



DigiBEST
Interreg Europe



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

**DIGITAL BUSINESS
ECOSYSTEM TRANSFORMATION**



DigiBEST in numbers



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INTRODUCTION



Kick of Meeting in Riga. Source: VARAM

To promote and support the competitiveness of SME and to offer solutions for the digital transformation of SMEs and microenterprises in Europe, especially rural territories, using modern technologies and new innovative business methods, promoting sustainable and inclusive growth in Europe and its regions, the implementation of project "Digital Transformation of Business Environment" (DigiBEST) started on 1 August 2019.

The aim of DigiBEST is to improve European policy instruments at the regional or national level to facilitate digital transformation of SMEs.

Target group: SMEs representing all sectors, business related and sectoral organisations, national or regional policy planning authorities.

The DigiBEST project is implemented in two phases. Phase 1 is devoted to the investigations of the priority challenges and potential solutions, exchange of

experience, learning lessons that at the end of Phase 1 resulted in drafting the main output of the project – Action Plans – set of measures fostering digital transformation of SMEs and improving the addressed policy instruments of partners.

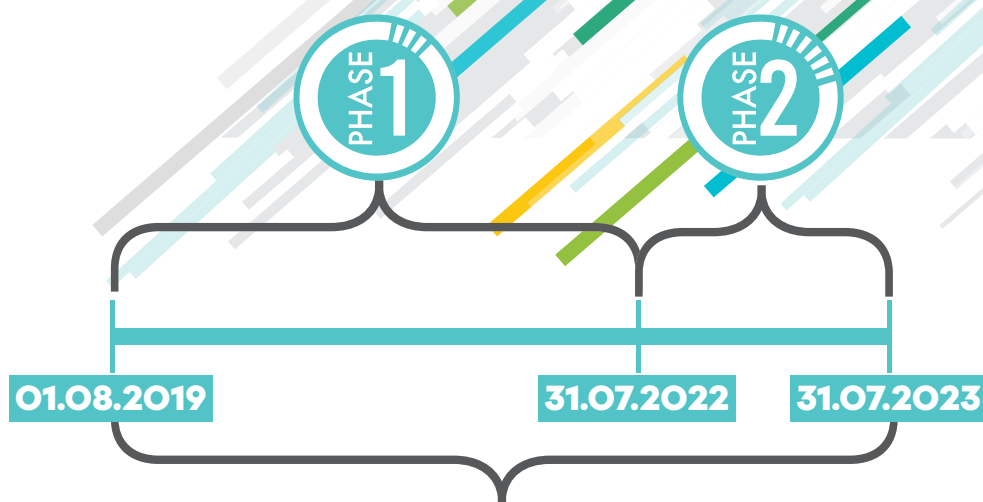
Phase 2 envisages implementation and monitoring of the Action Plans.

This brochure aims at presenting and highlighting the main qualitative and quantitative results of the DigiBEST project, as well as providing an overview of the good practices and focus of the action plans.

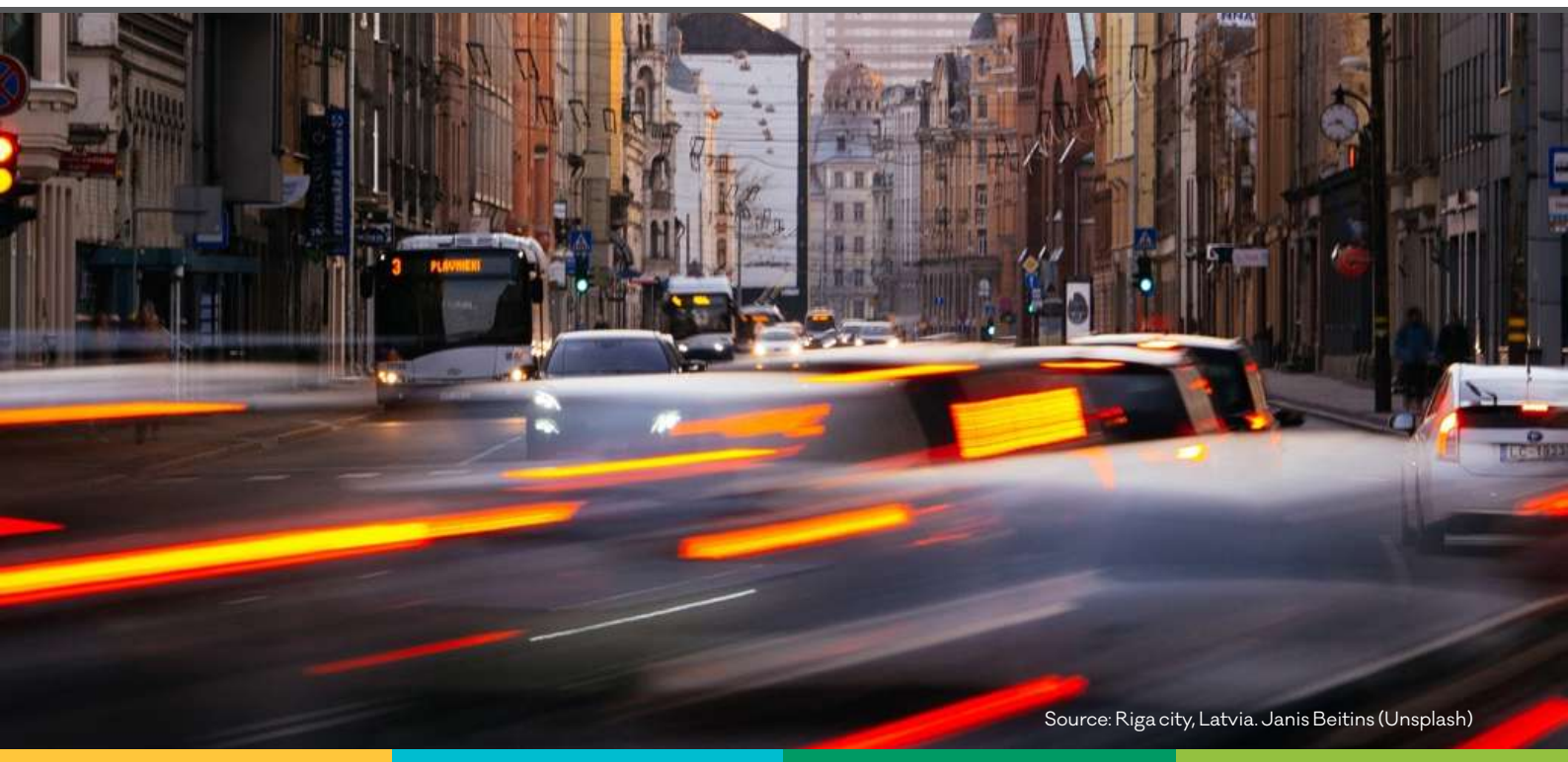
Due to the Covid-19 pandemic that started during the first year of the DigiBEST implementation, project became particularly important in helping to find new solutions for dealing with the Covid-19 crisis and its consequences, as well as for adapting to a new reality.

TIME FRAME & BUDGET

The project is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund and Norwegian national funding under the auspices of the interregional cooperation programme INTERREG EUROPE.



1 579 342 EUR



PARTNERS & POLICY INSTRUMENTS ADDRESSED



PARTNERS

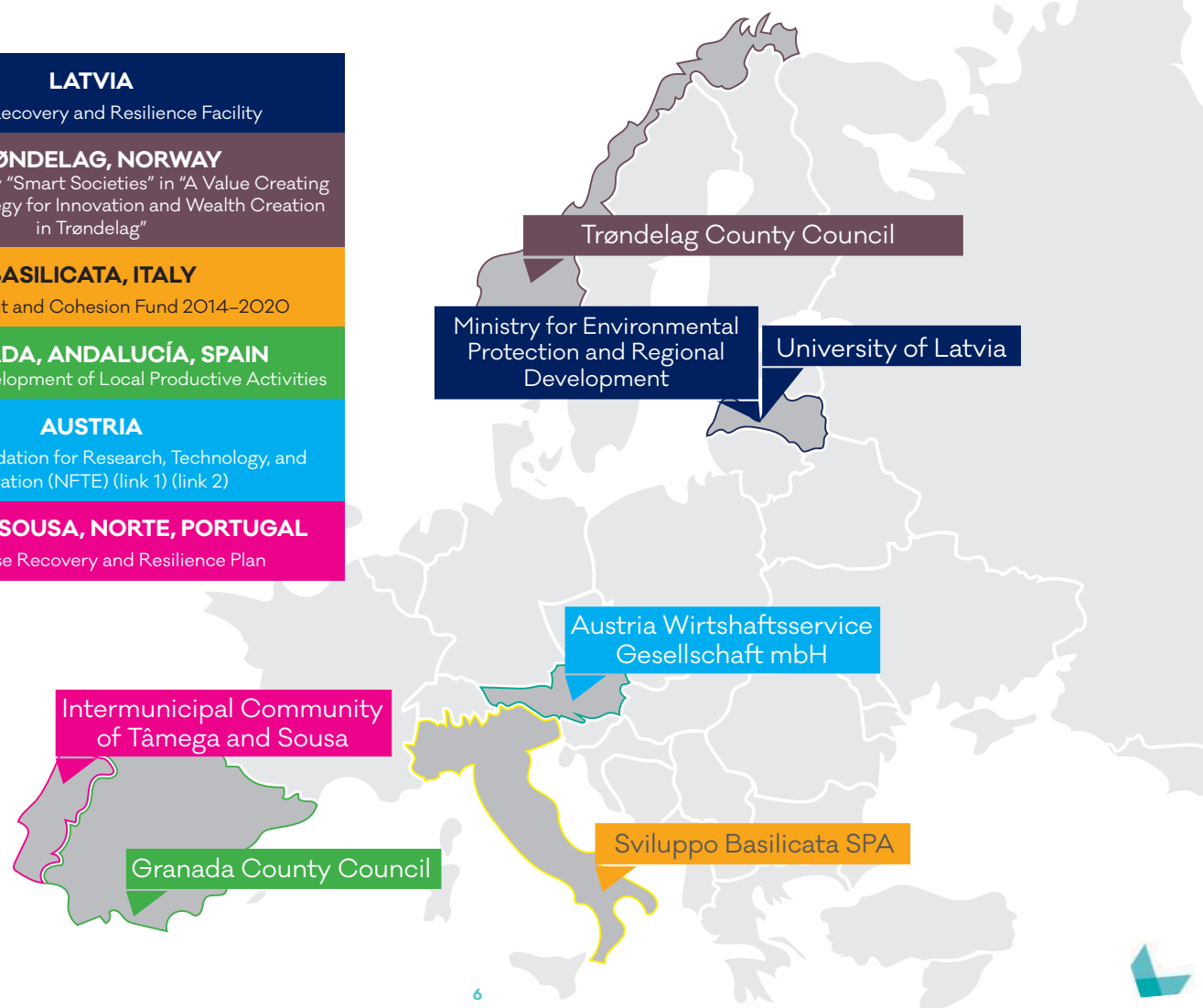
The project is implemented in cooperation of seven partners from six countries/regions. The lead partner is Latvian Ministry for Environmental Protection and Regional Development. The University of Latvia is the project advisory partner.



POLICY INSTRUMENTS

DigiBEST was launched during the programming period 2014–2020, and some policy instruments have concluded during the project's implementation. Several partners have selected new policy instruments to be improved.

LATVIA Latvia's Recovery and Resilience Facility
TRØNDELAG, NORWAY Regional strategy "Smart Societies" in "A Value Creating Trøndelag. Strategy for Innovation and Wealth Creation in Trøndelag"
BASILICATA, ITALY Development and Cohesion Fund 2014–2020
GRANADA, ANDALUCÍA, SPAIN Plan for the Development of Local Productive Activities
AUSTRIA National Foundation for Research, Technology, and Innovation (NFTE) (link 1) (link 2)
TÂMEGA E SOUSA, NORTE, PORTUGAL Portuguese Recovery and Resilience Plan



MAIN ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS



FOCUS OF ACTION PLANS



implementation and monitoring



Source: Gilly (Unsplash)

LATVIA

To reduce fragmentation of the available information on digital transformation (DT) of SMEs, a one-stop platform, using the existing platform, will be created to provide SME-tailored information, business-oriented services, as well as containing Knowledge Bank with learning materials to foster digital knowledge of SMEs.

For raising awareness and understanding of the benefits and opportunities offered by DT, a Digital Maturity Test followed by individual consultations and trainings will be provided for entrepreneurs who would like to obtain EU grants.



Source: Trondheim city, Norway, Eistein Guldseth

TRØNDELAG REGION, NORWAY

Improvement of policy instrument to stimulate DT at the regional level and to implement the relevant actions – inclusion of the term “DT” into the main government strategy document for Trøndelag (completed in 2021, Value Creation Strategy), inclusion of farmers as a new target group with a higher status – as businesses rather than farms, organisation of SME training to facilitate ecosystem, and introduction of an additional research activity for improved understanding of the DT needs of SMEs to be used in the strategy and County Council.





Source: Gilly (Unsplash)

BASILICATA REGION, ITALY

Implementation of new digitalization services for SMEs, such as an online self-assessment tool and OpenLab activities at the competence centre "InchUBatori" to spread the digital culture and to boost technological knowledge and skills.



Source: Gilly (Unsplash)

PROVINCE OF GRANADA, SPAIN

Promotion of the digitalization culture and its advantages among entrepreneurs that frequently lack understanding of the benefits of digitalization, through organisation of the awareness-raising campaign.

Creation of a capacity building programme for DT through improvement of both digital skills and financial capacity to undertake actions to digitalize companies (training sessions, dissemination events, activities on funding opportunity). SMEs frequently have insufficient digital skills, and this is a burden on DT processes. SMEs face difficulties to apply for funds that could boost their DT.



Source: Gilly (Unsplash)

AUSTRIA

Reissuing the AWS funding programme "Industry 4.0" – this programme should support companies in being a successfully digitalized company, moreover, adding elements that are not immediate digital elements, such as: integration of safety and cyber security issues into business support initiatives, support of new/digital forms of work (hybrid working, dislocated worker, etc.) and usage of digitalization to support inclusion and gender topics.

Initiating a new funding initiative – "transformation to an economically, ecologically and socially just food system" – to enable and support sustainability innovation in the context of food/food systems with digitalization as an essential tool.



Source: Gilly (Unsplash)

TÂMEGA E SOUSA, PORTUGAL

Establishment of coworking space at CIM Tâmega e Sousa – fully equipped offices and provided services (access to digital public services, software, etc.) to support remote work.

Development of a free-of-charge learning programme to foster basic digital skills among the population and SMEs of Tâmega e Sousa (on such topics as cybersecurity, digital communications, digital services, etc.).



DigiBEST GOOD PRACTICES

THE BUSINESS GARDEN PROGRAMME

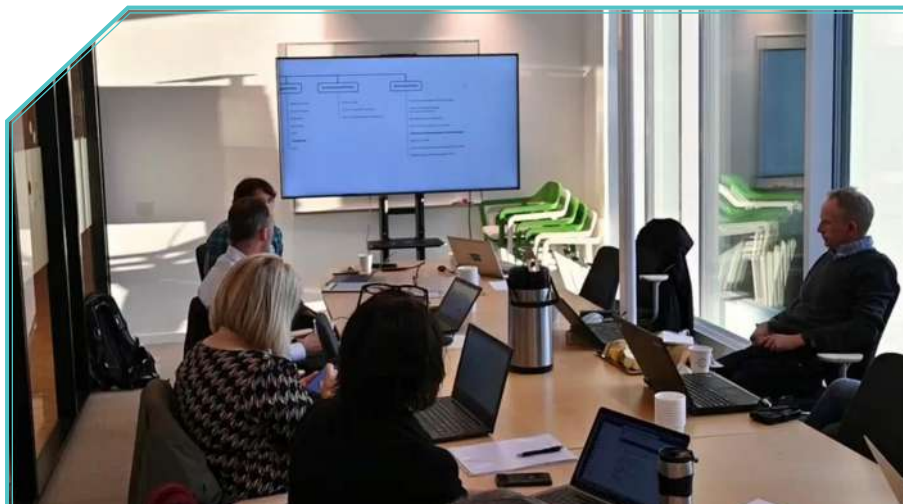


Photo: Eistein Guldseth

SUMMARY

Objective: Business gardens (BG) and Incubators provide SMEs with basic knowledge, e. g., about digitalization, and enhance business development in the rural areas. BG are an important regional development tool for the county councils.

BG are organised as shareholder companies with min. 51% of private ownership, and min. 34% – public shares. A BG co-locates development-oriented companies to promote growth, cooperation, and development. It provides access to expertise, networks, and an academic and social community.

Scale: National/Regional

Time: 1998 – ongoing

Owner: Run by the SIVA (a public enterprise) and co-owned by the county councils in Norway (total of 50% public ownership)

HIGHLIGHTS

- BG have proven to provide stabilizing environments in rural municipalities where they are located, and have contributed to reduction of competence drain, and even increased inflow of people.
- The focus is on human resource development (priority), innovation, creating start-ups, networks, and growth in established rural area SMEs. The private-public model gives BG a greater legitimacy in their development work with businesses.
- In 2017, ~4 000 SMEs received assistance from both programmes.
- Regional projects in Trøndelag show that workshop-based courses, where county council and BG/Incubators cooperate, help to engage the SMEs. During 2015–2017, over 140 businesses participated in digital visibility courses.
- BG, Incubators and Trøndelag County Council developed the project "Industry 4.0 Trøndelag" that engaged 113 small and micro businesses.

DETAILS

Resources required: 16.4 million EUR of annual governmental contribution is allocated to 40 BGs and 35 Incubators in Norway. A local, regional BG has 3-15 employees, and it can be established without a national programme, but public funding is essential.

Potential for learning: Relatively easily applicable in other countries and regions, but requires regional/national funding and structure.

DEVELOPMENT OF DIGITAL NETWORKS (FIXED AND MOBILE) IN NON-COMMERCIAL VIABLE AREAS



Photo: Kjell Ivar Bye



SUMMARY

Objective: The Trøndelag County Council strives to develop digital networks (fixed and mobile) in non-commercial areas. Trøndelag has extensive remote rural areas, and the SMEs are imperative to maintain the population. 23% of all employed people work in businesses with less than 10 employees and a lot of them are located in rural areas. Access to high-speed internet is crucial.

Scale: Regional

Time: 2008-2025

Owner: Trøndelag County Council, Norway

HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2019, 3 000 new fiber cable-based accesses to households and 15 new mobile cell towers for mobile networks (4G/5G and fixed radio) were built. For businesses in rural areas, there is a special priority focus.
- For 2020, the number of development projects is uncertain due to the disruption caused by Covid-19. The success of these projects lies in the good cooperation-methodology model (county councils/municipalities/telecom companies), which is unique in Norway.
- Most of the networks have been developed on a commercial basis, and coverage improves with each year. The coverage for Trøndelag currently stands at 86% for 30 Mbps and 82% for 100 Mbps, and 4G area coverage of 86%.
- In the national context, Trøndelag is the front-runner in terms of developing digital networks in rural areas. Trøndelag is often used as an example for other counties and municipalities.



DETAILS

Resources required: For 2019, 6 million EUR from national/regional funding was allocated, and nearly the same amount contributed by municipalities. There are also contributions from suppliers. In the Trøndelag County Council, 2 persons are employed in the projects. The county has the resources for controllers and legal advisers when needed.

Potential for learning: Easily applicable in other countries/regions, given access to public financing. The model is based on an inherent fundamental trust and credibility between the actors, so that everyone works well together to achieve common goals. Openness, good communication and information are the key elements.

More information:

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Digital infrastruktur - Trøndelag fylkeskommune ([trondelagfylke.no](https://www.trondelagfylke.no))

🌐 Web: <https://www.trondelagfylke.no/vare-tjenester/samferdsel/digital-infrastruktur/>



LATVIAN DIGITAL INNOVATION HUB (DIH)



Source: DIH



SUMMARY

Objective: DIH offers a set of support measures for SMEs to acquire knowledge on the actual digital solutions & improve problem-solving capabilities.

As a regional digital innovation hub, it serves as a go-to partner in digitalization projects, playing a major role in increasing the digital competitiveness of Latvian companies and driving the global competitiveness by spreading the set of digital competences of DIH ecosystem. Latvian IT Cluster (LITC) as a DIH takes the leading position/acts as a facilitator within the ecosystem, which has been built in collaboration with universities, scientific institutions, government, corporates, industry, and local champions (SMEs operating in traditional and high potential industries).

Scale: National

Time: 2018 - ongoing

Owner: Latvian IT Cluster DIH, Latvia

HIGHLIGHTS

- More than 15 success stories of companies and implemented projects, including SMEs, banks, Latvian National Library, and others.
- ~ 20 companies participated in digital trainings (Kickstart) to explore the variety of digital tools that could help in business growth.
- Well-established network with entrepreneurship development centres of 4 Latvia's planning regions, main sectoral associations, universities, scientific institutions as well as over 40 digital technology developers.
- Since 2021, DIH Latvia is a partner of the EU DIH and together with the Latvian IT Cluster has received BDVA (Big Data Value Association) silver nomination.



DETAILS

Resources required: DIH staff consists of 7 members (inhouse) & 40 IT Cluster members (EE), costs of organized events.

Potential for learning: Application in other regions and countries depend on the digitalization level of SMEs and required adjustments according to local conditions.

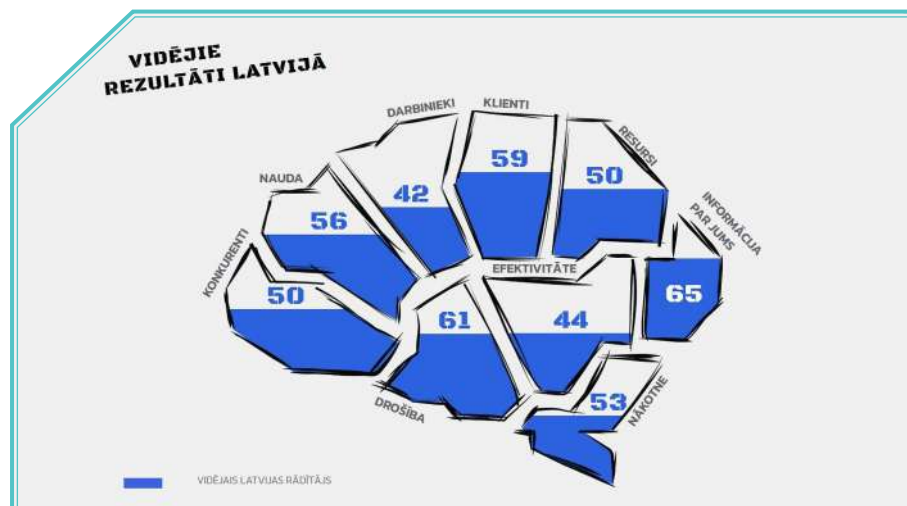
More information:

✉ E-mail: itcluster@itbaltic.com ☎ Tel: +371 22 046 166

🌐 Web: <https://dih.lv/en/> and <https://www.interregeurope.eu/good-practices/digital-innovation-hub-dih>



SMART LATVIA & SMES' ONLINE DIGITAL MATURITY SELF-ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATION TOOL



Source: Gudra Latvia

SUMMARY

Objective: To help Latvian companies in development of IT solutions in their businesses, LIKTA together with partners and IT companies has launched an educational campaign called “Smart Latvia” and developed a free tool (SME Online Digital Maturity Test) for entrepreneurs to acknowledge and plan business digital transformation activities. Latvian companies can assess their digital maturity, to compare themselves with competitors and to find out what IT solutions would help each respective company to work more effectively, with less costs and higher profits.

Scale: National

Time: 2019 - ongoing

Owner: Latvian Information and Communications Technology Association (LIKTA)

HIGHLIGHTS

- This tool currently is also available in English, Estonian, Lithuanian, Danish, Polish and Swedish.
- As of March 2022, the Digital Maturity Test was completed by 1 554 SMEs (1 115 in Latvia, 301 in Estonia, 59 in Poland, 31 in Lithuania and over 45 in other countries (Sweden, Finland, Denmark)).
- Based on use of the tool, in 4 countries a multicountry analysis of the tool usability has been developed and disseminated.

DETAILS

Resources required: "Smart Latvia" is supported by the project of Interreg Baltic Sea Region – "#RO50 Digital Innovation Network, DIGINNO". Costs planned in the project for self-assessment tool "Digital Maturity Tool" (design, developing, hosting) – 6 000 EUR.

Potential for learning: A tool can be implemented in other countries for entrepreneurs to acknowledge and plan activities for digital transformation of business.

More information:

✉ E-mail: gudralatvija@likta.lv, office@likta.lv ☎ Tel: + 371 67311821

Web: <https://www.gudralatvija.lv/>; <https://www.diginnotool.eu/> and

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/4119/smart-latvia-digital-maturity-test/>

CONSULTANCY AND SEMINARS ON BUSINESS SUPPORT



Source: ZRKAC



SUMMARY

Objective: ZRKAC events provide free individual mentor consultancy for SMEs (including home producers) for establishing their visual identity on the internet & increasing market competitiveness.

Business support consultancy advises entrepreneurs how to carry out the promotion of SME's products on the external market, helps to ensure that SME's websites are easily accessible to potential clients and in practical workshops shows how to create a visually appealing product design.

Scale: Local – SMEs in Zemgale region

Time: 2009 - ongoing

Owner: Zemgale Region Human Resource and Competences Development Centre (ZRKAC)

HIGHLIGHTS

- 7 120 consultations received by businesses (421 of those in 2021). 725 participants learned about digital marketing in 17 seminars.
- Individual practical aid for SMEs targeted at their individual needs: 35% of businesses improved their e-commerce, and product turnover improved by 20–50%.
- 320 businesses acquired knowledge about online tools and 48 developed marketing campaigns or improved their visual identity using online tools.
- [Virtual Zemgale Region Business Catalogue](#) and on-line contact areas have been created. More than 70 cooperation contracts concluded and 30 partnerships established using the Virtual Catalogue and on-line contacts (e.g., [Catalogue – Winter 2021](#), [Catalogue – Spring 2021](#)).



DETAILS

Resources required: Consultations are held free of charge and are provided by two employees with basic local remuneration amount covered by municipality budget.

Potential for learning: The service comprising consultancy and seminars is an easily establishing tool to support business development in the less densely populated areas.

More information:

✉ E-mail: birojs@zrkac.jelgava.lv ☎ Tel: +371 63082101

🌐 Web: <https://zrkac.lv/index.php?view=pakalpojumi&id=25> and

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/good-practices/consultancy-on-business-support>



PROGRAMME “TICCAMARAS”



Source: TICCAMARAS

SUMMARY

Objective: TICCAMARAS promotes the systematic incorporation of the IT into the usual activities of SMEs as a competitive key tool in their strategy, as well as to maximize the opportunities that IT offer to improve productivity and competitiveness.

The programme is oriented towards the specific needs of the targeted companies through development of a mixed methodology of diagnosis, support in the process of implementing the solution and dissemination of the knowledge.

Scale: National

Time: 2014 - ongoing

Owner: The Spanish Chamber of Commerce

HIGHLIGHTS

- Since 2014, ~ 1 000 businesses per year have participated in TICCAMARAS, increasing their productivity by using digital marketing, e-commerce, and business management tools through cloud technology.
- During 2021, at least 1 532 businesses benefitted from this programme.
- Annual seminar is held to explain the advantages of ICT usage to SMEs.

DETAILS

Resources required: The programme subsidizes up to 85% (depending on the autonomous community) of investments in technological development to a maximum of 7 000 EUR.

Potential for learning: Many SMEs do not invest in ICT, if they are not motivated. Thanks to TICCAMARAS, several companies have started their digital transformation and have increased their competitiveness. This economic incentive requires an effort on behalf of SMEs, hiring ICT services for 7 000 EUR. Thus, TICCAMARAS is motivating a lot of SMEs to initiate their digitalization.

The programme is currently implemented through 36 local Chambers of Commerce across the country.

More information:

 **Web:** <https://www.camara.es/innovacion-y-competitividad/ticcamaras>

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OFFICES (OTD)



Source: RED.ES

SUMMARY

Objective: Promoting creation and consolidation of OTD to disseminate the need and advantages of the digitalization process of Spanish companies. OTD aims at strengthening the ecosystem of support available to SMEs in ICT matters by offering dynamization and support services for their digital transformation.

Two services are offered: 1) Support: consultations on solutions and/or methodologies to improve the management of the company by using the ICT. 2) Diffusion: collective actions to communicate the advantages and/or methodologies in the implementation of technological solutions.

Scale: National

Time: 2019-ongoing

Owner: RED.ES (a public entity, owned by Ministry of Energy, Tourism, and the Digital Agenda from the Government of Spain)

HIGHLIGHTS

- 28 entities operating in Spain, 2 in Granada (Cluster of Sustainable Construction and Cluster of Technology and Biotechnology). March 2019 – March 2020: both clusters organised over 240 events and activities focused on dissemination of knowledge regarding the digitalization advantages to SMEs.
- The Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) Report 2018 highlights the work carried out by RED.ES with programmes such as OTD.

DETAILS

Resources required: The programme was funded between 100 000 – 200 000 EUR per office to develop action plans for businesses' digitalization. Each plan was co-financed by the managing entities (e.g., association or professional college) with a min. of 20% of the eligible budget. The OTD is financed by the ERDF (5 million EUR) and co-financed by the OP for Smart Growth.

Inside the strategy – Plan for the Digitalization of SMEs 2021–2025, the project of Acelera Pyme Offices is endowed with a total amount of 24 million EUR and an intention to create 90 offices in the whole country.

Potential for learning: It is easily transferable to any EU region/country. The entity transferring the funds must open public a call addressed to professional associations, clusters, and colleges. These organisations will apply a for call by submitting an application that includes an action plan listing the actions to be carried out.

More information:

Web: <https://red.es/es/iniciativas/acelera-pyme> and <https://www.acelerapyme.gob.es/localizador-de-oficinas>

"GUADALINFO" - A SOCIAL NETWORK OF INHABITANTS IN ANDALUSIA



Source: Guadalinfo



SUMMARY

Objective: "Guadalinfo" offers a free-of-charge, accessible space to use Internet with the aim to develop projects and initiatives to stimulate digital transformation in rural areas. "Guadalinfo" aims to empower people (using ICTs as a tool) to be the driving force behind the transformation of their communities – the training is adapted to different ages and profiles in digital competences, entrepreneurship skills, technological and professional skills, as well as community awareness and cohesion, with special attention to the prevention of digital, gender and social gaps.

Scale: Regional

Time: 2001 - ongoing

Owner: Consortium Fernando de los Ríos (a public entity, commissioned by the Junta de Andalucía and 8 provincial councils of the region)

HIGHLIGHTS

- 70 000 developed activities in 2017, 90 000 in 2018 and 100 000 in 2019.
- ~10 000 entrepreneurs and 5 000 SMEs have participated in one or more activities related to digital transformation in 2019.
- More than 1 million users registered into its platform.
- Activities promoted by "Guadalinfo" are free for the users registered on its platform.
- Andalusia has improved in ICT literacy, benefiting people, entrepreneurs, and SMEs in rural areas, and those traditionally facing greater difficulties in accessing ICTs. 53% of the users are women.



DETAILS

Resources required: The budget is ~ 193 000 EUR. "Guadalinfo" has ~ 800 centres based in Andalusia with 800 local innovation agents.

Potential for learning: During the development years of the "Guadalinfo", the Government of Andalusia experienced an extensive amount of interest from other Spanish regions and different countries due to the high transferability of the project at the national and international level.

In terms of good practice for developing the Information Society, Andalusia's Ministry of Innovation particularly points out its choice to pursue a strategy based on free software as a way of combating the limitations caused by property software. The advances achieved in providing citizens with training resources, providing SME with tools for digital transformation, and development of a model that encourages cooperation between local bodies can be considered as a point of reference for other initiatives with the same aims.

More information:

Web: <http://www.guadalinfo.es/home> and <https://www.consortiofernandodelosrios.es/>



DIGITAL INNOVATION HUB CONFINDUSTRIA BASILICATA (DIHB)



Source: Basilicata Chamber of Commerce



SUMMARY

Objective: DIHB is an informative and consulting office dedicated to SMEs for the transfer of technological innovation and digital transformation.

The following services are provided to regional entrepreneurs: facilitating awareness about the opportunities that the Industry 4.0 can provide to SMEs; definition of the roadmap for the digital transformation of business processes; favour and transfer of innovation to companies; support of SMEs in accessing public and private financing instruments; support the investment planning activity; training and mentoring services to businesses. The participation is free of charge.

Scale: National

Time: 2019 - ongoing

Owner: Confindustria Basilicata, Italy

HIGHLIGHTS

- Over 16 territorial digital assessments (companies checked) in Basilicata, and more than 1 600 digital maturity assessment tests in Italy carried out (September 2021).



DETAILS

Resources required: Budget for 1 innovation manager – 60 000 EUR (expert staff for Basilicata); the overall economic resources for the three-year period 2019–2021 were over 6 million EUR (in Italy).

Potential for learning: The possibility to have a one stop-shop where to find highly qualified experts specialised in the transfer of technological innovation and digital transformation at company's disposal free of charge.

More information:

✉ E-mail: info@confindustria.basilicata.it ☎ Tel: +39 0971 292911

🌐 Web: <https://preparatifuturo.confindustria.it/digital-innovation-hub/cosa-sono/>



DIGITAL BUSINESS POINTS (PID)



Source: Basilicata Chamber of Commerce



SUMMARY

Objective: PID are service structures located at the Chambers of Commerce throughout Italy to spread out the culture and practice of digitalization in the MPME (Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises) of all economic sectors. The network of 'physical' points is joined by a 'virtual' network through using a wide range of digital tools: specialized sites, forums and communities, use of social media.

The following services are provided to regional entrepreneurs: self-assessment of the digitalization level; mapping of the digital maturity of companies and assistance in starting digitization processes through assessment and mentoring services; training, information and mentoring services in the field of business digitalization; provision of financial support through digitalization vouchers.

Scale: National

Time: 2017 – ongoing

Owner: Italian Chambers of Commerce

HIGHLIGHTS

- over 600 entrepreneurs have benefited from the PID services at regional level.
- over 350 have attended courses & information events.
- 280 companies measured their digital maturity with the SELF assessment test 4.0.
- ~50 entrepreneurs carried out an in-depth assessment conducted by the digital promoters within the network.
- over 80 companies have had access to almost 600 000 EUR through the vouchers by PIDs to purchase consulting & training services 4.0.



DETAILS

Resources required:

Budget 2020: 373 982.85 EUR

- Internal cost 18 130.18 EUR;
- External cost 198 780.00 EUR;
- Voucher 157 072.67 EUR.

Expert staff: 5 digital promoters, 3 coordinators, 1 leader.

Potential for learning: PIDs can be considered as a tool for companies to increase the 'active' awareness on the possible solutions offered by digitalization and its benefits, as well as on the risks associated with company's non-use of digital tools and solutions.

More information:

✉ E-mail: pid@basilicata.camcom.it

🌐 Web: <https://www.assetbasilicata.it/asset/page/2/266/1/2019/PID>

PROJECT "GROWING IN DIGITAL"



Source: Basilicata Chamber of Commerce



SUMMARY

Objective: The project is aimed at promoting the employability of young people (between 15 and 29, who do not study and do not work) through the acquisition of digital skills, and transferring these skills into local companies.

Scale: National

Time: 2014– 2020

Owner: Italian Chambers of Commerce (*Unioncamere*) in partnership with *Google*, promoted by the National Agency for Active Labour Policies supervised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies.

HIGHLIGHTS

Italy, "Growing in Digital":

- 112 000 young people seeking employment were enrolled in "Growing in Digital", 8 100 businesses participated, and 3 100 internships were paid in the company activated on the national territory.
- 5 000 internships are planned throughout the national territory in the new programme session.

Basilicata, "Growing in Digital":

- In 2017, 80 companies have hosted digital innovators and in 2019 the second edition started.



DETAILS

Resources required: Financed from the National Operational Programme "Youth Employment Initiative".

Budget for Basilicata – "Growing in Digital":

Year	EUR	Staff
2014/2015	6 000	2
2016/2017	16 000	2
2019/2020	8 000	2
2021	15 000	2

Potential for learning: "Growing in Digital": as an opportunity for training and traineeships for young people seeking jobs to increase their chances of success and for companies to hire skilled young adults. After the training, the participants complete a 6-month internship in companies. In this way, young people can put into practice what they have learned. Companies are able to host 1 or more participants. SMEs do not take courses; trainees are granted a reimbursement of expenses equal to 500 EUR.

More information:

✉ E-mail: info@crescereindigitale.it

🌐 Web: <https://www.crescereindigitale.it/>



CITIZEN'S SHOP



Source: Municipality of Penafiel



SUMMARY

Objective: Citizen Shop enables all citizens, but especially companies, to have access to a wide range of public and private services in a single space, a one-stop-shop concept provision of public services in Portugal. It has facilitated an important increase in the quality and levels of demand related to the provision of public services in the country.

Scale: National

Time: 1999 – ongoing

Owner: AMA – Agência para a Modernização Administrativa Administrative Modernization Agency, Portugal

HIGHLIGHTS

- Citizen Shop is one of the most distinctive brands in the relationship of SMEs with public administration. At the end of 2011, the service reached 100 million users.
- The high level of demand (there are alternatives) that reveal the users' preference for this model of public service provision, with consistent and generally positive evaluations. Until 2020, 59 Citizen Shops were opened.
- In 2020, ~ 276 061 consultations per month were provided.
- To respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, the "Quiosque Cidadão" or "Citizen Kiosk" was developed – a temporary service desk to serve the citizens regarding the various public services available (sense of adaptation).



DETAILS

Resources required: The cost of implementation and management depends on the store's size. The Shops can be funded from the municipalities' budget or from the national government budget, and it can cost from a few hundred EUR to more than 2 000 EUR per month. HR costs are not accounted for, as they are guaranteed by the employees' home services.

Potential for learning: In addition to providing comfort and convenience to citizens allowing them to resolve various issues within the same space, saving time and travel costs. The Shops also permit sharing resources, infrastructure and platforms, enhancing efficiency and cost reduction.

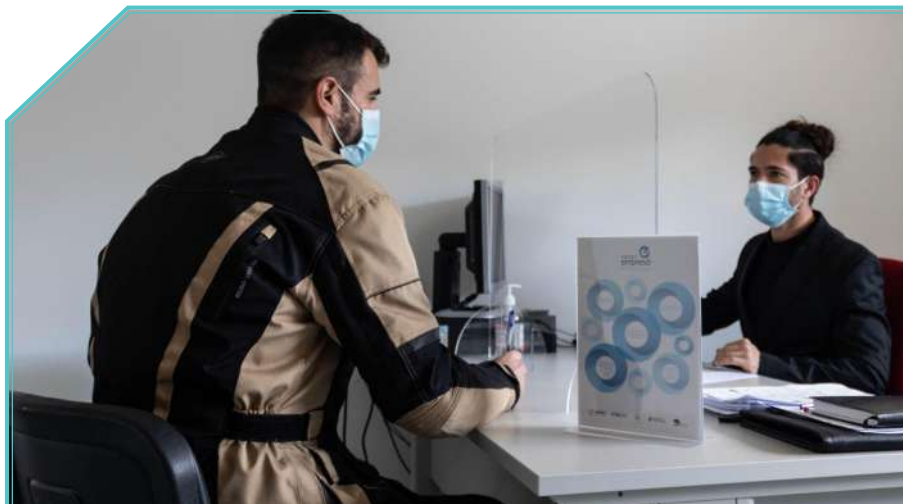
More information:

✉ E-mail: ama@ama.pt ☎ Tel: +351 217 231 20

🌐 Web: <https://projects2014-2020.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/3926/loja-do-cidadao-citizen-s-shop/> and <https://www.ama.gov.pt/web/agencia-para-a-modernizacao-administrativa/lojas-do-cidadao>



BUSINESS SPACE



Source: Municipality of Paços de Ferreira



SUMMARY

Objective: Business Space provides entrepreneurs and business owners with a single space where they can solve problems and other issues related to their business activity. SME entrepreneurs and people aspiring to establish future SMEs can receive information, advice and support adjusted to the needs of their company in a timely manner.

Scale: National/Regional

Time: 2017 – ongoing

Owner: Câmara Municipal de Paços de Ferreira | Municipality of Paços de Ferreira, Tâmega e Sousa, Portugal

HIGHLIGHTS

- At the end of 2021, the service verified 239 consultations.
- Provided services: general information, legal and economic support and advice specially designed for SMEs, intermediation and facilitation (interface with Central Public Administration services) and assisted digital service – support for the realization of online services provided by the public administration.
- The use of the ePortugal portal provides the informative content supporting business and investment; electronic services for completing the legal formalities (related with the creation and incorporation of companies and the licensing of economic activities): forms for submitting requests for both scheduling a meeting and online information.
- More than 1 000 consultations provided in three years.



DETAILS

Resources required: 2 000 EUR/month for equipment and for HR (one full-time person and another half-time person), the costs are supported by the municipality of Paços de Ferreira budget.

Potential for learning: Business Space is a service predominantly oriented toward customers with specific needs concerning creation of a small company and/or solving the problems directly related to the SME. Being assisted by a specialized technician, help can be found in a very easy manner. The key success factors are the available specialized technicians, the concentration of different services from different public entities and the digital services available free of charge.

This practice can easily be transferred and implemented to address a wide range of situations, preventing people from visiting a number of places before they can create their business or solve a problem.

More information:

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🌐 Web: <https://www.cm-pacosdeferreira.pt/index.php/balc-emp>



DIGITAL PRO BOOTCAMPS



Source: VARAM

SUMMARY

Objective: The programme addresses the development of digital skills, the support of digital further training to master the challenges of advancing digitalization and addressing the shortage of skilled workers.

Highly motivated specialists from Austrian companies are transformed into “digital professionals” during intensive learning phases in the bootcamp (with a total training duration of several weeks). The “digital professionals” learn to understand complex interrelationships of digitization and practical problems. In addition to profound IT expertise and advanced digitalization skills on specific focal points of digitization, practical skills are the focus of the qualification.

Scale: National/Regional

Time: 2018- ongoing

Owner: Federal Ministry for Digital and Economic Affairs and Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) with support of the National Foundation for Research, Technology and Development.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Within two calls, 7 bootcamps were held, focusing on various digital aspects, such as data science, data security, artificial intelligence, and smart factories.
- Employees from 54 partner companies from various Austrian regions were involved in the bootcamps in cooperation with 16 scientific partners (a high demand for the programme itself). The combination of on-site and online phases was a success.

DETAILS

Resources required: 1.67 million EUR funding for the 1st call (2018–2019); 0.65 million EUR funding for the 2nd call (2020). A team of 2–3 persons were involved in the implementation of the two calls.

Potential for learning: SMEs must catch up with digitization. This particularly applies to the highly dynamic markets such as e-commerce, social media marketing and the use of cloud services. With the “Digital Pro Bootcamps”, Austria implements targeted measures and allocates grants to ensure that SMEs remain internationally competitive. This enables companies to ensure rapid further qualification of their staff, carrying out digitization initiatives and pursuing the development of new technologies and products.

More information:

 **Web:** <https://www.ffg.at/digital-pro-bootcamps> and <https://www.interregeurope.eu/node/23765>

DIGITAL INNOVATION HUBS (DIH)



Source: VARAM



SUMMARY

Objective: DIH support SMEs in surviving the digital change and realising the innovation and growth potential that digitalization can bring to them.

DIH act as one-stop-shops, which support private companies (primarily SMEs) dealing with digital challenges by providing information, trainings and skills' development, expertise, infrastructure (e.g., collaborative R&D and development of prototypes for digitization applications) and networking possibilities.

Scale: Regional

Time: 2018 - ongoing

Owner: Federal Ministry for Digital and Economic Affairs and Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) with support of the National Foundation for Research, Technology and Development.

HIGHLIGHTS

The six digital innovation hubs at a glance:

- DIH Eastern Austria: Digital Innovation Hub – Lower Austria, Vienna, Burgenland
- DiMaHub: Digital Makers Hub
- DIH West: Digital Innovation Hub West
- DIH-South: Digital Innovation Hub South Austria
- DIH innov: ATE – Austria's Digital Innovation Hub for Agriculture, Timber and Energy
- Digital Innovation Hub Work



DETAILS

Resources required: 3 million EUR funding for the 1st call (2018–2019). 4 million EUR funding for the 2nd call (2020). A team of 2 to 3 persons were involved in the implementation of the two calls.

Potential for learning: A key success factor of the DIH programme is the consideration of the federal provinces (regions) and collaboration with them. They know the needs of the SMEs in the region and collaborate with the regional higher education & research institutions. Hence, the submissions are well coordinated and tailored to the needs of the region(s).

More information:

 **Web:** <https://www.interregeurope.eu/node/23764>



DigiBEST

Interreg Europe



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

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