

### PARTNER ORGANISATIONS AND REGIONS

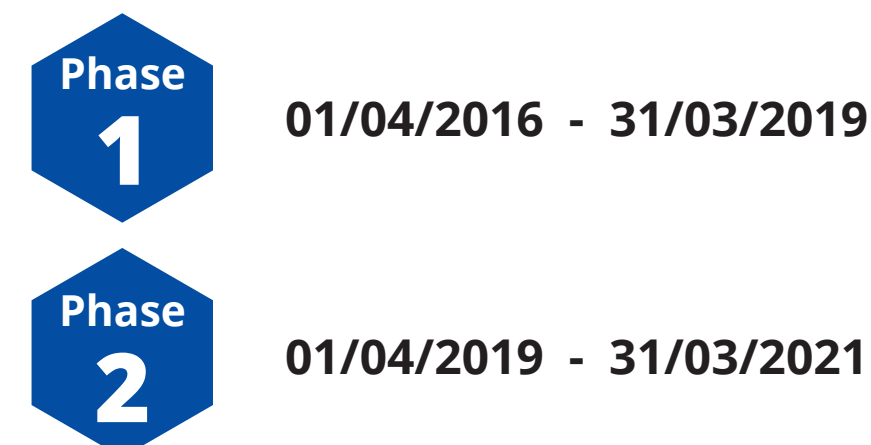
Ministry for Regional Development and Transport of Saxony-Anhalt, GERMANY  
Kainuun Etu Ltd., FINLAND  
Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of LATVIA  
University of Western Macedonia, GREECE  
Malopolska Regional Development Agency, POLAND  
Trøndelag County Authority, NORWAY  
Zadar County Rural Development Agency, CROATIA  
Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, BULGARIA  
Ministry for Culture and Tourism of Castilla y León Regional Government, SPAIN  
Pannon Novum WestTransdanubian Regional Innovation Nonprofit Ltd., HUNGARY  
University of LATVIA  
Technical University of Ostrava, CZECH REPUBLIC

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SKILLS+ aims at advancing public policies promoting information and communication technologies (ICT) skills among SMEs in rural areas helping them seize fully the opportunities offered by a digital single market and benefits of a digital economy.

The project is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund and Norwegian national funding through the INTERREG EUROPE programme. The project involves 12 partners from Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Norway, Poland and Spain.

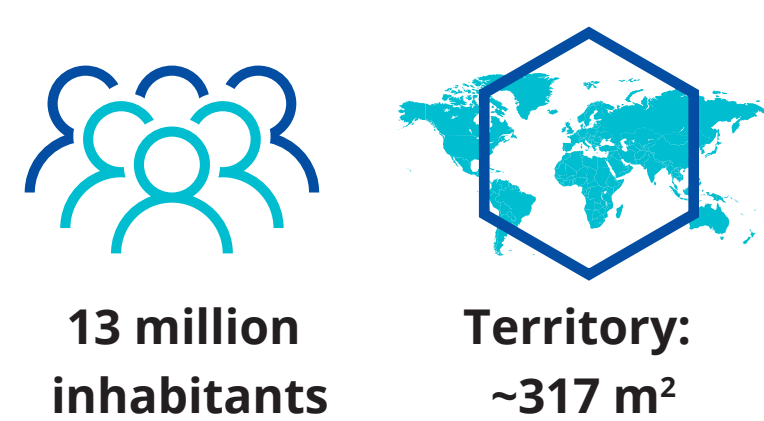
### PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION:



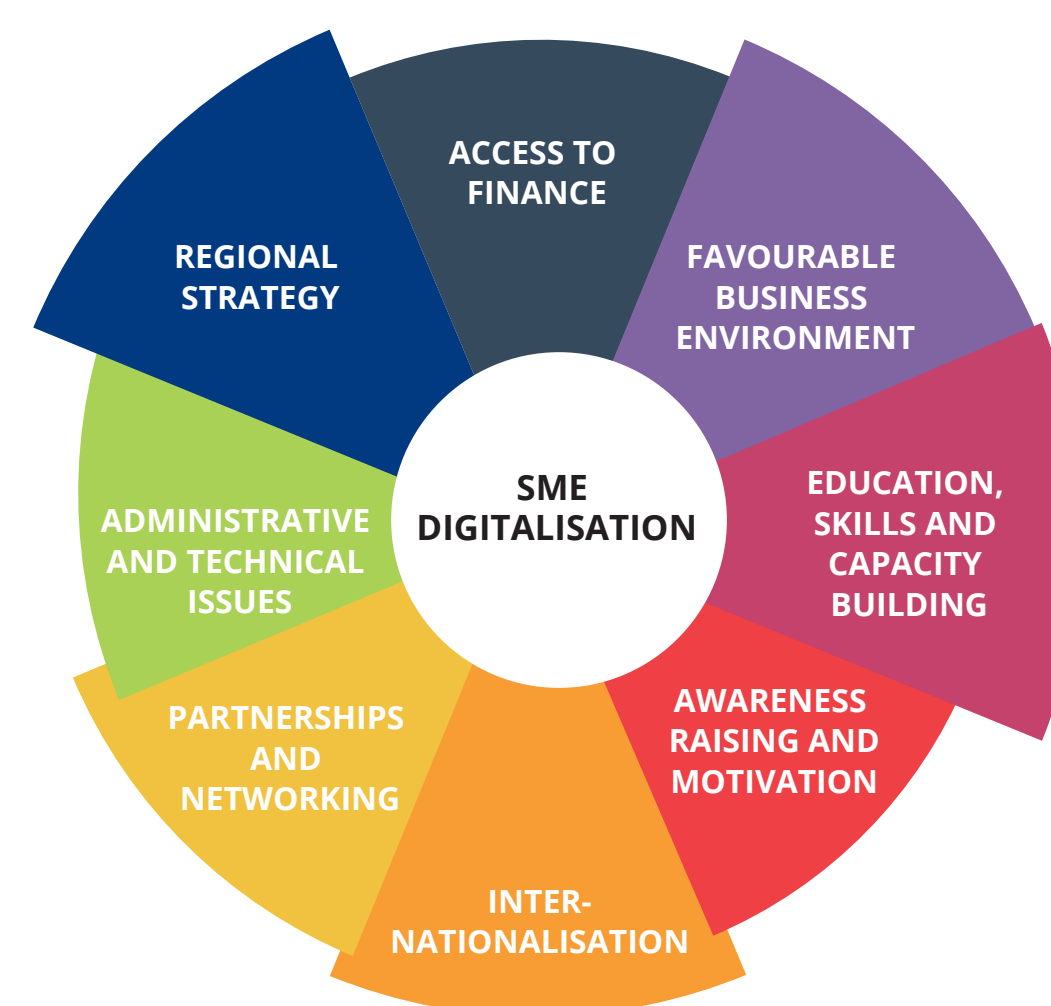
### PROJECT TARGETS



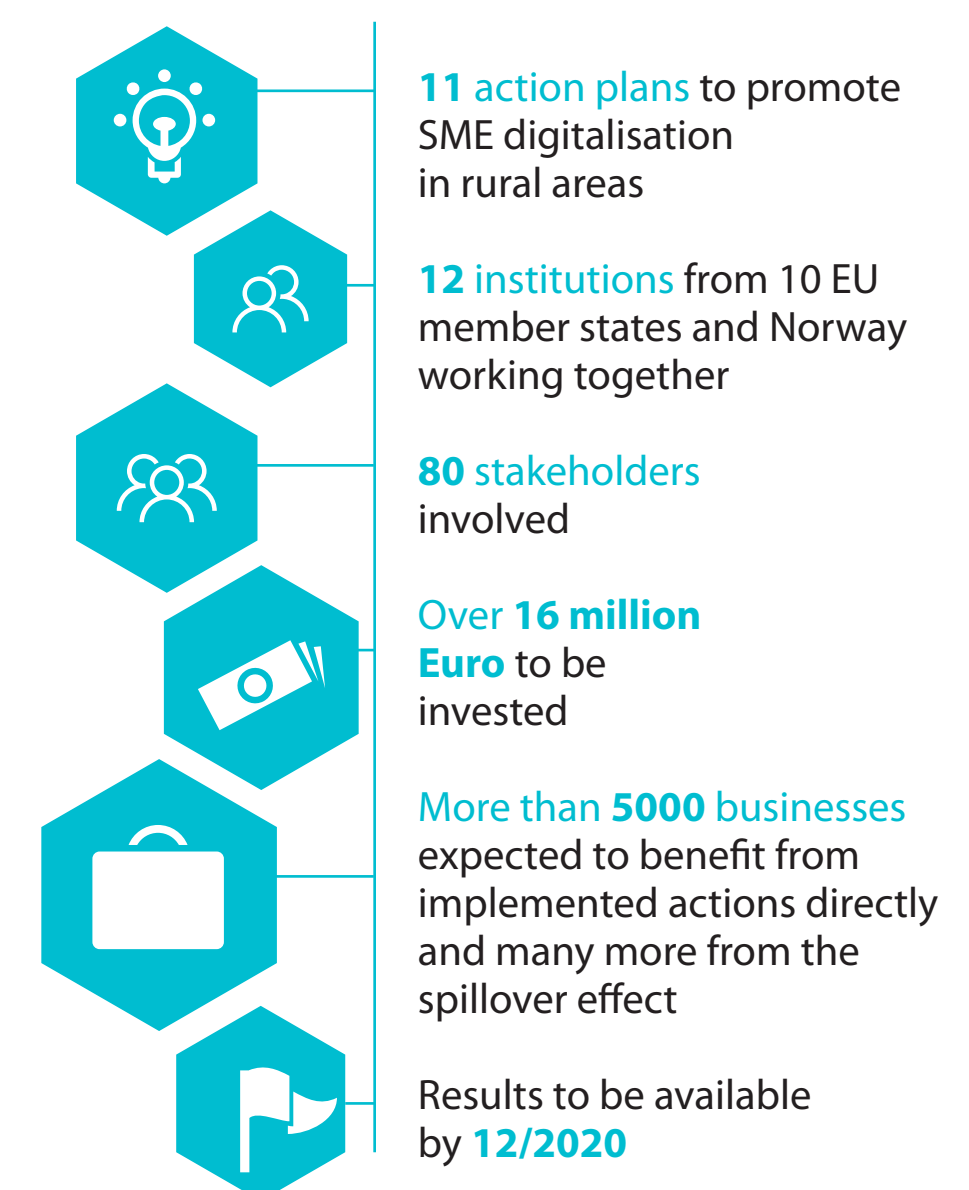
### PROJECT TERRITORY:



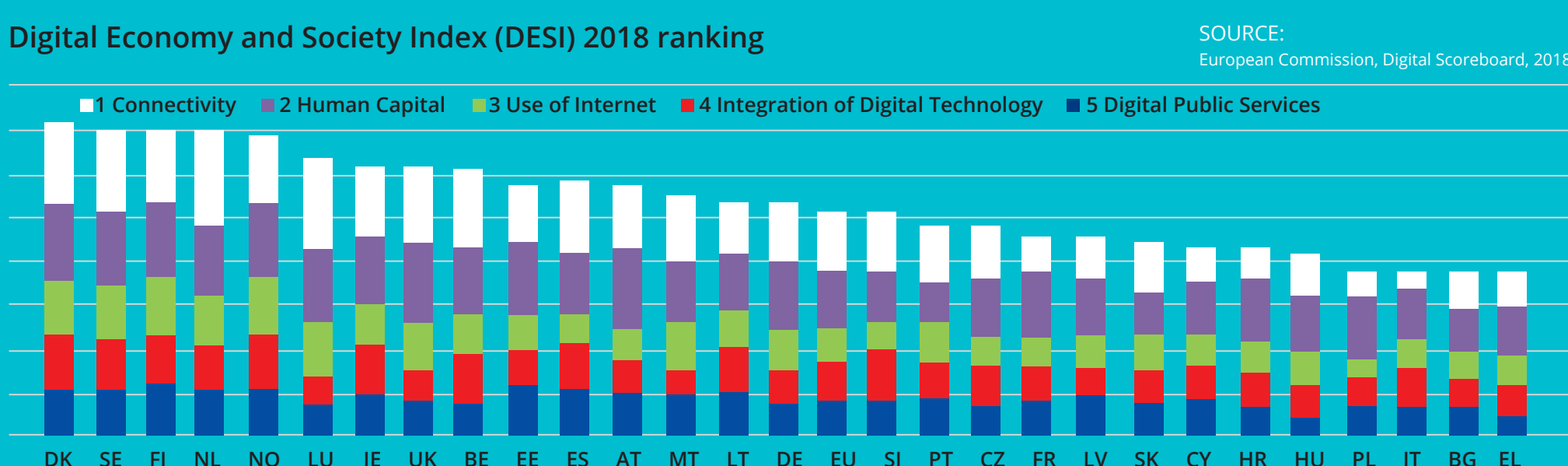
### FRAMEWORK FOR ENHANCING SMES DIGITALISATION



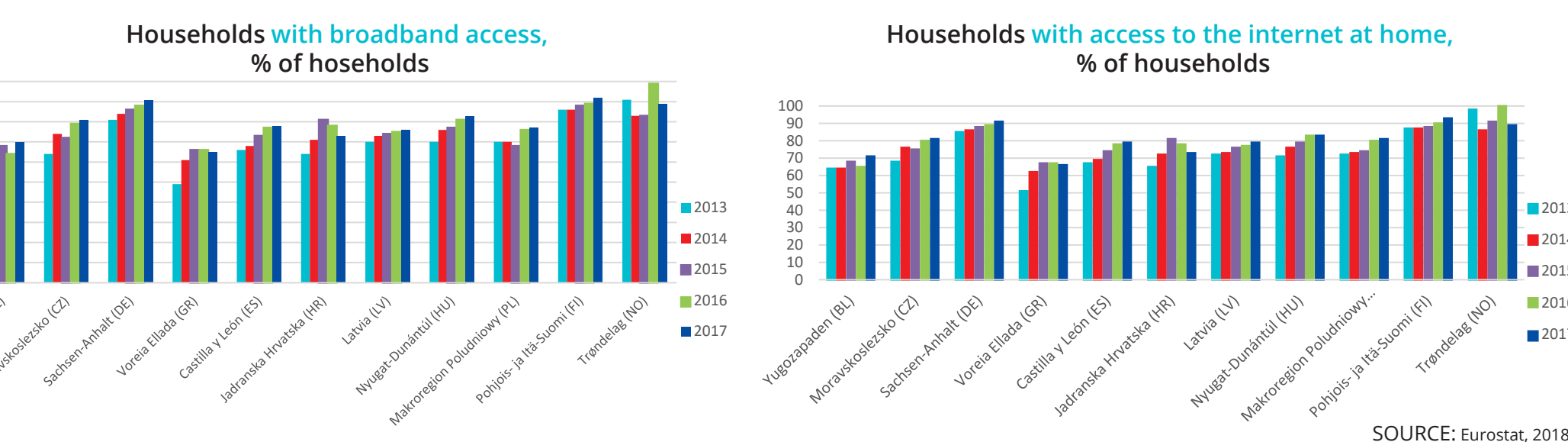
### PROJECT RESULTS:



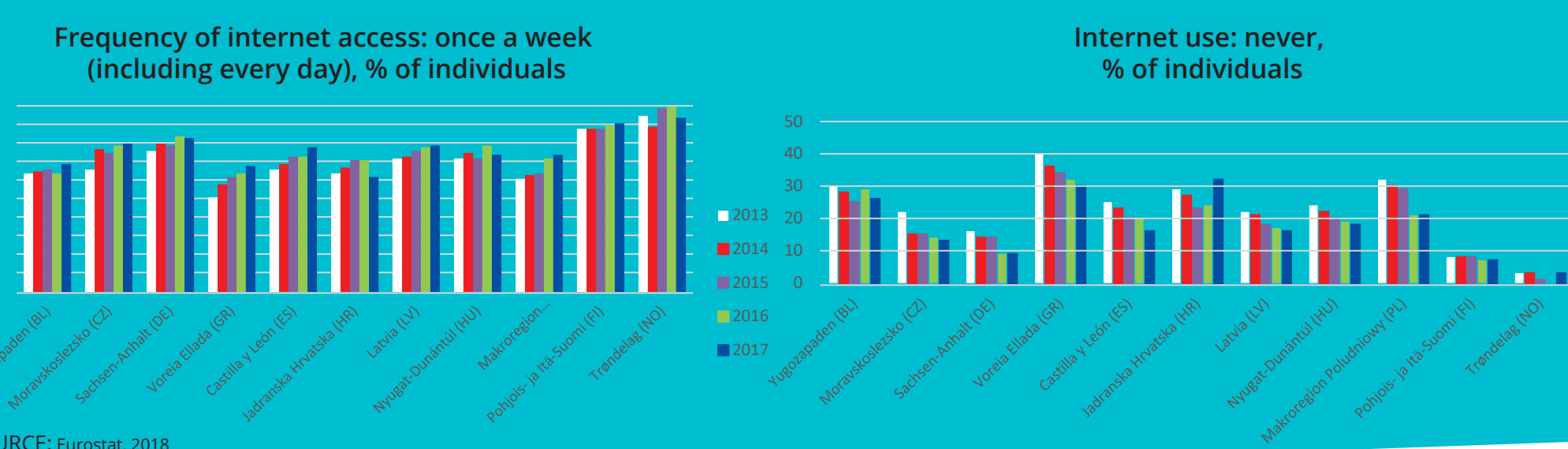
### DIGITALISATION PROGRESS ACCORDING TO DESI 2018 RANKING



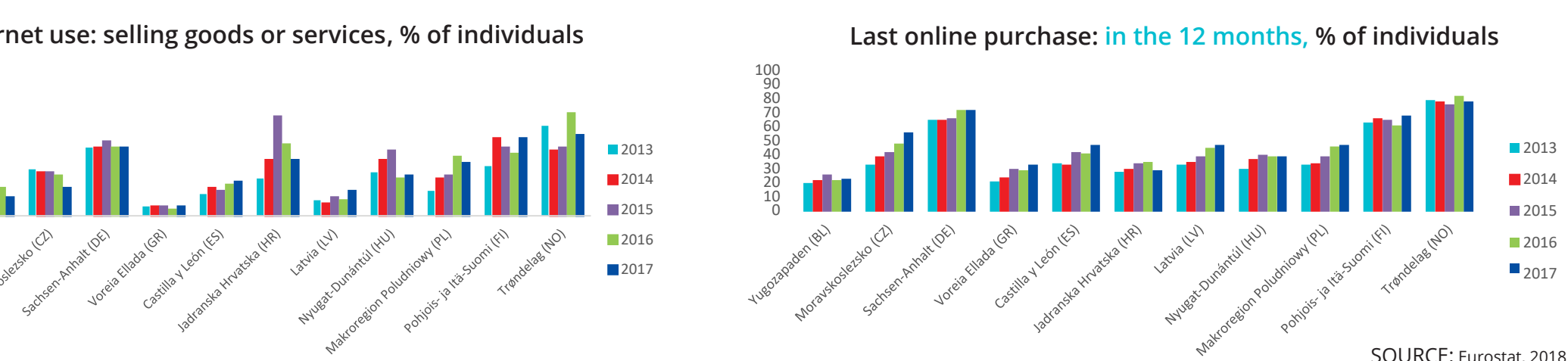
### CONNECTIVITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVED, BUT IS STILL INSUFFICIENT IN RURAL AND HARD TO REACH AREAS



### SOCIETIES AND SMES ARE GRADUALLY BECOMING MORE DIGITAL BUT THERE ARE STILL MANY PEOPLE WHO HAVE NEVER USED INTERNET.



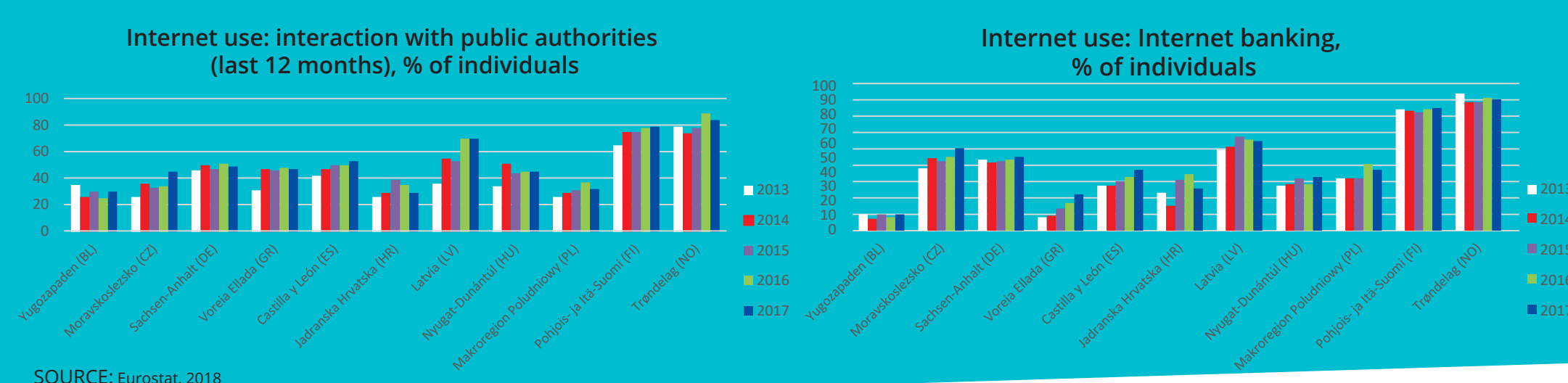
### REGIONS HAVE MORE DIGITAL BUSINESSES WHILE E-COMMERCE IS GROWING BUT TOO SLOWLY



### COMMON CHALLENGES



### PEOPLE INTERACT MORE WITH PUBLIC AUTHORITIES ON-LINE AND USE INTERNET BANKING MORE BUT STILL REMAIN LARGE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN REGIONS, AS WELL AS BETWEEN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS.



### DIGITALISATION STRENGTHENS COMPETITIVENESS OF COMPANIES AND REGIONS

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Take use of good practices collected by SKILLS+ and other projects or networks. If necessary, the approaches should be adapted to better suit local conditions.
2. Doing business is getting more and more digitalised. Especially very small companies must be made aware of the opportunities for their business activities.
3. Adopt digitalisation strategies on national and regional levels. Encourage enterprises to adopt their individual digitalisation strategies.
4. Introduce new digital solutions and tools to SMEs and show, how these solutions could free-up resources and reduce costs providing additional resources for investing in modernization.
5. Parallel to infrastructure improvements introduce the most required non-monetary support measures, such as seminars, training, consultations, one stop shops and help-desks. Simplification of digital application and affordable, suitable and in some cases tailor made digital solutions and products for SMEs in rural areas are also required.
6. Ensure that adequate financing is available to assist companies or business support associations in their digitalisation efforts.
7. Teach the teachers and make sure that trainings offered to companies is certified.
8. Reduce unnecessary regulations and bureaucratic procedures without jeopardising online safety.
9. Build on business support networks and platforms for university-to-business cooperation to promote digitalisation.

