

International Benchmark of Good Practices



START EASY PROJECT

16 June 2022

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1 Introduction

This Good Practices guide is part of the START EASY project, which is promoted by the Government of Catalonia in cooperation with national, regional and local authorities as well as other stakeholders from all corners of Europe which endeavours to create the best conditions for growth. The project will improve policy making and deliver smart tools that enable a conducive environment for business to start easy and quickly, boosting business startup activity and competitiveness in Europe.

In the specific the project partners are:

1. Government of Catalonia (ES – Lead Partner);
2. Metropolitan City of Bologna (IT – Partner);
3. Economic Council of East Flanders (BE – Partner);
4. Mazovia Development Agency Plc (PL – Partner);
5. Lublin Science and Technology Park (PL – Partner);
6. Lithuanian Innovation Center (LT - Partner);
7. Ministry of Economics of the Republic of Latvia (LT – Partner);

By learning from one another (peer reviews), exchanging and integrating good practices (GP) from all over Europe (study visits, research and studies, etc.), and developing joint strategies (workshops and other events), the partnership will overcome common challenges identified such as: the difficult and costly process behind regulations governing business creation which tend to discourage entrepreneurial activity; the limited responsiveness of the public administration to the needs of these new startups, thereby making necessary to catch up in the digitalization of public services, once-only principle (OOP) for business data registration, one-stop shop (OSS) models, etc.

By initiating this Good Practices guide the Start Easy project aims to solve the challenge of lack of effective support measures to innovative start-ups with significant growth potential. The partnering regions are engaged in a determined effort to put in place or improve what is now often called a start-up support ecosystem; an ecosystem being “a system capable of supporting entrepreneurship, enterprise and job creation and growth in a specific environment or territory. The business ecosystem should support the whole process from the entry of possible entrepreneurs to the continuous support during the lifecycle stages of enterprises.”¹

The Good Practices guide is part of the Phase 1 of the project, dedicated to promoting active interregional exchange and effective stakeholder engagement for joint development of Action Plans (AP). The plans should conduce improvements in the policy instruments selected, delivering new and enhanced public services and tools that facilitate the entry of new businesses into the marketplace (new projects supporting digital services, OOP, OSS, and administrative simplification in general will be supported). They should also conduce to better governance, engaging multiple stakeholders in policy understanding, development and implementation, in particular key decision and policy makers at the different governance levels (including Managing Authorities (MA)), agents from the startup ecosystem and business enabling institutions (BEI)).

The structure of the guide is built up of the following parts: what good practice is; the main criteria of choosing the the good practices; clustering of the good practices and finally docuementation of good practices.

¹ TRINNO: Business Support Ecosystem.



N.B. The START EASY project started before the Covid-19 crisis. Some issues related to start-ups' policies had radically changes after the sanitary and economic crisis related to the Coronavirus. The engagement and dialogue with stakeholders have been important in this period also to discuss on post-Covid measures and policies and how to deal with this uncertain economic period.

2 Definition of Good Practices

Good practice in the context of the Interreg Europe programme is defined as an initiative (e.g. methodologies, projects, processes, techniques) undertaken in one of the programme's thematic priorities which has already proved successful and which has the potential to be transferred to a different geographic area. Geographic coverage depends on the area where initiative was taken, depending on project geographical scope. Proved successful is where the good practice has already provided tangible and measurable results in achieving a specific objective.

Overall quality of the good practices will be evaluated and validated by the policy officers in order to justify the value reported, therefore the quality is more important than quantity.

The objective of the Good Practice Guide is to provoke critical thinking and a broadening of perspectives and knowledge of Project Partners and Stakeholders on the opportunities to innovate and improve start-up support ecosystem. Either in groups or individual learning, empower your learners to take over a Good Practice case, and dissect key information to identify the problems that arose and find solutions to the problems. The knowledge acquired by experiences gained from good practices needs to be capitalised through a process of documentation which supports continuous learning. In the START EASY project a good practice will therefore seek to achieve young companies or start-ups being able to benefit from the highest standard support services, sustainable pool of talents, good regulations, digital services etc. regardless of the location where their business was established. The term "good practice" is used in preference to "best practice" to signify the possibility of more than one approach being suitable for the same task, process or activity. Thereby, we also recognise that a practice may have applications owing to the differences which exist in the local conditions such as legislation, cooperation between public and private entities, etc. The START EASY identified practices reflect the complex nature of the problems addressed through them and are usually characterised by being interdisciplinary. The ways different institutions implement good practice depends on various circumstances. The good practices should be regarded not as a successful packaged intervention that could be easily generalised and transferred, but rather as a process of planning and synthesising research from sources.

3 Clustering the good practices

The main objective of the Start Easy project is to find those good practices that enable the high level of innovative companies' productivity in the innovation ecosystem through delivery of certain required services. These services could be initiated and provided by various type of Start-up ecosystem builders. The ecosystem builders are actors who:

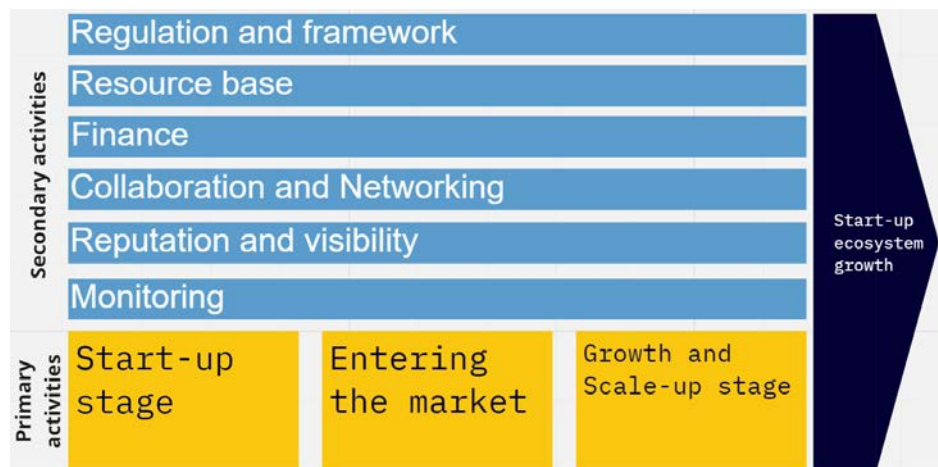
- play a role in creating an inclusive network of entrepreneurs in the local community through running a co-working space, mentoring young entrepreneurs or organising networking events;
- play a role in government and are involved in making the policy that effects start-up
- play a role in the innovation and entrepreneurship infrastructure and service menu.

All these ecosystem builders are working and collaborating on the main common goal to increase the productivity of the Start-up ecosystem. The main productivity sources of Start-up ecosystems are:

- the quality of institutions (quality of regulation and framework conditions for innovations)
- quality of the actors (high-level competencies and skills of ecosystem actors)
- the quality of links (through networking and developing relevant organisational forms) among them.

There are some patterns in relation to methodologies used by the ecosystem builders to improve each of the source of productivity and support start-ups. There are two type of activity groups identified (primary and secondary) which supports start-ups in direct and indirect ways. The primary activities are various versions of mentoring, consultancy, specialist services, etc. these services are different depending on the stage of start-ups and their corresponding goals. The start-up development could be divided into three wide phases which differentiate how start-ups are on their way to monetization or becoming an indispensable solution in the market. In each of these phases, different forms of primary and secondary support services can be given, and each phase has main players that, in a way, help the growth of the start-up business model and organisation:

- **Support at start-up stage:** Policies / projects that support the process of starting new business ventures, including pre-startup advice and appraisal of the 'business idea' as well as assistance with the various aspects of setting up a new business.
- **Support at Entering the market stage:** Policies / projects concerned with providing generic business advice, specialist services, clustering and infrastructural amenities which are supportive of enterprise formation and development.
- **Support at scale-up and growth stage:** Policies / projects concerned with the growth, improvement of competitiveness and viability of existing SMEs through the provision of advice, easier access to finance and the reduction of administrative burden.



Then the start-up support ecosystem could be broken down into six additional activities that help support primary activities. Public authorities can further improve the primary activities of their start-up support ecosystem with secondary activities - these activities generally play a role in each primary activity. Such as financial support, networking and communication activities which can play a role in each stage of the start-up development. Here are the six supporting activities:

Regulation and framework: As for innovative businesses in general, administrative framework, government regulations and public policies that impact the operation of firms can influence the growth of innovative companies. Innovative new ventures are specifically affected by the administrative framework for entry and growth. A simplified administrative framework can encourage business entrepreneurship by reducing barriers; lengthy and costly company registration procedures divert human and financial resources away from business activity, just when the company is the most fragile, etc.

Resource base: start-ups need policies / programs designed to provide various stages technology entrepreneurs with the resources needed to launch successful start-ups: facilities, technologies, premises and human resources. Also, there are many stages in the start-up development journey where very niche and specific knowledge or/and resources are required. For example, in the area of deep technologies there is a huge need of people who both knows the thematic area, the best practices, the enthusiasm and the ability to identify the common interests and drive collaboration between different actors. The scarcity of such people is a challenge for the development of start-ups and the whole innovation ecosystem as well. In addition, most start-ups face difficulty in recruiting specialists with necessary skills as there is a lack of alignment of educational institutions with the market.

Finance: Securing access to public and private funding is often key to ensuring that companies can fulfil their growth potential. Making this happen is a central plank in various incubation, acceleration and public grant, loan programs, which assist in the product development, organisation growth stages and builds start-up investment readiness and organises opportunities for them to connect with other potential investors.

Collaboration and networking: networking is a tool that enables the stakeholders with diverse expertise and needs find each other with a strategic goal of establishment of collaborative partnerships. Networking is useful both in the mature ecosystems with a big number of stakeholders, and in the early-stage ecosystems, where the identification of those interested in innovations and bringing them together needs to be done.



Reputation, trust and visibility: for the whole start-up ecosystem it is significant to have initiatives and programs that helps to the ecosystem become more visible to the tech world and attracts start-ups, big companies, investors and talents. These goals could be achieved by informing, inspiring, and connecting people who are interested in tech through media, events, and spaces.

Monitoring: Tools / projects with possibilities to measure impacts and results of policy intervention are fundamental for policy improvement. Start-up ecosystem consists of various actors with different and changing need, thus a “one size fits all” model is not conducive to the needs of an entrepreneur and a more tailored personal/business/ place centred approach is needed. It is essential to use specific monitoring tools with key performance indicator (KPI) raised for integrated development.

These nine domains have been selected as basic support fields in the examples of good practices. For each of the nine domains good practice cases are assigned which provide examples of how different support services are applied. Example of final output (see Annex IV).

Also, one of the goals of this Start Easy Good Practices guide is to establish a simple and common framework to talks and describe the various phases of start-up support ecosystem and to help see and compare various parts in it. This framework might help the supporting organisations get to the point and communicate much faster about the precise phase of the start-up ecosystem where improvement is needed. The original and globally recognized start-up development framework was introduced by the Startup Commons² which involves 3 main phases: formation, validation, and growth. But in this Good Practice guide we use an improved framework that involves two additional stages that are very important for the start-up ecosystem builders: mindset activation and reflection. By introduction of this framework, we aim to categorize all policy actions and successful initiatives into start-up ecosystem phases as policy action designed to improve the outcomes of the entrepreneurial process should be tailored to the distinct needs of start-up ecosystem along the different development stages: Mindset activation, formation, validation, growth, and reflection. Here is the short description of each start-up ecosystem development stage:

At the **stage of mindset activation**, support and actions should be aimed at entrepreneurial learning, entrepreneurial culture and mindset activation, certain activities should be initiated that builds entrepreneurial competences, promotes creativity, ideation, and innovation. The focus should be put on the facilitation of mentoring, training, consulting, and learning with and from experienced individuals or businesses.

At the **stage of formation**, public support should aim to buffer start-ups from adverse external conditions (resources constraints). Public support through buffering can include seed-stage access to financial capital, low-cost office space, tax deductions, and initiatives to lower the regulatory burden of establishing new firms, among others.

At the **stage of validation**, buffering and sheltering barriers against the hostile external environment are no longer appropriate, – instead, the bridging public support is necessary, i.e. promotion and facilitation of networking relationships with external partners. Bridging facilitates collaborations and the flow of knowledge and resources across organisations.

At the **stage of growth**, the policy support relates to the boosting of firms' organisational capacities to scale-up the business. The purpose is to provide support in growing organisation, advice how to build processes and

²<https://www.startupcommons.org/>



validate them. Also, it is essential to provide good conditions and environment for the internationalization of the company and finding new financial sources.

At **the stage of reflection**, the policy should be aimed at the continuous monitoring and evaluation of the various supports available to an entrepreneur to ensure that they are as dynamic as the evolving entrepreneurial ecosystem is. In order to develop more effective and valuable supports for the entrepreneurial ecosystem an additional "Impact and Monitoring" phase is needed. Assessing and evaluating impacts of supports for start-ups provides the opportunity for reflection, understanding and co-design for these cornerstones of an start-up ecosystem.

Each good practice should be assigned to one or more phases where and how it contribute to the effectiveness of start-up ecosystem. An example of final output (see Annex V).

Entrepreneurial Education			Startup phase						Impact/monitor	
Mindest Activation			Formation		Validation		Growth		Reflection	
Activating -5	Inspiring -4	Nurturing -3	Ideating -2	Concepting -1	Committing 0	Validating 1	Scaling 2	Establishing 3	Assessing 4	Monitoring 5

4 List of initiatives

Number	Name of Good practice	Country/Region from which good practice originates	Country/Region whose initial regional analysis show the need for similar good practice	Short description (max 250 symbols)
1.	Startup VISA Lithuania	Lithuania		A procedure that provides a streamlined entry process to the Lithuanian startup ecosystem for innovative non-EU entrepreneurs.
2.	StartupFair	Lithuania		StartupFair is the biggest startup event in Lithuania, where local and international speakers present the most relevant startups' topics.
3.	TechHub Pre-Accelerator	Lithuania		A three-month training course, in which, with the help of personal mentors and innovation experts, they develop their ideas, get acquainted with investors and business angels, gain the necessary knowledge for further business development.
4.	FinTech LT	Lithuania		The project that focuses on raising awareness of business community and entrepreneurial society about fintech innovations, and creating a sustainable image of Lithuania as fintech industry hub in the Baltic region.
5.	Smart FDI	Lithuania		Financial support measure that aims to attract foreign investments to Lithuania by supporting R&D&I activities.
6.	GovTech Lab	Lithuania		GovTech Lab provides a platform where public sector institutions are able to identify challenges and put it up for the private sector to provide solutions.
7.	"Progetti d'Impresa" (Business Project service) of Metropolitan City of Bologna	Italy	Lublin/Poland; Lithuania	A public service supporting the birth and development of new businesses.
8.	"Co-Start" incubator in Villa Garagnani, Zola Predosa (Bologna - Italy)	Italy	East Flanders/Belgium; Lublin/Poland; Lithuania	Co.Start Villa Garagnani is the incubator and co-working space located in a regenerated building in Zola Predosa, a Municipality of the Metropolitan City of Bologna.

9.	“Insieme per il lavoro” (Together for work) project	Italy		“Insieme per il lavoro” (Together for work) is a project that aims the insertion in the labour market of people that has economical and social vulnerabilities.
10.	“Le Serre dei Giardini” (Margherita Gardens’ Greenhouses) incubator	Italy	East Flanders/Belgium; Lublin /Poland; Lithuania	The “Margherita Gardens’ Greenhouse” is a space dedicated to the promotion of innovation and of the entrepreneurial culture.
11.	Crowdfunding Hub - Metropolitan City of Bologna	Italy	Catalonia/Spain; Lublin/Poland	The Crowdfunding Hub disseminates the Crowdfunding tool and its potential by providing free consultancy and training to startup, SMEs, local public bodies.
12.	Unitary Access / SuapER (lepida.it)	Italy		The UNITARY ACCESS platform unifies the building, environmental and seismic functions to the SUAP functions, allowing companies a single access to PA.
13.	Gentrepreneur, a city platform for student-entrepreneurs in Ghent	East-Flanders		Inspiring and informing young entrepreneurs in Ghent through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - expert network - workshops/events - authentic learning environment in order to build and stimulate the business community.
14.	Eureka, promoting entrepreneurship in secondary and higher education through supporting business programs for students	East-Flanders		East-Flanders has different projects focussing on stimulating entrepreneurship to young people during their school education. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eureka, I do business! (ECEf initiative) - Mini company (Vlajo initiative, supported by ECEf) - Start Academy (Vlajo initiative, supported by ECEf)
15.	Festival of the Future, an incentive to focus on entrepreneurship during COVID by creating a flexible event format	East-Flanders		The Economy Department, POM (Provincial Development Company) and ECEf created an event where people could take a global look on what is coming in 2030
16.	Making entrepreneurship more attractive by creating a unique contact and	East-Flanders		OOG (ENG: Support Point for Entrepreneurs Ghent) provides accessible and user-friendly insights



	consultancy service in order to simplify the administrative maze (NL: Ondersteuningspunt Ondernemen Gent - ENG: Support Point for Entrepreneurs Ghent)			in governmental services to entrepreneurs.
17.	Young Creatives Festival	East-Flanders		Festival for young creatives in cultural sector who need a small push towards entrepreneurship
18.	Webinar sessions about employee share options, start-up funding opportunities	Latvia		Online events for start-ups regarding available support tools for growth and competitiveness.
19.	Start-up day	Latvia		Start-up day provides space on various stages for thematic sessions, about such topics as the future of the Latvian start-up industry in the post-pandemic world, science-inspired business environment, sustainability, business development and available support. An event, where policymakers and ecosystem builders come together and celebrate the Latvian start-up community. As part of it, everyone has the opportunity to get to know the dynamic local start-up community, look back at what has been done so far and outline future trends.
20.	Start-up visa	Latvia		Start-up visa as a temporary residence permit is offered to all non-EU start-up founders who are willing to realize their start-up ideas in Latvia. The main criteria for getting start-up visa is an innovative (most often technology-based) start-up idea, which is easily scalable and yields a high added value.
21.	TechChill conference	Latvia		The leading start-up and tech conference in the Baltics which transforms into global meeting hub for start-ups, investors, innovators, inspirators, and technology enthusiasts and provides its participants some of the best opportunities for networking,

				individual meetings, and deal-making in the Baltics, Nordics and Central Eastern Europe.
22.	Start-up bootcamp	Latvia		Training seminar that provides access to experienced mentors who are ready to share their knowledge and skills, as well as to continue successful cooperation with promising start-up teams.
23.	Start-up ecosystem strategy	Latvia		Assessment of the ecosystem of Latvian start-ups, identification of the current situation and development of proposals based on it.
24.	Investment and Development Agency of Latvia as a one-stop agency of business incubators	Latvia	Latvia's initiative	Investment and Development Agency of Latvia as one-stop agency of business incubators provide support for business start-ups and development for individuals and start-ups.
25.	INNOVA-INVEST	POLAND / Lublin Region (Lublin Science and Technology Park)	ITALY / Bologna (Metropolitan City of Bologna)	Pre-incubation program for innovative startups with equity investments (seed funding), comprised of 4 batches run for 3 months each
26.	Connect Poland Prize	POLAND / Lublin Region (Lublin Science and Technology Park)	ITALY / Bologna (Metropolitan City of Bologna) BELGIUM / East Flanders (Economic Council of East Flanders)	Acceleration program for innovative foreign startups run in cooperation with industry partners and investors under open innovation approach; comprised of 4 batches run for up to 13 months each
27.	NLAB – Nevada-Lubelskie Acceleration Bridge	POLAND / Lublin Region (regional self-government – Marshal Office of Lubelskie Voivodeship)	ITALY / Bologna (Metropolitan City of Bologna) POLAND / Mazovia (Mazovia Development Agency Plc)	Acceleration (scale-up) and internationalisation program for startups from Lublin Region willing to enter the US market through the State of Nevada
28.	Business Lubelskie (Biznes Lubelskie)	POLAND / Lublin Region (regional self-government – Marshal Office of Lubelskie Voivodeship)		Regional one-stop shop for investors and exporters, operated by self-government of Lublin Region – Marshal Office of Lubelskie Voivodeship
29.	UMCS Knowledge and Technology Transfer Center	POLAND / Lublin Region (University of Maria Curie-Skłodowska in Lublin)	SPAIN / Catalonia (Government of Catalonia) LATVIA (Ministry of Economic of Republic of Latvia)	Academic center supporting innovation flow between science and business, operated by University of Maria-Curie-Skłodowska in Lublin

30.	Startup Weekend Lublin: Poland-Ukraine- Belarus international edition	POLAND / Lublin Region (Lublin Science and Technology Park)		International startup bootcamp for IT community from Poland, Ukraine and Belarus, run for 3 days
31.	Connect Start-up Platform for new ideas	POLAND / Lublin Region (Lublin Science and Technology Park)		Incubation program for young entrepreneurs willing to innovate, comprised of 7 batches run for up to 7 months each, with dedicated VC track and a fast track to restricted grant program
32.	Mentorship Academy by Lublin Business Club	POLAND / Lublin Region		Skills development program supporting and matching experienced businessmen with young companies and startups, operated by Lublin Business Club
33.	Lublin Park for Entrepreneurship Development	POLAND / Lublin Region (regional self-government – Marshal Office of Lubelskie Voivodeship)		Pre-incubation program comprised of trainings, advisory and financial support for aspiring entrepreneurs from disadvantaged social backgrounds
34.	Lublin Regional Development Fund	POLAND / Lublin Region		Regional financial institution in charge of dedicated instruments and Venture Capital fund for young companies, startups and SMEs
35.	Creative Lab by City of Lublin and Startup Academy	POLAND / Lublin Region		Skills development program based on business trainings for creative community students
36.	Biznes.gov.pl one-stop shop platform	POLAND (Ministry of Development and Technology)		Flagship national business-oriented one-stop shop portal, covering information and transaction services for businesses starting and running economic activity in Poland
37.	MAZOVIAN STARTUP acceleration program	Poland		Promotion of clusters and business accelerators; training courses
38.	START FROM MAZOVIA competition	Poland		An instrument for the promotion and support of the regional startup ecosystem
39.	„Modelling the System of Offers for Innovations”	Poland		Support of Partnerships of Mazovian Business Environment Institutions in preparation of proinnovative services for SMEs.
40.	Investor and Exporter Service Centre	Poland		Business support for investors and exporters, as well as the implementation of activities aimed at economic promotion of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship in the country and abroad.
41.	Start in Park	Poland		An acceleration program intended for current and aspiring entrepreneurs from the Płock region.

				An opportunity to participate in professional business training, mentoring and networking meetings free of charge.
42.	Targówek District Entrepreneurs' Club	Poland		Space for entrepreneurs where they can know each other, integrate, change knowledge, and experience, gain recommendations.
43.	Centre of Entrepreneurship Smolna (CES)	Poland		One-stop shop; Business incubator; Training and educational offer; Business promotion; Business, financial and legal advisory
44.	Creative Mikser	Poland		Series of networking meetings of the creative sector, organised by the British Council and the City of Warsaw along with local partners. These are presentations, discussions and an opportunity to establish new business contacts and meet interesting people.
45.	Alternative Funding Recommender Tool of ACCIÓ-Catalonia Trade & Investment	Catalonia		Promotion of alternative funding instruments (donation and reward crowdfunding, crowdequity, crowdlending, invoice trading, business angels networks, venture capital, direct lending, stock markets and more) among SMEs and startups.
46.	Marketplace – ACCIÓ	Catalonia		Virtual Marketplace to connects companies that offer technology and health-related material, production capacity, to help the consequences of COVID-19.
47.	Investment Forum - ACCIÓ	Catalonia		The Investment Forum is the place where local start-ups from Catalonia meet annually with international and national investors. 21 startups pitch and engage in dynamic networking. Every year, a different country participates in this meeting as a special guest.
48.	Grant Programme to Business Angel Networks of ACCIÓ-Catalonia Trade & Investment	Catalonia		Grants to Business Angels Networks in Catalonia to foster the funding (via equity or participatory loans) of business angels into companies.
49.	Covid-19: Business support and assistance service	Catalonia		Online service to provide up-to-date information about the economic measures being taken to deal with the COVID-19



				consequences, and to offer support and assistance to businesses.
50.	PRIMER Preacceleration Program	Catalonia		The Programa Primer seeks to promote innovation and technology based startups and to expand the technology hub effect of Barcelona throughout Catalonia.

5 Selected shortlist

No.	Name of Good practice	Country/Region from which good practice originates	Countries which might benefit from this Good Practice (with arguments)	Short description (max 250 symbols)	What is the problem addressed and the context which triggered the introduction of the practice? (300-700 symbols)	What was solution proposed to address the problem/issue. Solution shall not be innovative company or product. It has to be method, project, process, technique. (300-700 symbols)	What is the major value/innovation/lesson learned (i.e. why do you think that it is a GOOD practice)(300-700 symbols)
1.	Startup VISA Lithuania	Lithuania	Spain: wants to attract more entrepreneurs	A procedure that provides a streamlined entry process to the Lithuanian startup ecosystem for innovative non-EU entrepreneurs.	Immigrant entrepreneurs had great difficulty getting a visa, making investment into establishment of their innovative startup in Lithuania pretty complicated.	The new legislation streamlines the process for gaining temporary residence permits for citizens of non EU/EEA countries who want to run innovative businesses in Lithuania. There are some key criteria for startups applying for the visa.	Startup visas are a way to attract a highly qualified workforce, innovation, and in the long-term – new jobs and more funds in the country's budget. There's a significant benefit to countries that initiate such program. Small legislative changes related to immigration Law allows to boost startup ecosystem.
2.	StartupFair	Lithuania		StartupFair is the biggest startup event in Lithuania, where local and international speakers present the most relevant startups' topics	Networking and knowledge exchange is essential part of successful Startup ecosystem, lack of	This event connects different parts of smaller events into one festival. Startup fair consists of key note speeches	The event should be organized by the prominent actor/organisation in the region, in this case it is Startup Lithuania (one-



					these activities doesn't allow startup to reach out to investors, incubators etc. or find relevant funding sources.	about relevant topics, pitch battles, B2B event and after party which is also key part for networking and connecting ecosystem.	stop-shop in Lithuania) and also cooperation with other organisations: incubators, angel investors, VCs should be established. In addition, this event is good way to advertise region for foreign companies.
3.	TechHub pre-accelerator	Lithuania		A three-month training course, in which, with the help of personal mentors and innovation experts, they develop their ideas, get acquainted with investors and business angels, gain the necessary knowledge for further business development.	Rarely the startups are created by the graduates of local universities, they usually land in bigger companies, because they lack of knowledge how they may develop their idea or who could help in this process.	Agency for Science, Innovation and Technology (MITA) invites startup teams to register for the "TechHub" pre-acceleration program. During the program 25 startups (in each co-hort) participate in a three-month training course, in which, with the help of personal mentors and innovation experts, they develop their ideas, get acquainted with investors and business angels, gain the necessary knowledge for	It is very important for the startup ecosystems to inspire and nurture the future entrepreneurs. Usually the main focus and resources in the ecosystems are targeted at established startups or scaleups, while students and young entrepreneurs are usually forgotten, thus this pre-acceleration program solves this issue. And the main goal is that participants would gain knowledge, network and self-confidence. In this way startup ecosystem will be supplied by experienced professionals who know how to create products.



						further business development, find new team members and receive services worth 25,000 Eur.	
4.	Fintech LT	Lithuania		The project that focuses on raising awareness of business community and entrepreneurial society about fintech innovations, and creating a sustainable image of Lithuania as fintech industry hub in the Baltic region.	Rarely specific and targeting support services are offered to the thematic startups, but it is the most prominent and effective way to attract startups and help them to grow faster, as every startup ecosystem has to differentiate themselves from others.	Agency for Science, Innovation and Technology (MITA) established innovation advisory services to startups and companies in fintech industry – consultations and advice in the fields of product research and development, commercialisation, innovations' implementation, access to financing, knowledge transfer, acquisition, protection, and exploitation of intangible assets, use of standards and regulations embedding them.	The initiative that unites thematic experts and organisations in the Fintech area, also additional initiatives were introduced under umbrella of Fintech LT project: Fintech Sandbox, events (fintech Inn conference).
5.	Smart FDI	Lithuania		Financial support measure that aims to attract foreign investments to Lithuania by	Lithuania as most of other CE countries has an	The Smart FDI measure was introduced as it	Targeted support for foreign R&D companies that make big investments



				supporting R&D&I activities.	increased concentration of manufacturing companies which usually are connected to Germany or other WE industries, however we see only few investments from those advanced industries that would be eager to create high-value added workplaces, and integrate local companies into high-technology value chains.	aims to attract foreign investments into Lithuania who are planning their investments into R&D activities (salaries, materials, inventory), but the side effect of this measure is that Startups could have a new cooperation partners, or even spin-offs could be created by the big company in the future. Most of the companies that were financed by this measure were from sectors such as AI, laser tech, financial technologies and advanced materials, so positive impact to development of Lithuania's economy and startup ecosystem could be expected.	and supports the competitiveness of local economy. This measure is a long-shot, that provides payback in 5-10 years, but the positive output usually is bigger than investment.
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6.	GovTech Lab	Lithuania		GovTech Lab provides a platform where public sector institutions are able to identify challenges and put it up for the private sector to provide solutions.	Lithuania GovTech lab has been developed and created in order to promote the use of state-of-the-art technologies in the public sector, thereby improving the efficiency of the public sector, providing better services to the society and making more accurate public policy decisions.	Any public sector institution can be a participant in the GovTech Challenge series by submitting their challenge, that could be solved by an innovative technological solution. GovTech Lab helps to evaluate and define the challenges and prepares for the challenge competition. Startups, SMEs and other entrepreneurs are at the core of GovTech ecosystem as they are the key creators of the GovTech solutions.	It is effective and very fast way to connect and create collaboration between public organisations and startups. Also, the govtech call is connected to the innovation tender procedure, which replace very complicated traditional tendering procedure.
7.	"Progetti d'Impresa" of Metropolitan City of Bologna	Italy	Lublin/Poland Lithuania	A public service supporting the birth and development of new businesses.	A public body can give concrete and free of charge support to aspiring entrepreneurs and new-born companies to reduce the		



					mortality rate of businesses.		
8.	"Co-Start" incubator in Villa Garagnani, Zola Predosa (BO)	Italy	East Flanders/Belgium Lublin/Poland (Lithuania	Co.Start Villa Garagnani is the incubator and co-working space located in a regenerated building in Zola Predosa (BO), municipality near Bologna.	The challenge of the local public administration to play an active role in responding to the current issues of the world of work, new opportunities for sharing, contamination and development of business ideas. The main problem for a start-up is (almost by definition) the lack of resources and the abundance of ideas and projects. The need for effective public-private collaboration.		
9.	"Insieme per il lavoro" (Together for work) project	Italy		"Insieme per il lavoro" (Together for work) is a project that aims the insertion in the labour market of people that has	The main challenges addressed by Insieme per il lavoro are:		



				economical and social vulnerabilities.	- the need for the employment of vulnerable people - the need to develop innovative approaches and tools to combine labour market supply and demand		
10.	"Le Serre di ART-ER"	Italy	East Flanders/Belgium Lublin /Poland (Lithuania	The "Margherita Gardens' Greenhouse" is a space dedicated to the promotion of innovation and of the entrepreneurial culture.			
11.	Crowdfunding Hub - Metropolitan City of Bologna	Italy	Catalonia/Spain	The Crowdfunding Hub disseminates the Crowdfunding tool and its potential by providing free consultancy and training to startup, SMEs, local public bodies.	The main challenge addressed by Crowdfunding Hub is the support to the initial critical phase of starting a business, especially for young aspiring entrepreneurs who want to enter the marketplace with innovative startup ideas.		
12.	Unitary Access / SuapER(lepida.it)	Italy		The UNITARY ACCESS platform allows companies to relate to the public	The regional PA challenge was to increase the offer		



				administration through a single access.	of services to businesses by ensuring fully interoperable services, simplifying and facilitating access through a new platform for the e-submission of applications. Main problems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • merging different existing platforms; • coordinate Region and local authorities to define univocal functions to implement and integrate; • provide integration with third parties. 		
13.	Gentrepreneur, a city platform for student-entrepreneurs in Ghent	East-Flanders		Inspiring and informing young entrepreneurs in Ghent through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - expert network - workshops/events - authentic learning environment 	Need for more young entrepreneurship	Networking and events for students on entrepreneurship	High increase of entrepreneurial activity



				in order to build and stimulate the business community.			
14.	Eureka, Promoting entrepreneurship in secondary and higher education through supporting business programs for students	East-Flanders		<p>East-Flanders has different projects focussing on stimulating entrepreneurship to young people during their school education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eureka, I do business! (ECEP initiative) - Mini company (Vlajo initiative, supported by ECEP) - Start Academy (Vlajo initiative, supported by ECEP) 	Young people have a negative image of entrepreneurs.	Creating a positive image through school initiatives.	Direct access to young students at school, to influence their vision on entrepreneurship.
15.	Festival of the Future, an incentive to focus on entrepreneurship during COVID by creating a flexible event format	East-Flanders		The Economy Department, POM (Provincial Development Company) and ECEP created an event where people could take a global look on what is coming in 2030	Start-ups have difficulties in seeing the future trends in our economy and society.	A high level event with lots of speakers and participants highlights future trends and gives inspiration to start-ups.	Broad scale of future trend themes.
16.	Making entrepreneurship more attractive by	East-Flanders		OOG (ENG: Support Point for Entrepreneurs Ghent) provides accessible and	Start-ups need a one stop shop.	Creation of a one stop shop in the City of Ghent.	Start-ups can ask all the questions they have for



	creating a unique contact and consultancy service in order to simplify the administrative maze (NL: Ondersteuningspunt Ondernemen Gent - ENG: Support Point for Entrepreneurs Ghent)			user-friendly insights in governmental services to entrepreneurs.			government at the one stop shop.
17.	Young Creatives Festival	East-Flanders		Festival for young creatives in cultural sector who need a small push towards entrepreneurship	Creative and arts students are not good in making business plans.	Creating a community and events for these students.	More successful creative start-ups.
18.	Webinar sessions about employee share options, start-up funding opportunities	Latvia	Not applicable	Online events for start-ups regarding available support tools for growth and competitiveness.	Rarely specific and targeting support services are offered to start-ups, and often the founders are not aware of accessible support options.	Stock options make the company's employees directly interested in the company's rapid growth. The more valuable a company becomes, the more valuable the company's shares are that an employee can sell - either when the company's investment is	The initiative unites thematic experts and organisations in the webinars. Additional initiatives are introduced to the start-ups, as well as a questions and answers session is provided.



						<p>attracted or when it begins to be listed on a stock exchange. Not only are business owners and investors financially beneficial, but so are the employees themselves. It is important that cooperation with foreign investors is encouraged, which would not only increase the total number of investors and investment, but also promote market activity. and wider visibility</p>	
19.	Start-up day	Latvia	Not applicable	<p>Start-up day provides space on various stages for thematic sessions, about such topics as the future of the Latvian start-up industry in the post-pandemic world, science-inspired business environment, sustainability, business development and available support. An event, where policymakers and</p>	<p>Networking and knowledge exchange is essential part of successful start-up ecosystem, lack of these activities doesn't allow start-up to reach out to investors, incubators etc. or</p>	<p>Start-up day consists of key-note speeches about relevant topics, as well as enables networking and connecting ecosystem.</p>	<p>Latvia is the first country in the world to introduce an official start-up day, celebrating it every 12th of September. The Start-up Day provides closer co-operation between representatives of the start-up community, policy makers, the general public, as well as start-ups</p>



				ecosystem builders come together and celebrate the Latvian start-up community. As part of it, everyone has the opportunity to get to know the dynamic local start-up community, look back at what has been done so far and outline future trends.	find relevant funding sources.		at both the Latvian and Baltic levels.
20.	Start-up visa	Latvia	Not applicable	Start-up visa as a temporary residence permit is offered to all non-EU start-up founders who are willing to realize their start-up ideas in Latvia. The main criteria for getting start-up visa is an innovative (most often technology-based) start-up idea, which is easily scalable and yields a high added value.	Immigrants from non-EU countries had great difficulty getting a temporary residence permit in Latvia, establishing their innovative start-up and receiving support in further developing it.	The start-up visa process is straightforward: the main prerequisite is an innovative start-up idea and a business development plan for the next 3 years. The application package is then submitted to the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (OCMA), or at the Latvian Embassy.	It's easy to apply, with realistic criteria, and friendly to spouses and children, too. The program is highly competitive in the European market, providing excellent conditions for the development and growth of a start-ups that don't initially possess many resources.
21.	TechChill conference	Latvia	Not applicable	The leading start-up and tech conference in the Baltics which transforms into global meeting hub for start-ups, investors,	Every year the conference program is focused on a specific topic, but the goal	The most promising start-ups from the Baltic Sea region - from the Baltics, Nordics and Central	TechChill conference is the largest event in the Latvian start-up industry, which has been taking place in Riga every year



				<p>innovators, inspirators, and technology enthusiasts and provides its participants some of the best opportunities for networking, individual meetings, and deal-making in the Baltics, Nordics and Central Eastern Europe.</p>	<p>remains the same - to inspire start-ups with the stories of experienced entrepreneurs and experts and to gather community representatives once a year, giving them the opportunity to network and attract foreign investors to Latvia. TechChill organizers point out that the TechChill conference is most useful in terms of content and offer for early stage start-ups who need all kinds of development support - contacts, experience stories, investor money and knowledge, while late start-ups like to attend the conference once a year. meet all</p>	<p>Eastern Europe - meet and match with global investors and business angels.</p>	<p>since 2012 and has grew from an event with few hundred visitors to a Baltic-level event with more than 2,000 participants. Over few days on multiple parallel stages, the event brings together hundreds of technology professionals from around the world.</p>
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					players in the local ecosystem.		
22.	Start-up bootcamp	Latvia	Not applicable	Training seminar that provides access to experienced mentors who are ready to share their knowledge and skills, as well as to continue successful cooperation with promising start-up teams.	Attracting new talent and growing promising business ideas is important for the development of the start-up ecosystem. The event is organized to give early-stage start-ups the opportunity to gain inspiration and confidence in the further development of their ideas.	New knowledge and experience is gained, attempts are made to look at the problems from a different point of view, meeting with technology professionals, experienced entrepreneurs, experts and mentors.	The event is attended by world-renowned technology and business experts, while the teams of start-ups have a unique opportunity to meet with the festival's speakers and investors.
23.	Start-up ecosystem strategy	Latvia	Not applicable	Assessment of the ecosystem of Latvian start-ups, identification of the current situation and development of proposals based on it.	A strategy must be made, to improve the workings of the public sector, thereby improving the efficiency, providing better services to the society, start-ups and making more accurate public policy decisions.	The start-up ecosystem development strategy sets out the goals for the coming years, the resulting priorities for achieving the goals, proposals for measures to achieve the goals for the coming years of the Latvian start-up ecosystem, as well	Development of a common strategy will be able to identify the sector's challenges more effectively and address them constructively.



						as the tasks to be implemented, activities and performance indicators.	
24.	Investment and Development Agency of Latvia as a one-stop agency regarding business incubators	Latvia	Not applicable	Investment and Development Agency of Latvia as a one-stop agency of business incubators provides support for business start-ups and development for individuals and start-ups.	Business incubators play an important role in both the intellectual and financial development of companies. With the support of the incubator, many of the intentions are being implemented faster or on a larger scale than would be possible on their own.	Business incubators are the tools that help develop entrepreneurial skills and create new businesses. They are one of the most important tools for the successful development of innovative, knowledge-based and sustainable start-ups that contribute to the economy and promote employment.	Within the framework of the program, consultations of industry experts and mentors are provided, in-depth trainings and seminars are provided, co-production facilities and office equipment are provided, opportunities are offered to participate in a joint stand of the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia's business incubators at industry exhibitions, pop-up stands, etc. events. The incubation support program also provides companies with co-financing of up to 50% for the purchase of services, plant and



							equipment and 30% for the purchase of raw materials.
25	INNOVA-INVEST	POLAND / Lublin Region (Lublin Science and Technology Park)	ITALY / Bologna (Metropolitan City of Bologna) > based on the project 5 th study visit in Lublin Region (online), Italian partner was eager to learn more about the practice to identify potential elements to transfer to its region	Pre-incubation program for innovative startups with equity investments (seed funding), comprised of 4 batches run for 3 months each	<p>CHALLENGES: > create conducive environment for innovative startups based in the region, and > provide them with crucial components for comprehensive early stage growth.</p> <p>PROBLEMS: a. low, insufficient level of competitiveness and innovation of economy in the region, b. insufficient flow of R&D, human and technical resources to regional economy, c. high-risk financing / VC gap on the regional innovation market, and</p>	Dedicated support for aspiring entrepreneurs in their innovative business creation, including academic environment and spin offs, by providing business consulting on starting and running a business, advisory & capital (seed fund investments combined with co-investments). Specific focus was put on solutions from strategic sectors for regional innovation development – so called regional smart specialisations (RSS) in: biotechnology, health and medicine, renewable energy /	<p>VALUE: > 20 innovative companies (startups) created > 51 jobs created at the end of the project, i.e. more than 2 jobs per startup > 40 innovative ideas pre-incubated > 316 startup ideas submitted > 2.3 million EUR of seed funding (equity investments) > ca. 2.9 million EUR of attracted co-investments</p> <p>LESSONS: > increasing average age of startup founders means policy makers and business support institutions should create customized incentives for more experienced potential innovators, especially coming from academia and science</p>



					d. high business risk aversion in academic and business regional ecosystems.	environment protection, chemical sector, as well as other ones.	background (deep tech); that means e.g. complex support ensuring the startup gets a number of benefits: mentoring, training, tools, network, validation opportunities, (non)equity financing etc. > pre incubation improves business idea appraisal and makes startups better prepared for further development stages > post-program support and monitoring is highly recommended; though the majority of ventures do not succeed, support after the program increase the chance to commercialize innovative product > startup = risk: just few companies are expected to succeed and reach the product-market fit, though (but see the lesson above)
26.	Connect Poland Prize	POLAND / Lublin Region (Lublin Science and Technology Park)	ITALY / Bologna BELGIUM	Acceleration program for innovative foreign startups run in cooperation with industry partners and	CHALLENGES: > boost innovation level of the Polish economy	> matching foreign startups with business partners either corporates,	VALUE (so far): > 17 startups under batch 1 selected for phase 1 (soft-landing and



			SPAIN / Catalonia	<p>investors under open innovation approach; comprised of 4 batches run for up to 13 months each</p>	<p>> boost open innovation culture in Polish public and private sector</p> <p>> strengthen Polish startup ecosystem through transferring innovative ideas, business culture and talent from abroad, and</p> <p>> contribute to the image of Poland as the country of first choice in Central and Eastern Europe for foreign start-ups</p> <p>PROBLEMS:</p> <p>> insufficient integration of foreign startups with Polish ecosystem</p> <p>> low utilization of innovation potential by R&D centers, corporates and innovative SMEs</p>	<p>innovative SMEs, innovation demanding public entities or investors for pilot market validation and technology commercialization</p> <p>> phase 1: customized 3-month soft-landing and development program to help foreign startups establish a business in Poland, adapt to legal, business and cultural environment and find relevant business partner to work on technology development</p> <p>> phase 2: customized 10-month acceleration program allowing for pilot market validation or commercialization of technology on the Polish market</p>	<p>development) and more to come in next batches</p> <p>> 155 applications from foreign startups</p> <p>> 12 business partners, including 2 VC funds</p> <p>> generally, there will be 56 startups selected for phase 1 (soft-landing and development), 36 will be invited for phase 2 (acceleration)</p>
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					<p>> funding and networking gap in some European and global regions with low innovation potential</p> <p>> supply-demand imbalances in developed and highly innovative regions, creating opportunities to create low competition niches in Polish economy</p>	<p>> post-acceleration support</p> <p>Under industry acceleration track, specific focus is put on solutions from given strategic sectors for national innovation development (taking into account regional environment) – so called national smart specialisations (NSS) pharmaceutical biotechnology, bioeconomy and Industrial Internet of Things. Under general acceleration track, other solutions are eligible, too.</p> <p>> 4 batches, each for 14 startups on average</p>	
27.	NLAB – Nevada-Lubelskie Acceleration Bridge	POLAND / Lublin Region (regional self-government – Marshal Office	ITALY / Bologna POLAND / Mazovia (Mazovia	Acceleration (scale-up) and internationalisation program for startups from Lublin Region willing to	<p>CHALLENGES:</p> <p>> support internationalization and development</p>	<p>Two-stage program:</p> <p>> 1st stage: 5-day bootcamp for 30 companies with</p>	<p>VALUE:</p> <p>> 2 program editions</p> <p>> 60 companies supported</p>



		of Lubelskie Voivodeship)	Development Agency Plc)	enter the US market through the State of Nevada	<p>of young companies from the region, allowing them to enter new markets outside European Single Market</p> <p>> stimulate development of startups in growth phase / scale-ups</p> <p>PROBLEMS:</p> <p>> too less regional-based initiatives supporting young companies in entering new markets, especially outside European Single Market</p> <p>> low level of innovation in Lublin Region</p> <p>> untapped potential of interregional cooperation between Polish mid-level self-governments and US states</p>	<p>workshops, short lectures and individual consultancy run by business mentors from the US State of Nevada and Poland</p> <p>> 2nd stage: 2-weeks tailor-made acceleration program in Nevada (US) for selected best 10 companies, divided into 2 groups, with consultancy, training, B2B meetings with potentials clients, investors, business angels, business and legal advisors, business institutions and representatives of public administration</p>	<p>> 20 companies accelerated in Nevada</p> <p>LESSONS:</p> <p>> the program provides opportunities not only for revenue growth, but also exchange of international knowledge, build business capabilities and strengthen company's long-term competitiveness</p> <p>> companies are often afraid to expand their activity on totally different market (continent); but with support of public body or other trustworthy institution they tend to be more confident and willing to face their business challenges</p> <p>> successful companies who has already participated in the program can serve as role models and present their success stories to program new participants</p>
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28.	Business Lubelskie (Biznes Lubelskie)	POLAND / Lublin Region (regional self-government – Marshal Office of Lubelskie Voivodeship)	No interest expressed by project partners so far	Regional one-stop shop for investors and exporters, operated by self- government of Lublin Region – Marshal Office of Lubelskie Voivodeship	<p>CHALLENGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > create a system that effectively supports the inflow and creation of new investments and strengthening the export activity of businesses from the region, by linking local and regional self-governments and other partners > strengthen public competencies of the self-government of Lublin Region to provide professional business services of the highest quality <p>PROBLEMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > lack of one single contact point for investors and exporters in the region > fragmented public tasks on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > single contact point for relevant entrepreneurs' groups, acting primarily as a one-stop shop > network of local offices allowing businesses for easy access to local self-governments and business environment institutions operating locally, regionally, nationally and internationally > integration of different territorial levels and regional units relevant for one-stop shop operation > basic support offer for businesses investing in the region and willing to expand to other markets 	<p>VALUE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Business Lubelskie services were used by Polish and international coprorates, investors and other companies from business services, machine, automotive, aviation, food, chemical and pharmaceutical sectors > increased business attractiveness of the region
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					different territorial self-government levels relevant for investors and exporters, not integrated both vertically (local and regional authorities) and horizontally (specific public units servicing investors' and exporters' needs)	> free-of charge and time-effective services	
29.	UMCS Knowledge and Technology Transfer Center	POLAND / Lublin Region (University of Maria Curie-Skłodowska in Lublin)	SPAIN / Catalonia (Government of Catalonia) LATVIA (Ministry of Economic of Republic of Latvia)	Academic center supporting innovation flow between science and business, operated by University of Maria-Curie-Skłodowska in Lublin	CHALLENGES > boost regional competitiveness through academic-driven innovations and technology transfer > attract corporate research support > licence revenues to support further R&D and commercialization > comply with national regulations in a more systemic way	> university technology transfer office (TTO) called Center for Knowledge and Technology Transfer – thematic one-stop shop > set of a technology-driven services and activities, including joint research projects, licencing and selling IP, training courses for academic stakeholders,	VALUE > commercialization of several disrupting technologies > implementation of several hundred research works commissioned by businesses > 21 projects received funding worth ca. 28 million EUR (125 million PLN)



					<p>> improve talent attraction and retention of university-based scientists and students</p> <p>PROBLEMS</p> <p>> insufficient support for knowledge and technology transfer and its flow to the regional economy</p> <p>> low level of R&D cooperation activities between universities and the socio-economic environment</p> <p>> to few links between R&D stakeholders: scientific employees of the university, SMEs and corporates, business environment institutions, NGOs, local and central</p>	<p>support for spin-off and spin-out companies</p> <p>> special business entity created by the university: Synergia UMCS Ltd. for indirect commercialization (spin-off zone), headhunting, commercial business consulting, scientific projects matching etc.</p> <p>> national network of technology transfer centers: Polish Association of Centers for Technology Transfer (PACTT), comprised of 73 TTOs for joint representation of technology transfer community, knowledge exchange, capacity building and better cooperation</p>	
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					government administration etc.		
30	Startup Weekend Lublin: Poland- Ukraine-Belarus international edition	POLAND / Lublin Region (Lublin Science and Technology Park)	ITALY / Bologna	International startup bootcamp for IT community from Poland, Ukraine and Belarus, run for 3 days	<p>CHALLENGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > meet the supply of talent by region-based universities and local multicultural community > improve business skills of IT specialists and students based in the city > boost networking activity among young people with entrepreneurship aspirations > improve regional competitiveness by supporting international talents based in Lublin to build innovative ventures > increasing demand for integration of startup community in neighbouring countries (in this 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 3-days (54 hours) startup bootcamp for young people from Poland, Ukraine and Belarus to create prototypes addressing given challenges, comprised of team building, business training, mentoring and pitching activities > afterparty with networking activities 	<p>VALUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 6 international business ideas / teams participated > 4 pitch session judges > 11 mentors with international background > local society attention through media (TV and radio) > cal. 200 business ideas participating in 3 editions of Startup Weekend Lublin (2015-2017) <p>LESSONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > due to short program format, participating business ideas should be quite original, interesting, and based on accurate market research to ensure quality results; thus, basic thematic training of participants is needed as part of the program > as the program is very intense, the expert roles should be clearly defined and balance for pitch session judges and



					<p>case, Poland, Ukraine and Belarus)</p> <p>PROBLEMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > untapped potential of talent pool in Lublin City > low awareness among young people about the value IT skills can add to their professional career > insufficient networking and mentoring opportunities in the city 		<p>bootcamp mentors, taking into account their technology or business background and language skills</p>
31.	Connect Start-up Platform for new ideas	POLAND / Lublin Region (Lublin Science and Technology Park)	ITALY / Bologna	Incubation program for young entrepreneurs willing to innovate, comprised of 7 batches run for up to 7 months each, with dedicated VC track and a fast track to restricted grant program	<p>CHALLENGES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > strengthen capacity of regional innovation ecosystem to animate innovation support programs > boost links between key ecosystem stakeholders, i.e. VC funds and financing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > pilot startup platform for Eastern Poland to test mechanisms for startup creation > wide network of 40+ partners (stakeholders) directly involved in incubation program > incubation program (up to 7 month) for 	<p>VALUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 80 innovative companies created / business models verified through incubation program > 74 innovative companies positively recommended for fast track (access to restricted grant program) > 33 startups raised ca. 6 million EUR of additional



					<p>institutions, entrepreneurship and innovation centers, local public authorities and universities</p> <p>> test approach for regional innovation ecosystem building, for roll-out activities under startup platforms</p> <p>> increase level of regional competitiveness through innovations</p> <p>> fill the funding gap for young people up to 35 years and equip them with necessary tools to develop new technologies and enter the market</p>	<p>innovative startups to build MVP and reach significant market readiness level through training, general e.g. business, marketing, UX, pitching, tax, legal) and special advisory services (e.g. technology, design, strategy, IT support), and office space</p> <p>> two special tracks: CEO track with job shadowing support and VC track to improve startup investment readiness</p> <p>> fast track for top performing startups with direct access to external grant program dedicated for startups with full readiness to commercialize their products and participate in a restricted call)</p>	<p>co-funding (26 million PLN) due to successful verification under the fast track – access to external grant</p> <p>> 40+ organisations partnered under the pilot startup platform</p> <p>LESSONS:</p> <p>> the best incubator results are achieved when key stakeholders from different relevant backgrounds are involved, well linked and communicated (VCs, financing institutions, entrepreneurship and innovation centers, universities, local public authorities)</p> <p>> average age or type of background of innovators and entrepreneurs is increasing or changing, so the ecosystem should address specific needs of each segment of potential innovators, to help them turn idea into business (technology) venture</p>
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32.	MAZOVIAN STARTUP acceleration program	Poland		Promotion of clusters and business accelerators; training courses. Acceleration program, financed from the budget of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship Self-Government	Lack of development and mentoring deficiency for young start ups (operating less than 3 years) Acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills that will allow to set up a company / successfully develop business ideas / implement innovations.	Project - a competition for startups that take part in a professional acceleration program at no cost, gaining knowledge and skills in the field of establishing and running a startup.	The Mazowieckie Voivodeship runs the competition with the support of non-governmental organizations that run acceleration programs for startups. In exchange for support for startups, they are to contribute to the overall improvement of the market situation and the socio-economic growth of Mazovia. This method of project implementation provides startups with real professional support and stimulates the Mazovian startup ecosystem. The program aims to promote and implement additional activities in selected subregions in order to increase the availability of support for entities developing projects outside the capital city, not only inside.
33.	START FROM MAZOVIA competition	Poland		A contest helping good practices to be disseminated and	Lack of insider business knowledge available to young	Project - a competition for startups that can	The Masovian Voivodeship is



				<p>promoted in the field of economic use of new technologies, development and introduction of new products or services and modern management methods and business models.</p>	<p>startups; not enough opportunities to disseminate good practices. In creating innovation, the idea is what is the most valuable, but even the best idea needs proper support to be successful. For this reason, it was decided to support the best startups among all those submitted in the competition with a cash prize, appropriate promotion, giving a chance to show their innovation to a wider audience and investors, as well as prizes from competition partners, such as substantive consultations related to business development and</p>	<p>appear on the market, develop their companies, and attract investors without incurring any costs.</p>	<p>implementing the competition with the support of organizations / companies that professionally assist in the development of companies. These entities are selected through public procurement procedures. This method of project implementation provides startups with real professional support and stimulates the Mazovian startup ecosystem.</p> <p>The contest provides a unique opportunity to meet innovative entrepreneurs from the region and obtain valuable advice from the competition jury consisting of well-known business experts.</p>
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					obtaining financing, participation in training and mentoring programs or a presentation for a group of investors		
34.	„Modelling the System of Offers for Innovations”	Poland		Support of Partnerships of Mazovian Business Environment Institutions in preparation of proinnovative services for SMEs.	The problem faced by the region was the fragmentation of the market of pro-innovative services for SMEs and insufficient adjustment of services as well as the lack of comprehensive support from BEI in relation to the development needs of enterprises and focusing on the implementation of simple services.	The implemented innovative solution is the creation of BEI partnerships that jointly offer new services, based on the resources of all members, with the assumption of further cooperation and maintaining new services in the offer after the end of the project. This enables the extension of the centers' offer and the consolidation of the BEI services market.	The project is treated as a pilot, the experiences from its implementation will have an impact on the preparation and design of support offered through the Business Environment Institutions in the new financial perspective.
35.	Investor and Exporter Service Centre	Poland		Business support for investors and exporters, as well as the implementation of activities aimed at economic promotion of the	No free, standardized, substantive business support for SMEs	Resolution 398/22/07 of the Management Board of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship of 27	IESC was designed as a national network of 15 units (one in each region) that provide information services in various forms



				Mazowieckie Voivodeship in the country and abroad		February 2007 on the transfer of certain tasks of the voivodeship self- government to the implementation by the Mazovia Development Agency. IESC is the place of first contact for foreign entrepreneurs interested in investing in Mazovia and for Mazovian entrepreneurs undertaking and carrying out export activities.	to entrepreneurs free of charge. Thus, the network guarantees trouble-free access, regardless of location, to professional services based on a uniform standard.
36.	Start in Park	Poland		An acceleration program intended for current and aspiring entrepreneurs from the Płock region. Professional business training, mentoring and networking meetings free of charge for people with innovative ideas.	Low dynamics of start-ups development in non-metropolitan small or medium- sized cities as well as low innovation level.	As a non- metropolitan development centre, we are creating opportunities for development and incubation of innovative businesses in non- metropolitan cities by providing	The prime value of this practice is the investment in the development of the overlooked sub regions of the country that are not under the influence of major metropolitan cities. It creates the opportunity to equalize the level of innovation, prosperity, business dynamics all over the state.



						professional business training, mentoring and networking conditions for 25 innovative business ideas.	
37.	Targówek District Entrepreneurs' Club	Poland		Open meetings for local SMEs aimed at boosting cooperation between entrepreneurs and exchanging know-how.	In Warsaw district – Targówek entrepreneurs didn't know each other because all networking meetings were organized in the city centre. Targówek district wrestled with a lack of local cooperation between local entrepreneurs and a lack of local business connections.	Targówek municipality cooperates with entrepreneurs in organizing local meetings with dedicated company owners. There is an entrepreneurship board that cooperates with the municipality. The main aim of the meetings is to integrate local SMEs by organizing open networking meetings.	Targówek is a large district (approx. 120 000 inhabitants). Entrepreneurs didn't cooperate with each other because they didn't know each other. Thanks to open and free of charge networking meetings organized in Targówek District Office, they can integrate, share their knowledge and develop their businesses by contact with other business owners. They establish local cooperation and recommend their products and services.
38.	Centre of Entrepreneurship Smolna (CES)	Poland		One-stop shop; Business incubator; Training and educational offer; Business promotion; Business, financial and legal advisory	Lack of enough support provided to the entrepreneurs by the public entities in terms of	Centre of Entrepreneurship Smolna (CES) is the project developed by the European	Developing an incubator and additional free-of charge services for entrepreneurs helps with filling the public SMEs



					setting and running the company.	Funds Department within the City of Warsaw structures, co-financed by the European Union from the European Regional Development Fund under the Regional Operational Program for the Mazowieckie Voivodeship 2007-2013.	support gap and combats stereotypes on stiffness of the system. Being a public incubator creates a better opportunity to join in the whole ecosystem of entrepreneurship support and understands better the needs within.
39.	Creative Mikser	Poland		Series of networking meetings of the creative sector, organised by the British Council and the City of Warsaw along with local partners. These are presentations, discussions and an opportunity to establish new business contacts and meet interesting people.	Lack of people's awareness regarding different issues within creative sector.	Creation of platform that would enable people from different branches within creative sector to connect, exchange thoughts, broaden their knowledge and cooperate with each other	Providing the possibility to exchange thoughts, to bring different people to the table and make them connect with each other is definitely a good way to bring life to new creative projects from which many can benefit, or at least gain more experience in the field for individual purposes.
40.	Alternative Funding Recommendor Tool of ACCIÓ-Catalonia Trade & Investment	Catalonia		Promotion of alternative funding instruments (donation and reward crowdfunding, crowdequity, crowdlending, invoice trading, business	One of the lessons learned from the past is that when companies rely heavily on traditional banking	The interactive online recommendation tool leads users to the alternative	According to data from 2019 the tool achieved 11,260 viewed pages that year. We can also draw some conclusions about the business ecosystem in



				angels networks, venture capital, direct lending, stock markets and more) among SMEs and startups.	they end up experiencing more difficulties to overcome a situation of restricted access to credit. This is one of the reasons that promoting the alternative business funding has become a must. Statistics show that in other European countries as well as in the USA funding other than traditional banking is higher than in Catalonia. We created this tool to shorten the gap.	funding providers that better fit their profile and needs. Users have to answer just five questions regarding the sector they belong to, the stage the company is in, the economic and financial situation of the company, the amount of money they are looking for, and the reason why they need it.	Catalonia, its needs and trends based on the users' answers and readapt to them. This allows us, for example, to know which types of instruments appear more often listed, therefore more needed, and we can address this together with the entities providing them. It is useful knowledge for all of us, government and private entities.
41.	Marketplace – ACCIÓ's	Catalonia		Virtual Marketplace to connects companies that offer technology and health-related material, production capacity, to help the consequences of COVID-19.	ACCIÓ -the Catalan Government's agency that promotes business competitiveness in Catalonia - has set up a virtual Marketplace that connects	The Marketplace is putting in touch manufacturers from different parts of the production chain to boost collaboration so that the current health emergency can be addressed	The COVID-19 Business Marketplace focuses specifically on technology services and healthcare products that can be effective in the short term.



					companies in Catalonia that offer technology and health-related material, or have production capacity, to help ease the consequences of COVID- 19.	the most efficient way. In a situation like the current one, talent, creativity and generosity make people and companies want to give everything they have to try to mitigate the effects of the health crisis we are experiencing.	
42.	Investment Forum - ACCIÓ	Catalonia		The Investment Forum is the place where local start-ups from Catalonia meet annually with international and national investors. 21 startups pitch and engage in dynamic networking. Every year, a different country participates in this meeting as a special guest. The startup selection process starts with an open call, in which start-ups can apply for. Then, 50 start-ups are chosen to be included in the Investment	The Investment Forum is the place where local start-ups from Catalonia meet annually with international and national investors. It is addressed to innovative, ambitious and high growth potential start-ups, looking for private equity or venture capital funds. During all day, the attendants	This event is focused on sharing success stories, making entrepreneurs more visible, fostering networking activities and emphasizing their international presence. Moreover, every year, a different country participates in the meeting as a special guest.	One of the main goals of the Investment Forum is to create a space where entrepreneurs can pitch their projects to investors, so that they can raise money and put their expansion plans into practice. It also aims to promote contacts between all attendees and facilitate relations between people from the same sector through participatory, dynamic networking.



				Forum catalogue. However, only the best 21 projects are selected to pitch at the Investment Forum, where some start-ups will be awarded	also engage in a dynamic networking based on having previously booked 10-minute meetings with other attendants. It is Catalonia's most important event on the field.		<p>Investment Forum 2019 indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 21 pitches - 50 startups at the catalogue - 18 investors at the jury - 650 attendees - pre-scheduled meetings / networking <p>Investment Forum 2020 celebrates its 25th edition.</p>
43.	Grant Programme to Business Angel Networks of ACCIÓ-Catalonia Trade & Investment	Catalonia		Grants awarded to Private Investor Networks accredited by ACCIÓ-Catalonia Trade & Investment to foster the funding from their business angels into innovative and high-growth potential businesses. The grants are based on the investment operations closed annually by these networks.	This grant programme awarded by the Government of Catalonia through ACCIÓ-Catalonia Trade & Investment addresses the accredited Business Angels Networks in Catalonia with the aim to foster investment into Catalan startups and businesses with high growth potential.	The amount granted is based on the funded deals closed annually by these networks. The criteria gives a certain score to every business angels network considering their number of closed deals and the amount of each of them. It scores equity deals (capital subscription) higher than debt deals (participatory loan)	Once the business angels networks are ranked based on closed deals and invested amount, the three ones with the highest score could get a maximum of €30k grant and €15k for the remaining five networks. Other networks with less score will not have access to any grant should no money is available. Networks can apply for the grant by filling an online application form and submitting the documentation that



						as well as the ones with more than 3 co-investors participating in it. Business Angels networks can apply for them if they closed successfully during a year, at least, two investment operations for a minimum value of €20k each.	proofs that the operation was successful (bank receipts, public deeds, entrepreneurs and investors registration receipts to the networks).
44.	Covid-19: Business support and assistance service	Catalonia		Online service to provide up-to-date information about the economic measures being taken to deal with the COVID-19 consequences, and to offer support and assistance to businesses.	The Government of Catalonia has set up an online service to provide up-to-date information and gather all the national, regional and local economic measures being taken to deal with the COVID-19 consequences in Canal Empresa (in Catalan and Spanish). These measures are collected not only	These measures are collected not only by means of an in-depth screening of official documents, but mainly through a coordination and information exchange system, led by the Business Management Office, which allows the Canal Empresa website to have constantly updated information about the different	The service also offers support and assistance to business and start-ups to provide guidance and support in relation to the Governments support packages, tax measures and COVID-19 related business issues. The significant number of measures adopted, from various authorities and institutions, makes essential a centralisation service, so that both businesses and the authorities themselves



					by means of an in-depth screening of official documents, but mainly through a coordination and information exchange system, led by the Business Management Office, which allows the Canal Empresa website to have constantly updated information about the different measures from different departments and government agencies.	measures from different departments and government agencies.	can have a complete picture of all the measures taken. Moreover, businesses value very positively a personalized attention service to provide assistance in these times of uncertainty and struggle, as proven by the success of the service.
45.	PRIMER Preacceleration Program	Catalonia		The Programa Primer seeks to promote innovation and technology based startups and to expand the technology hub effect of Barcelona throughout Catalonia.	The program starts through a call for public entities and universities linked to the territory to develop entrepreneurship acceleration programs based on innovation and high technology	Once the programs are selected, the participants will go through a very specialized training on technology and business models (including learning and mentoring). These levers include research groups and	The aim is to provide the knowledge and to identify business opportunities in the specific sector approached by the local entity/ university. 21 startups have been created after the last edition of the program in the fields of Education,



					expertise that respond to a specific need or strength of the territory. All programs must include a lever or competitive advantage that ensures the success and added value of the solutions generated.	universities, corporation or public alliances in the specific economic sector. The aim is to provide the knowledge and to identify business opportunities in the specific sector approached by the local entity/university.	mobility, decentralizing governance etc. The biggest achievement of the program is to demonstrate the feasibility of creating technologic and innovation hubs at any city minimizing inequalities in the territory.

6 Good Practices description

6.1 Lithuania



Good practice 1. StartupFair

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	<i>StartupFair</i>	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	<i>Start Easy</i>	
Thematic objective of the practice	<i>SME Competitiveness</i>	
Geographical scope of the practice	<i>Regional</i>	
Location of the practice	Country	<i>Lithuania</i>
	Region	<i>Lithuania</i>
	City	<i>Vilnius</i>



2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<i>StartupFair is the biggest startup event in Lithuania, where local and international speakers present the most relevant startups' topics.</i>
Detailed information on the practice	<p><i>Lithuanian one-stop-shop agency Startup Lithuania is holding an annual conference for startups. The aim is to present the most relevant topics for local and regional startups, investors and ecosystem builders. During the two days event key note speakers cover a broad range of topics: how to use digital marketing tools, improve customer success and adapt to business changes, how to clarify the idea while searching for investments and global tendencies.</i></p> <p><i>In addition to this, the conference has its B2B meetings part, where startups can schedule the meeting with mentors, angel investors, venture capitalists or potential employees. Usually this event is visited by more than 50 local and international investors, thus it is a good platform to look for additional financing or networking</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>- The StartupFair is always finished with the pitch battle, where pre-selected startups pitch their ideas and compete on stage in front of the influential jury: the investors, startup ecosystem experts and the audience.</i>
Resources needed	<p><i>The full amount that is dedicated for this event is around 40K EUR for two days conference including venue, catering, VIP dinner, communication etc.</i></p> <p><i>Organizational part is prepared by the team of 4 people, also important is to establish connections with local and international startup communities.</i></p>
Timescale (start/end date)	<i>Started on 2012 – on progress</i>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p><i>Startup Fair is considered as a big success that contributes to the growing Lithuanian start-up ecosystem. Since 2012 Start-up fair events foster knowledge and experience-sharing, create great opportunities for startups to meet foreign investors and partners. Thus, it is an essential long-term investment, which brings economic and social benefits.</i></p> <p><i>2019 results:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>- 118 startups from 25 different countries in the pitch battle</i> <i>- attracted investors from 11 different countries</i> <i>- 54 speakers.</i>
Challenges encountered (optional)	<i>Organizing a big event requires a lot of work and human resources, thus it is worthwhile to contract an external organization that has a vast experience in this field. The main focus of local one-stop-shop agency should be on gathering community, inviting foreign guests.</i>
Potential for learning or transfer	<i>The format and idea of event like Startup Fair could be transferred in other regions easily. The agenda of this event varies every year as it's important to adapt to local circumstances and the conditions that exist at a current time. During the first years it was focused on networking team building and ideas generation. Afterwards the presentations and discussions were targeted on challenges that established startups are usually facing. This year the organizers noticed that most of the startups are good at coping with those challenges, thus the main topic is growth. So, each country or region should focus on area in relation to the current stand of their local startup ecosystem. In addition, the presence of foreign experts or startup supporters such as investors, tech gurus, owners of accelerators should not be forgotten when organizing such event. Thus, it is essential to have a matchmaking part and dining event / party during this kind of events.</i>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practice used for	Startup phase: X
	Entering the market phase:
	Growth phase:
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<i>This good practice is administrated by the organisation called Startup Lithuania that could be considered as an one-stop-shop for Startup organisations in Lithuania</i>



Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	<i>This programme is funded from national budget, but this GP could be connected with services such as attraction of foreign investors, startups, business missions etc. It could be financed by ERDF funds.</i>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<i>The event is free for all participants.</i>
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<i>No criteria</i>
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	<i>Usually this Good practices is presented by the startup Lithuania representatives in international physical or online events, advertisement on social media. Also it is quite easy to spread information about this event mouth to mouth when country is pretty small, and startup community is well connected</i>
What is innovative about this good practice?	<i>This event connects different parts of smaller events into one festival. Startup fair consists of key note speeches about relevant topics, pitch battles, B2B event and after party which is also key part for networking and connecting ecosystem.</i>
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	<i>The founders could found other founders in this event, hear new ideas or find financial support in this perspective the StartupFair facilitates the Startup Ecosystem.</i>
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	<i>Nothing to mention.</i>

Good practice 2. Startup Visa

1. Good practice general information	
Title of the practice	<i>Startup Visa</i>
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes

In case 'yes' is selected, the following sections appear:

Please select the project acronym	<i>Start Easy</i>	
Thematic objective of the practice	<i>SME Competitiveness</i>	
Geographical scope of the practice	<i>Regional</i>	
Location of the practice	Country	<i>Lithuania</i>
	Region	<i>Lithuania</i>
	City	<i>Vilnius</i>

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<i>A procedure that provides a streamlined entry process to the Lithuanian startup ecosystem for innovative non-EU entrepreneurs.</i>
Detailed information on the practice	<p><i>Immigrant entrepreneurs have great difficulty getting a visa, making investment into establishment of their innovative startup in Lithuania pretty complicated.</i></p> <p><i>The new legislation streamlines the process for gaining temporary residence permits for citizens of non EU/EEA countries who want to run innovative businesses in Lithuania. Thanks to these changes, startups from Russia, Ukraine, and India are already in the process of establishing their businesses in Lithuania.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Startup Visa is a temporary residence permit issued by the Migration Department and approved by the Ministry of Economy. An evaluation committee decides if the startup applying is suitable. This committee is made up of representatives of local startup accelerators and venture capital funds, plus staff from Startup Lithuania and the Agency for Science, Innovation and Technology. There are some key criteria for startups applying for the visa: the startup must operate in an innovative field, the applicant must legally be at least a partial owner of the newly founded company, and they must have enough financial resources to achieve the set business goals for 1 year. A set amount is not stipulated, and applicants have the freedom to decide how much capital is required to achieve the startup's goals for their first year in Lithuania. All the applications are assessed by the committee, so it is important to establish an evaluation committee that would be made up of local startup ecosystem builders.</i>
Resources needed	<p><i>Currently Startup Lithuania is responsible for this program and this organization has two project manager who works on the Start-up Visa full-time:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>- Communication with potential applicants</i> <i>- Communication with those who have the visa.</i> <p><i>The evaluation committee could consist of 5-10 members..</i></p>
Timescale (start/end date)	<i>Started on 2017 – on progress</i>

Evidence of success (results achieved)	<i>Since 2017 lots of start-ups from non-EU markets have shown interest in Lithuania, during the 2017-2019 the increased number of non-EU start-up founders were granted with Start-up visa: 2017 – 27 2018 – 83, 2019 Q2 – 70, in total 35% of applications were approved. These non-EU Start-ups consisted almost 16% of all Start-ups working in Lithuania in 2020. This program provided a possibility to attract company founders that otherwise wouldn't consider Lithuania as a place to start their company</i>
Potential for learning or transfer	<p><i>The idea of Start-up Visa could be transferred to any country or region and there are various versions of this program in different countries. How easy and fast it could be transferred depends on the local legislation, governmental structure, procedures etc. In Lithuania the main thing was to make an amendment in the National Foreigners Act as well to give even bigger advantage for Foreign founders Lithuanian government is considering to pass a legal amendment that will allow foreigners to obtain the status of an e-resident</i></p> <p><i>Startup Visa offer companies a plethora of benefits. For example, the chance to enter a new market or establish and grow a business in a more startup friendly environment than where you currently reside. There's a significant benefit to countries as well. Startup visas are a way to attract a highly qualified workforce, innovation, and in the long-term – new jobs and more funds in the country's budget.</i></p>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	<p>Startup phase:</p> <p>Entering the market phase: X</p> <p>Growth phase: X</p>
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<i>This good practice is administrated by the organisation called Startup Lithuania that could be considered as an one-stop-shop for Startup organisations in Lithuania</i>
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	<i>This programme is funded from national budget, but this GP could be connected with services such as soft landing in this case, the services could be supported by EU structural funds.</i>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<i>Startups have to pay administrative costs related to issuing visa, opening bank account etc. But the service itself doesn't cost anything.</i>
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<i>The startup must operate in an innovate field, the applicant must legally be at least a partial owner of the newly founded company, and they must have enough financial resources to achieve the set business goals for 1 year.</i>
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	<i>Usually this Good practices is presented by the startup Lithuania representatives in international physical or online events, fairs where Lithuania tries to attract investements, also Invest Lithuania (public organisation responsible for the attraction of foreign investment) present this GP to potential clients. Also, all information could be found on Startup Lithuania website.</i>
What is innovative about this good practice?	<i>This is a new approach to invite, attract certain group of people into national economy, especially into those sectors that faces huge demand for additional employees.</i>
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	<i>Every company that applies for a startup visa is a potential new Startup in Lithuania, in 3 years more than 100 Startups opened their office in Lithuania due to this GP.</i>
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid”	<i>The application procedure should be as simple as possible, and as fast as possible. Also, preferably information should be provided in several languages (in Lithuania English and Russian) depending on startups that are willing to come.</i>

Good practice 3. TechHub pre-accelerator

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	<i>TechHub pre-accelerator</i>	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	<i>Start Easy</i>	
Thematic objective of the practice	<i>SME Competitiveness</i>	
Geographical scope of the practice	<i>national</i>	
Location of the practice	Country	<i>Lithuania</i>
	Region	<i>Lithuania</i>
	City	<i>Vilnius</i>

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<i>A three-month training course, in which, with the help of personal mentors and innovation experts, they develop their ideas, get acquainted with investors and business angels, gain the necessary knowledge for further business development.</i>
Detailed information on the practice	<p><i>The pre-accelerator contains a total of twelve training topics. Startups refine the target customer, perform market and competitor analysis, create market entry strategy, learn about business and product development, positioning, branding, team building, intellectual property, investing. The best performing teams are awarded valuable prizes – opportunities to participate in meetings, events, and accelerators abroad.</i></p> <p><i>During the program, startups receive intensive care from mentors that help them achieve desired goals. Eight professionals in various fields look into the individual problems of startups and the teams continuously consult with experts in strategy, marketing, team building, information systems projects, technology, sustainable business, health innovation, etc.</i></p> <p><i>“TechHub” is the most intensive startup training program in Lithuania. 60 startups have already completed the program, 20 are currently participating. In total, the pre-accelerator brought together about 200 innovators, assisted by 10 program mentors from Lithuania and abroad, and a large number of partners, innovation experts and investors.</i></p>
Resources needed	<i>2 mln. EUR for 3 years</i>
Timescale (start/end date)	<i>Started on 2018 – on progress</i>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<i>3 startups that participated in the program received investments from private investment funds, another 8 have received financial support from MITA, and 10 startups have already accelerated abroad,</i>
Challenges encountered (optional)	
Potential for learning or transfer	<i>First the good and attractive program is needed that could attract young entrepreneurs to participate: the program contains a total of twelve training topics. Startups will refine the target customer, perform market and competitor analysis, create market entry strategy, learn about business and product development, positioning, branding, team building, intellectual property, investing.</i>

	<i>Additionally partnerships with other startup ecosystem members is needed: Successful graduates have the opportunity to present themselves to the investors at the final "Demo Day" event. In addition, the best performing teams are awarded valuable prizes - tickets to accelerators abroad and trips to meetings with partners or events in the EU countries. Also, the facilitates for this pre-accelerators are offered by the biggest university in Lithuania.</i>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Startup phase: X
	Entering the market phase:
	Growth phase:
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	Stand-alone
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	Yes.
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	The acceleration program for selected participants is free.
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	Startups (small companies with high and innovation-based business development potential, operating for up to 5 years) as well as teams with an innovative idea intending to register a company during the pre-accelerator can apply for participation.
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	Student and university fairs, info day events, social media platforms.
What is innovative about this good practice?	It is very important for the startup ecosystems to inspire and nurture the future entrepreneurs. Usually the main focus and resources in the ecosystems are targeted at established startups or scaleups, while students and young entrepreneurs are usually forgotten, thus this pre-acceleration program solves this issue. And the main goal is that participants would gain knowledge, network and self-confidence. In this way startup ecosystem will be supplied by experienced professionals who know how to create products.
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	3 startups that participated in the program received investments from private investment funds, another 8 have received financial support from MITA, and 10 startups have already accelerated abroad, More student companies were created than ever before. Entrepreneurship skills is promoted and learned among students of different disciplines, and even cross-sectoral collaboration is promoted.
Can you please outline "what not to do or things to avoid" in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	Nothing to mention.

Good practice 4. FinTech Innovations (FinTech LT)

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	<i>FinTech Innovations (FinTech LT)</i>	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	<i>Start Easy</i>	
Thematic objective of the practice	<i>SME Competitiveness</i>	
Geographical scope of the practice	<i>national</i>	
Location of the practice	Country	<i>Lithuania</i>
	Region	<i>Lithuania</i>
	City	<i>Vilnius</i>

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<i>The project that focuses on raising awareness of business community and entrepreneurial society about fintech innovations, and creating a sustainable image of Lithuania as fintech industry hub in the Baltic region..</i>
Detailed information on the practice	<p><i>in the recent years, by exploiting new and developing electronic technologies, taking advantages of changes in consumer behaviour and applying innovative business models, fintech industry has expanded a range of financial services and improved their quality and accessibility, especially in the fields of payments, electronic money and credit.</i></p> <p><i>Lithuania has great opportunities to become one of fintech industry hubs in Europe and attract related investments. Those prospects are facilitated by attractive regulatory approach for fintech enterprises to operate, existing tax incentives for investments in research and development and innovation, available pool of IT resources and friendly overall business environment. According to The Fintech Landscape in Lithuania Report, a number of fintech companies in Lithuania kept on growing and reached 170, in 2018. The trends confirm the existing potential and ambitions to become an important regional fintech hub.</i></p> <p><i>At the same time, the potential of Lithuania's fintech industry is considered to be higher. Estimated that wider awareness of fintech innovations and improved framework of innovation advisory services will add to the potential.</i></p> <p><i>The project concentrated on developing the potential of Lithuania's fintech industry and addressing the existing challenges. To raise awareness of fintech innovations, two international fintech conferences to be held in 2019 and 2020, as well as 30 events and presentations abroad promoting Lithuania's fintech industry, 16 events in Lithuania, and a number of articles in foreign and Lithuanian media to be prepared and published. In parallel, fintech startups and companies will get access to innovation advisory services and consultations, enabling their growth and development..</i></p>
Resources needed	<i>2 mln. EUR for 3 years</i>
Timescale (start/end date)	<i>Started on 2018 – on progress</i>

Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p>Although 2020 was a turbulent year, the Lithuanian Fintech industry emerged stronger as never before. During the year, we welcomed many homegrown companies and international players, such as Mambu, Curve and Ria, all of whom are leveraging the country's multi-disciplinary talent pool, innovative infrastructure, and progressive regulation. Lithuania now hosts over 230 Fintechs, most of which are focused on payments, financial software, digital banking and lending activities.</p> <p>In 2020, Lithuania's Fintech industry grew by 18%. It currently comprises over 4,000 jobs, with companies continuously expanding their teams and the range of functions carried out from Lithuania.</p> <p>Lithuania became the largest fintech hub in the EU in terms of licensed companies</p>
Challenges encountered (optional)	
Potential for learning or transfer	<p>The fintech sector in Vilnius has skyrocketed, attracting attention from around the globe, this was a result of a great mobilisation of all ecosystem members both from private and public sector which was initiated by Fintech LT team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newcomer programme – provides guidance through a one-stop-shop by the Bank of Lithuania • Universities started to prepare programmes relevant to this industry. • other public organisation prepared favourable business environment, friendly regulatory system and supportive ecosystem: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Smooth authorisation ◦ Electronic money or payment institution license 2-3 times faster than other EU jurisdictions ◦ The only jurisdiction in the EU offering "Lite" bank license for challenger banks ◦ 1st in Global Talent Competitiveness Index by ease of hiring • Financial incentives aimed at fostering innovation
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Startup phase: X
	Entering the market phase: X
	Growth phase: X
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	Stand-alone
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	Yes.
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	The acceleration program for selected participants is free.
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	Any Fintech company (either local or international) could get free advisory services from the MITA experts.
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	Usually this Good practices is presented by the startup Lithuania, MITA representatives in international physical or online events, fairs where Lithuania tries to attract investments, also Invest Lithuania (public organisation responsible for the attraction of foreign investment) present this GP to potential clients. Also, all information could be found on MITA website. Also big conferences on Fintech area were organised in Vilnius for several years.



What is innovative about this good practice?	<i>A concentration of different initiatives that was targeted on support for one specific startup sub-sector. If this strategy works out these kind of programmes provide higher visibility of local startup ecosystem in the global world.</i>
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	<i>Lithuania now hosts over 230 Fintechs, most of which are focused on payments, financial software, digital banking and lending activities. In 2020, Lithuania's Fintech industry grew by 18%. It currently comprises over 4,000 jobs, with companies continuously expanding their teams and the range of functions carried out from Lithuania.</i>
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	<i>Nothing to mention.</i>

Good practice 5. Smart FDI

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	<i>Smart FDI</i>	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	<i>Start Easy</i>	
Thematic objective of the practice	<i>SME Competitiveness</i>	
Geographical scope of the practice	<i>national</i>	
Location of the practice	Country	<i>Lithuania</i>
	Region	<i>Lithuania</i>
	City	<i>Vilnius</i>

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<i>Financial support measure that aims to attract foreign investments to Lithuania by supporting R&D&I activities.</i>
Detailed information on the practice	<p><i>Under the Smart FDI measure, applicants are companies established in Lithuania by a foreign investor over which a foreign investor has a decisive influence, or a foreign investor (company) or a branch established in Lithuania by a foreign investor. Partners are available under this measure.</i></p> <p><i>The Smart FDI measure supports FDI in R&D activities, as well as in FDI for projects related to the implementation of processes and organizational innovations, and FDI for the creation or expansion of the R & D infrastructure of an existing enterprise. The applicant can choose to implement all three, two or one activity in the project.</i></p> <p><i>Lithuanian companies can carry out projects according to the priority directions of research and experimental (social, cultural) development and innovation development (smart specialization).</i></p> <p><i>The maximum amount of funding available for the project is 3 million. EUR 6.5 million in FDI for R&D activities; EUR 500 thousand for FDI for the creation or expansion of an existing company's R & D I infrastructure; FDI for projects related to process and organizational innovation. The minimum amount of funding available for the project is 50 thousand. euros.</i></p>
Resources needed	<i>60 mln. EUR for 3 calls</i>
Timescale (start/end date)	<i>Started on 2017 – 2022</i>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<i>During all three calls the full dedicated budget was used to finance projects in total 80 application for funding was received, and 13 projects were accepted. Each accepted company had also to make their own private investment into the R&D activities and create well paid workplaces.</i>
Potential for learning or transfer	<i>This GP could be transferred to those countries that are also very active in integration into global value chains and they want to redirect and connect their companies with high-technology partners. This measures allows to attract these big companies into the</i>

	country and later those companies become cooperation partners for local SMEs and Startups. Also spin-off creation from these big companies could be expected.
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Startup phase:
	Entering the market phase: X
	Growth phase:
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	Stand-alone
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	Yes.
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	The co-financing rate is up to 80%
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<p>Requirements for applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private legal entities acquired by a Foreign Investor (Natural Person or Legal Person); or Foreign Investor (Enterprise); Branch of the Foreign Investor (Enterprise) incorporated in Lithuania <p>Requirements for Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Investor (Applicant) must have invested in the manufacturing or service sector in the Lithuania no earlier than 10 years before submitting the Application and is planning to launch R&D&I activities; or the Investor (Applicant) has not carried out any activities in Lithuania and intends to launch R&D&I activities Lithuania The Project shall create new jobs for researchers (during the implementation of the Project and 3 years from the end of implementation of the Project activities the jobs for researchers make at least 20 per cent of all new jobs related directly with the Project); The annual income of the Applicant (including the Enterprise Group of the Applicant) during the last three financial years is not lower than the requested amount of financing at least one financial year during the last 3 financial years before submission of the Application
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	Usually this Good practices is presented by, LVPA representatives in international physical or online events, fairs where Lithuania tries to attract investments, also Invest Lithuania (public organisation responsible for the attraction of foreign investment) present this GP to potential clients.
What is innovative about this good practice?	Targeted support for foreign R&D companies that make big investments and supports the competitiveness of local economy. This measure is a long-shot, that provides payback in 5-10 years, but the positive output usually is bigger than investment.
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	Attracted high-skilled employees, who later could be partners or co-founders of new startups. As well, some of the big companies that used this measure to enter Lithuanian market later have invested in local startups.
Can you please outline "what not to do or things to avoid"	The call should be continuous, in this case country would be able to finance the most promising applicants.

Good practice 6. GovTech Lab

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	GovTech Lab	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	Start Easy	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	national	
Location of the practice	Country	Lithuania
	Region	Lithuania
	City	Vilnius

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	GovTech Lab provides a platform where public sector institutions are able to identify challenges and put it up for the private sector to provide solutions.
Detailed information on the practice	<p>Lithuania GovTech lab has been developed and created in order to promote the use of state-of-the-art technologies in the public sector, thereby improving the efficiency of the public sector, providing better services to the society and making more accurate public policy decisions.</p> <p>Any public sector institution can be a participant in the GovTech Challenge series by submitting their challenge, that could be solved by an innovative technological solution. GovTech Lab helps to evaluate and define the challenges and prepares for the challenge competition.</p> <p>Startups, SMEs and other entrepreneurs are at the core of GovTech ecosystem as they are the key creators of the GovTech solutions. GovTech Lab together with the challenge owner and experts in the field select the best proposals for each challenge. All the teams, startups, academics and companies are invited to develop prototypes for the selected challenge and they participate in the GovTech Incubator programme which aims to develop the best ideas.</p> <p>Prizes and testing or contract opportunities are awarded to the best solution creators. In this way The GovTech Lab enables them to solve real-world problems that have a clear social impact by connecting startups and entrepreneurs with investors, accelerators and potential clients, as well as spreading the culture and knowledge of innovation in the public sector.</p>
Resources needed	<p>4 full time staff members to run the initiative;</p> <p>funds for prizes for the best solution creators;</p> <p>experts for the incubator programme.</p>
Timescale (start/end date)	Started on 2019 – on progress
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p>Project reached these goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GovTech Lab was created and GovTech pilot series of challenges was launched; 2. Signed partnership agreements together with Ministry of Economy and Innovation, Ignitis Group, Lithuania travel, Kaunas 2022 and Bank of Lithuania; 3. Organized workshops together with public and private sector;

	4. Created GovTech incubation program.
Challenges encountered (optional)	GovTech currently works with the most motivated and innovative public sector institutions, however the challenge is to attract a broader spectrum of institutions.
Potential for learning or transfer	GovTech is highly related to public procurement of innovation. GovTech can play a crucial role in fostering innovation public procurement, as it acts as a moderator and facilitator between public and private sector. Through the various GovTech initiatives, public sector is taught about the importance and benefits of innovation. In addition, initiative provides public sector with an opportunity to define their institutional needs and engage with the business side in market consultations. At the same time, GovTech also encourages start-ups and SMEs to propose their solutions and participate in the public procurement process
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Startup phase: x
	Entering the market phase:
	Growth phase:
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	Is connected to the innovation procurement procedure
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	Yes.
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	Who can apply Lithuania's public sector institutions, except research and higher education institutions Maximum funding for one project 53 000 EUR (co-financing up to 85%)
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	Project implementation requirements Project must be implemented in two stages, beginning with a design contest and the awarding of cash prizes to the winners in the first stage, following with negotiations for the contract with the winners of the design contest in the second stage.
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	MITA is the main organisation that is responsible to advertise this measure, they mainly target public organisations by going to events, or presenting personally. After that selected public organisations should find startups on their own.
What is innovative about this good practice?	It is effective and very fast way to connect and create collaboration between public organisations and startups. Also, the govtech call is connected to the innovation tender procedure, which replace very complicated traditional tendering procedure
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	Startups, SMEs and other entrepreneurs are at the core of GovTech ecosystem as they are the key creators of the GovTech solutions.
Can you please outline "what not to do or things to avoid" in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	GovTech currently works with the most motivated and innovative public sector institutions, however the challenge is to attract a broader spectrum of institutions.

6.2 Bologna



Good practice 7. “Progetti d’Impresa” of Metropolitan City of Bologna

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	“Progetti d’Impresa” of Metropolitan City of Bologna	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	Start Easy	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Metropolitan City	
Location of the practice	Country	Italy
	Region	Emilia-Romagna Region
	City	Bologna

2. Detailed description

<p>Short summary of the practice</p>	<p><i>“Progetti d’Impresa” is a public service supporting the birth and development of new businesses.</i></p>
<p>Detailed information on the practice</p>	<p><i>The mission of Progetti d’Impresa is to encourage and promote the creation and development of new business activities. It gives concrete and free of charge support to aspiring entrepreneurs and new-born companies to support their business idea implementation and to reduce the mortality rate of businesses.</i></p> <p><i>“Progetti d’Impresa” offers to aspiring entrepreneurs specific advice on everything one needs to know to start a business: from purely bureaucratic aspects to organizational, managerial and practical feasibility indications, up to the possibility of drafting a business plan.</i></p> <p><i>A particular focus is aimed at the possibility of intercepting subsidized finance tools. The service is based in Bologna and is supported by a network of 8 territorial local desks located throughout the metropolitan area.</i></p> <p><i>The service is based in Bologna and is supported by a network of 8 territorial local desks located throughout the metropolitan area.</i></p> <p><i>Progetti d’Impresa offers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>accompanying the development of the business idea and the feasibility check, through personalised consultancy for the development of the idea and the drafting of the business plan;</i> • <i>information on data, bureaucratic, administrative and legal obligations;</i> • <i>assistance in identifying competent bodies and services in startups and businesses;</i> • <i>insights into economic and legal issues related to the various business sectors;</i> • <i>information on opportunities, loans and grants issued in favour of new businesses and support in research and identification of the type of aid consistent with the business project;</i>
<p>Resources needed</p>	<p><i>The following human resources are currently dedicated to the service:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>1 technical advisor at 100%;</i> - <i>1 technical advisor at 20%;</i> - <i>1 administrative accountant at 10%;</i> - <i>1 manager at 10%.</i>

Timescale (start/end date)	<i>From 1989 to today</i>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p><i>Progetti d'impresa can be considered as a good practice because of its stronorientation towards business innovation, supporting entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs in the critical phase of start-up and valorizing business ideas with an added value and impact (social, environmental, cultural impact).</i></p> <p><i>The results of the office are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>over 10,000 business ideas advised, 350 business ideas listened to on average every year</i> - <i>over 1.000 companies started thanks to the support of the service</i> - <i>establishment of an annual award (Barresi Award) for business ideas (from 6.000 to 10.000 euro for prize every year).</i>
Challenges encountered (optional)	<i>A public body can give concrete and free of charge support to aspiring entrepreneurs and new-born companies to reduce the mortality rate of businesses.</i>
Potential for learning or transfer	<i>Progetti d'Impresa is easily transferable with human resources, consultancy skills and economic resources. The service can be provided through physical and online offices. It is useful to choose staff with experience in business management. It is useful to choose staff with experience in business management and ability to network between the various realities of the area for business facilitation.</i>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Start-up phase: x
	Entering the market phase:
	Growth phase:
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<i>Progetti d'Impresa is part of the strategy of the Economic Development Department of the Metropolitan City of Bologna.</i>
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	<i>The good practice is not supported by EU structural funds. It can be relevant for the structural funding authority as a key stakeholder for the Metropolitan area in the domain of new and innovative entrepreneurship support and SMEs policy.</i>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<i>The service is free of charge.</i>
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<i>Generally there is no selection criteria for access to the service. However, selection criteria have been applied for the provision of specific services as competition for the Barresi Prize. (www.cittametropolitana.bo.it/premiobarresi)</i>
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	<p>www.cittametropolitana.bo.it/progimpresa</p> <p>www.facebook.com/progimpresa</p>



<p>What is innovative about this good practice?</p>	
<p>How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?</p>	<p><i>The good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in the Metropolitan City thanks to a free advisory desk to aspiring entrepreneurs (over 10,000 business ideas advised, 350 business ideas listened to on average every year). Over 1.000 companies started thanks to the support of the service including assistance in identifying competent bodies and services in startups and businesses, insights into economic and legal issues related to the various business sectors; information on opportunities, loans and grants at European, national, and Metropolitan level as the establishment of an annual award (Barresi Award) for companies led by youngsters who are committed in sustainable development (UN Agenda 2030).</i></p>
<p>Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?</p>	<p><i>It is necessary to avoid competition with the private sector; if anything, it is necessary to find collaboration and cooperation with it.</i></p> <p><i>Fragmentation of services must be avoided, while coordination and networking must be strengthened.</i></p> <p><i>It is useful to choose staff with experience in business management and ability to network between the various realities of the area for business facilitation.</i></p>

Good practice 8. “Co-Start” incubator in Villa Garagnani, Zola Predosa (BO)

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	“Co-Start” incubator in Villa Garagnani, Zola Predosa (BO)	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	Start Easy	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Metropolitan City	
Location of the practice	Country	Italy
	Region	Emilia-Romagna Region
	City	Bologna

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	Co.Start Villa Garagnani is the incubator and co-working space located in a regenerated building in Zola Predosa (BO), municipality near Bologna.
Detailed information on the practice	<p>The property and the management of Co-Start is held by the municipality, with the support and contribution of both public and private partners for the development and promotion of numerous activities in the mansion and over the territory. The municipality publishes a yearly call for start-ups, in order to provide for free the spaces and the services offered by Co-Start (which include dedicated offices, co-working spaces, coaching and mentoring activities).</p> <p>Through this project, the Municipality wants to offer new opportunities for sharing, contamination, and development of entrepreneurial ideas. The aim is to build a linkage between the users of the Co-Start service and local companies, facilitate collaborations, exchange of ideas and new job opportunities, creating synergies to further qualify the local productive context as a whole, multiplying knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Co-start gives opportunities to new entrepreneurial ideas through a public selection: the selected start-ups have free access for free for 12 months to spaces, equipment, coaching and mentoring activities to facilitate their development. This project is sustained through private sponsor contribution. The development of the project, its facilitation, coaching, and mentoring activities are led by Ethic, a consolidated-experience company in this field.</p> <p>Also, start-ups which are not selected through the public selection have the possibility to access services upon payment.</p>

Resources needed	<p>Zola Predosa Municipality is sustaining all costs, including managing costs (caretaking, heating, light, cleaning and so on) and costs for internal staff.</p> <p>Total annual costs are about € 77.000, about € 30.000 connected to professional staff.</p> <p>Co-Start received public and private contributions for about € 28.000 for year.</p>
Timescale (start/end date)	<p>Start date: May 2017</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p>The success is evidenced by the fact that 18 start-ups in 4 years have benefited from the Co-Start. Co-Start is a great example of Public-Private partnership. The public property and management ensure the accessibility through public selections. This combination gives the opportunity to find a balance between community-based interests and market based interests.</p>
Challenges encountered (optional)	<p>Thanks to this project, the Municipal Administration won the challenge to play an active role in responding to the current issues of the world of work, new opportunities for sharing, contamination and development of business ideas.</p>
Potential for learning or transfer	<p>The main strengths which have the potential for learning and transfer come from two main aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The efficacy of the public-private partnership. The main problem for a start-up is (almost by definition) the lack of resources and the abundance of ideas and projects; the Municipality had the opportunity to give the spaces, the setting and the context; at the same time, the technical activities (in particular coaching and mentoring) have been externalised, giving a professional private service inside a public project. This results in an efficient use of a public space for the development (and with the help) of the private sector. - The exploitation of R & D interests of big companies located in the territory to promote and develop local and innovative ideas. From the big company side, it is an opportunity to discover new talents and promote the image of the company; from the start-up side, it is a unique opportunity to learn from highly competitive and motivated mentors.
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Startup phase: Incubator hosts startups in their earlier phase
	Entering the market phase:
	Growth phase:
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<p>Co-Start is meant to represent the point of reference for all the services supporting the establishment of new business and for the promotion of both the STEAM and entrepreneurship culture among young people. To this aim, several training and information activities are implemented every years with secondary schools, NEETs, unemployed people.</p>
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not,	<p>No, it is not.</p>

how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	<i>The project is relevant since it promotes youth and women empowerment; it also spreads the culture of entrepreneurship and self-employment, one of the key competences for lifelong learning.</i>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	No
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<p><i>Participants are selected with a public announcement by a Selection Commission composed by Experts in the startup field, Entrepreneurs and Startups; Commission changes every year.</i></p> <p><i>The public procedure yearly published for the selection of the 4-5 start up to access the incubation program, accepts both established companies (less than 12months) and informal projects. All sectors are accepted.</i></p> <p><i>Additional points are assigned to projects that :</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Contribute to the goals of the Agenda 2030</i> - <i>Contribute to the missions of the National PNRR (next gen EU)</i> - <i>Foresee social and work inclusion of people with disabilities</i> - <i>Are composed of women (for more than 50%)</i>
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	<p><i>Co-Start Villa Garagnani is promoted through:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>official website https://www.villagaragnani.it/co-start</i> - <i>official Facebook profile https://www.facebook.com/CoStartVillaGaragnani</i> - <i>official Instagram profile</i> <p><i>It is also promoted through the regional incubator network (in-ER) of which Co-Start is a member:</i></p> <p><i>http://in-er.it/membri.html</i></p>
What is innovative about this good practice?	<p><i>The partnership between public and private sector enable the project to offer high quality coaching and mentor services for free.</i></p> <p><i>The incubator invests his resources with a view to spread knowledge and create opportunities for the benefit of the whole social environment.</i></p>
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	<i>Co-Start Villa Garagnani boosted start-ups creation offering, free of charge, spaces and offices accessible 24/7, coaching and temporary management activities, networking with other Incubators and Companies.</i>
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	

Good practice 9. “Insieme per il lavoro” (Together for work) project

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	“Insieme per il lavoro” (Together for work) project	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	Start Easy	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Metropolitan City	
Location of the practice	Country	Italy
	Region	Emilia-Romagna Region
	City	Bologna

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<i>“Insieme per il lavoro” (Together for work) is a project that aims the insertion in the labour market of people that have economical and social vulnerabilities.</i>
Detailed information on the practice	<p><i>Insieme per il lavoro (Together for work) is a project that aims to insert into the labour market of people with social and economic vulnerabilities. It was launched in 2017 with the participation of the Municipality of Bologna, the Metropolitan City of Bologna and the Archdiocese of Bologna and, since 2021, with the participation of the Emilia-Romagna Region. Moreover, the network sees the collaboration of associations, unions and non-profit subjects. A fundamental added value is the participation of the companies and enterprises that feed the system with job offers. This large network cooperates in synergy by merging financial and human resources, utilities and tools to reach a shared objective: the social innovation of the Metropolitan area.</i></p> <p><i>The main goal of the service is the insertion into the labour market of the beneficiaries, that is performed by the matching offer and demand. The project makes use of tools such as specific training, orientation accessories such as Competences Assessment, Curriculum Vitae building, language courses, Social Innovation, Self-employment, etc.</i></p> <p><i>During the last 3 years, “Insieme per il lavoro” has intercepted an urgent and real need of people, and after Covid period more than ever, the project continues to guarantee hope and above all trust. Only in this way, it will be possible to combine the economic development with the centrality of relations, especially in this historical moment, in which we will increasingly need social cohesion and inequalities reduction.</i></p>

	<p><i>Specifically, an unemployed person of the Metropolitan City of Bologna and who is not already a beneficiary of an active employment policy measure, can submit his application to Insieme per il Lavoro via an online questionnaire. Once received the application, the front office will contact the person to fix an interview with a professional operator. If the user is domiciled in the metropolitan City of Bologna, the help desk will contact him within 5 working days, in order to schedule an interview with an operator that will lead an accurate interview. Once the beneficiary is put in charge of the project, the team will support the person along the path by using the above mentioned tools.</i></p>
Resources needed	<p><i>The annual budget is feed from Metropolitan City and Municipality of Bologna (400.000 euro) and Archdiocese of Bologna (1mln euro)</i></p>
Timescale (start/end date)	<p><i>17 march 2017- ongoing * the second protocol was renewed on 17 .05. 2021 up to 2026.</i></p>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p><i>Since the beginning of the project 5353 people have enrolled and more than 1485 people have been placed in job positions. In detail, 250 companies were involved in the project, 109 of which also signed the agreement to join the "company board" and who contributed to the job placement of 716 people; 106 self-employment paths and 65 social innovation projects which led to the financing of 20 new activities (start-ups).</i></p>
Challenges encountered (optional)	<p><i>a) Improvement of response times to candidates: in the first 4 years, the project introduced and strengthened actions aimed at maximising the goal of job placement.</i></p> <p><i>b) Establishment of collaborative relationships with companies: the model from the beginning proposed is the direct contact.</i></p> <p><i>c) The management of a new potential tool: specific training for adults to empower competencies to facilitate the labour market insertion.</i></p>
Potential for learning or transfer	<p><i>Insieme per il lavoro participated in the EEPA 2019 placing in second place in the responsible and inclusive entrepreneurship category. For this reason it can be a good practice potentially transferable also in other European countries especially in the post-covid phase with many people who have lost their jobs and are unable to find it because they may not have the right preparation that the market requires. The project is also a way of bringing supply and demand closer together. The potential for transfer lies in the commitment of Government and Local Public Administration to create concrete paths of social-economic integration of the vulnerable target population.</i></p>



Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Startup phase:
	Entering the market phase: X
	Growth phase:
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<i>This good practice is a stand-alone service supported by the Municipal, Metropolitan City and Archdiocese of Bologna in collaboration with the Emilia-Romagna Region.</i>
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	<i>No, the project has no access to EU structural funds.</i>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<i>The service offered to citizens and companies is completely free of any charges.</i>
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<i>The beneficiary in order to access the service must be an unemployed citizen that is not treated by other active labour policies.</i>
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	<i>The practice is marketed throughout communication channels of the stakeholders, companies Board, word-of-mouth, etc.</i>
What is innovative about this good practice?	<i>The innovative action of the good practice is the matching job offer – company demand</i>
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	<i>By offering financial support and accompanying tutorship</i>
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	<i>The thing to avoid is to consider a beneficiary merely as a number to be inserted in the system: the beneficiary has a unique private & professional history (or not) that needs to be oriented and valued to reach a social and economic independence.</i>

Good practice 10. “Le Serre di ART-ER” (Margherita Gardens’ Greenhouses) incubator

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	“Le Serre di ART-ER” (Margherita Gardens’ Greenhouses) incubator	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	Start Easy	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Regional	
Location of the practice	Country	Italy
	Region	Emilia-Romagna Region
	City	Bologna

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<i>The “Margherita Gardens’ Greenhouse” is a space dedicated to the promotion of innovation and of the entrepreneurial culture.</i>
Detailed information on the practice	<p><i>It deals with an urban regeneration project, in the middle of the Giardini Margherita (the most popular and centrally located green park in Bologna). The project born in 2013 when the City of Bologna - along with ART-ER, the Golinelli Foundation and Kilowatt - received a regional financing aimed at boosting territorial competitiveness and innovation. Daisy - the name of the project - had the objective to create a new hub for the community dedicated to experimentation, innovation and entrepreneurship.</i></p> <p><i>The space includes:</i></p> <p><i>1- facilities for the community (bar, restaurant, space for events, exhibitions, daycare etc.) and a co working space for micro businesses. This specific action is implemented by the cooperative Kilowatt.</i></p> <p><i>2- facilities for training on entrepreneurship targeting young students and school teachers: this action is implemented by the Golinelli Foundation</i></p> <p><i>3- a business incubator - ART-ER Greenhouses - for hosting and accelerating innovative startups, a helpdesk for would be entrepreneurs and actions for the startup community: this is implemented by ART-ER.</i></p> <p><i>The project was co-funded by the Regional government - total amount of Euro 1 million - mainly for renovating the existing buildings and setting up the service offer.</i></p>



	<p><i>The initial regional funding covered two years of activity. The incubator "ART-ER Greenhouses" consists of office space - 90 sq. mt divided into offices for startups - , 2 meeting and training rooms and an office for ART-ER staff. Startups can access space for a period of 12 months and benefit from a range of support services and other facilities to enable their acceleration and growth.</i></p> <p><i>Every year, a call is published to identify those most promising startups to accelerate.</i></p> <p><i>In 2022, the space hosts 13 different startups that share the office space.</i></p> <p><i>Office space cost 70 euro/month.</i></p> <p><i>In addition to this activity, a new acceleration programme - I percorsi delle Serre di ART-ER - was launched in 2021 in the same space to support teams over 4 months programmes in 5 key areas (product launch, fund raising, sales development, CCIs and green economy). 22 teams have taken advantage of this new programme.</i></p>
Resources needed	<p><i>The project that created Le Serre dei Giardini covered two years of activity, dedicated to the renovation of the buildings and to the setting up of the services that are delivered and received a total budget of around one million Euros.</i></p>
Timescale (start/end date)	<p><i>2013 - ongoing</i></p>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p><i>The successes achieved by Le Serre are collected in an impact document, the main indicators (for the 2015-2019 period) are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>- 204 companies used Serre's consulting/mentorship services</i> <i>- 67 of these companies re-used the services a second time</i> <i>- 87 project of enterprise participated to their incubation and impact programmes</i> <i>- 11 of these projects turned in actual companies</i> <p><i>Full impact document available at the following website:</i></p> <p><i>https://kilowatt.bo.it/download-form/?ID=1169&blogID=1</i></p>
Challenges encountered (optional)	<p><i>The most powerful aspect of Le Serre is its multidimensional approach, which gives the perfect environment to jump from the idea to the concrete business: the environment is filled with both institutional and private stakeholders from the territory.</i></p>

<p>Potential for learning or transfer</p>	<p><i>Le Serre are a generative space of contamination and exchange, and it is with this spirit that many projects came to life between the park and the offices, thanks to the collaboration of the communities that found their home here. Le Serre host different projects ranging from sustainable agriculture to design, from circular economy to entrepreneurship for migrant people.</i></p> <p><i>For the management of the space, a hybrid approach has been adopted, which includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the involvement of both institutional (such as the Municipality of Bologna, the Golinelli foundation and ART-ER) and non-institutional agents, giving the opportunity to Le Serre to act as a bridge between innovative and non-structured agents and the institutional ones. - Governance includes profit activities which balance the non-profit ones, which usually have major social impact but low economic sustainability - Within the different spaces there are occasions of contamination between different worlds.
<p>Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for</p>	<p>Startup phase:x</p> <p>Entering the market phase:x</p> <p>Growth phase: x</p>
<p>Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?</p>	<p><i>The incubator Le Serre di ART-ER is part of the offer available for regional startups that is mainly grouped in the regional platform EmiliaRomagnaStartUp (https://www.emiliaromagnastartup.it/). EmiliaRomagnaStartUp is the facility implemented by ART-ER and the Emilia-Romagna region to gather regional innovative startups (over 500 startups have a profile in the platform), incubators, accelerators and institutions supporting startups (a network of 92 organisations have a profile in the platform). EmiliaRomagnaStartUp also provides online services (e.g. information on opportunities for the community) as well as off line support (e.g helpdesk for would-be entrepreneurs, information support from experts on fundraising, IPR, labour, tax and other business creation aspects).</i></p>
<p>Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?</p>	<p><i>Yes. The project born in 2013 when the City of Bologna - along with ART-ER, the Golinelli Foundation and Kilowatt - received a regional financing aimed at boosting territorial competitiveness and innovation. The budget was made available in the regional ERDF programme.</i></p>
<p>Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?</p>	<p><i>The requested contribution for each startup/business project is 70 euro/month.</i></p>
<p>How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.</p>	<p><i>Startups / projects selected can access the space and support services spaces for a period of 12 months and benefit from a range of facilities to enable their acceleration and growth.</i></p> <p><i>A call of applications is published every year to select the startups.</i></p> <p><i>A selection committee selects the companies in 2 steps:</i></p> <p><i>step one: selection is made based on application contents according to the following criteria: (1) product/service innovation contents, (2) success potential</i></p>

	<p>based on the company market and competition, (3) economic and financial sustainability, (4) Team's competences</p> <p>step two: team interview according to the following criteria: (1) Team motivation, (2) application consistency in respect to the startup establishment at the incubator, (3)</p> <p>Expected benefit from participation in the programme.</p>
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	<p>Le Serre di ART-ER has a profile in the platform EmiliaRomagnaStartUp: https://www.emiliaromagnastartup.it/en/innovative/soggetti/le-serre-di-aster</p> <p>Promotion of specific actions (call for applications, trainings, events, etc.) are mainly made through the platform.</p>
What is innovative about this good practice?	<p>Le Serre di ART-ER are based in a real hub for innovation and creativity thar, due its central location in Bologna, the availability of large external spaces, the recovery of historical greenhouses and buildings, represents a key space for the whole community. The concentration of many activities and audiences favour cross fertilisation, experimentation of new projects and represents an excellent place for showcasing new products and startups.</p>
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	<p>Over the period 2016- feb. 2022, 59 startups have been supported by the incubator (37 with office space and services and only 22 with accelerations services).</p>
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	<p>Due to space constraints, startups are selected for a limited period of 12 months and, since 2021,a 4 month acceleration programme supports startups with services mainly provided online.</p> <p>The relatively short period of access to space and the new acceleration programme has enabled to highly increase the number of supported startups over the last period.</p> <p>The type and costs of office space is especially attractive for those startups at their very start: the teams are usually small (3 people maximum) and the space is shared between the startups which highly facilitate exchanges between the startup founders..</p> <p>More advanced startups have access to larger space that is available in other incubators in the region.</p>

Good practice 11. Crowdfunding Hub - Metropolitan City of Bologna

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	Crowdfunding Hub - Metropolitan City of Bologna	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	Start Easy	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Metropolitan City	
Location of the practice	Country	Italy
	Region	Emilia-Romagna Region
	City	Bologna

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<i>The Crowdfunding Hub disseminates the Crowdfunding tool and its potential by providing free of charge consultancy and training to startup, SMEs, local public bodies.</i>
Detailed information on the practice	<p><i>The Crowdfunding Hub, promoted by the Metropolitan City of Bologna and the University of Bologna, was born thanks to the Interreg Central Europe project "Crowd-Fund-Port". The project launched 10 Crowdfunding Hubs around central Europe. Each of the Hubs of the Countries involved (Austria – 2 Hubs, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Slovakia, Slovenia and Poland) has its own Hub Strategy, adapted to the situation of each country. The Italian Hub supports startups, SMEs, public administrations and third sector organisations by offering information, consultancy and training on Crowdfunding and on how to develop a crowdfunding campaign.</i></p> <p><i>The service is mainly provided through a physical office located in Bologna, at the headquarters of the Metropolitan City of Bologna.</i></p> <p><i>To name some of the activities, the Hub organised 4 training days, totally free of charge for participants: 30 hours in total, a hundred participants and two in-depth modules. The first - aimed primarily at start-ups, consultants, and SMEs - had as its main themes the introduction to entrepreneurial finance, the principles and functioning of crowdfunding and the management of the project after a crowdfunding campaign. The second, designed for Public Administrations and third sector organisations, focused on civic crowdfunding, as well as on definition, actors, models, taxonomies, advantages, and disadvantages of crowdfunding in the broad sense.</i></p>

Resources needed	<i>The launch of the Hub was financed by European funds, and specifically by the Interreg Central Europe programme – Crowd-Fund-Port project. The project ended in June 2019; the continuation of the activities is ensured by the Metropolitan City of Bologna by using its own financial and human resources.</i>
Timescale (start/end date)	<i>Start: June 2019 - ongoing</i>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<i>The success of the good practice is determined by the hundreds of people who have already followed the free courses made available and connected to the site for information on crowdfunding techniques. This service is completely free of charge, a “helpdesk” for information and training on what crowdfunding is, how it works, its pros and cons and how to face a crowdfunding campaign. This is much appreciated in a time of scarce resources.</i>
Challenges encountered (optional)	<i>Beyond the success or otherwise of the campaign, the entrepreneur can understand the real possibility of success of his idea without spend money. To encourage the birth and growth of businesses, P.A. offers free, useful and concrete tools to new entrepreneurs.</i>
Potential for learning or transfer	<i>This good practice can be transferred for the following good reasons: 1) during this current economic and financial crisis businesses need new financial instruments as crowdfunding; 2) crowdfunding is a tool with a high intensity of knowledge and professionalism, not so much of economic resources, therefore it can be activated by SMEs; 3) the European Crowd-Fund-Port project can offer that transversal knowledge on crowdfunding that can make good practice better transferable also in other countries.</i>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Startup phase: X
	Entering the market phase: X
	Growth phase: X
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<i>The Crowdfunding Hub is part of the Business Projects Office activities within the strategy of the Economic Development Department of the Metropolitan City of Bologna.</i>
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	<p><i>The Crowdfunding Hub is a specific service of Progetti d'Impresa (see GP 1) within the Economic Development Department of the Metropolitan City of Bologna.</i></p> <p><i>TTThe Crowdfunding Hub was activated thanks to the support of the transnational cooperation project Interreg Central Europe Crowd-Fund-Port, which aimed to increase knowledge and skills on Crowdfunding in Central Europe. Thanks to the project Interreg Central Europe Crowd-Fund-Port (also mentioned above), Progetti d'impresa - which cooperates with the Research, innovation and european projects management of the Metropolitan City of Bologna - had the opportunity to acquire important skills on crowdfunding, and spread the potential of this tool to users, and in particular to startup, SMEs, aspiring entrepreneurs and citizens.</i></p>



	<i>Nowadays, the Crowdfunding Hub is runned through the metropolitan City's own resources.</i>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<i>This service is completely free of charge.</i>
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<i>There is no particular criteria to access the info desk service if not basics as having a business project idea and interest in the Crowdfunding tool. Users of the good practice can then be invited on a voluntary basis to participate in the services of the Crowdfunding Hub (lab workshops etc..) provided through cooperation with local partners. Criteria usually include previous access and use of business projects service (Barresi Award) or participation in partners services (Incubation acceleration programmes).</i>
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	https://www.crowdfundport.eu/crowd-funding-hub/italy/
What is innovative about this good practice?	<p><i>The innovative value of Crowdfunding Hub consists in the possibility, for a Public Administration, to provide a useful and free service to different types of targets, and to be a point of contact and meeting between aspiring entrepreneurs and entities and realities that deal with Crowdfunding themes and tools at the local, national and European level.</i></p> <p><i>The Crowdfunding Hub has also an European added value: it was activated thanks to the support of the transnational cooperation project Interreg Central Europe Crowd-Fund-Port, which aimed to increase knowledge and skills on Crowdfunding in Central Europe. The Hub of Bologna is in net with others 10 Hub of the center Europe started thanks to the plan. The Hubs are in constant contact and share their experiences, to look at the European context with curiosity and a spirit of innovation.</i></p>
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	...
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	<p><i>It is necessary to avoid competition with the private sector; if anything, it is necessary to find collaboration and cooperation with it.</i></p> <p><i>Fragmentation of services must be avoided, while coordination and networking must be strengthened.</i></p> <p><i>It is useful to choose staff with experience in business management and ability to network between the various realities of the area for business facilitation.</i></p>

Good practice 12. Unitary Access / SuapER(lepida.it)

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	Unitary Access / SuapER(lepida.it)	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	Start Easy	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Regional	
Location of the practice	Country	Italy
	Region	Emilia-Romagna Region
	City	Bologna

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<p><i>The UNITARY ACCESS platform allows companies to relate to the public administration through a single access instead of the four existing ones.</i></p> <p><i>It's a web portal that allows SME and professional users (architects, surveyors, engineers, etc) and citizens to submit a practice online instead of going physically inside a public office.</i></p> <p><i>it guarantees homogeneous processes inside the territory of Emilia-Romagna</i></p> <p><i>It brings different functions agreed with Emilia-Romagna Regione and Public Administrations that take part also in the definitions.</i></p> <p><i>The final user is facilitated in compiling each practises using this platform related to productive activities, building, environmental and seismic functions</i></p>
Detailed information on the practice	<p><i>The UNITARY ACCESS aims at improving and simplifying the relationship between the business world and the Public Administration (PA) by providing a platform allowing companies to relate to the PA through a single access instead of the four existing ones (new SUAPER, SiedER, SIS and AIA); it unifies the building, environmental and seismic functions to the single contact point (SUAP) functions.</i></p> <p><i>The regional PA challenge was to increase the offer of services to businesses by ensuring fully interoperable services, simplifying and facilitating access through a new platform for the e-submission of applications.</i></p>

	<p><i>How does it work?</i></p> <p><i>The service makes available to the local PA that adopts a set of procedures codified and certified, and allows customization to each public and third parties according to specific needs and regulations.</i></p> <p><i>UNITARY ACCESS allows SMEs to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Login to the platform by a public digital identity's authentication system (SPID);</i> <i>2. choose the intermediation;</i> <i>3. search personal data and directory;</i> <i>4 compile practice: fill-out necessary forms to stay in compliance with local regulations relating to the environment, productive and residential construction, commerce, tourism, health and maritime state property;</i> <i>5. attach doc files;</i> <i>6. make payments;</i> <i>7. Signed digitally and sending the single form.</i> <p><i>The competitiveness of the SMEs can significantly increase thanks to easier and quick digital access related administrative bureaucratic practises for the regional businesses.</i></p>
Resources needed	<p><i>Investment about 1 Mil. EUR.</i></p> <p><i>Management about 150K EUR per year.</i></p>
Timescale (start/end date)	<i>12/2018 -ongoing</i>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p><i>More than 95% of local authorities in Emilia-Romagna endorsed this platform up today (315 out of 328).</i></p> <p><i>About 100.000 practises handled per year</i></p>
Challenges encountered (optional)	
Potential for learning or transfer	<p><u>Unitary Access platform technical specifications for integration and interoperability</u></p> <p><u>Procedures for accessing the Unitary Access test environment</u></p> <p>Video tutorials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Functions compilation and presentation of practices for companies, professionals and intermediaries</u>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Back office and administration functions for institutions - Taxes configuration
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Startup phase: x
	Entering the market phase:
	Growth phase:
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<i>The good practice UNITARY ACCESS is an important goal, envisaged by the Digital Agenda of Emilia-Romagna (ADER) as part of the POR FESR 2014-2020, to improve and simplify the relationship between the business world and the Public Administration (PA). The Unitary access platform belongs to the Lepida 's Division Software and Platforms Bodies and Healthcare for bodies, citizens and enterprises.</i>
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	Yes. POR FESR 2014-2020
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	No
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<i>The users need to register to the platform to access the Unitary Access services.</i>
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	https://au.lepida.it/ https://www.lepida.net/software-piattaforme-enti-sanita/piattaforme-imprese https://www.lepida.net/software-piattaforme-enti-sanita/tutorial
What is innovative about this good practice?	<i>The Unitary Access platform improves and simplifies the relationship between business and PA, by allowing companies to relate to the PA through a single access, online, by guaranteeing homogeneous processes in the Region.</i>
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	

6.3 East Flanders



Good practice 13. Gentrepreneur, a city platform for student-entrepreneurs in Ghent (East-Flanders)

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	Gentrepreneur, a city platform for student-entrepreneurs in Ghent (East-Flanders)	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	Start Easy	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Regional	
Location of the practice	Country	Belgium
	Region	East-Flanders
	City	

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Telephone	0032 483 22 27 78
Your organisation <i>Organization name</i>	Economic Council of East-Flanders
Location <i>name the city, region, state</i>	Woodrow Wilsonplein 2 – 9000 Ghent (Belgium)
Further information <i>Link, website</i>	https://www.gentrepreneur.gent/

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<p>Inspiring and informing young entrepreneurs in Ghent through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - expert network - workshops/events - authentic learning environment <p>in order to build and stimulate the business community.</p>
Detailed information on the practice	<p>In 2011 we noticed a lot of students establishing their own company without having all the right information. In a response to this, a coaching center was set-up in each of the academic institutions in Ghent (Artevelde high school, UGent, HOGENT), but they also collaborated with the City of Ghent into establishing “Gentrepreneur” in order to coach and guide the student entrepreneurship. Thanks to subsidies of Flanders and Europe, the project could grow.</p> <p>Nowadays Gentrepreneur informs, inspires and guides young entrepreneurs between 18 and 26 years old with interesting business ideas to realise their dreams. The goal is to be easily accessible, therefore Gentrepreneur often joins forces with the business coaching centers of the academic institutions.</p> <p>The service offer of Gentrepreneur continues to be updated according to the needs of the beneficiaries, which are detected by working together with a broad network of partners.</p> <p>Main stakeholders are all of the academic institutions in Ghent, the City of Ghent and the Province of East-Flanders, and all of the business supporting network organisations (Unizo, Voka, Vlaio, Vlajo...)</p> <p>Main beneficiaries are</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - primarily all students in high schools and universities in Ghent - if relevant, all young entrepreneurs between 18 and 26 years old in Ghent - their coaches.
Resources needed	<p>70% of the funding: EFRO, co-financed by Vlaio</p> <p>30% of the resources: the City of Ghent, the Province of East-Flanders, the academic institutions (Artevelde, UGent, HOGENT)</p> <p>Today 4 employees (3 fte) are paid with project subsidies. There are also 10 fte working in the coaching centers of the academic institutions (not paid by the subsidies).</p>
Timescale (start/end date)	September 1, 2016 - ongoing
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p>The results of Gentrepreneur are prosperous and promising.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each year more than 1000 students are coached by Gentrepreneur. - Gentrepreneur publishes between 30 and 40 blog posts a year, with approximately 3300 readers annually. - 7200 followers on social media; 40000 website clicks - 1250 newsletter subscribers <p>Even during COVID19, all of their numbers are increasing.</p>
Challenges encountered (optional)	In recent years a lot of entrepreneurship initiatives were created. It is important for the young entrepreneurs to have a clear overview and to not get lost in a labyrinth of information.
Potential for learning or transfer	Collaboration is key in the story of Gentrepreneur. That is why all parties influencing the student-entrepreneurs, from experts and teachers to role models and parents, are having an essential role in creating a challenging, stimulating community for young entrepreneurs in Ghent. The part of the high schools and universities is essential, since each school also has its own business contact center.



	Since there are a lot of initiatives for young entrepreneurs nowadays, Gentrepreneur sees the need to work together with them, in order to create one single place where student-entrepreneurs can go for answers on all of their questions.
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	<i>Startup phase: yes</i>
	<i>Entering the market phase: yes</i>
	<i>Growth phase: yes</i>
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<i>Stand-alone</i>
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	<i>The initiative is funded by EFRD-funds from the Flemish and Provincial Government.</i>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<i>No</i>
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<i>They have to be students at a high school or University</i>
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	https://www.gentrepreneur.gent/
What is innovative about this good practice?	<i>It is effective in reaching out to students and make them more entrepreneurial.</i>
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	Gentrepreneur informs, inspires and guides young entrepreneurs between 18 and 26 years old with interesting business ideas to realise their dreams
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	In recent years a lot of entrepreneurship initiatives were created. It is important for the young entrepreneurs to have a clear overview and to not get lost in a labyrinth of information.

Good practice 14. Eureka - Promoting entrepreneurship in secondary and higher education through supporting business programs for students

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	Eureka - Promoting entrepreneurship in secondary and higher education through supporting business programs for students	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	Start Easy	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Regional	
Location of the practice	Country	Belgium
	Region	East-Flanders
	City	
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Your organisation <i>Organization name</i>	Economic Council of East-Flanders	
Location <i>name the city, region, state</i>	Woodrow Wilsonplein 2 – 9000 Ghent (Belgium)	
Further information <i>Link, website</i>	https://www.erov.be/jong-ondernemerschap-stimuleren/eureka-ik-onderneem-toneelstuk/ https://www.vlajo.org/programmas/mini-ondernemingen/waarom-hoe-en-wat https://www.vlajo.org/programmas/start-academy/word-ceo-van-je-eigen-idee https://www.start-academy.be/	

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<p>East-Flanders has different projects focussing on stimulating entrepreneurship to young people during their school education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eureka, I do business! (ECEP initiative) - Mini company (Vlajo initiative, supported by ECEP) - Start Academy (Vlajo initiative, supported by ECEP)



<p>Detailed information on the practice</p>	<p>By means of the play “Eureka, ik onderneem!” (in English “Eureka, I do business!”), we promote entrepreneurship and the skills needed: having guts, taking risks, being responsible and developing self-esteem. The play is presented to students in the last year of their secondary education in East-Flanders.</p> <p>Three eccentric hosts go on an instructive adventure with the students with only one goal: within the hour they will set up a new business. They go through the entire foundation process and try to by-pass all possible traps. Afterwards ECEF presents inspiring testimonies of young entrepreneurs, who tell about the ‘how’ and the ‘why’ of their newly established business, about the challenges, the obstacles, but above all about the good parts of being an entrepreneur.</p> <p>Vlajo has also two inspiring activities, supported by ECEF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mini companies: in the last grade of secondary school, students are guided into setting up their own small business, and to run it during a certain period (from one semester to two years). The students have to determine their missions and targets, do market research, gather funds, write a business plan, organise shareholder’s meetings... - Start Academy: high school and university students with a business idea follow a series of webinars and workshops with a personal coach, in order to refine their plans. The final idea is pitched to a jury who chooses the best. The winner gets a nice start capital. - Of course there are many more coaching and supporting programs in East-Flanders.
<p>Resources needed</p>	<p>Eureka</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - € 12K: development of the play (unique cost) - ± 10K a year: performance of 8 shows - ± 6.5K a year: personnel cost <p>Mini’s</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 60% from Flemish government and Vlaio - 40% from partners, such as ECEF - Participation fees (€15/student) - 12 ftes for all Vlajo programs in Flanders <p>Start Academy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 25K a year <p>1.5 fte</p>
<p>Timescale (start/end date)</p>	<p>Eureka: 2005 - ongoing</p>



	<p>Start Academy: 2008 - ongoing</p> <p>Mini's: 1996 - ongoing</p>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p>The show "Eureka" reaches about 1500 to 1800 students a year.</p> <p>311 East-Flemish class teams set up their own mini company. By the end of the year the mini-entreprises often donate the profit of their business to charity.</p> <p>Last year 89 student teams (approx. 3 students per team) participated in the Start Academy program. A lot of start-ups and jobs were created, but exact numbers are hard because not all of the teams begin a business immediately after the program</p>
Challenges encountered (optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Up to date topics - Target group: mostly students in technical schools participate, and not the more general disciplines - Finding external customers (not only friends, family) - Impossible to give sessions in Dutch and English (lack of human capital) <p>Elaborating online knowledge center & number of coaches</p>
Potential for learning or transfer	<p>We see some overlap in the learning potential for these initiatives. All in all the most interesting part is stimulating students during their entire school education to be creative and to develop their own talents. It gives them extra luggage for whatever future they choose: this can be as an employee or as an entrepreneur. For younger students this can be obtained by means of a playful coworking activity, for students in higher education it is interesting to link this with a competitive aspect. These initiatives aim to make entrepreneurship more accessible since a lot of young people in Flanders find it difficult to realise their own business: they need expensive coaching, they need a lot of start capital, they don't find their way through all the administration. Thanks to this kind of coaching trajectories, students are far better prepared to realise their entrepreneurial dream.</p>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Startup phase: yes
	Entering the market phase: no
	Growth phase: no
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	Stand-alone
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	The initiative is funded by funds from the Flemish and Provincial Government.



Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	No
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	All schools can apply
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	https://www.erov.be/jong-ondernemerschap-stimuleren/eureka-ik-ondernem-toneelstuk/ https://www.vlajo.org/programmas/mini-ondernemingen/waarom-hoe-en-wat https://www.vlajo.org/programmas/start-academy/word-ceo-van-je-eigen-idee https://www.start-academy.be/
What is innovative about this good practice?	Direct contact with students and young people through the educational context of the school on entrepreneurship. Interactive activities to inspire young people.
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	We think it has, in an indirect way. We often meet entrepreneurs or start-ups who tell us their entrepreneurial dream started when getting in contact with Eureka or the Mini's.
Can you please outline "what not to do or things to avoid" in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	From inspiration to really starting a business is a big step.

Good practice 15. Festival of the Future, an incentive to focus on entrepreneurship during COVID by creating a flexible event format

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	Festival of the Future, an incentive to focus on entrepreneurship during COVID by creating a flexible event format	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	NO	
Please select the project acronym	Start Easy	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Regional	
Location of the practice	Country	Belgium
	Region	East-Flanders
	City	
Contact email	sarah.levecque@erov.be	
Telephone	0032 483 22 27 78	
Your organisation <i>Organization name</i>	Economic Council of East-Flanders	
Location <i>name the city, region, state</i>	Woodrow Wilsonplein 2 – 9000 Ghent (Belgium)	
Further information <i>Link, website</i>	http://festivalvandetoekomst.be/	

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	The Economy Department, POM (Provincial Development Company) and ECEF created an event where people could take a global look on what is coming in 2030



<p>Detailed information on the practice</p>	<p>Before COVID19, we wanted to organise a festival-like event where people could choose between different stages, where speakers give a taste of a particular future-related theme. Since we have to organise everything online now, the decision to create the same atmosphere, but in a digital way, didn't come as a surprise: the last thing we wanted was to create a simple series of webinars.</p> <p>In several online sessions and testimonies, spread over three days, the problems of tomorrow were tackled to see how future-proof our society and our economy are nowadays. Important topics were: the jobs of tomorrow, the newest technology, sustainable (circular) economy, lifelong learning and digital challenges for people in all age classes. The festival was closed with a keynote speaker and a network session, in which the guests and the speakers could get to know each other and ask more specific questions.</p> <p>This was an event that wanted to combine both the academic, theoretic approach and a more experienced, practical vision on working in the future. Through 19 keynote speakers, going from professors of the University of Ghent to very ambitious, young entrepreneurs, the public was given a global insight into the problems of tomorrow. This resulted in a very dynamic atmosphere, which is not easy for an online event.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main beneficiaries were (young) entrepreneurs, municipalities, retail and more generally anyone who is interested in the economy and in what is coming for us in the future.
<p>Resources needed</p>	<p>Every partner had two employees working on the project.</p> <p>65K: communication, online platform, website, footage, goodiebags (main funding came from the Economy Department, through subsidies, but also ECEF and POM invested in the project)</p>
<p>Timescale (start/end date)</p>	<p>The festival itself took place on December 8, 9 and 10 of 2020. This means to be an annual event.</p>
<p>Evidence of success (results achieved)</p>	<p>Some 520 participants joined us on the digital festival ground. A few of them followed the sessions online, most of them watched the videos later.</p> <p>19 speakers, going from professors to young entrepreneurs, shared their theories and experiences about the problems and challenges the future brings.</p> <p>The main feedback of the guests was positive: they like this new way of sharing testimonials and getting in touch with entrepreneurs even in difficult times.</p>

Challenges encountered (optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Setting up a livestream for a lot of people - Finding a platform. The one we found came from the Netherlands; it might be more interesting to find a more local, affordable alternative <p>Creating interesting but entertaining videos. It is harder to make people concentrate on online than on offline events</p>
Potential for learning or transfer	<p>COVID19 was some kind of a challenge, but the festival setting made the event very flexible. Of course we prefer to organise an event that is both on- and offline, but we had no choice here but to go completely online, which proved not to be a problem. By combining online and offline the event might draw a larger audience, making the concept more attractive. It is very important though to see that an event doesn't have to be canceled due to unexpected circumstances, as long as the platform and the concept are flexible enough to turn everything upside down without large expenses.</p>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Startup phase: yes
	Entering the market phase: no
	Growth phase: no
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	Stand-alone
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	The initiative is funded by funds from the Provincial Government.
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	No
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	All start-ups can register (free)
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	http://festivalvandetoekomst.be/ Marketing and communication campaign on (social) media
What is innovative about this good practice?	A high level event with lots of speakers and participants highlights future trends and gives inspiration to start-ups.
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	We think it has, in an indirect way. New ideas have arised and will lead to new businesses.



Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?

From inspiration to really starting a business is a big step.

Good practice 16. Support Point for Entrepreneurs Ghent

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	OOG Making entrepreneurship more attractive by creating a unique contact and consultancy service in order to simplify the administrative maze (NL: Ondersteuningspunt Ondernemen Gent - ENG: Support Point for Entrepreneurs Ghent)	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	Start Easy	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Regional	
Location of the practice	Country	Belgium
	Region	East-Flanders
	City	
Contact email	sarah.levecque@erov.be	
Telephone	0032 483 22 27 78	
Your organisation <i>Organization name</i>	Economic Council of East-Flanders	
Location <i>name the city, region, state</i>	Woodrow Wilsonplein 2 – 9000 Ghent (Belgium)	
Further information <i>Link, website</i>	https://stad.gent/nl/ondernemen (subscription for newsletter at the bottom of this page) Social media: https://www.facebook.com/gentseondernemer https://twitter.com/Gent_Ondernemer https://www.linkedin.com/in/gentseondernemer	

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	OOG (ENG: Support Point for Entrepreneurs Ghent) provides accessible and user-friendly insights in governmental services to entrepreneurs.



<p>Detailed information on the practice</p>	<p>OOG actively stimulates starters by guiding them through all the governmental information and subsidies. More experienced entrepreneurs are counseled on the right governmental support.</p> <p>According to organisations representing SMEs and retail (Voka, Unizo and NSZ), entrepreneurs needed a single point of contact in Ghent. The consultancy used to be wavering and of doubtful quality so the need was high to establish a skilled, clear-cut platform for entrepreneurs.</p> <p>Achieving goals by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Qualitative, easily accessible consultancy service - Facilitating subsidies and matchmaking - Active collaboration with other city departments (concerning licences, energy saving subsidies and coaching) - Providing basic information about products of other governmental entities, such as VLAIO: subsidies, innovation, loans and fundings - Collaborating with local partners and creating a local ecosystem of consultancy services for entrepreneurs (organisations representing SMEs, universities and high schools, industry/university project, innovation projects) - Digitalising and reducing the administrative process of applying for subsidies and licences. - Budgeting extra personnel to expand the consultancy services of OOG <p>Stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Other governmental entities - Local partners - Internal services (both on content and on IT/legal framework) <p>Beneficiaries (in numbers)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hotels, restaurants, cafes and retail ((+/- 50%) - Consultancy professions (+/- 25%) - SME's (+/- 22%) - Acquisition/investors (+/- 3 %)
<p>Resources needed</p>	<p>Initially financed by EFRO and the Flemish Hermes fund. Today: structurally and financially embedded in the Economic Department of Ghent</p> <p>Initial costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 75K investment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 150K consultancy - 60K communication <p>Human capital: 8.3 fte personnel (5.6 front office, 1.7 back office, 1 teamcoach)</p>
Timescale (start/end date)	January 22 2010 - ongoing
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p>Factual proof</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Satisfaction survey: 92.5% is pleased with the service - Yearly budget for start-up contracts and subsidy improvement is expended - Newsletter has more than 6.000 members <p>Number of OOG users increases: 3300 cases in 2019, 3650 cases in 2020 (duplication compared to 2010)</p> <p>No creation of start-ups or jobs; OOG only wants to guide starting entrepreneurs. With the right information and financial support, entrepreneurs are stronger, which leads to more sustainable entrepreneurship.</p>
Challenges encountered (optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reducing administration (online requests for subsidies and licences) - Unifying all city departments concerning entrepreneurship - Creating a platform with VLAIO where the entrepreneur has a contact overview and a product overview of the government <p>Expanding of the resources</p>
Potential for learning or transfer	<p>OOG wants to invest in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital consultancy: expansion of video calls - More user-friendly website - More interactive webinars - Permanent training of the personnel: to get to know new products and the operation and actions of other governmental entities and local partners <p>It is hard for entrepreneurs to start a business without governmental support, but the incredible maze of governmental information and subsidies can be challenging and even discouraging. Thanks to the optimal, persistent support of OOG, start-ups have one single point of contact for all their questions on this topic. If OOG cannot help them, they are able to refer the entrepreneurs to the right account manager (intern of extern).</p>

	<p>OOG wants to point starting entrepreneurs in the right direction, therefore creating a good, flourishing business climate is crucial. Through first-level support OOG supports more and more start-ups. Nevertheless OOG focuses more on quality, on a strong enterprising environment, than on the amount of start-ups.</p>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	<i>Startup phase: yes</i>
	<i>Entering the market phase: yes</i>
	<i>Growth phase: yes</i>
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<i>Stand-alone</i>
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	<i>The initiative was funded by EFRD-funds. Today the city government provides all funding.</i>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<i>No</i>
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<i>All start-ups can contact OOG (free)</i>
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	<i>Digital marketing and communication campaigns + direct mailings to start-ups.</i>
What is innovative about this good practice?	It creates a one stop shop for entrepreneurs, for all government related questions in the city
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	Yes, more start-ups year after year
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	Continuous investments are necessary.

Good practice 17. Young Creatives Festival

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	Young Creatives Festival	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	NO	
Please select the project acronym	Start Easy	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Regional	
Location of the practice	Country	<i>Belgium</i>
	Region	<i>East-Flanders</i>
	City	
Contact email	sarah.levecque@erov.be	
Telephone	0032 483 22 27 78	
Your organisation <i>Organization name</i>	Economic Council of East-Flanders	
Location <i>name the city, region, state</i>	Woodrow Wilsonplein 2 – 9000 Ghent (Belgium)	
Further information <i>Link, website</i>	Lien.dewitte@erov.be of +32 470 33 27 82	

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	Festival for young creatives in cultural sector who need a small push towards entrepreneurship



<p>Detailed information on the practice</p>	<p>During the study visit in Bologna, we got to know Creative Keys, an organisation that helps creative minds to realise their ideas. In Bologna, culture is more supported and present than in East-Flanders. For this reason, we wanted to organise an event to bring together young, adventurous artists who only need a small boost to make the shift to their own business.</p> <p>Together with AmuseeVous, Gentrepreneur, Ministry of Makers and LUCA School of Arts, ECEF is organising a creative festival for young potential entrepreneurs. The festival aims to unite last year art students and graduates who only need a small push to start their own business. Very interesting is the collaboration between academic institutions, non-profit organisations with governmental support and the students themselves.</p> <p>Five students of LUCA School of Arts do a thorough research into cultural entrepreneurship: how do students feel about it, and how to meet their needs. Interesting in this is the fact that the researchers are also the target group of this event.</p> <p>The aim is to encourage young creatives by means of peer referral and workshops. The atmosphere has to be informal, to make sure participants do not have the feeling to be in school. There will also be a digital platform to reach more targets and to support the physical sessions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All of the suppliers for this event, from catering to the performing bands, from the photographer to the student radio, are young entrepreneurs.
<p>Resources needed</p>	<p>For now: € 10K to cover the first costs.</p> <p>We mean to find sponsors and other partners for financial support.</p> <p>The purpose is to arrange a free location/venue through LUCA School of Arts, and to arrange audiovisual support through LUCA campus Narafi, the academic institute for film, video, photography.</p> <p>For now we have five organising partners: ECEF, AmuseeVous, Ministry of Makers, Gentrepreneur and LUCA School of Arts.</p>
<p>Timescale (start/end date)</p>	<p>The first event was to be in September 2020, but was postponed to April 2021 due to corona. Might be postponed again.</p> <p>Will be a recurring event</p>
<p>Evidence of success (results achieved)</p>	<p>The few platforms for young entrepreneurs, such as Flanders DC, are federal and thus less accessible. With a local festival we can reach more future entrepreneurs. The need of something local and accessible is high.</p>

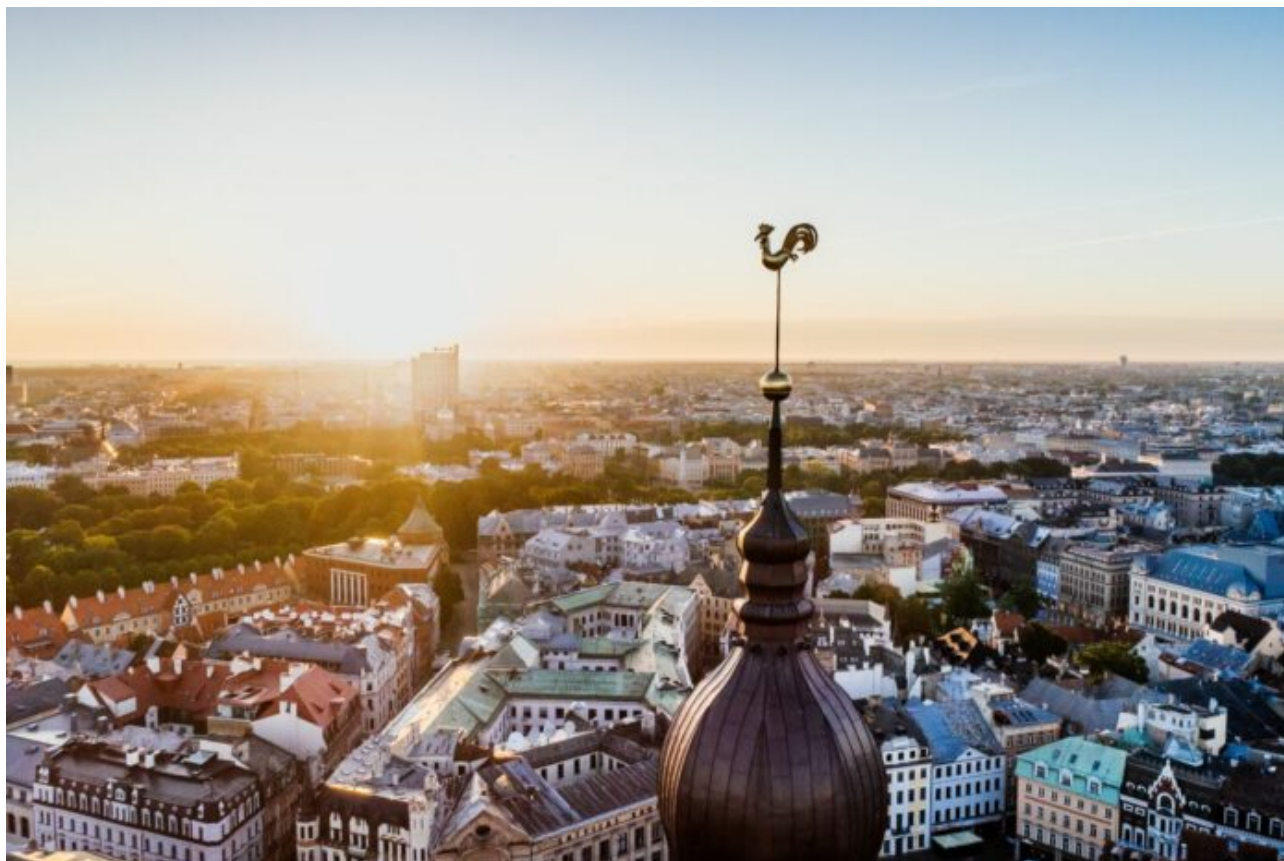


	<p>LUCA School of Arts has already organised an entrepreneurship fair. This was a successful event but because it was rather formal, students found it harder to bond with the subject. That is why this festival has to be inclusive and easily accessible.</p> <p>Aim: 200 to 250 participants.</p>
Challenges encountered (optional)	<p>Biggest challenge so far is the COVID19-crisis, which made us postpone it once already.</p> <p>Another difficult but interesting exercise will be to realise an informal event, which is fun and appealing, but also inspiring. We want to set an example without being too school-like.</p>
Potential for learning or transfer	<p>A very important challenge is to break the taboo against entrepreneurship in a difficult target group. Artists very often cannot rhyme their creative output with the commercial aspect. Furthermore it is defiant to create something interesting without pointing fingers or being too school-like. It might be useful to implement this to other problems and target groups as well.</p> <p>The fact that we can work together with other organisations (instead of competing with them) gives this event a couple of extra dimensions. We will deal better with all the different questions and issues that will arise before, during and after the event.</p>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	<i>Startup phase: yes</i>
	<i>Entering the market phase: no</i>
	<i>Growth phase: no</i>
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<i>Stand-alone</i>
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	<i>The initiative is funded by provincial government.</i>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<i>No</i>
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<i>All students in creative sectors can join (free)</i>
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the	<i>Digital marketing and communication campaigns + direct mailings through the art schools.</i>



end-user (please include links if available)	
What is innovative about this good practice?	Creative artists often lack business skills. This project helps them in developing these skills
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	We will see, we think it will boost <u>successfull</u> creative entrepreneurship
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	Always try to speak the language of the target group (in this case a creative approach is required, focussing on business management to much scares the target group away)

6.4 Latvia



Good practice 18. Webinar sessions about employee share options, start-up funding opportunities

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	<i>Webinar sessions about employee share options, start-up funding opportunities</i>	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	Start Easy	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Regional	
Location of the practice	Country	Latvia
	Region	Latvia
	City	Online

2. Detailed description



Short summary of the practice	<i>Online events for start-ups regarding available support tools for growth and competitiveness.</i>
Detailed information on the practice	<i>The initiative unites thematic experts and organisations in the webinars. Additional initiatives are introduced to the start-ups, as well as a questions and answers session is provided.</i>
Resources needed	<i>Project manager was involved in organization of webinar sessions. Accounting firm services were provided within activities.</i>
Timescale (start/end date)	<i>2021</i>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<i>The course of this activity is positively assessed. The total number of spectators at the events exceeded 1,000, which confirms the importance and relevance of the selected topics.</i>
Potential for learning or transfer	<i>In the future, it would be worth repeating similar events at least 1-2 times a year and present them not only as info sessions, but to emphasize the practical nuances of support programs.</i>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Start-up phase: X
	Entering the market phase: X
	Growth phase: X
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<i>Practice is stand-alone activity.</i>
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds?	<i>Practice is supported by Interreg Europe project "Smart tools for quick and easy business start-up in Europe (Start-Easy)".</i>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<i>The event was free for all participants.</i>
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<i>No selection criteria were applied to access activities.</i>
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user	<i>Activities were marketed through social networks and press releases.</i>
What is innovative about this good practice?	<i>Participants had the opportunity to ask interesting questions and receive advice on how to successfully receive financial support.</i>
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	<i>The activity promoted the start-up sector by increasing number of start-ups represented.</i>
Can you please outline "what not to do or things to avoid" in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	<i>Participants are mostly interested in practically applicable topics. Therefore it would be recommended to organise more similar events in future with even more practical topics for start-ups.</i>

Good practice 19. Start-up Day

1. Good practice general information	
Title of the practice	<i>Start-up Day</i>
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	No

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<i>Start-up day provides space on various stages for thematic sessions, about such topics as the future of the Latvian start-up industry in the post-pandemic world, science-inspired business environment, sustainability, business development and available support.</i>
Detailed information on the practice	<i>Start-up day is an event, where policymakers and ecosystem builders come together and celebrate the Latvian start-up community. As part of it, everyone has the opportunity to get to know the dynamic local start-up community, look back at what has been done so far and outline future trends.</i>
Resources needed	<i>8 470 EUR for organizing Start-up BBQ event; 18 150 EUR for start-up day organization.</i>
Timescale (start/end date)	<i>Started 2018 - ongoing</i>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<i>The Start-up Day provides closer co-operation between representatives of the start-up community, policy makers, the general public, as well as start-ups at both the Latvian and Baltic levels.</i>
Potential for learning or transfer	<i>Start-up day consists of key-note speeches about relevant topics, as well as enables networking and connecting ecosystem.</i>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	<i>Startup phase: X</i>
	<i>Entering the market phase: X</i>
	<i>Growth phase: X</i>
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<i>Start-up day is an open platform for ecosystem involvement to promote cross-sectoral cooperation and emphasize the contribution of start-ups or start-ups to the development of Latvia's innovations and economic vitality. Start-up day organisation usually involves many partners.</i>
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds?	<i>No, the activity does not involve EU structural funds.</i>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<i>The event is free for all participants.</i>
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<i>No selection criteria is applied to access the activity.</i>
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user	<i>The activity is marketed through social networks and press releases.</i>
What is innovative about this good practice?	<i>Start-up Day is a step towards promoting a culture of start-ups, which in turn motivates more and more enterprising people to turn their ideas into reality. Latvia is the first country in the world to introduce an official start-up day, celebrating it every 12th of September.</i>



<p>How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?</p>	<p><i>The event is organized with the aim of promoting dialogue between start-ups and public, private, academic and non-governmental organizations and thus explaining to the public the role of start-ups in shaping the innovation system and their contribution to the economy.</i></p>
<p>Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?</p>	<p><i>It would be necessary to promote the development of a start-up culture already at the university and in the future to focus the start-up day programme on young people's audience.</i></p>

Good practice 20. Start-up visa Latvia

1. Good practice general information	
Title of the practice	Start-up visa
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	No

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	Start-up visa (a temporary residence permit for up to three years), is offered to all non-EU start-up founders who are willing to realize their start-up ideas in Latvia. The main criteria for getting a start-up visa is an innovative (most often technology-based) start-up idea, which is easily scalable and yields a high added value.
Detailed information on the practice	<p>Start-ups ensure the development of innovations, including the emergence of new or significantly improved technologies, products or business models, as well as the faster transition of the economy to a modern economy. They make a significant contribution to the national economy by creating high value-added and exportable products, new and well-paid jobs, attracting highly qualified workers, attracting investment and strengthening the venture capital industry.</p> <p>For non-EU founders, a start-up visa is available. One start-up may have up to 5 founders with a start-up visa for the period of maximum 3 years and it is spouse and children friendly. Each year, the temporary residence permit must be registered, and to keep it, either information about received investment, or a progress report must be provided.</p> <p>The investment may be: EUR 30,000 from VC fund or EUR 15,000 from an accelerator/business angel. Regardless of what type of investor it is, they need to be qualified in compliance with the Star-up Law.</p> <p>The progress report must include factual and objective information regarding how the business idea has been developed over time, for example, showing proof that the innovative product has been substantially improved, and/or newer versions were launched.</p> <p>After the start-up visa, the founders may apply for a new kind of TRP, which lasts for 5 years. The applicant must be a member of the board in the commercial company or a branch of a foreign merchant, registered in the commercial register and carrying out economic activities that provide economic benefit to the Republic of Latvia. A foreigner who has continuously resided in the Republic of Latvia with a TRP for at least five years before the expiry of the last TRP has the right to request a permanent residence permit in accordance with the procedures specified in the Immigration Law. The permanent residence permit must be registered every five years.</p>
Resources needed	Not applicable.
Timescale (start/end date)	2017 - ongoing
Evidence of success (results achieved)	From 2018 until the end of 2021, over 180 innovative start-ups have been founded, thanks to the star-tup visa program (351 person has received a positive decision for issuing a temporary residence permit). During the first quarter of 2022, over 68 requests for evaluating the innovative business ideas, and progress reports have been received from the OCMA.
Potential for learning or transfer	Good practices are being shared with other EU countries (e.g. Poland, Lithuania, Austria).
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Start-up phase: X
	Entering the market phase: X
	Growth phase: X
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	The activity is stand-alone.

Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds?	<i>No, the activity does not involve EU structural funds.</i>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<i>Yes, the stamp duty must be paid to the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (OCMA) for reviewing the application package: 30 days - EUR 100 (regular procedure) 10 working days - EUR 200 5 working days - EUR 400</i>
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<i>A free-form application can be submitted for initial review and consultative support (free of cost). The main evaluation factors, are that the business idea should be innovative and scalable, as according to Latvian Law on Aid for the Activities of Start-up Companies. This means, that the startup should generally comply with the key definitions as stated below: <u>start-up company</u>- a capital company with a high growth potential the basic activity of which is related to the development, production or improvement of scalable business models and innovative products; <u>innovative product</u>- a product or service with a high added, inter alia, technological value, which ensures development of a specific new product or service, or a significant improvement of the existing product or service.</i>
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user	<i>The program is marketed through several media channels, but the main source of information for non-EU founders is the StartupLatvia.eu website. Additionally, the Investment and Development agency of Latvia as well as other start-up ecosystem organisations, regularly join in various events to spread the word – through presentations, meet-ups, webinars and more. Several marketing campaigns have also been launched by the Investment and Development agency of Latvia, in order to raise awareness of the program in various regions, e.g. the Middle East, and Asia.</i>
What is innovative about this good practice?	<i>The practice has undergone several improvements since it's first introduction, and has been made rather accessible, making Latvia a desirable destination for high value-added, rapid growth tech companies. The Latvian start-up visa - residence permit can be fast-tracked, has a good option for bringing the family along, and gives no-visa travel access to all of the EU. It's also relatively easy to retain, by showing either that the start-up has attracted a certain amount of investment, or significantly developed the innovative product over the last 12 months.</i>
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	<i>Latvian startup visa program was launched in 2017. Technically, it is a temporary residence permit for non-EU startup founders. In the past 4 years, the startup visa program has been received by over 138 startups, or 272 founders in total, and the numbers have continued to increase even throughout the covid-19 pandemic and additional travel requirements. A blog article about the program's success is also available there: https://startuplatvia.eu/article/startup-visa-program-golden-ticket-latvian-startup-world</i>
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	<i>Not applicable.</i>

Good practice 21. TechChill conference

1. Good practice general information	
Title of the practice	<i>TechChill conference</i>
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	No
2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<i>The leading start-up and tech conference in the Baltics which transforms into global meeting hub for start-ups, investors, innovators, inspirators, and technology enthusiasts and provides its participants some of the best opportunities for networking, individual meetings, and deal-making in the Baltics, Nordics and Central Eastern Europe.</i>
Detailed information on the practice	<i>Every year the conference program is focused on a specific topic, but the goal remains the same - to inspire start-ups with the stories of experienced entrepreneurs and experts and to gather community representatives once a year, giving them the opportunity to network and attract foreign investors to Latvia. TechChill conference is most useful in terms of content and offer for early stage start-ups who need all kinds of development support - contacts, experience stories, investor money and knowledge, while late start-ups like to attend the conference once a year and meet all players in the local ecosystem.</i>
Resources needed	<i>10,000 EUR for the organization of the conference "TechChill 2022" (to attract the audience of investors); 35,750 EUR to cover TechChill conference marketing costs; 36,300 EUR for consulting and start-up exhibition areas within the TechChill conference; 10,000 EUR for organizing TechChill Fifty Founder Battle main prize.</i>
Timescale (start/end date)	<i>Started 2012 - ongoing</i>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<i>TechChill conference is the largest event in the Latvian start-up industry, which has been taking place in Riga every year since 2012 and has grown from an event with few hundred visitors to a Baltic-level event with more than 2,000 participants. Several years ago, an Estonian start-up that won the TechChill 50 Founders Battle won a trip to Silicon Valley, during which it started negotiations with an investor who later chose to invest in the company. The TechChill pitch competition has also been one of the first points of success for such successful Baltic start-ups as Infogr.am, Edurio, Nordigen, Sprayprinter and Anatomy Next.</i>
Potential for learning or transfer	<i>TechChill conference is most useful for early stage start-ups who need all kinds of development support - contacts, experience stories, investor money and knowledge, while late start-ups like to attend the conference to meet all local ecosystem players once a year in one place.</i>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	<i>Startup phase: X</i>
	<i>Entering the market phase: X</i>
	<i>Growth phase: X</i>
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<i>The event is stand-alone activity.</i>
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds?	<i>No, the activity does not involve EU structural funds.</i>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<i>Depending on the type, access fee to the event varies from €179,00 till €229,00.</i>



<p>How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.</p>	<p><i>No selection criteria is applied to access the activity. In total, TechChill is visited by more than 350 start-ups, a third of which are local start-ups in Latvia, while foreign start-ups are mainly represented in Estonia, Lithuania and Finland.</i></p> <p><i>Start-ups are invited to join the start-up pitch competition Fifty Founders Battle. Interested start-ups need to fill in the application form online by answering 15 simple questions. All applications are evaluated by experienced ecosystem professionals. 50 finalists are then announced. They have an opportunity to pitch on stage during the event and to take part in the competition for the main prize: EUR 10,000 with no strings attached.</i></p>
<p>Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user</p>	<p><i>The event is marketed through social networks and press releases.</i></p>
<p>What is innovative about this good practice?</p>	<p><i>TechChill is an important bridge that connects the local ecosystem with the global start-up ecosystem centers of the world, both by attracting foreign investors and participants and by enabling the global winning team to enter world-class start-up competitions in collaboration with global partners.</i></p>
<p>How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?</p>	<p><i>TechChill attract opinion leaders from all over the world to discuss the latest innovations and trends. This event is very important for the whole ecosystem as it offers an opportunity to get inspired for new beginnings.</i></p> <p><i>Longenesis that won the Fifty Founders Battle a couple of months later closed a EUR 1 million funding round.</i></p>
<p>Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?</p>	<p><i>Not applicable.</i></p>

Good practice 22. Start-up bootcamp

1. Good practice general information	
Title of the practice	<i>Start-up bootcamp</i>
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	No

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<i>Training seminar that provides access to experienced mentors who are ready to share their knowledge and skills, as well as to continue successful cooperation with promising start-up teams.</i>
Detailed information on the practice	<i>Attracting new talent and growing promising business ideas is important for the development of the start-up ecosystem. The event is organized to give early-stage start-ups the opportunity to gain inspiration and confidence in the further development of their ideas.</i>
Resources needed	<i>6 050 EUR for the organization of a Start-up Bootcamp for the integration of international start-ups into the Latvian ecosystem</i>
Timescale (start/end date)	<i>2018 – ongoing</i>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<i>The event provides an opportunity to receive support and advice from international mentors and investors.</i>
Potential for learning or transfer	<i>New knowledge and experience is gained, attempts are made to look at the problems from a different point of view, meeting with technology professionals, experienced entrepreneurs, experts and mentors.</i>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Startup phase: X
	Entering the market phase: X
	Growth phase: X
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<i>The event can be organized as a continuation of the hackaton or technology marathon or as a stand-alone activity.</i>
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds?	<i>No, the activity does not involve EU structural funds.</i>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<i>The event does not involve any costs to participants.</i>
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<i>The event is open to early-stage start-ups.</i>
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user	<i>The event is marketed through social networks and press releases.</i>



What is innovative about this good practice?	<i>The event is attended by world-renowned technology and business experts, while the teams of start-ups have a unique opportunity to meet with the festival's speakers and investors.</i>
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	<i>The event inspired the creation of new start-ups and development of new and innovative technology and science-intensive businesses.</i>
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	<i>Not applicable.</i>

Good practice 23. Start-up ecosystem strategy

1. Good practice general information	
Title of the practice	<i>Start-up ecosystem strategy</i>
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes

Please select the project acronym	<i>Start Easy</i>	
Thematic objective of the practice	<i>SME Competitiveness</i>	
Geographical scope of the practice	<i>National</i>	
Location of the practice	Country	<i>Latvia</i>
	Region	<i>Latvia</i>
	City	<i>Riga</i>

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<i>A strategy must be made, to improve the workings of the public sector, thereby improving the efficiency, providing better services to the society, start-ups and making more accurate public policy decisions.</i>
Detailed information on the practice	<i>Start-ups play a key role in the overall innovation ecosystem, ensuring the influx of innovative business ideas and fostering a faster shift from an economic paradigm to a knowledge-based economy. Therefore, it is important to create a supportive environment for entrepreneurship with the help of a unified strategy, in which new companies can be formed and the innovations created by them can be developed, thus creating preconditions for the growth of the Latvian economy.</i>
Resources needed	<i>6 438,02 EUR for development of an action plan to improve the ecosystem of start-ups and encourage the creation of new start-ups; 1 928,47 EUR for translation of the action plan in English language; 4 148,76 EUR for organization of informative seminar (premises, catering, transport).</i>
Timescale (start/end date)	<i>Started on 2022 – on progress</i>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<i>To be evaluated after completion of the activity.</i>
Challenges encountered	<i>To be evaluated after completion of the activity.</i>
Potential for learning or transfer	<i>To be evaluated after completion of the activity.</i>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	<i>Startup phase: X</i>
	<i>Entering the market phase:</i>
	<i>Growth phase:</i>
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<i>The activity is stand-alone.</i>



Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds?	<i>Practice is supported by Interreg Europe project "Smart tools for quick and easy business start-up in Europe (Start-Easy)".</i>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<i>Not applicable.</i>
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<i>Not applicable.</i>
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user	<i>The activity is still in the planning/development stage.</i>
What is innovative about this good practice?	<i>Development of a common strategy will be able to identify the sector's challenges more effectively and address them constructively.</i>
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	<i>To be evaluated after completion of the activity.</i>
Can you please outline "what not to do or things to avoid" in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	<i>To be evaluated after completion of the activity.</i>

Good practice 24. Latvian Investment and development agency as one-stop agency regarding business incubators

1. Good practice general information	
Title of the practice	<i>Latvian Investment and development agency as one-stop agency regarding business incubators</i>
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	No

1. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<i>Investment and Development Agency of Latvia as a one-stop agency of business incubators provides support for business start-ups and development for individuals and start-ups.</i>
Detailed information on the practice	<i>A business incubator is a combination of infrastructure and staff designed to help develop new, viable and competitive businesses. The aim of the incubator is to support the establishment and development of new, viable and competitive businesses by providing individuals and businesses with the necessary environment for starting and developing a business, consultations, training and events on general business issues, mentor support and grant co-financing.</i>
Resources needed	<i>Additionally, in order to implement a new regional business incubator support program and together create a network of business incubators in 21 municipalities of regional development centres, 36 million euros are needed for the next six years.</i>
Timescale (start/end date)	<i>Started on 2016 – on progress till the end of 2023</i>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<i>The business incubator support program has proven to be a sought-after and successful tool for creating new and export-oriented companies in the regions. To date, public investment in the program has been less than the tax benefits received from companies. By ensuring the continuity of business incubators, the state earns long-term benefits and increases common prosperity. In the last 5 years, the export volumes of the participants in business incubators have reached more than 125 million euros.</i>
Potential for learning or transfer	<i>During the incubation, participants receive a variety of counselling opportunities, including industry mentors, the opportunity to attend seminars, and access to co-working spaces and the community. Business incubators are constantly improving the knowledge of entrepreneurs, gaining valuable contacts and making maximum use of collective intelligence to solve problems and take advantage of new opportunities. The flow of information in incubators is very fast and purposeful, which significantly increases the competitiveness of the participants.</i>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	<i>Start-up phase: X</i>
	<i>Entering the market phase: X</i>
	<i>Growth phase: X</i>
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<i>The activity is stand-alone.</i>
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds?	<i>Business incubators are financed both from the European Union structural funds and from the Latvian state budget</i>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<i>The activity does not involve any costs to participants.</i>
How are participants/users selected for this good practice?	<i>The applicant's company can't be more than 3 years old, not a member of any other ongoing acceleration program financed by Altum. The applicants may only join the</i>



<p>Please outline any criteria that is required.</p>	<p><i>incubator whose territory corresponds to the actual activity or registered office of the company. An exception is the Creative Industries Incubator, which is open to companies in the creative industries and authors of business ideas from all over Latvia.</i></p> <p><i>The company applying for incubation should be a SME, which has been registered in the Commercial Register of the Republic of Latvia for no longer than 3 (three) years, and whose capital share holder is not the state or local government. An applicant for a pre-incubation program may be a natural person (author of a business idea). The total amount of tax or duty debt may not exceed EUR 1000.00. The applicant may receive support if it ensures the achievement of the set goals during the incubation.</i></p>
<p>Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user</p>	<p><i>The event is marketed through social networks and press releases.</i></p>
<p>What is innovative about this good practice?</p>	<p><i>Both the pre-incubation and incubation processes provide a highly supportive environment for the development of new startups, as well as promote collaboration with the public, academic and non-governmental organizations from the very beginning of the business idea's initial phase (pre-incubation), to the company growth, business and R&D partnerships, as well as further startup expansion internationally. The pre-incubation program is also available for the Latvian diaspora members, strengthening the bonds also beyond borders.</i></p>
<p>How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?</p>	<p><i>During the period from 2016, until the end of 2021, 3380 teams with business ideas were accepted to the program. In 2022, the aim is to welcome a total of 329 new participants, of which 67 are for the incubation program and 262 for the pre-incubation program.</i></p> <p><i>There are currently 12 business incubators located in different regions across Latvia and 9 support divisions.</i></p>
<p>Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?</p>	<p><i>Not applicable.</i></p>

6.5 POLAND / Lublin Region



Good practice 25. INNOVA-INVEST

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	INNOVA-INVEST	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	START EASY	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Regional	
Location of the practice	Country	Poland
	Region	Lublin Region
	City	Not applicable

2. Detailed description

Short summary of the practice	<p>[160 characters] This text works as a preview for the good practice and it will appear at card level.</p> <hr/> <p>Pre-incubation program for innovative startups with equity investments (seed funding), comprised of 4 batches run for 3 months each.</p>
Detailed information on the practice	<p>[1500 characters] Please provide information on the practice itself. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the problem addressed and the context which triggered the introduction of the practice? - How does the practice reach its objectives and how it is implemented? - Who are the main stakeholders and beneficiaries of the practice? <hr/> <p>INNOVA-INVEST is one of the flagship Lublin Science and Technology Park startup oriented program run in 2013-2015, with internal seed fund and investment portfolio of companies supervised until today. It dealt with creation of conducive environment for innovative startups based in the region, ensuring them access to crucial components for comprehensive early growth through pre-incubation and equity investments.</p> <p>Problems addressed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. low, insufficient level of competitiveness and innovation of economy in the region, b. insufficient flow of R&D, human and technical resources to regional economy, c. high-risk financing / VC gap on the regional innovation market, and d. high business risk aversion in academic and business regional ecosystems. <p>Thus, in 2013-2015 a pool of innovative ideas was supported to create competitive companies, including spin offs in both priority (biotechnology, medical, renewable energy / environment protection, chemical) and other sectors. As part of pre-incubation and equity program, entrepreneurs were offered:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. training, consultancy on starting and running a business, and specific services aligned to innovative companies' needs, and 2. investment capital (equity / seed funding) in terms of acquisition of shares of the newly created companies. <p>The program was organised in 4 batches run for 3 months each, with 10 startup teams per batch. Of 40 startups pre-incubated (point 1), 20 top performing ones created a registered company and got equity investment of up to 800 thousands PLN (ca. 180 thousands EUR) provided by Lublin Science and Technology Park's internal seed fund (point 2). The investment program was accompanied by co-investments for some startups, provided by external investors (e.g. business angels).</p>
Resources needed	<p>[300 characters] Please specify the amount of funding/financial resources used and/or the human resources required to set up and to run the practice.</p> <hr/> <p>A. Funding / financial resources for the project (project value): 2,5 mln EUR, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% equity funding (INNOVA-INVEST seed fund) • 5,7% administration & external costs • 0,8% marketing • 3,1% staff costs <p>B. HR: 4 members – administrative (management), marketing (promotion) and finance staff</p> <p>C. Tech resources: premises, office equipment</p> <p>Taking into account the co-investment program, the project was valued at 5,2 mln EUR in total.</p>
Timescale (start/end date)	<p>Start date: December 2013</p> <p>End date: November 2015</p> <p>Duration: 24 months</p>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p>[500 characters] Why is this practice considered as good? Please provide factual evidence that demonstrates its success or failure (e.g. measurable outputs/results).</p> <hr/>

	<p><i>INNOVA INVEST pre-incubation and equity investment program occurred to be successful for regional economic and innovation development. Successful implementation was proven by the following project outputs and results:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 innovative startups created • > 51 jobs created at the end of the project, i.e. more than 2 jobs per startup • 40 innovative ideas pre-incubated • 316 startup ideas submitted • 2.3 million EUR of seed funding (equity investments) • ca. 2.9 million EUR of attracted co-investments <p><i>By early Spring 2022, INNOVA INVEST's investment portfolio comprised of 18 companies. So far, the fund made 2 exits: in 2019 and 2020.</i></p> <p><i>Currently, one of the portfolio companies (IT sector) belongs to the holding group listed on Warsaw Stock Exchange, and another one (biotechnology sector) gained regional and international attention thanks to its innovative business model. Some other startups have also met their success on national and international startup events or in target market sectors</i></p>
<p>Challenges encountered (optional)</p>	<p><i>[300 characters] Please specify any challenges encountered/lessons learned during the implementation of the practice.</i></p> <p>—</p> <p><i>Challenges:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complex investment process regarding high-risk ventures • need for key partners from startup ecosystem • strategic supervision of investment portfolio • sustainability of startups' business models <p><i>Lessons learnt:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing average age of startup founders means policy makers and business support institutions should create customized incentives for more experienced potential innovators, especially coming from academia and science background (deep tech); that means e.g. complex support ensuring the startup gets a number of benefits: mentoring, training, tools, network, validation opportunities, (non)equity financing etc. • pre incubation improves business idea appraisal and makes startups better prepared for further development stages • post-program support and monitoring is highly recommended; though the majority of ventures do not succeed, support after the program increase the chance to commercialize innovative product • startup = risk: just few companies are expected to succeed and reach the product-market fit, though (but see the lesson above)
<p>Potential for learning or transfer</p>	<p><i>[1000 characters] Please explain why you consider this practice (or some aspects of this practice) as being potentially interesting for other regions to learn from. This can be done e.g. through information on key success factors for a transfer or on, factors that can hamper a transfer. Information on transfer(s) that already took place can also be provided (if possible, specify the country, the region – NUTS 2 – and organisation to which the practice was transferred)</i></p> <p><i>[Technical: A good practice be edited throughout a project life time (e.g. to add information on the transfers that have occurred)]</i></p> <p>—</p> <p><i>This example have a potential for both learning and transfer to other EU regions, especially those labelled as modest or moderate European innovators³. Because of VC gap seen as significant development barrier for high risk companies (startups) in EU member countries, these regions with competitive human capital can rely on similar startup funding programmes. In this context, the instrument can trigger economic growth and capitalise on EU regions' existing strength and opportunities, and specializations as well. An important recommendation here is to put more incentives at early development stages for 'market newcomers', i.e. pay attention to sufficient training and expertise as compared to strict financial incentives. Also, it is highly recommended to design a viable post-program support for startups.</i></p>

³ For more on European innovation scoreboard, please visit the European Commission website: https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/statistics/performance-indicators/european-innovation-scoreboard_en

Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	<p>Startup phase: YES</p> <p>Entering the market phase: NO (to some extent, in terms of business model validation)</p> <p>Growth phase: NO</p>
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<p>INNOVA INVEST was a one-time project co-funded within ERDF (EU funds), yet the investment portfolio and the seed fund operates until today, with initial pool of 20 portfolio companies and 18 ones now (as of early Spring 2022). The seed fund is to be operated as a constant investment program, i.e. all the proceeds from exits will be reinvested within next fund cycle.</p>
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	<p>YES, it was the project co-funded within ERDF (EU funds) under National Operational Program Innovative Economy 2007-2013, Measure 3.1 Initiating innovative activities.</p>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<p>NO, the program was free of charge for startup teams. There was a selection process for applicants submitting business ideas to participate in the program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> top 40 selected startup teams participated in the pre-incubation program of them, top 20 startups got equity funding, yet were required to provide own equity stake, either in money terms or in-kind (e.g. IP rights)
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<p>PRE-SELECTION</p> <p>Key eligibility criteria (0-1 scale) – applicants should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> submit an innovative idea (innovation in terms of Polish market) be a natural person who attained age of majority (18 years old) residing in the territory of the Republic of Poland or a registered legal entity based in the territory of the Republic of Poland be the business idea owner or have relevant rights in regard to the business idea submitted <p>Quality criteria (0-10 scale, except of criteria 6 and 8 with 0-20 scale):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> potential of the startup team innovation potential of the business idea market potential of the business idea and its competition marketing and sale strategy of the product / service / processes covered by the business idea development strategy and reliability of the business project timeframe business model and financial model competitive advantage of the business model SWOT analysis <p>SELECTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on quality assessment and ranking of business ideas, top 10 to 24 business ideas per batch were invited to the pitch presentation assessed by a panel of experts. Followed by pitch session, the panel of experts developed a list of recommended business ideas invited to the pre-incubation program. <p>PRE-INCUBATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the pre-incubation program, each of the 40 startup teams invited to the pre-incubation program got a set of training, consultancy on starting and running a business, and specific services aligned to its innovative business needs; of them, top 20 ones were selected for equity investments <p>EQUITY INVESTMENTS</p> <p>Based on the pre-incubation program – progress on developing a business idea, i.e. business plan, results of training, consultancy and advisory, and profitability analysis – the panel of experts chose top 20 performing startup teams, which then created a registered company and got equity investment from the INNOVA-INVEST seed fund, with equity co-investments in some cases. Two basic components comprised equity investment selection process:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPV (net present value): the project should be positive in terms of discounted cash flows in 5 years perspective, taking into account the level of risk corresponding to the project Project risk: the project should not exceed the 50% threshold to be accepted for equity investment program; the risks was assessed on the scale, where 1 = 'no risk', and 2 = '50% chances of success'.
<p>Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)</p>	<p>The pre-incubation program was targeting following groups with profiles relevant for biotechnology, health and medicine, renewable energy / environment protection and chemical sector, as well as other ones, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key group: scientists and students from local universities based in Eastern Poland Current and aspiring entrepreneurs <p>Therefore, the pre-incubation program was marketed through different channels as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated web site for pre-incubation program Social media Media promotion 8 conferences at local universities Printed materials (brochures, posters, roll-ups) <p>As a result, the program and the startups participating in the program gained public attention in thanks to visibility in local and national media.</p>
<p>What is innovative about this good practice?</p>	<p>This good practice combined both pre-incubation program with equity investments as a complex support instrument for R&D community in the region, thus filling the funding gap for high-risk ventures, the skill gap for academic community, and the culture gap related to risk aversion among academic and business community in the region. Moreover, it was one of the first initiative in Eastern Poland equipping business environment institutions with tangible tools to support technology ventures through creation of internal seed funds (VC).</p>
<p>How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?</p>	<p>The program itself was designed to boost creation of startups in the region, by a set of soft (pre-incubation program) and hard (equity investment) measures. As a result of the program, a total of 20 innovative companies were created, 2.3 million EUR were invested as part of seed funding, and ca. 2.9 million EUR were attracted as part of co-investments.</p> <p>Moreover, INNOVA INVEST seed fund operates until now and will be reinvesting proceeds from investment exits within the new fund cycle.</p>
<p>Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not think the program ends when your last startup is created. Even though not every startup created under your program will succeed, it is worth to do post-program support for startups to help them grow, i.e. through further business networking opportunities, fundraising support, progress monitoring and any other activity which contributes to adding the value for a seed fund and a startup Try to avoid situation in your program when a startup does not bear any risk and your organisation takes all the risk for the startup venture through financing or any other type of activity; each participating startup should be aware of the risk it takes to make a business venture successful, thus it should invest its time and resources, and sometimes this should be also own equity to ensure the risks associated with the business venture are thoroughly assessed and shared between business idea owners, seed fund and co-investors

Good practice 26. Connect Poland Prize

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	Connect Poland Prize	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	START EASY	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Regional / international	
Location of the practice	Country	Poland
	Region	Lublin Region
	City	Not applicable

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<p>[160 characters] This text works as a preview for the good practice and it will appear at card level.</p> <p>—</p> <p>Acceleration program for innovative foreign startups run in cooperation with industry partners and investors under open innovation approach; comprised of 4 batches run for up to 13 months each</p>
Detailed information on the practice	<p>[1500 characters] Please provide information on the practice itself. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the problem addressed and the context which triggered the introduction of the practice? - How does the practice reach its objectives and how it is implemented? - Who are the main stakeholders and beneficiaries of the practice? <p>—</p> <p>Connect Poland Prize is a currently implemented acceleration program based on experience of pilot Poland Prize initiative supervised by Polish Agency of Enterprise Development. It sets a number of challenges to address, which are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • boost innovation level of the Polish economy • boost open innovation culture in Polish public and private sector • strengthen Polish startup ecosystem through transferring innovative ideas, business culture and talent from abroad, and • contribute to the image of Poland as the country of first choice in Central and Eastern Europe for foreign start-ups <p>Specifically, the problem addressed by this good practice are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • insufficient integration of foreign startups with Polish ecosystem • low utilization of innovation potential by R&D centers, corporates and innovative SMEs • funding and networking gap in some European and global regions with low innovation potential • supply-demand imbalances in developed and highly innovative regions, creating opportunities to create low competition niches in Polish economy <p>To tackle this, a Connect Poland Prize accelerator was designed to connect relevant stakeholders who have a direct impact on innovative value creation. These are, on the one hand, innovative human capital coming from foreign countries and, on the other hand, the supporting ecosystem in Poland – corporates and SMEs with high demand for innovations, VC funds, as well as other partners and the community of specialists, whose potential will increase the chance for success of the startups participating in the program.</p>

	<p>The subject of the Good Practice is an acceleration program consisting of two stages:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scouting, soft-landing and development of 56 startup teams – foreign start-up teams willing to develop their business in Poland by setting up a registered company and establishing cooperation with a business partner. This stages lasts for up to 3 months. 2. Acceleration and post-acceleration of 36 out of 56 startups, which in cooperation with a chosen business partner – company as technology recipient or VC fund – will successfully implement pilot validation of its solution. <p>The acceleration program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has its thematic focus – industry track acceleration for solutions from pharmaceutical biotechnology, bioeconomy or Industrial Internet of Things sectors (corresponding to chosen national smart specializations) • By is open to startups with technologies corresponding to other national smart specializations, as part of the general track acceleration
Resources needed	<p>[300 characters] Please specify the amount of funding/financial resources used and/or the human resources required to set up and to run the practice.</p> <p>—</p> <p>The value of the project is ca. 2.3 million EUR, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17% staff costs • 77% equity-free grants for foreign startups, max. 65 thousands EUR per startup (10 thousands for stage 1: soft-landing and development, and 55 thousands EUR for stage 2: acceleration) <p>Human resources for acceleration program management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceleration program manager • Project office coordinator • Accounting & monitoring specialist • Promotion & marketing specialist • Procurement specialist • Public aid specialist • 3x Scouting, selection and verification specialists • Post-acceleration specialist • Other support (translations, legal services) <p>As part of the acceleration program, each participated startup gets expert support relevant for different stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For stage 1 (soft-landing and development): dedicated concierge – an expert providing support needed to move to Poland, set a registered capital company and match with a business partner – industry company or investor – which is a basic requirement for stage 2 • For stage 2 (acceleration): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 1 acceleration mentor: business expert leading the pilot validation process for startups cooperating with industry company, or the investment preparation process for startups cooperating with VC funds > selected industry mentors (non-obligatory): technology experts advising on specific needs related to technology used by the startup <p>Due to the funding scheme, it is the startup who pays the above mentors for their services and for any other services needed, based on the grant it receives.</p>
Timescale (start/end date)	<p>Start date: May /2021</p> <p>End date: October 2023</p> <p>Project duration: 30 months</p>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p>[500 characters] Why is this practice considered as good? Please provide factual evidence that demonstrates its success or failure (e.g. measurable outputs/results).</p> <p>—</p> <p>As the acceleration program is in implementation phase, there are just interim evidence of success based on 2 calls for applications and 1 startup batch started:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 155 applications under the 1st and 2nd call (80 and 75 applications, respectfully)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications from Europe and Asia (Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, Germany, Spain, Switzerland, Denmark, Hungary, Czech Republic, Georgia, Moldova, India, China, Israel, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Zimbabwe) • 17 startups selected for the 1st batch <p>Generally, there will be 56 startups selected for phase 1 (soft-landing and development), and 36 will be invited for phase 2 (acceleration). The program assumes there will be in total 21 successful pilot validations with industry partners of investments by VC funds by the end of all 4 batches.</p> <p>An evidence of program success can be shown on example of the previous pilot edition of the Poland Prize initiative, with 5 programs run by different accelerators in 2018-2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 632 applications submitted from 94 countries • 101 startups successfully accelerated • Of them, 81 startup companies are still operating in Poland (as of 31.05.2021), which means 20% death rate in ca. 2 years
<p>Challenges encountered (optional)</p>	<p>[300 characters] Please specify any challenges encountered/lessons learned during the implementation of the practice.</p> <p>—</p> <p>Challenges and (>) lessons learnt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • so far, one of the most challenging issue was COVID pandemic making the scouting process and acceleration activities in Poland more difficult > lesson: therefore, a risk mitigation strategy should be well designed to allow for hybrid and to some extent totally online scouting and acceleration program operation • some startups do not understand what is the role of business partner in the program > one should well communicate the structure of the program, who are the business partners and what is the role and difference between an industry partner which is to work with a startup to implement pilot validation of technology, or an investor (VC fund) which is to work with a startup to improve its investment readiness and finally make VC investment • similar challenge was encountered by business partners: while investors (VC funds) do know what is startup acceleration and how they can benefit from participating in such program, some companies, especially and even innovation-driven SMEs did not understand what can be their role as technology recipients and how can they benefit from participation in the program as business partners > lesson: a thorough value proposition for business partners acting as technology recipients (i.e. companies working with startups to implement pilot validation of the startup technology) is needed; key benefits for industry companies are de-risking of their R&D activity, fast track to validate new business processes or introduce new products on the market, tailor-made technology addressing identified business needs, innovation capacity and business ecosystem building • not every startup will be successful to complete the acceleration program, which is a business risk for itself, and an impact and financing risk for the accelerator > lesson: to help startup address the business risks in case it will not be successful to complete the acceleration program and validate its product, it is recommended to design structured post-acceleration support to address specific business, technology or other issues; to address its impact and financing risk, the accelerator should plan goals realistically, and design balanced financing scheme based partly on advance payments and reimbursements linked to achieved acceleration milestones
<p>Potential for learning or transfer</p>	<p>[1000 characters] Please explain why you consider this practice (or some aspects of this practice) as being potentially interesting for other regions to learn from. This can be done e.g. through information on key success factors for a transfer or on, factors that can hamper a transfer. Information on transfer(s) that already took place can also be provided (if possible, specify the country, the region – NUTS 2 – and organisation to which the practice was transferred)</p> <p>[Technical: A good practice be edited throughout a project life time (e.g. to add information on the transfers that have occurred)]</p> <p>—</p> <p>Connect Poland Prize acceleration program and particularly its elements could be easily transferred to other regions. It can definitely be interesting for European regions with</p>

	<p>different innovation development level, which are looking to boost their startup ecosystem and internal VC market, especially with low level of internationalisation of startup community, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transfer of innovative ideas, business culture and talent from abroad, and • reinforce of their business image as a community focused on young, innovative companies and a good choice for foreign startups to do business <p>As a whole, this good practice can be easily transferred due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mechanisms effectively connecting foreign talents with domestic ecosystem, thus addressing cultural and business differences between the two (e.g. through soft-landing program preceding the very typical acceleration activities, and post-acceleration support to magnify results and address specific issues startup can face in the country it is new to), • tailor-made program framework, i.e. the accelerator gives most of the decision making over the way and direction of acceleration to startups themselves in close cooperation with the business partner (either technology-driven company or potential investor) it matched with; what the accelerator does is it provides the tools for acceleration: grant and supporting ecosystem built of cooperation-ready business partners, concierges helping to soft-land the local environment and find relevant partner for startup acceleration, and acceleration and industry mentors supporting startup to define and achieve its milestones towards pilot validation or investment – network of experts chosen and paid by startups themselves • opportunity for startups to boost early traction / get first clients and extend its business network, which is possible thanks to cooperation with industry partners – corporates or companies willing to test startup technologies within their business framework in market or market-like environment, or investors – VC funds supporting startups to achieve pre-investment (term-sheet) requirements and ultimately providing successful startups with investment needed for further commercialization • balanced financing scheme based on simplified grant reporting, i.e. each startup invited to the acceleration program is provided with advanced payment partly covering the costs needed to achieve required milestones, and thereafter is reimbursed with the remaining grant amount as soon as it achieves specific milestones corresponding to grant tranches <p>As the elements of the good practice, there are specifically those to transfer to other regions separately, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • soft-landing program: there is a number of soft-landing programs for foreign startups in Europe, yet individual approach with dedicated concierge for each startup tends to be more effective to help foreign team adapt to local environment; as the pilot Poland Prize initiative led by Polish Agency of Enterprise development has shown, the concierge services are the first step to prepare startup for full-scale acceleration – not only formal and legal matters need to be addressed, but also cultural differences and business operation and relations, i.e. preparing the company, an office, and the team to develop its technology
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Startup phase: YES (to some extent)
	Entering the market phase: YES
	Growth phase: NO
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	Connect Poland Prize is a one-time project co-funded within ERDF (EU funds). Nevertheless, it is implemented as part of the second edition of the Poland Prize initiative led by Polish Agency of Enterprise Development, and operating in the network of 9 other similar accelerators across Poland under the same initiative. The first pilot edition was connecting 5 Poland Prize accelerators in different Polish regions, active in 2018-2020.
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	The project is co-financed within the ERDF (EU funds), implemented under the national Operational Program Smart Growth 2014-2020, Measure 2.5 Acceleration programs – Poland Prize, Priority Axis II: Support for business environment and capacity of enterprises to run R&D&I activities.

<p>Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?</p>	<p><i>NO, the program is free of charge and equity-free for foreign startup teams. Interested teams should pass selection process to be eligible for acceleration program. In practical terms, each startup participating in the program should be ready to ensure financial liquidity for its operation, as the program:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>has defined rules for budget eligibility</i> • <i>does not cover all the costs needed for business operation in Poland</i> • <i>is based on balanced financing mechanisms combining both advanced payments and reimbursements</i>
<p>How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.</p>	<p><i>To be invited to the program, foreign startups should pass selection process as described below.</i></p> <p>ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA <i>Key eligibility criteria (0-1 scale):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>applicants – foreign startups – should set a registered capital company in Poland if invited to acceleration program, whereas at least 50% of shares are held by non-Polish citizen, and at least 1 member of the registered capital company will be a non-Polish citizen</i> • <i>startup technology should meet at least TRL-5 (Technology Readiness Level), i.e. the prototype / MVP should be validated in conditions similar to real ones, thus initial traction is highly recommendable</i> • <i>applicants fully own the IP rights to its solution</i> • <i>startup technology is not commercialized on Polish market</i> • <i>startup technology correspond to at least one of the National Smart Specializations⁴</i> • <i>startup technology complies with the horizontal rules listed in Articles 7 and 8 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013</i> <p>QUALITY CRITERIA): <i>Level 1 – application assessment (0-10 scale; min. 4 points per criterion is required)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Capacity of the startup team</i> 2. <i>Potential of the business model</i> 3. <i>Potential to implement the startup solution within the acceleration program</i> 4. <i>Consistency of the startup business vision with the acceleration model</i> 5. <i>Potential of cooperation with a business partner</i> <p><i>Level 2 – Open Call (pitch presentation) assessment (0-5 scale, min. 3 points per criterion is required)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. <i>Consistency of the startup business vision with acceleration objectives</i> 7. <i>Consistency of the startup commercialization vision with proposed business partner capacity</i> <p><i>Level 3 – list of ranked applications based on previous level assessments and program focus</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. <i>Compatibility of the startup technology with acceleration program focus (industry track): at least 55% of selected applications should correspond to the industry track specializations, i.e. pharmaceutical biotechnology, bioeconomy or Industrial Internet of Things (to ensure quality of results of the startup acceleration)</i>
<p>Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)</p>	<p><i>The acceleration program is targeting different groups of startup teams with profiles relevant for industry track specializations and other ones from foreign countries, with key focus on Ukraine and Belarus, but also Central and Eastern Europe region and other European and non-European countries, where innovation potential is significant. These target groups are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Key group: startup teams and registered startup companies (outside Poland)</i> • <i>Entrepreneurs with relevant track record</i> • <i>Academic community (university)</i> • <i>Thematic public and social media channels</i>

⁴ To learn more about Polish National Smart Specializations, please visit the webpage: <https://smart.gov.pl/en/>

	<p>Two basic approaches are used to ensure both sufficient quantity and quality of incoming applications: scouting run by scout team and promotion of the program run by PR & marketing specialist.</p> <p>Therefore, the acceleration program is marketed through different channels as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in top external online and physical startup events across targeted foreign markets (scouting) • Organisation of own promotional events for foreign startup community, based on dissemination of information among relevant group communities (scouting) • Organisation of online and physical study visits with program presentation for foreign stakeholders, e.g. public administration, entrepreneurship and innovation centers, and universities • Acquisition of leads through professional platforms – Dealroom and Vestbee (scouting) • Social media • Dissemination of information among relevant stakeholders (domestic and foreign organisations connected to foreign startup, academic, innovation and business communities, e.g. entrepreneurship and innovation centers, incubators and accelerators, VC funds and investor communities, universities, business initiatives, industry associations, trade and investment agencies, embassies etc.)
What is innovative about this good practice?	<p>This good practice combines foreign startup technologies with domestic innovation-driven business partners. The structure of the program, with its tailor-made features and acceleration ecosystem prepared specifically for foreign startup needs make it more feasible for both startups and business partners to either implement pilot validation of technology on the market, or invest in promising technologies. Therefore, it benefits all parties – not only startups themselves, but companies and investors willing to get verified startup teams for further cooperation.</p>
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	<p>So far, there is no specific evidence of success Connect Poland Prize achieved, as it has recently started to accelerate the 1st batch of foreign startups. Yet in terms of the program objectives, it plans to accelerate 36 out of 54 foreign startups coming to the program based in Poland, and 21 ones to successfully finish it.</p> <p>Additionally, there is evidence delivered by the pilot edition of the Poland Prize edition led by Polish Agency for Enterprise Development. By operation of 5 national accelerators in 2018-2020, it managed to accelerate a total of 101 foreign startups, of which 81 companies are still operating in Poland (data as of 31.05.2021).</p>
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to avoid business partners which have just a will but not sufficient capacity and vision to work with foreign startups – this applies specifically to companies acting as technology recipients (i.e. leading to pilot validation of startup technology). That means lack of vision by corporate / SME management, too few or low-skilled employees responsible for close work with a startup team, technological and business barriers that may be harm for acceleration process and cooperation with chosen startup team • Try to avoid occupation of a the role of acceleration program manger by employees with no or little experience in open innovation activities; as this manager should be responsible for the program vision and connect ‘all the dots’, this should be the one who understand innovation trends, technology transfer, familiar with startup and investor communities, understand business needs and knows what corporate-startup cooperation really is

Good practice 27. NLAB – Nevada-Lubelskie Acceleration Bridge

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	NLAB – Nevada-Lubelskie Acceleration Bridge	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	START EASY	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Regional / international	
Location of the practice	Country	Poland / United States of America
	Region	Lublin Region / US State of Nevada
	City	Not applicable

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<p>[160 characters] This text works as a preview for the good practice and it will appear at card level.</p> <p>—</p> <p>Acceleration (scale-up) and internationalisation program for startups from Lublin Region willing to enter the US market through the State of Nevada.</p>
Detailed information on the practice	<p>[1500 characters] Please provide information on the practice itself. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the problem addressed and the context which triggered the introduction of the practice? - How does the practice reach its objectives and how it is implemented? - Who are the main stakeholders and beneficiaries of the practice? <p>—</p> <p>Problems addressed and general idea.</p> <p>In late 2017, the Marshal and Vice-Marshal of Lubelskie Voivodeship, together with the Governor of the State of Nevada, signed a list of intent to organize a 6-month pilot program for internationalization of young SMEs and startups from Lublin Region. The Nevada – Lubelskie Acceleration Bridge (NLAB) program is aimed at supporting internationalization and development of young companies and startups from Lubelskie Voivodeship through participation in meetings, workshops and pitching sessions organized during the Bootcamp Lubelskie event, and in acceleration activities run in the US State of Nevada. So far, there were two program editions organised (2018; 2020), each with two cohorts of startups.</p> <p>The Nevada – Lubelskie Acceleration Bridge is a unique formula of supporting companies and startups (scale-ups) that no other region in Poland has in the offer. It gives Lubelskie Voivodeship a strong asset in attracting and stimulating young companies startups in their growth and scaling. All of the participating mentors, experts as well as participants value NLAB as a highly effective tool for growing and scaling companies by entering new markets. They also emphasize that organization of the program and support of the program operator were great.</p> <p>It is a tool that helps regional authorities in the Lublin Region to stimulate young companies and startups (scale-ups) growth and scaling. It gives an opportunity to directly reach the new niche of clients. The companies willing to operate on foreign markets need to identify specific market needs and keep direct relations with partners active on the target markets, in accordance with the local law, business culture and other relevant conditions.</p>



	<p>The context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nevada is a very business-friendly state with no State or Corporate Taxes. Lubelskie offers a tax friendly environment with the highest rates of public aid. Lubelskie and Nevada are locations where businesses come to increase their bottom line and grow, take advantage of the business-friendly environment, have closer proximity to customers, and utilize the region's skilled workforce. Lubelskie is an important Polish academic center actively involved in research and Lublin is the biggest academic city in the Eastern part of Poland Lubelskie is a perfect spot to locate investments, especially if they combine development within the western markets and expansion to the Eastern markets like Russia and Ukraine. <p>The main stakeholders of the program are entrepreneurs running business activity in the Lubelskie Voivodeship, for a minimum of 6 months prior to application to the program, fluent in English, with global business orientation, willing to scale, gain new experience and find new partners in the US.</p> <p>The program general stakeholders are the local and regional authorities from Lubelskie Voivodeship and the State of Nevada, chambers of commerce and other organisations with similar profile.</p> <p>Solution applied. The program is divided into 2 stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st stage: 5-day training session "Bootcamp Lubelskie" in Lublin followed by a Demo Day, dedicated to 30 previously selected companies. The training was organised in the form of workshops, small lectures and individual consultancy run by Polish and American business mentors, including from the State of Nevada. 2nd stage: acceleration activities in Nevada. Top 10 performing companies were divided into 2 groups and went to Nevada. They spent there 2 weeks in Reno and Carson City (1st week) and Las Vegas (2nd week) full of a series of consultancy, training, meetings with potentials clients, investors, business angels, business and legal advisors, business environment institutions and representatives of public administration. Each participating company had offered with a tailor-made program adjusted to its profile and needs identified during the previous stage.
<p>Resources needed</p>	<p>[300 characters] Please specify the amount of funding/financial resources used and/or the human resources required to set up and to run the practice.</p> <p>—</p> <p>Approximately 100 000 EUR for the 1st edition and 50 000 EUR for the 2nd edition. The cost of the 2nd edition is lower as the number of outsourced subcontractors was decreased and the region itself performed the whole activity with the use of its office staff. The practice required the resources of 3 people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project staff: management, promotion and administrative tasks <p>Program specific experts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 trainers and mentors (organisation of bootcamp, assessment process) 6 representatives of partner organisations from the State of Nevada (assessment process) 1 representative of VC fund (assessment process) 2 representatives of the program operator and regional self-government authorities <p>Program costs covered by the operator: trainers and mentors, consultancy, travel and accommodation, and co-working costs in Reno and Las Vegas</p> <p>Program costs covered by participants: visa costs, meals during acceleration program in Nevada.</p>
<p>Timescale (start/end date)</p>	<p>Based on the 1st pilot edition</p> <p>Start date: September 2018</p> <p>End date: February 2019</p>

	Total duration: 6 months
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p>[500 characters] Why is this practice considered as good? Please provide factual evidence that demonstrates its success or failure (e.g. measurable outputs/results).</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 program editions in 2018 and 2020 • 50 SMEs and startups participating in the bootcamps organised in Lublin (20 in the 1st edition, 30 in the 2nd edition) • 10 of them participating in acceleration program in Nevada • 5 out of 10 companies who went to the USA successfully expanded to the US market by setting up their businesses in Nevada (while still operating in the Lublin Region) • The intensive bootcamp and acceleration run in Lublin and Nevada, respectfully, including contacts participants acquired during their stay in the US, made it possible for them to expand their activity on the US market • Participants who did not win the competition confirmed that program broadened their minds towards scaling their business. Additionally, they got specific feedback from the trainers / mentors and the panel of experts assessing their pitch presentations and progress made during the local bootcamp, having the insight into their strengths and weaknesses to capitalize on or to improve •
Challenges encountered (optional)	<p>[300 characters] Please specify any challenges encountered/lessons learned during the implementation of the practice.</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To convince some local companies they may be successful on the US market and to make them believe in their potential • Some companies were sceptical about what they could learn for 2 weeks of a follow-up acceleration program in Nevada • The program 1st edition was targeted mainly at startups and scale-ups, while the 2nd edition was dedicated also to other companies (SMEs) looking for possibilities to grow and scale
Potential for learning or transfer	<p>[1000 characters] Please explain why you consider this practice (or some aspects of this practice) as being potentially interesting for other regions to learn from. This can be done e.g. through information on key success factors for a transfer or on, factors that can hamper a transfer. Information on transfer(s) that already took place can also be provided (if possible, specify the country, the region – NUTS 2 – and organisation to which the practice was transferred)</p> <p>[Technical: A good practice be edited throughout a project life time (e.g. to add information on the transfers that have occurred)]</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The good practice can be surely transferred to other regions – in most of the regions companies have naturally driven by willingness to expand their business activity onto the international markets, as it provides opportunities not only for revenue growth but also for exchange of knowledge, and enhances capacity of businesses which strengthen their long-term competitiveness • It often occurs companies are afraid to expand their activity on totally different continent / market, but with support of public authorities, relevant business environment or other trustworthy institutions they tend to be more confident and willing to face this challenge • During the program 2nd edition, successful companies who had already been to Nevada served as role models and presented their success stories to new participants. It had a very positive effect.
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	<p>Startup phase: NO</p> <p>Entering the market phase: YES (to some extent)</p> <p>Growth phase: YES (and a scale-up phase, too)</p>
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<p>It is a stand-alone activity, initiated by the regional authorities of Lubelskie Voivodeship (program operator, regional bootcamp organiser) and the state government of Nevada (acceleration program organiser).</p>

<p>Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?</p>	<p><i>NO, it is not supported by the EU structural funds. It can be definitely relevant for structural funding authorities as part of regional or national operational programs, for example, in cooperation with other European regions.</i></p>
<p>Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?</p>	<p><i>The program is free of charge in terms of participation costs. Nevertheless, there are program covered by participants, i.e. visa costs and meals during acceleration program in Nevada.</i></p>
<p>How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.</p>	<p>ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> entrepreneurs running business activity in the Lubelskie Voivodeship business activity for a minimum of 6 months prior to application to the program fluency in English global business orientation, willing to scale, gain new experience and find new partners in the US <p>SELECTION CRITERIA for the 1st stage – pre-acceleration bootcamp in Lublin:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Growth potential (0-15 points): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > business capacity (human resources, physical and financial assets) Commercialization potential (0-35 points) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > new / improved products / services (max. 5 points) > social and environmental challenges addressed (max. 5 points) > new / improved technical and functional features of the products / services (max. 5 points) > product / service differentiation (max. 5 points) > potential for US expansion (max. 5 points) > risks and barriers for US expansion (max. 5 points) > applied / planned IPR approach (max. 5 points) Market readiness and alignment to the program profile (0-35 points) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > technology readiness level of the key product / service subject to the US expansion (max. 17 points) > compatibility with the regional smart specializations of the Lublin Voivodeship (max, 5 points) > compatibility with the ket economy sectors of the State of Nevada (max. 10 points) <p>SELECTION for the 2nd stage: acceleration program in Nevada</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each participating company or startup presented its business and expansion plans during the Demo Day event, where a panel of experts assessed their readiness to enter the Nevada market followed by US expansion
<p>Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NLAB - Nevada – Lubelskie Acceleration Bridge Summit Lublin regional self-government and local authority channels, including web pages and social media Public media <p>Information sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details and the origins of bilateral cooperation between Lubelskie Voivodeship and the State of Nevada: http://invest.lubelskie.pl/en/aktualnosc/nlab-lubelskie-nevada-acceleration-bridge Good practice on Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform: https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/3569/nlab-lubelskie-nevada-acceleration-bridge/ Participating company announcement: https://plantalux.pl/en/plantalux-flies-to-nevada/
<p>What is innovative about this good practice?</p>	<p><i>The program combines the ecosystem and public support coming from two regions in Poland and United States for mutual benefits, by equipping Polish SMEs with practical knowledge, skills and networking opportunities to expand onto the US market. The Nevada – Lubelskie Acceleration Bridge is a unique formula of supporting companies</i></p>



	<p>and startups (scale-ups) that no other region in Poland has in the offer. It gives Lubelskie Voivodeship a strong asset in attracting and stimulating young companies startups in their growth and scaling. All of the participating mentors, experts as well as participants value NLAB as a highly effective tool for growing and scaling companies by entering new markets.</p>
<p>How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?</p>	<p>Basically, the program is not aimed to support startup creation, but internationalisation of region-based businesses. Nevertheless, throughout its two program editions, it helped some Lublin Region SMEs to establish a registered business in the US State of Nevada to better scale their operations on the foreign market.</p>
<p>Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?</p>	<p>There are a number of interesting insights developed in a form of recommendations by the program authors. It complements the question on potential for learning or transfer by “do’s”, not specifically “don’ts” in the following aspects.</p> <p>PROGRAM AND ITS ORGANISATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give more time for training, focusing more on the abilities to design and present the offer on the formal issues of how to run a business on the American / Nevada market • Prepare or review the business models for each startup during the regional / domestic stage of pre-acceleration (bootcamp), involving both Polish and American mentors and trainers • Try to announce the schedule of participant's stay in the target expansion region (where acceleration takes place) – at least a week before participants' departure • Consult the area of specific interests for individual meetings with all participants selected for the acceleration program in the target expansion region, before they came there <p>PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND PARTNERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring the program objectives closer to participants' objectives; internationalization and growth / scaling of companies and startups must be extended by increasing number of new product / service implementations, sales and clients • Take into consideration the relevance of partnerships on the regional / domestic side; partners can help with promotion and information / marketing activities <p>SCOPE OF SUPPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a stable mechanism for growth and expansion of participating companies and startups, as a tool for attracting businesses from your country to settle in your specific region (recommendation relevant for regional or local stakeholders) • Support participating businesses selected for acceleration in the target expansion market by endorsement and credibility related activities – that can help them scale their businesses out on the target foreign market • Take into consideration the need for separate rooms and higher level of accommodation for participants during their stay in the target expansion region (as part of the acceleration program) • Try to organize meals during the meetings when participants stay in the target expansion region; it helps them focus on the agenda without individual breaks for lunch in between <p>PROMOTION AND INFORMATION ACTIVITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put additional efforts to promotional activities and focus on information channels used by participating companies and startups • Develop direct contacts in various ways, both in your region / domestically and abroad, e.g. by participating in business fairs, conferences, meetings and other relevant events • Extend the time effort allocated for promotional activities in all channels, for at least two weeks before opening the program call for applications



	<p>PARTICIPANTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider differentiation of the two categories of young companies – the less and more developed / mature ones, e.g. startups and scale-ups • Try to keep the number of participants during the 2nd stage stay (in the target expansion region) at around 5 participants because of logistics reasons • Try to group participants into cohorts with similar profiles / interests and needs, in terms of sectors and partners they would like to meet in the target expansion region (at the 2nd stage)
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Good practice 28. Business Lubelskie (Biznes Lubelskie)

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	<i>Business Lubelskie (Biznes Lubelskie)</i>	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	START EASY	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Regional	
Location of the practice	Country	Poland
	Region	Lublin Region
	City	Not applicable

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<p>[160 characters] This text works as a preview for the good practice and it will appear at card level.</p> <p>—</p> <p>Regional one-stop shop for investors and exporters, operated by self-government of Lublin Region – Marshal Office of Lubelskie Voivodeship.</p>
Detailed information on the practice	<p>[1500 characters] Please provide information on the practice itself. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the problem addressed and the context which triggered the introduction of the practice? - How does the practice reach its objectives and how it is implemented? - Who are the main stakeholders and beneficiaries of the practice? <p>—</p> <p>CHALLENGES tackled</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create a system that effectively supports the inflow and creation of new investments and strengthening the export activity of businesses from the region, by linking local and regional self-governments and other partners • strengthen public competencies of the self-government of Lublin Region to provide professional business services of the highest quality <p>PROBLEMS addressed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of one single contact point for investors and exporters in the region • fragmented public tasks on different territorial self-government levels relevant for investors and exporters, not integrated both vertically (local and regional authorities) and horizontally (specific public units servicing investors' and exporters' needs) <p>Basic idea. BusinessLubelskie Team is an initiative of Marshal Office of Lubelskie Voivodeship which aims to strengthen regional cooperation with investors and exporters. It provides a wide range of support offer for both entrepreneurial groups: investors and exporters, acting primarily as a thematic one-stop shop. Namely, it creates one point of contact, with dedicated "Investment Pilot" (IP) AS is the first contact person for potential investors, and for all other parties from the region involved in the project, especially at initial phase of investment process.</p> <p>The key benefit for its customers is a free-of charge and time-effective approach leveraging easy access to relevant information and services delivered by local self-</p>

	<p>government and business environment institutions operating locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.</p> <p>Solution addressing the problems. Business Lubelskie is based on the centralized physical contact point, supplemented by a dedicated web portal with three virtual zones: investor, exporter and self-government zone. As part of Economy and Entrepreneurship Support Department of the Marshal Office of Lubelskie Voivodeship, it has built a network of 10 county divisions in Lubelskie Vivodship, designed as a system to support better flow of regional investment and export activities.</p> <p>Business Lubelskie Its operations are mainly focused on direct service and assistance to investors, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preparation of comprehensive, reliable and up-to-date economic information about the region: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. potential and the current economic situation b. forms of doing business c. instruments supporting entrepreneurship d. investment incentives offered at the regional and country level, and institutions appropriate for particular instruments e. entities from the region seeking for investor f. potential suppliers (by sector) 2. Organisation of and support for economic mission to / from the region. 3. "Investment Pilot's" (dedicated service staff) assistance throughout the whole investment process. 4. Presentation of the region and relevant sectors, available investment offers and site identification. 5. Support for negotiations with local authorities and business environment institutions. 6. Matching entrepreneurs with business oriented organisations and institutions supporting economic development in the region. 7. Organisation of conferences, seminars and trainings for entrepreneurs and local authorities. 8. Logistic support during investment visits (transport, accommodation, providing facilities for b2b meetings etc.). <p>For exporters, it developed a set of the following services:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identification of potential markets for a given type of product / service and investment outside the region 2. Assistance in utilizing business databases on potential business partners for export or foreign investment activities, and the follow-up business matching. 3. Reserarch of information through available resources (reports, analyzes, market research, sector- and problem-related studies) 4. Access to knowledge on adminsrative, legal, financial, business, investment, transactional, settlement, export related and cultural aspects of doing business on the foreign markets. 5. Organisation of export missions to / from the reigon. 6. Other information-based services.
<p>Resources needed</p>	<p>[300 characters] Please specify the amount of funding/financial resources used and/or the human resources required to set up and to run the practice.</p> <p>—</p> <p>Key financial resources: project staff of central and local points</p> <p>Human resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central poin staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 1 Business Lubelskie manager (head of the unit) > 1 investment pilot • Local county point staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 1 local manager > 1 thematic support assistant
<p>Timescale (start/end date)</p>	<p>This is a stand-alone regular (ongoing) initiative.</p> <p>Start date: April 2015 (lists of intent were signed between regional and county / local authorities)</p>

<p>Evidence of success (results achieved)</p>	<p>[500 characters] Why is this practice considered as good? Please provide factual evidence that demonstrates its success or failure (e.g. measurable outputs/results).</p> <p>—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Lubelskie services were used by Polish and international coprorates, investors and other companies from business services, machine, automotive, aviation, food, chemical and pharmaceutical sectors • 10 out of 24 counties are connected within the Business Lubelskie network, which unifies its investor and exporter related service standards, increase regional and county self-government capacity; for businesses investing in the region, it makes the process easier and faster • increased business attractiveness of the region <p>Business Lubelskie web page: http://invest.lubelskie.pl/en</p>
<p>Challenges encountered (optional)</p>	<p>[300 characters] Please specify any challenges encountered/lessons learned during the implementation of the practice.</p> <p>—</p> <p>No information provided</p>
<p>Potential for learning or transfer</p>	<p>[1000 characters] Please explain why you consider this practice (or some aspects of this practice) as being potentially interesting for other regions to learn from. This can be done e.g. through information on key success factors for a transfer or on, factors that can hamper a transfer. Information on transfer(s) that already took place can also be provided (if possible, specify the country, the region – NUTS 2 – and organisation to which the practice was transferred)</p> <p>[Technical: A good practice be edited throughout a project life time (e.g. to add information on the transfers that have occurred)]</p> <p>—</p> <p>A centralized single point of contact, with a network of local (county) divisions and an online portal offers comprehensive information regarding all aspects of investment and export activities, available free of charge and online, making it accessible to all interested parties.</p> <p>Why this is a good practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-stop shop – single point of contact, which means that dedicated “Investment Pilot” (IP) is the first contact person for potential investors, and for all other parties from the region involved in the project, especially at initial phase of investment process. • Cooperation with local authorities as well as regional, national and international business environment organisations • All services are free of charge and high-quality, delivered primarily by specialized self-government units in the region and locally
<p>Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for</p>	<p>Startup phase: NO</p> <p>Entering the market phase: YES</p> <p>Growth phase: YES</p>
<p>Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?</p>	<p>This is a stand-alone regular (ongoing) initiative.</p>
<p>Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?</p>	<p>Activities of the Business Lubelskie initiative were co-financed within the EU funds, implemented under Regional Operational Program of Lubelskie Voivodeship 2014-2020, Priority Axis 3: SME competitiveness, Measure 3.6 Regional economy marketing.</p>
<p>Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?</p>	<p>NO, all the services provided for the Business Lubelskie clients – investors and exporters – are free of charge.</p>
<p>How are participants/users selected for this good practice?</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>



Please outline any criteria that is required.	
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Both the central regional self-government unit managing Business Lubelskie one-stop shop and its local divisions market its services basically through dedicated web pages and social media</i> • <i>Also, Business Lubelskie organizes regular promotional events for local businesses with its services presentation</i>
What is innovative about this good practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Connection of regional and county (local) self-governments for mutual cooperation in the field of regional investment and export activities</i> • <i>An online portal allowing to set an account for access to basic platform features</i>
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	<i>Not applicable</i>
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	<i>No information provided</i>

Good practice 29. UMCS Knowledge and Technology Transfer Center

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	UMCS Knowledge and Technology Transfer Center	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	START EASY	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Regional	
Location of the practice	Country	Poland
	Region	Lublin Region
	City	Not applicable

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<p>[160 characters] This text works as a preview for the good practice and it will appear at card level.</p> <p>—</p> <p>Academic center supporting innovation flow between science and business, operated by University of Maria-Curie-Skłodowska in Lublin.</p>
Detailed information on the practice	<p>[1500 characters] Please provide information on the practice itself. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the problem addressed and the context which triggered the introduction of the practice? - How does the practice reach its objectives and how it is implemented? - Who are the main stakeholders and beneficiaries of the practice? <p>—</p> <p>CHALLENGES tackled</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • boost regional competitiveness through academic-driven innovations and technology transfer • attract corporate research support • licence revenues to support further R&D and commercialization • comply with national regulations in a more systemic way • improve talent attraction and retention of university-based scientists and students <p>PROBLEMS addressed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • insufficient support for knowledge and technology transfer and its flow to the regional economy • low level of R&D cooperation activities between universities and the socio-economic environment • to few links between R&D stakeholders: scientific employees of the university, SMEs and corporates, business environment institutions, NGOs, local and central government administration etc. <p>Solution addressing the problems. Knowledge and Technology Transfer Center is a one-stop shop for business partners interested in academic R&D in Maria Curie Skłodowska University.</p> <p>As an academic unit, the UMCS Knowledge and Technology Transfer Center:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports entrepreneurs in establishing cooperation with scientists of the University • Develops an individual offer of cooperation between the entrepreneur and the University • Coordinates the implementation of commissioned research, R&D projects for the field of energy, IT, medical, biotechnology, food, construction, fuel and other industries • Ensures the protection of intellectual property • Conducts processes of commercialization of research results, patents and copyrights • Promotes innovative solutions • Provides online training in the field of knowledge commercialization <p>Through its special purpose company Synergia UMCS Ltd., the Center is able to run:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indirect commercialization / spin-off zone • Training and mentoring services for companies and R&D centers • R&D headhunting activities • Commercial business consulting • Searching and matching business partners • Organization of events and conferences <p>As a member of the Polish Association of Centers for Technology Transfer (PACTT) network it contributes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of 73 technology transfer offices (TTOs) based in Poland • Joint representation of of technology transfer community • knowledge exchange, capacity building and better cooperation of partners <p>Main stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal – scientific employees of UMCS • External – SMEs and corporates, startups, spin-offs and spin-outs, R&D centers, business environment organisations, NGOs, local and central government administration etc. <p>The University is open to cooperation with the external environment in conducting joint research and development projects and wants to provide experts and research to businesses and government institutions. The unique equipment and experience of the technical and research personnel allow the University to conduct commissioned studies in various fields. Each year UMCS concludes new contracts for research work commissioned by external entities and carries out several hundred orders.</p>
Resources needed	<p>[300 characters] Please specify the amount of funding/financial resources used and/or the human resources required to set up and to run the practice.</p> <p>Human resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 technology transfer manager • 3-4 technology brokers • 1 IP protection specialist
Timescale (start/end date)	<p>The UMCS Knowledge and Technology Transfer Center is a stand-alone regular (ongoing) initiative.</p> <p>Start date: September 2016, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synergia UMCS Ltd.: registered in May 2021 • Polish Association of Centers for Technology Transfer (PACTT) network: established in December 2015
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p>[500 characters] Why is this practice considered as good? Please provide factual evidence that demonstrates its success or failure (e.g. measurable outputs/results).</p> <p>The UMCS Knowledge and Technology Transfer Center:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • commercialization of several disrupting technologies • implementation of several hundred research works commissioned by businesses • 21 projects received funding worth ca. 28 million EUR (125 million PLN)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 350 agreements per year • 500 agreements with external entities • Cooperation with 200 companies • Average revenue ca. 0.45 million EUR (over 2 million PLN) per year • Commercialization revenue – 26% increase in revenue compared to the 2019/2021 academic year • Submitted projects – coordinated and managed applications for external funds in 43 projects <p>Moreover, the Center leverage access to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2000 experts and specialists • Modern laboratories based on UMCS 12 faculties • 1000 technology transfer services (research, expertise, reports, laboratory analyses, innovation opinions and trainings) • 84 UMCS patents
Challenges encountered (optional)	<p>[300 characters] Please specify any challenges encountered/lessons learned during the implementation of the practice.</p> <p>—</p> <p>No information provided</p>
Potential for learning or transfer	<p>[1000 characters] Please explain why you consider this practice (or some aspects of this practice) as being potentially interesting for other regions to learn from. This can be done e.g. through information on key success factors for a transfer or on, factors that can hamper a transfer. Information on transfer(s) that already took place can also be provided (if possible, specify the country, the region – NUTS 2 – and organisation to which the practice was transferred)</p> <p>[Technical: A good practice be edited throughout a project life time (e.g. to add information on the transfers that have occurred)]</p> <p>—</p> <p>This good practice allows for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better use of the intellectual and technical potential of the University in cooperation with domestic and foreign businesses through the implementation of research and development projects financed from external sources and implementation of commissioned research, in particular at the faculties that have not yet implemented them (humanities and social sciences) • Training for employees in the field of intellectual property protection, cooperation with the socio-economic environment, commercialization and entrepreneurship (including spin-off companies)
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	<p>Startup phase: YES</p> <p>Entering the market phase: YES</p> <p>Growth phase: YES</p>
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<p>The UMCS Knowledge and Technology Transfer Center is a stand-alone regular (ongoing) initiative.</p>
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	<p>NO, the Knowledge and Technology Transfer Center, due to its nature as an organizational unit, is financed by the UMCS university itself. Nevertheless, part of its activities, e.g. research or infrastructure projects, were / are co-financed under different EU programs.</p>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<p>Basically, the UMCS Knowledge and Technology Transfer Center offers commercial services for its clients, thus generates revenue amounting to ca 0.45 million EUR (over 2 million PLN) per year.</p>
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<p>Not applicable</p>



<p>Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)</p>	<p><i>Key channels:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Own web page www.biznes.umcs.pl (for basic information, please visit: https://www.umcs.pl/en/commercialization-of-umcs-research,1544.htm) • Marketing materials • Own and external events
<p>What is innovative about this good practice?</p>	<p><i>The UMCS Knowledge and Technology Transfer Center builds on the capacity of university based science activities, makes it possible to connect it to business and provides R&D and private sector with opportunities to commercialize science-driven technologies.</i></p>
<p>How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?</p>	<p><i>This good practice helps both:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • startups to leverage scientific potential of university thanks to a set of R&D services, and • its academic employees and students to build science-driven ventures, especially through spin-offs and spin-outs
<p>Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?</p>	<p><i>No information provided</i></p>

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	Startup Weekend Lublin: Poland-Ukraine-Belarus international edition	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	START EASY	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Regional / international	
Location of the practice	Country	Poland
	Region	Lublin Region
	City	Lublin

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<p>[160 characters] This text works as a preview for the good practice and it will appear at card level.</p> <p>—</p> <p>International startup bootcamp for IT community from Poland, Ukraine and Belarus, run for 3 days.</p>
Detailed information on the practice	<p>[1500 characters] Please provide information on the practice itself. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the problem addressed and the context which triggered the introduction of the practice? - How does the practice reach its objectives and how it is implemented? - Who are the main stakeholders and beneficiaries of the practice? <p>—</p> <p>CHALLENGES tackled</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meet the supply of talent by region-based universities and local multicultural community • improve business skills of IT specialists and students based in the city • boost networking activity among young people with entrepreneurship aspirations • improve regional competitiveness by supporting international talents based in Lublin to build innovative venture • increasing demand for integration of startup community in neighbouring countries (in this case, Poland, Ukraine and Belarus) <p>PROBLEMS addressed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • untapped potential of talent pool in Lublin City • low awareness among young people about the value IT skills can add to their professional career • insufficient networking and mentoring opportunities in the city <p>Local context. Lublin has a huge human potential for entrepreneurship development. The number of public and private universities (5 + 4) proves the city has dynamic business potential, with a total of 65 thousands students of which 12% are foreign ones from Ukraine and many other countries. That is why an international startup event can well complement university studies in more than practical way, boost innovation-based entrepreneurship and startup creation. It turned out that about 50% of local students were open to entrepreneurial experience – that was the challenge for Lublin Science and Technology Park. Moreover, the city is attractive for IT sector.</p>

	<p>Basic idea and solution applied. Startup Weekend Lublin: Poland-Ukraine-Belarus international edition was organised in 2017 as part of global Startup Weekend initiative, which aims to create a dynamic environment for those who have passion for new technologies, willing to meet and joint the teams to implement their innovative business ideas, work with mentors and create a business solution prototype. The even structure is quite standardized. In terms of Startup Weekend Lublin international edition, it was structured as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 days / 54-hours long bootcamp • 6 international teams were formed (Polish, Ukrainian and Belarussian entrepreneurs), with a mix of skills and backgrounds in IT and other sectors • Each team works to build startup fundamentals, i.e. a product or service prototype • Startups are supported by dedicated Polish and foreign mentors and business training • The bootcamp ends with a Demo Day where business ideas and prototypes are presented in front of the judges • The whole event ends with an afterparty and networking activities
Resources needed	<p>[300 characters] Please specify the amount of funding/financial resources used and/or the human resources required to set up and to run the practice.</p> <p>—</p> <p>Financial resources: ca. 4 500 EUR (20 000 PLN)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catering • Travel and accommodation for mentors • Promotional materials and gifts • After party • Staff costs <p>Human resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 project manager
Timescale (start/end date)	<p>This was the 3rd Startup Weekend Lublin and the 2nd international edition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start date: June 2017 • End date: November 2017 <p>Total duration: 6 months (preparation + 3-days bootcamp + project closing)</p>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p>[500 characters] Why is this practice considered as good? Please provide factual evidence that demonstrates its success or failure (e.g. measurable outputs/results).</p> <p>—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 international business ideas / teams participated (Poland, Ukraine, Belarus) • 4 pitch session judges • 11 mentors with international background • local society attention attention through media (TV and radio) • ca. 200 business ideas participating in 3 editions of Startup Weekend Lublin (2015-2017)
Challenges encountered (optional)	<p>[300 characters] Please specify any challenges encountered/lessons learned during the implementation of the practice.</p> <p>—</p> <p>ORGANISATONAL CHALLENGES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promotion of the bootcamp among international community based in the city – it is much more difficult than attracting native Polish entrepreneurs, as they are well integrated, better know the ecosystem landscape and are more reachable by default; > thus, more time and effort should be put to attract international community of students and IT specialists <p>LESSONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • due to short program format, participating business ideas should be quite original, interesting, and based on accurate market research to ensure quality results; thus, basic thematic training of participants is needed as part of the program

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> as the program is very intense, the expert roles should be clearly defined and balance for pitch session judges and bootcamp mentors, taking into account their technology or business background and language skills
Potential for learning or transfer	<p>[1000 characters] Please explain why you consider this practice (or some aspects of this practice) as being potentially interesting for other regions to learn from. This can be done e.g. through information on key success factors for a transfer or on, factors that can hamper a transfer. Information on transfer(s) that already took place can also be provided (if possible, specify the country, the region – NUTS 2 – and organisation to which the practice was transferred)</p> <p>[Technical: A good practice be edited throughout a project life time (e.g. to add information on the transfers that have occurred)]</p> <p>—</p> <p>This good practice is well and easily transferred due to the standardized and simplified Startup Weekend format across global charters. Moreover, there is an opportunity to customize this good practice to specific challenges of local community – society and environmental issues, business needs of SME / corporate world, challenges faced by public authority units responsible for city wellbeing etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> one of the key factor of success for international editions is to provide a network of mentors from your own and foreign countries, which is a very strong value proposition for potential participants
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	<p>Startup phase: YES</p> <p>Entering the market phase: NO</p> <p>Growth phase: NO</p>
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<p>This good practice is part of a global Startup Weekend initiative led by Techstars (https://www.techstars.com/communities/startup-weekend).</p>
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	<p>NO, this good practice was not supported by EU funds. Nevertheless, it was publicly funded as part of Municipality of Lublin public task.</p>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<p>NO, the event was free of charge for participants.</p>
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program selection process was very simple, as there was only one requirement: interest to participate in the event and build a prototype with a team of like-minded people Participants had to fill a short 1-minute registration form with basic personal information (no experience or background was needed to describe)
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key marketing channels: dedicated event web page (http://www.swlub.pl/) with event description, agenda, information about mentors, judges and partners Face-to-face marketing (conferences, phone and video calls) Internet campaign: social media (Facebook), AdWords, regional and macroregional information portals Influencers and event media partners External event campaign (LubCamp, Aula Polska Lublin)
What is innovative about this good practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reaching international academic and IT community to integrate it within local entrepreneurial ecosystem Cooperation with top experts from Poland and Ukraine for mentorship and judging activities
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Polish-Ukrainian-Belarusian edition of Startup Weekend Lublin equipped young people from local native and international community with knowledge, network and experience to build its own innovative venture. This is important due to the global evidence suggesting that around ½ of startups are built of international teams. That is why by better integration of people from different countries living in one city can be beneficial for both the



	<i>city development and future entrepreneurs by inspiring the latter group and helping them to create new technology ventures.</i>
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	<i>Do not restrict participation of any group of participants based on its (lacking) experience or background. The more mixed the group is the better results it gives.</i>

6.6 Poland / Mazovia region



Good practice 31. MAZOVIAN STARTUP acceleration program

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	MAZOVIAN STARTUP acceleration program	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	No	
Please select the project acronym		
Thematic objective of the practice		
Geographical scope of the practice		
Location of the practice	Country	
	Region	
	City	

2. Detailed description

Short summary of the practice	<i>An activity of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship organized since 2018. The competition is an instrument for the promotion and support of the local start-up ecosystem.</i>
Detailed information on the practice	The MAZOVIAN STARTUP acceleration program is a public task organized annually and lasting all year round by the Mazowieckie Voivodeship, aimed at start-ups. As a result of the acceleration program, entrepreneurs gain new skills, competences as well as mentoring support, which allows them to gain feedback, and better refine their business ideas. These activities accelerate the development of their companies or business projects and increase the chances of implementing the proposed solutions on the market. This program is aimed at business projects without registered activity or start-ups, both which operate in Mazovia for no longer than 3 years. To qualify, projects must be within 4 areas of Mazovia's Smart Specialization: safe food, intelligent systems in industry and infrastructure, modern business ecosystem, high quality of life. Each year it is aimed at 30 innovative and socially responsible startups. Program helps startups to verify business model, develop and scale operations with help of the practitioner experts.
Resources needed	Practice is solely financed from the Self-government of Mazowieckie Voivodeship budget. Minimum of two persons are needed to successfully implement the practice. 500 000 PLN (about 107747 EUR) for each acceleration program (every year).
Timescale (start/end date)	Since 2018 on. The preparation and implementation of the acceleration program lasts a whole year, however the acceleration program itself usually lasts from June to December.
Evidence of success (results achieved)	The results were measured with evaluation questionnaire: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for 100% respondents participation increased their knowledge and skills in the field of entrepreneurship and verification of commercial suitability ideas; • for 95% respondents participation increased their knowledge in product development, marketing, sales, business development, pitching, foreign expansion strategies; • for 100% respondents participation increased their knowledge and skills to use the social aspects of their start-ups.
Potential for learning or transfer	This good practice is easy to implement in other countries after identifying start-up needs. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze the region in terms of entrepreneurship and innovation, and to analyze the local needs and the needs of the community.
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Startup phase: Yes
	Entering the market phase: Yes
	Growth phase: No
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	The Masovian Acceleration Program is one of several competitions organised by the Mazowieckie Voivodeship for non-governmental organizations. The competitions cover many fields, for instance the boost of entrepreneurship and economic development.
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	This good practice is not supported by the EU structural funds. The involvement of structural funds would allow to increase the scale of support for start-ups.



Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	No, participation in the competition is free of charge.
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	You can apply for the competition by completing the online form during recruitment. Participants are formally and substantively assessed by experts, on the basis of specific criteria. The regulations of each edition of the program and the criteria are created by the entity implementing the program.
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	<p>Mazowieckie Voivodeship runs a promotional campaign in order to reach the end user. Actions taken include: promotion in social media, including paid promotional campaigns, promotional spots emitted in public transport and regional railways, webinars, start-up camp workshops, meetings in subregions, press releases published in well-known industry media.</p> <p>https://mazovianstartup.ybp.org.pl/</p> <p>https://innowacyjni.mazovia.pl/dzialania/programy-akceleracyjne.html</p> <p>https://innowacyjni.mazovia.pl/dzialania/programy-akceleracyjne/ii-edycja-2.html</p>
What is innovative about this good practice?	Due to the specificity of the region: competitive and business Warsaw and subregions characterized by a lower competitive potential, the program aims to promote and implement additional activities in selected subregions in order to increase the availability of support for entities developing projects outside the capital city. Due to the agricultural nature of the region, the program supports start-ups that create new solutions in the agri-food sector. This will be possible thanks to strong cooperation with the regions and partners of the program.
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	The last edition of Mazovian Acceleration Programme resulted in registering new companies, creating new jobs and strengthening the position on the market of existing companies and developing activities. Participants learned how to diagnose business weaknesses faster and more efficiently, and introduce new solutions to the market or new sales channels, which increases the chance of maintaining the business and achieving success.
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	Complicated application forms should be avoided.

Good practice 32. Start from Mazovia

1. Good practice general information	
Title of the practice	<i>Start from Mazovia</i>
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	No

Please select the project acronym		
Thematic objective of the practice		
Geographical scope of the practice		
Location of the practice	Country	
	Region	
	City	

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	Dissemination&promotion of good practices: economic use of new technologies, development&new products introduction, modern management methods, business models
Detailed information on the practice	The competition is an instrument for the promotion and support of the Mazovian startup ecosystem. Thanks to this contest, good practices are disseminated and promoted in the field of economic use of new technologies, development and introduction of new products or services and modern management methods and business models. It is dedicated to startups registered in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship and operating for a maximum of three years. Startups can submit their participation in the categories: social impact, inno-tech and start. The social impact category is for startups with a positive impact on the environment or society, while the inno-tech category is open to startups whose products and processes are technologically innovative. A start category is for pioneering projects that are at the Minimum Value Product (MVP) or prototype stage. The contest provides a unique opportunity to meet innovative entrepreneurs from the region and obtain valuable advice from the competition jury consisting of well-known business experts. Their combined expertise is a source of invaluable business knowledge that can help a company avoid costly mistake and build a strong market position. The winners also receive special awards from the Partners of the competition. Along with financial support, winning the competition is an opportunity for promotion in the industry media, which is extremely important for developing startups. Media patronage allows the winners to quickly reach a wider audience.
Resources needed	393 905 PLN (about 84 674 EUR) including: 90 000 PLN (about 19 320 EUR) prizes for laureates, 303 905 PLN (about 65 260 EUR) payment for the contractor
Timescale (start/end date)	The realization of the task lasts all year round. The deadline for accepting competition applications starts on June 1, 2022 and ends on July 7, 2022.
Evidence of success (results achieved)	It was a landmark event in the development of SolHotAir. Participation allowed them to gain many valuable contacts, which ultimately helped them find a strategic investor.

	For Microlens, a startup producing the world's smallest gradient microlenses, a special award in the 2nd edition, an acceleration program in Nevada, USA, enabled the work on new technological solutions. They gained the right perspective and practical knowledge.
Challenges encountered (optional)	Observing the processes taking place in the modern world, including in particular climate change, the voivodeship self-government realizes that innovation should not only be the driving force of the economy, but it should also have a positive impact on the society and the environment. Therefore, in 3rd edition of the competition, start-ups had a chance to compete in 3 categories: Social Impact, Inno-Tech and Start.
Potential for learning or transfer	This good practice is easy to implement in other countries after identifying start-up needs. Competition participants agree that participation in the competition allowed them to appear on the market, develop companies, increase sales, attract investors not only thanks to financial awards, but also promotion and awards from competition partners (substantive consultations related to business development and obtaining financing, participation in training and mentoring programs or a presentation to a group of investors). The practice boosts the appearance of start-ups on the market.
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Startup phase: Yes
	Entering the market phase: Yes
	Growth phase: Yes
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	For years, the self-government of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship has been taking actions aimed at creating appropriate conditions for the development of entrepreneurs, promoting pro-innovative attitudes, and support in acquiring competences based on modern technologies. Initiatives such as the Masovian acceleration program, the Start from Mazovia or the Innovator of Mazowsze competitions are a space for educating and rewarding the most creative entrepreneurs. This good practice is classified to be stand-alone activity financed by own funds, however it contributes to the achievement of Regional Innovation Strategy's goals and it is a part of actions aimed at creating appropriate conditions for the development of entrepreneurs, promoting pro-innovative attitudes, and support in acquiring competences based on modern technologies.
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	This good practice is not supported by the EU structural funds. The involvement of structural funds would allow to increase the scale of support for start-ups.
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	No, participation in the competition is free of charge.
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	You can apply for the competition by completing the online form during the recruitment. Participants are formally and substantively assessed by experts, on the basis of specific criteria. In the first stage of the assessment, experts evaluate the competition applications, and in the second stage of the assessment - start-up pitches.
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	Mazowieckie Voivodeship runs a promotional campaign in order to reach the end user. Actions taken include: promotion in social media, including paid promotional campaigns, promotional spots emitted in public transport and regional railways, involvement of finalists of previous editions of the competition, press releases published in well-known industry media, cooperation with a well-known influencer (159 000 followers).
What is innovative about this good practice?	The innovation in this practice is transnational cooperation. In the 2nd edition of the competition, the Mazowieckie Voivodeship and the State of Nevada funded a week-long acceleration program in the USA for selected participants of the competition. In the next edition, the State of Nevada also declared cooperation and a special award.



<p>How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?</p>	<p>The competition mainly contributes to the development of start-ups that already exist, however the region-wide campaign may be inspirational for people who are willing to run their own start-up.</p>
<p>Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?</p>	<p>Complicated application forms should be avoided.</p>

Good practice 33. „Modelling the System of Offers for Innovations”

3. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	<i>„Modelling the System of Offers for Innovations”</i>	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	<i>MSODI \ Grant Project for Business Environment Institutions</i>	
Thematic objective of the practice	<i>SME Competitiveness</i>	
Geographical scope of the practice	<i>Regional</i>	
Location of the practice	Country	Poland
	Region	Mazovian Voivodeship
	City	

4. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<p>.</p> <p>Support of Partnerships of Mazovian Business Environment Institutions in preparation of proinnovative services for SMEs.</p>
Detailed information on the practice	<p>A project co-financed with structural funds, aimed on support Business Environment Institutions (BEI) in form of grants allocated in competitive procedure. BEIs are the grant recipients, and Mazovian Voivodeship is project's beneficiary. Grants for Partnerships of BEI are support for creation and implementation new proinnovative services in BEIs' portfolios. Project is based on demand system – in grants are created services (new or improved), which are actual needs of SMEs. Before marketisation services are tested by SMEs for free.</p> <p>When formulating support for the BEI in the form of grants, it was important that the resulting services translated into real development of SMEs. This was reflected in the requirements for the construction of services and the assumption that services would enable the initiation of the innovation process in enterprises. Due to their modularity and variability, they will be adapted to different types of enterprises. The resulting services will translate into innovation processes in sectors defined as areas of smart specialization and thus contribute to building a competitive advantage of enterprises, using innovative solutions.</p> <p>Grant Project „Modelling the System of Offers for Innovations ”is an out-of-competition project implemented as part of the Regional Operationam Programme of Mazovian Voivodeship 2014-2020.</p>
Resources needed	<p>Total value of project - 8.373.574,23 PLN, funding - 8.200.643,67 PLN.</p> <p>Partnerships of BEI taking part in the grant call had to demonstrate reliable infrastructural, technical and human resources, as well as meeting appropriate standards and experience in the provision of services.</p>
Timescale (start/end date)	Project implementation period: 29th January 2016 – 31st January 2023, (Grant Projects are realized since January 2021 till the end of October 2022).
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p>The project will result in providing the market with 20 advanced services dedicated to SMEs, i.e. of higher quality and at the same time tailored to the needs of recipients.</p> <p>For those purposes formal partnerships of BEI were established - 4 partnerships associating 11 entities.</p>

	The design of services has to, i.a. enable initiation of the innovation process in enterprises and translate into innovation processes in sectors defined as areas of intelligent specialization.
Challenges encountered (optional)	Developing a coherent system of grant financing&maintaining financial liquidity of grant recipients, taking into account the possibility of settling individual payment applications in advance and reimbursement system, and correlating grants' settlement with beneficiary's and support unit settlement
Potential for learning or transfer	<p>Noteworthy is the structure of the project and the scope of support addressed to the Business Environment Institution by granting grants for the development of advisory services tailored to the real needs of SMEs, animating cooperation between BEI.</p> <p>Such activities contribute to building a coherent and comprehensive system of pro-innovation offers. The role of instruments addressed to the business environment is also important, namely the identification and support of only those activities that develop the potential and increase the effectiveness of the BEI, while avoiding financing the current operational activities (e.g. advisory) of these institutions, which do not lead to the achievement of the above-mentioned goal.</p> <p>The project is treated as a pilot, the experience from its implementation will have an impact on the preparation and design of support offered through the BEI in the new financial perspective, has great adaptability and can be implemented in any region.</p>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Startup phase: Do not refers.
	Entering the market phase: Do not refers.
	Growth phase: Do not refers.
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	It is a part of the Innovation Support System implemented by the Mazovian Voivodeship. The undertaken activities are a continuation of initiatives initiated as part of the system project of the OP Human Capital entitled "Mazovian Network of Advisory and Information Centers in the field of innovation" and in particular in the field of the Forum of Business Environment Institutions, created as part of this project.
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	Modelling of Offers System for Innovations is an out-of-competition project co-financed from the Structural Funds under the ROP MV 2014-2020.
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<p>The BEI Partnership bears the expenses deemed ineligible and related to the implementation of the Grant Project (e.g. VAT).</p> <p>It should be noted, however, that in accordance with the amendment of Article 2 (10) of the General Regulation of the European Commission regarding the definition of a beneficiary, it is possible to implement projects in the grant/umbrella formula of these projects with state aid or de minimis aid, the value of which does not exceed EUR 200,000 granted as state aid within a project to one company.</p>
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<p>Project participants were selected in an open grant call addressed to partnerships of Business Environment Institutions meeting the requirements for granting public aid.</p> <p>An important element of the selection process was the assessment of the organizational and substantive readiness of the BEI to create, provide and maintain advanced and comprehensive services on the market, and consequently to provide them for a fee. The minimum requirements for BEI, in the grant competition, giving the opportunity to assess the above-mentioned readiness and quality of services, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a)to monitor the provision of various services and to carry out customer satisfaction surveys to assess their performance and to rely on statistical data in the implementation of new services; (b)the application of existing standards for the provision of services; (c)the implementation of a business strategy that clearly identifies the different sources of revenue and confirms the ability to operate under market conditions and the financial independence to carry out the business (or the ability to gradually achieve such independence by the end of the eligibility period); (d)having an annual activity plan containing: an indicative list of the projects/services it plans to provide/ provide, the resources available, the necessary training, the required budget and the sources of funding (projects planned for support from the ERDF should be clearly presented in the work plan).



	<p>The selection criteria are specified in the recruitment document available: https://innowacyjni.mazovia.pl/dzialania/projekt_msodi/konkurs-grantowy-2.html</p>
<p>Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)</p>	<p>For the purpose of activating the BEI environment and entrepreneurs, networking meetings implemented as part of the project were prepared. Their primary goal is to animate cooperation, enable networking and stimulate the need for cooperation and establishing contacts with business environment institutions.</p> <p>In addition, the project, Partnerships and services are presented during regional and national thematic events.</p> <p>https://innowacyjni.mazovia.pl/dzialania/projekt_msodi/partnerstwa-iob.html</p> <p>The final recipient of the project are Business Environment Institutions, the assumptions of the project were consulted with the BEI environment in the region, i.e. the BEI Forum and the Mazovian Innovation Council.</p>
<p>What is innovative about this good practice?</p>	<p>Particular emphasis has been placed on developing BEI's advanced and specialized advisory services, using existing centers and their resources by consolidating capabilities in the form of partnerships. These activities are supported by a system of monitoring and accounting for funds, as well as animation activities aimed at cooperation between BEI and SMEs. In addition, BEI support will lead to their professionalization. The development of services is also in line with the development trends of the region defined as areas of smart specialization.</p>
<p>How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?</p>	<p>Project does not directly affect the creation of startups in the region, however, the services provided as part of the Grant Projects in part are also addressed to this market segment.</p>
<p>Can you please outline "what not to do or things to avoid" in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?</p>	<p>The assumptions of the project and its construction were positively evaluated i.a. during the evaluation discussion entitled "Assessment of the impact of activities undertaken under the ROP MV 2014-2020 aimed at improving the conditions for the development of SMEs".</p> <p>Attention should be paid for an attempt of consolidation of potential of existing BEI, what can minimise fragmentation of BEI market and start real BEI cooperation with high standards of operation.</p>

Good practice 34. Investor and Exporter Service Centre (IESC)

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	<i>Investor and Exporter Service Centre (IESC)</i>	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	No	
Please select the project acronym		
Thematic objective of the practice		
Location of the practice	Country	
	Region	
	City	

3. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	Business support for investors and exporters, as well as the implementation of activities aimed at economic promotion of the region in the country and abroad
Detailed information on the practice	<p>The tasks of the IESC include in particular:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support for domestic and foreign investors interested in undertaking economic activities in the region; 2. Cooperation with the Polish Information and Foreign Investment Agency, local government units and business environment institutions in the field of investor service and providing information on Masovian investment offers; 3. Supporting Masovian enterprises (start ups, and SMEs) by organizing thematic workshops; 4. Creating and updating a database of regional investment offers, 5. Organizing and participating in domestic and international business ventures, in cooperation with local government units and business support institutions; 6. Promoting the Mazovian economy by disseminating the investment and export offer of Mazovia during fairs, conferences, seminars, workshops and other domestic and international economic undertakings; 7. Development and publication of information and promotion materials in the field of the economy of the Voivodeship; 8. Implementation of projects supporting entrepreneurship in Mazovia region.
Resources needed	<p>250 00 EUR/year</p> <p>Human resources: employment of well-trained experts, ~10 people. Other resources: industry market analyses, reports, databases, operation costs.</p>
Timescale (start/end date)	Since 2007, ongoing
Evidence of success (results achieved)	Since the beginning of IESC, more than 20 visits to foreign trade fairs with entrepreneurs from the region have been organized; more than 150 entrepreneurs from the region had the opportunity to promote their products and services abroad during trade fairs and economic missions; over 4,800 entrepreneurs received support in terms of exporting goods abroad, over 300 entrepreneurs - in terms of foreign investments, over 67 thematic workshops.

Challenges encountered (optional)	<p>To provide the service, advanced databases are needed, allowing for efficient matching of entrepreneurs. The lack of a sufficient base may hinder the implementation of activities.</p> <p>Acquiring resources to finance external experts. Finding appropriate foreign partners willing to start cooperation with regional companies during trade fairs and missions.</p>
Potential for learning or transfer	<p>This good practice is easy to implement in other countries after identifying start-up needs. Participants agree that participation in the provided activities allowed them to appear on the market, develop their companies, establish new international business contacts, increase sales, and attract investors.</p>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	<p>Startup phase: Yes</p> <p>Entering the market phase: Yes</p> <p>Growth phase: Yes</p>
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<p>It is a part of services offered by MDA, transferred by the Office of the Marshal of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship (Resolution 398/22/07 of the Management Board of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship of 27 February 2007), dedicated for economic growth support of the region.</p>
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	<p>This good practice is not supported by the EU structural funds. However, some activities are supported with structural funds or ERDF under specific Projects (i.e. organisation of trade fairs visits). More involvement of structural funds would allow to increase the scale of support for start-ups.</p>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<p>No, participation is free of charge.</p>
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<p>The participant must have a business activity established, i.e. as a startup or an SME, etc.</p>
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	<p>There have been promotional campaigns in national and worldwide media, current actions taken include: promotion in social media and via web sites. Centrum Obsługi Inwestora i Eksportera (COIE) w Warszawie Facebook Centrum Obsługi Inwestora i Eksportera Agencja Rozwoju Mazowsza S.A. (armsa.pl)</p>
What is innovative about this good practice?	<p>It is available to all entrepreneurs who have enterprises registered in the territory of the Republic of Poland, and in the case of natural persons - having a place of residence in Poland. The service is provided by an independent local government institution free of charge, which removes the financial barrier, making it available to everyone, including startups or small businesses. IESC was designed as a national network of 15 units (one in each region) that provide information services in various forms to entrepreneurs free of charge. Thus, the network guarantees trouble-free access, regardless of location, to professional services based on a uniform standard.</p>
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	<p>The competition mainly contributes to the development of start-ups and SMEs that already exist, however the region-wide campaign may be inspirational for people who are willing to run their own start-up.</p>
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	<p>Complicated application forms and procedures should be avoided in order to increase availability of the service. The importance of human resources (well trained experts) should not be disregarded.</p>

Good practice 35. Start in Park

1. Good practice general information	
Title of the practice	<i>Start in Park</i>
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	No
Please select the project acronym	

4. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	People with unconventional ideas are given the opportunity to participate in professional business training, mentoring and networking meetings free of charge.
Detailed information on the practice	<p>Non-metropolitan small or medium-sized cities and surrounding areas are often left behind when it comes to innovation boosting initiatives and support that are focused in metropolises. As a result it is difficult for the smaller cities entrepreneurs to level up and stay tuned to the crossbar. As a non-metropolitan development centre, PPP-T S.A. is creating opportunities for development and incubation of innovative businesses in non-metropolitan cities.</p> <p>By providing professional business training, mentoring and networking conditions for 25 carefully selected innovative business ideas. The acceleration program consists of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training in the areas of marketing, accounting, law, management, fundraising, sales and training in soft skills; - Business mentoring - each program participant can count on the support of a mentor - an experienced entrepreneur; - Networking meetings stimulating mutual support and business relations among participants; - Demo Day - where participants will be able to present their results and win one of the three cash prizes. <p>Stakeholders: Entrepreneurs from the Plock region, people planning to set up and run their own business, people with business ideas, those who care about the development of an already existing enterprise.</p>
Resources needed	The financial resources are significant yet classified. The whole practise is coordinated and managed by a team of three people.
Timescale (start/end date)	<p>Annually, 1st edition – November 2019/September 2020</p> <p>2nd edition – November 2021/ongoing</p>
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p>1st edition results:</p> <p>Percentage of business projects that completed the acceleration process – 100%</p> <p>Percentage of verified business models – 75%</p> <p>Percentage of business projects that significantly developed as a result of participation in the Program (e.g. developed a new product, service, new method of production / service provision) – 35%</p>
Challenges encountered (optional)	<p>[300 characters] Please specify any challenges encountered/lessons learned during the implementation of the practice.</p> <p>Difficulties for the applicants to come up with innovative technological or IT related ideas – in the 2nd edition of the Program 54% of the applicants' ideas were related to the service sector. Only 17% were IT sector and 7% from technology sector. The remaining 21% were production/craftsmanship.</p>

Potential for learning or transfer	<p>In the case of regions with a similar structure and challenges - non-metropolitan areas - the Program has the potential to increase innovation and new technologies indicators. In particular, in the context of equalizing the region's development opportunities in relation to the growth centre, the implementation of incubation and start-up programs may have a positive impact not only on the number of accelerated entities, but above all on their potential, management of market niches, or the transfer of innovation from the development centre to the regional area.</p> <p>Due to the concentration of acceleration programs in large cities (development centres) or at research and development centres of large companies and universities, the implementation of regional acceleration programs is a good practice supporting the development of sub regions, where there are disproportions in access to knowledge, development opportunities and science in relation to regions, e.g. capital cities.</p>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	<p>Startup phase: Yes</p> <p>Entering the market phase:</p> <p>Growth phase:</p>
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	<p>It is a stand-alone activity, however it surely has potential for more, e.g. continuation from incubation and acceleration to implementation.</p>
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	<p>It is not, however the Start in Park program is in line with the goal of "increasing the growth and competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises and creating jobs in small and medium-sized enterprises" in relation to planned incubation and acceleration programs with an emphasis on the less developed regional Mazowiecki region - point 2.1.1.1 of the project of the Regional Operational Program of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship for the years 2021-2027.</p>
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	<p>No, participation is free of charge.</p>
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<p>Through an Application Form.</p> <p>According to the terms of the program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Program participants may be adults and minors over 16 years of age (with the consent of a parent or legal guardian) declaring their readiness to actively participate in the Program - The Program participant may be a natural person or max. a 3-person business project team that has completed the Application Form on behalf of itself, its project team or for the benefit of an entity (business or commercial law company) and has been (a) qualified by a recruitment committee as a project team or entity to participate in the Program Business projects without registered economic activity, initiated by the inhabitants of the Plock Subregion - The Program participant may be young companies at the initial stage of development, with registered business activity in the Plock Subregion (as at the date of submitting the recruitment form) <p>The Program participant may be new business projects implemented or planned to be implemented by experienced entities with registered business activity in the Plock Subregion (as of the date of submission of the recruitment form)</p>
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	<p>Through social media, local newspapers, contact addresses of commune offices, local news portals, posters in key locations, local radio and TV. Few example:</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/Program-Akceleracyjny-PPP-T-SA-102668344650364</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/ppptsa.poland</p> <p>https://www.instagram.com/pppt_sa/?hl=en</p> <p>https://siecpredsiębiorczychkobiet.pl/start-in-park/</p> <p>https://bodzanow.pl/wiadomosci/38354/nowy-program-akceleracyjny-start-in-park</p>



What is innovative about this good practice?	<p>It is meant to create opportunity for further innovation.</p>
<p><i>We have provided potential start-ups with theoretical and practical knowledge to continue their growth, however we have not conducted research in this area.</i></p>	<p>We have provided potential start-ups with theoretical and practical knowledge to continue their growth, however we have not conducted research in this area.</p>
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	<p>We would advise against narrowing down the business area in which the start-up operates to the specific areas in favour of choosing according to the quality and development potential.</p>

Good practice 36. Targówek District Entrepreneurs' Club

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	Targówek District Entrepreneurs' Club	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	No	
Please select the project acronym		
Thematic objective of the practice		
Geographical scope of the practice		
Location of the practice	Country	
	Region	
	City	

5. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	Open meetings for local SMEs aimed at boosting cooperation between entrepreneurs and exchanging know-how organized in the municipality.
Detailed information on the practice	<p>Targówek municipality cooperates with entrepreneurs in organizing local meetings with dedicated company owners. There is an entrepreneurship board that cooperates with the municipality. The main aim of the meetings is to integrate local SMEs by organizing open networking meetings.</p> <p>Targówek is a large district (approx. 120 000 inhabitants). Entrepreneurs didn't cooperate with each other because they didn't know each other. Thanks to open and free of charge networking meetings organized in Targówek District Office, they can integrate, share their knowledge and develop their businesses by contact with other business owners. They establish local cooperation and recommend their products and services.</p>
Resources needed	Very small or even no funding required. The crucial resource is a person in the municipality who organises and coordinates local networking meetings. Small funds: refreshments and promotion. The municipality provides the space for meetings and shares information about the events.
Timescale (start/end date)	2018 November – until now
Evidence of success (results achieved)	Every networking meeting gathers around 20-30 entrepreneurs and shows one of the business issues. From the beginning, we organized approx. 80 meetings. Cooperation between municipality and entrepreneurs is long-term and effective. Local business owners are engaged in this cooperation because they can promote their business, gain new clients and business partners. They also willingly share their knowledge and help each other.

Challenges encountered (optional)	To convince entrepreneurs that networking can help develop their businesses; to keep long-term relationships with businesses. The entrepreneurship board is changed every half year to keep the freshness of mind so annually we need to encourage six people to manage the Club.
Potential for learning or transfer	Targówek District Entrepreneurs' Club has a big potential to transfer because it can be done without a huge amount of money and entrepreneurs willingly join this club. A club is a good place for entrepreneurs who started their business and want to gain new business contacts or just want to develop their companies or just looking for inspiration to grow. The mechanism is very easy – connect people on the interesting meetings. The key factor is to share the responsibility with entrepreneurs and let them take care of the Club and share the networking idea among their friends and business partners.
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Startup phase: Yes
	Entering the market phase: Yes
	Growth phase: Yes
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	Targówek District Entrepreneurs' Club Is a stand-alone activity run mainly by municipality.
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	The practice is a partial continuation of the project Warsaw Entrepreneurship Forum which was finished in 2014. The project was co-financed by European Social Fund.
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	No, participation in the competition is free of charge.
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	Participants can join the meeting at any time.
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	Municipality Website Mailing Social media: Facebook , Instagram , LinkedIn Posters and leaflets
What is innovative about this good practice?	Municipality share their space for local entrepreneurs integration, free of charge.
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	Entrepreneurs from the Club willingly help each other, share their contacts and run the new projects together.
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	You should not organize events for entrepreneurs without cooperating with them - you should engage entrepreneurs as much as possible and let them decide about the club activities and rules.

Good practice 37. Centre of Entrepreneurship Smolna (CES)

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	Centre of Entrepreneurship Smolna (CES)	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	No	
Please select the project acronym		
Thematic objective of the practice		
Geographical scope of the practice		
Location of the practice	Country	
	Region	
	City	

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	One-stop shop; Business incubator; Training and educational offer; Business promotion; Business, financial and legal advisory
Detailed information on the practice	<p>The problem that CES addresses is tightly connected with the lack of enough support provided to the entrepreneurs by the public entities in terms of setting and running the company. CES is being implemented by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Building the incubator that consists of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - open space with desks for entrepreneurs - conference rooms 2) Developing additional free-of charge services for entrepreneurs, which are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One-stop shop information desk, where would-be entrepreneurs can register the company, receive information regarding loans and grants and other entrepreneurship-supporting services provided by both public and private entities within local ecosystem. - Trainings, courses, workshops - Networking meetings - Acceleration programmes - Business/financial/legal advisory - Internationalization activities - Entrepreneurship-support promotion activities <p>The main stakeholders of CES are local NGOs, incubators, hubs, associations, foundations – all entities that somehow provide business-supporting services for entrepreneurs.</p> <p>The beneficiaries are mainly would-be entrepreneurs, SMEs, students and all other individuals or entities interested in cooperation with the City of Warsaw on the field of entrepreneurship.</p>
Resources needed	<p>Centre of Entrepreneurship Smolna's initial cost: EUR 2,5 mln</p> <p>Annual budget for implementing projects – circa. EUR 500k-1 mln</p>

	CES' staff: 27 (different departments)
Timescale (start/end date)	Since 2013 on.
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p>Around 70k users from 2013 until now, out of which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - around 3k users participate in trainings annually - around 2,5k users use services of one-stop shop annually - 315 teams went through acceleration programmes - 21 teams participated in internationalisation programmes - thousands of other users participate annually in various CES's projects co-organized with external entities regarding entrepreneurship support
Challenges encountered (optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stiffness of administrative procedures within structures of the City of Warsaw that often prevents swiftness in undertaken actions • Being a public incubator creates a better opportunity to join in the whole ecosystem of entrepreneurship support and understand better the needs within
Potential for learning or transfer	<p>The incubator is a 100% public undertaking, financed only with public and EU money. It connects feats of private incubators with feats offered by public district offices, i.e. not only can a person run a company/participate in entrepreneurs-oriented workshops here, but can also submit a form for registering a sole proprietorship. It offers real help in a form of grants for the winners of the CES' acceleration programmes held annually. It is also a OSS that offers information on various initiatives of SMEs support. Thus, visiting CES guarantees that the clients will also be equipped with essential knowledge on both public and private free-of-charge trainings, workshops, lectures, networking meetings, acceleration programs and other events. It links local stakeholders, cross-promotes stakeholders' entrepreneurs-oriented initiatives and encourages stakeholders to do the same thing. Embedded within the public structures of the Warsaw City Hall, it uses tools common for private entities.</p>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Startup phase: Yes
	Entering the market phase: Yes
	Growth phase: Yes
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	It's a stand-alone service
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	It is co-financed by the European Union from the European Regional Development Fund
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	The only costs that participants need to pay refer to space rental within open space of CES incubator.
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	<p>The users of CES are divided into different categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - co-working space users: they are selected from among Varsovians' entrepreneurs who submitted the form; - participants of trainings: would-be entrepreneurs or already operating companies; - participants of acceleration programs: start-ups or fledgling entrepreneurs who operate in specific business field, which depends on individual acceleration program's criteria (i.e. technology, IOT, AI, AR, fintech, insuretech, big data, biotechnology, creative sector, etc.); - participants of advisory services: would-be entrepreneurs or entrepreneurs; - users of OSS services: no specific criteria required.
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your	O Centrum Przedsiębiorczości Smolna : Centrum Przedsiębiorczości Smolna



region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	Centrum Przedsiębiorczości Smolna - Strona główna Facebook Spot Centrum Przedsiębiorczości Smolna - YouTube
What is innovative about this good practice?	An OSS within the public structures of the Warsaw City Hall using tools common for private entities, and offering free of charge services.
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	Around 3k users participate in trainings annually, 315 teams went through acceleration programmes.
Can you please outline “what not to do or things to avoid” in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	Complicated application forms and procedures should be avoided.

Good practice 38. Creative Mikser

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	Creative Mikser	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	No	
Please select the project acronym		
Thematic objective of the practice		
Geographical scope of the practice		
Location of the practice	Country	
	Region	
	City	

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	Creative Mikser is about networking meetings, presentations, discussions and establishing opportunities to exchange thoughts on various creative topics.
Detailed information on the practice	The problem that Creative Mikser tries to correspond to is the lack of people's awareness regarding different issues within creative sector. In order to relevantly respond to the issue a decision was made to create a platform that would enable people from different branches within creative sector to connect, exchange thoughts, broaden their knowledge and cooperate with each other. Creative Mikser is implemented through series of networking meetings organised by the British Council and the City of Warsaw along with local partners. These are presentations, discussions and opportunities to establish new business contacts and meet interesting people. The main beneficiaries of the practice are all the participants- people interested in creative subjects. The main stakeholders are artists, individual creators, entrepreneurs, foundations, associations and all other entities willing to support creative sector.
Resources needed	Annual budget of the City of Warsaw (CoW) – 40k PLN Annual budget of British Council (BC) – 10~15k PLN BC's and CoWs staff working on the organization of each Creative Mikser: 5 External staff hired for audio-visualisation and translation: up to 10 people External moderators of each Mikser: 1
Timescale (start/end date)	Since 2011 on.
Evidence of success (results achieved)	We have been running Creative Mikser since 2011 and there are always new topics to cover, new interesting subjects to talk about. Almost 25k people participated in all editions.
Challenges encountered (optional)	<i>[300 characters] Please specify any challenges encountered/lessons learned during the implementation of the practice.</i> Creative Mikser used to be organized in various places around Warsaw, which we might consider as "creative": theatres, museums, clubs, houses of culture, etc. Due to the pandemic it had to be moved online, which didn't fit well to what it is intended for, i.e. semi-formal networking meetings.



Potential for learning or transfer	Creative Mikser delivers the platform to discuss on topics, which are not commonly covered by casual trainings, workshops, accelerations programs and other tools of support for entrepreneurs in the local ecosystem of the City of Warsaw. It is an opportunity that brings to daylight the creativity of individual artists and creative entrepreneurs giving them a chance to develop, be understood and scale up..
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	<i>Startup phase:</i> Yes <i>Entering the market phase:</i> Yes <i>Growth phase:</i> Yes
Is this good practice stand-alone activity/service or part of some other offering?	It is one of many initiatives developed within the process of cooperation between the City and other actors.
Is this good practice supported by EU structural funds? If not, how can it be relevant for structural funding authority?	It is not supported
Is there any cost to participants in engaging with this good practice?	It's free-of-charge
How are participants/users selected for this good practice? Please outline any criteria that is required.	The registration for each Creative Mikser is open for everyone. There are no criteria of participation.
Please outline how this good practice is marketed in your region and how it reaches the end-user (please include links if available)	Every edition of Creative Mikser is promoted on the websites of British Council and the City of Warsaw; it is promoted in Warsaw transportation system: buses, trams, subway and city trains. The posters and leaflets about the project are distributed among district offices of the City of Warsaw.
What is innovative about this good practice?	Two cities from two different countries created a mutual platform to discuss on topics, which are not commonly covered by casual trainings.
How has this good practice boosted creation of the start-ups in your region?	Creative Mikser is a place to establish new business contacts. Entrepreneurs from the Mixer help each other, share their contacts and run the new projects together.
Can you please outline "what not to do or things to avoid" in relation to this good practice from experience and learning in providing this good practice in your region?	One should thoroughly take into consideration the partners that we choose to promote Creative Mikser.

6.7 Catalonia



Good practice 39. Alternative Funding Recommendor Tool of ACCIÓ-Catalonia Trade & Investment

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	Alternative Funding Recommendor Tool of ACCIÓ-Catalonia Trade & Investment	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	Start Easy	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Regional	
Location of the practice	Country	Spain
	Region	Catalonia
	City	

6. Detailed description

Short summary of the practice	<p>The interactive online recommendation tool leads users to the alternative funding providers that better fit their profile and needs. Users have to answer just five questions regarding the sector they belong to, the stage the company is in, the economic and financial situation of the company, the amount of money they are looking for, and the reason why they need it.</p>
Detailed information on the practice	<p>One of the lessons learned from the past is that when companies rely heavily on traditional banking they end up experiencing more difficulties to overcome a situation of restricted access to credit. This is one of the reasons that promoting the alternative business funding has become a must. Statistics show that in other European countries as well as in the USA funding other than traditional banking is higher than in Catalonia. We created this tool to shorten the gap.</p> <p>Alternative funding comprises many options and categories which entrepreneurs and business owners need to learn about and choose. To help and guide them through this amount of instruments so that they can make the right choices, we decided to create a recommendation tool which can be found in the organization's website.</p> <p>This tool drives users through five questions which will lead them to the alternative funding suggestions that best fit the sector they operate in and the specifications of their projects and businesses. The questions they have to choose an answer from are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The business sector of the company. 2. The stage the company is in (depending on product and billing) 3. The economic and financial situation of the company 4. The amount of money the company needs 5. The reason they need funding (creation, R&D, growth...) <p>Based on the answers the users give to these questions, the tool filters by the 120 currently identified funding instruments and it lists the ones that best meet their needs. A short description of each instrument as well as its investment criteria and contact details are provided.</p>
Resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Phase 1- Definition and technical development: 1 person of the funding unit analysed the funding data (users, ecosystem, needs, procedures, habits, funding instruments...) and wrote down the main characteristics of the recommendation tool. Then it was decided, together with the digital marketing area, how to structure and display it into the web. + 1 person to program it and implement it in the website. - Phase 2- Keeping the data updated: 1 person is needed to contact entities behind the instruments to obtain



	fresh and updated information. Afterwards, this data, in an excel file, needs to be migrated manually into the online tool so that users can get it.
Timescale (start/end date)	2016
Evidence of success (results achieved)	According to data from 2019 the tool achieved 11,260 viewed pages that year. We can also draw some conclusions about the business ecosystem in Catalonia, its needs and trends based on the users' answers and readapt to them. This allows us, for example, to know which types of instruments appear more often listed, therefore more needed, and we can address this together with the entities providing them. It is useful knowledge for all of us, government and private entities.
Challenges encountered (optional)	<p>It is very important that the online tool is user-friendly and works smoothly. This should be taken into account when designing and programming it and it should be permanently improved.</p> <p>Besides this, it is also important to keep the database updated to provide accurate and real guidance to SMEs and startups, considering the funding sector is dynamic. New funds and instruments are permanently raised while other ones disappear.</p>
Potential for learning or transfer	Other regions and countries can learn from this experience and apply this knowledge so that their business ecosystems can easily benefit from a well-structured and accessible alternative funding portfolio.
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Startup phase:
	Entering the market phase: X
	Growth phase: X

Good practice 40. Marketplace – ACCIÓ's

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	Marketplace – ACCIÓ's	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes	
Please select the project acronym	Start Easy	
Thematic objective of the practice	SME Competitiveness	
Geographical scope of the practice	Regional	
Location of the practice	Country	Spain
	Region	Catalonia
	City	

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	Virtual Marketplace to connect companies that offer technology and health-related material, production capacity, to help the consequences of COVID-19.
Detailed information on the practice	<p>ACCIÓ -the Catalan Government's agency that promotes business competitiveness in Catalonia - has set up a virtual Marketplace that connects companies in Catalonia that offer technology and health-related material, or have production capacity, to help ease the consequences of COVID- 19.</p> <p>The Marketplace is putting in touch manufacturers from different parts of the production chain to boost collaboration so that the current health emergency can be addressed the most efficient way.</p> <p>In a situation like the current one, talent, creativity and generosity make people and companies want to give everything they have to try to mitigate the effects of the health crisis we are experiencing.</p> <p>The COVID-19 Business Marketplace focuses specifically on technology services and healthcare products that can be effective in the short term.</p>
Resources needed	Human
Timescale (start/end date)	March 2020 - ongoing



Evidence of success (results achieved)	<i>More than 2,000 companies are participating and offering solutions</i>
Challenges encountered (optional)	
Potential for learning or transfer	<p>This type of collaborative platform can be an example and can be replicated in other regions to promote cooperation and seek short-term solutions with the region's productive, organizational and knowledge capacities.</p> <p>Why is it a good practice?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agility of the response by the Administration in creating a business platform to give visibility to the business offer in response to the health crisis. 2. The Marketplace has allowed companies to generate business, establish alliances, use it as a channel to promote new products and publicize technological capabilities to help alleviate the effects caused by the crisis due to the breakdown of supply chains and shortages. of certain products 3. It has facilitated Administration-company dialogue: it has been the gateway for numerous queries, information requests for the manufacture / approval of new products and the import of products with high demand and little supply in the market.
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	<i>Startup phase:</i>
	<i>Entering the market phase: X</i>
	<i>Growth phase: X</i>

Good practice 41. Investment Forum - ACCIÓ

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	<i>Investment Forum - ACCIÓ</i>	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	<i>No</i>	
Please select the project acronym	<i>Start Easy</i>	
Thematic objective of the practice	<i>SME Competitiveness</i>	
Geographical scope of the practice	<i>Regional</i>	
Location of the practice	Country	<i>Spain</i>
	Region	<i>Catalonia</i>
	City	

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	<p>The Investment Forum is the place where local start-ups from Catalonia meet annually with international and national investors. 21 startups pitch and engage in dynamic networking. Every year, a different country participates in this meeting as a special guest.</p> <p>The startup selection process starts with an open call, in which start-ups can apply for. Then, 50 start-ups are chosen to be included in the Investment Forum catalogue. However, only the best 21 projects are selected to pitch at the Investment Forum, where some start-ups will be awarded</p>
Detailed information on the practice	<p>One of the main goals of the Investment Forum is to create a space where entrepreneurs can pitch their projects to investors, so that they can raise money and put their expansion plans into practice. It also aims to promote contacts between all attendees and facilitate relations between people from the same sector through participatory, dynamic networking.</p> <p>The startup selection process starts with an open call. They are evaluated according to some criteria: maturity, differential and innovative advantage, potential market and social impact, involvement and investment and complementarity roles of the team.</p> <p>After studying all the candidates, 50 are selected to be part of the Investment Forum catalogue.</p>

	<p>It is distributed through different platforms, newsletters and social networks, impacting about 130,000 people. In addition, the catalogue is sent to the main venture capital and business angel's networks in Catalonia.</p> <p>Then, 24 companies are chosen to receive training, to make engaging presentations to investors.</p> <p>After that, only 21 finalists are chosen to pitch at the event.</p> <p>The companies are divided into three categories: life sciences and health, ICT and other technologies. The public can vote and chose 9 finalists, who then answer questions from investors to demonstrate the great business potential of their proposals.</p> <p>Investment Forum 2019 indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 21 pitches - 50 startups at the catalogue - 18 investors at the jury - 650 attendees - pre-scheduled meetings / networking <p>Investment Forum 2020 celebrates its 25th edition.</p>
Resources needed	<p>Investment Forum budget (annual): 55.000 €</p> <p>Human resources: several departments of ACCIÓ are involved: funding unit, Startup Catalonia, marketing, events and protocol...</p>
Timescale (start/end date)	1 day (once a year)
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 25th edition in 2020 - 100 applications every year - The start-ups that participated in 2009-2019 raised € 271 million from business angels, venture capital funds and public institutions.
Challenges encountered (optional)	Increase the interaction among attendants.
Potential for learning or transfer	Barcelona and Catalonia appear high up in a several worldwide rankings classifying places in terms of creativity, entrepreneurship and business relations. Investment Forum is a great representation of the Catalan startup ecosystem and its growth over the last years in raising capital investments.
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	Startup phase:
	Entering the market phase: X
	Growth phase: X

Good practice 42. Grant Programme to Business Angel Networks of ACCIÓ-Catalonia Trade & Investment

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	Grant Programme to Business Angel Networks of ACCIÓ-Catalonia Trade & Investment	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project		
Please select the project acronym	Start Easy	
Thematic objective of the practice	Grants to Business Angels Networks in Catalonia to foster the funding (via equity or participatory loans) of business angels into companies.	
Geographical scope of the practice	Regional	
Location of the practice	Country	Spain
	Region	Catalonia
	City	

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	Grants awarded to Private Investor Networks accredited by ACCIÓ-Catalonia Trade & Investment to foster the funding from their business angels into innovative and high-growth potential businesses. The grants are based on the investment operations closed annually by these networks.
Detailed information on the practice	<p>This grant programme awarded by the Government of Catalonia through ACCIÓ-Catalonia Trade & Investment addresses the accredited Business Angels Networks in Catalonia with the aim to foster investment into Catalan startups and businesses with high growth potential.</p> <p>The amount granted is based on the funded deals closed annually by these networks. The criteria gives a certain score to every business angels network considering their number of closed deals and the amount of each of them. It scores equity deals (capital subscription) higher than debt deals (participatory loan) as well as the ones with more than 3 co-investors participating in it. Business Angels networks can apply for them if they closed successfully during a year, at least, two investment operations for a minimum value of €20k each.</p> <p>Once the business angels networks are ranked based on closed deals and invested amount, the three ones with the highest score could get a maximum of €30k grant and €15k for the remaining five networks. Other</p>



	<p>networks with less score will not have access to any grant should no money is available.</p> <p>Networks can apply for the grant by filling an online application form and submitting the documentation that proofs that the operation was successful (bank receipts, public deeds, entrepreneurs and investors registration receipts to the networks).</p>
Resources needed	Up to €165k per year altogether.
Timescale (start/end date)	From January to December, annually.
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p>Since the creation of this grant programme in 2012, the funding deals of the Business Angels Networks have increased significantly. At that year, through theses networks a total amount of 66 deals were achieved and €10,6M were invested into companies. In 2018, 6 years afterwards, 79 deals were achieved and €14,8M invested. Year after year both the number of deals and the total amount invested have been increasing.</p> <p>The business angels investments enjoy less incentives and tax reductions than other types of investments such as venture capital and private equity funds. Despite this, they represent a type of investment which takes place mostly during the first years after the creation of the companies (early stage), at a vital moment for them to expand and grow. That's why is important to make sure this funding continues being sourced from private investors like business angels to the new-born companies. This is the task of the Private Investors Networks and we support them for it.</p>
Challenges encountered (optional)	Sometimes it's hard for the Business Angels Networks to obtain the documentation giving proof of the deals they helped to achieve, namely the bank receipts and public deeds. We're making them aware to prepare this documentation well in advance of the Grant Programme call.
Potential for learning or transfer	Other ecosystems needing to improve the funding of early stage companies could initiate such a programme to make sure that this activity is being fostered for the long term.
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	<i>Startup phase: X</i>
	<i>Entering the market phase: X</i>
	<i>Growth phase: X</i>

Good practice 43. Covid-19: Business support and assistance service

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	Covid-19: Business support and assistance service	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	<i>No</i>	
Please select the project acronym	<i>Start Easy</i>	
Thematic objective of the practice	Other: Business and start-ups support and advice	
Geographical scope of the practice	<i>Regional</i>	
Location of the practice	Country	<i>Spain</i>
	Region	<i>Catalonia</i>
	City	

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	Online service to provide up-to-date information about the economic measures being taken to deal with the COVID-19 consequences, and to offer support and assistance to businesses.
Detailed information on the practice	<p>The Government of Catalonia has set up an online service to provide up-to-date information and gather all the national, regional and local economic measures being taken to deal with the COVID-19 consequences in Canal Empresa (in Catalan and Spanish). These measures are collected not only by means of an in-depth screening of official documents, but mainly through a coordination and information exchange system, led by the Business Management Office, which allows the Canal Empresa website to have constantly updated information about the different measures from different departments and government agencies.</p> <p>The service also offers support and assistance to business and start-ups to provide guidance and support in relation to the Governments support packages, tax measures and COVID-19 related business issues.</p> <p>The service is offered, in two languages, via different digital tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A specific section on the website, updated daily, gathering at the present time more than 70 economic measures taken by local, regional and national authorities, with information on the measure, FAQs and links to manage the proceedings online.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A customer service chatbot in the website, managed by a team of business advisors. - A queries, complaints and suggestions (CQS) online form, for the more elaborate and complex replies. <p>Guided search within the economic measures, to allow the businesses, start-ups and professionals to quickly access those measures that are most suited to their sector and needs.</p>
Resources needed	<p>Human Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 15 business advisors managing the queries in the chatbox and CQS box - 3 legal and economic experts, to collect, filter, summarize and publish all the measures - 2 communication experts to update the website and ensure the outreach of the service - 1 team leader <p>Financial:</p> <p>Software for the chatbot and the guided search</p>
Timescale (start/end date)	Ongoing from the 14 th of March 2020
Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p>The significant number of measures adopted, from various authorities and institutions, makes essential a centralisation service, so that both businesses and the authorities themselves can have a complete picture of all the measures taken. Moreover, businesses value very positively a personalized attention service to provide assistance in these times of uncertainty and struggle, as proven by the success of the service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100.000 visits to the section of the website, 45.000 users - 2.306 resolved CQS - 956 interactions in social media <p>More than 150 queries solved in the first 15 days of the chatbot service (this service was set-up in mid-May).</p>
Challenges encountered (optional)	Especially those related to the coordination of the information exchange system amongst different departments and government agencies, and to the filtering and summarizing of a large amount of information published in the local, regional and national official documents.
Potential for learning or transfer	<p>The service is a good practice and has an important potential for learning or transfer because of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The agility of the response by the Administration in creating a Business support and assistance service to help



	<p>companies navigate in the complexity of the economic measures being taken to deal with the COVID-19 consequences.</p> <p>The coordination and centralization of all the measures taken by different authorities (local, regional and national) and departments, creating a one stop shop with constantly updated and clear information, and with direct access to all the online procedures.</p>
<p>Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for</p>	<p>Startup phase: <i>X</i></p>
	<p>Entering the market phase:</p>
	<p>Growth phase:</p>

Good practice 44. PRIMER Preacceleration Program

1. Good practice general information		
Title of the practice	PRIMER Preacceleration Program	
Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project	Yes, it is funded through FSE	
Please select the project acronym	Start Easy	
Thematic objective of the practice	Promotion of clusters and business accelerators	
Geographical scope of the practice	Regional	
Location of the practice	Country	Spain
	Region	Catalonia
	City	

2. Detailed description	
Short summary of the practice	The Programa Primer seeks to promote innovation and technology based startups and to expand the technology hub effect of Barcelona throughout Catalonia.
Detailed information on the practice	<p>The program starts through a call for public entities and universities linked to the territory to develop entrepreneurship acceleration programs based on innovation and high technology expertise that respond to a specific need or strength of the territory. All programs must include a lever or competitive advantage that ensures the success and added value of the solutions generated.</p> <p>Once the programs are selected, the participants will go through a very specialized training on technology and business models (including learning and mentoring). These levers include research groups and universities, corporation or public alliances in the specific economic sector.</p> <p>The aim is to provide the knowledge and to identify business opportunities in the specific sector approached by the local entity/ university.</p>
Resources needed	<p>Each acceleration program receives up to 60k € which imply an 80% of the total budget of the program. In 2018 a total of 16 accelerators.</p> <p>Las call launched (2020) has a budget of 1.125.000,00€</p>
Timescale (start/end date)	Every edition lasts 6 to 12 months.



Evidence of success (results achieved)	<p>21 startups have been created after the last edition of the program in the fields of Education, mobility, decentralizing governance etc.</p> <p>The biggest achievement of the program is to demonstrate the feasibility of creating technologic and innovation hubs at any city minimizing inequalities in the territory. More than 150 queries solved in the first 15 days of the chatbot service (this service was set-up in mid-May).</p>
Challenges encountered (optional)	<p>Some of the challenges encountered are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not all the participants finished the programs, because of the shortage of talent some of them founded IT related positions after finishing the training - Funding difficulties to start the businesses after the program
Potential for learning or transfer	<p>In the promotion of an start up ecosystem it is important to take into account the reduction of territorial inequalities of a model with a very dynamic centre that does not extend to the peripheral areas.</p> <p>Founders and CEOs of innovative start-ups must be able to receive support without having to move to Barcelona and in the other side, Barcelona doesn't have to concentrate all the talent and start-ups.</p>
Please indicate what start-up development phase is this good practise used for	<i>Startup phase: X</i>
	<i>Entering the market phase:</i>
	<i>Growth phase:</i>

7 Startup ecosystem service providers landscape

		Startup VISA Lithuania	Startup Fair	TechHub Prie-accelerator	Fintech LT	Smart FDI	Govtehc LAB	Business Projects" office in Metropolitan City of Bologna	Co-Start" incubator in Villa Cini	Insieme per il lavoro	Le Serre dei Giardini	Crowdfunding Hub	Unitary Access	Gentpreneur	Eureka	Festival of the Future	OOG	Young Creatives Festival	Start-up day	Start-up visa	TechChill conference	Start-up bootcamp	Start-up ecosystem strategy	Start-up ecosystem strategy	Total number of practices
1. Regulation and framework	Policy	x			x			X				x	X				X		x	x	x			x	17
2. Resource Base	Human resources	x	x					X	X	X	X	x	X	X	X	X		X	x	x	x	x	x		27
	Technologies				x								X					x							14
	Office premises			x				X	X	X	X	x							x			x	x		19
	Production & R&D facilities										X														8
	Thematic expertise				x				X		X	X	X	X			X		x	x					24
3. Finance	Access to public support			x	x	x	x	X	X	X	X	X						X	x		x	x	x	x	28
	Access to private funding			x	x				X	X	X	X										x	x		19
4. Start-up Stage (product)	Product development			x	x		x						X						x		x				17



	R&D				x	x	x		X										x		x				18
	Value proposition and business concept testing and validation			x	x			X	X		X	X	X	X				X		x	x		x		25
	Intellectual property management			x	x	x														x	x				13
	Product and Corporate design																	X							11
5. Entering the market	Marketing products and services				x			X	X			X	X	X								x			21
	Distribution channels and sales																			x					13
	Innovation management				x				X		X		X	X		X			x			x		x	19
	Accompaniment after entering the market																					x			10
6. Scale-up and growth strategy and transformation	Business services for growing and accelerating companies				x						X					X						x			15
	Support in managing the structural transformation				x								X									x			11
	Thematic expertise				x						X					X			x	x	x	x	x		18
7. Innovation infrastructure	Regional networking and collaboration				x		x	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	x	x		x	x	x	30



organisations collaboration	Out of region/international collaboration	x									X								x			x				16
8. Monitoring	Mapping actors in Ecosystem						X		X	X		X				X		x		x				x		15
	Start-up numbers analysis						X					X				X			x		x			x		10
	Funding success / failure matrix																				x			x		5
	International expansions analysis										X								x	x		x		x		7
9. Reputation, trust and visibility	Enhancing visibility		x				X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X		x	x						22
	Startup events		x				X	X		X			X		X		X		x		x	x				21
	Students involvement		x	x									X	X			X						x			14
	Attracting investors & Big companies	x	x		x	x			X					X							x	x	x			24



		GP1. INNOVA-INVEST	GP2. Connect Poland Prize	GP3. NLAB – Nevada-Lubelskie Acceleration Bridge	GP4. Business Lubelskie (Biznes Lubelskie)	GP5. UMCS Knowledge and Technology Transfer Center	GP6. Startup Weekend Lublin: Poland-Ukraine-Belarus international edition	Start from Mazovia	Mazovian Startup Acceleration Program	MSODI	Investor and Exporter Service Centre	Start in Park	Targówek District Entrepreneurs' Club	Centre of Entrepreneurship Smolna	Creative Mikser	Investment and Development Agency of Latvia as a one-stop agency regarding Alternative funding	Marketplace	Investment forum	Gran Programme	Covid-19: Business Support	Primer Preacceleration					Total number of practices
1. Regulation and framework	Policy				X			X	X					X	X			X		X						17
2. Resource Base	Human resources	X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X										27
	Technologies	X	X			X		X	X	X					X	X		X	X		X					14
	Office premises	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X		X		X										19
	Production & R&D facilities	X	X			X									X		X				X	X				8
	Thematic expertise	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X			X				24
3. Finance	Access to public support	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X			X		X					X	X				28
	Access to private funding	X	X	X	X				X	X				X			X	X	X	X						19
4. Start-up Stage (product)	Product development	X	X			X	X	X	X	X				X		X			X							17



	R&D	x	x			x	x	x	x							x		X	X	X	X	X				18
	Value proposition and business concept testing and validation	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x				x		x	X	X								25
	Intellectual property management	x	x		x	x		x	x	x						x										13
	Product and Corporate design	x	x			x	x	x	x					x				X	X			X				11
5. Entering the market	Marketing products and services	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x					x		X	X	X						21
	Distribution channels and sales	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x		x			x		X								13
	Innovation management	x	x			x		x	x	x						x	X		X		X					19
	Accompaniment after entering the market		x	x	x	x		x	x	x						x					X					10
6. Scale-up and growth strategy and transformation	Business services for growing and accelerating companies		x	x	x	x		x	x	x						x		X	X		X					15
	Support in managing the structural transformation			x	x					x						x		X	X	X		X				11
	Thematic expertise			x	x		x			x			x		x	x		X			X	X				18



7. Innovation infrastructure organisations collaboration	Regional networking and collaboration	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x		x		X	X								30
	Out of region/international collaboration		x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x			X				X						16
8. Monitoring	Mapping actors in Ecosystem							x	x	x	x		x	x					X								15
	Start-up numbers analysis								x		x					x				X							10
	Funding success / failure matrix															x	X										5
	International expansions analysis																	X		X							7
9. Reputation, trust and visibility	Enhancing visibility	x	x	x	x			x		x	x		x	x		x	X										22
	Startup events	x	x	x			x		x		x		x	x		x			X	X							21
	Students involvement	x	x			x	x					x		x		x						X					14
	Attracting investors & Big companies	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x		x	X	X			X						24



8 Service/support delivery stages:

	Entrepreneurial Education			Startup phase						Impact/monitor	
	Mindest Activation			Formation		Validation		Growth		Reflection	
Title of the good practice	Activating -5	Inspiring -4	Nurturing -3	Ideating -2	Concepting -1	Committing 0	Validating 1	Scaling 2	Establishing 3	Assessing 4	Monitoring 5
Startup VISA Lithuania						x	x	x	x		
Startup Fair Lithuania	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
TechHub pre-accelerator	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
Fintech LT						x	x	x	x		
Smart FDI								x	x		
GovTech LAB							x	x	x		
“Business Projects”	x	x	x			x	x	x	x		x
“Co-Start” incubator in Villa Garagnani,	x	x	x	x	x	x					
“Insieme per il lavoro”	x	x	x								
“Le Serre dei Giardini”	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	
Crowdfunding Hub	x	x	x								



	Entrepreneurial Education			Startup phase						Impact/monitor	
	Mindest Activation			Formation		Validation		Growth		Reflection	
Title of the good practice	Activating -5	Inspiring -4	Nurturing -3	Ideating -2	Concepting -1	Committing 0	Validating 1	Scaling 2	Establishing 3	Assessing 4	Monitoring 5
Unitary Access						X	X	X			X
Gentreprenuer	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Eureka	x	x									
Festival of the Future	x	X	x	x							
OOG						x	x				
Young Creatives Festival	x	x	x	x	x						
Webinars on share options, funding	x	x	x			x					
Start-up day	x	x				x	x				x
Start-up visa						x	x	x	x		
TechChill conference						x	x	x	x		
Start-up bootcamp	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Start-up ecosystem strategy	x	x				x				x	x
INNOVA-INVEST	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x



	Entrepreneurial Education			Startup phase						Impact/monitor	
	Mindest Activation			Formation		Validation		Growth		Reflection	
Title of the good practice	Activating -5	Inspiring -4	Nurturing -3	Ideating -2	Concepting -1	Committing 0	Validating 1	Scaling 2	Establishing 3	Assessing 4	Monitoring 5
Connect Poland Prize						x	x	x			
NLAB – Nevada-Lubelskie Acceleration Bridge	x	x	x			x	x	x	x		
Business Lubelskie (Biznes Lubelskie)								x	x		
UMCS Knowledge and Technology Transfer Center	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
Startup Weekend Lublin: Poland-Ukraine-Belarus international edition	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				



	Entrepreneurial Education			Startup phase						Impact/monitor	
	Mindest Activation			Formation		Validation		Growth		Reflection	
Title of the good practice	Activating -5	Inspiring -4	Nurturing -3	Ideating -2	Concepting -1	Committing 0	Validating 1	Scaling 2	Establishing 3	Assessing 4	Monitoring 5
Latvian Investment and development agency	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Alternative funding							X	X	X		
Marketplace			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Investment Forum				X	X	X	X	X	X		
Grant Programme								X	X		
Covid-19: Business Support				X	X	X	X	X			
PRIMER Preacceleration Programme								X	X		



9 Evaluation Sheet

Title of the good practice	Evaluation Criteria		
	Alignment with the partner's regional strategy 0-10 (if the score is 0, the rest of criteria do not need to be assessed)	Potential for replication in the partner's region	Expected impact in the partner's region
Startup VISA Lithuania			
StartupFair			
TechHub Pre-Accelerator			
FinTech LT			
Smart FDI			
GovTech Lab			
"Business Projects"	7	2 partners (PP4 Lublin/Poland; PP3 Lithuanian Innovation Center)	
"Co-Start" incubator in Villa Garagnani,	9	3 partners (PP5 East Flanders/Belgium; PP4 Lublin/Poland; PP3 Lithuanian Innovation Center)	
"Insieme per il lavoro"	0	0	
"Le Serre dei Giardini"	9	3 partners (PP5 East Flanders/Belgium; PP4 Lublin/Poland; PP3 Lithuanian Innovation Center)	
Crowdfunding Hub	6	1 partner (PP1 GENCAT)	
Unitary Access	0	0	
Gentrepreneur			
Eureka			
Festival of the Future			
OOG			



Young Creatives Festival			
INNOVA-INVEST			
Connect Poland Prize			
NLAB – Nevada-Lubelskie Acceleration Bridge			
Business Lubelskie (Biznes Lubelskie)			
UMCS Knowledge and Technology Transfer Center			
Startup Weekend Lublin: Poland-Ukraine-Belarus international edition			
MAZOVIAN STARTUP acceleration program			
START FROM MAZOVIA competition			
„Modelling the System of Offers for Innovations”			
Investor and Exporter Service Centre			
Start in Park			
Targówek District Entrepreneurs' Club			
Centre of Entrepreneurship Smolna			
Creative Mikser			
Alternative funding			
Marketplace			
Investment Forum			
Grant Programme			
Covid-19: Business support			
Primer Preacceleration			

