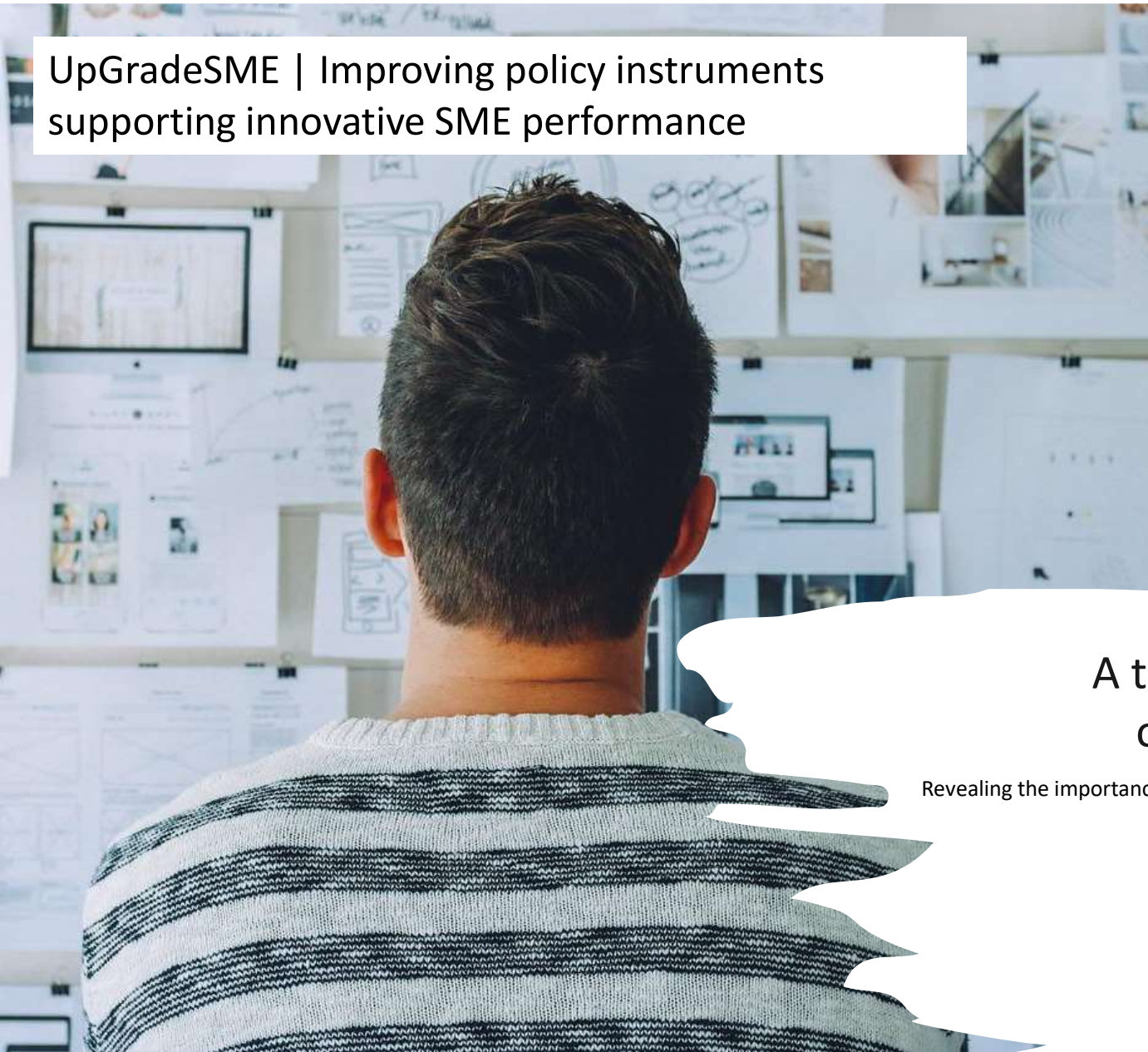


UpGradeSME | Improving policy instruments supporting innovative SME performance



A transnational learning cooperation of the INTERREG EUROPE program

Revealing the importance and impact COVID-19 pandemic on the individual policy instruments

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European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

EUROPEAN UNION



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RESEARCH AREA

Hungary | Germany | The Netherlands | Romania | Spain | Portugal



A snapshot of the results of a year of joint work

ANALYSIS AND PROBLEM DEFINITION

UpGradeSME COVID-19 qualitative and quantitative analysis with SMEs and the Managing Authorities

- exploration of the impact of COVID-19 on the selected Policy Instruments
- Between December 2021- February 2022
- resources are statistics, literature review and 125 interviews with SMEs + 8 interviews Management Authorities

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SMEs involved operate mainly in the following sectors

- Manufacture
- automotive industry
- engineering
- construction
- ICT
- wood and furniture
- wholesale and retail trade
- agriculture sciences
- tourism



UpGradeSME SME SURVEY RESULTS

COVID-19 has severely affected their export activity

- supply chain difficulties:
- Internal operation and reduced lack of reliable staff
- change of market entry strategy
- challenges due to the absence of travel and face-to-face meetings
- reconsider marketing approach
- intensify their online commercial actions

Positive side effects of COVID-19

- Depending on sector increased orders due to some SMEs' strategic geographical positioning
- more online sales

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UpGradeSME SME SURVEY RESULTS

New measures developed due to COVID-19 crisis

- Reviewed of investment and development plan
- Restructuration of delivery maps
- Focus change on economic activity to be able to survive
- Change in the portfolio
- Remote work and health protection measures - introducing home office creating a flexible work schedule
- Acquisition of raw materials in larger quantities
- Extension of delivery deadlines
- Increase on subcontracting for the production process
- Changing the pricing policy
- Skills and digital literacy was raised

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POLICY INSTRUMENT SURVEY RESULTS

highlighting interesting findings

Three progressive Economic Reactivation Plans (PREKs) by Fomento de San Sebastián, Donostia.

Concrete **measures in the Hungarian Economic Development and Innovation Operational Programme 1.3.7** policy to respond effectively to the impact of COVID-19.

Specific calls to immediate needs of companies launched and implemented in Vale do Ave region, Portugal.

New regional funding instrument introduced by the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Labour and Tourism in Germany

In Friesland both **instruments able to cope with the changes** - no effect of COVID-19 on the adsorption of export stimulating instruments



POLICY INSTRUMENT SURVEY RESULTS - highlighting interesting findings

Financial framework has not change

Miminal institutional challenges in optimizing working circumstances

Series of online services have been launched to accompany companies

Virtual assistance work to businesses, workshops and trainings organized



AN INTERNATIONAL LEARNING EVENT

SME INTERNATIONALISATION PERSPECTIVES IN THE P

31st March 2022

13:00-15:00 (CET)

ORGANIZERS:



JOINT LEARNING PROCESS

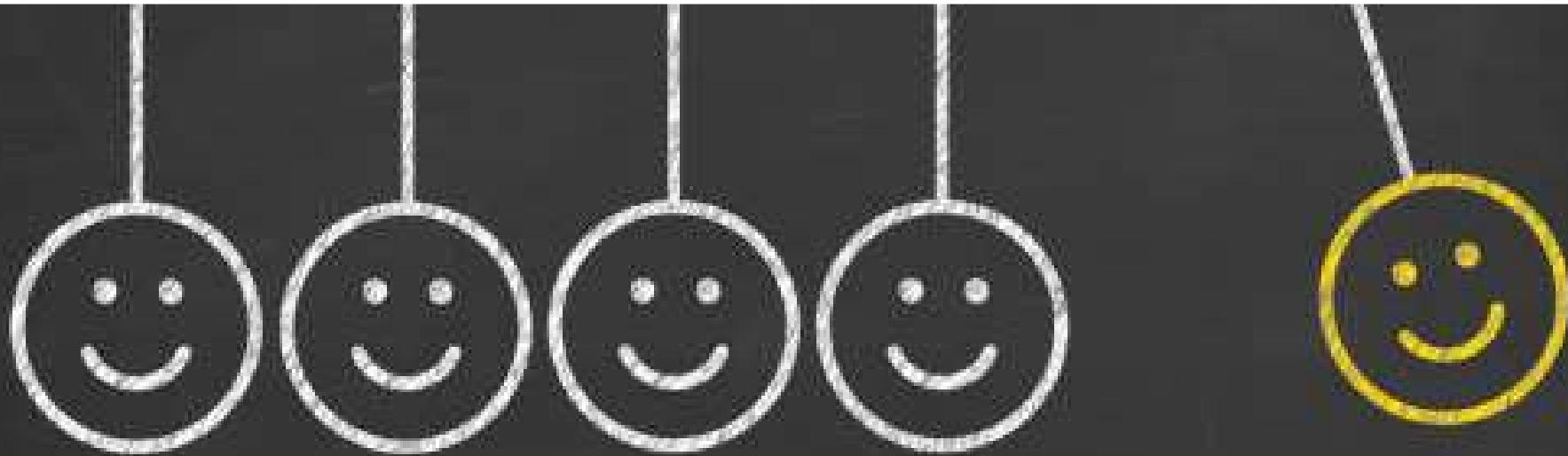
Joint International online learning event

Invited experts from Europe representing their point of view and the results of investigation focusing of SME actions and policy responses.

4 INTERREG EUROPE projects shared results

Case studied from Austria and Slovenia in **SME Internationalisation support** presented

European Research and Innovation Centres and Hubs introduced



JOINT LEARNING PROCESS | Good practices

- Flexibility in the implementation of international activities in support to Hungarian clusters (HU)
- Services for SMEs to exploit their export potential in the changed circumstances created by COVID (HU)
- Supporting SMEs in response to the COVID -19 pandemic (RO)
- Support the mitigation of the effects of the crisis in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, its social consequences and prepare for a green, digital and resilient economic recovery(RO)
 - WTC Leeuwarden (NL)
 - EKIN + FOMENTO SAN SEBASTIAN
 - INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY PROGRAMME: CONNECTING TALENT INTERNSHIPS in San Sebastian
 - Fashion Film Festival in Guimarães (PT)
 - Crisis Consulting with specific focus on Covid-19 in Baden Württenbeg
 - Innovation Express / Kapi.Tra.BW - capitalization of transnational cooperation for SMEs

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JOINT LEARNING PROCESS

2 bilateral study visits in the Talenhouse managed by Fomensto San Sebastian in Donostia Region, Spain



JOINT LEARNING PROCESS

International peer review meeting and final event of UpGradeSME in Budapest 22.09.2022
Final event to synthesize the learnings on project level, for partners and stakeholders

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For details please visit our Homepage
<https://projects2014-2020.interregeurope.eu/upgradesme>

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