

REPORT

PARTNER:

SEE ICT

EVENT:

REPORT FROM REGIONAL CASE STUDY IN

SERBIA

DELIVERABLE:

D.C.2.2

DATE:

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I. GENERAL OVERVIEW

1. General content

The entrepreneurship environment and culture in the Danube macro-region is weaker and less developed comparing to other EU countries. Young innovators (YIs) in the region often fail to turn their ideas into marketable solutions for variety of reasons, including lack of experience and knowledge, inadequate business support and information, or insufficient funding.

The Danube Energy+ project's general objective is to create an enabling environment that will support Young innovators to pioneer a change in the energy efficiency area by setting up highly innovative start-ups in the Danube macro-region.

Main activities envisaged for implementation under the project to achieve the set goal

1. Danube Energy+ Ecosystem package – development of an innovative learning system for key actors of regional ecosystems (Public administration, Universities, Business Supporting Actors, SMEs) to advance their knowledge in industry challenges, models and practices for identification, motivation and connection of YIs.
2. Danube Energy+ Tool – establishment of a pre-seed / pre-acceleration learning system for Young innovators (YIs) to support their highly innovative idea in the energy efficiency field.
3. Mutual learning process at transregional level - carrying out of 2 physical and 8 virtual workshops to increased knowledge of project partners (PPs) and indirectly support also YIs through expert knowledge-based Tool and Package.
4. Learning package for regional ecosystem actors – development for advancing their knowledge during the Pilot of Danube Energy+ Package on regional level through their participation in several regional activities aside of project partners.
5. Pilot of Danube Energy+ Package in all regions – development and implementation of Package to build capacities of ecosystem actors to create enabling environment for Young innovators + facilitate further cooperation inside ecosystem.
6. Training scheme for Young innovators – development and implementation of training scheme in which the Young innovators are taking part in the Pilot of Danube Energy+ Tool which will directly benefit from learning process within the pre-acceleration scheme.

7. Mutual learning during implementation of Pilots - Partners and ASPs will learn mutually from each other on transregional level through joint Package Pilot implementation, monitoring and impact measurement process.

Expected Results: Intensity of cooperation of key actors in the programme area in order to increase competences for business and social innovation (survey based composite indicator)

Expected Outputs: Danube Energy+ will result in establishment of enabling environment for Young innovators to further strengthen innovation ecosystem and entrepreneurial spirit, especially in area of energy efficiency. This enabling environment will be built on three key elements achieved by the project, each relevant to one specific objective: to advance knowledge of key regional stakeholders in boosting Young innovators (Specific Objective 1), to boost Young innovators towards successful ventures (Specific Objective 2) and to set-up sustainable structures in regional ecosystems to create long-term enabling environment (Specific Objective 3).

Project will intensify cooperation of stakeholders through their engagement in the Danube Energy + ecosystem Package by joint design, pilot monitoring, evaluation and by the development of Action plans. It will engage 9 regional public administrations, 90 Young innovators who were selected for Danube Energy+ Tool Pilot, 9 Regional Alliances, 9 Regional Hubs & 2 working groups (responsible for content of the learning scheme).

Young innovators will benefit from strengthened competences gained through pre-acceleration learning scheme, which will further develop their general business knowledge (business development, marketing, sales, finance) & specific industry knowledge in the energy efficiency sector.

Through improved enabling environment, participating territories will benefit from strengthened entrepreneurial spirit resulting in new business ventures oriented towards the sustainable energy in long-term period.

Project partners

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<p>Partner's Name: Asociatia Centrul Start-up Transilvania Address: Pitesti Street 19/2Cluj-Napoca, Romania Legal status: private</p>	<p>Partner's Name: Фондация 'Клийнтех България' Address: TsarigradskoShousse, Sofia Tech Park, Business Incubator building, ground floor</p>	<p>Partner's Name: ABC Accelerator, razvoj start-upov in mladih podjetij, d.o.o Address: Šmartinska cesta 152, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia Legal status: private</p>

Website: www.start-uptransilvania.ro	111 B, 1784, Sofia, Bulgaria Legal status: private Website: www.cleantech.bg	Website: https://abc-accelerator.com/slovenia/
Partner's Name: Optimizacija Address: Istarska ulica 47, 10 000 Zagreb, Croatia Legal status: private	Partner's Name: Центр європейських ініціатив Address: Shvabskaya street, 71a, 88018 Uzhhorod, Ukraine Legal status: public Website: www.iardi.org/partners/tsentr-evropejskyh-initsiat	Partner's Name: Civitta Slovakia, a.s. Address: Ilkovičova 2, 842 16 Bratislava, Slovakia Legal status: private Website: www.neulogy.com

Danube Energy+ Ecosystem Package (Package)

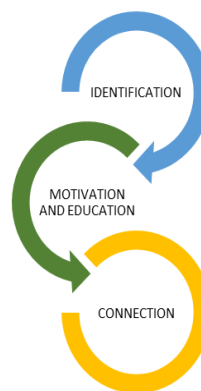
The Package including a Tool is designed with the aim to tackle the aforementioned challenges and is piloted in 9 regions. Thus, engaging Young innovators (YIs) in this region and unlocking their potential to address the energy efficiency specific challenges in the region is a top priority for innovation ecosystem actors.

The Package is developed through learning interaction among project partners and inclusive design process involving key actors of regional ecosystems - regional public authorities, universities, BSOs, SMEs and industry representatives. The Package is composed **of two main elements:**

- 1) best practices, models and experiences in identification, motivation and connection of YIs to ecosystem actors
- 2) Danube Energy+ Tool development as a pre-acceleration learning scheme for YIs boosting their competences to start successful ventures.

The Package helps create an enabling environment for innovation by guiding ecosystem actors in:

- 1) Identification of YIs in their ecosystems
- 2) Motivation of YIs to further develop their disruptive ideas to marketable solutions
- 3) Implementation of the Danube Energy+ Tool to boost knowledge of YIs to scale-up their ideas to ventures
- 4) Connection of YIs with other key stakeholders in regional ecosystems



2. Objective of this document

The primary goal of the Regional case studies is to give users opportunity to see the partner's step-by-step approaches and lessons learned during the implementation of the project for creating an enabling entrepreneurship environment to unlock YIs potential in Danube macro-region.

3. Management summary

This case study shows how regional ecosystem actors gain first-hand experience and knowledge from the whole process of implementation of the Tool based on the Danube Energy+ Ecosystem Package presented in the following structure:

1. General description of the pilot in 9 partner countries (identification, motivation and connection process of Young innovators and boost regional ecosystem cooperation)
2. Outcomes:
 - a) Effectiveness of applied methods for reaching out to YIs (lessons learned, cooperation with, traps)
 - b) Lessons learned from the pilot from different perspectives
 - c) Success stories and regional impact

The imposed restrictive measures on the spread of the coronavirus pandemic in the partners' countries reflected on the implementation of the Tool based on Danube Energy+ Ecosystem Package. The degree of readiness of the individual project partners to address these challenges led to a scenario in which these Tool Pilots were taken at two 'speeds' or in two time periods as follows:

January - July 2020: Germany, Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, Serbia and the Czech Republic

January - October 2020: Slovenia, Ukraine and Slovakia

The partners decided to develop the Regional case studies as an open document. The information has to be supplemented periodically according to the implementation of the Pilot's steps per each of the individual project partners.

REGIONAL CASE STUDIES Final structure template

GENERAL OVERVIEW (CTBG responsible)

- 1. General content**
- 2. Objective of this document**
- 3. Management summary (short summary of the provided case studies)**

CASE STUDY (All PP's responsible)

1. General description of the pilot

SEE ICT has implemented 10 visits and 2 motivational workshops in order to present the Call for the Danube Energy+ Program. Through the local Serbian tech and entrepreneurship website - Startit.rs, which is read by more than 80.000 people every month, individuals and teams could hear and apply for an educational and networking program for Young Innovators - Pilot Danube Energy+. The whole program was supposed to be delivered in one of the leading local start-up Hubs - Startit Center. Considering the current situation regarding the Covid-19, the Pilot program was implemented online from July 8 to July 21, 2020.

This was a pre-accelerator program created for students and young innovators who are just at the beginning of their entrepreneurial journey. The entire program was held online, including the workshops and the final event - Demo day, that was held on July 21. During the two weeks of the program, 11 participants gained basic business knowledge and had the opportunity to work on developing their innovative ideas. The SEE ICT team, mentors and speakers brought the world of entrepreneurship a little bit closer to them covering topics such as Problem discovery and ideation workshop, Business model development, all to Sales and Pitching.

At the final event which took place on July 21st 11 young innovators, members of five new startups had the opportunity to present their ideas and receive feedback from a professional jury. Among the members of the jury were Marko Šćepanović, founder of two startups Ono Bikes and oDo Ride, Milan Gizdavić, angel investor and associate of local Startup Hub, as well as Bartłomiej Tokarski, a member of the regional InnoEnergy network. The teams had only three minutes to present their idea that they have developed so far.

2. Outcomes

It was really challenging to switch from an already planned offline program to an online one - especially because the teams and individuals applied for an offline program at the very beginning. For the individuals who had no team it was challenging to work all by themselves, but we managed to overcome those obstacles, splitting them into groups during the workshops so they worked together.

- Feedback from YIs (general)

Generally the YIs were really satisfied with the lectures and workshops, especially with the possibility to meet entrepreneurs who shared their stories and challenges they faced, as well as giving them practical tips to overcome them. It was really challenging for the teams to deliver 3 minutes pitch, but with proper practice, all of them managed to do it during the Demo day and present their idea.

- Feedback from other stakeholders (incl. mentors)

Stakeholders and mentors were really optimistic about the possibility to hear the final pitches, as it gave them a peak of the problems that young innovators indicated as important - especially covering topics such as energy efficiency and sustainability. Also, it was valuable to them to meet the innovators in person and hear a little bit more about their solutions and the team structure.

a. Success stories and regional impact

- Representatives of the NSoilab were chosen as one of the 8 teams to participate at the EIT Food competition - Innovation Prizes.
- Two teams got a signed letter of intent from future customers, one of which is the state owned electricity provider in Serbia.
- Impact on other stakeholders (e.g. learning)

Stakeholders got better connected through different events.

3. Interviews with participating YI and their short idea “pitches”

- SEENRGyStorage team: “We are developing a web platform for market and risk optimization, related to storage from solar energy, with an emphasis on the evaluation of system services. For us, during the program, it was really valuable to meet one of the speakers and mentors Aleksandar Kavgić from Typhoon HIL as a market and technology leader in energy systems controlling. We really hope we will continue our collaboration.” - Radoš Čabarkapa
- Biotech Energy - “NSoilab is a biotechnological startup focused on development of advanced microbial products intended for sustainable and organic agriculture. We really appreciated to be part of this program and we will definitely use gained knowledge to continue our work.” - Ivana Pajčin
- MasX is developing an innovative way of producing reusable face masks. “Considering the current situation, we needed to think and act fast. This program provided high value in a short period of time - just two weeks. Now I need to expand the team and apply all the tips and tricks I picked up.” - Semir Poturak
- DentaLog team is developing a mobile application for scheduling dental appointments. After only two weeks they were able to present their idea that started totally from scratch. Now they are more familiar with the projects and funds that are in this startup field.

“We are Green Danube District and we are developing floating boxes made of recycled materials, providing a closed circle system of nutrition for plants and fishes. We now know how to approach the whole project, develop a business plan and especially how to protect our idea, what was totally unfamiliar to us. This will be our first step, and then we will continue to develop the whole business and sales plans.” - Nenad Potulić