

DESIGN OPTIONS PAPER

Cross landing Services for Start-ups and Scale-ups in the Alpe Adria Region

2016-2017

Trans^{UP}

*Study conducted in the framework of TransUP project- Supporting
Transnational Start-up Ecosystems
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Table of content

1. Introduction.....	4
2. TransUP Project Design	6
2.1 Project Partner Organizations.....	8
2.1.1 FINN – Friuli Innovazione Research and Technology Transfer Centre	8
2.1.2 TEHNOLOSKI PARK LJUBLJANA DOO – Slovenia	10
2.1.3 IRP Inštitut za raziskovanje podjetništva	11
2.3.4 STEP RI Znanstveno Tehnologijski Park Sveucilista U Rijeci	11
2.3.5 Kärntner Wirtschaftsförderungsfonds – KWF	12
2.3.6 Overview: strengths and resources within the TransUP partner’s network	13
2.3.7 The “Treasure Box”: mirroring each other’s strengths and resources.....	13
3. Designing a cross-landing platform	15
3.2 Existing Good Practice initiatives	17
3.2.1 Friuli Innovazione incoming support examples and the French M.O.T. case	17
3.2.2 Step Ri softlanding case – ASSIST	19
3.2.3 B2B / SOFTLANDING – Ljubljana landing services	22
3.2.4 PULLDOCK – The Carinthian Industrial Innovation Initiative	25
3.2.5 Estonia Start-up Ecosystem	26
3.3 Existing and promising Strong industries –RIS 3	28
4. Service Delivery System.....	35
4.1 Target groups for crosslanding services.....	35
4.2 Assessment of needs – start-ups	36
4.3 Assessment of needs – intermediaries	39
4.4 Framework conditions	40
4.4.1 Italy – Friuli Venezia-Giulia Region.....	41
4.4.2 Slovenia.....	43
4.4.3 Austria – Land Carinthia.....	46
4.4.4 Croatia	49
4.4.5 Overview – Environment Framework conditions.....	51
5. Cross landing offer with high impact.....	52
5.1 First group: Low cost - High impact cross-landing Services	53
5.2 Second Group: High cost- High Impact cross-landing – scale up	54
6. Implementation.....	57



6.1	Findings Validation: setting up a sustainable Pilot Action.....	57
6.2	Evaluation	58
6.3	Lessons Learnt	60
7.	Start-up Ecosystem Terminology.....	63
8.	Bibliography – recommended reading	65
9.	Appendix.....	67
9.1	Assessment of needs – Interviews, relevant initiatives and stakeholders input	67
9.1.1	Interview Documentation – TPLJ	67
9.1.2	Interview Documentation – KWF.....	69
9.1.3	Interview Documentation – Step Ri	71
9.1.4	Interview Documentation – IRP	76
9.1.5	Interview Documentation – FINN	81
9.1.6	SMART SPECIALIZATION COMPARISON TABLE.....	85



1. Introduction

The Alpe-Adria Start-up ecosystem: current situation and challenges

During the past 2 years the Initiative “Alpe Adria Start-up Ecosystem” has been initiated by vital organizations of regional entrepreneurial ecosystems – Carinthia (Austria), Venezia-Giulia (Italy) and Slovenia aiming at creating a start-up ecosystem enabling and encouraging the development of a sound, efficient and globally recognized cross-border start-up & scale-up Hub.

On the 7th of May 2014 the initial partners, Kärnten Wirtschaftsförderungs Fonds (KWF), Friuli Innovazione (FINN) and the promoters of the “Initiative Start-up Slovenija”, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The aim was that of developing synergies, encouraging the collaboration and the exchange of information, sharing know how regarding the development of joint start-ups support programmes hence the creation of a Multilateral Start-up Ecosystem. Other key actors were invited to join the first steps of the initiative that is: the Lakeside Science and Technology Park, the business incubator Build!, the Centre of Excellence Low Carbon Technology (CONOT), and representative of the Austrian Start-up ecosystem .

Starting from the partners’ expertise and extensive experience in the development and implementation of support programmes for start-ups, these are the main challenges identified on a cross border level:

- how innovation capabilities and capacities can be created,
- **how to overcome exodus of start-ups to global accelerators,**
- how to raise the level of activation of entrepreneurial talent,
- how to attract start-ups to land in the multilateral region,
- how to identify main strengths and opportunities of multilateral start-up ecosystem,
- how to develop and communicate the core competencies and strategic advantages of Multilateral region and
- how to develop unique selling proposition of cross-border start-up ecosystem.

Taking into account the regional context, building on regional strengths and mutual learning from each other- gained thanks to previous cooperation projects, partners chose as unique selling proposition (USP) the motto describing the Alpe Adria start-up ecosystem as **"THE LANDING POINT FOR START-UPS ENTERING EU MARKET"**. The vision behind this USP is that of creating a unique cross-border, multinational environment, where target customers (start-ups, scale-ups and innovative entrepreneurs) in particular coming from outside Europe can land and grow their business.

The first concrete joined actions were the implementation of co-organized lighthouse events aimed at growing the cross-border start-up community. More in particular, it regarded talent activation workshops and conferences addressed to start-up talents and community stakeholders from Carinthia/Austria, Friuli Venezia-Giulia/Italy and Slovenia.

The next challenge is to develop the cross border initiative (involving neighbouring regions/countries) into a **larger ecosystem** including other countries of the **Alpe Adria macro region**. In concrete, it is now important to test business models proving the rationale of how the cross-border value is going to create a “market” opportunity for start-ups, as well as to implement the state-of-the-art services and capture



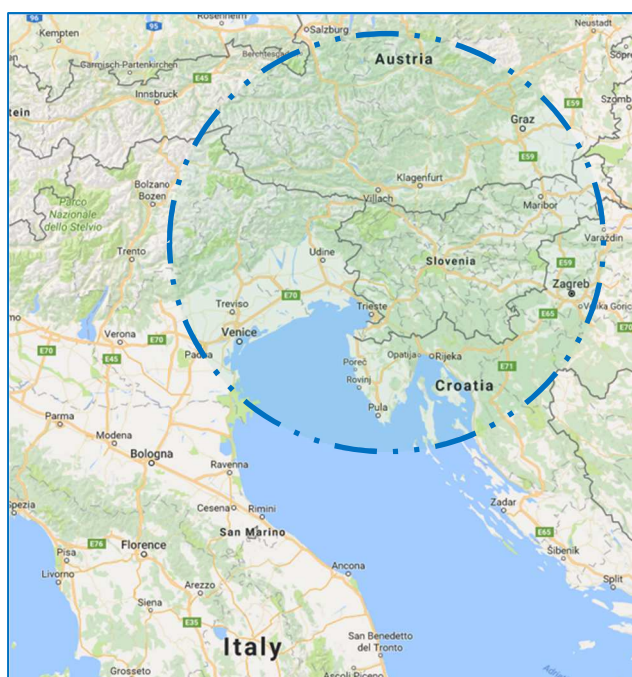
value. In this view, the design and implementation of a **systemic Cross-regional Softlanding Program for entrepreneurs** represents a significant step.

Objectives of the TransUP project

The **overall objective** of TransUP -“Supporting Transnational Start-up Ecosystems” action, submitted and approved under the H2020-INNOSUP-2014-5 Call, is to peer-review transnational support programmes for **enhancing international driven attitude among new entrepreneurs from cross border territories**. By leveraging the multicultural character of the area, the aim is **to improve start-ups’ success performance and their survival chances on the global market**.

Specific focus will be dedicated to start-ups and scale-ups from the Alpe Adria region although recommendations developed will be valid for all sectors and EU geographical location.

At the same time, TransUP tackles the challenge of making the enlarged Alpe Adria multilateral region an attractive hub for innovative entrepreneurs and investors from other countries, where the ecosystem, made of actors and services devoted to support the creation and development of new businesses, is really collaborative and transnational.



Source: Alpe Adria cross-border geographical area with reference to TransUP Partnership (FVG-Italy, Carinthia-Austria, Slovenia and Croatia)

Specific objectives of the TransUP project are:

- **Identify good practices** of transnational start-up softlanding programmes in the cross-border area, in Europe and beyond. The Partners’ commitment is to identify existing local initiatives during the project’s lifetime, to participate in the re-design of such programmes in the current programming period 2014-2020 and where appropriate provide recommendations to the local/regional policy makers.
- **Design a dedicated Cross-landing Programme** - by capitalizing the experience and recent results achieved by partners, as well as by getting inspiration from identified good practices. Here the idea



is to create of a larger cross-regional network made by start-up cross-landing service providers that acts as a “one-stop-shop” supporting new established businesses in: exploring neighboring markets, connecting with mentors and expertise across the region; connecting start-ups with capitals across the region; connecting individuals with similar business ideas in order to build regional and global players, etc. The ultimate goal is bringing neighboring start-up ecosystems together, fuse the entrepreneurial communities to one, globally known as Start-up ecosystem in the Alpe Adria region.

- **Apply “Agile” testing** of the co-designed cross-landing Programme focused on start-up and stakeholders needs in the Alpe Adria transnational region in view of further expanding the start-up network model to Eastern Europe and the Balkans (enlarged Alpe Adria region).
- **Strengthen and expand the strategic partnership** among the Alpe Adria start-up ecosystem agencies (i.e. **enlargement of the MoU to Croatian partner**) to engage in more frequent peer learning activities in the future concerning open network start-up and SMEs policies improvement.

2. TransUP Project Design

By means of the Twinning Advanced methodology, this initiative lead to the elaboration of a Design Option Paper (DOP), which will serve as a “guide” or a “handbook” to other innovation agencies to design and/or deliver similar innovation programmes.

Twinning Advanced (Twinning +)

The **Twinning Advanced**¹ is an extension of the original **INNO-Partnering Forum** (IPF) twinning method. It is not limited to transferring good practices among agencies, but it provides an opportunity for the design and implementation of better practices. The basic idea of *Twinning Advanced* is to have innovation support organizations collaboratively address a common innovation support challenge. By using their collective experience and knowledge, the idea is to develop and test an approach to address the support challenge in a new and better way. The result of the effort is documented in a Design Options Paper that identifies and documents the implementation options, guidelines and implementation alternatives that the partners in the challenge have experienced and would recommend to an agency, which is interested in implementing the proposed better practice.

Project implementation scheme

TransUP implementation process was developed during 12 months divided into four main parts, which were combined respectively with three **Peer Learning Meetings** plus one operative meeting which took place respectively in Croatia, Slovenia, Austria and Italy, representing four the countries of the enlarged Alpe Adria Region. The process was implemented by the TransUP peer learning group, made of representatives and stakeholder experts from the four partners innovation agencies networks .

¹ Twinning Advanced Methodology, <https://ec.europa.eu/easme/sites/easme-site/files/Paper-Twinning-advanced-methodology.pdf>

The Peer learning activity was aimed to strengthen the collaborative network and develop a systemic Cross- regional Softlanding Programme for start-ups /scale-ups in the Partners 'territories as well as improve the delivery capacity of the organization partners through the application of Twinning + methodology.

An external expert jointly selected by the partner organization, Ms. Kirsten Tangemann facilitated the the peer review process thus assuring a systemic, agile and lean methodology for the design of the **Alpe Adria Start-up Cross-border Softlanding Service**.

The TransUP cross landing service delivery design (SDS) process

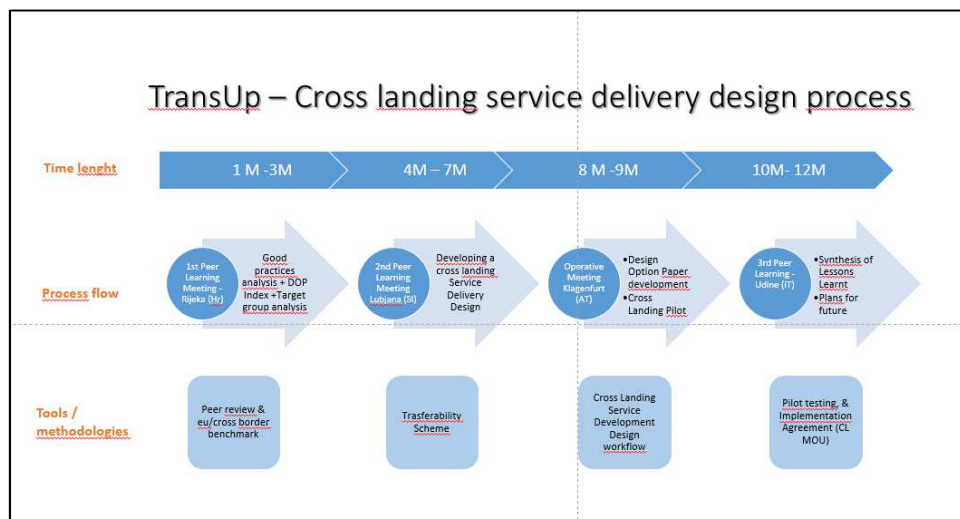
The first Peer Learning meeting, held in **Rijeka** at Croatian Partner premises, the Science and Technology Park of Rijeka (STE PRI) on **the 30th of June 2016**, focused on the analysis and identification of related measures concerning good practices of cross-border Softlanding Service delivery to new entrepreneurs and innovative SMEs. It included also other combined support services on internationalization both on a local and global dimension. In addition, partner referents together with representatives of local start-ups and service deliver organizations were invited to share their ideas on the **target needs** (start-ups, scale ups and innovative SMEs) based on their experience in the enlarged region. A **Design Options List** through peer reviewing and international benchmarking as well as the reviewed **Target Need Analysis Table** were the outcomes of this first project phase.

During the second Peer Learning Meeting, which was held on the **6th of October 2016 in Ljubljana**, participants were actively involved in the design of a **“cross-border start-up support transferability Scheme”**. Guided group works and plenary sessions focused on the analysis of framework conditions and organizations of the concerned the transnational territory as well as on the processes by which the addressed support service delivery should operate. This implied critical analysis of the selected options according to contextual aspects that need redesign, on linkages to good practices and on the drafting of a **CB Service Delivery process** including the setting up of an “agile” Service Delivery test.

An intermediary operating Peer Learning Meeting took place **on the 5th of December in Klagenfurt** at the Lakeside Technology Park where TransUP Peer referents worked at the Design Options Paper development, based in particular on the implementation of an Agile Service delivery Pilot activity.

Finally, the Science and Technology Park of Udine , Friuli Innovazione’s premises, hosted the third and last Peer Learning Meeting held **on February 2, 2017 in Udine (Italy)**. Here, partners working together focused on further systemizing the knowledge created during the previous months with the aim of making it directly applicable and available to other innovation agencies. partner organizations finalized a sustainable pilot action based on the contents of the TransUP Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).





Source: TransUP delivery design process

2.1 Project Partner Organizations

TransUP partner organizations are strongly committed in the development of a no-border, multinational startup service delivery system (SDS). Each of them has a qualified role as innovation stakeholder within their own local entrepreneurial hub and as such, they bring the uniqueness and great value of their direct experience, knowledge and competence on a cross- border level.

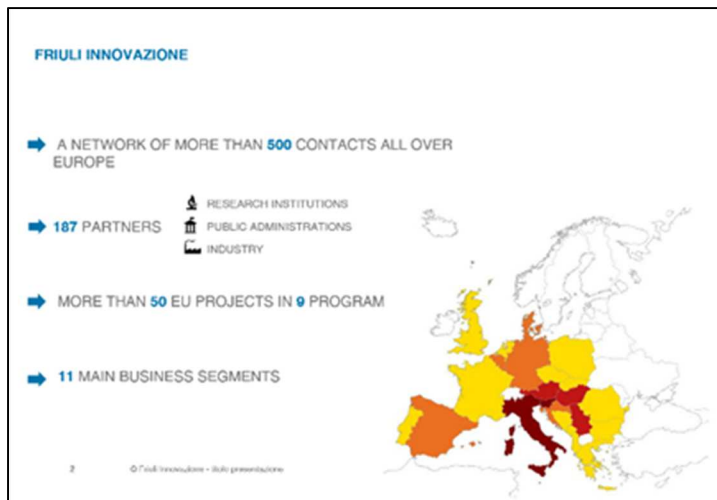
2.1.1 FINN – Friuli Innovazione Research and Technology Transfer Centre

Region: Italy - FRIULI VENEZIA GIULIA

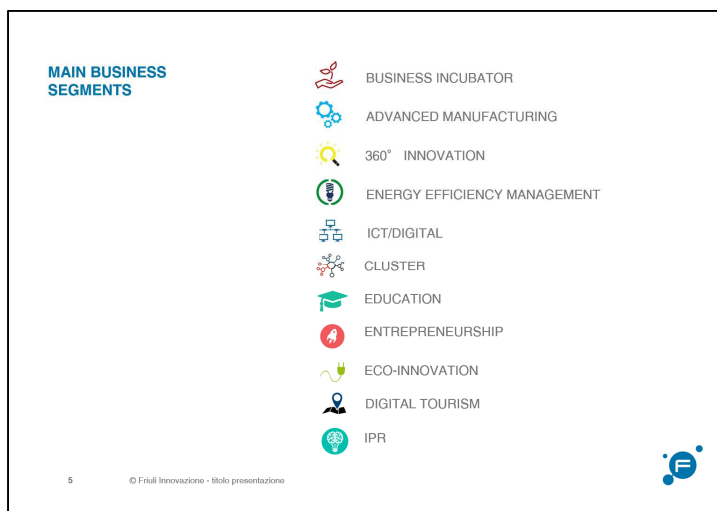
Friuli Innovazione (FINN) was set up by the University of Udine in 1999 with the aim to empower local resources and vocations, driving them towards a knowledge-driven economy and society. In its management board the whole territory is represented (the city of Udine, its province, banks and foundations, research centers, the economic actors like the chamber of commerce and the industry association). In 2004 Friuli Innovazione launched and still manages the Luigi Danieli Science and Technology Park (STP) in Udine and the nationally certified business incubator Techno Seed. The STP is located at the southern borders of Udine, only a few minutes from the European motorway network and within easy reach of several international airports. At the STP laboratories and hi-tech companies have their headquarters, and the services offered by Friuli Innovazione are:

- **Technology Transfer:** to promote collaboration between enterprises and the scientific and technological research network;
- **Business Financing:** to inform, educate and support enterprises and researchers to identify the most appropriate finance instruments and key operating stages, search for partners and verify the eligibility for European or Italian funds;
- **Business Start-up:** to support and assist the creation of high-tech enterprises by means of the Techno Seed certified incubator;

- **Hosting:** to offer space equipped with facilities and infrastructures to develop science and technology research projects and innovative businesses.



Source: Friuli Innovazione international network (2017)



Source
Friuli Innovazione's main business segments (2017)

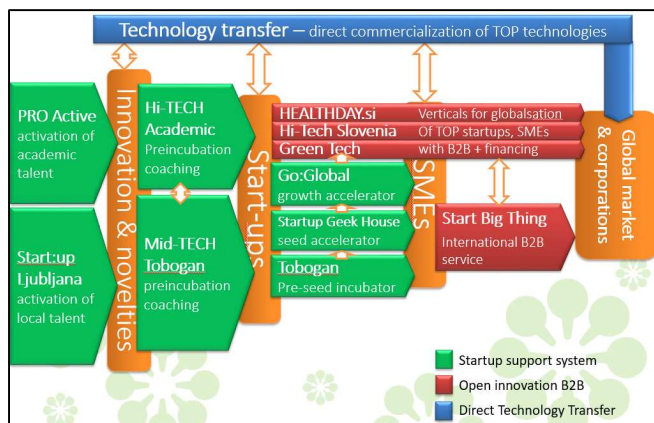
Stakeholders and main partners

Founders and shareholders of Friuli Innovazione (FINN) are the University of Udine and other local partners (industry associations, public administrations, research institutions, etc.). Techno Seed, already honoured with international awards (Achieve More network Best incubator 2011), is among the first incubator in Italy to have completed the national procedure for certification (2013), which attests the excellence of the services provided to start-ups. FINN is member of: Friuli Venezia Giulia Innovation System, APSTI (www.apsti.it) the Italian Science and Technology Parks Association; APRE (www.apre.it/en), the Italian Agency for the Promotion of European Research. FINN collaborates with the main Italian Business Angels networks: IBAN - Italian Business Angel Network, IAG - Italian Angels for Growth and Custodi di Successo and recently with a local based BA's association called UnicornTrainers Club.

2.1.2 TEHNOLOSKI PARK LJUBLJANA DOO – Slovenia

Region: Central Slovenia region

TPLj is a leading national stakeholder for development of innovative and knowledge based entrepreneurship in Slovenia with more than 20 years of experience. In this respect, it is recognized as a largest business ecosystem for commercialization of technology based innovation in SE Europe by OECD and European Commission. Since TPLj acts as innovation hub, one of its main and most important roles is to support talents with specialized support services, coaching, and access to funding on one hand and to act as a bridge between SMEs and big companies by implementing efficient open innovation services on the other hand. As a commercialization leader and largest technology park in SE Europe TPLj has direct access to regional innovation network: more than 15 key partner in the business support environment, more than 30 public research organizations (including 3 main national public research institutes) and more than 1000 technology start-ups and SMEs. Additionally, TPLj acts as one of the leading partners of Start:up Slovenia Initiative and Start:up Alpe-Adria Initiative and supports 60 new start-ups annually.



Source: Technology Commercialisation Support, Technology Park Ljubljana, 2015.

During the past years TPLj has developed technology commercialisation support and a quality environment for IT&C and R&D companies and interested stakeholders: 7 programs of Start-up support system; 4 programs of Open innovation B2B; Direct Technology Transfer service; Softlanding for growing start-ups; Development of business-innovation ecosystems; Co-initiator and active member of Healthday.si initiative and community, and other sectorial networks as ICT Network; Thematic events as a NASA Start-up weekend, Healthday.si conference.

Stakeholders and main partners

TPLj was established in 1995 as a public private and non-profit partnership and is nowadays owned by Municipality of Ljubljana, 3 main public research institutes - Jožef Stefan Institute, National Institute of Biology, National Institute of Chemistry as well as three leading Slovenian big companies Lek Inc., Iskra Inc. and Iskratel Inc.. As a local ecosystem TPLj is defined also by: +300 member companies with +1.500 employees; +3,5 mio. funding in +60 start-ups annually; +150 business mentors and start-up coaches; +12 commercialization and business support programs; direct access to +400 certified technology parks in IASP global network.

TPLJ is a self-sustainable technology park, without systematic funding on national or regional level. Funding for implementation of support services and programs (mainly for the target group of start-ups and talents) is ensured by TPLJ's participation and applications to various national and EU funded calls (Public call for coordination of the pre/selection process for public grants and seed investment, Public tender for implementation of support services for organisations of national entrepreneurial ecosystem, EU programmes - Central Europe, Danube, Mediterranean, Cosme, bilateral cooperation programmes, and others) and by implementation of services tailored for corporations and other target clients.

2.1.3 IRP Inštitut za raziskovanje podjetništva

Region: Podravska Region - Slovenia

IRP is a private non-profit institution funded in 2001, which is a carrier of the activities of University of Maribor incubator (Venture factory) based on a long-term agreement with the University of Maribor. The Venture factory is one of the key elements of innovation ecosystem of University of Maribor and responsible for the development of entrepreneurial pillar and transfer of innovations from research institutes into the entrepreneurial environment, as well as for realization of entrepreneurial ideas of students, researchers and other innovative individuals. Venture Factory incubated more than 60 start-up companies, which created more than 200 new jobs.

Venture factory is also the initiator of national Initiative **Start:up Slovenia**, managed together with its strategic partner Technology park of Ljubljana as well as with numerous other partners of the start-up ecosystem (www.start-up.si), based on Slovenian start:up Manifesto. Venture Factory is an active co-creator of **Start:up Alpe-Adria initiative**, which started to develop within Crossborder programme INNO CBC with the objective of establishing a recognizable start-up destination in a worldwide context. IRP is the main organizer of **PODIM conference** (www.podim.org) the biggest conference in the Alpe Adria region, and is the organizer of the start-up competition Start:up Slovenija. IRP is also a partner of European wide Start-up Monitor Tracker, carrier of the portal www.poslovninact.org, consisting of advice and manuals for business planning and lean methodologies, including a tool for business planning used by over 10.000 entrepreneurs.

Stakeholders and main partners

IRP is a private non-profit institution funded in 2001 by Prof. dr. Miroslav Rebernik and Matej Rus. IRP main partners in Slovenia are TPLJ, SPIRIT public agency and Slovene Enterprise Fund as well as several partners from neighbouring countries from support environment.

IRP is a leading partner of local Start:up Maribor program, leading partner of Start-up Slovenia initiative and full member of the European Start-up Network (in the name of Start-up Slovenia initiative).

IRP is funded by SPIRIT agency (university incubator programme) and Slovenian Enterprise Fund (preselection process for public grants and seed investments for start-ups). IRP is also receiving funding based on active participation and applications to various national and EU funded calls and active cooperation with corporations.

2.3.4 STEP RI Znanstveno Tehnologijski Park Sveucilista U Rijeci

Region: Adriatic Croatia

The Science and Technology Park of the University of Rijeka – Step Ri was established in 2008 by the



University of Rijeka in order to become the premier science and technology hub, facilitating the commercialization of research & development and foster cooperation between the Academia and the business sector.

Step Ri provides first class consulting services based on global up-to-date best practices. In 2015 Step Ri has consulted 244 companies, scientists and business start-ups, organized various events and workshops (24 trainings for more than 530 participants). The mailing list of Step Ri consists of 6000 contacts, equally scientists and SMEs.

The company has defined consulting programs and advising processes for the establishment of start-ups, new product and service development, scaling-up of existing businesses, IPR protection support, needs assessment and commercialization strategies for SMEs and scientists that want to become entrepreneurs, and EU funds advising.

The services of the park integrate some of well-known mainstream concepts of innovation management, such as: "Job to be done", analysis of non-existing markets and non-consumers, strategy canvas and value curve, disruptive innovation theory, business model canvas, customer job mapping and customer outcomes as measures of customer perceived and desired value.

Stakeholders and main partners

Step Ri is a widely recognized center for innovative and entrepreneurial support infrastructure of the ministries of Economy and Entrepreneurship and Crafts in Croatia, a partner in the Proof of concept program organized by the Croatian agency for small entrepreneurship, innovations and investments (HAMAG-BICRO) as well as a major regional provider of business know-how.

Close relationships and cooperation are established with local stakeholders (City of Rijeka, Primorsko Goranska County, Croatian Employers Association – Chapter in Rijeka; other local municipalities) and national stakeholders – Ministries of Science, Economy and Entrepreneurship; Croatian Chamber of Commerce, national innovation agency (Hamag Bicro) and key regional entrepreneurial supporting institutions in major Croatian cities (Zagreb, Osijek, Split, Varaždin, Čakovec, Koprivnica, Vukovar, Šibenik...).

2.3.5 Kärntner Wirtschaftsförderungsfonds – KWF

Region: Carinthia

KWF was founded in 1993 based on a local government law of Carinthia. Therefore, the owner is the government of Carinthia.

KWF has 20 years' experience in the development of the economy in Carinthia, in funding companies (from single member company up to big established companies) and has therefore an excellent network of entrepreneurs managing the companies. KWF has access to a huge pool of information on company data. Furthermore, KWF has 10 years' experience in supporting EU – cross border projects. The experience is based on pre-development tasks of projects in the context of the Carinthian economic strategy, supervising and monitoring of project progress and first level control.

KWF supports Carinthian enterprises, especially small and medium-sized enterprises with regard to their international competitiveness. The development of the economy (framework, milieu, and ecosystem) is one of the major aspects in the business model of KWF.



Kärntner Wirtschaftsförderungsfonds is one of the key stakeholders in the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem and responsible (project management) for the development of »Enhancing the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem« in Carinthia. Together with the strategic partners and stakeholders in Carinthia (institutions, enterprises, politicians, financiers, etc.) KWF acts also initiator of the regional initiative to connect all players in the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem. They signed a common commitment »Carinthian Manifest of Entrepreneurial Culture«

Stakeholders and main partners

Austrian Economic Chamber, Universities in Carinthia and Austria, Public Employment Service Austria (AMS), Lakeside Science and Technology Park, BABEG Carinthian Agency for Investment Promotion and Public Shareholding, Federation of Austrian Industries (IV), Business Incubator build!.

2.3.6 Overview: strengths and resources within the TransUP partner's network

The following table outlines TransUP partner organization's comprehensive offer within the start-up and scale up cross-border ecosystem.

Table 1 TransUP partners organization startup support offer

	FINN	IRP	TP LJ	Step Ri	KWF
Category					
Incubator	X	X	X	X	
Accelerator		X	X	X	
Science & Technology Park	X		X	X	
Organization managing a Start-up Competition	X	X	X	X	
Organization managing Coworking Spaces	X	X	X	X	
Business Support and Development Agency					X
Access to :					
networks (local, national, international)	X	X	X	X	X
private funding	X				X
public funding (regional, state, EU)	X	X	X	X	X
industry-sectors (strategic industry partners)	X	X	X	X	X
market research	X			X	
infrastructure	X	X	X	X	X

2.3.7 The "Treasure Box": mirroring each other's strengths and resources

Teamwork activity: The TRESURE BOX



Personal interaction, networking and local communities are important ingredients in creating effective ecosystems. During the second Peer Learning Meeting (06.10.2016 Ljubljana –Slovenia), organizations' referents engaged in group work activity with the aim to better analyse the strengths and resources of the cross-border partnership network. As a result, the following Treasure box² table was set up with the aim to provide another level of information to the addressed cross border actors.

Description: TransUP Peer learning participants (including ecosystem stakeholders) were asked to make a list of strengths and resources associated to each TransUP Partner. Then, participants shared and discussed in plenary the feedbacks received. The collected inputs represent the Partnership „Treasure“(strengths and resources) which completes the previous TransUP Partnership description (see 2.1 Project Partner Organizations).



Table 2 Partnership Treasure Box

<p>Partner organization Strengths: KWF</p> <p>KWF is seeing as a proactive Carinthian organization willing to make a change in the cross border transnational start-up ecosystem, capable of actively involving other start-up stakeholders in Carinthia (cooperation approach) and able to set up long term planning innovation policies. Is considered one of the main promoter of Start-up ecosystem vision both regionally and on a cross border level thus representing a strong influencer on policy level on the start-up ecosystem topic. KWF is experienced in delivering financial support measures to SMEs on a regional level (Carinthia) including start-up financial resources.</p> <p>Other strengths are connected to KWF's reference territory that is the Land Carinthia(Austria) considered to be a welcoming region with good average living costs; hosting a relevant network of external experts coming to Carinthia (dedicated website) and representing an excellent location for start-ups as it is closer than others to western EU business capital.</p>
<p>Partner organization Strengths: Friuli Innovazione</p> <p>With reference to the development of the Alpe Adria Start-up Ecosystem Friuli Innovazione (FINN) is recognized as the main referent, proactive partner organization in Friuli Venezia Giulia region (Italy). In this role, it is considered as a committed, trustful, and engaged partner. On a operative level the Friulian organization is appreciated for its hands-on approach, for having an efficient structure as well as for its result oriented approach. It is also seed as well connected with other strategic regional (FVG) institutions as well as national hubs. It is recognized for its expertise in European project design and project management (often as project leader); Friuli Innovazione main related sectors include: industry 4.0, digital as well as creative industry sectors. FINN has recognized</p>

² Treasure box teamwork: Peer Learning participants were give three cards were they were asked to indicate 1-2 particular strengths and resources related to the partner organizations.

experience for organizing **different** kind of events in collaboration with regional (FVG) and national stakeholders as well as on a transnational level. The Friuli Venezia Giulia region represents an appealing tourism destination where the great variety of landscapes matches the rich and variegated cultural heritage that was determined by a complex history and by the confluence of different civilizations in this territory (Roman, Venetian, Celtic, Slavian and German).

Partner organization Strengths: IRP

Venture Factory (IRP) role is recognized for its **“strategic thinking” applied to the** development of the Alpe Adria start-up ecosystem as well as for its ability in linking/ engaging stakeholders. IRP partner has a **large local and global start-up stakeholder Network**. It is considered to be an engaged, trustful, committed partner as better described as **“the heart beat for the Alpe Adria Start-up ecosystem focus”**. IRP employs experienced for marketing and promotion activities, this is a local resource that has been useful also for promoting the entire cross-border start-up initiative. In addition, IRP has a good experience in organizing international events (involving national – international investors) such as the well-known Alps Adriatic Podim conference <http://www.podim.org/en-us/alps-adriatic>. As business incubator, it is also known for involving **advanced business management** staff and finally it seeing as is the enabling and coordination “authority” on national level in Slovenia.

Partner organization Strengths: STE PRI

STEP RI, the Croatian Science and Technology Park although it is the youngest in terms of experience among TransUP partner organizations, it is nevertheless considered a **virtuous example** of business model streamline and as such it represents a virtuous practice of a Science and Tech Park management. Partner collaborators as an “agile” structured organization with an efficient problem solving approach and lean methodology expertize prizes it. Stepri has very good connection with University environment that guarantees access to new ideas & technical competences, as well as technology transfer skills/competences and it is acknowledged a **Flagship Technology Park in Croatia**.

Partner organization Strengths: TP_LJ

TP_LJ offers a **broad range of services to start-ups and technological companies** (Smes) starting with **infrastructure**, ending with **supporting programs** (ie. start-ups Geek house). The Science and Tech Park of Ljubljana is acknowledged for its a **large SMEs network**, for being a well-organized Science and Technology Park representing a good example of **self-sustainable management** implementing scalable operations. It is also one of the promoters/founders **of start-up Slovenia initiative** including the national start-up ecosystem as well as one of the promoters/founders of the Alpe Adria start-up Ecosystem. The TP-LJ has large experience and skills in **EU project design** & project management, has a very good network of national & European partners and it is like a **hub for innovation network in Slovenia** (universities, TTOs, IRP).

3. Designing a cross-landing platform

The main objective for establishing a transnational softlanding platform is to make the Alpe-Adria region **an attractive hub** for effective collaboration within a transnational context, addressing, in particular, innovative entrepreneurs, and companies in growth phase and investors.

Research shows that start-up companies tend to develop much better, grow faster and create more



jobs when they function within dynamic start-up ecosystems. Start-up companies cannot develop in a »vacuum«; if they aim to successfully develop they connect themselves with various private and public stakeholders of the ecosystem, which can assist them in product development, product placement, start-up and growth financing, including providing for the necessary infrastructure. **The quality of the individual ecosystem** is measured by the quality of the stakeholders such as start-up companies, investors, universities, professional schools, established companies, technology parks and incubators, co-working centres and the quality of their connections. In last years **the »battle for talents«** has intensified on the global level and it has boosted the outflow of entrepreneurial talents and innovative companies from the cross border areas into the more attractive start-up ecosystems such as Silicon Valley, Boston, Berlin, Vienna and London. It is not only small rural areas that are affected by this outflow, but also larger cross border University centres especially Ljubljana, Maribor, Udine, Trieste, Klagenfurt, Graz, as well as Rijeka and the Zagreb area.

The key challenges of the cross border area are therefore how to strengthen the quality of services of key stakeholders of the multilateral start-up ecosystem and how to create the largest number of possible linkages between them. **Strengthening linkages** will lead to more effective cooperation, but also better correlation and policy alignment on a cross border, European and international level within the Start-up Alpe Adria region (on a level). The challenge lays in connecting local start-up hubs to cross border and European start-up clusters, where technology parks, incubators and co-working spaces provide support services and play the role of connectors between local and cross border and international start-up ecosystems. In fact, start-up companies tend to develop much better, grow faster and create more jobs when they function within dynamic start-up ecosystems.

A **Neighbouring Cross border ecosystem** implies necessarily a broader approach which must be taken into consideration, for example the issue of attracting skilled persons | employees to join startups, scale-ups and innovative SMEs operating in the addressed enlarged Region. This implies also providing adequate supporting services for their families. For this reason, the main overall objective is to increase the quality and range of services and resources for innovative talents and new innovative SMEs and start-ups in the cross border region by developing a unique cross border and globally recognizable start-up destination Alpe-Adria.

To get into the implementation of such a cross border softlanding the stakeholders need to follow a **structured approach**. Important in that sense is the **»learning by doing«** and **lean approach**.

In recent years, the project partners as well as other stakeholders followed the notion that only through cross border cooperation they are able to create an internationally competitive start-up ecosystem supporting local as well as attracted foreign entrepreneurial talents in their efforts to create successful high tech companies. **Cluster development** also involves cooperation of organizations and stakeholders that could be considered competitors. This means that the concept is not very simple and will need a lot of innovativeness to become reality. Ongoing activities will be developed based on innovative lean methodologies.

Conclusion | Goals | Content (products and services)

The whole project is developed based on experiences that four strong partners gathered while creating a business support environment. As the Alpe-Adria initiative has already gone through initial stages of development, promoters will use their experiences for scaling the initiative and providing for its long-term sustainability. **One goal is to set up a joint »resource container«** that will assist the network in providing services and information to innovative start-ups as well as will include information on all relevant stakeholders. Through the development of the Alpe-Adria initiative, local start-up HUBS will



upgrade their existing services and contribute to growth of the whole ecosystem.

Overlapping products and services should be avoided.

Connecting local initiatives, products and services with potential target groups is one of the focuses. Another one is their **upgrade to international standards** and the promotion on the multilateral, respectively global level.

The focus should be on **start-ups with internationalisation potential** and innovative high (or medium) growth potential (preferred: technology oriented) in all phases (from start to global growth).

3.2 Existing Good Practice initiatives

During the first TransUP Peer Learning Meeting held in Rijeka, in order to illustrate cross-border supporting startup initiatives in detail, each partner organization was asked to bring either local and or international successful examples regarding cross border softlanding offers and/ or other noteworthy cross-border supporting actions. Partner's input together with six projects /initiatives factsheets are reported here below. This DOP section is meant to present **exemplary or innovative projects and partnership initiatives** that may serve **as inspiration for TransUP Service design** as well as for other cross-border initiatives. Partners choose not to include International driven accelerators good practices as these are clearly based on a specific business model and they are usually already linked to international hubs as well as to dedicated networks.

3.2.1 Friuli Innovazione incoming support examples and the French M.O.T. case

With reference to local successful initiatives, Friuli Innovazione brought as local example a pilot initiative called **"IN-FVG³- New ideas for the development of the regional territory"** carried out in collaboration with the University of Udine and the Social Research Institute IRES FVG. The project objective was to support business high tech start up with potentialities of growing in the region. FVG Region financed the action addressed not only to local beneficiaries but also to startups coming from abroad.

Another initiative worth to be mentioned, with reference to the need to attract skilled people, is the program called **TALENTS** financed by the Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia and launched by AREA Science Park with the aim of supporting international mobility of experienced researchers. To date, 23 experienced researchers were able to take advantage of the mobility grants offered for enhancing their skills and strengthening partnerships between scientific institutions, according to a bottom-up approach, ensuring that researchers' total freedom of choice is the host institution of the object of their study. "TALENT"'s long-term objectives are to enhance human capital, strengthen regional synergies, and enhance the international attractiveness of the region against young human resources.

Among other relevant cross border good practices, Friuli Innovazione introduced the "Study of economic development in the cross-border territories along France's borders" published in 2015 by **Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT)**, an organisation dealing with Cross Border Cooperation initiatives. This work aims to present the up-to-date situation with respect to cross-border economic

³ <http://www.friulinnovazione.it/projects/in-fvg-new-ideas-for-the-development-of-the-regional-territory>



development, both from the point of view of cooperation between private-sector players and public action. The first part of the document analyses the needs of the territory including investments, while the second part presents fact sheets about the projects developed within the cooperation programmes. Some of these cooperation initiatives have been ongoing for over a decade, so they have metrics and the results are good as better described in the following table.

Title of the initiative	<i>Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT)</i> http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/en/the-mot/about-the-mot/
Objective of the initiative	Established in April 1997 by the French government to "provide operational assistance to project stakeholders and, more generally, to cross-border territories".
Design of initiative	The MOT network brings together cross-border cooperation stakeholders. Its members are diverse, representative of all levels of governance and actors implicated in cross-border projects, including states, local and regional authorities and their groupings, associations, federations, cross-border structures and major businesses
Rationale: Why is this a good practice example?	<p>Because it promotes the interests of cross-border territories</p> <p>The result of the work carried out with local and regional stakeholders – assistance and networking – helps promote the consideration of cross-border territories in national and European policies and helps the definition of overall policies and strategies.</p> <p>The MOT initiative achieves this by acting as a relay, communicating the needs of actors in the field to the authorities concerned and putting forward proposals for legislative and regulatory changes.</p> <p>Specific projects are dedicated to promote cross border Start-up ecosystem (Seed4Start http://www.seed4start.com/; Cross-border projects cafés http://www.starthop.eu/en/kiosk-office/ : START HOP specializes in Franco-German business initiatives and welcomes coworkers from all walks of life to workspaces in Strasbourg and Offenburg where everything has been designed for 360° market development: events, advice and networking.)</p>
Results:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and evaluation criteria; • impact analysis; <p>Between January 2014 and September 2015, the Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT – Cross-Border Operational Mission), with the support of the national technical assistance programme Europ'Act, carried out a study of economic development in the cross-border territories along France's borders.</p>

	<p>The first part presents six portraits of cross-border territories along the land borders between France and its European neighbour, as well as three examples of other European cross-border territories. The second part deals with cross-cutting themes in cross-border economic development. In the context of far-reaching reform of territorial public action in France, the document sets forth some recommendations that are specific to the French context. Project factsheets then illustrate the concrete components of cross border economic development.</p> <p>A practical guide, published in the form of a second booklet, completes this introductory work. It consists of two parts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the first part aims to give impetus to partnerships between public sector and private-sector players in order to help projects to be developed; - the second part is aimed at facilitating the emergence of cross border economic development projects. <p>Future plans: For the 2014-2020 programme period, the partners are working on drawing up a Sustainable Innovation Programme. This programme will focus both on making links between players from research and business (S2B – Science to Business) and on relationships between economic players themselves (B2B – Business to Business). The S2B component aims to develop the transfer of technologies to businesses through a voucher system, a fund inspired by the Sciences Offensive project (Offensive Sciences, financed by the 2007-2013 Upper Rhine programme) and capitalization activities. The B2B component, for its part, is focused solely on the pre-competitive phase, in order to comply with the regime governing state aid. It will include the creation of an Open Innovation Cluster similar to the TTC project, an Open Innovation Fund similar to the GCS project, and an Open Innovation Loan.</p>
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3.2.2 Step Ri softlanding case – ASSIST

Boris Golob, Step RI managing director, presented the case of Assist, an Italian company that is the largest soft landing case Step RI handled. At the time, Assist arrived in Croatia it was a start-up established by a software company. An already mature start-up came to Croatia in order to scale up. Assist wanted to create a subsidiary in Croatia, where there are many Italian speakers. The plan was to be operational in 3 months, and this was achieved. Since an official soft landing programme was not yet in place, the method applied was, “we are here for all that you need at any time and will try to solve it asap”. Usually there was one person in charge for this project and for all of the following start-ups that

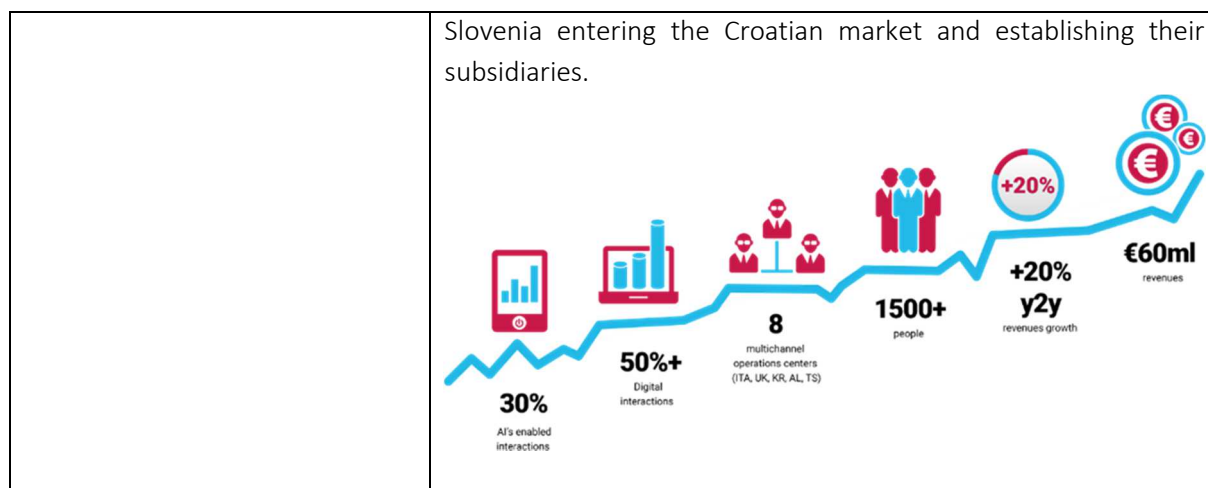


came to Step Ri. In a scale up phase, cooperation is necessary. It is also easier to think of cooperation in a scaling phase, since early start-ups do not think about foreign countries; they need to be in scale up phase to consider going abroad. Boris Golob put forward the question whether this project is about start-up or about soft-landing. If it is more about soft-landing, he stated not seeing the difference between regular companies soft-landing and start-ups soft-landing, apart for the fact that start-ups need to experiment more. This is the benefit that need to be provided through cooperation of all partners - experimenting simultaneously in four markets.

In his opinion, this should be about helping existing start-ups, wherever they are, to establish subsidiaries in the Alpe Adria region. This way the entire region could also become more attractive for the initial establishment.

Title of the initiative	Step Ri softlanding case - Assist 
Objective of the initiative	<p>The softlanding client was a high growth Italian company looking for an office space and support for fast take off.</p> <p>Assist is a spin-off of the Italian software development company Beeweb which became bigger and more important than the original company through time.</p> <p>At the time of their arrival (2012) their main goals were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to find appropriate office space or space with potential to become appropriate for their purpose • to establish subsidiary and built capacity for service delivery • to refurbish offices and to install equipment needed for their operations • Final result was fully functional subsidiary - established company with +100 employees after three months since arrival.
Design of initiative	<p>What we did?</p> <p>Since Assist was the first international client of that scope and size, Step Ri needed to establish a organizational system and procedures in order to support the start of their operations and fast take off in Croatia.</p> <p>Key elements of Step Ri's approach were:</p> <p>Personal services with dedicated one person (Italian speaking). Person in charge acted as Key Account Manager – “hub” for all questions, tasks and issues related with Assist. Other Step Ri employees were supposed to help and were responsible for final</p>

	<p>outcome („no wrong door” policy) – fast and seamless start of Assist operations</p> <p>Immediate support, answers and decisions in shortest possible time – key goal was to address most, if not all, problems that arose.</p> <p>Comprehensive support – even though Assist had additional support from outside professional services (accounting, legal consultants etc.) we were available to address any issue related to establishment of their operations (attitude „Tell me about your problem and We’ll check...”)</p> <p>Referrals and networking support – Step Ri network, formal and informal, was available at full extent - „We know someone... that can help with...” attitude.</p> <p>Softlanding Step Ri – key characteristics</p> <p>Since it was one of a kind case (at that time) and Step Ri had very limited resources and capacities, Step Ri strategy was to transform shortcomings into advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unstructured process – small team limitations enabled creative group work, fast response time and creation of new procedures and solutions. • Leveraging small organization logic allowed flexibility and short decision timeframe • Learning experience for all parties included and implemented through „We can do it” attitude – no wrong questions and too-difficult-to-handle problems
<p>Rationale: Why is this a good practice example?</p>	<p>Step Ri transformed potential shortcomings (relative softlanding inexperience, small organization, limited resources) into key elements of value proposition (customer centric service, quick decision process, flexible offering) by leveraging existing organization and some individual employees competences (knowledge of Italian language, commercial experience and pragmatic understanding of the Croatian business and academic culture, legal framework and project management).</p> <p>Secondly, a one-time case/example became a “learning experience event” and foundation for existing softlanding standardized, but highly personalized and customer oriented services.</p>
<p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and evaluation criteria; • impact analysis; 	<p>Initial softlanding service provided to Assist continued as a long term service level (company is still there, its size almost tripled in four years).</p> <p>In the following years, the same logic and softlanding approach was applied with high rate of success and as standardized procedure for supporting companies from Italy, Germany and</p>



3.2.3 B2B / SOFTLANDING – Ljubljana landing services

The Slovenian national strategy is mainly related to attract foreign direct investments rather than attract talents to specific local/regional communities. Additionally, in Slovenia there is a lack of softlanding support services. Thus, the TPLj decided to engage as a leader in this area and set up a pilot project called “Softlanding”. Initially, similar service called “cross-landing” and with different objective, was developed under the project ACCELMED (MED Programme) to test the support service which was oriented towards international marketing and support; objective of this pilot was to create a network of service providers supporting Mediterranean SMEs in their internationalization strategies and not designing service itself. During the past two years, TP Lj decided to design and implement soft-landing service for expanding the business into Ljubljana.

The main question was on “**How to attract talents and young companies**” to Ljubljana and “Who will pay?” for the services provided. During the process of service design, it was become clear that social environment is very important aspect when considering the softlanding service, too. Therefore, TP Lj has identified and collaborated with two key regional stakeholders to showcase the service for the other regional authorities for considering the implementing the same approach in their region:

- the national platform – Initiative Start:up Slovenia in order to upscale specific support service and to broaden the business network crucial for expanding business in area and
- Municipality of Ljubljana with the aim to ensure a housing facilities as a complement service to Softlanding itself

The ACCELMED⁴ project (TP-LJ example)

During the testing phase TP Lj has realised that the first challenge is to attract and convince clients to get into a contractual agreement. The first target group addressed were start-ups. The most effective promotional channel for attracting potential clients have proven the following partners:

- 2 partners within Erasmus for Young entrepreneur’s intermediaries

⁴ <http://www.accelmed.eu/>

- 1 start-up community from Budapest
- 2 accelerators (hosting also Slovenian start-ups from TP Lj and well aware of the quality of Slovenian national start-up ecosystem)
- Since the Memorandum of Understanding was signed with institutions during the ACCELMED project, we also include them into communication when relevant. (Most of MOU signatory organisations provide services for foreign SMEs, however the range and pricing of the available services varies and depends whether the services are recognised as strategic priority on local/regional level as well as on status of specific organisation.)

Later, the service has been adopted to technology based SMEs (and start-ups in growth phase) as they have clearly defined goals set, existing references, available resources for growth and are potentially interesting for corporate partners and/or to implement project upon collaborative innovation principles. TP Lj's **Softlanding Program** is in continuous process of further development and reshaping. Currently the service is composed of interconnected modules as follows:

Stage 1 – matching & networking services:

- B2B matching with potential & tech partners
- Information on legal procedures

Stage 2 – landing services:

- Accommodation (own facilities)
- Company incorporation & business location
- Information on legal procedures

Stage 2 – follow up



Source: TP-Lj Softlanding Program⁵

The core of the service provided is a **tailored agenda** specifically designed for each single client, on payable basis. An important aspect of the service is a follow up agenda where we do provide support to all “participants” of the programme even when the contract is not valid anymore.

Results (& lessons learned):

- 1 foreign SME in internationalisation phase was supported during the ACCELMED project;
- 5 foreign start-ups (Hungary, Greece and Romania) that already secured financing for further developing and internationalisation of their services have been hosted by TP Lj. These start-ups were exploring new markets. B2B meetings were organised for these start-ups – except one all have signed agreements for future developments / expand their business.
- For 2 companies from Russia a softlanding programme had been implemented, since to operate in the EU Russian companies need subsidies. Difficulties were encountered regarding their status – it was hard to establish a subsidiary (since they were financed by venture capital and thus had some legal restrictions).

A big difference in the engagement between the above presented examples was remarked, even if both were growing start-ups with the first round of financing behind them. In the field of real softlanding one should work in a network of local partners.

⁵ <http://www.tp-lj.si/en/start-up-centre>

Lessons learned:

- If the service is provided on payable basis, the target clients should be selected accordingly. In case of start-ups the identified target group are *those with an established position in the market*.
- Pricing model is still explored. A service provider can support those companies operating in the sector for which a network with industrial partners is already established. Mojca Cvirn also highlighted that the Peer Learning Group should also develop a CRM based model and consider to diversify it depending on where the majority of (client) companies come from.
- The set of services under the umbrella of TPLj's Softlanding program (which is a live organism) is changing its shape continuously due to the new opportunities, changing market conditions and new forms of cooperation.
- The approach during the ACCELMED project was toward building transnational network of service providers rather than building common transnational service. The approach was promising, however very difficult to remain sustainable without binding arrangements on long-term and different missions of involved organisations (from regional perspective). TPLJ is still using the Accelmed network.

Closing remark:

Since the Alpe Adria region is more manageable in terms of geographical size and involved partners have been implementing projects and initiatives (without public funding) related to start-up ecosystem in the past, the model developed within the ACCELMED project could be successfully transferred.

Title of the initiative	B2B / SOFTLANDING – LJUBLJANA LANDING SERVICES
Objective of the initiative	International marketing and support for expanding business into Ljubljana. The issue is how to attract talents and young companies to Ljubljana. Considering costs were not covered through other funds the question was also cost efficiency, thus lean approaches were employed to design and test the initiative.
Design of initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only for specific sectors - Market overview - Infrastructure availability, - Coworking - Accommodation - Tailored agenda with preselected businesses - Keeping up with the client and post service maintenance of the relationship
Rationale: Why is this a good practice example?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness only certain sectors can be covered - Pricing model dependent on the maturity of the company, tailor made services can obtain higher prices.

<p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and evaluation criteria; • impact analysis; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - signed agreements - post visit upkeep of the relationship <p>4 out of 5 landing contracts were successful with the agreements signed. Further relationships have been developed.</p>
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Start:up Slovenia (IRP example)

Slovenia supports start-ups with different financial grants (Slovenian Enterprise Fund), as well as with consulting services, infrastructure, mentorship from entrepreneurs (Initiative Start:up Slovenia connects start-uppers with experienced entrepreneurs). The challenge consists in linking the public mechanism with the private sector. Private investments are lacking (for ex. angels). As of last year Initiative Start:up Slovenia has started to better connect with private initiatives like ABC accelerator, CEED Slovenia, Slovenian Business Angels and similar entities and are now discussing about “Slovenia country of start-ups”. While researching for best practices, these new partners discovered the start-up Estonia leaflet (<http://start-upestonia.ee/why-estonia>). Compared to Estonia, the Alpe Adria region has challenges to face in term of speed (legal affairs, establishment, and taxes). The quality of life is an advantage that the Alpe Adria region can boast. Giving that it encompasses four countries, market testing can also be considered positive, when compared to the Estonian example. Regarding the investments to be thorough in the region there is room for improvement.

3.2.4 PULLDOCK – The Carinthian Industrial Innovation Initiative

If one decides to start a company in Carinthia, a loan, infrastructure and non-repayable subsidies are appointed. But this is not enough to attract start-ups, Jürgen Kopeinig (KWF) raised the question of what would happen if a start-up from abroad would decide to come to Carinthia for 3-6 months. What could be offered to keep them in Carinthia for a longer time was another question. One option would be to offer more subsidies.

Another possibility would be to offer services for their families and partners. An organization already dealing with providing such services is **the CIC Carinthian International Club**⁶. CIC is a network offering different services. It includes all information needed in order to “soft land” in Carinthia (education, dual career service, etc.) Indeed this is a good example to be expanded in the broader enlarged territory.

Among Carinthian incoming good practices the Pulldock⁷ was chosen as it brings together Start-ups (SU) from around the Globe and established companies (EC) from Carinthia.

Title of the initiative	PULLDOCK Industrial Innovation Initiative
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⁶ <http://www.cic-network.at>


⁷ <http://www.pulldock.com/>

Objective of the initiative	Bring together Start-ups (SU) from around the Globe and established companies (EC) from Carinthia. Option: rollout to the Alps-Adriatic-Region in the next round
Design of initiative	EC define a search field, out of their standard business, in which they need a SU solution (rethinking, innovation). Pioneers (from Vienna) look for SU on a global level. Goal is to bring SU to the region, where they have a first customer (=EC). Matching was End of September 2016. Now they start to find each other in the next month and make specific arrangement. From January onwards the SU and the tandem (SU+EC) receive full support of all support organizations in Carinthia (in terms of events, funding, social, employment law, etc.) for duration of 6 month. The support is based on the Carinthian Manifest for Entrepreneurship Culture. First round: 8 EC and 23 SU
Rationale: Why is this a good practice example?	Because, this is an example how softlanding could work on a national regional basis (law, funding schemes, etc.). Based on that, synergies could be worked out on a multilateral level. More EC and therefore more infrastructure will be available.
Results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring and evaluation criteria; impact analysis; 	How many SU join the region from outside. How long they stay here? What's about their connections they build here (to local SU, to SU-community, to stakeholders, to others). Important questions: what is important that they will stay in a region (<i>experience from Pioneers: Mentorship and specific infrastructure</i>).

3.2.5 Estonia Start-up Ecosystem

Another relevant example analyzed within TransUP peer reviewing is the start-up Estonia case (<http://start-upestonia.ee/why-estonia>). TransUP partners agreed that compared to Estonia, the Alpe Adria region has still challenges to face (ie. legal affairs, establishment, and taxes). On the other side, the **quality of life is an advantage** that the Alpe Adria region can boast. Giving that it encompasses four countries, **market testing** can also be considered **positive**, when compared to the Estonian example. Regarding the investments to be borough in the region also in this sector, TransUP partners confirmed that there is still room for improvement.



Title of the initiative	<p>Start-up Estonia</p>  <p>Source: http://www.start-upestonia.ee/</p> <p>http://start-up.si/en-us/about-the-initiative-/the-land-of-start-ups</p> <p>https://viennabusinessagency.at/start-up-city-vienna/vienna-start-up-package/</p>
Objective of the initiative	<p>Start-up Estonia is a governmental initiative aimed to supercharge the local start-up ecosystem in order to see many more start-up success stories to come from Estonia. They would like to make Estonia one of the world's best places to start a company.</p>
Design of initiative	<p>Four key building blocks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Ecosystem; Uniting, building and representing the local start-up community. • Smart People; organizing trainings for start-up teams and cooperating with higher education institutions. • Smart Money; Educating the local investors and attracting foreign investors to Estonia. • Friendlier Regulations; Making it easier to operate a start-up, invest or raise funding in Estonia.
Rationale: Why is this a good practice example?	<p>Start-up Estonia is a governmental initiative aimed to supercharge the Estonian start-up ecosystem in order to be the birthplace of many more start-up success stories to come. For that, they are making Estonia one of the world's best places to start a company, collaborating with and uniting the best of start-ups, incubators, accelerators, private and public sector into one big successful Estonian Mafia family, a term that has become a recognised brand for the local start-up community.</p> <p>Today, Start-up Estonia divides its activities into 4 categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the Estonian start-up ecosystem – uniting and building the community through different events and activities, creating and executing unified marketing and branding strategies;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working on educating the start-up founders and employees in areas they currently lack certain knowledge of that keeps them from achieving their (international) business goals; and developing niche start-up areas in Estonia, such as cleantech; • Working on educating the local investors to help them invest more and smarter, as well as attracting foreign investors to Estonia; • Working on eliminating regulative issues and barriers that are complicating the process of operating a start-up, investing or raising funding in Estonia.
<p>Results: Monitoring and evaluation criteria; impact analysis;</p>	<p>They hope that by the year 2020, they will support and encourage the Estonian start-up ecosystem enough to become self-sustainable and thriving.</p> <p>Now there are an estimated of 450 start-ups in Estonia and by 2020 they aim to reach a magical 1000 start-ups.</p>

3.3 Existing and promising Strong industries –RIS 3

Smart Specialisation Strategies⁸ (RIS3 or S3) set priorities at national and regional level to build competitive advantage by developing and matching research and innovation own strengths with business needs, to **address emerging opportunities and market developments** in a coherent manner, while avoiding duplication and fragmentation of efforts. They are also a backbone of national or regional research and innovation strategic policy frameworks in Europe. In 2014–2020 Cohesion Policy will guide the investment of over EUR 450 billion (including national co-financing) to help achieve the EU-wide goals of growth and jobs and reduce economic and social disparities. **It is the biggest investment instrument at EU level for pursuing the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy.** Investments will be concentrated on four key priorities: **innovation and research**, the **digital agenda**, support for small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) and the low-carbon economy with EUR 125 billion allocated to these areas. Altogether, this represents an important tool for start-up growth as well as for innovative SMEs development. In addition, by comparing regional /national RIS3 strategies within the TransUP start-up ecosystem, specific sectorial support can be further developed both for growing startups and/ or for improving collaboration between high tech young companies and established innovative companies. In fact, what brings new blood into the economic system are not only start-up companies, but also a redesigned offer and new ventures in already established innovative companies. This is why collaboration, mutual exchange of experiences and joint conquest of customers are so important. All successful big companies also have to be start-up companies in a way, and all propulsive start-up companies endeavour to become as successful and high-impact as the leading company in their

⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/presenta/smart

industry.

The following paragraphs focus on the analysis of TransUP regions/nations RIS3 with the aim to identify potential common areas to further develop cross landing supporting services. In this view the SMART SPECIALIZATION COMPARISON TABLE annexed to this Paper offers an overview of regional common priorities addressed to startups and Smes within the multilateral territory.

Box 1 – Definition of RIS3

National/regional research and innovation strategies for smart specialisation (RIS3) are integrated, place-based economic transformation agendas that do five important things

- They focus policy support and investments on key national/regional priorities, challenges and needs for knowledge-based development, including ICT-related measures;
- They build on each country's/region's strengths, competitive advantages and potential for excellence;
- They support technological as well as practice-based innovation and aim to stimulate private sector investment;
- They get stakeholders fully involved and encourage innovation and experimentation;
- They are evidence-based and include sound monitoring and evaluation systems.

Source: RIS3 definition according to EU Commission dedicate Guide to Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisations (RIS 3) 2012

RIS 3 _ Regional smart specialization target markets competence: FRIULI VENEZIA-GIULIA

The new Friuli Venezia Giulia regional innovation policy strategy⁹ is strongly focused on the following priorities:

- ⇒ Develop the collaboration and synergy between companies and between companies and scientific bodies, increasing quality and diffusion of innovation.
- ⇒ Promote business investment in innovation and the industrialization of research results, also through services for innovation
- ⇒ Promote new innovative entrepreneurship by supporting innovative start-ups as well as cultural and creative enterprises.

The key regional specialization areas were identified by a thorough process of entrepreneurial discovery that led to identification of five areas:

1. Agribusiness
2. Strategic production value chains (mechanics and home furniture and automation)
3. Maritime technologies
4. Smart Health
5. Culture and tourism

The 5 areas will be recipients of financial resources through the selection of a limited number of projects assessed for quality and impacts, and making clear the role of key enabling technologies. In this framework, the Region intends to stimulate and encourage the cross-fertilization between sectors as a key element to maximize the impact of investments.

Friuli Venezia Giulia RIS 3: The new Friuli Venezia Giulia regional innovation policy strategy strongly focuses on the following priorities:

⁹ FVG Regional Innovation Monitor base profile; <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/regional-innovation-monitor/base-profile/friuli-venezia-giulia>

- Develop the collaboration and synergy between companies and between companies and scientific bodies, increasing quality and diffusion of innovation.
- Promote business investment in innovation and the industrialization of research results through services for innovation
- Promote new innovative entrepreneurship by supporting innovative start-ups as well as cultural and creative enterprises.

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RIS 3 _ Regional smart specialization target markets competence: SLOVENIA

Smart Specialisation Strategy (SSS) focuses on sustainable technologies and services for a healthy life based on which Slovenia will become a green, active, healthy and digital region with top-level conditions fostering creativity and innovation focused on the development of medium- and high-level technological solutions in niche areas.

The key SSS objectives are raising the value added per employee, increased share of high-tech intensive products and knowledge-intensive services, and increased entrepreneurial activity. Objectives for each of the nine priorities identified clearly focus areas and technologies where Slovenia has the competitive advantages.

In these areas Slovenia will no longer act as a follower but as a co-creator of global trends. SSS priority areas are:

A. HEALTHY WORKING AND LIVING ENVIRONMENT

- Smart cities and communities with IT platforms and conversion, distribution and energy management: raising the value added per employee by 15%.
- Smart buildings and homes, including wood chain with smart building units, building management systems, smart appliances and advanced materials and elements: raising the value added per employee by 25%.

B. NATURAL AND TRADITIONAL RESOURCES FOR THE FUTURE

- Networks for the transition to circular economy with biomass transformation and new bio-based materials, technologies for use of secondary raw materials and reuse of waste, and production of energy based on alternative sources: raising the material efficiency index from 1.07 to 1.50.



- Sustainable food production with functional foods and sustainable agricultural production (livestock and plants) in the framework of at least three value chains, which will provide the critical mass of consumption. Long-term contractual partnership based on the economic initiative aims at raising the value added per employee of companies participating in value chains by 20%.
- Sustainable tourism with technology-based marketing and networking, investments for enhancing the quality of services, technological solutions for sustainable use of resources in accommodation facilities and a green Slovenian tourism scheme: raising the value added of tourism by 15%, increasing the inflow from export of travel services by 4-6% annually, and reducing CO2 emissions from tourism by 20% by 2023.

C. (S)INDUSTRY 4.0

- Factories of the Future with optimisation and automation of production and production processes, including enabling technologies:
 - Raising the value added per employee in tool industry by 25%, i.e. on the average EUR 45,000 per employee by 2023.
 - Raising the level of robotization and automation in manufacturing: in the automotive industry the rate of robotization is comparatively high so emphasis will primarily be put on introducing automation. In all other areas automation as well as increasing the number of robots is key with the target standing at a 50% increase, i.e. an increase from 48 to 72 per 10,000 employees. In the framework of demonstration factories the value added per employee will rise by at least 20%.
 - Connect knowledge and creativity of stakeholders in the field of photonics for new impetus and new market opportunities in the global markets with the aim of achieving the average value added of EUR 75,000 by 2023.
 - Increase export of automated industrial systems and equipment by at least 25% by 2023, in particular in tool industry, robotics and smart industrial mechatronic systems.
- Health – medicine with biopharmaceuticals, diagnostics and therapeutics in translational medicine, cancer treatment, resilient bacteria and natural medicines and cosmetics: 2023 objective: increase export of participating partnership companies by over 30% of which small and medium-sized enterprises should increase export by at least EUR 250 million. In addition to promoting the establishment of at least 20 new companies, the objective is also to attract at least one foreign direct investment, which will employ over 50 people.
- Mobility with niche components and systems for internal combustion engines, e-mobility and energy storage systems, systems and components for security and comfort (interior and exterior), materials for the automotive industry: raising value added of partnership companies by 20%, and increasing the number of pre-development partnership suppliers from 15 to 22 (45% increase).
- Development of materials as end products with sustainable production technologies in metallurgy, and multi-component smart materials and coatings: raising value added per employee in companies manufacturing alloys and metals from EUR 45,000 to at least EUR 55,000 by 2023, increasing exports and value added per employee in the field of smart coatings by 20%, increasing investment in development by 15%, value added by 5% and exports of multi-component smart materials by 10%.



RIS 3 _ Regional smart specialization target markets competence Austria¹⁰

General objective: Developing talent, awakening passion - Implementing sustainable reforms in the education system.

Education is the foundation of knowledge-based economies and makes an essential contribution to the social and economic development of our society. Skills are crucial for the development potential of our community and the robustness of our democratic institutions. Yet skills also determine the ability of firms to develop and implement innovations, thereby affecting the economy's competitiveness. The quality of human potential determines the quality of research, which in turn creates new knowledge and is the prerequisite for new understanding, and for adapting and applying new technologies and research that have been developed elsewhere.

- We want to promote the talents of people in all levels of education, awaken their passion for research, and facilitate the best possible training for business dealings and scientific research. This should guarantee universities, research institutions and firms a sufficient pool of highly qualified researchers.
- To do this, the entire education system must be optimised, from the early childhood phase to models of lifelong learning.
- These reforms attempt to mitigate social selectivity, to improve permeability between education courses and tracks, to implement thorough quality improvements in school and university instruction, to better integrate immigrants, and to balance out gender discrepancies in research.

Utilising knowledge, increasing added value - Activating innovation potential

As a high-income country, Austria can only secure and expand its competitiveness and quality as a location to the extent to which the transformation to a knowledge-based economy takes place. The prerequisite is an on-going intensification of the transfer process from science to the economy: newly created knowledge must find a shorter path to utilisation. This means substantially increasing the scope and level of innovations that are developed and implemented in Austria. Increasing numbers of Austrian firms should develop technological or market-oriented competitive advantages through innovation so they can become market leaders in global competition, creating economic growth and jobs. To do this they will need to intensify more ambitious research and development activities in firms performed by highly skilled employees on the foundation of the latest scientific findings. This is why increasing the performance of the innovation system is one of the fundamental tasks in a strategy for research, technology and innovation, which will make Austria an Innovation Leader. We must adopt a broad approach to innovation that not only includes technological, research-driven and non-technological innovations in manufacturing and in the service sector but also ecological and social innovations as well as innovations in the public sector.

Innovation and corporate research, enterprise formation, promotion of innovation through competition

- We want to enhance domestic value creation by encouraging research-intensive industries and knowledge intensive services. In the process, we want to stimulate innovations through a strong emphasis on demand-side instruments in public procurement, regulation and standardisation.

¹⁰ Source: Document - Becoming an Innovation Leader | Realising potentials, increasing dynamics, creating the future | Strategy for research, technology and innovation of the Austrian Federal Government; to find at <https://era.gv.at/object/document/3040>



- The role of internationally successful Austrian leading firms as a central pillar for the innovation system should be strengthened and the research and innovation potential of small and medium enterprises should be activated.
- We want to increase the cooperation intensity of Austrian firms and strengthen the strategically oriented collaboration between science and business – with a special focus on excellence and sustainability.
- This means that we must reduce barriers and hindrances among firms, especially SMEs, for cooperating with science/research facilities, and make it easier for innovative firms to access external resources.
- We want to substantially increase the intensity of private equity and venture capital in the formation of technology-based, innovative firms.
- The number of knowledge- and research-intensive new startups should climb annually by an average of 3% until 2020.
- The growth of innovative firms should be accelerated.
- Creating a regulatory framework to strengthen equity capital in young firms that are oriented towards technology and growth.
- Expanding of venture capital initiatives to stimulate early-phase investment, considering previous developments.
- Optimising and completing existing support measures for forming technology-based and innovative enterprises, focussing above all on measures for the start-up phase (preseed, seed financing, business angels, technology marketing, etc.).
- Strengthening finance competence and entrepreneurship at universities, including the establishment of knowledge transfer centres.
- Developing new financing models with venture capital investment for realising university intellectual property rights (IPR), and establish university-related venture investment companies.

RIS 3 _ Regional smart specialization target markets competence: CROATIA

The Croatian RIS3 puts strong emphasis on innovation and entrepreneurial support activities - especially through the creation of an optimal milieu for innovative creation and for the establishment and growth of new companies. Main RIS 3 sector identified:

- Energy and sustainable environment
- Bio-economy
- Health and quality of life
- ICT

Table 3: Croatia S3 priorities



CROATIA

S3 Priorities as Encoded in the "Eye@RIS3" Tool

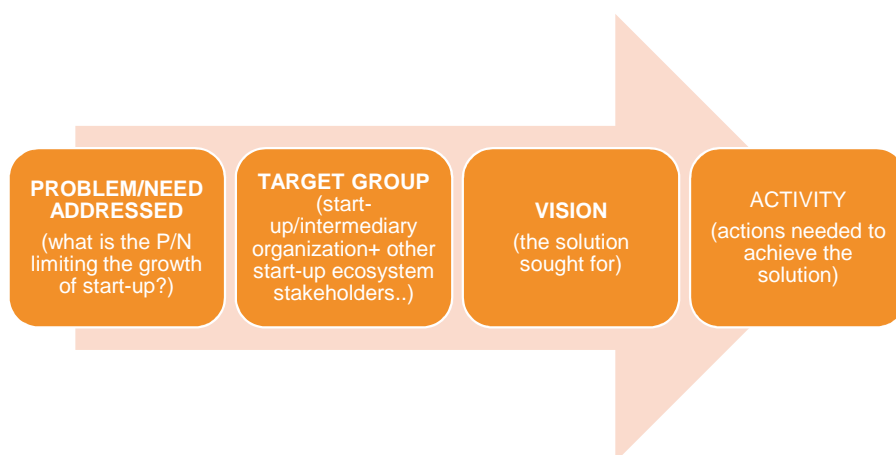
Description	Capabilities	Target Markets	EU Priorities
Transport and mobility	1. Transporting & storage	1. Transporting & storage	1. Sustainable innovation
	2. Water transport & related services		2. Smart green & integrated transport systems
Energy and sustainable environment	1. Energy production & distribution	1. Energy production & distribution	1. Sustainable innovation
	2. Power generation/renewable sources	2. Energy distribution	2. Sustainable energy & renewables
Security	1. Public administration, security & defence	1. Public administration, security & defence	1. Public health & security
Bio-economy	1. Manufacturing & industry	1. Manufacturing & industry	1. KETs
	2. Biotechnology	2. Biotechnology	2. Industrial biotechnology
Health and quality of life	1. Human health & social work activities	1. Human health & social work activities	1. Public health & security
Agro-food	1. Agriculture, forestry & fishing	1. Manufacturing & industry	1. Sustainable innovation
		2. Food, beverage & tobacco products	2. Sustainable agriculture

4. Service Delivery System

4.1 Target groups for crosslanding services

During the first Peer Learning meeting hosted by STEP RI partner in Rijeka, participants representing TransUP partner organizations together with other Croatian representative stakeholders invited (business incubator facilitators, start-up entrepreneurs, technology transfer experts) engaged in a led group work activity aimed at 1. Identifying the cross landing service target groups and/or users and 2. Sharing direct experience inputs on the target needs.

More in detail, leveraging the participant's long term experience and competences in supporting business ideas and start-up growth as well as entrepreneurs (start-up), referents were asked to discuss and complete a common chart/table aimed at developing specific content for the Cross landing service design. Participants divided into three homogenous groups (in terms of nationality, competence and roles) began by identifying perceived problems/needs limiting the cross-border start-up /scale up growth. Team members shared opinions based on their own experiences thus agreeing on specific actions to achieve the best solutions for certain needs/problems.



Source. TransUP work group activity guided process

The macro target groups addressed included:

- Start-ups (idea, early stage and growth phase) including “**internal**” **start-ups** (founders from within the Alpe Adria ecosystem), “**external**” **start-ups** (founders coming from outside the Alpe Adria ecosystem).
- Intermediaries (service providers, innovation and development agencies, technology transfer organizations...)

Each work group eventually synthesized the analysis and shared their results by filling in a poster - table describing regional problems/needs, target groups (start-ups, intermediaries, etc.), vision and activity.

4.2 Assessment of needs – start-ups

Given that there is a huge range of different options that could address **start-ups' needs** when cross landing in the Alpe Adria region, the group work approach helped the participants to identify the starting point for the cross-landing service development. In addition to Peer Learning activity based on the participants' start-up support service delivery experience, each partner organization carried out several interviews with own network entrepreneurs (start-ups). In addition, any useful output from previous partner's projects addressing the topic was also taken into consideration during this project implementation phase.

Besides intermediary organization workgroup based on participants experience and competence, TransUP peer-reviewing relied also on interviews with founders (Appendix) carried out by partner organizations in each cross-border territory as well as on outcomes from other start-up initiatives. The following list summarized the main common requirements from entrepreneurs' point of view:

- Growing start-ups are more interested and ready to further develop their business cross border while new entrepreneurs and early stage start-ups consider it to be useful and are willing to participate in cross border talent activations initiatives/ events, thus getting immediately involved in the multilateral start-up community interactions.
- Interviewed companies that are ready to explore cross border markets/ecosystems are mainly looking for specialized competences /partnerships, connections with cross border companies (cross-border business trips), market opportunities/demand data...
- Entrepreneurs consider tailor-made/customized support more suitable for cross landing objectives rather than off-the-shelf service offers. In general, start-ups perceive that the neighbouring markets are still closed to "non native" companies, thus a cross-landing service support would be of great help.
- Interviewees do not consider different languages as a barrier although bilinguism is indeed an advantage (especially among SME's entrepreneurs the languages used within cross-border territories are still be Slovenian, Italian, Austrian) but more and more young entrepreneurs easily speak and interact in English.

Altogether the insights achieved during this assessment phase can be synthetized in the following facts.

- Lack of confidence (start-ups)

One problem addressed in particular with reference to **early stage start-ups** is the lack of confidence linked to the fact that local Alpe Adria communities (Carinthia, FVG, Croatia ...) located in peripheral areas, are often small and distant from environments that are more dynamic. Here, the vision is to enhance a unique Alpe Adria start-up community by connecting local cross border groups for the promotion and organization of start-up community events. Among others, the idea is to promote events such as "fireside chats", start-up meet-ups, and other talent activation initiatives based on a peer learning approach. These occasions, where 'would be' and young entrepreneurs can gain insight from successful start-up (peer) testimonials, proved successful for encouraging and supporting young entrepreneurs especially at the beginning. During fireside chats, testimonial speakers, coming either



from the territory and /or from outside the enlarged region, introduce their experience by highlighting successful practices and issues in managing a company and resources and are available for further questions from the audience.

- Family-friendly entrepreneurship

The entrepreneurial environment is still more conducive to **male entrepreneurs than female or entrepreneurs** with families. However due to the safety of the area itself both gender entrepreneurs are part of the target groups to be attracted, and thus a „Family friendly entrepreneurship hub“ should be addressed and implemented . The following activities are suggested by TransUP partner organizations to achieve this vision:

- Alpe Adria region should be developed and promoted with content marketing as a region with high quality of life, a good health, and education system.
- The region should be promoted and kept as a safe region.
- As the idea is to attract entrepreneurs with their partners and children career services and activities should be organized in order to provide integration of the whole family.

- Brain gain - Attract skilled start-up teams and personnel

Lack of interdisciplinary teams is a common problem as well as the start-ups' lack of the capacity and knowledge needed for a successful implementation in the Alpe Adria area. Thus, it is important, in particular for growing start-ups and innovative SMEs to attract and connect skilled young people and entrepreneurs and contribute to the creation of internationally well-balanced teams of experts. Among others a way to achieve this vision is to:

- Co-fund international platforms for team creation and expertize scouting,
- Enable flexible and well-connected work spaces to set up companies in the Alpe Adria region.

- Access to markets

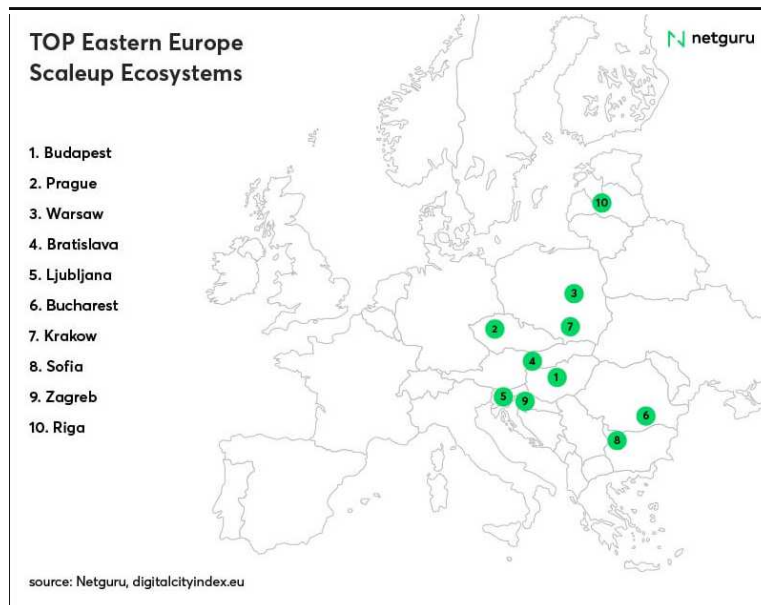
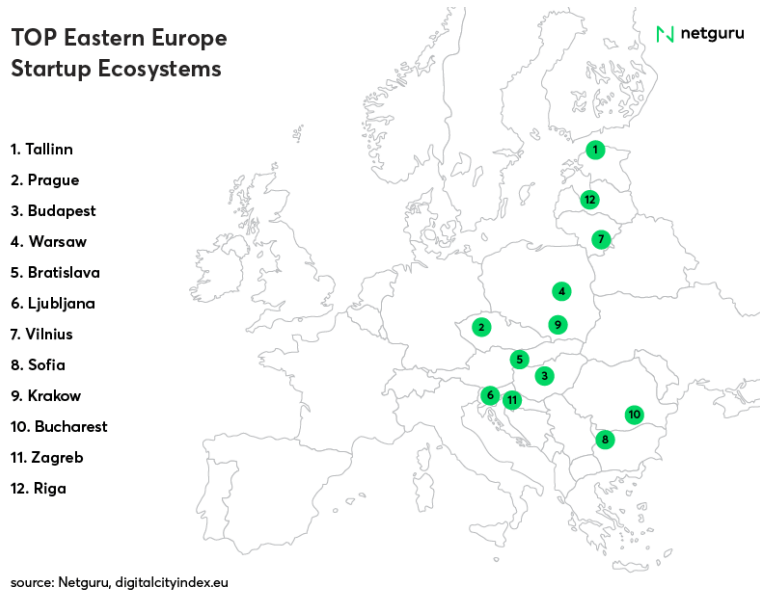
With reference to **growing /scale up start-ups** one of the problems (observed from the service provider point of view) is that start-ups need to develop and test their business outside their “home” environment that is, they need to come out of their comfort zone and start exploring other markets (naturally this need becomes evident when the original market is small). The vision here is to set up a unique offer made by the support service providers from all the neighbouring countries involved. With regards to the activities a unique start-up “cross landing” package could be developed as well as the organization of collateral cross border events (meet ups, workshops...) organized on a regular basis and aimed to foster connections among the cross border entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Usually early stage start-ups lack commercial skills/structure and focus risking their successful commercialization and further growth. The vision for this need is to increase the market share of start-ups thus enabling young entrepreneurs with additional market opportunities by improving their access to the enlarged multinational cross border market. One way for this vision to succeed is:

- improving access of start-ups to specialized marketing agencies,
 - provide them with support and
 - promoting the Alpe Adria enlarged region as a testing platform-hub, with adequate services and infrastructure to support the testing.
- Access to Capital



Start-ups in outer ecosystem as the Alpe Adria region don't attract as much capital as the ones located in the top hubs in Europe — London, Amsterdam, or Berlin . Although the situation is improving there are still fewer investors (Business Angels) in particular there is still not enough money for the pre-seed and seed phase. In addition, it is still difficult to get access to public funding and the high level of bureaucracy represents still a strong barrier preventing start-up growth. On the other side the Alpe Adria start-up-scale up ecosystem is strongly linked with the growing Eastern Europe Start-up ecosystems. This brings key competitive advantages such as talent pool, thriving bootstrapped projects, recent start-up-friendly policies, such as a “start-up visa” program that allows founders from outside the EU to open businesses in the addressed territories (including Italy), and recently attracting VC funds supporting local scale-up development .



4.3 Assessment of needs – intermediaries

TransUP Peer Learning partners operating as service providers (such as incubators, accelerators, technology transfer offices) in the cross-border start-up ecosystem, can bring direct experience in supporting young tech companies growing transnationally. During the workgroup, session dedicated to needs assessment intermediaries played an important role. The results, which complete the inputs collected, can be summarized in the following facts.

Information flow: dedicated HR- Service resource container

On the service provider side a perceived need is to settle a common information procedure by exchanging for example, better practices within the limits of local ecosystems peculiarities and eventually come up with a standardization of cross border services. This step is also necessary to enable the growth of the ecosystem by involving new organizations and for constantly improving the collaboration approach. In this view, the set-up of a transparent “container” tool (ie dedicated service platform, collaborative system) is considered useful to facilitate access to cross-border service resources.

In addition, Peer Learning participants indicate as crucial the need to engage a dedicated staff responsible for the cross border service activity. This not only shows concrete engagement on the intermediary side but also assures efficiency and visibility towards the addressed beneficiaries. As a matter of fact, an efficient and regular information flow among service providers indirectly consolidates the entire cross-border network as it stimulates stronger links among all the start-up ecosystem stakeholders.

With regard to the activities needed to set up the envisioned cross-border facility, TransUP Peer Learning participants suggest the need to outline both the organizations and referents in each nation/territory (network nodes) but also to include promotional service delivery approaches such as free-mium and pre-mium subscriptions to promote and facilitate service access.

The cross-border softlanding offer necessarily implies also international softlanding service, in this view the need perceived is that by connecting as much as possible international resources (links, strategic key contacts) of the Alpe Adria network will automatically lead to the expansion and elevation of service provider offer.

Need assessment conclusions

The main findings show that the start-up target taken into account as main beneficiary of the cross-landing support service differs in terms of needs perceived differentiating among early stage start-ups and growing start-ups and innovative Smes). Early stage start-ups, while appreciating the idea of a support service dedicated to access to cross border support consider the opportunity to participate in transnational talent activation events such as Start-up weekends more important, there initial business ideas or projects can be further developed through a learning by doing approach including active networking.

On the other side growing start-ups or scale ups as well as innovative SMEs have the need to get access to specific, customized support for expanding their activity cross-border.



CROSS LANDING ASSESSED NEEDS



TransUP peer reviewing clearly showed that external and local innovation driven Smes and START-UPS in the growth/scale up phase within the cross border entrepreneurial hub still do not receive adequate support services.

This applies in particular to the following needs:

1. Support need for cross border business development including access to potential investment resources;
2. the need to meet clients, identify strategic partners;
3. as well as the need to find skilled people for their business.

On the other side, requirements from growing start-ups or innovative entrepreneurs coming from outside the enlarged cross border region are mainly related to access to specialized consulting services, or work infrastructures, such as local professional business related support and/or those services related to office subsidiaries are generally already well covered by the Alpe Adria intermediary organizations.

4.4 Framework conditions

Entrepreneurial activities and growth of companies are deeply affected by the environment in which they take place. The results of the TransUP need assessment are in line for a large degree with the state of the art and purposes of the EU Commission's Communication called " Europe's next leaders the start-up and scale-up Initiative" , published on the 22 of November 2016. In particular, the importance to promote further and efficient ecosystems connections, support start-up/scale-up to grow cross border and facilitate access to finance are demonstrated key actions required for making the Alpe Adria hub a well-performing ecosystem totally integrated in the European Start-up & Scale up scene. In this view, on a European Policy level the ultimate goal is therefore to make also peripheral cross border start-up hubs the first choice for ambitious entrepreneurs to set up and grow their breakthrough business ideas into successful companies.

4.4.1 Italy – Friuli Venezia-Giulia Region

Nation/Region

Friuli Venezia Giulia is one of the five autonomous Italian regions with a special statute¹¹. Its capital is Trieste while other important towns are Udine, Pordenone and Gorizia, which represent the major economic, cultural and social poles. Friuli Venezia Giulia is Italy's most North-Eastern region. It covers an area of 7,858 km², it is the fifth smallest region of the country and has about 1.2m inhabitants. It borders Austria to the north and Slovenia to the east. The economy of the region is one of the most developed in the country and it is based on the large presence of SMEs (the so-called “North-East model”), on specialized sectors (“distretti industriali” or clusters) and on high-quality tourism. In comparison to the other Italy the economic situation is better in Friuli Venezia Giulia: in 2014 the per capita GDP was €27,856, above the Italian (€ 26,548) and the European (€ 27,400) averages.



Source: Friuli Venezia Giulia geographic position

Legal conditions supporting the start-up/entrepreneurial environment

The Italian Government has shown in recent years great attention and sensitivity to the issues of innovation and development of start-ups. The **Italian Start-up Act**¹², passed in late 2012, includes a vast and diversified package of measures aimed at creating the enabling regulatory framework for the setup and growth of high-tech start-ups. Far from being static, Italian policy for innovative start-ups is in constant evolution. Recent legislative measures (Decree Law 76/2013, known as the “Decree on Labour,” turned into Law 99/2013; Decree Law 3/2015, known as the “Investment Compact,” turned into Law 33/2015) have improved and broadened the range of measures in favor of innovative start-ups. The Italian Start-up Act has provided a clear and comprehensive definition of innovative start-up and has launched new instruments and support measures regarding subjects which have an impact on the whole lifecycle of a company, including the introduction of flexible corporate management tools, new ways to remunerate workers and consultants, facilitation in the access to capital and investment and support in the process of internationalization.

The new Friuli **Venezia Giulia regional innovation policy strategy** is strongly focused on the following

¹¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/regional-innovation-monitor/base-profile/friuli-venezia-giulia>

¹² Executive Summary Italy's Startup Act (March 2016), Ministry of Economic development – Directorate General for industrial policy and competitiveness

http://www.mise.gov.it/images/stories/documenti/Executive_Summary_Italy's_Startup_Act_02_03_2016.pdf

priorities:

- Develop the collaboration and synergy between companies and between companies and scientific bodies, increasing quality and diffusion of innovation.
- Promote business investment in innovation and the industrialization of research results, also through services for innovation
- Promote new innovative entrepreneurship by supporting innovative start-ups as well as cultural and creative enterprises.

Political conditions supporting the start-up/entrepreneurial environment

On September 19, 2013, the Italian Government published the document titled “Destination Italy”¹³. It is a governmental strategic plan that defines a set of 50 measures aimed at attracting foreign investments in Italy and at promoting competitiveness of Italian enterprises. These measures, that are progressively introduced in the Italian legislation by the Italian government in strict coordination with Regions and Municipalities, will reform several sectors (finance, research, job market, entrepreneurship, etc.) with the final aim to set up a new “business environment” in Italy. In order to attract foreign investments “Destination Italy” includes measures for promoting guarantee of rules, times and inland revenues.

Economic conditions supporting the start-up/entrepreneurial environment

In Friuli Venezia Giulia the university system is composed by 3 universities: University of Trieste, University of Udine and SISSA – International School for Advanced Studies.

In Italy it is common that each university has its own technology transfer office (TTO). The Coordination of Research Institutions in Friuli Venezia Giulia (CER) is the coordinating initiative of national and international research centers, universities and STPs. Institutional aims of a TTO are connected to the commercial and legal management of research results and to the training of human resources in order to fulfill university needs and improve regional economic conditions. TTO functions are primarily connected to intellectual propriety management and to support the setting up of new enterprises or spin-offs. CER, as an initiative of Friuli Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region, cooperates with the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Coordinating Office of Research Centres represents the Network including the main regional scientific institutions. Formed in 2004, the Coordinating Office aims at stimulating synergies between public research and the industrial sector, enabling scientific cooperation at international level, and further strengthening human assets in the region through initiatives aimed at promoting the mobility of researchers and scientists coming from all over the world. The main feature of the office is its multidisciplinary character which, thanks to the wide range of knowledge and technologies available within the area, facilitates the creation of indispensable synergies for interdisciplinary research activities, to the extent that, presently, it is a proper, single body, “a real *coordinating office* of scientific, technological, and educational centres of excellence located in the area”: a reality, benefiting from the experience by prestigious research institutions such as International Research centres, three Universities, and many other scientific centres of excellence.

¹³ http://www.sviluppoeconomico.gov.it/images/stories/documenti/Executive_Summary_Italy_Start-up_Act_02_05_2016.pdf



Sociocultural conditions supporting the start-up/entrepreneurial environment

Entrepreneurship Education Programs: In Italy there are different business schools as SDA Bocconi School of Management, MIP Politecnico di Torino School of Management, MIB School of Management, LUISS Business School, ISIDA School of Business and CIMBA. The most important business schools in Italy in 2012 were SDA Bocconi and Politecnico di Milano (11th and 38th position respectively). On Regional Level MIB School of Management was founded as a **non-profit organization in Trieste in 1988** thanks to the joint efforts of high profile **companies** (including Generali, Allianz, illycaffè and Fincantieri) and the world of academia.

The school and its Masters programmes have been recognized by several top Rating Agencies, **Accreditation Bodies and recruiting companies** in Italy and Europe. The thorough, practical and engaging teaching style, the strong international outlook and the ongoing relationship with companies are the pillars upon which our Business School has built its success.

Among other initiatives which were born in order to provide training supporting entrepreneurship:

- **Junior Achievement** is the first not-for-profit association for the promotion of economic education in schools. Born in the United States in 1919 and released today in 123 countries around the world, it has been operating in Italy since 2002 and has reached over 116 thousand students between 6 and 19 years old with innovative programs in business, finance and entrepreneurship. Programmes offered are different basing on age of students and can be divided in 3 initiatives: lessons, competitions and entrepreneurial programmes. In Friuli Venezia Giulia, Friuli Innovazione is the local partner promoting Junior Achievement Program activities in the whole region.
- **Start Cup FRIULI VENEZIA-GIULIA** is a Business Plan Competition (realized in partnership with Universities of Udine and Trieste, Advanced Studies School SISSA, Foundations “Cassa di Risparmio di Udine and “CrTrieste” and Friuli Innovazione) which aim is to promote on a regional level the diffusion of the innovation culture and the creation of new companies.
- **ARTS –TECH BIZ Mash up Arts/Tech/Biz MASH UP** is the Alpe Adria Start-up, event in Friuli Venezia Giulia, organized by Friuli Innovazione, it's a talent activation activity, a unique opportunity for participants to meet like-minded people, creative, IT experts, young entrepreneur from Italy, Slovenia, Austria and Croatia. From Friday evening to Sunday, participants work in teams developing early business concepts. Supported by qualified mentors coming from Alpe Adria region.

4.4.2 Slovenia





Nation/Region outline:

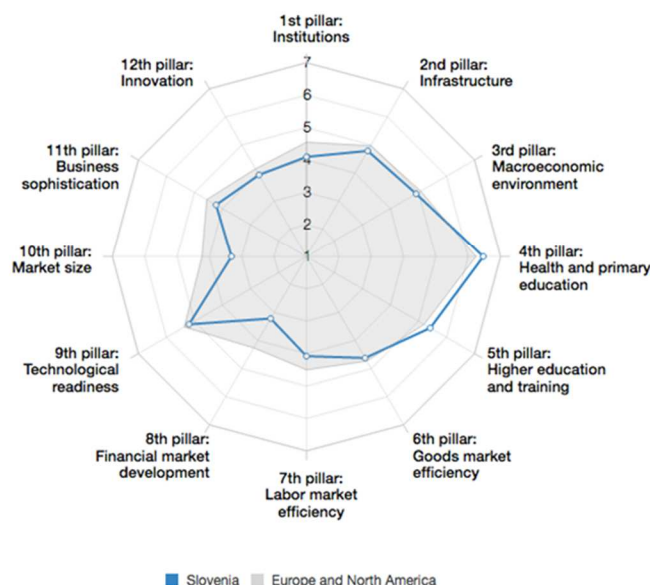
Slovenia is situated in Central Europe and covers an area of 20,273 km². Slovenia is a safe, hospitable, picturesque country with a variety of landscapes. It has borders with Italy, Austria, Croatia and Hungary, and stretches across the Alps, the Dinaric Alps and the Pannonian Plain to the Mediterranean. The coastline is only 46.6 km long, but there are 26,000 km of rivers and streams and some 7,500 freshwater springs, including several hundred first-class therapeutic mineral springs. Slovenia has approx. 2 million inhabitants. Slovenia today is a developed country that enjoys prosperity and stability as well as a GDP per capita at 83% of the EU28 average. It was the first new member of the European Union to adopt the euro as a currency in January 2007 and it has been a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development since 2010. Slovenia has a highly educated workforce, well-developed



infrastructure, and is situated at a major transport crossroad. On the other hand, the level of foreign direct investment is one of the lowest but is rising steadily in last years. Slovenian economy has been severely hurt by the European economic crisis, which started in late 2000s. After 2013 is GDP/pc rising again. Almost two thirds of the working population are employed in services.

Key Indicators, 2015

Population (millions)	2.1 	GDP per capita (US\$)	20732.5 
GDP (US\$ billions)	42.8 	GDP (PPP) % world GDP	0.06 



Source: World Economic Forum.

Legal conditions supporting the start-up/entrepreneurial environment

Slovenia lags behind the EU average in terms of indicators analysing the implementation of the Small Businesses Act for Europe (SBA), according to a European Commission report for 2015. Slovenia has improved access to finance for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and to some extent also the responsiveness of the state administration. But the main issues remain unabated, particularly red tape, the Commission wrote, calling for an acceleration in the "reduction of administrative burden" and "increasing the efficiency of the public administration". According to the report, Slovenia should reduce the high labour costs and address the lack of a qualified workforce, while entrepreneurship education also needs to be strengthened. Nevertheless, the report finds that Slovenian SMEs have recovered relatively well from the financial crisis, as value added and employment in SMEs were only 4% and 5% below their 2008 levels last year, respectively. Moreover, the outlook is positive, as the value added of SME's is expected to increase by 6% in 2015-2017 and employment by 2%, which should create around 8000 new jobs. SMEs provide over 72% of all jobs in Slovenia and almost 63% of the total value added, around 5% above the EU average in both cases (EU Commission SBA Fact Sheet, 2015).

Political conditions supporting the start-up/entrepreneurial environment

The lack of funds available - due to the fall in economic activity, financial crises and budgetary constraints - have led successive governments to focus on non-financial policy measures, but progress has been slow. The large size of the shadow economy, late payments and the burden of various types of taxation weigh heavily on companies. The new government formed in autumn 2014, after an early



general election, has committed to further improving the business environment and has started regular dialogues with SME stakeholders. However, it will take some time before the effects of the new policy directions become apparent and can be evaluated. The emphasis in implementing the government's 'Single document' is to be put on reducing administrative complexity and administrative burdens, fighting corruption and increasing the efficiency of the public administration. The government plans to introduce the comprehensive 'SME test', including the related electronic tools, by mid-2016. Though also this ambitious plan has faced delays, it is expected to result in a sophisticated electronic solution. The online portal for public procurement is now in operation and public procurement announcements are published on it, but tenderers are still waiting to be able to submit their bids electronically in all public procurement procedures. New measures were introduced to open international markets for Slovenian SMEs. The government adopted a strategy document entitled 'Guarantee for youth' to support young entrepreneurs up to the age of 24. The one-stop-shop web portal for entrepreneurs (eVEM for domestic and EUGO for foreign entrepreneurs) was upgraded. The Slovene Enterprise Fund launched measures to improve the use of EU funds. These include providing favourable financing for SMEs in underdeveloped regions, supporting innovative start-ups with grants and seed capital and providing microcredits and guarantees for bank loans with subsidised interest rates (EU Commission SBA Fact Sheet, 2015).

Economic conditions supporting the start-up/entrepreneurial environment

In recent years Slovenia has introduced several policy measures to facilitate SMEs' access to finance. These mainly involve providing guarantees for bank loans with subsidised interest rates by the Slovene Enterprise Fund and through some direct loans by SID bank. In 2014, the Slovene Enterprise Fund took measures to make better use of EU funds. They are providing favourable financing for SMEs in underdeveloped regions and supporting innovative start-ups with grants, loans and seed capital (such as convertible loans of up to EUR 50 000 and capital investments of up to EUR 200 000 per company), as well as with microcredits. The Slovene Enterprise Fund has also supported some venture capital firms via the Holding Fund, which is backed by EU funds. In addition, regional seed and venture capital financing platforms have connected promising Slovene enterprises with international investors. However, these measures will in the end help only a rather limited number of SMEs, so they alone will not solve the difficulties of accessing finance. SMEs also need support to increase their own investment readiness and reduce their dependence on debt financing. Alternative financing mechanisms, including public-private partnerships, need to be strengthened. Banks' reluctance to provide loans may to some extent be addressed by creating a credit review office for SME lending (EU Commission SBA Fact Sheet, 2015).

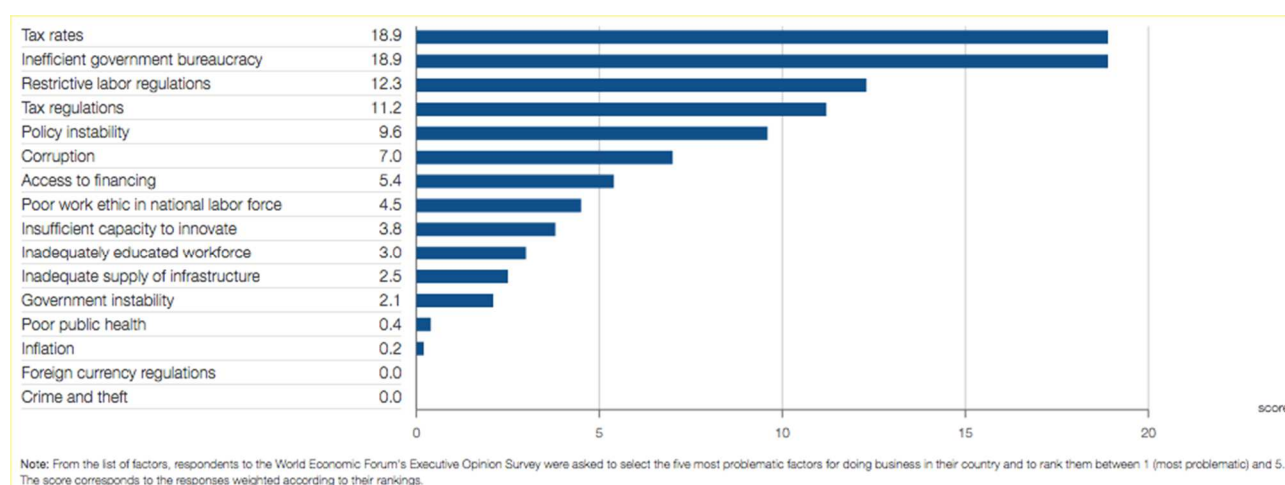
Sociocultural conditions supporting the start-up/entrepreneurial environment

Slovenia's track record on entrepreneurship is broadly in line with the EU average. The established business ownership rate, showing the proportion of the population that owns and manages an operating business, fell from 5.8 % in 2012 to 4.8 % in 2014. Among those not yet involved in any entrepreneurial activity, the intention to start a business within the next three years also dropped, from 13.2 % in 2012 to 11.4 % in 2014. The same trend is observed in entrepreneurial activity driven by opportunity (as opposed to not finding other options for work), which fell from 53 % in 2013 to less than 45 % in 2014. This means that the lowest percentage of Slovenians in a decade are starting a business



because they pursue certain opportunity and wish to be independent or increase their income, while most do so only due to a lack of other options. Those who agree with the statement that successful entrepreneurs in Slovenia enjoy high status increased from 68 % in 2013 to 72 % in 2014. This goes hand-in-hand with media attention to entrepreneurship, as since 2011 people see more and more media stories about successful new businesses. In recent years Slovenia has taken some policy measures on entrepreneurial education and promoting entrepreneurship. In 2014, the government adopted the 'Guarantee for youth' strategy document aimed at supporting young entrepreneurs up to the age of 24. While a vibrant start-up community is being established, Slovenia does not yet offer a favorable environment for entrepreneurs in general (EU Commission SBA Fact Sheet, 2015).

Most problematic factors for doing business in Slovenia



Source: World Economic Forum.

4.4.3 Austria – Land Carinthia

TRANSUP Alpe Adria ecosystem_ Analysis of the environment

Innovative start-ups have become the main driver of job creation, innovation and economic growth throughout the world. So far there has been little profound data on the start-up phenomenon.

Austria has defined a strategy (2015), where they would like to develop Austria as the founder-friendliest country in Europe.

The European Start-up Monitor – Country Report Austria 2015 show the following situation to get an overview about the eco-system:

Vienna is the main hub (region) for Austrian start-ups: Almost two-thirds of the start-ups (62.7%) are located there. The remaining 37.3% are similarly distributed among the other federal states.

The average founder of a start-up in Austria is male (84.5%), is an Austrian citizen (80.8%) and starts his company in a team of 2 to 3 people (average time size: 2.55).

Male founders are on average 31.9 years old when they start their companies, whereas female founders are almost five years younger (27.5).

One third of the founders (39%) have already started at least one company before and 20% of them can even be regarded as serial entrepreneurs with two or more previous ventures. 11.6% of the experienced entrepreneurs completely sold (exited) their previous companies. 14.9% of previous business operations were discontinued; either voluntarily (11.6%) or due to insolvency (2.3%).

The average age of an Austrian start-up is 2.19 years and has created more than 7 jobs on the average (including founders).

44% of the start-ups regard themselves as part of the Digital Industry, 18.7% as Life Sciences start-ups. More than two thirds (70.4%) of the start-ups generate an annual turnover of less than 150,000 EUR. 19.2% of the founders and 27% of the employees are non-Austrian citizens.

In Austria you find a strong federalist system. Therefore “almost every” federal state in Austria establish his own start-up ecosystem. If you look on it in detail you find »start-up-tyrol«, »Start-up Salzburg«, »Start-up-Hub Vienna«, »Carinthian manifesto for founding culture«. The exchange regarding information, cooperation between the federal initiatives are very low at the moment. Carinthia wishes to expand this in the future on a national level.

Stakeholder from Carinthia initiated a process to develop an entrepreneurial | start-up ecosystem. An ecosystem could arise only through the successful co-interaction of all fields of action in the sense of entrepreneurship | start-ups (education, research, business development, interests-representation, infrastructure, advisory services, site development, etc.). Scarce resources can be used optimally and synergy effects could be generated.

The strategic coordination of all relevant developments regarding entrepreneurship | start-ups is a key success factor. Therefore an environment is designed where active communication between all relevant stakeholders and institutions is guaranteed:

Board members, managing directors, rectors from universities, decision-makers vote on strategic priorities and cooperate with other institutions to strengthen the ecosystem.

All actors who are committed to entrepreneurship and start-ups, regularly reflect offers, services and development projects.

Carinthia focuses to the south (Italy, Slovenia, and Croatia) to develop an Alpe-Adria ecosystem. The goal is to make the portfolio of support of the region visible and try to develop it in an attractive manner for start-ups in the pre-seed, seed and growth phase. Complementary initiatives will be concerned.

From the large number of potential starting points Carinthia stakeholder starting with those for which there is knowledge available, there are resources accessible and the interest is noticeable to turn theory into action by implementing concrete measures. The regional strengths make the reference (existing industries or companies, recognizable educational and research priorities). In urban areas an attractive environment with excellent infrastructure for start-ups is provided. Basic services, such as advice on legal framework and support for financing are provided in high quality.

In Carinthia, many institutions are involved in the entrepreneurship and start-up activities, organizing various initiatives and force the ecosystem. Networking and cooperation of actors is the basis of such an ecosystem. A vision and coordinated objectives can be pursued effectively only through coordination and cooperation. Therefore 8 institutions signed a common paper, the »Carinthian manifesto for founding culture«. And all of them have their specific role in the ecosystem, based on the skills and resources they already have in their system. Together, they defined a code of conduct, how to interact with each other. Based on that, a specific governance structure is established. There is a decision meeting on management level and there are operational meetings, where actions will be planned and



prepared to decide. Upside there are information exchange meetings, where other relevant stakeholder have the possibility to give inputs and impulses.

Legal conditions supporting the start-up/entrepreneurial environment

“GmbH” as a legal form becomes more popular. One reason that the legal form of a corporation often only for established companies comes into question, is the relatively high establishment costs due to public duties and charges and the relatively high minimum capital requirements. For the attractiveness of the legal form of “GmbH” the "GmbH New" was launched. For a new company the limited liability is a share capital of 10,000 EUR, required 5,000 EUR out of that amount must be paid in cash.

Within ten years after the start-up is established, the capital has to be increased to the actual minimum capital sum of 35,000 EUR. Start-ups are also a part of the reform in tax issues. The reform reduces the cooperate income tax. With the establishment of a GmbH costs become reality. 1% company tax is payable on the paid-up capital. With January, 1st 2016, capital duty has been abolished, which should lead to a strengthening of the equity base. Also, the reduction of the minimum capital, which considerably is now closer to the EU average of 8,000 EUR, was an important step for the international competitiveness of the founding location Austria as well.

Furthermore, a research premium of 10% for research expenses from its own operational research were companies previously refunded by the tax office. This value increases with the beginning of 2016 to 12%, making research and development projects for companies more attractive. Premiums will be also favored for expenditures on research and experimental development. This means that both basic research as well as applied and experimental research in the manufacturing and service sectors are promoted. This concerns specific software developments. However, the research must be carried out in a domestic operation or a domestic place.

Political conditions supporting the start-up/entrepreneurial environment

The politicians start working on commitments and programs to support start-up activity. If Austria wants to build for the future, then we must allow innovation. Therefore the open innovation strategy in Austria is prepared . Goals, measures and methods to reach the targets must be defined, developed and converted. The political conditions must, and that is a confession of the government, work on different fields to improve the framework conditions where start-ups can grow up. The fields are, as mentioned, innovation (e.g. cooperation between science, research and economy; be prepared to secure intellectual property, play with the trend of digitalization), financing (e.g. crowdfunding as alternative financing instrument; bring international VC-Fonds to Austria; attract more private capital for science, research and innovation), awareness raising (entrepreneurship from kindergarten onwards strengthen; establishment of a culture of failure), networks (e.g. bring together founders and experienced entrepreneurs), infrastructure and regulatory (e.g. cutting red tape - communication between companies and public authorities, reduction of taxes and social security contributions).

Economic conditions supporting the start-up/entrepreneurial

Research and development transfer is not representative in Carinthia. In Styria, established on the Technical University, there is a technology transfer office.

Sociocultural conditions supporting the start-up/entrepreneurial environment



Carinthia try to organize formal and unformal events, where entrepreneurs and start-ups come together, could exchange their experiences and build up their network.

Tolerance for failure is not established so far.

Ambition is very low. Studies show, that students in Austria need to have a high grade of security. They want to work for a public authority, in the best case owned by the state! This makes it difficult to try something, like a venture.

4.4.4 Croatia

Although start-ups and innovative SMEs are important topics on the public opinion agenda, so far there are no clear evidences that there was substantial impact on national GDP or employment rate.

The regional entrepreneurship ecosystem, as far as innovation related activities are concerned, is focused mainly in the public sector, where the dominance of the R&D expenditure is, strongly oriented towards fundamental research. Another aspect of the ecosystem is an insufficient collaboration between private and public sector. Universities and R&D companies are rarely seen as sources of information for innovation: only 6.9% of firms in Croatia would turn to universities for innovation. The result is the fact that Croatia has amongst the lowest level of patenting intensity, with approximately 4.26 patents per million populations, in comparison to an EU average of 110. In Adriatic Croatia, the situation is even worse: out of the total number of patent applications of resident applicants in 2014, 27,1% patents were filed by applicants from Adriatic Croatia while the share increased by 5.4 percentage points in 2015.

In contrast to the decline of R&D activities in traditionally large performers, there is a growing niche of innovative, technology-based SMEs. The most innovative sectors, based on the number of patents of Croatian applicants and inventors that were granted by the EPO, are the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, medical and ICT sector (e.g. Jadran Galenski Laboratorij in the Adriatic region).

Key characteristics that limits or increase Croatia attractiveness for subsidiary establishment, hence start of softlanding activities are:

- Low living expenses compared to major European start-up cities
- Relatively cheap HR capital - well educated specialists in many fields
- Possibility to start a one-person company
- Option to start a simplified form of an LLC – J.D.O.O. (1,5 EUR capital – about 5 days to register)
- Very high VAT (25%)

Legal conditions supporting the start-up/entrepreneurial environment

A national strategy in support of start-ups is in place - the Small Business Development Promotion Act. This Act defines measures that aim to foster the development of small entrepreneurs. The Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Crafts defines an annual program with specific activities and incentives. However, Croatian legislation defines no special status for start-ups.

There are no tax-free option regimes. However, in 2015 the Value Added Tax (VAT) Act has been modified - enabling SMEs with annual turnover of up to 390 000 EUR to pay VAT based on invoices that were actually paid.

It takes a novel entrepreneur 1 to 5 days to set up a business in the simplified form of a Simple Private Limited Company (j.d.o.o.), but it can take up to 45 days for a regular Private Limited Company (d.o.o).



Also, founding a d.o.o. requires at least of 2600 EUR of start capital.

The Late Payment Directive been implemented reducing time to pay the invoice and hence limiting the need for short-term financing.

Political conditions supporting the start-up/entrepreneurial environment

Two state agencies provide favorable loans – these are HBOR and HAMAG BICRO. HAMAG BICRO is the result of a merger between HAMAG Invest and BICRO, the business innovation agency. HAMAG BICRO signed a contract with the European Investment Fund for a microloan scheme for SME financing available also for start-ups.

Proof of concept (POC) private Financing of entrepreneurs’ pre-commercial activities in the early developmental phase of new products, services and technological processes.

The Croatian Employment Service (Hrvatski zavod za zapošljavanje) has some occasional programs and funding schemes for unemployed people that want to become entrepreneur.

The Ministry of Entrepreneurship has programs for funding innovations, innovative start-ups and supporting consulting and incubation services.

Economic conditions supporting the start-up/entrepreneurial

There is an uneven distribution of physical and supporting infrastructure throughout Croatia. Most of the infrastructure is available in major cities – Zagreb, Rijeka, Split and Osijek partly connected with universities from those cities.

Apart of the initiatives from City of Zagreb (Technology Park Zagreb) and University of Zagreb, especially from Faculty of Electronics and Computing (FER) and Economy Faculty, Zagreb has the private start-up incubator – ZIP and co-working zone HUB385. Office for technology transfer (OTT) within University is established but with limited capacities. The Croatian Business Angels Network (CRANE) is established in Zagreb as network of business angels and private investors (mostly from Zagreb) interested in investing in productive and innovative company in the very early stages of development.

Rijeka has the greatest number of start-up incubator facilities – there are incubators from City of Rijeka, Rijeka development agency and Step Ri. OTT within University is established but with limited capacities. Out of the four bigger cities, north of Croatia is generally better compared with other parts of the Croatia, due to existence of Varaždin Technology park, Čakovec’s REDEA and TICM, Koprivnica etc.

Sociocultural conditions supporting the start-up/entrepreneurial environment

In general, entrepreneurial culture should be improved, general image is relatively unfavorable due to legacy from socialist times when private entrepreneurship was “suspicious”, bad cases of privatization in 90s and generally non desirable ambition for becoming rich from entrepreneurial activity.

General attitude for risk taking is low (most “favorable” jobs are safe jobs in local or state administration). Similar attitude is for mistakes, experimentation and failures – general opinion is that it is better to be on the safe side, preferably as a part of a “majority”.

Interesting major events are SHIFT Split, Start-up Camp Rijeka (Step RI and US Embassy), Kulen Dayz Osijek (Osijek Software City / BIOS), Voogle Varaždin (TP Varaždin), Zagreb Connect (City of Zagreb), ZIP MasterClass series (ZIP Zagreb), Start-up Wednesdays (CRANE) plus regional contests and initiatives that aims to attract start-ups from Croatia (like ABC incubator Ljubljana).



4.4.5 Overview – Environment Framework conditions

External factors are relevant how start-ups develop and growth. Table 1 gives an overview about the assessment of the factors from the different perspectives in terms of different countries, cultures, frameworks and environment.

External factors	AUT	CRO	IT	SLO
Legislation	+++	+	+++	-
Political commitment	++	-	+	+
Market - Taxes	-	-	-	-
Market - Presence of investors	+	+	+	+
Market - Grants	+++	++	+(+)	++(+)
Entrepreneurship in education	+	-	+	+
Coordinated ecosystem	R: ++ N: +	R: ++ N: (+)	R: + N: +	R: + N: ++(+)
Infrastructure in the ecosystem	++	++	++	++

Legend:

+++	best
-	worst
R	Regional level
N	National level

Table 4: TransUP partners' framework conditions Assessment overview

The topic of »entrepreneurship | start-ups« is partly anchored in the various strategies of the countries. In Croatia there is a reference in the smart specialisation strategy. Politicians are less likely to address the issue during this time. In Slovenia there are also low references in strategies regarding the topic, but Slovenia created the Start:up Manifesto¹⁴ which is initiated by stakeholders of the ecosystem. Also, politicians could intensify the communication about the subject. In Italy a national strategy exists, but on regional level the topic has low presence. In Austria the Ministry defined a common strategy with the title »Land der Gründer«. The politicians like to talk about the topic.

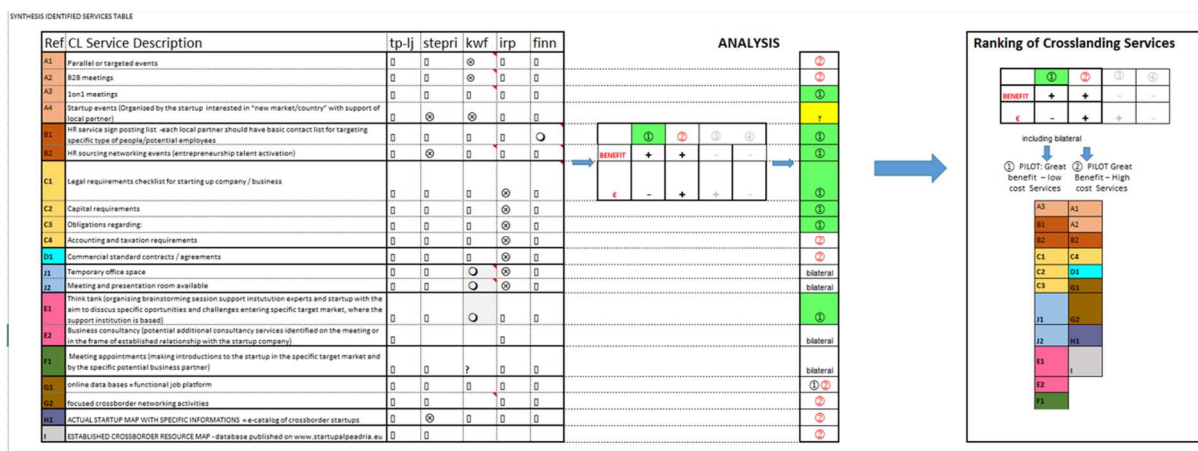
- ⇒ In all countries the tax issue is assessed on a worst level. So there is potential for improving the tax regulations around the topic of »entrepreneurship | start-ups« (e.g. Austria already implemented a subsidy for labour costs in the first years of starting the venture). Investors and their access to markets are important for the target group. In all countries, there is room for improvement to increase investment activities into start-ups.

¹⁴ <http://www.startup.si/en-us/about-the-initiative-/startup-manifesto>

- ⇒ Access to grants is quite well established in all countries. Austria has the most extensive offer to start-ups.
- ⇒ On entrepreneurship education level, Croatia is the country where they have no entrepreneurship professorship on their universities. Slovenia has a teacher pilot project implemented. Carinthia focus to strengthen the education on natural sciences beginning also in preliminary school.
- ⇒ The coordination in the ecosystems between the stakeholders differs, dependent from the focus (regional or national level).
- ⇒ There is a lot of different infrastructure with various focus available in the countries. Infrastructure could be technology parks, research and development centres, machinery infrastructure, coworking spaces.

5. Cross landing offer with high impact

Following the Target Needs and Framework conditions Analysis, peer-reviewing activity focused on the set up of the cross landing offer. This phase included three main steps: **A)** during the 2° Peer learning meeting held in Ljubljana, partner organizations worked together within group work activities with the aim to identify **existing and new solutions of cross landing services** with potential of scaling in the Alpe Adria cross border region. The output was a comprehensive list of either existing and or required services addressing TransUP challenge. **B)** In the next step, each partner ranked the previous service list according to **cost-efficient** approach. As a result, two main service groups were generated, on one side the **“high impact - low cost”** cross-landing support **offer** and on the other, the **“high impact-high cost”** cross landing **offer**. **C)** Finally, during the last step, partners developed a **concrete offer** (pilot action) based on the low cost –high efficient results, to be developed within the TransUP partnership. On the other side, the high cost- high impact cross landing offer – mainly addressed to scale up and innovative SMEs companies - was further developed in terms of resources and opportunities in view of future concrete joint implementation actions.



Source: TransUP cross landing service peer reviewing selection process matrix

As a result of the second process step (as described above), the following Support Service groups were therefore identified:

- ① “High impact - Low cost” cross-landing Services : services working already on regional level ready to be implemented by partners on a cross landing system
- ② “ High impact - High cost” cross- landing Services: services mainly addressed to scale-ups not yet available for which partners plan to jointly act for identifying resources and implement the needed actions on a cross landing system

In the next phases, TransUP peer reviewing activities focused on further developing the implementation potentialities of identified cross-landing offer.

5.1 First group: Low cost - High impact cross-landing Services

This first group of cross landing support offer (high impact-low cost) refers to services existing already on a regional level and that can be easily implemented on a cross-landing system.

Following the ranking procedure carried out by each TransUP partner organization (based on own resources and specialization), the resulting services were further analysed and then assembled as follows:

- Entrance step: **THINK TANK** - Need assessment and matching opportunities with Service Provider offer;
- Cross landing support areas: **A. BUSINESS CONNECTIONS; B. BUSINESS CONSULTANCY; C. FACILITIES.**

Additional analysis including feed backs from target beneficiaries (involved in the peer learning activity) were carried out in order to define a common delivery procedure including minimum standards and possible promotional actions. Finally, TransUP partners agreed to adopt the identified set of cross border services as TransUP Pilot Action.

The agreement on the identified high impact –low cost services makes the ground for the DOP TransUP evaluation section (.

Table 5: Pilot Action Cross Landing Service Offer

TRANSUP Benefit + /Cost – Cross Landing Service Offer to be tested within Pilot action Target: startup /innovative SMEs			
	Services resulting as Benefit +/Cost- by PPs from previous selection process. (Objective: To be implemented under TransUP Pilot action)	Partner SERVICE DELIVERY RESOURCES	SERVICE CONDITIONS (FREE / CHARGE negotiated by each service delivery provider)

(Starting Point) Assessment Startup Need and compliance with Service Provider (Signatories of TransUP Memorandum of Understanding 2017)	Think tank Service description: brainstorming session among service delivery experts and beneficiary startup with the aim to analyze and discuss cross landing opportunities starting from specific opportunities and challenges entering specific target market, where the support institution is based.	Human resources: - 1 person from business incubator/accelerator area.	<i>FREE of Charge</i>
A - Service delivery offer	Business Connections - Service description: service aimed at setting up a meeting agenda (includes introducing the incoming startup to specific target market through specific potential business partner)	Human resources - 1 person from business incubator/accelerator area, with senior business management and competences - (further expertize available according to beneficiary's needs)	<i>Under service delivery provider price conditions (negotiated offer)</i>
B - Service delivery offer	Business consultancy - Service description: providing additional specific consultancy services identified during the first need assessment meeting or in the frame of the established relationship with the startup company.	Human resources – service provider internal and /or external consultancy to be activated according to beneficiary's needs	<i>Under service delivery provider price conditions (negotiated offer)</i>
C- Service delivery offer	Facilities Access to Service Provider facilities Service description: access to meeting rooms, conference rooms, coworking area, offices.	Related to the Service Delivery infrastructure in particular to facilities addressed to startups/innovative entrepreneurs	<i>Under service delivery provider price conditions (negotiated offer)</i>

5.2 Second Group: High cost- High Impact cross-landing – scale up

The implementation of previous cross border initiatives generated outcomes in terms of knowledge about stakeholders and innovative SME, established linkages and networks, services and programs, spin-off and start-up hub activities, information channels, focused on how to use existing energies of players to initiate specific topics as well as enhancing cross-border networking and partnership of investors. Consequently, this produced dynamics in the field of high growth entrepreneurship in the cross-border territories.

Still more needs to be done in terms of consolidating the cross border ecosystem. In particular with reference to supporting scale up companies within the enlarged cross border region as well as in terms of connecting this peripheral ecosystem to other core high tech entrepreneurial hubs (i.e. Paris, Berlin, Amsterdam, and London) as well as to globally recognized high tech entrepreneurial destinations.

The following list represents several “high impact – high cost” cross landing actions emerged both from the TransUP peer reviewing process as well as from other actions financed within Start up Europe an initiative promoted by the European Commission .



In particular, TransUP partners acknowledged the following objectives as relevant actions to be implemented on a cross border level. These actions require adequate financial capitals and network resources to be adequately developed. In other words, the next step requires a synergy among local and transnational as well as public and private resources.

1. Set up of start-up Alpe Adria destination

Following more detailed ecosystems' analysis and systematic approach, the objective is to develop a functioning cross border Start-up Alpe-Adria destination. This is made firstly by further connecting neighbouring Start-up HUBS together with their stakeholders (service and infrastructure providers) to become a wider global network providing services, resources and promotion to their members. Secondly, by placing the cross-border area on a global map connecting it with other core hubs in Europe and beyond. In concrete this implies the design and development of a start-up/scale up cross border platform involving other relevant stakeholders (branding, services, products, events, role models, talent enhancing).

In this way, the cross-border entrepreneurial ecosystem will be promoted through unique **Resource container (Alpe Adria start-up/scale up ecosystem platform)**, offering joint services (including support for finding skilled people, new clients and resources not only on the local or national level but also on the cross border/international level. In addition a further development of the **"Cross regional Start-up Softlanding Initiative"**, should be approached where **"incoming"** (welcoming of international Start-ups) and **"outgoing"** (internationalisation of regional start-ups) are issues to keep in mind.

2. Development and implementation of scale-up support services

Improving and developing new services for scale-ups in the cross border region. Provide direct support for innovative talents and start-ups and complete the services with lean methodology approach evaluation and upgrade. At the project, completion the services will have to be set up as to be constantly implemented guaranteeing for sustainability of results. This objective will be achieved also by setting up **cross border -Incubators with minimal standards, support schemes, coordinated services, common branding, etc.** One-stop-shop, full support (definition of basic package of services, tailor-made service for specific needs, legal support, human resources, etc.) Four test markets, where a quick assessment is possible.

3. Funding for growth across the continent

Another common identified growing start-up and innovative SMEs' need directly affecting the health and success of an ecosystem is the access to funding. In general, seed money and early stage funding rounds up to €1 million and in particular money and later funding rounds that were significantly hindering the growth and scaling of businesses.

4. The data challenge

Finally, another finding confirmed also by recent EU studies on the topic of supporting start-up growth in Europe, has been the challenge of data. It is a challenge that is multivariate in nature and requires a more joined up and collaborative approach if a solution is going to be researched. The problems in the data manifested themselves in three main ways: availability – with data difficult to obtain for some



ecosystems; consistency – with data collected in different ways; and appropriateness – with traditional classifications no longer appropriate for the digital and tech sectors.

Target groups	Requirements/ Problems/ Needs	Measures Needed
Innovation driven Smes & STARTUP IN GROWTH PHASE (SCALE STARTUPS)	(Not available adequate Offer) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop New Business* • Introduction to clients* • Skilled people* • Access to capital (Support Offer available) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Office Subsidiaries ✓ Access to work infrastructures ✓ Specialised services (legal, accountant, other local professional support) <p>* not well covered by current cross border service delivery partners in the AA Start-up ecosystem</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Definition of Standard level of Services covering the main requirements that are still not well answered. ⇒ Develop local internal procedures (within standard level defined above). ⇒ External communication (joint platform)
INTERNAL STARTUPS (ALPE ADRIA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money for growth • Lack of experience • Infrastructure & premises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentorship • Talent activation initiatives (lighthouse events)
GLOBAL CORPORATIONS CORPORATE SPIN OFFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing qualified connections to large and medium corporates (“Matching”). • identify and share best practices • identifying and reporting the “scaleups”, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate “buy one get four” matching initiatives; • Promote start up-corporate interactions through Events and Research (“Sharing”). • Activate mapping activity referring to fast growing startups at cross border level (“Mapping”).

The following table is the result of TransUP peer-learning work aimed at identifying **missing supporting services**.

While startup development support seem to be well covered especially in the first startup phases. Specific services for **growing startups and innovation driven SMEs** appear to be still missing (no specific services addressing this target within the enlarged cross-border region, neither significant actions nor networks active in this field). In addition, cross-border growth and internationalization are characteristics more likely to apply to this scale ups and innovative companies thus confirming the need to develop effective support for this target.

Source: TRANSUP HIGH- IMPACT /HIG COST CROSS LANDING SUPPORT OFFER table

6. Implementation

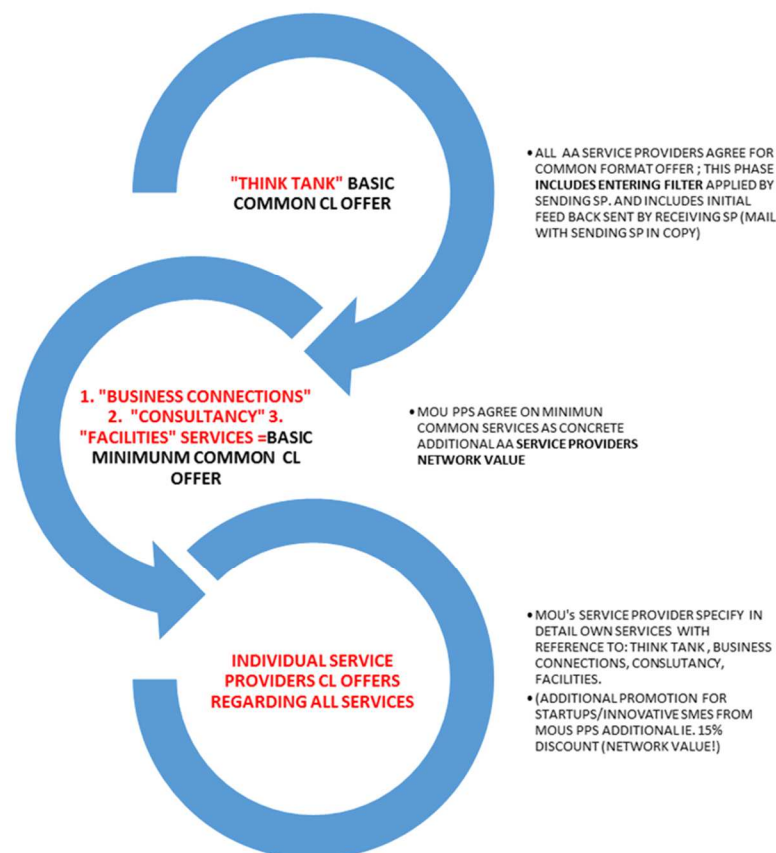
6.1 Findings Validation: setting up a sustainable Pilot Action

TransUP peer reviewing findings are validated with the implementation of a joint portfolio containing business landing services available within the cross border partnership and deployed for the first time according to a common procedure. Partners drafted a Memorandum of Understanding (M.O.U.) with the purpose of setting up a legal framework to sustain the cooperation.

The related M.O.U. incorporates in more detail the objectives of the first agreement - signed in May 2014 between TransUP partner organizations from Austria, Italy and Slovenia, aimed at encouraging the collaboration and the exchange of information, and sharing of knowhow regarding the support of start-ups for the development of the Alpe Adria Start-up Ecosystem destination.

The new MOU brings the initiative one-step further by:

- enlarging the partnership territory with the involvement of the Science and Technology Park STEP RI (Croatia);
- setting up the first jointly delivered support service for the Alpe Adria Start-ups /scale up companies



Source: Cross Landing Offer Pilot process draft

6.2 Evaluation

THE ALPE ADRIA CROSS-LANDING PILOT SERVICE

In order to test the rationale of how the cross-border value is going to create a “market” opportunity for start-ups and scale-ups as well as to implement the state-of the art services and capture value, TransUP partners as M.O.U. co-signer organizations agreed to jointly set up the **ALPE ADRIA CROSS-LANDING PILOT SERVICE**. The service will be implemented within the already established Alpe Adria start-up ecosystem.

In particular, partners agree to:

- adopt a mutual service delivery procedure
- designate service referents and supply contact references
- state a common description of the typology of services offered
- apply special prices to cross border entrepreneurs supported by MOU signatories and related service providers – for services that go beyond the free offer.

Each service provider (MOU signatories) will directly inform the applying cross-border entrepreneur on specific service terms and conditions. Signatories agree to share any useful detailed information regarding the cross-landing services provided, in order to assure service delivery quality and enable monitoring activity for future improvements.

In addition, Signatories agree to ensure information flow on main cross border events and support services/offer for start-up/scale up companies, for upgrading the following common info-promo platform www.start-upalpeadria.eu

M.O.U. signatories are entitled to use the official Start-up ecosystem Logo in association to the Alpe Adria Cross-Landing Service as well as for mutually agreed events. Detailed terms and conditions of the Alpe Adria Start-up Ecosystem logo for third parties will be detailed on a separate document by owner organizations.

A.A. CROSS-LANDING SERVICE CONTENT

1. Service Criteria Entry check: Each C.L. Service Provider applies an entry quality check to local applications for Cross Landing Support. More in detail, applying candidates (start-ups /entrepreneurs) should fit to criteria referred to English communication skills, market readiness (if the expected offer includes B2B also), international growth potential, sector etc.
2. “Think tank” 1st meeting - in practice it is a first skype meeting (max 2 hours) where the applying start-up/ entrepreneur, together with both the sending and receiving service delivery providers (MOU partner organizations), carry out a joint brainstorming session. The aim of the “Think Tank” phase is to:
 - A. further assess start-up needs and check compliance with Service Provider Offer
 - B. analyze the start-up business plan and outline specific opportunities and challenges entering the targeted Alpe Adria market
 - C. Provide a first feedback . Up to this step, the support provided is free of charge.
3. After positive entry check, the following service areas can be addressed for specific support under terms and conditions applied by receiving MOU partners:
 - ⇒ “Cross-landing Business Connections” – regards the identification of connections as well as the setup of appointments at the “receiving” Service provider premises or at any other suitable location. The aim is to introduce the beneficiary to the new-targeted



market by facilitating interactions with potential business partners/clients and with any other strategic contact from the Cross-Landing provider network.

- ⇒ “Cross-landing Consultancy” - regards the supply of further consultancy services by the Receiving Service Delivery organization and/or by other local consultants/experts /mentors.
- ⇒ Access to “cross-landing facilities” – regards the possibility to access to facilities (meeting rooms, conference halls, co-working etc.) available at the Service provider premises.

A.A. CROSS LANDING SERVICE DELIVERY PROCESS

A.A. CROSS LANDIG SERVICE PROVIDERS –contacts

- ITALY- FVG : Friuli Innovazione

Address: Friuli Innovazione

Parco Scientifico e Tecnologico Luigi Danieli

Via J. Linussio,51

33100 Udine

www.friulinnovazione.it

Contact Referent:

Claudia Baracchini claudia.baracchini@friulinnovazione.it; technoseed@friulinnovazione.it;

- AUSTRIA- CARINTHIA: On behalf of - KWF M.O.U. partner organization, BUILD!Business Incubator’s staff will operate as Service Provider for the Carinthian/Austrian start-up ecosystem.
KWF Kärntner Wirtschaftsförderungsfonds ; www.kwf.at
Contact referent: Jurgen Kopeinig, kopeinig@kwf.at

Cross Landing Service Provider: BUILD! Gründerzentrum Kärnten GmbH

Lakeside 1, 9020 Klagenfurt am Wörthersee, Austria

<http://build.or.at/>

Contact Referent:

Markus Setschnagg

setschnagg@build.or.at

- SLOVENIA

Initiative Start:up Slovenia promoters www.start-up.si

TP-LJ (Slovenia)

Address: Tehnološki park 19, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

Contact referent: Mojca CVIRN, mojca.cvirn@tp-lj.si

IRP (Slovenia) IRP Inštitut za raziskovanje podjetništva

Address: Ulica Škofa Maksimilijana Držečnika 6, Maribor Slovenia

Contact referent: Matej Rus, matej.rus@irp.si



- CROATIA

STEP RI znanstveno-tehnološki park Sveučilišta u Rijeci

Radmile Matejčić 10,

51000 Rijeka www.step.uniri.hr/

Contact referent: Neven Tamarut, ntamarut@uniri.hr

6.3 Lessons Learnt

This section summarises the key lessons learned during the implementation of TransUP peer learning activity for the set-up of cross border supporting services in particular with reference to the process applied, to the common services developed focusing on working across cultures and country borders. The target groups addressed were start-ups, scale-ups innovative SMEs and intermediary organizations /service providers.

ADVICES FOR OTHER AGENCIES AND SERVICE PROVIDERS WORKING CROSSBORDER FACING THE TRANSUP CHALLENGE

The following aspects should be taken into account when building a cooperation in terms of business landing services.

With reference to the PROCESS it is important:

- To have an external focused moderator
- To define agreed common language and definitions
- To be clear on common aims
- To synchronize partners agendas
- To keep the momentum during the project lifetime
- To be aware to carry out a slow and long learning process towards the target groups (SMEs & start-ups)

With reference to the set-up of COMMON SERVICES, it is important:

- To address real needs of the final beneficiaries
- To clearly communicate the added value of the value proposition
- To generate quick wins (from ideas to successful implementations)
- To include test implementations in the project activities (just to have pilots as outputs)
- To keep the joint services and procedures simple
- To balance few resources and good results
- To check to have qualified human resources to provide services to the target groups (SMEs & start-ups)
- To pay attention the profile of the final beneficiaries and to the quality of the services

With reference to WORKING ACROSS CULTURES AND COUNTRY BORDERS it is important:

- To foster cross-border cooperation among firms as cross-border initiative.



- To communicate, as part of the USP (unique selling proposition), the advantages of micro-region initiatives (proximity and diversity might be a challenge but also easily tackled; some specific BMs can be better tested)
- To leverage and combine national/local (SMEs & start-ups) supporting programmes
- To facilitate commitment and trust among partners from different countries
- To organize networking events in the Alpe Adria region, in order to get know each other and to develop trust between partners and the target groups
- To constantly work to keep the network alive

Key issues to build a cross-landing cooperation

TransUP final analysis on the lessons learned embraces the entire cross border experience going back to the initial collaboration activated initially by partners from Austria, Slovenia and Italy in 2014.

Alpe Adria promoters started from bottom up in 2014 working on multilateral events organizing events together and out of that started the relation between partners and policy makers. Personal interaction, networking and community engagements were important ingredients in building effective ecosystems. These interactions were important in creating linkages between businesses for: driving new ideas and innovation; opening up new markets and supply chains; providing informal support and advice; providing an opportunity to celebrate success or indeed failure; and finally for creating a sense of community and scale for individuals who would otherwise feel quite isolated.

General advice:

- ✓ It is important to achieve minimum consensus, you do not need to force or synchronize everything from the beginning but consider the differences between IA and countries (you need to start small to grow).
- ✓ Network trust should be built from operative and collaborative approach that is from working together and performing concrete actions. Innovation Agencies (IAs) should have a concrete project in order to make the start-up ecosystem building effective
- ✓ Do not forget connections with policy stakeholders. Long term versus short term have to be balanced. IAs should have a wide and global picture; they should be aligned and should go bottom-up in a long-term vision in balance with concrete short-term actions. (It is important to stimulate reactions from local governments thanks to the participation of policy makers to events in order to fuel resources for the actions from the beginning. Consider from the beginning both operative level and policy level.
- ✓ Cooperating Innovation Agencies should help each other in promoting their cross border collaboration and vision towards mutual policy makers. The best seller of the “story” could be an outsider government influencing the other nations’ government (asking colleagues from other countries for help could be more effective).

Cross-border cooperation Benefits for involved innovation agencies (IAs):

- ✓ Important to overcome the tendency of focusing only on own benefit.
- ✓ PUTTING THE EFFORT ON JOINT ACTIONS creates benefits also at local level even if it is a long-term effect. When acting together the results could be more than the sum of the individual contributions and thus will be the common benefit/impact.



- ✓ Do not try to synchronize everything but consider what you have in common. It is like having a Minimum Viable Product (MVP): focus on things you have in common (among cross-border innovation agencies) trying to synchronize on small actions rather than on the big job.
- ✓ Diversity and similarity in the network should be taken into account and balanced. It means to consider the different types of organizations involved in the cooperation (Eg. Incubators/Technology parks/ development agencies...). It is good to have diversity but this should be taken into account.

Challenges/pitfalls:

⇒ Communication (external) can be a challenge: be aware of it. You should set up the cross-border project building upon first concrete results and this is necessary to get recognition also at political level.

Requirements:

- ⇒ To start with, you should be able to bootstrap your wider project leveraging on shared resources from other initiatives (from local and/or structural Funds...). It is easier to find resources in different projects even if they are not totally in line and in parallel you should find other resources (do something else to earn money to realize your wider project in order to bootstrap it).
- ⇒ Cross border, cooperation should be seen as a joint greater program combining other sources for achieving its objective (it is not realistic that you find one single source).
- ⇒ Intercultural communication needs to get fine-tuning. Partners should be able to understand different perspectives and different contexts (Political, legal, cultural...). Multicultural context brings different solutions to the same problems with different approaches and in some case with different actions to solve them.

7. Start-up Ecosystem Terminology

- Accelerator: is an institution that helps start-ups gain rapid development within a given period through coaching and services.
- Bootstrap: You are doing it the hard way, with no venture capital. Your bootstrapped start-up runs on its own accruals.
- Business Angel: is an experienced businessperson that assists the budding entrepreneur financially and with know-how and networks.
- Co-working space: As the name suggests, these are (larger) areas that are available as work places for freelancers, creative people and start-ups. The participants do not necessarily need to work together. The use of the premises is non-binding and temporally flexible.
- Crowd funding: means financing from a group of people. Crowd funding is a good way for new founders who need capital to implement their ideas.
- Crowd investing: is the name for the financing of start-ups through many lenders. In return, the person or small groups hold shares in the said young company.
- Disruptive: Used to describe technology that displaces another; often overused by entrepreneurs and sometimes misused.
- Elevator pitch: This is the '60- second business plan pitch a start-up entrepreneur needs to have in his head for whenever he bumps into an investor in an elevator.
- Entrepreneur: is a company founder. The term stems from the French language and refers primarily to individuals who can deal with great responsibility and high risk and at the same time guide their company to success.
- Incubator: The term originates from medicine. An incubator is used for premature babies. An incubator has a similar function in the start-up scene: incubators provide start-ups with an environment that deliver optimal conditions for a successful start to business.
- Lean Start-up: This kind of company spends lean' amounts of money on everything, until the balance sheet does not permit so.
- Minimum Viable Product: This is the first version of your product with no bells and whistles but ready for market adoption.
- Monetize: The crucial, life-changing method to make money from your product or service. Can't monetize? Then you cannot succeed.
- Pivot: That is what you do when you change the course of your business but not its focus.
- Scalability: How far and wide can you spread your wings? A term often asked by investors before they bet their bucks on you.
- Scale: "scale" generally refers to a size change. In the economic context, it means to expand or grow.
- Start-up Ecosystem: A start-up ecosystem is made up of people, start-ups in their various stages and various types of organizations in a location (physical or virtual), which interacts as a system to create new start-up companies. These organizations can be further divided into categories such as universities, funding organizations, support organizations (such as incubators, accelerators, co-working spaces, etc.), research organizations, service provider organizations (such as financial services, legal, etc.) and large companies. Most of these organizations typically focus on specific parts of the ecosystem function, and on start-ups depending on their development stage.
- Start-up: is a newly formed company, which is characterized to a certain degree by innovation and



scaling options.

- Value Proposition: It's what your company does to heal the 'pain point'
- Venture capital: is speculative or risk capital that is invested as participation in a possible risk company.
- Zombie Company: This start-up just has money to survive and feed its founders, but has no growth premium.



8. Bibliography – recommended reading

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- Becoming an Innovation Leader | Realizing potentials, increasing dynamics, creating the future | Strategy for research, technology and innovation of the Austrian Federal Government; <https://era.gv.at/object/document/3040>
Cross Border Economic Development Brochure (September 2015) , Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière, downloadable http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/Documents_MOT/Etudes_Publications_MOT/BROCHURE_DEV_ECO_EN.pdf
- Executive Summary of the new Italian legislation on innovative start-ups (May 2016), Italian Ministry of Economic Development , DG for Industrial Policy, Competitiveness and SMEs (download – http://italiastart-upvisa.mise.gov.it/media/documents/Executive_Summary_Italy's_Start-up_Act_02_03_2016.pdf
- Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Venture Capital in the Mediterranean (2013), Accelmed Report, Investment Fora, Acceleration Programme, Cross-landing Services
- European Start-up Monitor, ESM 2016, German Start-ups Association , (downloadable: http://europeanstartupmonitor.com/fileadmin/esm_2016/report/ESM_2016.pdf)
- Friuli Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region. Regional Operational Programmes 2014-2020 under the “Investment for growth and jobs’ goal”, financed by ERDF - European Regional Development Fund <http://www.regione.fvg.it/rafvfg/cms/RAFVG/fondi-europei-fvg-internazionale/por-fesr/FOGLIA128/>
- Friuli Venezia –Giulia profile Regional- Innovation- Monitor; <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/regional-innovation-monitor/base-profile/friuli-venezia-giulia>
- Local/national Start-up communities/networks such as: <http://www.Start-up.si/en-us> ; <http://www.austrianStart-ups.com/ecosystem/>; http://www.italiaStart-up.it/wp-content/themes/italiaStart-up/files/ItaliaStart-up_Report_WholsWho; <http://Start-upcroatia.com/> ; <http://cee-Start-ups.com/>
- Manifesto-filiera start-up (November2016) IT; http://www.apsti.it/web/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Manifesto-filiera-start-up_Novembre-2016-2.pdf
- Report on the public consultation under the Start-up Initiative file:///192.168.1.25/dati/pubblico/Progetti/Horizon%202020/ICT-32_2017/CALL_8.12.2016/IA/01.Progettazione/Materiale/Report_consultation_final_Nov2016.pdf
- Spin-off processes of Start-ups in the Alps Adriatic Area (January 2015), Study conducted in the framework of the project Smart Energy, Interreg IV Italy-Austria.
- Support package for SME internationalization; Soft landing for your business in Estonia, Latvia, Finland and Sweden , Central Baltic Programme Interreg IV A, 2007-2013; Downloadable: http://projects.centralbaltic.eu/images/files/result_pdf/SMEDGE_result_1.pdf



- SPS SLOVENIA ENGL.:
http://www.svrk.gov.si/fileadmin/svrk.gov.si/pageuploads/SPS_predstavitve/S4_dokument_2_015_october_eng_clean_lekt.pdf
- SPS VENETO: <http://www.regione.veneto.it/web/attivita-produttive/Smart-Specialisation-Strategy>
- SPS FRIULI VENEZIA GIULIA <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/regional-innovation-monitor/policy-document/smart-specialisation-strategy-friuli-venezia-giulia>
- Scale-up Manifesto <http://scaleupeuropemanifesto.eu/>
- “Commission gives boost to start-ups in Europe” - European Commission - Press release http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-3882_en.htm
- The power of Three - Together, governments, entrepreneurs and corporations can spur growth across the G20; The EY G20 Entrepreneurship Barometer 2013.
- Twinning Advanced Methodology <https://ec.europa.eu/easme/sites/easme-site/files/Paper-Twinning-advanced-methodology.pdf>
- Triple E! Lab - Enhance the Entrepreneurial Eco-System! http://www.triple-e.at/TripleE_LAB_Minutes_20150504_en_de.pdf
- The outcomes of bilateral Interreg IV projects like **Inco-Net** www.inco-net.eu (Italy –Austria) and **INNO CBC** Innovation ecosystem for cross border cooperation (Austria-Slovenia);
- The experience of first joined events dedicated to Start-ups in the region, such as <http://Start-uplivealpeadria.com/> and Podim <http://www.podim.org/>, <http://www.Startcupfvg.it/en/>
- The web site dedicated to Alpe Adria Start-up ecosystem www.Start-upalpeadria.eu aimed to collect all regional innovation agencies and resources supporting new innovative companies.



9. Appendix

9.1 Assessment of needs – Interviews, relevant initiatives and stakeholders input

9.1.1 Interview Documentation – TPLJ

Primož Cigler, ProteusNet d.o.o., start-up, growing phase, Ljubljana area

- easy access to infrastructure
- environment with low administrative boundaries
- access to employees with tech background
- links to value chains of advanced companies
- simplified procedures related to employment of foreign experts
- Digitalization, removing administrative barriers
- Simple landing
- Access to employees with technical background
- Easy procedures related to employing foreigners.

ACCELMED <http://www.accelmed.eu/>

In addition, in the following lines we are sharing the outcome of the project ACCELMED that was focusing on supporting SMEs in overcoming three main challenges related to smart growth: access to private funding, access to international markets and business growth potential. The cross-landing service was identified and developed as one which can efficiently support SMEs needs related to internationalization.

SMEs' access to international markets

Needs

The following needs could be addressed from a transnational approach :

- Lack of cross landing specialised services
- Lack of one single service desk offering business landing services
- Lack of market analyses, customised according to specific business needs

Objectives

The development of a Mediterranean cross-landing cooperation has the objective of promoting the involved territories and supporting Mediterranean SMEs in their internationalization strategies.

Methodology and results achieved within the ACCELMED project

Three workshops have been organized, each of them focused on a different stage of the process, thus guiding participants through an analysis, identification and definition of softlanding services. The objective has been to create a common portfolio containing all the identified softlanding services organized by category following one single classification criteria.

Workshop 1: **The analysis of the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem.**

What does an ecosystem need to be attractive? What do our ecosystems have/lack?

How can they be improved?



Workshop 2: **The identification of Softlanding services.**

Identification of available /needed soft-landing services per region and elaboration of a common portfolio, together with the involvement of local and regional stakeholders providing business landing services.

Workshop 3: **Launch of Crosslanding services.**

Presentation of the cross-landing services' portfolio to institutions with potential interest to join.

As a **result**, one joint portfolio containing all the services available to give business landing support has been defined. A Memorandum of Understanding has been drafted with the purpose of having a legal framework to sustain the cooperation.

Benefits of a cross-landing cooperation

a) **For institutions:** institutions supporting enterprises in their process of setting-up abroad will find the following benefits in cooperating:

a. Trustworthy filtering:

- i. Network partners will be able to receive interested entrepreneurs whose interest in setting-up has been previously filtered by the partner of origin.
- ii. Network partners will be able to offer their local entrepreneurs with contacts abroad who comply with the network quality standards.

b. Benchmarking of services and procedures: partners will be able to compare and stay updated on trends and services offered in different territories.

c. Enlargement of services portfolio: partners will be able to offer their entrepreneurs with support services abroad. This will be done through the network members, thus saving representation costs abroad.

d. Promotion and attractiveness: being part of a network offering services on other territories, territorial agencies will more likely promote these territories towards their SMEs. Thus, they will be active contributor of the promotional efforts of the other territories to attract external companies.

e. Multiplier effect: this cooperation will set institutions for business support in regular contact, thus increasing possibilities of developing further cooperation and peer to peer assistance.

b) **For enterprises:** SMEs looking for internationalization will get the following benefits:

a. Save time and costs: SMEs will get direct access to contacts, information and services for business landing in each territory associated to the network;

b. Market outreach: SMEs will have a local account manager able to drive the company to services delivered in external markets;

c. Security: in each territory associated to the network, SMEs will be offered services complying with the quality standards required by the network.

Key issues to build a cross-landing cooperation

The following issues should be taken into account when building a cooperation in terms of business landing services:

- Detect and **involve all relevant players** and stakeholders.



- Start **analyzing and benchmarking territories**. Getting to know the strengths and competitive advantages will help territories to set the focus of the services that they provide and the companies that they want to attract.
- Agree on a **categorisation for the business landing services**. These categories should be easily understandable for end-users and should serve all partners to “speak the same language”.
- Offer services that are being provided in a **sustainable** way by business support institutions in the territory. Avoid offering services funded by short term projects or creating *ad hoc* services.

Policy recommendations

Initiatives that could be promoted within ETC programmes to foster the development of services to support business landing and the collaboration among entities providing these services:

Awareness raising for business support centers, chambers, development agents to provide soft-landing services.

Test of services on the field:

- Cross-landing services should be tested on the field through the direct involvement of companies. This should contribute to the validation of service offers and consolidation of collaboration routines between transnational partners and also between local partners.
- Funding could be made available for the first companies to test the cross landing service packages.

Capacity Building of intermediary organizations:

- Training and exchange programmes may be developed to facilitate collaboration between intermediary organizations.

Tools to collaborate:

- Guidelines on service internationalization may be developed at country and regional levels in order to develop a common language and access detailed descriptions of services. This will help in the development of “quality standards” for softlanding services at EU levels.
- A web platform for guiding companies and giving visibility to intermediaries may be promoted at EU levels

Tools to attract foreign companies:

- Cross-landing services should be enlarged to other organizations in Europe and outside Europe. A study could be made among local companies in each partner region in order to identify which regions are the most of interest for them in order to develop partnerships with most requested areas.
- A debate should be developed between regions on how to attract interested companies from other countries in order to help regions make decisions on what sort of incentive to apply in a conscious way.

9.1.2 Interview Documentation – KWF

Clustering in different Categories

Synthesis of result of interviews carried out within the Carinthian Start-up Stakeholders Analysis (2015)



Good reason for foreigners to start a company in the area:

Natural environment | cheap rental fee | good infrastructure | founders need special, specialized support which they find here | a good starting point in order to join new markets | high standards of living | infrastructure like coworking spaces are available | relaxed atmosphere to develop strategies and to start the business | competent employees available | highly developed funding regimes.

Kind of support, which is missing in the area:

Business Angels | not **enough money for the pre-seed phase** | difficulty to receive public funding | difficult to find connection to the start-up scene | low number of inhabitants and therefore a low number of disposable mentors | high level on bureaucracy, influence that not many people try to realize their ideas | general economic situation in general | lack in failure culture (prevents people to try their venture)

Biggest challenges in starting the venture:

Find, hire and finance the first employee | finding the right path in growing the business | too less craftsmen in Carinthia with which you can cooperate | licenses and regulations must fit into the company development | financing in the start phase is difficult | raising awareness is important, about the start-up, the product or service | growing the company

Relevant reasons to move to another region:

Cost of production in Carinthia are high | access to a larger community and therefore greater opportunities | access to money | more VC money | support from the start-up scene and support programs | »good-looking singles« with money | less bureaucracy | high standard of living and family planning | better incentive programs for founders

Advantages of a cooperating Alpe-Adria region (AT, CRO, IT, SLO) for start-ups:

Receiving input from different cultures and people with different points of view | reach new markets and audiences | compare, combine and share ideas more effectively | problems can be solved more quickly and easily | the more entrepreneurs in a region live, the sooner they find access to decision-makers – decision-makers acts faster in to support them with forming the conditions (critical mass issue) | setting up cooperation (between start-ups, established companies, public stakeholders, etc.) to jointly serve the market in a better way | easier to go into these new markets, if start-ups can use the local, regional infrastructure | the more people are involved in the network, the stronger the scene | overview of a larger market | access to neighbouring markets

Missing issues, in order to strengthen the entrepreneurial momentum in the Alpe-Adria region:

More common events (e.g. Start-up Live events, talent activation events e.g. Mash up Udine), which are coordinated between the regions to activate scene and to force exchanges (between start-ups, financiers, etc.) | a lack of young motivated people and talents with a high level of knowledge in the region (brain drain, brain gain) | young people with the right mind-set | interesting jobs beside (e.g. for



the wife of an entrepreneur) | enough established companies | a coordinating agency (all stakeholder superordinate) in the ecosystem | know-how and experience | awareness of entrepreneurship

Which information is useful and interesting regarding the ecosystems in the neighboring regions:

A weekly or monthly newsletter about past and future events in the region | information about funding and support programs, in different countries | list of experts, mentors and supporters in the respective countries | information about the different communities in the countries | information about coworking spaces | which difficulties and obstacles an entrepreneur | a start-up find in the neighbouring country | links to investors | how are problems resolved at the political level in the countries and how politicians are engaged in the respective countries to help start-ups with their problems | relevant contacts | which infrastructure is available in each country | information regarding funding opportunities in the different countries

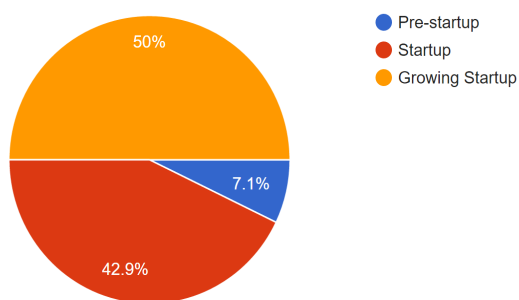
The most important USP's:

To find different perspectives and approaches for solutions | giving the product or service a certain special | different mentalities and mind-sets combined | the language barrier can be funny, start-ups have to explain the product, the service in detail and this could generate opportunities | extends the horizon of entrepreneurs and start-ups | terminates prejudices | easier access to new markets | creates a better understanding of other cultures | dealing with the problems of the various countries in the common sense of supporting entrepreneurship and start-ups

9.1.3 Interview Documentation – Step Ri

Interview Questionnaire :

YOU ARE A:



Pre-start-up 1 / Start-up 5 / Growing Start-up 7

ESTABLISHED

All established in the last 3 years – except for one established in 2009.

EMPLOYEES

Average 2 – all under 8 employees.



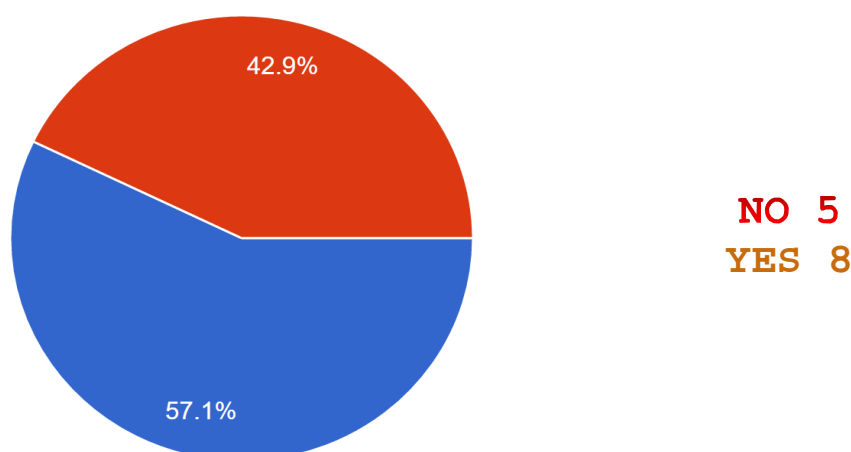
LOCATION

All from Rijeka – one from Krk Island and one from Zagreb.

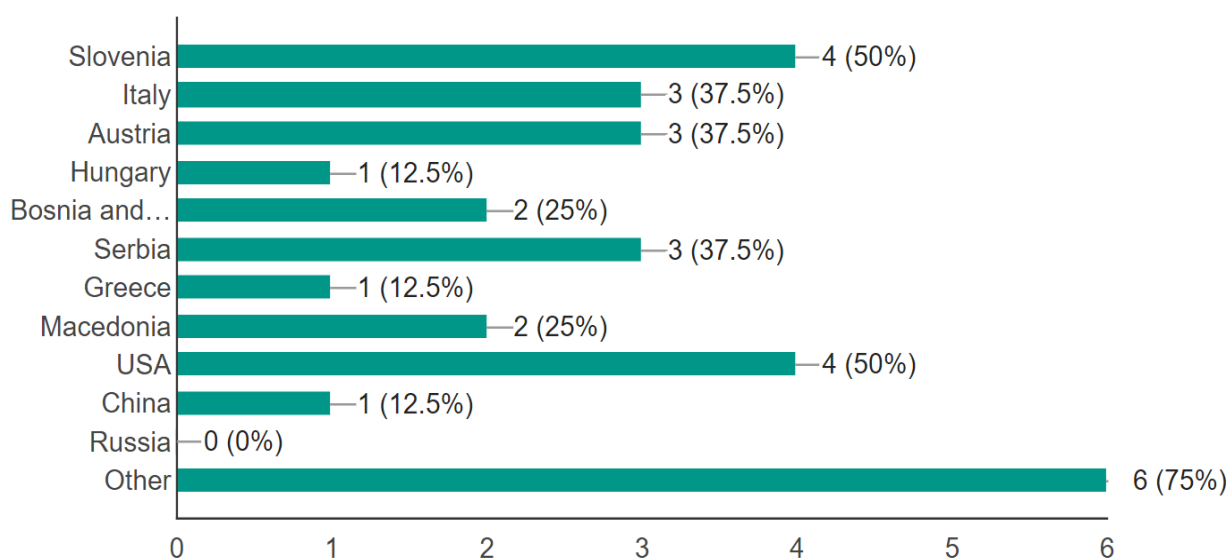
SECTORS

IT - Exevio Ltd.	E-health – Adrivel
Intellectual services - PayMe u.o.	Events and research - Proper d.o.o.
Education – STEMI, Albero	Photography - Sempiternal
Textile industry - Barrutik / Cloudpillow project	Assistive technology - FizioTech
Retail - Beling (SpyShopEurope)	Food industry - Ebba's cuisine d.o.o.

2 companies preferred to remain anonymous.

ARE YOU COOPERATING WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES?**WHAT COUNTRIES DO YOU COOPERATE WITH?**

1. Austria, USA, UK, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, New Zealand, Netherlands
2. Slovenia
3. Slovenia, Italy, Austria, Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Greece, Macedonia, USA, China, All EU
4. Slovenia, Macedonia, UK, Germany
5. Slovenia, Italy, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, USA, UK
6. USA, Sweden, Germany, Switzerland
7. Italy, Serbia
8. USA, United Kingdom



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF DOING BUSINESS WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES?

Challenge

Easy communication, fast delivery, affordable prices

Customers - larger and richer market. Suppliers - cheaper work force, cheaper product.

Greater market, more opportunities, higher ROI

Expanding, exchanging experiences

Larger market, easier doing business than in Croatia.

Better standards in their countries = better income for good if not better service quality

WHAT ARE THE LIMITING FACTORS / CHALLENGES OF DOING BUSINESS WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES?

Resources / time

Language / culture barrier to an extent.

It really depends on the project/product/country

Domestic laws and administrative system

Time difference, a bit harder to communicate and progress but with good tools and responsibility that can be solved.

IF NOT - CAN YOU THINK OF A REASON WHY YOU AREN'T DOING BUSINESS WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES?

Out of prejudice: the field of interest has never been very cooperative: knowledge, science and education.

We have just started the business.

Still searching for potential partner/s

Language, expensive delivery, demanding research

I have just started, expansion to foreign markets will commence once I test the service in the Croatian market



We are still in process of development of prototype and we are trying to connect with Slovenian expertise in our field of interest.

We are a young company, but one of our main goals in future is to do business and to connect with foreign countries.

DO YOU KNOW ANY BUSINESS SUPPORT INSTITUTIONS (INCUBATORS, TECHNOLOGY PARKS, CLUSTERS, HUBS) IN THE ALPE ADRIA REGION?

YES 92.9% - 12 responses

NO 7.1% - 1 response

WHICH INSTITUTIONS YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH?

STEPRI

Start-up incubator, Lean Start Up, Hub in Zagreb

STEPRI

StepRi (Rijeka), Porin (Rijeka)

Step Ri, Tehnološki park Varaždin, Microsoft Innovation Center Osijek - BIOS Tehnološki park Zagreb, tehnološki park Ljubljana, Zip zagrebački inkubator poduzetništva, HUB 385, Poduzetnički centar Solin, Lag kvarnerski otoci, Porin razvojna agencija Rijeka

ZIP, Porin, STEP RI

StepRi in Rijeka, Croatia

STEP-RI

StepRi (Rijeka, Croatia), Start-up incubator Rijeka, ZIP (Zagreb)

Step Ri in Rijeka (Croatia) and Area in Trieste (Italy)

Start-up Inkubator Rijeka

ABC Accelerator, HUB: Raum, ZIP, HUB385

HAVE YOU EVER USED SERVICES OF BUSINESS SUPPORT INSTITUTIONS IN CROATIA, SLOVENIA, ITALY OR AUSTRIA? PLEASE SPECIFY.

Start-up inkubator

Yes. Start Up Rijeka.

STEPRI

Yes - preincubation program in Step Ri

Yes. Mostly knowledge support.

Yes, services of StepRi in Rijeka, Croatia

Only StepRi

Yes. Seminars for small business owners (beginners)

Yes, we have been members of Start-up incubator in Rijeka and we are now in pre incubation in StepRi.

We participated in business related seminars and workshops in Step Ri and IT B2B events organized by Area Trieste.

CAN YOU SUGGEST HOW COULD BUSINESS SUPPORT INSTITUTIONS HELP YOU IN THE ACCESS TO EXTERNAL MARKETS / FOREIGN COUNTRIES?



Stop doing so many courses. Pick the right people and get them to know the right environment. They could introduce them and they could specify what do they offer.

More meetings between interested parties

Teach crowdfunding.

Contacts and statistics data, translator

Connecting companies, ensuring payment.

Connect me with an incubator in the external markets of interest, provide instructions about the basics of doing business there, co-finance market research

Connecting potential partners / needs with demand.

Yes, organizing specific industry trips, B2B meetings, events, market research insights, data, meeting investors, similar companies etc.

SEO, marketing

It would be very useful for us that institutions can provide better networking in our field of interest.

By organizing B2B events targeted for specific industries/sectors.

It certainly could help to connect with foreign countries, or help to resolve usual problems that entrepreneurs deal with every day, through different seminars and similar. An entrepreneur has a constant need to learn and meet new people.

WHICH OPPORTUNITIES DO YOU PERCEIVE IN AN ALPE ADRIA REGION “WITHOUT” BOUNDARIES?

I would have to think this thoroughly.

Participation in fair trades and attending lectures of foreign lecturers

The markets we mainly work have no boundaries in real sense. Anyways more cohesive market, easier to access customer and services of other countries.

Lower taxes & costs, simplified rules & procedures, easier to make a decision to move to a foreign market and expand

I perceive opportunities to connect with right people from other food industries, companies and connecting with investors.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED TO ALLOW EASIER ACCES TO FOREIGN MARKETS, ESPECIALLY TOWARDS NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES?

Stop doing courses. Pick the right people and get them to know the right environment.

First 5 years in a start-up should be tax-free, bureaucracy free.

Many things, for example opening an office there and setting up legally as a subsidiary of a current company. Opening open plan offices where you can hire a seat or a meeting room for a day at low costs. It really is mostly a cultural thing. If a company wants to spread to neighbor country I do not see any real obstacle.

The information about the rules and regulations needs to be readily available and understandable

Administrative system, which for now is not working properly

We need more events where start-ups from all Alpe Adria region or even from other countries (like STEP RI's annual event Start-up CampRijeka) are participants. These events can create some new collaboration between start-ups from different countries.

Easier contact to potential clients - again, B2B events organized by local business support institutions proved to be a good starting point in meeting potential clients and collaborators.

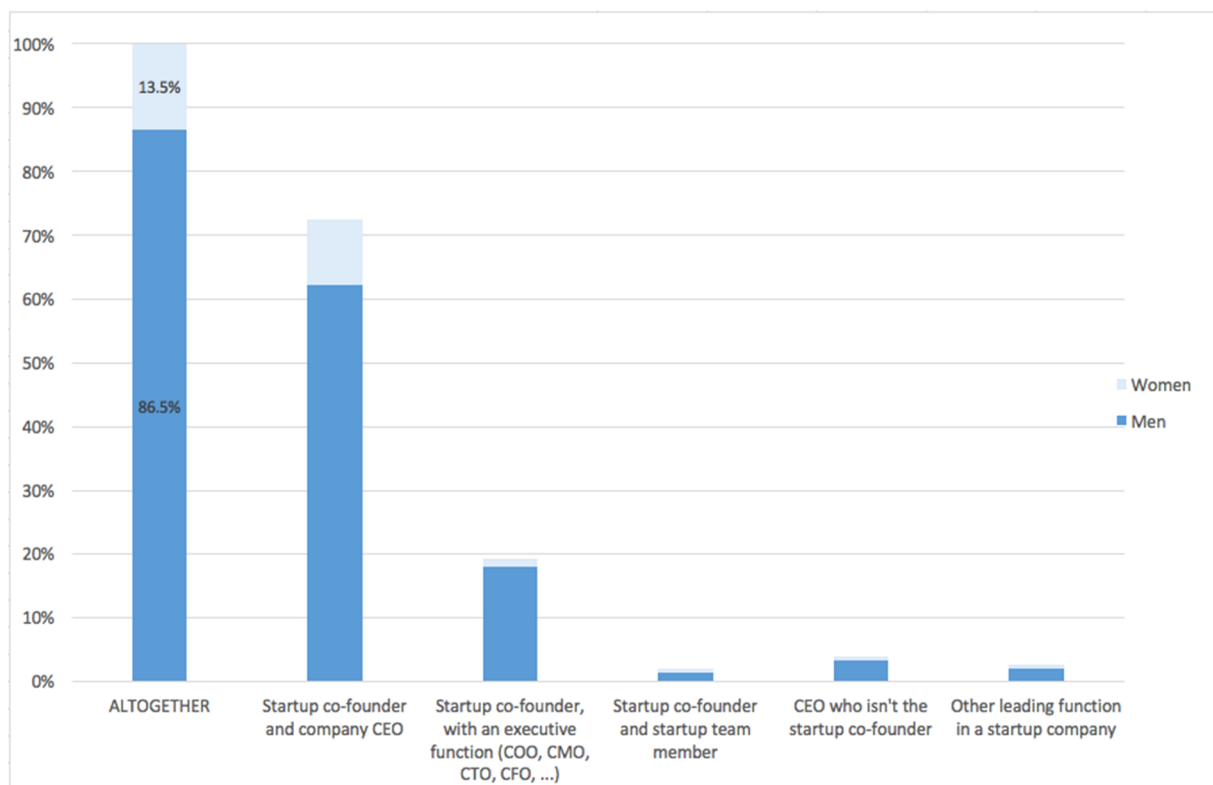


A good marketing strategy is required and among all, excellent representation of the company.
 More collaborative activities like events on all territories, advertised jointly.
 More on line lectures and workshops

9.1.4 Interview Documentation – IRP

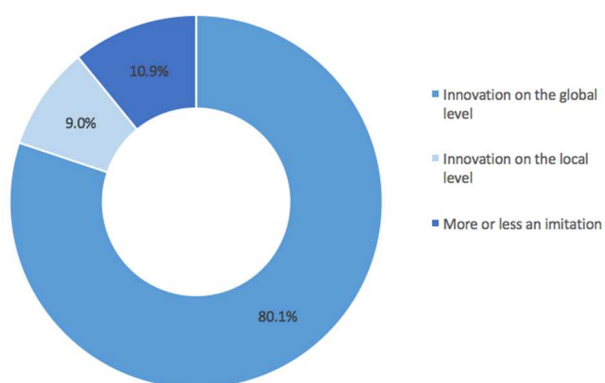
We carried out the analysis of Slovenian start-up companies and the start-up ecosystem as part of the Slovenian Entrepreneurship Observatory. Research included the participation of 156 start-up companies. The average age of companies in the analyzed sample was 2.1 years. We obtained a quality sample of start-up companies from the entire Slovenia that most suited the defined type of innovation-driven companies with global growth potential. The research approach is consistent to the approach of the European Start-up Monitor ESM (www.europeanstart-upmonitor.com). The goal was of ensuring the best possible international comparison of results.

Co-founders or managers of start-up companies were the ones to answer questions, whereby the individuals who answered were 86,5% of men and 13,5 % of women, whose average age was 34,7 years.

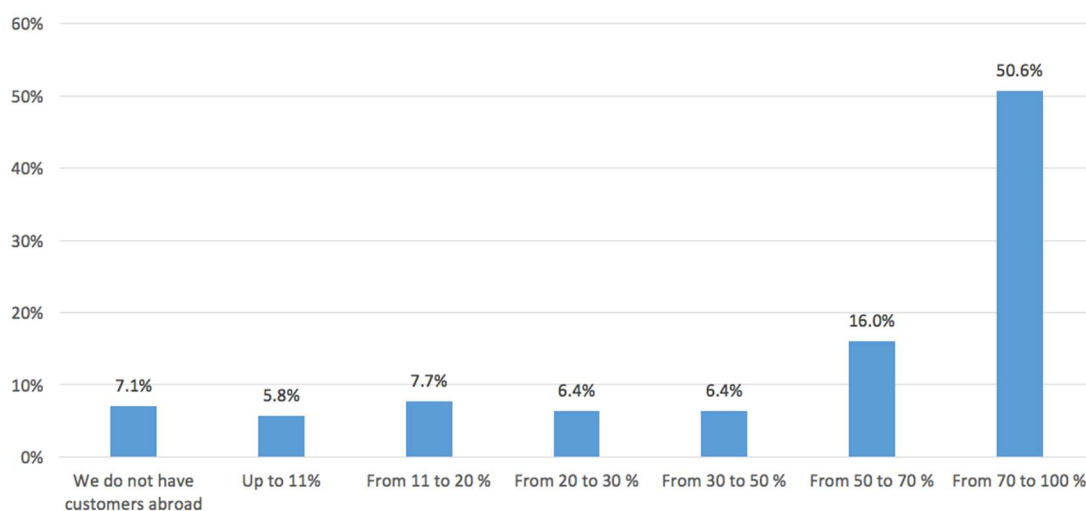


Considering the target group of the analysis, it doesn't surprise that most start-ups in the sample (80,1 %) think that their product (product or service) is an innovation on the global level.

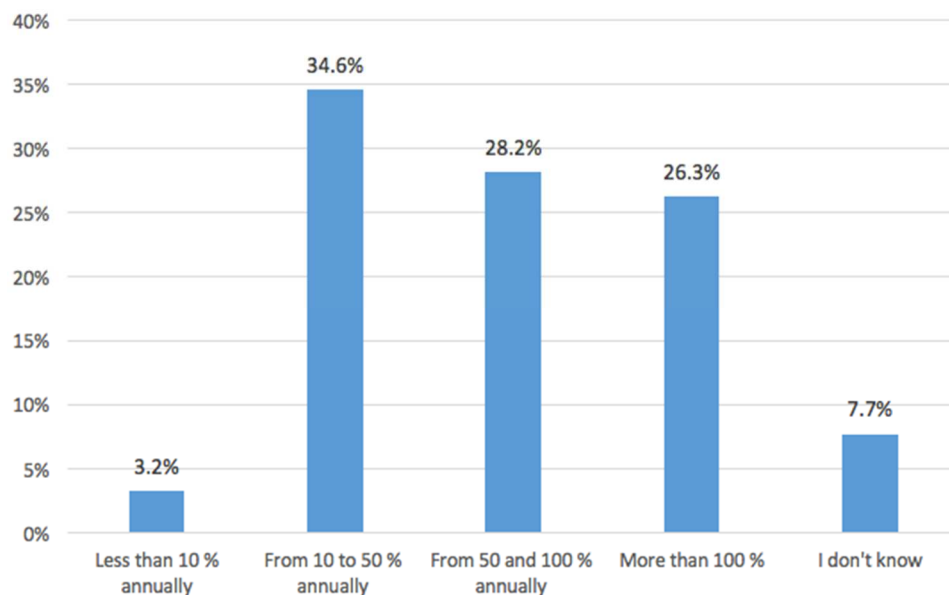
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In this, more than half of asked start-ups (50,6 %) think that they will reach between a 70 % and 100 % share of sales abroad in the next three years.

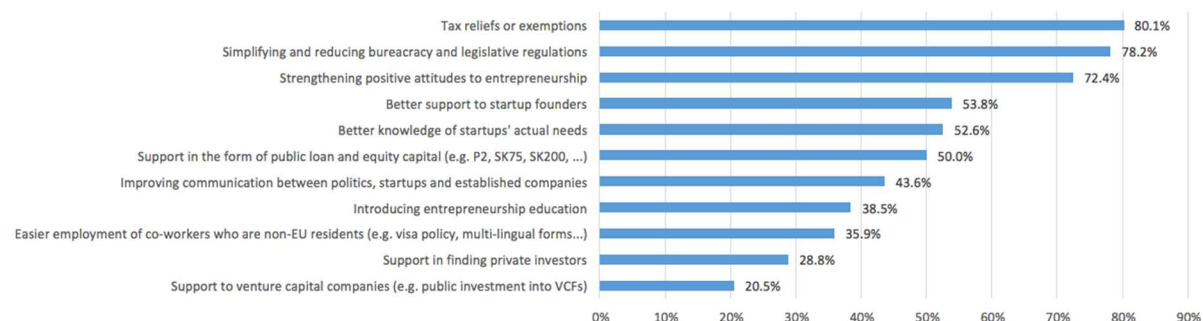


Most analyzed start-ups also plan for ambitious growth, as 34,6 % of start-ups in the next three years are planning average revenue growth in the amount of between 10 and 50 %, 28,2 % plans growth of between 50 % and 100 %, and 26,3 % even growth steeper than 100 %.



The quality of an individual start-up entrepreneurship ecosystem is defined by the quality of individual building blocks of the ecosystem and the quality of connections between them, which influences the activities of founding and developing start-up companies in the studied target environment. The analysis shows that start-up support in the Slovenian start-up ecosystem is very varied, as a lot of private and public stakeholders work in it. Practically all start-ups first helped themselves or sought help in the circle of family, friends and other connected people (96,8 % of start-ups). As the second most frequent help, we find Slovene Enterprise Fund's P2 start-up grant (48,1 % of start-ups). In third place, start-ups mention mentorship support of other start-uppers and entrepreneurs (23,1 %). This is followed by Slovene Enterprise Fund's SK seed capital products (19,9 %), various start-up competitions and awards (14,7 %), conferences (for example PODIM Challenge, COINVEST ...), technology parks (12,8 %), banks (9,0 %), Slovenian business angels (9,0 %), start-up school Hekovnik (8,3 %), EU resources (7,7 %), university incubators (7,7 %) and foreign accelerators (7,1 %) as well as other forms of support (SPIRIT, Entrepreneurially into the world of entrepreneurship, municipality tenders, etc.).

Finally, we once again highlight the key recommendations for improving the start-up ecosystem, which stem from our research.



We hope and believe that government policy makers and other start-up ecosystem stakeholders will be able to usefully use the research results and co-contribute to further improvement of the Slovenian start-up ecosystem, which is giving very enviable results in this moment already. We can definitely be

very proud of Slovenian start-up companies and entrepreneurs, because their innovative products are increasingly successfully breaking onto global markets and strengthening the reputation and economic power of our country Slovenia.

Start-up company: Vsenet marketing d.o.o.

<http://www.seovisor.com/>

Goran Krajačić, CEO

Telephone /mobile: +386 31 582 686

Email: goran@seovisor.com

SEOVISOR is a Search Engine Optimization platform that was built to help companies to develop and implement their SEO/ inbound strategies. Small and medium sized companies have a hard time ranking in organic results on search engines. This is due to frequent algorithm changes at search engines and lack of strategic/tactical SEO knowledge. They solve this by giving them SEOVISOR, an SEO platform that gives them niche specific intelligence and proven/effective SEO strategies from their competitors.

SEO is a very dynamic science. With offsite SEO being the largest problem for companies to grasp. There is also no "one fits all" strategy that every company could use for SEO. They discovered that they need to build a tool that enables companies to discover niche specific and proven SEO strategies.

With their tools SMEs have a better chance to overtake their competitors in search engines. They accomplish this with the combination of new technologies and establishing a good SEO/Inbound business processes inside a company. Their product SEOVISOR is the SaaS software that delivers this benefits.

Start-up active in other countries of the Alpe Adria region?

If Yes:

- Where?

Austria.

Austrian market is one of our target countries because we are mostly looking for clients in English and German-speaking markets.

- What kind of activity (customers, cooperation, with research organizations ...)?

We have some customers there. We are looking for new potential customers in Austrian market. We are not focused on specific sectors. We are looking for partners and customers, that need excellent service and advice on how to manage and conduct their SEO strategies. Our customers are mainly small and medium sized companies, that are very well aware of the benefits of excellent (efficient and proven) SEO activities. Our customer are companies, that are getting most of their clients from the web, so they are very well aware that it is a



good deal, if they pay 150 EURO for SEOVISOR and increase revenue for 50.000 EURO because of the SEOVISOR solutions.

We are also looking for partners or distributors, such as internet/advertising/marketing/SEO agencies, that can offer SEOVISOR service to their clients. We are also interested in partnerships with different business associations, business incubators, technology parks etc., which can present our SEOVISOR service to a larger number of companies at once and help us conduct a market research or sales presentations.

- Experiences: positive - What is the benefit?

Positive. Generally being able to charge more.

- Limiting factors – challenges?

The market is still somehow closed to foreign companies.

- Which potential/opportunities perceive start-ups in an Alpe Adria region “without” boundaries? (What could be a USP)

Global and/or cross-border e-commerce.

- Are there special strengths that start-ups consider to be important in the different countries/partner organizations?

Being able to speak the local language. Able to establish first contacts.

- What needs to be improved in order to increase cross-border activities?

Increase the awareness of such opportunities. Best cross-border co-operation cases could be promoted.

- What kind of services could above stated organizations provide to support cross border activities?

Connecting companies. Providing market opportunities/need data. Organizing cross-border business trips.

9.1.5 Interview Documentation – FINN

ADVANTECH TIME SRL

- Start-up established in Febr. 2014 – 2.5 years approx.
- Based in Udine
- Innovative Start-up under Italian Low

Advantech TIME Srl is a **services company** operating in **engineering innovation of product and process**.

Its main activity focuses on **R&D** based on **experimental** and **virtual tests** in the thermo-fluid-mechanical field, and analysis services of production processes and innovation through the integration of new ICT technologies in the production cycle. The company provides engineering consulting services for **development and integration of modern digital tools** within the entire production cycle of client company, on both a **technological and managerial** sector.

The company is organized in two business-units:

- **REAL & VIRTUAL TESTING**
- **MANUFACTURING & IT SYSTEM**

The company was founded in 2014 as a spin-off of University of Udine and today has its headquarters at **Science and Technology Park** entitled to **Luigi Danieli in Udine**.

Start-up active in other countries of the Alpe Adria region? no

If No:

- Why? Challenges? No need ...

Until now there was no time to think internationally. Now the whole company image is being rebuilt and the company is starting to think about commercial activities on international level (eg. In the next month it will take part into an important fair in Germany)

Nevertheless the start-up would be interested in expanding its commercial activities to AA regions in particular with Slovenia (as regards new customers) and maybe in Croatia. In Austria there don't seem to be interesting commercial opportunities In the white sector in which the company mainly operates.

- How could company benefit from cross border activities?

Exchange of competence that are maybe not available in a small territory (like FVG Region)

Both:



- Which potential/opportunities perceive start-ups in an Alpe Adria region “without” boundaries? (What could be a USP?) (Risorse e servizi a cui accedere indipendentemente dal paese di provenienza ad esempio.)

- Exchange of competence
- Wider and opener market

- What needs to be improved in order to increase cross border activities?

Set up of tailor-made services and matching opportunities starting from the individual needs of the start-up in terms of competences (no wider matchmaking events but individualized approach).

- What kind of services could above stated organizations provide to support cross border activities?

Support with commercial agreements and legal stuff concerning relationships with start-up from AA countries

TWL SYSTEMS SRL

- Start-up established in Oct. 2015 – 1 year approx.
- Based in Udine
- Innovative Start-up under Italian Law
TWL is an innovative company that develops projects and solutions in the printed electronics industry and offers consulting, design, prototyping and manufacture services.

Start-up active in other countries of the Alpe Adria region?

If Yes:

- Where?

Croatia and marginally in Austria

- What kind of activity (customers, cooperations, with research organizations ...)?

Croatia: customers/collaboration with a young company for commercial partnership – The Italian start-up may distribute in Italy some products of the Croatian company and the two may work together in order to develop new products
Austria: Contacts with a corporate as clients

- Experiences: positive - What is the benefit?

Croatia: found interesting products and competences and skills to share for the development of new product and solutions

Both:

- Which potential/opportunities perceive start-ups in an Alpe Adria region “without” boundaries? (What could be a USP?) (Risorse e servizi a cui accedere indipendentemente dal paese di provenienza ad esempio.)

- Are there special strengths that start-ups consider to be important in the different countries/partner organizations?

1. Legal advisory by specialized consultants for the drafting of NDAs, commercial agreements/contracts (it could be useful to have some standard contracts to start with)
2. Commercial/marketing support on international level - for instance by providing to start-ups some people taking care of the commercial activities for some hours/week externalizing the service
3. Exchange of competencies thanks to the creation of cross border networks e.g. between universities and STPs

- What needs to be improved in order to increase cross border activities?

It could be useful to have a sort of matchmaking platform putting together start-ups needs and professionals that could provide services at lower rates in a sort of “collective purchase group” modality

- What kind of services could above stated organizations provide to support cross border activities?

Support in the participation of fairs, not only in finding the right fair but also a wider support on the marketing and logistic



9.1.6 SMART SPECIALIZATION COMPARISON TABLE

Table Synthesis of RIS3 connected with TransUP partner regions - highlighting territories specialties and common R&D&I fields. Austria RIS3 was not included in this table, as available documents did not better specify sectors of intervention. In this view, Austrian RIS3 can be applied horizontally with reference to research intensive industries and knowledge intensive services.

SLOVENIA	ITALY FVG	CROAZIA	AUSTRIA
<p>1. Natural and traditional resources for the future</p> <p>2. Networks for the transition to circular economy</p> <p>3. Sustainable food production (1. Sustainable production and processing of food products into functional foods, 2. Technologies for sustainable agricultural production (livestock and plants)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable tourism 	<p>1. Agrofood</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical applications of industrial design at food industry (in particular sustainable – eco-design and food-design) Development of innovative systems for food preservation Development of smart packaging Development of innovative technics for food chemical analyses and reuse of waste 	<p>1. Agro-food</p> <p>1.1. Agriculture, forestry & fishing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manufacturing & industry - Sustainable innovation Food, beverage & tobacco products - Sustainable agriculture 	<p>research intensive industries and knowledge intensive services</p>
<p>1. Healthy working and living environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smart cities and communities (Focus areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Systems and IT platform solutions – IT ecosystem for hosting (mobile) applications Conversion, distribution and energy management; Focus technologies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Cloud computing and big and open data Internet of things and future internet Embedded smart systems High Performance Computing (HPC) infrastructure Capture and use of long-distance earth observation data) 	<p>2. Strategic supply chains</p> <p>A. Metal-mechanic chain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numerical modeling technologies for processes and products Methods and technologies for integrated design Smart machines <p>B. Home system chain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Material related technologies Rapid design methods and technologies Energy efficiency technologies for buildings Cloud computing technologies 	<p>2. Energy and sustainable environment</p> <p>2.1. Energy production & distribution</p> <p>2.2. Power generation/renewable sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy production & distribution Energy distribution Sustainable innovation Sustainable energy & renewables <p>3. Transport and mobility</p> <p>Transporting & storage</p>	



<p>2. Smart buildings and home, including wood chain (Focus areas and technologies 1. Smart housing units 2. Smart environment using intelligent building management systems 3. Smart appliances 4. Advanced materials and products, including wood composite)</p>		<p>Water transport & related services</p> <p>3.1. Transporting & storage</p> <p>Sustainable innovation</p> <p>Smart green & integrated transport systems</p> <p>4. Transport and mobility</p> <p>4.1. Transporting & storage</p> <p>4.2. Water transport & related services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transporting & storage • Sustainable innovation <p>Smart green & integrated transport systems</p>	
<p>3. Industry 4.0</p> <p>a. Factories of the Future</p> <p>b. Health – medicine</p> <p>c. Mobility</p> <p>d. Development of materials as end products</p>	<p>4. Maritime technologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and development methodologies for new products, processes and services • Green technologies and energy efficiency • Security technologies 	<p>5. Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public administration, security & defence • Public health & security <p>6. Bio-economy</p> <p>6.1. Manufacturing & industry</p> <p>6.2. Biotechnology</p> <p>6.2.1. Biotechnology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KETs <p>Industrial biotechnology</p>	
<p>5. Industry 4.0</p> <p>a. Factories of the Future</p> <p>b. Health – medicine</p> <p>c. Mobility</p> <p>d. Development of materials as end products</p>	<p>6. Smart Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biomedicine (diagnostic ‘in vivo e in vitro’) • Medical informatics and bioinformatics • Innovative therapies • AAA - ambient assisted living 	<p>5. Health and quality of life Human health & social work activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human health & social work activities- Public health & security 	

<p>4. Natural and traditional resources for the future</p> <p>5. Networks for the transition to circular economy</p> <p>6. Sustainable food production (1. <i>Sustainable production and processing of food products into functional foods</i>, 2. <i>Technologies for sustainable agricultural production (livestock and plants)</i>)</p> <p>7. Sustainable tourism</p>	<p>7. Culture, creativity and tourism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technologies for conservation and enhancement of goods and products • Geomatics and image processing • Social and sharing platforms 		
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