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The DigitaliseSME Project and its lessons for an EU-Industry Policy 2021-2027

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The Pilot Project DigitaliseSME is co-financed by DG CONNECT of the European Commission, on proposal of the European Parliament, with funds of the EU-Programme for Research and Development 2014-2020 "Horizon 2020"



How did the project work?

1. **Promotion** in our networks and beyond: newsletter, social media, 14 local events
2. **Registration** of companies and “Digital Enablers” in **2 online data bases**
3. Assessment of applications, direct contacts, if positive, attempts to match SMEs with DEs – condition: **payment of board & lodging by SME to DE**
4. When match was agreed, signature of **Financial Support agreement** with DE
5. During ”exchange” DE had to deliver **2 reports**, one “**Intake Summary Report**” (after 1 week) and one “**Development Roadmap Outline**” (after 2-3 weeks). At the end of the exchange – after 4-6 weeks – the DE had to deliver to the SME the “Terms of reference for the Digitalisation Start-up”, which meant to be an **executive project for the implementation**.
6. The whole process was accompanied by an **external evaluation** - later more.



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Lessons for an EU-Industry Policy 2021-2027

1. The results later, but the costs: approx. 14.500€ per exchange of EU-investment. Without start-up costs to promote a new brand, **12.000€ per exchange** are reasonable, included promotion, facilitation and administration.
2. To reach **5.000 companies in 5 years** would cost the EU **60 Million Euro**: very cheap way to approx. 100.000 individuals as direct and indirect beneficiaries, achieve 750 million Euro of potential added value and – by triggering emulation by other companies – even **more than 1 Billion Euro**: i.e. **17 times the initial investment**, or a **ROI of more than 1500%**.
3. We propose to support **10.000 garages** – 5.000 with Digital Europe and 5.000 with the SME-Instrument – instead of **1 European Unicorn**.
4. By the way: also the most famous EU-programme supported with few funds a high number of individuals... ERASMUS. These are success stories to be taken as example.



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Digitalise SME



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Digitalise **SME** 

The logo icon consists of a circular arrangement of small dots in blue and red, resembling a globe or a network.

Thank you for your
attention!



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