	Brokerage events (B2B, B2F)	Innovation Management Services – innovation audits, capacity building
IPR expertise	Company missions	Key Account Management service under H2020
Access to funding		Start-up / scale-up advisors
SME feedback		

- 13% of the EENs' host organisations are Managing Authorities
- 25% are Intermediate Bodies
- 40% are represented in different Monitoring Committees

- More than 66% of the EEN teams advise SMEs also on access to ERDF-financed measures

ILLUSTRATION: EEN and the ERDF

EEN services in synergy with ERDF programmes

1. Governance of ERDF programmes
2. Design and implementation of ERDF programmes / ERDF-funded measures
3. Advice on access to ERDF-funding
4. Enriching ERDF-funded projects with EEN services
5. Scaling up EEN services with ERDF funding

ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK

ENRICHING ERDF PROGRAMMES

Download it here

ILLUSTRATION: Case Study

- Within the ERDF-funded “Spitzen!Leistung”, SFG (the Steirische Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaft) cooperates with Styrian clusters.
- The goal is to enhance the innovation capacity of the clusters’ SME members
- Clusters receive support to carry out innovation audits :
  - Based on the EEN service “Enhanced Innovation Management Capacity” building
  - The EEN team of SFG is involved in the preparation and implementation of the innovation audits and the analysis of the results.
  - Following the innovation audits, action plans with detailed recommendations are elaborated.

https://www.sfg.at/

THANK YOU!