

PR1- A2: Consultant Training Toolkit

Chapter no.: 7

Partner: GrantXpert Consulting

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1.0 Information about Chapter

Chapter's title: Networking and Support

Duration: 5

Short introduction to the chapter:

Entrepreneurs and SMEs want to find partners through networking and a solid support system who will provide them with certainty regarding their participation in selling their products or services, processing customs policies, advertising products or services, adjusting marketing strategies based on modern patterns and inform them about available fund provision and opportunities on how to thrive their businesses^{1,2,3,4,5,6}.

Unfortunately, an SME does not have adequate funds in terms of capital that can provide a solid and powerful opportunity for expansion. The risks they face when entering such a process are a lot of times overwhelming to handle. However, EU provides a number of support bodies and organisations that can support and assist SMEs throughout their journey and provide solid information and funding through different schemes and programs. Such systems are known as: chambers of commerce, clusters and VET agents^{1,2,3,4,5,6}.

In this chapter, learners will be informed on how to spot, describe, and share available funding opportunities which are open to SMEs. They will acquire basic knowledge on trusted financial organisations and functions based on promoting healthy entrepreneurship. This chapter will also briefly describe the significance of funding for SMEs, which are the available and trusted funding bodies, tools and programs and how EU can support SMEs at different levels^{2,3}. The chapter explores the role of chambers of commerce and other support bodies across EU and provides information about the funding options, aside banking, that SMEs have and might not know about such as private funding options and business angels. This chapter aims to assist SMEs to close the gap of communication between the company and the funding and support institutions and promote entrepreneurship^{1,2,3,4,5,6}.

Methods of instructions:

This module is going to utilize a ppt presentation as a method of instruction. Learners will be able to go through slides with information on the topic and be guided to specific useful links with further information and videos related to the topics covered.

Prerequisites of the students:

No basic knowledge in networking and support is required by the learners.

Learning aims and Objectives:

The main aims and objectives of this module focus on:

- Helping learners understand the support system provided to the SMEs by the EU.
- Comprehension of the fundamental support aids and bodies of the EU that are relevant to SMEs based on their products and/or services.
- Providing all available information of the funding opportunities provided by the EU for the SMEs.
- Informing the learners what options they have in terms of financing through EU or at national level.
- Exploring the available support options that the EU provides to different SMEs in terms of organisation, promotion, help, communication and market access.

Learning Outcomes Covered:

After completion of this module, the learners will be able to:

- Find all the support bodies and schemes provided by the EU for SMEs
- Understand how and when they can apply for funding for their company
- Acquire knowledge of the major funding bodies from EU that are related to SMEs
- Learn the different types of funding provision available from EU
- Acquire knowledge about the support system for SMEs in Europe
- Understand how they can utilize the bodies and schemes provided by the EU in order to promote their businesses in terms of networking and expansion to new markets

Skills and Competences:

Skills:

training about support funds, having a support network, funding availability

The transferable skills related to this chapter aim to upskill and reskill SMEs employees, managers and adults with no specialized education on the matter in an attempt to facilitate employment, enhance SMEs through information on funding, networking and support systems provided by the EU. This information will facilitate the knowledge of learners in an attempt to be able to apply for funding to the appropriate programs of bodies and request help from the bodies provided by the EU. This chapter also identifies what the basic knowledge and methods of networking and support are available and transfers this information to the learners.



Digital First Aid Kit ENTrepreneur's for recovering
from COVID-19 pandemic
Project Number: 2021-1-RO01-KA220-VET-
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Competences:

Inform on government funding, apply for government funding, funding methods, find grants, apply for research funding, microfinance, check grant applications, identify support mechanisms to develop your professional practice, organise supporters, find supporters, motivate supporters, decision support systems, utilise decision support system, expand the network of providers, network management system tools, develop professional network, network with store owners, implement a virtual network⁶

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2.0 Information about each individual subchapter

Subchapter title: **Introduction**

Short introduction to the subchapter:

This subchapter is mainly the introduction of the chapter and it includes general information related to the importance of SMEs in the European economy and why the SMEs must have dedicated support systems and financing opportunities and funding from the EU, from national agencies and private investors.

Briefly, it explains that Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are the backbone of the European economy with strong contributions to employment, growth of economy, innovation and entrepreneurship. They employ more than two thirds of the EU labour force, contribute to more than half of EU value added and have played an important role in the recovery since the financial and economic crisis. They therefore deserve dedicated support and attention in an attempt to thrive and continue contributing to the developing Europe^{1,2}.



Adapted

from: European Commission-Unleashing the full potential of European SMEs :https://ec.europa.eu/info/files/commission-communication-sme-strategy-sustainable-and-digital-europe_en

Subchapter title: **Support Policies and Events for SMEs in EU**

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Short introduction to the subchapter:

This subchapter focuses on how the EU has established a lot of different policies and events for SMEs. The support bodies are related to either strategy, networking, entrepreneurship and education and are available for all the SMEs across Europe 1,2,3.

The EU provides both support in business strategy and entrepreneurship to SMEs.

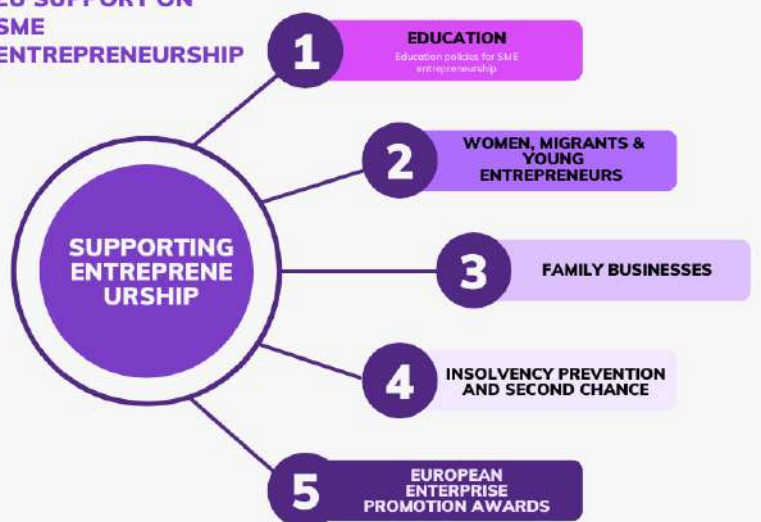
Links connected to the related support bodies are connected through the schematics indicated in the ppts.

EU business support to SMES



EU entrepreneurial support to SMES

EU SUPPORT ON SME ENTREPRENEURSHIP



Subchapter title: ***Support Bodies for SMEs in EU***

Short introduction to the subchapter:

This subchapter aims to provide the learners with information related to all support bodies that are available in the European Union. These bodies provide different types of support to SMEs in an attempt to form resilient, green, sustainable and solid companies. The learners will be able to acquire information on all of these bodies and the precise manners that these bodies can support and help their companies.

Each different support bodies provided by EU are indicated below and the links for each of these support bodies are found connected to each box in the ppt file.

EU-SUPPORT BODIES FOR SMES

- 
- 1 Enterprise Europe Network**
The EU network to support SMEs competitiveness and innovation
 - 2 COSME Program**
EU program for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs, running from 2014
 - 3 Chambers of Commerce**
A form of business network. For example, a local organization of businesses whose goal is to further the interests of businesses.
 - 4 SME2B**
A platform that fosters a continuous match-making process by organising online and offline meeting for business opportunities in Europe
 - 5 European Digital Innovation HUBs**
The EDIHs were created so that digital expertise transfer will be facilitated according to the "Digital Europe" Programme

The chapter goes on to describe in detail the services and support each of these bodies can provide to the SMEs and all the information is included in the ppt file along with the links to each support body's website.

Subchapter title: **Financial Support of EU for SMEs**

Short introduction to the subchapter:

Where the necessity of funding for SMEs is explained in detail in the ppt.

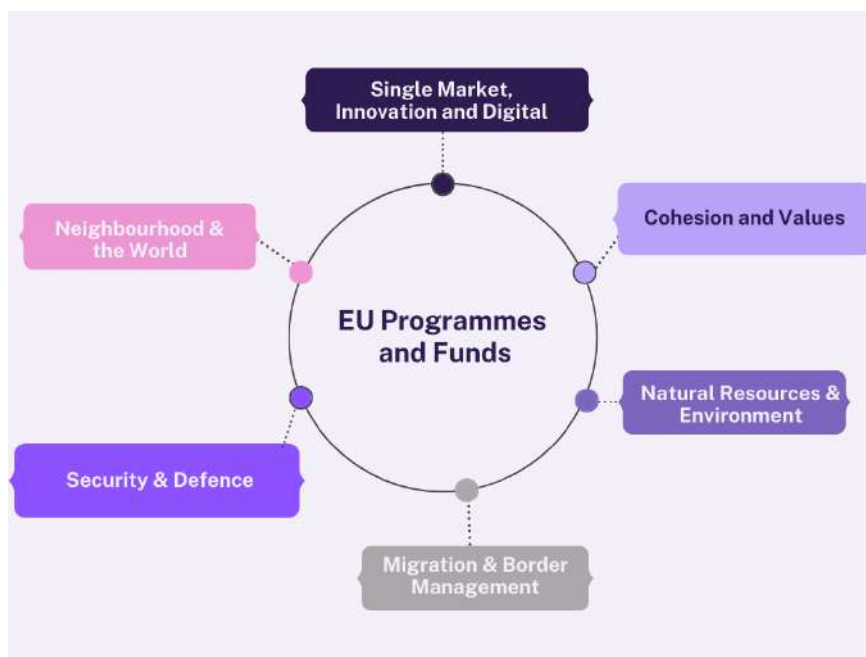


This subchapter is then separated into smaller sections based on the different types of financial support that are available to SMEs in the EU. The major sections are **Funding Bodies, Private Sector-Funding Bodies, Private Funding and Funding Banks**. Each type of funding body is explained in detail and the precise links for each of the fundings are active in the ppt file.

This subchapter also explains in detail the different opportunities that SMEs have in funding and the different usage of each of the types of funding. Aside from these, the chapter provides information on all the available funding calls that SMEs can apply for and that are relevant to their sector.

Briefly, the subchapter separates the fundings that are provided to the SMEs and to the funding bodies available in EU for SMEs

Fundings available for SMEs



Funding bodies and organisations in EU

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Then the chapter guides the participant to learn what terminologies related to funding are and where to find information.

It is separated into slides and each describes different terms such as:

1. **A business angel** is a private individual, who directly invests part of their assets in new and growing private businesses. Besides capital, angel investors usually provide business management experience, skills and contacts for the entrepreneur. They are increasingly important as providers of risk capital and contributors to economic growth and technological advances
2. **An investment fund** is a way of investing money alongside other investors in order to benefit from the inherent advantages of working as part of a group such as reducing the risks of the investment by a significant percentage.
Depending on how much capital a company needs, using personal funds might be the best option. Personal Funds - Self funding your business means providing the initial funds to start your business through your own personal means. The most common funding for small businesses comes from the founders'/owners' personal savings. Self funding allows the owners/founders of a business to retain equity in the business without saddling the business with ongoing debt payments during its early stages
3. **A small business loan.**
To increase your chances of securing a loan:
 - have a business plan
 - expense sheet
 - financial projections for the next five years.

These tools will give you an idea of how much you'll need to ask for, and will help the bank know they're making a smart choice by giving you a loan

Subchapter title: **References**

Short introduction to the subchapter:

References and bibliography related to the subject of the chapter.

3.0 Detailed Instructions for the trainer

Chapter 7

Step 1: Trainer must first become familiar with the introduction, aims and objectives and learning outcomes of the chapter

Step 2: Trainer must teach the ppt file related to the topic of Chapter 7

Step 3: At slide 11 trainer must go briefly over the different policies and explain to the participants their usage (open separate links connected to the slide).

Step 4: At slide 12 trainer must go briefly over the different policies and explain to the participants their usage (open separate links connected to the slide).

Step 5: At slide 14 trainer must go briefly over the different policies and explain to the participants their usage (open separate links connected to the slide).

Step 6: At slide 16, after explaining the support system provided by the EEN, the trainer must press on idea icon and navigate participants to the opened link (page associated with SMEs that became successful after help from the EEN)

Step 7: At slide 20, after briefly describing the content, the trainer must press on the idea icon and navigate the participants into the page of the digital innovation hubs and briefly describe their scope.

Step 8: At slide 25 and 26, after briefly describing the content, the trainer must go through hyperlinks provided and briefly explain to the participants about individual funding opportunities available.

Step 9: At slide 27, after briefly describing the content, the trainer must press on the idea icon and navigate the participants into the page of the EU funding tenders and describe to participants its significance

Step 10: At slide 28, after briefly describing the content, the trainer must press on the idea icon and navigate the participants into the page of the business angels across Europe.

Resources:

PPT:

Readings: [Slide 16](#), [Slide 20](#), [Slide 27](#), [Slide 28](#)

Exercises: /

Videos:

Additional materials: /

4.0 References

1. Network, S M E Envoys: European SME-Action Programme:

<https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/36142/attachments/1/translations/en/renditions/pdf>

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2. M.V.Alessandrini, A.Gramillano et al. EU policy framework on SMEs : state of play and challenges: <https://cor.europa.eu/en/engage/studies/Documents/EU-SMEs/EU-policy-SMEs.pdf>
 3. European Commission- Unleashing the full potential of European SMEs: https://ec.europa.eu/info/files/commission-communication-sme-strategy-sustainable-and-digital-europe_en
 4. European Commission-COSME Europe's programme for SME's: <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/9783>
 5. European Entrepreneurs CEA-PME-SME2B- The Networking and Trade platform for SMEs: <https://sme2b.european-entrepreneurs.org/>
 6. Bruzzone, Raffaella Network, Enterprise Europe- Enterprise Europe Network and the support to SMEs in the ERDF OP: <https://www.fi-compass.eu/sites/default/files/publications/Enterprise%20Europe%20Network%20and%20the%20support%20to%20SMEs%20in%20the%20ERDF%20OP.pdf>
 7. European Chambers- Eurochambers Review Report 2022- <https://www.eurochambres.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/EUROCHAMBRES-ECONOMIC-SURVEY-2022-Report-4.pdf>
 8. European Digital Innovation HUBs- <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/activities/edihs>
 9. SME2B: <https://sme2b.european-entrepreneurs.org/>
 10. European Commission, Directorate-General for Budget, The EU's 2021-2027 long-term budget and NextGenerationEU : facts and figures, 2021, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2761/808559>
 11. Access to Funding: https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/access-finance_en
 12. Access to EU Finance: <https://europa.eu/youreurope/business/finance-funding/getting-funding/access-finance/search/en>
 13. Invest EU Funding: https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/access-finance/investeu_en
 14. Funding Opportunities for small businesses: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/how-apply/eligibility-who-can-get-funding/funding-opportunities-small-businesses_en
 15. EU Funding Bodies: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes_en#heading-6-neighbourhood-amp-the-world
 16. Business Angels Europe: <https://www.businessangelseurope.com/>
 17. Online Banking - HSBC Continental Europe: <https://ec.europa.eu> <https://www.hsbc.gr>