



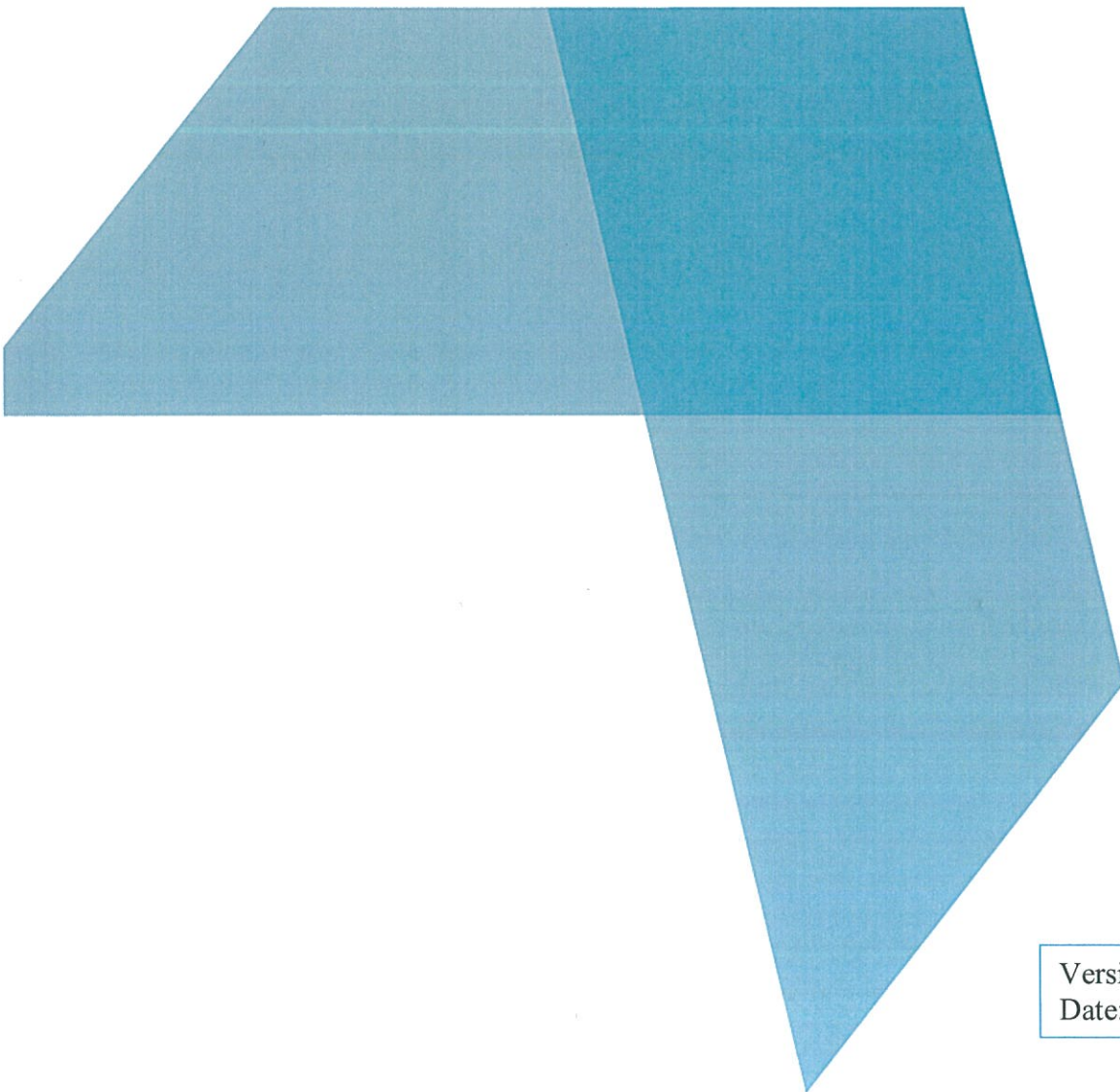
European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

SKILLS+
Interreg Europe



SKILLS+

ACTION PLAN FOR WEST-TRANS DANUBIA



Version FINAL
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1 Introduction

Produced by each region, the action plan is a document providing details on how the lessons learnt from the cooperation will be exploited in order to improve the policy instrument tackled within that region. It specifies the nature of the actions to be implemented, their timeframe, the players involved, the costs (if any) and funding sources (if any). If the same policy instrument is addressed by several partners, only one action plan is required.

1.1 Part I – General information

Project: SKILLS+

Partner organisation: Pannon Novum Nonprofit Ltd.

Other partner organisations involved (if relevant): -

Country: Hungary

NUTS2 region: West-Transdanubian region

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1.2 Part II – Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact:	X	Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
	€	European Territorial Cooperation programme
	€	Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument addressed:

Economic Development and Innovation Operational Programme

1.3 Part III – Details of the actions envisaged

2 ACTION 1

Modification of scoring system with ICT factor of Economic and Innovation Development Operational Programme 6.1.6.-17 call, which aims to support workplace training for employees in micro, small and medium-sized enterprises

2.1 The background

Links to other projects in SKILLS+: The best practices presented by the partners and the peer reviews we participated and organized were an important basis for determining our actions' content.

Between 06.11.2017.-08.11.2017. **a peer review team of 5 members (2 Spanish, 2 Czech, 1 Finnish) visited to West-Transdanubian region namely to Győr**, and participated in an organized peer review to collect experiences related to ICT in urban SMEs. During the 3 day-long program the team met numerous important stakeholders from the region. A representative of the Ministry for National Economy (Managing Authority of Economic Development and Innovation Operational Programme- EDIOP) provided us the professional background throughout the whole visit. She gave a comprehensive and very informative lecture on current or upcoming calls related to ICT. The EDIOP 6.1.6. call's social consultation version - which supports workforce trainings- was presented here. The representative of Ministry for National Economy, presented the proposed terms and scoring system for the call and said that there were still many questions to clarify. After presenting the call, the members of the peer review team made their suggestions for a future change that would prioritize ICT trainings against any other professional training.

Between 09.10.2017. – 13.10.2017. **a peer review team including Pannon Novum project team member visited Zadar region** and collected many useful experiences related Zadar region's digitalisation barriers, efforts and successes which inspired our action.

The team visited **Innovative Zadar** which is a business incubator organized to speed up the

growth and success of startup and early stage companies, it was founded by the City of Zadar in 2003 entitled Business Incubator Ltd. Zadar with the primary objective to encourage and develop SME culture in the City of Zadar. The team members interviewed more SME managers who talked about their difficulties, explaining that the greatest obstacle to digitization in their business life was the lack of IT skills, and that there would be a need for opportunities which provide IT training facilities for staff, especially for older employees. In the life of Innovative Zadar 2014 was a turning point, under new management began the process of business transformation. The company changed its name to Innovative Zadar Ltd. and registered additional activities related to ICT and keeps SMEs informed about the possibilities to finance ICT training for employees.



Peer review team in Zadar

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One of the most important government aims in Hungary is to improve the employability, workplace skills and competences of employees in order to increase the competitiveness of businesses. In the Partnership Agreement, the Government has set the objective of encouraging and supporting participation in lifelong learning which is indispensable for continuous adaptation to the competitiveness of the workforce and social and economic changes. This is also in line with the Europe 2020 strategy objective, that adult learning can play an important role in helping adults, especially low skilled and older workers, to adapt better to labour market and social change. In the case of employees working for SMEs, employees also need to regularly increase their personal and professional skills and

competences; considering the current instability of the labour market and the reduction of social exclusion, this is especially true for low-skilled workforce. In Hungary, the proportion of adults aged 25-64 in lifelong learning is extremely low: 6.3% (2016, EUROSTAT). This figure lags behind the average of the member states of the European Union (10.8%) and even low in relation to the countries in the region (see Czech Republic: 9.3%, Slovenia: 11.9%).

In the midst of accelerated digitization processes the need and constraints of developing professional competences and continuous learning in the ICT sector are particularly important.

The ICT sector is one of the most dynamically developing industries in the world, including Hungary. Due to our globalized and digitalized world, ICT has a tremendous influence on essentially every aspect of our lives.¹

Despite these trends, in Hungary only 15% of SMEs provided training to their personnel to develop and upgrade their skills while the EU average is above 20%. This is also one of the reasons why SMEs should receive appropriate professional assistance in ICT training, enabling the country to raise digitalization to a new level.

2.2 Action

The Economic Development and Innovation Operational Program (EDIOP) is a government program for the sustainable development of the Hungarian economy, aimed at increasing high added value production and expanding employment set up in 2013 for the period 2014-2020.

As part of the program, the Government has designated five national priorities and strategic goals in the partnership's agreement:

- improving the competitiveness of economic operators and enhancing their international role
- increasing employment by promoting economic growth and social inclusion

¹<http://ivszi.hu/en/ict-in-hungary/>

- increasing energy and resource efficiency
- handling social inclusion and population challenges
- realizing local and regional developments that help economic growth

These priorities are adjust to the EDIOP 6.1.6.-17 call, which aims to support workplace training for employees in micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. The main aim of the call is to increase the competitiveness of enterprises by improving employability of employees, improving the workplace skills and competences of their employees, increasing access to training rates for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and encouraging employers to continuously improve their employees' knowledge. Another objective is that businesses by supplementing their own resources can ensure that more employees are involved in training and training is also considered to be an investment in their own business. Considering that one of the most typical areas of adult learning is the workplace the construction also helps to make 15% of 25-64 year olds in adult learning in our country by 2020, in line with EU objectives.

It helps to finance trainings for employees of domestic micro, small and medium-sized enterprises while large companies can benefit from EDIOP-6.1.5-17 call to support for workplace training for employees for large enterprises.

The main aim of our action is to replace the planned scoring system that had been put into discussion in the social, the call is strongly support the expansion of knowledge required for employees to apply ICT technologies within businesses.

In the text for the social consultation, the scoring aspect was as follows:

It plans general ICT and / or professional training	8 points
yes	8
no	0

That is, in the version on social consultation for the applicant the opportunity is opened to choose ICT or any other professional training to achieve the 8 plus points, so ICT training is only a choose.

In the framework of our planned Action this option would not be given, but who would like to get an extra point it is obligatory to implement ICT training and we would like to add a scoring system that the more higher the number of employees involved in the ICT training is the more higher the plus score.

The recommended scoring system:

Include at least 15% of all training participants in ICT training (including the development of digital competencies and the general and special IT skills required to perform the job	10points
It plans ICT training and involves at least 15% of the participants	10points
It plans ICT training and involves at least 10% of the participants	7points
It plans ICT training and involves at least 5% of the participants	5points
Does not plan ICT training	0points

So it is in the interest of every applicant organization to plan ICT training within the planned workplace training in appropriately with the scoring system.

To increase the innovative approach and up-to-date business knowledge of domestic SMEs, especially micro and small enterprises, to the skilful and professional use of information technologies (ICT) tools and applications that is improving the integration of businesses into the digital economy is an indispensable national economic point of view.

To summarize the Action, we are planning 3 steps

1. Modification of the scoring system in the call EDIOP 6.1.6. in order to benefit SMEs that send a certain percentage of staff to ICT training within the project

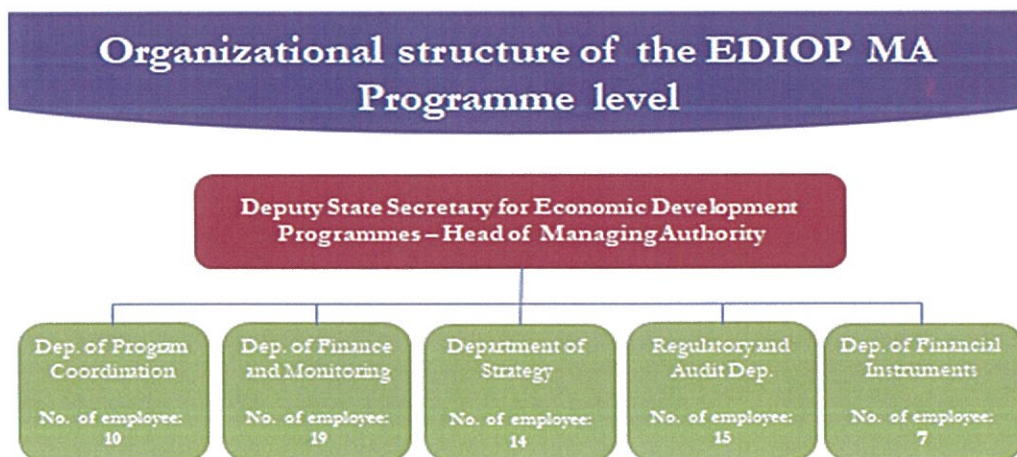
2. Promotion of the modified EDIOP 6.1.6. among SMEs in co-operation with Széchenyi Program Office
3. Monitoring of modification effects- ask for datas from Ministry of Finance that how many percent of projects included ICT training.

2.3 Players involved

- Ministry of Finance, Deputy State Secretary for Economic Development Programmes- Head of Managing Authority (EDIOP MA)

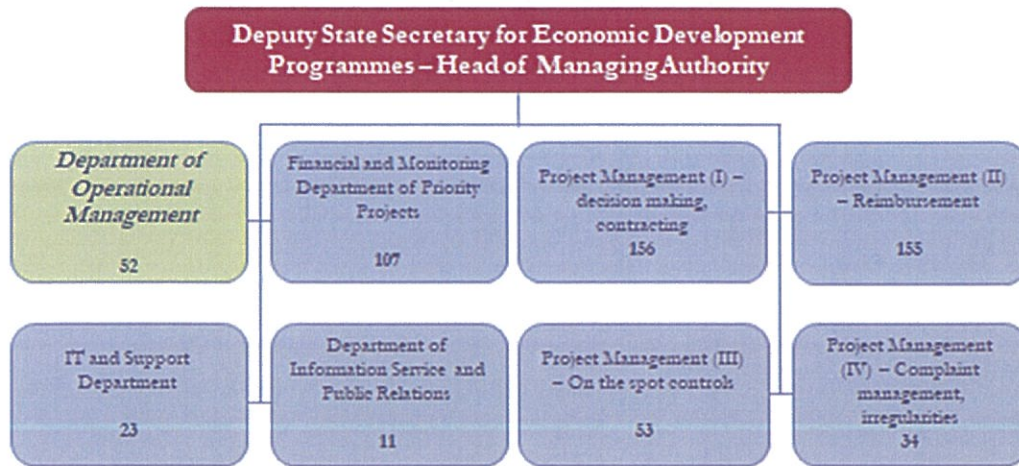
Deputy State Secretary is working under Ministry of Finance and responsible for implementing Economic Development Programs.

The structure and the number of employees can be seen below²



²Resource: Deputy State Secretary for Economic Development Programmes own ppt

Organizational structure of the EDIOP MA – Project level- intermediary tasks



Széchenyi Program Office: Széchenyi Programme Office (hereinafter referred to as „SZPO”) established in 2011, is operating under the control of the Prime Minister’s Office and became lately a key player in the international and national regional development and development policy. SZPO provides basically professional preparatory, informational and advisory, coordination and supervisory tasks for projects financed by operational programs and international cooperation programs. Understanding both of the local needs and the expectations of Brussels, SZPO provides a wide range of services for the national economic organizations absolutely free through its national consultancy and office network. These services cover almost all areas, from suggesting ideas, to project preparation, project design and technical assistance related to concrete implementation, project closure and settlement. SZPO acts as a link between the Hungarian State handling allocation of EU funds and the applicants interested in obtaining such funds, be they citizens, SMEs, local governments or NGOs. The tasks in the cross-border programs are performed by the international division of the SZPO, which was transformed from the former VÁTI, called Directorate of International and European Cooperation Programs. The Hungarian National

Rural Network also performs its rural development activities within the organizational framework of the SZPO.³

2.4 Timeframe

The action is under implementation and monitored by Managing Authority (Ministry for Finance).

03 February 2017: Publication date of the “EDIOP 6.1.6.- Workplace training support for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises’ employees” call for public consultation

Expected number of granted projects: 380-6346

07 November 2017: Pannon Novum proposes to modify the scoring system for the call (In Győr, peer review visit)

21 March 2018. EDIOP 6.1.6. call opened, submission of applications started after a long consultation period with the modified scoring system

03 December 2018: Project submission period closed

- 1204 project submitted during the 21.03.2018.- 03.12.2018. submission period from which 1133 SMEs planned ICT training into their projects (94%)

June 2020 : Evaluation- the final number of projects funded, the final rate of ICT training, and the final amount planned for ICT training

2.5 Costs

Planned budget: 6,3 Million EUR

2.6 Funding sources

Economic Development and Innovation Operational Program

³<https://www.szpi.hu/about-szpi>

3 ACTION 2

Raise-awareness campaigns for individual, micro and small enterprises in the terms of digital tools

3.1 The background

Links to other projects in SKILLS+: The best practices presented by the partners were an important basis for determining our actions' content.

The following best practices projects helped to develop this action:

I. E-leadership skills for SMEs- Latvia

Our Latvian Partner's best practice was trying to find a solution to the same problem as in our region, in West-Transdanubia is a major barrier to digitization that small and mainly the micro-enterprises are not able to effectively apply ICT technologies and e-skills. It actively worked in building up the information community and in the implementation of e-solutions on local, regional, national and international levels, as well as supporting and developing the infrastructure of information and communication technologies. We would like to translate the simplest modules of the training program modules into our own action, which is mainly aimed at micro and small businesses that are lagging behind mostly in the digital world, so using the Office software, and the different simpler electronic features would be more problematic than e-banking, use of electronic signature or electronic billing program. However, we would also incorporate the most important elements of the Latvian program into our action: experienced and motivated trainers, public funds support the training costs for SMEs and regionwide raising campaigns are essential parts of a successful program.

II. Digital Visibility- Norway

The Nordic countries are widely accepted as digital frontrunners in a European and even a global context but access to digital infrastructure is still subject to geographical variation and a rural-urban digital divide represents a challenge, even in Norway. Digitalisation can foster

green transition through developing smart city solutions and supporting sustainable business activities in the rural areas. Addressing the challenges and embracing the opportunities associated with digitalisation our Partner from Norway presented us this ongoing project which offers competence in digital possibilities and strategies and in online/digital visibility for small- and medium-scaled rural based businesses.

The project aimed at increasing digital skills in SMEs in rural areas which is also our goal for SMEs in the Western-Transdanubian region who are lagging behind in digitalisation for the most basic software and e-applications moreover they have lacked competence about possibilities within the digital economy and also have limited marketing skills.

On the project courses were introduced and implemented by the business-gardens, and organized as 6 afternoon-courses close to the location of the companies that participated. In our region, Pannon Novum would organize trainings similar to the Norwegian best practise with the same goal to engage the micro and small rural based businesses and to raise awareness about their digital possibilities, and we also consider the element of the project to be followed that trainers taught the local companies about how to order external expertise in their development work.

III. ICT- MICRO - Sweden⁴

Aim of the IT-MICRO program was to help micro enterprises to start using ICT. The main activity was to learn the SMEs to use different ICT tools such as Internet, MS Office and booking systems.

The insufficiency of IT competence in small companies was at that time noticeable in several ways. The rapid and extensive developments in IT technology can provide small companies with new working conditions but small companies are less inclined to adopt new IT solutions than larger companies. In many cases this is due to a lack of knowledge as to how IT techniques can be integrated into the procedures of the business. As a result of this situation the government was investing in a national programme to increase IT competence in small companies together with the Federation of Enterprises (FR). The programme was called IT-MICRO.

⁴ Skills+ Good Practise presented by Croatian Partner

The programme was based on the concept that IT competence can be developed as effectively in an educational situation as in a user situation. Applying the techniques to a small company's working reality and its own network can provide a meaningful foundation from which to improve the company's awareness of the opportunities IT can offer.

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Proper use of info-communication technologies and service applications is a key factor in all sectors of the economy, operational efficiency, competitiveness no longer can be ensured without them. The use of ICT in the Hungarian corporate sector can be stabled lags behind the indicators of other countries. Domestic enterprises to their operations essential info-communication tools and services are not taken to the extent as it would be expected. Low levels of ICT tools and services hinder productivity and corporate efficiency growth.

Many SMEs do not have the appropriate level of ICT competences for their work, there is a low ICT investment willingness to do and the potential of info-communication technologies is limited.

SMEs should be provided with information on how ICT tools are used such as e-invoicing and e-banking as they are still working on paper-based invoices and the administration takes place personally furthermore quite a lot of SMEs do not even have a website or web-shop.

Firms who are dedicated to remain competitive and desire to achieve sustainable success and long-term profitability must integrate ICT solutions into their operations, as these systems provide them differentiation and effectiveness on high levels (even micro companies). Furthermore, it is a necessary element of every single industry and an essential component of any effective educational, governmental and social system. It fosters efficiency and productivity on all levels and contributes to adaptability and flexibility that assist the development of a more advanced digital economy.

Much of the micro and small SMEs do not even know the simplest ICT solutions or know but afraid of their implementation in their own businesses, and the lack of these minor improvements hampers the bigger developments.

3.2 Action

Our action aims to organize raise awareness campaigns for individual and micro enterprises

related to electronic solutions in business management, focusing the using of e-signature, e-banking and electronic invoicing. SMEs in rural areas should be provided with incentives to meet their real needs in order to provide a solution for growth-driven businesses in different life situations in a rural environment.

The inevitable adaptation to the changing era of innovation and digitalization in the business world is costly and in many cases risky. The awareness campaign wants to mitigate this risk for businesses. Implementation of the Action promotes the shock caused by the challenges of digitization and provides an opportunity to strengthen small rural businesses.

Simultaneously with globalization, knowledge and social networks of rural areas are being appreciated, as well as their cooperation. In contrast, lagging behind growth zones may continue to grow, especially for those who have little contact with dynamic districts.

In order for businesses to move on, they need to think about their opportunities (feasible, worthwhile), review their abilities (resources, knowledge, opportunities offered by administrative frameworks) and decide whether they are willing to take risks. We need to help them in this by providing information, a supportive attitude, and a campaign that provides usable IT knowledge.

West-Transdanubian region is in the middle of the country in terms of SME indicators, but behind the European Union average. In our campaign which is primarily designed with the help of Digital Welfare Points that have been developed or are currently being developed across the country in the form of personal advice and information tailored to individual needs, primarily for individual businesses and micro enterprises.

In the campaign, we choose rural settlements (6-10) as a pilot where we announce various digitalisation events on various online and traditional advertising channels. When choosing a settlement, we strive to become a settlement from all three counties of the region.

Small and medium-sized businesses in the town will be involved in the campaign after applying, aiming to drive them towards the digital world, to familiarize them with the simplest digital solutions, but also to get a comprehensive view of useful applications and online marketing tools through professional presentations.

We want the focus on the following three areas in our campaigns:

Campaigning for e-banking and electronic bank account statement

Internet has made significant changes in finance in last years: firstly the massive use of the internet

and lately the spread of smartphone and tablet platforms have been realignment in business banking habits and business expectations up the banks. Most of the micro and small enterprises are currently online banking, but about 40 percent (more or solely) are still personally visiting the bank branch while 80 percent of micro and 97 percent of small enterprises use an online banking system for their corporate account. However users who only use the online system are significantly fewer: nearly one-fifth of micro and 15 percent of small enterprises belong to only online clients.

Small enterprises owners without the use of online banking systems mostly avoid this mode of administration because they believe they do not need it. In micro enterprises the lack of knowledge and security issues, and in medium enterprises beside the security the lack of trust also plays a role. We want to change this attitude through our awareness-raising campaign.

It shows the trends that since its introduction in March 2011, the decisive majority of businesses changed from paper-based bank account statements to electronic. Its popularity is dynamically growing, at present about 70 percent of customers receive e-statements. The e-statement is completely equivalent and the content is the same to the official paper-based statement accepted by any authority as electronic documents. It can be stored and organized on the computer like other files, and has the great advantage of being environmentally friendly, time- and space-saving, and more cost-effective than paper-based extraction. One of our campaigns aims is to increase the proportion of people requesting e-statement.

Campaigning for -e-signature:

Act CCXXII of 2015 on general rules for electronic administration and confidentiality is based on regulation EU No 910/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on electronic identification and trust services in electronic commerce in the internal market. Act 137/2016 on electronic signature and stamping requirements for the laws and electronic administration services. (VI.13.) on July 1, 2016 ensures that the Hungarian electronic signature is accepted in all EU countries. In spite of the fact, only a fraction of the Hungarian companies are using electronic signatures at operational level.

In our awareness-raising campaign we also want to adapt to the EU's objective, as the European Union also supports and strive to give a greater room for trust in online environments and for this, the electronic signature and connected trust services as the main tool. In our campaign we draw attention to the ways and benefits of using, which can be summarized as follows:

- fast and authentic communication

- reducing the stress factors of bureaucratic administration
- telework, home work

Campaigning for electronic invoicing:

The electronic invoice is a more modern, quicker and more practical form of traditional accounts, which saves not only time but also a lot of money for entrepreneurs.

The e-invoice is a certificate that contains the data of the invoice in the form of electronic signals.

An electronic invoice is required to provide a suitable invoicing program

The invoice is issued in the same way as in the case of a traditional invoice, but the e-invoice does not need to be printed or mailed, the invoicing program automatically sends the invoice to the buyer's specified e-mail address.

In Hungary based on research dating from the beginning of 2018, only the half of businesses use some invoicing software – the rest only invoicing by manually invoice pad. However, as from July 1 2018, invoices containing VAT passed over 100.000 HUF must be transmitted online to NTCA. The possibility of manual invoicing remained after 1 July, but the obligation to notify these companies entails additional administrative difficulties. They have to think over how they will continue to fulfill this obligation. The same apply to those who use invoicing software, but their service provider did not know or did not want to get ready for compulsory online data delivery. Both groups will be able to register these accounts on the NTCA website and then forward them to the NTCA on the Internet.

However, there is another solution: those who do not want to bother with manual solutions, online invoicing providers can be the ideal solution.

We would like to inform companies about these opportunities in our campaign and draw their attention to the out of date paper-based invoicing.

3.3 Players involved

➤ Digital Welfare Points

The Digital Welfare Program (DWP), launched by the Government of Hungary at the end of 2015, is aimed at bringing all citizens and businesses in Hungary into the digitalization winners.

The Digital Welfare Program (DWP) is making the Internet accessible and affordable for everyone in the coming years, moreover digitization education will also contribute to new areas to make Hungary better prepared for digital transformation.

In Hungary 1500 DWP Points have been being developed around the country. In these points digital knowledge can be acquired and developed by anyone with the help of modern tools (tablets, laptops, smartphones, etc.) through the availability of the right bandwidth internet for free.

At the DWP Points, which are opened 20 hours per week, besides the free use of tools a well-trained mentor can also be assisted. Following the comprehensive professional and social consultation, the Government of Hungary decided in the summer of 2017 to extend the Digital Welfare Program, the adoption of the Digital Welfare Program 2.0.

➤ Chambers of Commerce and Industry:

The Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry Economic Directorate is responsible for coordinating the energetic and environmental aspects of the macro and micro economic (industry, transport, trade, tourism, food economy), employment, regional development, technical development, research development and the economy.

The main aims of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry are to promote the development and organization of the economy furthermore coordinates the operation and the international relations of regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry based on local governments.

In the West Transdanubian Region there are three Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Győr-Moson-Sopron, Vas and Zala county.

Main tasks of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry:

- at international level the aim of the Chamber is to help the Hungarian companies' foreign operations to increase their competitiveness
- coordination of the development of national economic needs and vocational training based on labor market information, employment, employability data and prognoses
- provides free tender counselling services to businesses
- making national and local economic analyzes

Most important activities:

- international projects
- economic policy presentations

- organization of business trips
- forwarding business offers

The Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry has created a platform called Üzlet@Hálón. It is a business-to-business (b2b) platform, where there is an e-marketplace for registered companies in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and their members and partners where you can find detailed information about companies, products and services, business offers and business news.

In order to increase the competitiveness of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, the Modern Enterprise Program was launched in 2016.

The background of the Program is that Hungarian SME managers, decision-makers and owners have incomplete information about the possibilities of using ICT in companies. The basic objective of the project is to encourage SMEs to use ICT through the use of a network of chambers, to develop a digital approach to business leaders and owners with non-financial support and services.

Implementation: Outside Central-Hungary, November 2015 - March 2021

Program Budget: A total of 6 billion HUF

Indicators: Number of SMEs willing to involve the program and making them digitally prepared: 8500 (until spring 2021)

Program elements:

- National, free chamber ICT advisory network (available in all county seats)
- Digital raise-awareness contents
- Supplier & Product Catalog (voucher system)
- Digital Qualified Enterprise and Advanced Digitalization Enterprise Qualifications (which provide + 5% non-refundable support for EDIOP Applications)

- Information days and events (total planned: 254)
- Portal and decision support system
- Communication and media campaign
- Operating a Digital Wellbeing Financial Program rating system

Main results so far (17 Jan. 2019): more than 13 000 registered companies, 9287 consultancy audits, 6373 digitally prepared certified SMEs, 178 retained events, 590 suppliers, 1778 products / services in the catalog.

3.4 Timeframe

January- March 2019: Mapping European union and national funds to fund the campaign, in whole or in part

February- May 2019 : Submitting applications for partially or fully related calls

June 2019-December 2020: Conducting the campaign in some of the settlements of the Western- Transdanubian region as a pilot

3.5 Costs

Planned budget: 8000 EUR

3.6 Funding sources

Own budget, Economic Development and Innovation Operational Program 3.3.3.

4 ACTION 3

ICT VOUCHER IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 The background

Links to SKILLS+ project: In November 2017 a team of 5 members (2 Spanish, 2 Czech, 1 Finnish) visited to West-Transdanubian region, and participated in an organized peer review to collect experiences related to ICT in urban SMEs.



Peer review team in Győr, November 2017

During the 3 day-long program the team met many stakeholders including the Ministry for National Economy, SMEs, INNOSCART ICT Cluster, Kisalföld Foundation for Enterprise Promotion,

Mobilis Interactive Center, Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Győr-Moson-Sopron County, Do Business Digitally Regional Contact Point, West-Pannon Regional and Economic Development Public Non-profit Ltd., etc.

Their recommendation was related to the creation of an ICT innovation voucher, which aims to support individual and micro enterprises and SMEs to use digital technologies to innovate and increase their competitiveness.

Their ppt slide which suggest voucher to implement:

5) Recommendations and discussion



A) Innovation (ICT) voucher – too speed up the procedure (similar concept as Do business Digitally project)

B) Cluster strategy – provided by a particular district / intermediates (Pannum Novum / Foundation) to maybe interconnect clusters to have joint initiatives – example from Spain

C) ICT as Key Enabling Technology cross cutting key specialisation sectors - new way of management, process using full potential of internet – of – thing and internet – of – everything

D) Technology transfer & cooperation Academia – private sector – Knowledge Transfer Assistant (CZ good practice), % EU support, evaluation

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The following good practices include elements that we plan to take over, the difference being that they do not receive counseling, training and other services within the framework of the action, but that it is a voucher that can be recruited by qualified service providers, so it's easier to use, SMEs with time and capacity shortages do not need to carry out lengthy procurement and documentation procedures.

I. e-business pilot – Germany

The e-business-pilot project was established to advise SMEs on the introduction of new information and communication technologies.

The e-business-pilot Magdeburg was part of the promotion initiative e-skills network for companies, which has been promoted by the German Federal Ministry of Economic and Energy. The focus of the eBusiness pilot Magdeburg was on IT security, data protection, -online marketing, optimization of business processes, knowledge management and process management and ERP. The range of services offered by the eBusiness included individual information meetings to clarify specific problem solutions for individual companies, regular IT-meetings, internal workshops. The pilot's website also offered a download area for information materials, flyers and guidelines and access to the IT service provider database for Saxony-Anhalt.

II. Assistant of Knowledge transfer – Czech Republic

The project's key target was to support the transfer of technologies from research organizations (RO) to SMEs and the enhancement of innovations.

The technological transfer from research organisations to SME's is rather problematic and SME's suffer of lack of capacities and well trained staff. The OP Enterprise and Innovations for Competitiveness prepared the sub programme aimed on funding of Knowledge transfers – the university or research organisation member cooperated directly with the SME like in our voucher programme. This Good Practice is focused primarily on small companies, having problems to apply for subsidies. The position of Knowledge Assistant supports the SME in ICT utilisation, transfer of new technologies and innovative processes, also can influence the management and contribute to the smooth and updated administration of the SME, especially by increase of IT tools utilisation, often lagging in SME's.

This instrument represent a smooth and effective way of cooperation among SME's and educational and research organisations (Universities, Czech Academy of Sciences, other research organisations) which is our goal in our action as well.

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The Economic Development and Innovation Operational Program (EDIOP) aims to stimulate the intensity of enterprise innovation activity and to increase innovation activity among intensive and innovative businesses. In connection with this aim, the call of EDIOP 2.1.4-15. provides SMEs a chance to apply for an innovation voucher.

In the framework of the cooperation, the Government undertakes to:

- decides on the applications submitted under 30 days
- the projects corresponding to the terms of the call will be granted for a minimum of HUF 1 million to a maximum of HUF 5 million for non-refundable subsidies up to the amount available.
- to be awarded a maximum of 75% of appropriate support advance provides

The aim of this call is to involving micro, small and medium-sized enterprises that do not carry out R & D & I activities but are marketable with technology or service in the innovation chain by increasing the intensity of innovation activity of enterprises through the use of the voucher.

The planned amount available for grants is HUF 100 million.(cc. 300.000EUR)

Expected number of supported applications: 300-500 pieces.

In recent years the number of innovative companies in Hungary has decreased, which also shows the country's competitiveness deteriorating. According to actual researches conducted by the Central Statistical Office, recent innovations in firms have been lower than after the 2008 economic crisis. In fact, only the quarter of the companies have spent this purpose in recent years, while in 2010 this rate was above thirty percent. The decrease has been the result of two contradictory processes: the innovation of products and processes has increased, while fewer enterprises have been planning for work organization and marketing than before, although organizational renewal plays an important role in increasing a company's productivity. It would be very important for Hungary and the West-Transdanubian region to advance in the innovative development of the economy so that they can compete with large EU companies, as international experience shows that true technological breakthroughs are almost connected to SMEs. Generally, government does not appropriately encourage scientific research and the acquisition of advanced technologies, although the quality of Hungarian research institutes and technology companies is above the world average. Data also show that companies with fewer than 50 employees were even below the average for innovation, and only seven thousand small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are doing real research and development

work. This represents just over one per cent of the nearly half a million SMEs that produce 50% of the gross domestic product (GDP) with 70% of the workforce. Today in Hungary, every second company with more than 250 employees can be said to be innovative.

The distinction between the behaviour of the two groups of companies cannot be entirely written in the account of the shortage of funds: smaller companies have problems of approach, often they do not see the sense of innovation.

4.2 Action

The purpose of the current action is to complete the relevant innovation voucher call EDIOP 2.1.4.-15 with an ICT voucher option. It enables to facilitate SMEs' access to digital know-how and technology by giving them the incentive to connect with ICT knowledge and service providers. The aim is to encourage the use of new ICT-based business models.

Micro and individual enterprises and SMEs benefitting from a voucher can exchange the latter against ICT services, including services from private companies, universities, research centres and other accredited ICT knowledge and service providers. The voucher would provide the company with easy access to specialist services, such as creating a business website and using it profitably, learning to use e-commerce tools to buy or sell, or adopting more sophisticated ICT tools for internal processes, such as better resource planning, supply chain management, and customer.

So the suggested action would complete the current call which aims to stimulate the intensity of enterprise innovation activity and to increase innovation activity among intensive and innovative businesses. In connection with this aim, the call of EDIOP 2.1.4-15. would provide enterprises a chance to apply for an innovation voucher.

The call does not impose very strict requirements on the possible range of applicants, so we would not propose to change them. In this call, the voucher may be claimed by micro, small and medium-sized enterprises which:

- have at least one closed (report / personal income tax return) business year (365 days);
- average annual number of employees in the last business year preceding the submission of applications for funds was at least 1 person in the whole business year;

- are companies with double-entry bookkeeping in Hungary, or branch offices of double-entry bookkeeping companies with headquarters in the European Economic Area and having a branch in Hungary
- not covered by the EVA (taxing method)

We consider this circle of applicants to be suitable for the innovation voucher, and the maximum available amount of 5 million HUF can be realistic for the ICT voucher as well.

4.3 Players involved

- Ministry for Finance- Deputy State Secretary for Economic Development Programmes- Head of Managing Authority (EDIOP MA)
- Széchenyi Programme Office, Hungarian Chamber of Economy and Commerce, Local innovation Suppliers, Qualified IT Suppliers

4.4 Timeframe

June 2018: Reconciliation with EDIOP Managing Authority on the possibility of modifications and additions to the content of EDIOP 2.1.4.-15 call

December 2018: At submission period closing, again proposing an ICT voucher to incorporate

Promoting ICT Voucher when planning calls for the 2021-2027 budget period

4.5 Costs

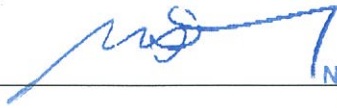
Planned budget: 60.000 EUR

4.6 Funding sources

Economic Development and Innovation Operational Program ,clusters' managed calls

Date 2019-08-21

Signature: _____



PANNON NOVUM
NYUGAT-DUNÁNTÚLI REGIONÁLIS
INNOVÁCIÓS NONPROFIT KFT.
9700 Szombathely, Berzsenyi Dániel tér 2.
Adószám: 14197280-2-18
Bank: 18203198-06017277-40010012

Stamp of the organisation: _____

Acknowledgement of Receipt



Project acronym	SKILLS+ (PGI00088)
Project title	Supporting knowledge capacity in ICT among SME to engage in growth and innovation
Name of the organisation (original) /including department (if relevant)	Gazdaságfejlesztési Programok Irányító Hatósága, Gazdaságfejlesztési Programokért Felelős Helyettes Államtitkárság, Pénzügyminisztérium
Name of the organisation (English) including department (if relevant)	Managing Authority for the Implementation of Economic Development Programmes, Deputy State Secretariat for Economic Development Programmes, Ministry for Finance
Name of the policy instrument addressed (original)	Gazdaságfejlesztési és Innovációs Operatív Program, Beruházási prioritás 2b
Name of the policy instrument addressed (English)	Economic Development and Innovation Operational Programme for Hungary, Investment Priority 2b
Name of partner(s) concerned in the application form (English)	Pannon Novum Non-profit Ltd.

We hereby confirm:

- that on 29th March 2019 we received the Action Plan prepared by Pannon Novum West Transdanubian Regional Innovation Non-profit Ltd. in the framework of the above-mentioned project;
- that the Action Plan has been prepared in accordance with Annex 1 of Interreg Europe Programme Manual (version 6, 19 December 2018);
- that we participated in the regional stakeholder group (RSG) of the above-mentioned partner in the project;
- that we are effectively acquainted with the contents of the Action Plan, and we will consider possibilities for implementation of the Action Plan through our policy instrument.

Name of signatory	Balázs Greinstetter
Position of signatory	Deputy State Secretary (Head of Managing Authority)
Date	'10' July 2019
Signature and institution stamp (if exists)	 