

Report on the “Commonalities identification workshops for cross fertilization within EU ecosystems”

Deliverable D6

***ExcellEnt: Excellency in Entrepreneurship: Expanding European
entrepreneurship by boosting youth (self) employability and promoting a
sharing resources culture***

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Abbreviations

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| AI | Artificial Intelligence |
| CCI | Cross-Cutting Issues |
| CEO | Chief Executive Officer |
| CTO | Chief Technology Officer |
| D | Deliverable |
| EBN | European Business Innovation Centres Network |
| EC | European Commission |
| EIC | European Innovation Council |
| EIT Digital | European Institute of Innovation and Technology Digital |
| ERA | European Research Area |
| ESCP Business School | École Supérieure de Commerce de Paris Business School (in French) |
| EU | European Union |
| EYE | Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs |
| FSTP | Financial Support to Third Parties |
| HEI | Higher Education Institute |
| ICT | Information and Communication Technology |
| iED | Institute of Entrepreneurship Development |
| IP | Intellectual Property |
| LU.MA | Website for community events |
| MS Teams | Microsoft Teams |
| MVP | Minimum Viable Product |
| NCP | National Contact Point |
| PE | Private Equity |
| QA | Quality Assurance |
| R&D | Research and Development |
| SMEs | Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises |
| SWOT | Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Analysis |
| TTO | Technology Transfer Office |
| TUBITAK | The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye |
| VC | Venture Capital |



Executive Summary

The common goals of the National workshops has been connected to Task 2.2 : Cross fertilization within EU ecosystems, to engage the national ecosystem stakeholders (local representatives (incubators, accelerators, universities, research labs, regional authorities, chambers of commerce etc.) and entrepreneurs (start-ups, women-led businesses, self-entrepreneurs, digital nomads etc. in 6 countries creating a lively and active entrepreneurial ecosystem. In order to facilitate the knowledge exchange and peer-to-peer learning among all players and enhance the outreach activities, it was important to listen to the voices /narratives of the entrepreneurs and stakeholders to find synergies and get value from the community of peers. The promotion of the European Entrepreneurship Academy platform (implemented in WP3) has been also in the focus in the national workshops, which will be constantly updated with data resources and services, to interact and foster the stronger cooperation, and collaborations among members. The crowd-sourced and knowledge-based repositories, FAQs for regional support, funding opportunities, competition events, marketplace etc. facilitating real-time communications across different possible channels, supporting dynamic communities' creation and animation.

Greece

The *Commonalities Identification workshop* in Greece, held on **Friday, May 17th, 2024, online through MS Teams**, was conducted in conjunction with the *Entrepreneurial Knowledge Sharing Across EU Ecosystems* workshop of WP1. This strategic combination aimed to avoid scheduling two separate events for the same target audience within a short time frame, thereby maximizing participation and resource efficiency. **The workshop attracted 55 participants**, all from Greece, reflecting a *diverse mix of professionals from the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem, including entrepreneurs, startup representatives, higher education institution representatives, incubators, and other key roles.*

The workshop comprised two main sessions: ***Cultivating Entrepreneurial Excellence in Greece***, dedicated to WP1 content, and Bridging Greek Innovation: ***Connecting Local Entrepreneurs to Global Opportunities***, focusing on WP2 content. The ExcellEnt Project Presentation, relevant to



both work packages, highlighted the project's achievements, future directions, and the role of the European Entrepreneurship Academy. **Key activities included keynote speeches, panel discussions, and interactive Q&A segments, which provided valuable insights and practical knowledge.** The event was praised for its organization, quality of speakers, and relevance of content, significantly impacting the Greek entrepreneurial ecosystem by enhancing funding awareness, understanding of regulatory frameworks, and fostering robust networking opportunities.

Bulgaria

The "Commonalities Identification Workshops for Cross-Fertilization within EU Ecosystems" was conducted as part of the ExcellEnt project under the Horizon Europe Programme, with the aim to enhance entrepreneurial potential in Bulgaria. This workshop, **held on May 28, 2024**, in a hybrid format at the GATE Institute and online via Zoom, attracted a total of 46 in-person participants and 83 online registrants. **Participants included entrepreneurs, startup members, incubator representatives, HEI representatives, investors, and other stakeholders, with a strong local representation (95.1% from Bulgaria).** The primary purpose of the workshop was to foster entrepreneurial skills, explore European opportunities, and identify commonalities for cross-fertilization within EU ecosystems. It focused on enhancing the entrepreneurial ecosystem by providing insights into deep tech challenges, design thinking, and pitching skills, as well as introducing the European Entrepreneurship Academy.

The workshop featured a series of structured activities designed to engage participants effectively:

- ★ Introduction to the ExcellEnt project by Denitsa Stoilova.
- ★ Keynote Address: Overview of deep tech challenges in entrepreneurship by Georgi Kadrev.
- ★ Skill Development Sessions: Practical exercises on design thinking by Iva Krasteva and pitch preparation by Ivaylo Ivanov.
- ★ European Opportunities: Introduction to the European Entrepreneurship Academy.
- ★ Networking session.

The workshop yielded several significant **outcomes**:



- ★ Enhanced understanding of the main deep tech challenges in entrepreneurship.
- ★ Practical skills in design thinking and pitch preparation.
- ★ Increased awareness of European resources and opportunities for entrepreneurs.
- ★ Identification of best practices for effective pitching and iterative product development.
- ★ Strengthened networking among participants, fostering a collaborative entrepreneurial ecosystem.

France

Workshop title: **ExcellEnt: the secrets of entrepreneurial excellence – how to succeed in Europe?**

Date and Location: **Date:** 14th of May 2024, from 9.00 till 11.30 am. **Location:** Pôle Léonard de Vinci.12 avenue Léonard de Vinci, 92400 Courbevoie, Paris.

Number of Participants: **82 registered people on LU.MA** (registration page is added in Annex), **63 attendees** (25 physically, 38 online) .

Profile of Participants: **The Creative Cluster & Booster Lab 's team has invited the leaders as active contributors to the workshop and the typical actors as audiences in the French Innovation Ecosystem.** Through a detailed List of invitees: these people represented an EU entity (EIT Digital), research institutions (universities), business support organisations (accelerators, incubators, chamber of commerce in France-Germany), civil society organizations, self-entrepreneurs (women-led business leaders), and start-up companies, and of course the co-founders or CEOs of various private tech companies, private investors (business angels, representatives from VC funds). The composition of the participants more precisely : SME (NFTUniverzum, EXOMIND), social platform (Bloomers), Incubator (De Vinci, Blue Factory of ESCP, Creative Cluster), self-entrepreneur , Embassy (Austria), large entreprise (Leadership Growth Holding), Private Investor (Soverency Group), Business School (ESCP, EMLV), Business consulting firm (JF NAUD), research institute (IFT), VET training (MATRICE).The **male-female ratio of the participants:** female (based on the List of attendees) around 48% while the male representation has been around 52%.

The hybrid workshop's outcomes has been to promote the key findings of the empirical results of the project , the European Entrepreneurial Academy platform and its services, with the



planned activities and events. Additionally to make a **number of interactions and collaborations among the audience and keynote speakers** to talk about the **cross-border entrepreneurial collaboration** (through a model of France-Germany), and also to conduct an Q&A session.

The workshop is co-organized by Creative Cluster, Booster Labs and the Pôle Léonard de Vinci in Paris.

Ukraine

The workshop "**Innovating in Ukraine and Shaping the Future of Entrepreneurship**," organized by TechUkraine and the ExcellEnt Project, aimed to showcase Ukraine's innovation potential and explore business growth opportunities both within Ukraine and across Europe. The event examined opportunities provided by the government, education, and the private sector for startups and companies, highlighting the most powerful tools for supporting entrepreneurs in Ukraine. Additionally, the workshop emphasized the importance of cross-fertilization within EU ecosystems.

Workshop Activities:

Opening Remarks: Speaker: Nataly Veremeeva, Director at TechUkraine.

Keynote Speaker: Zoi Moza, EU Project Manager of the iED – Institute of Entrepreneurship Development & ExcellEnt Project.

Panel discussion featuring:

- ★ Dmytro Kuzmenko, CEO of Ukrainian Venture Capital and Private Equity Association (UVCA).
- ★ Yana Paladiieva, Ukrainian Startup Fund.
- ★ Jane Klepa, Director of Partnerships and Innovation at SET University.
- ★ Olena Shershun, Associate Partner at Civitta.

Key Outcomes of the Online Workshop:

- ★ **Enhanced Understanding:** Gained a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities for innovation development and growth of private entrepreneurship in Ukraine.



- ★ Exchange of Ideas and Best Practices: Facilitated the exchange of ideas and best practices among local and foreign entrepreneurs, business leaders, startup founders, policymakers, academics, and community members.
- ★ Cross-Fertilization within EU Ecosystems: Highlighted the importance of cross-fertilizing entrepreneurial ideas and practices within EU ecosystems, promoting collaboration and innovation.
- ★ Expert Insights: Provided valuable insights from industry experts and thought leaders on fostering an entrepreneurial mindset, and highlighted the closest opportunities for business acceleration.

Workshop Details

Date: June 7, 2024

Time: 15:00-17:00 Kyiv Timezone

Format: Online via Zoom

Registration: 79 registrations

Participants: 24 attendees

This workshop represented a significant effort to highlight the innovative potential in Ukraine, showcasing its resilience and collaboration with European ecosystems by bringing together diverse stakeholders to address common goals and challenges, and opening new opportunities for business development and growth.

Ireland

The Unlocking Entrepreneurial Potential in Ireland - National Workshop, which took place on **May 28**, provided a platform for stakeholders to explore opportunities, challenges, and best practices in Ireland's entrepreneurial ecosystem. **Organized by International Development Ireland in collaboration with the ExcellEnt Project** consortium, the workshop aimed to foster interactive discussions among local entrepreneurs, business leaders, policymakers, academics, and community members. By leveraging insights from previous research on entrepreneurship development, the event sought to provide valuable insights into current trends, needs, and success stories in European entrepreneurship.

The **National Workshop**", provided a dynamic platform for stakeholders to explore and enhance the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Ireland and facilitated interactive discussions among local

entrepreneurs, business leaders, policymakers, academics, and community members. The event, promoted through various channels, attracted **59** participants and highlighted current trends, challenges, and best practices in European entrepreneurship with a focus on the Irish context. Through diverse session formats such as keynote presentations and panel discussions, participants **gained insights into emerging sectors, innovation hubs, and investment opportunities for start-ups** in Ireland. The workshop highlighted the role of various stakeholders, including **Enterprise Ireland (EI), HEIs, incubators and accelerators**, in fostering a conducive environment for entrepreneurial growth. Enterprise Ireland's comprehensive support for High Potential Start-Up (HPSU) companies was particularly emphasized. Moreover, the workshop encouraged entrepreneurs to embrace diverse business models and resilience, moving beyond the pursuit of unicorn status to building sustainable ventures. These insights and collaborative efforts aim to enhance Ireland's unique position within the European entrepreneurship landscape.

Turkiye

Workshop title: Innovating in Turkiye and Shaping the Future of Entrepreneurship

Date and Location: Date: 28th of May, from 15.30 till 17.30 pm. Location: Online

Number of Participants: 79

Aim of the workshop:

- ★ To promote the key findings of the ExcellEnt project and discuss them with the participants, to collect more feedback on ways to foster entrepreneurship in Turkiye and in Europe.
- ★ To present the European Entrepreneurial Academy platform and its services, with the planned activities and events.
- ★ To present the European Entrepreneurship Olympics Competition to be held by the ExcellEnt Project and inform potential applicants on how to make a good pitch.
- ★ Enable knowledge sharing on the funding and other support mechanisms for entrepreneurs.
- ★ Facilitate experience sharing between established technology entrepreneurs and new entrepreneurs
- ★ Create interactions and potential collaborations among the participants

Profile of Participants:

Sabancı University firstly invited keynote speakers and panelists as active contributors to the workshop and then shared the event publicly to enable registration by other participants. The keynote speakers and panelists were also asked to share the event with their circles. The participants came from diverse roles both from the center and periphery of the entrepreneurship ecosystem in Türkiye. Investors (business angels, VC fund managers), self-entrepreneurs, startups, incubator and acceleration program managers, project managers, and students interested in entrepreneurship had the majority of participation along with other actors.



Methodology

This section describes the methodologies used (participant selection, data collection, invitation of keynote speakers, panelists, session formats, quality and relevance assurance) per country to achieve the highest impacts on the national workshops.

Greece

Participant Selection

Participants were carefully selected to ensure a diverse and representative mix of professionals from the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in Greece. The selection criteria included individuals' roles within startups, higher education institutions, incubators, and relevant organizations. Invitations were extended to those with significant experience and expertise in entrepreneurship, innovation, and business development. The following means of communication were utilized to reach potential participants:

- ★ A registration link was shared, receiving 49 responses.
- ★ A LinkedIn event was created, with 155 people indicating they would attend ([link](#)).
- ★ A social media campaign was launched to announce the event.
- ★ A "Meet the Speakers" campaign was conducted on social media to generate interest and engagement (see for example link and..).
- ★ Email invitations were sent to targeted individuals.
- ★ Confirmation emails were sent to all registrants.
- ★ Event reminders were sent to registered attendees 2 days before & 2 hours before the event.

Data Collection

Data collection was conducted through the registration form, which gathered initial participant information. A participant information sheet was shared with all participants via the registration form and confirmation emails. Consents for workshop participation, audio and video recording, and personal data processing were also included in the registration form. Additionally, participants

had the option to provide consent for follow-up communications. During and after the event, participants provided quantitative ratings and qualitative feedback on various aspects of the workshop, including the effectiveness of the speakers, the organization of the schedule, technology performance, content relevance, and overall satisfaction. This feedback helped in assessing the success of the event and identifying areas for improvement.

Session Formats

The *Commonalities Identification workshop* in Greece was held in conjunction with the *Entrepreneurial Knowledge Sharing Across EU Ecosystems workshops* of WP1. This combined approach was strategically designed to avoid scheduling two separate events for the same target audience within a short time frame, thereby maximizing participation and resource efficiency.

The workshop was structured into distinct sessions to cover the different thematic areas of the work packages:

First Session: Cultivating Entrepreneurial Excellence in Greece:

Dedicated to WP1 content, this session focused on sharing best practices and strategies for fostering entrepreneurial excellence within Greece.

Second Session: Bridging Greek Innovation: Connecting Local Entrepreneurs to Global Opportunities:

Concentrating on WP2 content, this session aimed to bridge the gap between local innovation and global opportunities. It featured insights into international collaboration, market expansion strategies, and how Greek entrepreneurs can connect with global networks to scale their businesses.

ExcellEnt Project Presentation: This presentation was relevant to both work packages and provided an overview of the ExcellEnt project's achievements, next steps, and the role of the European Entrepreneurship Academy. It highlighted how the project supports both local and international entrepreneurial initiatives and fosters a cohesive innovation ecosystem.

By integrating both workshops into a single event, the organizers ensured that the participants could benefit from a comprehensive program without the need to attend multiple events. This



approach also facilitated a richer exchange of ideas and networking opportunities, as attendees were exposed to a broader range of topics and insights within a consolidated timeframe.

Quality and Relevance Assurance

To ensure quality and relevance, the workshop organizers adhered to the following processes:

Expert Speakers: Engaging knowledgeable and experienced speakers who could provide valuable insights and practical knowledge.

Clear Communication: Providing clear instructions and guidelines for participants before and during the event.

Interactive Formats: Utilizing interactive session formats to facilitate active engagement and meaningful exchanges among participants.

Feedback Mechanisms: Collecting and analyzing participant feedback to continuously improve the workshop content and delivery.

Bulgaria

The workshop on "Unlocking Entrepreneurial Potential in Bulgaria" used a **structured methodology to ensure quality participation, effective data collection, and engaging sessions**. Participants were selected based on their roles in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, including entrepreneurs, startup members, incubator representatives, HEI representatives, investors, and other stakeholders. The selection criteria focused on their experience and potential contributions to discussions, ensuring meaningful participation and valuable insights.

Data was collected through a pre-workshop survey as part of the registration process and a post-workshop survey. The pre-workshop survey gathered preliminary data on participants' backgrounds, expectations, and key challenges they faced in their professional roles. The follow-up survey collected feedback on the workshop's effectiveness and suggestions for future events.

The workshop agenda included various engaging session formats. It began with opening remarks and the presentation of the project ExcellEnt, followed by an introduction to the main deep tech challenges in entrepreneurship by Georgi Kadrev. The second part of the workshop featured

focused sessions on techniques for developing entrepreneurial skills and exploring European opportunities. These sessions included practical exercises on design thinking and idea generation led by Iva Krasteva, and a comprehensive guide on pitch preparation presented by Ivaylo Ivanov. A brief introduction to the European Entrepreneurship Academy portal and services by Denitsa Stoilova was also part of the agenda. The workshop concluded with a summarizing session by Georgi Kadrev, who highlighted key discussions and practical knowledge shared.

Quality control measures included the involvement of experienced presenters to keep sessions focused and relevant, interactive formats to maintain engagement, and post-workshop surveys for continuous improvement. This approach ensured a high-quality and relevant experience, fostering a collaborative environment that contributed to meaningful discussions, actionable insights, and the advancement of Bulgaria's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

France

The methodology used in the participant selection has been considered to identify relevant stakeholders, such as entrepreneurs, investors, policymakers, and ecosystem builders, to include representatives from various sectors (e.g., technology, finance, marketing) to ensure diverse perspectives. All kinds of actors who recognize the importance of collaborating with various actors in innovation ecosystems. Together, they tackle large-scale social and economic issues, fostering the development of new markets and improving business environments. **The data collection was based on the list of key French stakeholders, made by Creative Cluster and Booster Labs together.**

As Session Format, CREA used two types of session formats (*Keynote speeches and Networking session*) during the **French National Workshop** in order to keep the interest of the physical and virtual attendants to give floor to the instant *Questions & Answers* (Q&A) as well for free discussions.

Session:

Keynote speeches about a) **Building a connected ecosystem for startup success (based on the insights of the ExcellEnt project in WP2** b) **Presentation of the European Entrepreneurship Academy and EU Startups League** and c) **Collaboration among entrepreneurs in France-Germany.**



Networking Sessions: Allocate time for participants to connect informally. Networking fosters collaboration, knowledge exchange, and potential partnerships.

This kind of workshop with its interactive sessions where participants engage **in hands-on activities, problem-solving exercises, and discussions, could be more informative**, colorful and it is considered to have higher interest in **using case studies, role-playing, and brainstorming sessions**.

Ukraine

The chosen methodology allowed to ensure that the workshop provided a productive, insightful, and high-quality experience for all attendees, promoting effective collaboration and the exchange of innovative ideas.

Participant Selection:

- ★ Target Audience: The workshop targeted local entrepreneurs, business leaders, startup founders, policymakers, academics, and interested community members in Ukraine and Europe.
- ★ Registration Process: An online registration form was made available to ensure a diverse range of participants. This form collected information on participants' backgrounds, interests, and reasons for attending.

Selection Criteria:

- ★ Relevance to Innovation & Entrepreneurship: Preference was given to participants with demonstrated experience in entrepreneurship, innovation, or related fields.
- ★ Diversity: Efforts were made to ensure a diverse group of participants in terms of industry sectors, organizational roles, and geographic locations within Ukraine.
- ★ Engagement Potential: Registrants who demonstrated a clear interest in contributing to discussions and sharing insights were preferred.
- ★ Confirmation and Invitations: Selected participants received confirmation emails along with detailed instructions for joining the workshop.

Data Collection:

- ★ Pre-Workshop Registration: Participants were asked to complete a registration form prior to the workshop to gather data on their role, geography, and areas of interest.

- ★ Session Recordings: The session was recorded to capture discussions, presentations, and key insights.
- ★ Post-Workshop Feedback: Follow-up surveys were conducted to gather feedback on the workshop's effectiveness, and participant satisfaction..

Quality and Relevance Assurance:

- ★ Expert Speakers and Panelists: Ensuring the involvement of knowledgeable and experienced speakers and panelists to provide high-quality content and insights.
- ★ Moderation: Skilled moderator facilitated sessions to maintain focus, encourage participation, and manage time effectively.

Ireland:

The event was announced on the IDI LinkedIn account at regular intervals (every 2 days) and for a period of about three weeks before the event. Additionally, the experts responsible for the communication aspect of the project also announced the event in engaging ways through the project's website and LinkedIn account.

Participant Selection: Participant selection for the Unlocking Entrepreneurial Potential in Ireland - National Workshop was conducted through a multi-step process to ensure diversity and relevance. Initially, potential participants were identified based on their involvement in entrepreneurship, business leadership, policymaking, academia, or community engagement. Invitations were extended to individuals and organizations representing various sectors and geographical regions across Ireland. Also, efforts were made to include participants with diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences to enrich the discussions and insights shared during the workshop.

Data Collection: Data collection for the workshop involved a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to gather comprehensive insights into Ireland's entrepreneurial landscape. Prior to the workshop, relevant research reports, industry publications, and government documents were reviewed to identify key trends, challenges, and success factors in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Additionally, input was sought from experts and stakeholders through registrations to gather their level on the event topics. During the workshop, data collection primarily occurred through interactive sessions, panel discussions, and Q&A sessions involving

participants. Real-time feedback and insights were captured through audience engagement tools, and MS Teams features. Session moderator also encouraged participants to share their questions, experiences, challenges, and best practices.

Session Formats: The workshop employed a variety of session formats to facilitate engagement, knowledge sharing, and networking among participants. These included keynote presentations, panel discussions, breakout sessions, and interactive workshops. Keynote presentations provided overarching insights into trends and opportunities in European entrepreneurship, while panel discussions offered diverse perspectives from industry experts, policymakers, and entrepreneurs. Breakout sessions allowed participants to delve deeper into specific topics of interest, exchange ideas, and collaborate on potential solutions. Interactive workshops provided hands-on learning experiences and practical tools for participants to apply in their entrepreneurial endeavors.

Türkiye

To include diverse and fruitful actors from the ecosystem, we followed a methodology close to snowball sample selection technique. We first selected some keynote speakers and panel discussants, who have established and diverse roles in the entrepreneurship ecosystem in Türkiye, as well as wide networks. We then created **an event in LinkedIn from the official ExcellEnt project LinkedIn page, where we also tagged all the pre-selected participants**. We solicited them to share the event in their profiles, so that people in their networks could learn about the workshop and register. We also promoted the event from the **LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram accounts** of both Sabancı University and SuCool (Sabancı University's incubation center for startups) which are followed by several entrepreneurs and relevant actors in the field.

To collect data on participants and to ensure that they are in the scope of the targeted profile according to the event's purposes, we did not directly share the link for the event but shared a link for registration. We later skimmed through the application forms and sent the registrants the link for the event.

The workshops were run through the Zoom Webinar platform, so that the participants other than the pre-invited speakers and panelists could actively participate in discussions. **At the end of each of 5 sessions outlined in the agenda below**, we had question and answer sessions, where the participants could write questions or raise their hands to verbally join the conversations. In



addition, to capture wider insights from the view of participants, we **ran two online surveys during the sessions**. The first survey was run on Google Forms and was shared with a QR code during the first session. **The participants were asked to rate the importance of 10 challenges for successful technology entrepreneurship. The second survey was run through Zoom polls and was shared at the end of the third session.** With an open-ended question, the participants were asked to share their thoughts on the available support structures for entrepreneurs in Turkey, both in terms of quality and quantity, and make suggestions if they had any.



Workshop Information

Greece

Date and Location: Friday, May 17th, 2024, Online through MS Teams

Number of Participants: 55

Profile of Participants: All participants were from Greece, as the workshop was conducted in the Greek language. The participants hailed from a broad spectrum of professional backgrounds, reflecting the dynamic nature of the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in Greece.

Below is a detailed breakdown of their roles:

- ★ Entrepreneurs: 33.33%
- ★ Startups: 22.22%
- ★ Higher Education Institution (HEI) Representatives: 7.41%
- ★ Incubators: 7.41%
- ★ Other: 29.63%
- ★ Project Manager: 3.70%
- ★ Research Project Manager: 3.70%
- ★ Research & Innovation Project Manager: 3.70%
- ★ Researcher: 3.70%
- ★ NCP (National Contact Point): 3.70%
- ★ Technology Transfer Consultant: 3.70%
- ★ Financial and Investment Industry: 3.70%
- ★ Aspiring Entrepreneurs: 3.70%



Agenda

| Time | Topic | Speaker(s) |
|--|--|--|
| 15:00 - 15:10 | Opening Remarks | Andreas Almpanis, Moderator, Institute of Entrepreneurship Development |
| Cultivating Entrepreneurial Excellence in Greece | | |
| 15:10 - 15:20 | <i>Opening Keynote Speech:</i> Current landscape and future trends of Greek entrepreneurship | Irene Sgourou, Female Entrepreneurship Ambassador, Concept Founder W4AI-Hellas |
| 15:20 - 15:30 | The ExcellEnt Project Presentation | Zoi Moza, Project Manager, Institute of Entrepreneurship Development |
| 15:30 - 16:20 | Panel Discussion: Entrepreneurial Stories and Strategies | Theocharis Vlachopanagiotis, CEO of Rhoe Petros Soukoulis, Co-Founder of Seems Konstantinos Akrivos, Co-Founder & CTO of Oliveex Ioannis Tsakmakis, Co-founder & CEO of ENVRIO Theodora Tsokanari, Executive Manager of Thinc Thrace |
| 16:20 - 16:30 | Q&A Session | |
| Bridging Greek Innovation: Connecting Local Entrepreneurs to Global Opportunities | | |
| 16:30 - 16:40 | Cascade Funding Explained | Veronika Filippou, Innovation Community & Networking Manager, JOIST Innovation Park |
| 16:40 – 16:50 | From Design Thinking to Pitching Investors | Thomas Chalatsis, Project Manager, Institute of Entrepreneurship Development |
| 16:50 - 17:00 | <i>Closing Keynote Speech:</i> Moving towards mature | Theologos Prokopiou, CEO i4G SA |



| | | |
|---------------|------------------------------------|--|
| | innovation ecosystems in Europe | |
| 17:00 - 17:10 | Final Remarks and Workshop Closure | Andreas Almpanis, Moderator, Institute of Entrepreneurship Development |

Note: The *Commonalities Identification workshop* in Greece took place in conjunction with the *Entrepreneurial Knowledge Sharing Across EU Ecosystems workshops* of WP1. The first session, 'Cultivating Entrepreneurial Excellence in Greece', was dedicated to WP1 content, while the second session, 'Bridging Greek Innovation: Connecting Local Entrepreneurs to Global Opportunities', focused on WP2 content. The ExcellEnt Project Presentation applied to both work packages.

Speakers:

★ **Theologos Prokopiou** is the CEO of i4G SA. He is a Chemical Engineer with an MSc and PhD from the University of Notre Dame in the USA. From 1992 to 1998, he worked at EUROCONSULTANTS SA, a company listed on the Athens Stock Exchange, and its subsidiary GNOMON INFORMATICS SA. After successfully completing assignments for significant industrial units in Northern Greece, he returned in 2005 as the Director of i4G-Incubation for Growth, Greece's first private incubator for innovative technology companies. Currently, Dr. Prokopiou manages i4G PRO, a pre-incubation/co-working space, and participates as a Senior Consultant in various national and international projects focused on innovation management, SME support, and startup creation in the Balkans, Turkey, and GCC countries. Since late 2019, he has been a member of the final evaluation jury for the EIC Accelerator.

Theologos Prokopiou delivered the closing keynote speech titled **Moving Towards Mature Innovation Ecosystems in Europe**. In his presentation, he emphasized the importance of developing mature and robust innovation ecosystems across Europe. Dr. Prokopiou discussed key strategies and best practices for fostering innovation, including the establishment of supportive infrastructures such as incubators and accelerators, effective collaboration between academia and industry, and the role of government policies in promoting research and development.

He highlighted the success stories and challenges faced by European innovation ecosystems and shared insights from his extensive experience in managing i4G and participating in international projects. Dr. Prokopiou also underscored the significance of nurturing startups and SMEs through targeted support programs and the need for a cohesive European approach to innovation. His keynote provided a comprehensive roadmap for stakeholders to collaboratively advance the innovation landscape in Europe, ensuring sustainable growth and global competitiveness.

★ **Veronika Filippou** is the Innovation Community & Networking Manager at JOIST Innovation Park. She holds a BSc in Business Administration from the University of Macedonia and has specialized in Digital Marketing & Social Media from the Athens University of Economics and Business. Currently, she is pursuing her MSc in eBusiness & Digital Marketing at the International Hellenic University. Veronika's expertise includes entrepreneurship, communication, e-business, digital transformation, Google Analytics, and marketing. She is proficient in Management Information Systems, BPMN, Python for Business, and SQL, with experience in CRM & ERP Systems and PM² for Project Management. Veronika is multilingual, speaking English, Spanish, and French. Veronika Filippou's presentation, titled **Cascade Funding Explained**, provided an in-depth overview of cascade funding, also known as financial support to third parties (FSTP). She explained how this mechanism operates to distribute public funds aimed at supporting innovation and research projects, particularly benefiting startups and SMEs. Veronika highlighted the advantages of cascade funding, such as easier access to financial resources, reduced administrative burdens, and focused support for innovative endeavors. She illustrated these points with examples of successful cascade funding programs and offered practical advice on application and management strategies.

Additionally, Veronika introduced the EU Calls platform, a comprehensive tool where users can discover potential funding opportunities. She demonstrated how to navigate the platform, search for relevant calls, and utilize its features to maximize funding prospects. This segment of her presentation emphasized the importance of leveraging available resources to identify and secure financial support for entrepreneurial and innovation projects.

★ **Thomas Chalatsis** is a Project Manager at the Institute of Entrepreneurship Development.

He holds a Bachelor's degree in Public Administration from the Panteion University of Athens and a Master's degree in Project Management from the Technological Institute of Thessaly. Thomas has experience in the sales sector and has worked at the Development Agency of Karditsa, focusing on the technical support of public authorities and managing national and international projects. He is also a certified evaluator of investment plans under the Greek Investment Law.

Thomas Chalatsis presented on the topic **From Design Thinking to Pitching Investors**, where he covered the comprehensive journey of transforming innovative ideas into compelling investment pitches. He began by explaining the principles of design thinking, a user-centric approach to problem-solving that encourages creativity and iterative testing. Thomas outlined the key stages of design thinking, including empathizing with users, defining problems, ideating solutions, prototyping, and testing. Moving from the conceptual phase to practical application, Thomas discussed how to refine and develop these ideas into viable business models. He provided insights into crafting effective business plans and strategies that align with market needs and investor expectations. The final part of his presentation focused on pitching to investors, emphasizing the importance of clear communication, highlighting value propositions, and demonstrating market potential. Thomas shared best practices for creating impactful pitch decks and offered tips for delivering persuasive and confident presentations to potential investors.

★ **Zoi Moza** is a Project Manager at the Institute of Entrepreneurship Development (iED). She has actively been working on the ExcellEnt project since its beginning.

She holds a degree in Production and Management Engineering from the Technical University of Crete, along with two Master's degrees: one in Engineering Management from the Technical University of Crete and another in Production Management and Industrial Administration from the University of Thessaly. She has extensive experience in managing EU-funded projects, which has honed her project management and proposal writing skills.

Zoi Moza's presentation, titled **The ExcellEnt Project Presentation**, covered the key achievements and future directions of the ExcellEnt project. She provided a detailed overview of the project's accomplishments to date, highlighting significant milestones and successful outcomes. Zoi emphasized the project's impact on fostering entrepreneurship and innovation across Europe.

She also discussed the next steps for the ExcellEnt project, outlining strategic plans for continued growth and development. Zoi introduced the European Entrepreneurship Academy, explaining its role in supporting entrepreneurs through training, resources and networking opportunities. Her presentation underscored the importance of sustained support for entrepreneurial initiatives and the project's commitment to creating a robust ecosystem for European entrepreneurs.

★ **Andreas Almpanis** is the Projects & Proposals Manager at the Institute of Entrepreneurship Development (iED) and served as the **moderator** of the workshop. He holds a Master's degree in Social Exclusion and Minorities and a PhD in Cultural Sociology, focusing on Criminology and Youth Deviant Behaviour. Andreas has been involved in managing and submitting European and national projects since 2008, working with various non-profit organizations in Greece in fields such as culture, social inclusion, youth support, and non-formal education. Since 2015, he has been the Scientific Director of the Workshop of Life at the Centre for the Prevention of Addictions and Promotion of Psychosocial Health in Larissa, an initiative awarded the Pompidou Award in 2018.

Bulgaria

Date and Location: 28.05.2024, in a hybrid format. Physical location: GATE Institute building, bul. James Bourchier 5, 1164 Sofia; Online via Zoom platform: <https://edu-box.gate-ai.eu/login.aspx?meet=2954756772>

Number of Participants: In-person 46 people attended the workshop and signed the attendance sheet. On LinkedIn 124 attendees expressed their desire to participate in the workshop, out of which 83 people registered electronically.

Profile of Participants: The majority of the participants, 95.1%, were from Bulgaria, indicating a strong local representation. Participants hold diverse roles within their ecosystems, which include entrepreneurs, startup members, incubator representatives, HEI representatives, investors, and others. Specifically, 22% of the participants identified as entrepreneurs, 18.3% are from startups, 7.3% work in incubators, 6.1% are HEI representatives, 3.7% are investors, and 45.1% fall into the "Other" category. This distribution suggests a rich mix of roles that contribute to a dynamic and multifaceted ecosystem.



Delving into specific professional roles, the breakdown shows a wide range of expertise among the participants. There were academics, business development professionals, heads of departments, IT company SMEs, marketing experts, project managers, research group leads, representatives from the Sofia Investment Agency, TTO experts, and individuals who are part of the Sofia ecosystem. Each of these roles was represented by at least one participant, with research group leads being the most represented specific role, comprising 9.7% of the participants.

Overall, the participant group is predominantly Bulgarian as the workshop referred to the Bulgarian ecosystem and was held in Bulgarian. The participants represented a broad spectrum of roles, from entrepreneurs and startup members to incubators, HEI representatives, and investors. Within these broader categories, they hold various specific positions, indicating a diverse and multifaceted professional background. This diversity suggests that the workshop benefits from a rich mix of local expertise and international perspectives, enhancing the discussions, networking opportunities, and collaborative potential within the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem.

Agenda: The workshop was divided in two parts: the first part was related to our activities under Task 1.4 Revealing the Diversity of the EU Entrepreneurial Practices and the second part was related to our activities under Task 2.2 Commonalities identification workshops for cross fertilization within EU ecosystems, therefore the agenda below reflects only the second part of the workshop, but also includes the lecture of the keynote speaker Georgi Kadrev as he presented an overview of the main deep tech challenges in the entrepreneurship and provided the overall conclusion of the entire workshop. Therefore, the part of the agenda that reflects this part of the workshop linked to the current deliverable D6, is represented as follows:

Agenda:

9:30 – 9:45: Introduction and Presentation of Project ExcellEnt. Denitsa Stoilova, the project manager on behalf of GATE Institute.

10:05 – 10:20. Panel Discussion with 4 prominent speakers from the quadruple helix, which is considered more relevant for the deliverable D4, and therefore not the subject of this deliverable.



9:45 – 10:05. Introduction to Deep Tech Challenges in Entrepreneurship. Georgi Kadrev, a prominent figure in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, provided an insightful introduction on the main challenges faced by deep tech start-ups.

11:20 – 12:30: Part II. Techniques for Developing Entrepreneurial Skills and European Opportunities

11:20 – 11:50. Developing Design Thinking and Idea Generation. Iva Krasteva from GATE Institute. **11:50 – 12:20. Pitch Preparation.** Ivaylo Ivanov from Founders Institute.

12:20 – 12:25. Presentation of the European Entrepreneurship Academy Portal and Services. Denitsa Stoilova, GATE Institute.

12:25 – 12:30. Conclusion. Georgi Kadrev summarized the key discussions and practical knowledge shared throughout the workshop.

12:30 – 13:00: Networking and Informal Discussions

Speakers:

- ★ **Lora Pavlova Yosifova:** Head of Sector at the Ministry of Innovation and Growth of Bulgaria. She holds a BA in Political Sciences and an MA in Public Economy Development from the University of National and World Economy of Sofia. Since 2003, Lora has worked in research and innovation policy, holding various roles at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and the National Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology. She is responsible for programming research, innovation, and digitalization support instruments at the Ministry, significantly contributing to Bulgaria's innovation ecosystem.
- ★ **Georgi Kadrev:** Co-founder and CEO of Kelvin Health and Imagga. Georgi leads these companies in AI-driven image recognition and thermal image analysis for health screening. Imagga was recognized as a "Global Innovator in Image Analysis" by IDC in 2016. Georgi was named one of Forbes Bulgaria's "30 under 30" in 2013.



- ★ **Iva Krasteva:** Senior Researcher at GATE Institute, specializing in artificial intelligence and data analytics. Her work focuses on advanced research projects that drive innovation and technology development.
- ★ **Ivaylo Ivanov:** Director at Founder Institute Eastern Europe. Ivaylo has played a key role in bringing world-class entrepreneurship from Silicon Valley to Eastern Europe, launching numerous startups through structured accelerator programs. He is also involved in various fintech initiatives and serves on the board of the Bulgarian Fintech Association.
- ★ **Denitsa Stoilova:** Business Development and EU Project Manager at GATE Institute. With over 16 years of experience, Denitsa has expertise in EU project management, environmental sustainability, and digital transformation. She has worked at the Directorate General "Research and Innovation" of the European Commission and has been involved in various national and international projects focusing on innovation and ICT.

France

Date and Location: Date: 14th of May, from 9.00 till 11.30 am. Location: Pôle Léonard de Vinci.12 avenue Léonard de Vinci, 92400 Courbevoie, Paris.

Number of Participants: 82 registered people on LU.MA (registration page is added in Annex). 63 attendees (25 physically, 38 online) .

Profile of Participants:

The Creative Cluster & Booster Labs' team has invited the leaders as active contributors to the workshop and the typical actors as audiences in the French Innovation Ecosystem. Through a detailed List of invitees: these people represented public and private institutions, or international organisations (like EIT Digital), research institutions (universities from Paris), business support organisations (accelerators, incubators, chamber of commerce in France-Germany), civil society organizations, self-entrepreneurs (women-led business leaders), and start-up companies, and of course the co-founders or CEOs of various private tech companies, driven primarily by profit considerations, private investors (business angels, representatives from VC funds) . The



composition of the participants more precisely : SME (NFTUniverzum, EXOMIND), social platform (Bloomers), Incubator (De Vinci, Blue Factory of ESCP, Creative Cluster), self-entrepreneur , Embassy (Austria), large entreprise (Leadership Growth Holding), Private Investor (Soverency Group), Business School (ESCP, EMLV), Business consulting firm (JF NAUD), research institute (IFT), VET training (MATRICE).

The female-male ratio of the participants: 48% /52%.

Agenda :

Building a connected ecosystem for startup success (keynote speakers)

10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.: **Key success factors in entrepreneurship – France vs EU** (Paul Stefanut, Booster Labs)

11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.: **Presentation of the European Entrepreneurship Academy and EU Startups League** (Tunde Kallai, Alain Simac Creative Cluster)

11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.: **Discussion with participants – needs and challenges of startups**

Conclusions and next steps

12:00 – 12:20: **Christophe Arend, Special Advisor for Franco-German Relations**

12:20 – 12:30: **Next steps with ExcellEnt** (Yann Gozlan & Paul Stefanut)

Speakers:

★ **Tunde Kallai** - EU senior expert . She got her MA in social sciences at ELTE/Budapest, postgraduate studies at Corvinus University/Budapest and Certificate as EU Advisor of Startups from University of Wolverhampton (UK). She has been EU project evaluator/writer and coordinator since 2003. She has been the founding member of ENoLL, and 20 living labs with diff profiles in 8 countries (2005-2023). She is project partner with Creative Cluster.

★ **Paul Stefanut** - He is a project partner in the ExcellEnt project through the Booster Labs from France. With a technical background (an Engineering Diploma in Electronics and Telecommunications and a PhD in Microtechnologies), during the last 10 years, he have used his

scientific and technological expertise, as well as the methodologies discovered during the preparation of his PhD, to support companies in leveraging innovation to accelerate their businesses in multiple ways.

★ **Christophe Arend** - Special Advisor for Franco-German Relations - He was elected President of the France-Germany friendship group at the National Assembly, he is also vice-president of the Franco-German working group on cooperation between assemblies, by creating a France-Germany Chamber of Commerce.

★ **Alain Simac** - is national director of GTECH, the school of gaming, virtual and AI, since January 2022. With more than 20 years of experience in the field of IT and education. His mission at GTECH is to train future digital professionals, capable of designing, developing and managing video games, virtual and augmented reality, and artificial intelligence projects.

★ **Yann Gozlan** - is the co-founder and CEO of Creative Valley (2011) - one of the main players in innovation, thanks to its network of centers based in the Paris region. Its Creative Cluster has developed partnerships in higher education. Passionate about the pedagogical approach, he is involved in the development of bridges between education and industrial needs, He is a graduate of the University of Paris Sorbonne, Paris Dauphine and the Fudan Daxue University (Shanghai).

Ukraine:

Date and Location: June 7, 2024 / Kyiv, Ukraine and online

Number of Participants: 79 registrations and 24 attendees

Profile of Participants: The workshop gathered Ukrainian and foreign entrepreneurs, business leaders, startup founders, policymakers, academics, and interested community members. 67,1% of participants were from Ukraine, 25,3% from France, others represented Greece, Ireland, Turkey and other countries.



Country

79 responses

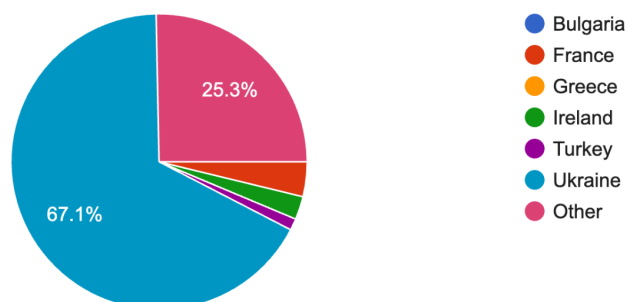


Fig 1: Demography of attendees of the workshop.

39,2% of the participants are entrepreneurs, 19% – startup founders, 2,5% are investors, others are from incubators and high education institutions.

Role

79 responses

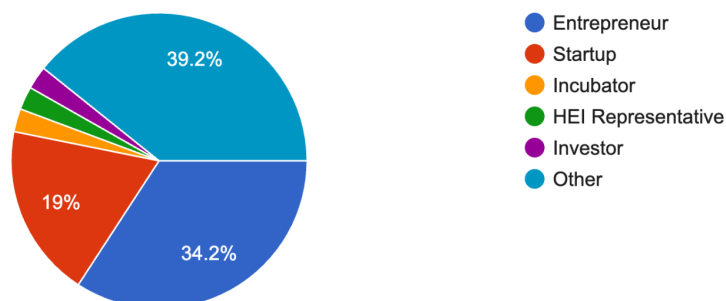


Fig 2: Roles of attendees of the workshop.

Agenda:

15:00-15:10 – Opening Remarks and brief introduction by the workshop organizer, outlining the workshop's objectives and agenda. Moderator: Nataly Veremeeva, Director at TechUkraine, Kyiv, Ukraine.

15:10-15:30 – ExcellEnt Project Overview and Presentation of the European Entrepreneurship Academy. Keynote Speaker: EU Project Manager of the project Coordinator of Excellent Project Consortium, iED - Institute of Entrepreneurship Development (Greece).

15:30-16:30 – Panel Discussion with Ukrainian Business Stakeholders. This session featured a panel of successful Ukrainian entrepreneurs and experts who shared their practical experiences, and highlighted new opportunities for startups and business growth in Ukraine. The panel was focused on the topic: "What are the Most Powerful Tools for Supporting Entrepreneurs in Ukraine?" Speakers: Dmytro Kuzmenko, CEO of Ukrainian Venture Capital and Private Equity Association (UVCA); Yana Paladiieva, Head of Projects and Programs at Ukrainian Startup Fund; Jane Klepa, Director of Partnerships and Innovation at SET University; Olena Shershun, Associate Partner at Civitta.

16:30-17:00 – Q&A and Closing Session.

Speakers:

★ **Zoi Moza** – EU Project Manager of the Project Coordinator of Excellent Project Consortium, iED - Institute of Entrepreneurship Development (Greece). Institute of Entrepreneurship Development (iED) is an NGO founded in 2005 in Larissa, Greece. It is a certified leading Center of Excellence in European entrepreneurship aiming to empower organizations and entrepreneurs to achieve their innovative goals by providing expert guidance, securing European funding, and fostering a dynamic ecosystem for impactful growth. As the coordinator of a designated European Digital Innovation Hub, iED has given shape to the innovation landscape in Europe. It has a rich history of participation in more than 200 National and European projects under numerous financial frameworks (Horizon, Erasmus+, AMIF, REC, COSME, INTERREG, ENI CBC MED, Life, etc.) and a powerful network of partners spanning three continents.

★ **Dmytro Kuzmenko** – CEO at Ukrainian Venture Capital and Private Equity Association (UVCA). Before UVCA Dmytro had over 10 years of experience in the investment and finance sphere, including retail lending, investment banking (mortgage assets), venture investments, and startup management and acceleration. He has been involved in Ukrainian VC\PE ecosystems

for over a decade, thus gaining deep knowledge of the domestic tech market. Now he is leading a very known and powerful association of VCs in Ukraine and organizes a lot of events, including leading the organization of Ukrainian Pavilion at Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas and leads projects, supporting startups seeking investment.

- ★ **Yana Paladiieva** – Head of Projects and Programs, Ukrainian Startup Fund. As Head of Projects and Programs at the Innovation Development Fund (Ukrainian Startup Fund), Yana Paladiieva leads initiatives to elevate Ukrainian startups onto the global stage, showcasing their innovation and potential. Yana has been the key person in Ukrainian startup fund in securing presence for Ukrainian startups at premier international events, including WebSummit in Lisbon, Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, EXPO 2020 in Dubai, SXSW in Texas, Startup Grind Global in Silicon Valley, Viva Technology in Paris, Collision in Toronto, and numerous others. Additionally, Yana oversees the Seeds of Bravery project, a groundbreaking initiative backed by a '20 million allocation from the European Innovation Council to fortify the Ukrainian tech ecosystem.
- ★ **Jane Klepa** – Director of Partnerships and Innovation at SET University. Before SET University Jane was Executive Director at 1991 Open Data Incubator. She is WTECH ambassador and social investor and currently she is working in a team of visioners and practitioners, developing the ambitious idea - create a Ukrainian version of Stanford.
- ★ **Olena Shershun** – Associate Partner at Civitta. Olena is an expert with a proven track record of successfully developing innovation ecosystems and attracting funding for innovative deep-tech startups and SMEs. Olena has helped numerous European companies in the fields of green technology, medical technology, assistive technologies, and energy technology to secure funding worth more than EUR 10 million.

Ireland:

Date and Location: May 28th, 2024 – Online (MS Teams)

Number of Participants: 59 **Number of Registrations:** 75

Profile of Participants: Entrepreneurs in various stages of their entrepreneurial journeys have shown interest in the event.

Time: 2 hours 34 minutes 4 seconds



Format: Virtual

- Role of the Participants

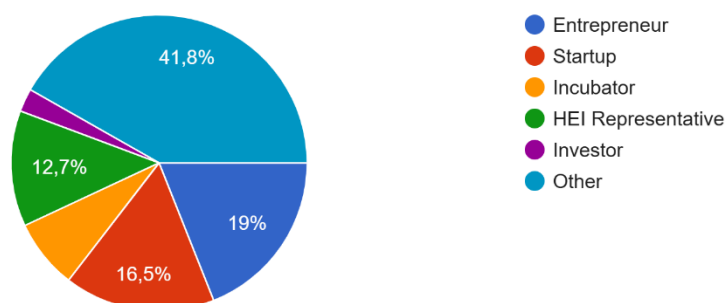


Fig 3: Type of stakeholders

| Agenda: Time CET | Session | Speaker | Moderator |
|---------------------|---|--|---|
| 13:55-14:00 | Registration | All | Odysseas Spyroglou, Senior Researcher and R&I Lead International Development Ireland |
| 14:00-14:30 | A SWOT analysis on the 6 European entrepreneurial ecosystems | Tunde Kalai, Excellent Partner CREA | |
| 14:30-15:00 | A deeper look into the Irish entrepreneurial ecosystem | Adamantios Koumpis, Senior Researcher at ExcellEnt Project | |
| 15:00-15:30 | The evolution of the Irish ecosystem over time and future development | Gerry O'Brien, Director, International Development Ireland | |
| 15:30-16:00 | Horizon Europe Pillar III (EIE, I3) and opportunities for Innovation Intermediaries | Adamantios Koumpis, Senior Researcher at ExcellEnt Project | |
| 16:00-16:30 | Q&A | All participants | |

Speakers: The synopsis of the speakers at the event can be found below.

- ★ **Ms Tunde Kallai:** Tunde Kallai is researcher, project evaluator and senior expert in the field of smart /intelligent cities, villages, industries and communities through the open innovation ecosystems. She holds a Masters Diploma in Social Sciences as a high school teacher and cultural manager from Budapest/Hungary. She got a certificate from University of Wolverhampton (UK) in 2015 as European Advisor of Startups. She also became an entrepreneur and company owner in 2008 in Malta & Switzerland as well, until 2020 (COVID period). Moreover, she has been an external project evaluator of the European Commission since 2003 (in FP6, FP7, H2020 and Horizon Europe. ENI CBC Med, PRIMA etc.). She is a founding member of the European Network of Living Labs (2005), she developed and deployed 20 living labs of different profiles, all certified by ENoLL since 2006 in 3 continents. She has worked intensively in the relation of EU and Africa (North and Sub-Saharan Africa) as mentor of SMEs, teacher of academicians and early-stage researchers since 2004 or project writer and project Partner in many EU funded projects. She has participated in more than 100 research and innovation projects funded mainly by the European Commission. Her publications are accessible on Researchgate and Academia.edu. She works in French and English. She is an independent consultant of Creative Cluster, which is based in Paris, since 1st of October 2023.
- ★ **Mr Gerry O'Brien:** Gerry O'Brien, is an economist, Graduate of University of Limerick and Trinity College Dublin. Gerry worked for the Irish Government Agency, Enterprise Ireland for over 13 years where he was involved in designing start-up supports, working with stakeholders in the entrepreneurship ecosystem around Ireland and with the Enterprise Ireland HPSU team which directly invests in Ireland's technology start-ups. Today Gerry is the director of Capability Building and Knowledge Transfer at International Development Ireland where he works with international government clients to strengthen their entrepreneurship, SME and innovation ecosystems. We have invited Gerry to join us today to share his observations on the ExcellEnt initiative, observations on how the Irish ecosystem has evolved over time and key trends that are guiding the further development of the Irish model.
- ★ **Dr. Adamantios Koumpis** has been together with Odysseas Spyroglou the designers of the ExcellEnt project together with Dr Paul Stefanut of partner organization BOOSTER-LABS. He has worked with the IDI team in the past also for other projects related to technology transfer and capacities building, and his research interests are in the area of innovation ecosystems, with a

specialization in the areas of medtech and healthtech innovation and entrepreneurship. He has taught for many semesters and in various settings (technology, business, science) courses on entrepreneurship. He is Research and Teaching Officer at the University Hospital Cologne in Germany. We have invited Adamantios because he had taken part in the conduct of the interviews with Irish stakeholders and had been also involved in the conduct of the SWOT analysis for Ireland.

Turkiye:

Date and Location: The workshop was held on 28.05.2024, between 15:30-17:30 PM, utilizing the zoom webinar platform.

Number of Participants: 79

Profile of Participants: The participants of the workshop had varied roles in the Turkish entrepreneurship ecosystem, thus could contribute to the discussions both with their knowledge, connections, and collaboration opportunities and could themselves benefit with the insights gained. See the summary for the participants' roles in the figure below.

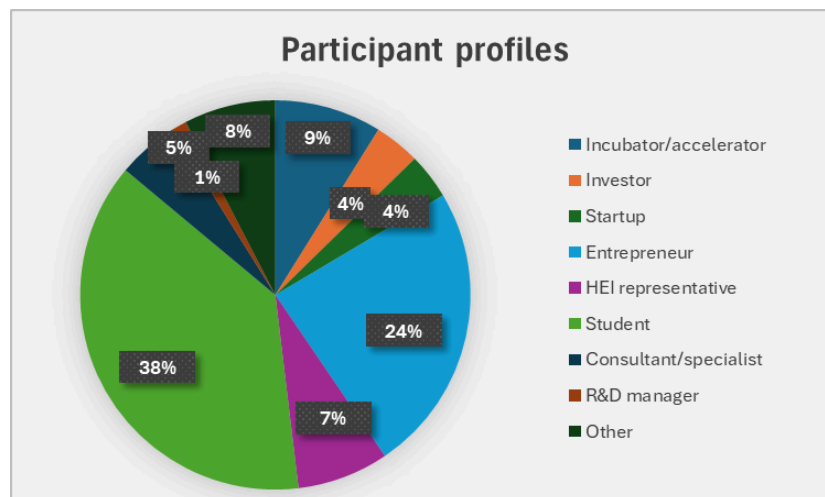


Fig 4: Participant profiles

Agenda:

15:35 – 15:45: Opening and ExcellEnt project presentation

- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Berna Beyhan, Sabancı University

Introduction by the workshop organizer outlining the workshop's objectives and agenda. A concise presentation on the ExcellEnt project detailing its goals, achievements, and impact.

15:45 – 16:30: Challenges in tech-entrepreneurship

- Metin Salt – Founder and Board Member, Salt Fikir Sanat
- Ergi Şener – Serial Entrepreneur and instructor at Sabancı University

In this session, notable speakers from the Turkish entrepreneurship ecosystem discuss the main challenges in entrepreneurship in technology intensive domains through the lens of their own experiences and observations. The session also includes an online survey and is followed by a Q&A session where participants could share insights on the topic.

16:30 – 17:00 Funding and support opportunities for entrepreneurs

- Fatil Al – Project Management Director, ODTÜ Teknokent
- Naci Kahraman – Startup programs leader, Sabancı University SuCool

This part of the workshop focuses on acknowledging the participants on funding and other support opportunities for entrepreneurs at different phases of their journey. The two speakers with vast amounts of experience in this field share context specific information for the Turkish ecosystem and explain the services offered by their organizations. As a local contact for the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs (EYE) program, Mr. Al also informed the participants of the program, feeding the impact goals of the ExcellEnt project. The session also includes a Zoom survey where participants give feedback on the quality and quantity of the available support for entrepreneurship in Türkiye.

17:00 – 17:10: Entrepreneurship Academy and pitch competition presentation

- Dr. Türkan Yosun – Instructor and project specialist, Sabancı University

The European Entrepreneurship Academy is presented to the participants acknowledging them of the support mechanisms provided in the platform. In addition, The European Entrepreneurship Olympics Competition, which will be organized by the ExcellEnt project in near future has been announced. The competition process, application procedures and the support that will be provided is explained.



17:10 – 17:25: Preparing for a perfect pitch

> Ozan Sönmez, Co-founder, YellowX OU, Zillion Pitches & SAGE HQ

This session hosts an established figure in the Turkish entrepreneurship ecosystem for giving advice to existing and potential entrepreneurs on how to make a good pitch, based on his local and global experiences as incubation manager, program manager, mentor, jury member, and entrepreneur.

17:25 – 17:30: Closing remarks

Speakers:

- ★ **Metin Salt** holds BS and MS degrees in electrical engineering and computer science from Middle East Technical University. After working in several positions at Vestek Electronics R&D Corp, including the role of General Manager, he served as the General Manager of Vestel Ventures between 2015-2023. In 2020, he also founded his Venture Capital named Salt Fikir Sanat.
- ★ **Ergi Şener** holds a BS in microelectronics engineering, an MS in management, and an MS in telecommunications engineering from Sabancı University. He has 20+ years of experience in digital transformation, product management, sales and marketing, business development and venture building in multinational companies and start-ups. He also teaches courses on technology awareness & trends and Industry 4.0 and digital transformation at Sabancı and Bahçeşehir Universities.
- ★ **Ozan Sönmez** holds a BA in Economics from Middle East Technical University, an MBA from Bilgi University, and an MS in Environmental Social Sciences from Boğaziçi University. Following his experience in consultancy companies and HEIs, he delved into the world of entrepreneurship where he led numerous programs and incubators both in Turkey and abroad. He is also the co-founder of three ventures offering education and pitch practice services to entrepreneurs as well consultancy to several system actors in entrepreneurship.
- ★ **Fatih Al** holds BS and MS degrees in Materials Science and Engineering from Gebze Technical University, and an MBA from Istanbul Bilgi University. He has 10+ years of experience in technology transfer offices and technoparks of universities where he has led and coordinated several local and international projects on technology transfer, entrepreneurship, and venture capital.



- ★ **Naci Kahraman** holds a BS in Manufacturing Systems and Industrial Engineering from Sabancı University and an MS in Engineering Management from Galatasaray University. He has 10+ years of experience in running and managing entrepreneurship programs at Sabancı University and also offers services on entrepreneurship support through his consultancy company.
- ★ **Assoc Prof. Berna Beyhan** holds a BA in Management from Boğaziçi University, an MA in Science, Technology, and Society from Istanbul Technical University, and a PhD in Science and Technology Policy Studies from Middle East Technical University. She is currently the Vice Dean of Sabancı Business School and a board member of Sabancı University Innovent A.Ş., where she also supports entrepreneurship and technology transfer policies and projects in addition to her academic studies. She is the director of the ExcellEnt project at the Turkish partner of the project, Sabancı University.
- ★ **Dr. Türkan Yosun** holds a BA in Management from Bilkent University and a PhD in Management from Sabancı University. She worked in the banking and auto industries before her PhD studies and later focused mainly on the theory and practice of entrepreneurship. She taught courses on Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship, and Technology Management at Sabancı University, engaging in several entrepreneurship programs. She works as a senior project researcher for the ExcellEnt project and is also an agri-tourism entrepreneur running an ecological vineyard.

Findings

The next section performs the main findings of the 6 national workshops.

The common components are the ways on how to realize growth and innovation in different business cultures, to ensure that the national ecosystems must function well for their entrepreneurs. **Such an “entrepreneurial ecosystem” or an „entrepreneurial sub-ecosystem“ is an interactive network of multi-actors and stakeholders**, who influence each other , and the chances of survival of venture creators and the new (startups) or self-entrepreneurs & digital nomads. The challenge is to let all these elements complement each other in such a way that together, they provide more value. That is what characterizes a **well-functioning ecosystem**.

In addition, **value creation from entrepreneurship involves:**

- **the competencies of the owner-manager**
- **networks**
- **formal support organizations**
- **human capital (talent)**
- **culture**
- **new knowledge**
- **financing.**

The challenge is to let all these elements complement each other in such a way that together, they provide more value. In essence, that’s what denotes a well-functioning European Entrepreneurial Ecosystems.

Greece

The workshop facilitated in-depth discussions on fostering entrepreneurial excellence and connecting local entrepreneurs to global opportunities. Participants highlighted several challenges, including difficulties in securing funding, complex regulatory environments, limited access to international markets, and skill gaps in digital transformation and advanced technologies. Proposed solutions included enhancing funding mechanisms through cascade funding and the EU Calls platform, simplifying regulations for startups and SMEs, encouraging

international partnerships to expand market access, and implementing training programs to bridge skill gaps. Best practices identified were utilizing design thinking for user-centric innovation, developing effective pitching techniques, creating supportive networks through incubators and accelerators, and leveraging digital tools like CRM and ERP systems for efficient business management. These discussions emphasized the need for a collaborative approach to address challenges and seize opportunities, aiming to enhance the innovation landscape and ensure sustainable growth and global competitiveness for Greek entrepreneurs.

Bulgaria

Short overview of the main deep tech challenges in the Entrepreneurship

Georgi Kadrev's presentation addressed the main deep tech challenges in entrepreneurship, offering strategies for success and integration into a collaborative ecosystem. He began by emphasizing the importance of identifying and defining broad, systemic problems. Using examples from his work at Kelvin Health, Kadrev highlighted the need for innovative approaches to tackle these challenges effectively. He stressed the significance of adapting existing technologies to solve common issues, demonstrating how leveraging current technological advancements can lead to impactful solutions, particularly in healthcare. Kadrev advocated for bringing together experts from various fields to generate new ideas, emphasizing that cross-sector collaboration is crucial for addressing complex deep tech challenges and driving innovation.

Networking emerged as another essential element. Kadrev underscored the importance of building strong connections, noting that effective networking opens doors to new opportunities, partnerships, and resources vital for deep tech ventures. He also outlined key steps for product and service development, including the creation of minimum viable products (MVPs) to test and validate concepts, the iterative refinement of products based on user feedback, and collaboration with technical experts to ensure robust and high-quality development.

Understanding market demands was highlighted as crucial for success. Kadrev emphasized the importance of thorough market research and early customer engagement to ensure products align with market needs. His insights underscored the importance of problem framing, solution exploration, collaboration, networking, and iterative development. By focusing on these areas,



deep tech entrepreneurs can navigate challenges and build successful, innovative companies within a vibrant, collaborative ecosystem.

Design Thinking Session

The Design Thinking session, presented by Iva Krasteva, focused on fostering an innovative mindset among participants. The session emphasized **the importance of adopting a beginner's mindset, encouraging openness, curiosity, and a willingness to fail and learn from the process.** Iva Krasteva highlighted that trusting the process and maintaining confidence in it are crucial for achieving successful outcomes. Participants engaged in practical exercises such as empathy mapping to better understand user needs, and rapid prototyping to quickly test ideas and gather early feedback. These activities were designed to help participants embrace **iterative development**, where continuous learning and adaptation are key. One of the main findings of the session was the significant role of **empathy** in the design thinking process. **Understanding the users' perspectives and needs** is vital for developing effective solutions. Additionally, the session underscored the importance of creating **a safe environment where team members feel comfortable experimenting and failing.** This approach not only fosters creativity but also drives innovation.

Iva Krasteva also stressed **the need for iterative improvement.** Participants were encouraged to **test their hypotheses and adjust based on real-world feedback** continually. This iterative cycle of **observation, hypothesis, experiment, and data collection** ensures that solutions are well-grounded and effectively address the identified problems.

Pitching Session

The Pitching session, led by Ivaylo Ivanov from the Founders Institute, was designed to provide participants with the essential skills needed to effectively present their business ideas to potential investors. Ivaylo began by emphasizing the importance of establishing credibility at the outset, advising participants to showcase their credentials and highlight significant milestones to set a strong foundation for their pitches.

Ivaylo outlined the critical components of a successful pitch, starting with **a clear articulation of the problem the start-up aims to solve.** This problem should be specific, relatable, and immediately evident to the audience. He then explained the importance of concisely describing

how the product or service addresses this problem, highlighting **unique selling points or competitive advantages**. **Demonstrating progress** was another key focus, with participants learning to showcase traction and milestones, such as **user metrics, funding achievements, and partnerships**, to build credibility and show momentum.

Understanding the investor mindset was crucial. Ivaylo explained that investors typically follow an internal checklist when evaluating pitches, looking for clarity, logical flow, and potential for return on investment. He advised structuring the pitch to align with this checklist, making it easier for investors to follow and understand. Additionally, Ivaylo stressed the necessity of making a specific ask from the audience, whether it's for funding, partnerships, or other support. This request should be clear, specific, and well-justified.

Common mistakes were highlighted, **such as lacking structure, failing to make a clear ask, overcomplicating the problem, ignoring progress, and presenting an unrealistic market size without justification**. By identifying these common errors, participants could better avoid them in their pitches.

The session was highly interactive, with participants practicing their pitches in front of peers and receiving constructive feedback. Ivaylo shared real-world examples of successful pitches, dissecting why they worked and providing practical insights that participants could apply. This hands-on approach helped reinforce theoretical knowledge and allowed participants to refine their pitches in real-time.

Tailoring the pitch to different audiences was another important lesson. Ivaylo advised that when pitching to investors, the focus should be on potential returns and market opportunities, whereas pitches to potential customers should emphasize the benefits and usability of the product or service. The session concluded with an emphasis on **iterative improvement**. Participants were encouraged to continually refine their pitches based on feedback and to practice extensively to build confidence and effectiveness. By the end of the session, participants had a clearer understanding of what makes a pitch compelling and were better equipped to present their ideas in a way that captures interest and drives investment. Overall, the Pitching session provided a robust framework for developing and delivering successful pitches, combining expert insights with practical, hands-on experience.

European Entrepreneurship Academy Session

The session on the European Entrepreneurship Academy, presented by Denitsa Stoilova, offered a comprehensive overview of resources and strategies to support entrepreneurship across Europe. Participants were informed about the upcoming ExcellEnt international conference that was going to take place online, which will feature participants and speakers from various European ecosystems, including Bulgaria, Turkey, Ukraine, Ireland, Greece, and France. This event aims to bring together diverse entrepreneurial communities to share insights and foster collaboration.

The academy provides **a wealth of resources** designed to help entrepreneurs at various stages of their business journey. These include online communities for networking and support, market matchmaking tools to connect entrepreneurs with markets, financial support options, and educational tools to facilitate business start-up and growth.

A significant highlight of the session was the introduction of **the "Olympics Competition," an entrepreneurship contest** designed to inspire a competitive spirit. This multi-round competition involves online submissions where participants present their ideas, followed by mentoring sessions and pitching opportunities in the semi-finals and finals, which will be held in Athens or Paris. Winners of the competition will receive innovation vouchers, visual identity packages, and opportunities to meet with investors.

Participants were encouraged to register for the academy to take full advantage of its resources and support. The session underscored the importance of international collaboration, continuous learning, and leveraging available resources to achieve success in entrepreneurship.

Conclusion by Georgi Kadrev

In the concluding session, Georgi Kadrev summarized the key insights and takeaways from the workshop. He emphasized the critical role of entrepreneurship in driving innovation and economic growth. Georgi **highlighted the interconnected nature of scientific research and business applications, noting that successful entrepreneurship often requires bridging the gap between these two domains.** Georgi underscored the **importance of aligning scientific goals with business objectives**, stressing that this alignment is crucial for transforming innovative ideas into viable products and services. He pointed out **the necessity of clear communication and mutual understanding between academia and industry** to foster effective collaborations. Another key



point in Georgi's conclusion was **the significance of intellectual property (IP) management**. He advised start-ups **to establish clear IP agreements early in the development process to prevent future conflicts** and ensure that both academic institutions and businesses benefit fairly from innovations. Georgi also reiterated **the importance of iterative validation and continuous learning**. He encouraged participants **to adopt a scientific approach to problem-solving within the business context, which includes observation, hypothesis testing, and data gathering**. This approach ensures that solutions are grounded in reality and effectively meet market needs. Finally, Georgi emphasized **the value of networking and forming strategic partnerships early on**. He noted that such collaborations can provide valuable insights, resources, and support, which are essential for the growth and success of start-ups. He concluded by **encouraging participants to leverage the resources and connections** they had gained from the workshop to further their entrepreneurial journeys.

Key messages from the workshop

Challenges encountered. The workshop participants identified several key challenges during the discussions. One major challenge was **the difficulty in transitioning from academic research to practical business applications**. Many participants from academia struggled with defining business problems as opposed to scientific problems. Another challenge was **the issue of intellectual property rights**, especially when universities demanded significant ownership stakes in start-ups without contributing to their development post-conception. The complexity of aligning scientific goals with business objectives also posed a significant hurdle, as did **the need for effective validation of business ideas through real-world testing and feedback**.

Solutions proposed. To address these challenges, several solutions were proposed. First, **fostering better communication and understanding between the academic and business communities** was emphasized, particularly by **aligning terminologies and expectations**. **Establishing clear IP agreements early on in the development process** was recommended to prevent future conflicts. The importance of **iterative validation** was also highlighted, suggesting that start-ups should continuously **test their hypotheses and adjust based on feedback from real customers**. Utilizing a **scientific approach** to problem-solving within the business context, including **observation, hypothesis testing, and data gathering**, was advised to ensure that solutions are grounded in reality and effectively meet market needs.



Best practices identified. Several best practices emerged from the workshop. Emphasizing the need for a **structured approach to pitching**, participants were advised to **clearly outline the problem, solution, progress, and specific requests** when presenting to investors. **Understanding the investor's perspective and aligning the pitch to their expectations** was deemed crucial. Additionally, the workshop underscored the importance of **demonstrating traction and progress**, as these factors significantly enhance credibility with potential investors. **Networking and forming strategic partnerships early on** were also identified as critical steps for start-ups to gain valuable insights and support.

France

Observations from the first year on the ideas on entrepreneurship

The CREA presented its observations from the first year's update of ExcellEnt project, focusing on the methodological approach deployed in the project. Paul Stefanut (from BOOSTER LABS) explained that every partner and their teams conducted interviews with successful entrepreneurs to understand their motivation, obstacles faced and advice, identifying exceptional cases of entrepreneurs who have successfully shortened the growth curve. Additionally, interviews with key stakeholders from six ecosystems were conducted to understand their perception of the theoretical framework and the 15 key skills described therein. Paul highlighted the results of its Excellence Project, which identified key skills and characteristics important for entrepreneurs. Ultimately, he also announced a selection process for immersive ecosystem tours to explore these concepts.

The European Academy of Entrepreneurship

Tunde presented the **European Entrepreneurship Academy and its start-up competition**, aimed at supporting and strengthening entrepreneurs in six countries. The discussion then focused on challenges and considerations for international expansion, including access to capital and markets. She highlighted the importance of community and the evolution of the venture capital industry. The importance of European funding for start-ups was highlighted with Tunde, discussing several initiatives and new EU grants launched in 2024.

Entrepreneurship, Franco-German ties and the future



The last part of the discussion centered around entrepreneurship, with participants emphasizing the importance of being open to opportunities and viewing it as a journey rather than a decision. Dr. Christophe Arend, dentist, researcher and former member of the National Assembly, shared his interest in **strengthening Franco-German ties and the need for a paradigm shift in various areas, including healthcare, business and education**. He also highlighted **the importance of cross-cultural understanding, breaking segmentation and the role of data management and technology in Franco-German relations**.

Conclusion

The workshop has ended with a conclusion and step ahead to focus on future issues like technology, sustainability and competences, and the need to support the digital skills at the companies and the necessity of stronger cross-border public-private-people partnerships.

Ukraine

The workshop emphasized the potential for innovation and entrepreneurship in Ukraine, while also recognizing the need for collaboration within the broader European entrepreneurial ecosystem. By addressing the identified challenges and implementing the proposed strategies and best practices, Ukraine can significantly enhance its entrepreneurial landscape and contribute to a dynamic and resilient European market. During the keynote speech, a panel discussion revealed challenges and opportunities for the future of Ukrainian entrepreneurship.

Challenges Encountered:

- ★ Access to Funding: Entrepreneurs face difficulties in securing venture capital and private equity. The financing ecosystem is still developing, and many startups struggle with finding initial funding.
- ★ Regulatory Hurdles: Complex and evolving regulations can impede business operations and growth. Entrepreneurs often need to navigate bureaucratic processes that can delay or complicate their activities.
- ★ Market Penetration: Gaining market traction and expanding customer base remains a challenge, particularly for tech startups that require significant user adoption to scale.
- ★ Skills Gap: There is a noticeable gap in entrepreneurial skills, particularly in areas such as business management, sales and marketing.

- ★ War in Ukraine: The war in Ukraine has led to increased regulatory complexity and uncertainty, the ongoing conflict deter foreign investors, further limiting access to funding for startups.

Solutions Proposed:

- ★ Enhanced Access to Capital: Establishing more venture capital funds and creating better access to private equity to provide startups with the financial support they need to grow.
- ★ Regulatory Reforms: Simplifying regulatory processes and providing clear guidelines to help entrepreneurs navigate the legal landscape more effectively.
- ★ Market Development Programs: Initiatives to support market penetration, including mentorship programs, accelerator programs, and partnerships with established businesses.
- ★ Skill Development: Creating more educational programs and workshops focused on entrepreneurial skills, leveraging resources from institutions like SET University and other partners.

Best Practices Identified:

- ★ Networking and Mentorship: Building strong networks and mentorship programs to provide guidance and support for new entrepreneurs.
- ★ Public-Private Partnerships: Leveraging collaborations between the government of Ukraine and European countries and the private sector to create a supportive environment for startups and companies.
- ★ Innovation Hubs: Supporting innovation hubs and incubators that provide resources, space, and community for startups to thrive across Europe.
- ★ Community Engagement: Boosting 360 degrees communication for exchanging information about growth opportunities, and encouraging business community involvement in supporting startups through events, funding opportunities, and public awareness campaigns.

Additional Insights:

- ★ Collaborative Ecosystem: The importance of strengthening a collaborative ecosystem where startups, investors, educators, and policymakers work together to support entrepreneurship.
- ★ Adaptability and Resilience: Entrepreneurs need to be adaptable and resilient, especially in a rapidly changing market environment and in conditions of the war. Learning from failures and being able to pivot is crucial.
- ★ Leveraging Technology: Utilizing cutting-edge technologies and digital platforms to reach broader markets, streamline operations, and innovate business models.
- ★ Sustainable Growth: Focusing on sustainable business practices that not only drive growth but also contribute positively to the community and environment.

Key Findings from the Speakers:

Zoi Moza - EU Project Manager of the project Coordinator of Excellent Project Consortium, iED - Institute of Entrepreneurship Development (Greece):

- ★ Focus on Entrepreneurship Ecosystem & Education: The European Entrepreneurship Academy aims to provide comprehensive education, communication platform and ecosystem support for budding entrepreneurs across Europe.
- ★ Actionable Resources: The presentation highlighted the availability of resources and programs through the European Entrepreneurship Academy to empower entrepreneurs and drive innovation.
- ★ Collaborative Efforts: The ExcellEnt Project emphasizes collaboration among European partners to foster entrepreneurship.

Dmytro Kuzmenko - CEO of Ukrainian Venture Capital and Private Equity Association (UVCA):

- ★ Challenges in Accessing Funding: Kuzmenko likely emphasized the difficulties Ukrainian entrepreneurs face in securing venture capital and private equity due to various economic and geopolitical factors.
- ★ Advocacy for Supportive Policies: He discussed the importance of advocating for policies that encourage investment and support entrepreneurship in Ukraine.
- ★ Opportunities for Collaboration: Kuzmenko also highlighted opportunities for collaboration between Ukrainian startups and international investors or organizations, cooperation on introducing Ukrainian companies and technologies at international conferences and events, like Consumer Electronic Show in Las Vegas, USA.

Yana Paladiieva - Head of Projects and Programs at Ukrainian Startup Fund:

- ★ Support for Ukrainian Startups: Paladiieva highlighted the role of the Ukrainian Startup Fund in providing financial support and resources to startups in Ukraine.
- ★ Promotion of Innovation: She shared numerous initiatives aimed at promoting innovation and fostering a thriving startup ecosystem in Ukraine.
- ★ Opportunities for Growth: Paladiieva shared insights into the opportunities available for Ukrainian startups to scale and expand their operations domestically and internationally, like the current programme Seed of Bravery providing acceleration and funding opportunities.

Jane Klepa - Director of Partnerships and Innovation at SET University:

- ★ Academic Support for Entrepreneurs: Klepa discussed SET University's role in providing educational resources, research, and support for aspiring entrepreneurs.
- ★ Integration of Innovation: She emphasized the importance of integrating innovation and entrepreneurship into academic curricula to prepare students for the modern workforce.
- ★ Partnership Opportunities: Klepa also highlighted opportunities for collaboration between SET University and the broader entrepreneurial community to drive innovation and economic growth.

Olena Shershun - Associate Partner at Civitta:

- ★ Consulting and Advisory Services: Shershun discussed Civitta's role in providing consulting and advisory services to support entrepreneurship and business growth in Ukraine.
- ★ Market Insights: She shared insights into market trends, opportunities, and challenges for entrepreneurs in Ukraine based on Civitta's research and expertise. She shared information about the programme Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs, offering exchange programs for entrepreneurs.
- ★ Strategies for Success: Shershun provided strategies and recommendations for entrepreneurs to navigate the Ukrainian market successfully and overcome current obstacles.

Ireland

This workshop served as a valuable platform for knowledge exchange, networking, and collaboration, ultimately contributing to the enhancement of Ireland's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Below we present brief findings and conclusions resulting from the workshop.

- ★ **Current Trends and Opportunities:** The workshop provided an overview of current trends and opportunities in European entrepreneurship, with a specific focus on the Irish context. This included discussions on emerging sectors, innovation hubs, and investment opportunities for start-ups.
- ★ **Identifying Needs and Challenges:** Through interactive sessions and panel discussions, the workshop aimed to identify the needs and challenges faced by entrepreneurs in Ireland. This enabled stakeholders to develop targeted strategies and support mechanisms to address key issues and foster entrepreneurial growth.
- ★ **Best Practices and Success Stories:** Participants had the opportunity to learn from best practices and success stories from across the EU. Case studies and testimonials highlighted innovative approaches, successful business models, and lessons learned, providing valuable insights for aspiring entrepreneurs and policymakers alike.

Ireland is not a trivial case for entrepreneurship as the country itself has identified itself for several years (actually: decades) with a **welcoming and supportive spirit for entrepreneurship**. As we were able to share information with the participants, this is not only the result of a successful branding or marketing strategy but reflects the facilities that the country has built and offers to entrepreneurs in all stages of their entrepreneurial journeys.

As we were able to identify during the previous period and especially **during the conduct of the SWOT analysis for the country**, what is of utmost importance in the context of the ExcellEnt project are *not* the incentives of e.g. multinational corporations such as Intel or Google, but **the collective understanding in the Irish society of entrepreneurship as an individual person's or a group's creative capacity to identify an opportunity and pursue it in order to produce new value or economic success**.

This is something that was also confirmed during the workshop both during the presentation but also in the discussion and the follow-up threads we cared to keep. And it is this immaterial aspect

that places the Irish entrepreneurial skill in a privileged position with respect to other countries in the EU and it is for this reason that Ireland shall continue to keep a unique position within the European entrepreneurship scene.

Similar was the case of considering and examining the different types of stakeholders in Ireland; to this, it was confirmed that it follows the same logic and structure as for the other countries participating in the project. This means that there are stakeholders to be identified from the scene of Entrepreneurs and Startups; Incubators and Accelerators; Academic and Research Institutions; Investors, Sectoral federations and industry and business associations; as well as Government Agencies and public institutions.

What was given special attention and may be seen as an important differentiation factor regarding the role of government agencies in Ireland relates to the willingness and the substantially high accumulated know-how of Enterprise Ireland to walk the extra mile and find solutions that will help entrepreneurs and make things work for them and their entrepreneurial visions and goals.

The same applies also to the case of academic and research institutions that were presented in the workshop, which understand and implement their role to support the development of scientists and researchers and where the collaboration between different stakeholders, which varies in nature and organisation, runs also smooth and efficiently with a high degree of competence for solving problems on an ad hoc basis and with no need to navigate in the waters of administrative procedures trying to follow time-taking, meticulous or painstaking routes that may not meet any outcomes.

The workshop confirmed another **finding of the analysis** done before regarding the existence of an 'organic development path', where one may see **the role of incubators and accelerators being in a similar harmony with the other stakeholders**, thus being able to offer added value to their basic services.

In the workshop the role of Enterprise Ireland (EI) as the official state agency responsible for supporting the promotion of entrepreneurship has been underlined especially in regard to its role in providing funding and supports not only for companies ranging from entrepreneurs with business propositions for a high potential start-up through to large companies expanding their activities, improving efficiency and growing international sales, but also for what one might

consider as cases of scientific or research entrepreneurship e.g. for the case of university-based researchers to assist in the development, protection and transfer of technologies into industry via licensing or spin-out companies. An important instrument to this offered by Enterprise Ireland is the support to High Potential Start-Up (HPSU) companies, these are considered as start-up businesses with the potential to develop an innovative product or service for sale on international markets and the potential to create 10 jobs and €1 million in sales within 3 years of starting up.

To this, what was identified as of utmost importance and relevance to the Excellent project is that entrepreneurs should free themselves from the obsession of unicorns – same like in the real life, there is need for diversification and pluralism, so future entrepreneurs should feel comfortable with their ventures and enterprises to be or look like donkeys or camels or zebras, so start-ups that will not give up easily and exhibit all the perseverance, determination and hard work, as donkeys do, or zebras that can combine blacks and whites and possess enormous self-confidence, or camels that will be resilient to the difficulties of the times.

Turkiye

The Workshop emphasized the importance of the entrepreneurship ecosystem in Turkiye where it is still at a crawling stage when compared to Silicon Valley. We should look at the ecosystem from a larger window; not only the entrepreneurs and investors, but also the universities, academics, research institutions, industry institutions, angel merchants (as we can call them) where the startup can try their project or use it as a reference. Infrastructure suppose, providing R&D labs for the use of entrepreneurs, human resources become much important when realizing the idea. We tend to think that capital is the most important, however wrong investors cause many high potential ideas to fail. **The ecosystem actors should match the entrepreneurs with investors who are capable of taking the venture to higher levels and do not have any hidden agenda.** Entrepreneurs themselves should also learn to select the right investors. Successful entrepreneurs in weak country ecosystems should develop their own ecosystems by connecting with the right people. They should also seek to connect to international investors. **Investments in Turkiye are small in size** and there is a hegemony of corporate investors- there is much bureaucracy in the process and the investment amounts are sometimes exaggerated in the media, which makes entrepreneurs falsely suppose that they can easily find big capital. In addition, some big international VCs invest but then forget about the entrepreneurs; they do not ask how things are



going, what the team needs other than money- at this stage **the incubators can play a more important role in assessing the needs of the venture and linking them to varied resources.**

Technology advancements are getting faster and faster. Tech entrepreneurs need to focus on some main expertise areas and catch up with the developments. However, being able to assess how to turn these into good products and form good business models and sales capabilities are at times more important than your technology. Wise collaborations, wise work share, and common vision brings success to the teams. Fulfilling real needs is more important than doing something first.

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs (EYE) is a relatively little known but a very practical and beneficial mechanism for supporting entrepreneurs. The “young” in its name does not refer to the age of the entrepreneur but the age of the idea; your venture should not be more than 2 years old, and even the idea stage is accepted. Local contact points in the EU supported countries, including METU in Türkiye, play a crucial role in connecting the entrepreneurs to local hosts in other countries where they can stay and learn the dynamics of the business and analyze the potential market for their venture idea as well as making connections.

Tubitak BIGG is a very effective support mechanism for Turkish entrepreneurs. There are 35 intermediary organizations across the country, who make the initial evaluations of the applications and help the entrepreneurs before the final jury stage. Last year, TUBITAK shifted to buying %3 shares of the venture, rather than the donation model. This year, they promised to fasten the evaluation process if the venture can find the same amount of investment from other sources and 3 universities including Sabancı committed to making this investment. Another innovative funding approach on Sabancı side has been matching the BIGG finalists to whom they intermediate in the process with the J-Start investment fund and other funds managed by the Sabancı Group. This will help close the gap in Türkiye in reaching high investment amounts, providing up to Usd 800K capital at the early phases.

Although there were several answers in the survey stating that funding for entrepreneurs is limited in Türkiye, the speakers emphasized that the number of accelerators, incubators, and financial support mechanisms has increased tremendously in the past years. They state that the entrepreneurs, if they firmly believe in their idea, should not hesitate from knocking the doors of

supporting institutions. In addition, **entrepreneurs should try to enlarge their networks, strengthen their teams by adding co-founders with complementary skills, and also take more risk**; e.g. they should be able to quit their professional and academic careers and only focus on their venture's activities. Speakers also state that potential entrepreneurs should not expect to find investment for their idea because they make some presentations; **the vital part is developing a product or service idea with a high reason-to-buy for the customers**. Another suggestion by the key actors has been *simplifying the tax procedures for entrepreneurs as well as eliminating the taxes which the entrepreneurs need to pay even before they make any sales*.



Workshop Evaluation

Greece

The workshop was very successful, receiving positive feedback from the participants, who praised its importance and impact on the business ecosystem in Greece. Participants felt that the content was both informative and engaging, with a strong emphasis on practical applications. The event facilitated valuable networking opportunities and fostered a collaborative environment. The overall organization and execution were commended, with the workshop exceeding expectations and highly recommended to colleagues.

Prior to the Event

Prior to the event, participants appreciated the effective advertising and clear communication. The registration process was straightforward, and the event agenda was made available in advance, allowing attendees to prepare adequately. Instructions for accessing the virtual event platform and required technology were clear and easy to follow. Pre-event networking opportunities were also well-received, helping attendees to connect with each other before the workshop began.

Table 1 and Figure 1 summarize the average scores given by participants regarding various aspects of the event's preparation and communication before the workshop started. The high scores indicate effective advertising, a straightforward registration process, clear communication, and helpful pre-event instructions, contributing to a positive initial experience for attendees.

Table 1: Pre-Event Evaluation Scores

| Statement | Average Score |
|--|---------------|
| The event was advertised effectively prior to the start date. | 4,67 |
| The registration process was straightforward and easy to complete. | 4,87 |
| The event agenda was clearly outlined and available in advance. | 4,80 |
| The event communication prior to the event was adequate. | 4,80 |

| Statement | Average Score |
|--|---------------|
| The instructions for accessing the virtual event platform were clear and easy to follow. | 4,87 |
| The pre-event instructions provided for any required technology were clear and easy to follow. | 4,80 |
| The pre-event networking opportunities provided were helpful in connecting with other attendees. | 4,73 |

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 stands for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree, please select how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

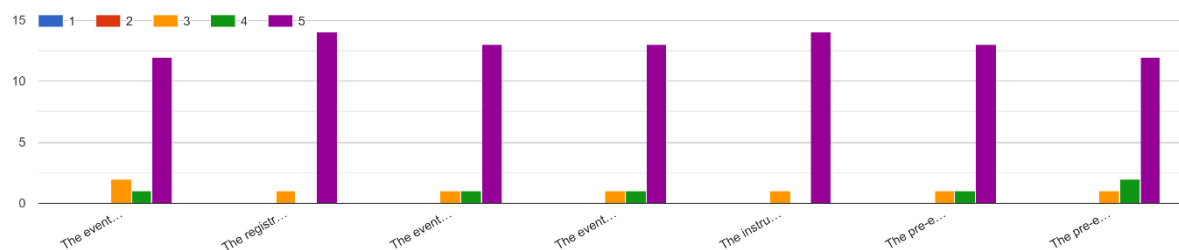


Fig 5: Pre-Event Evaluation Scores

During the event

During the event, participants felt that the speakers were knowledgeable and engaging, contributing to a well-organised and smoothly run programme. The technology worked seamlessly, ensuring a hassle-free experience. The content was relevant and provided a good balance between theory and practical application, allowing for active participation and engagement. The workshop was described as one of the best online events on business opportunities, with excellent speakers and a variety of topics covered. The positive atmosphere and insightful discussions left a lasting impression on the participants.

Table 2 and Figure 2 present the average scores given by participants on various aspects of the workshop during the event. The high scores reflect the participants' satisfaction with the engaging and knowledgeable speakers, the well-organized schedule, the smooth functioning of event technology, and the relevance and informativeness of the content. Additionally, the balance of

theory and practical application, opportunities for active participation, and overall expectations were highly rated, with participants recommending the event to their colleagues.

Table 2: During-Event Evaluation Scores

| Statement | Average Score |
|---|---------------|
| The speakers/presenters were engaging and knowledgeable. | 4,87 |
| The event schedule was well-organized and easy to follow. | 4,87 |
| The event technology (e.g. audiovisual equipment, internet connection) worked smoothly. | 4,87 |
| The event content was relevant and informative. | 4,87 |
| The event offered a good balance of theory and practical application. | 4,60 |
| The event allowed for active participation and engagement. | 4,67 |
| The event exceeded my expectations. | 4,80 |
| I would recommend this event to my colleagues. | 4,80 |

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 stands for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree, please select how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

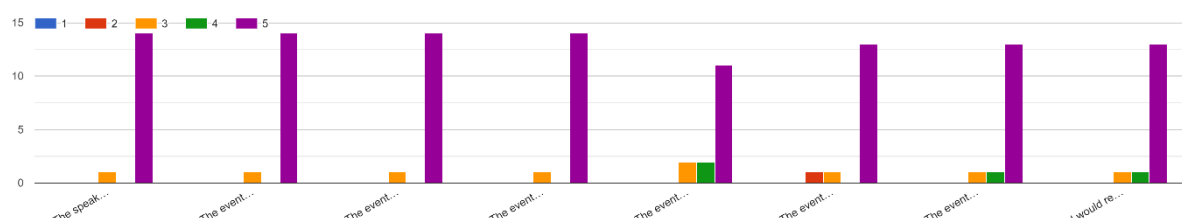


Fig 6: During-Event Evaluation Scores

Comments Received

Participants provided detailed feedback on various aspects of the event, reflecting their overall satisfaction and highlighting specific elements they appreciated. Comments highlighted the importance and impact of the project, the quality of the speakers and facilitators, and the smooth running of the event. Participants expressed their appreciation for the diverse backgrounds of the professionals involved, the wide range of topics covered and the interesting discussions. While

most feedback was positive, some participants suggested minor improvements, such as extending the duration of the event and addressing delays. In summary, the comments highlighted the success of the event in promoting knowledge exchange and networking in the Greek business ecosystem.

- *Comments on the evaluation statements during the event (if any):*

“The work being done on this project is important. It appears to be a great source of knowledge to everyone involved with entrepreneurship in the Greek ecosystem. Also, future plans look amazing with massive impact.”

“Excellent speakers and facilitator.”

“It was one of the best events I have attended online on the topic of business opportunities in Greece and abroad.”

- *Comments on ‘What did you like the most about the event?’*

“The speakers το ότι υπήρχαν έμπειροι επαγγελματίες και ομιλητές από διαφορετικά πόστα (the fact that there were experienced professionals and speakers from different backgrounds).”

“The fact that it rolled out so smoothly impressed me a lot. I became aware of the European Entrepreneurship Academy.”

“Speaker views and discussions covered an extended range of topics, providing answers and supporting arguments!”

“The moderator and speakers had great insights to share.”

“The variety of topics.”

“The warm and friendly atmosphere that developed between the speakers.”

“The mix of speakers was stellar!”

- *Comments on ‘What did you like the least about the event?’*

“Everything was great.”

“nothing”

“There is nothing to comment in this section. I enjoyed the event.”

“Limited time.”

“n/a”

“It could have been longer because there was a lot of interest in what was presented. But it was not a particular problem, I am just mentioning it because I was asked to make a negative comment.”

“There were significant delays.”

- *Comments on ‘Is there any feedback you would like to share about specific speakers or sessions?’*

“Η διαχείριση των πανελ από τον Ανδρέα ήταν πολύ καλή (The panel handling by Andreas was very good).”

“It was a great experience overall and all speakers had something meaningful to add regarding the topic.”

“Thank you all!”

Bulgaria

The workshop received generally positive feedback from the six participants who completed the evaluation forms. The overall satisfaction was high, with most participants rating the workshop at 5 out of 5 points, indicating strong agreement with the positive aspects of the event.

Key Highlights:

- ★ **Speakers and Content:** Participants appreciated the interesting speakers, the diversity of viewpoints presented, and the informal and spontaneous nature of the sessions.
- ★ The presentations of Ivailo Ivanov (the pitching session) and Georgi Kadrev were highlighted as particularly enjoyable, with Georgi Kadrev’s presentation noted as extremely motivating.

Areas of Concern:

- ★ **Technical Issues:** There were some minor technical problems, specifically with microphones. This led to slightly lower scores in the technical aspects, with three participants giving a score of 4 and one giving a score of 2.
- ★ **Event Notification:** One participant registered on the spot but received notice only 1-2 days before the event, thus did not rate the “Before the event” section.

Suggestions for Improvement:

- ★ **Balance Between Theory and Practical Application:** One participant suggested improving the balance between theoretical content and practical application, giving a score of 4 instead of the highest score.
- ★ **Participant Engagement:** Another participant suggested increasing active participation and engagement, also scoring this aspect a 4 out of 5.

The workshop was well-received overall, with high satisfaction regarding content and speaker quality. However, addressing technical issues, improving the balance between theoretical and practical content, and enhancing participant engagement could further improve future workshops.

France

The responses came back by the online survey on Google Form. The French questions /answers are translated into English in the report.

Question 1: How would you assess your satisfaction with the event?

Comment évalueriez-vous votre satisfaction vis-à-vis de l'événement ?

5 réponses

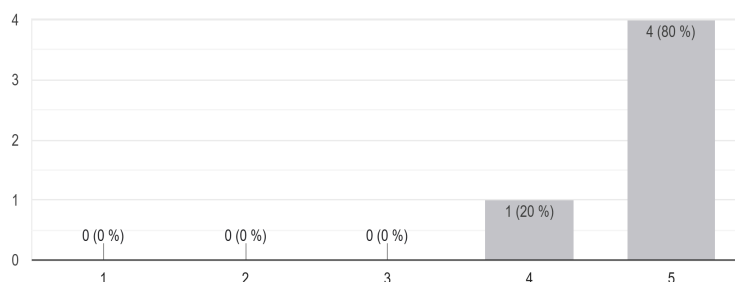


Fig 7 : Overall satisfaction rate

Question 2. To what extent did you find the content of the relevant and useful workshop for your goals?

Dans quelle mesure avez-vous trouvé le contenu de l'atelier pertinent et utile pour vos objectifs ?

5 réponses

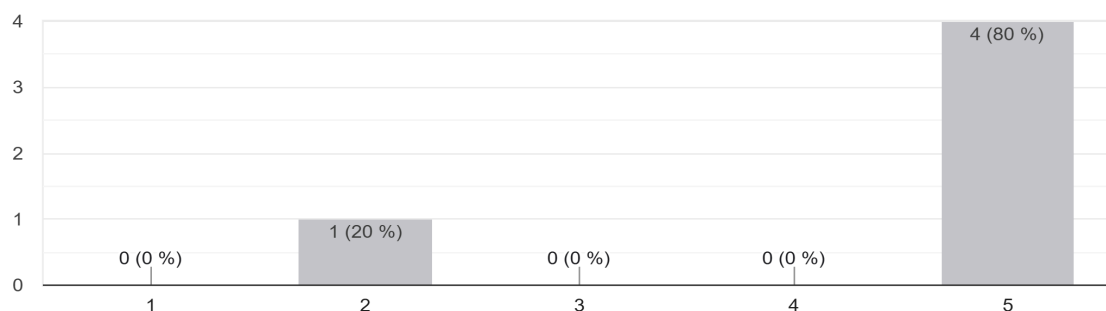


Fig 8: The relevance of the workshop

Question 3. What are the main lessons or insights that you have withdrawn from this workshop?

A: "Keep an open mind, continue to undertake to make things happen"

A: "Cooperation and collaboration between SSO of different countries."



Question 4. How do you assess the logistics management of the event for each of the following aspects ?

Comment évaluez-vous la gestion logistique de l'événement pour chacun des aspects suivants :

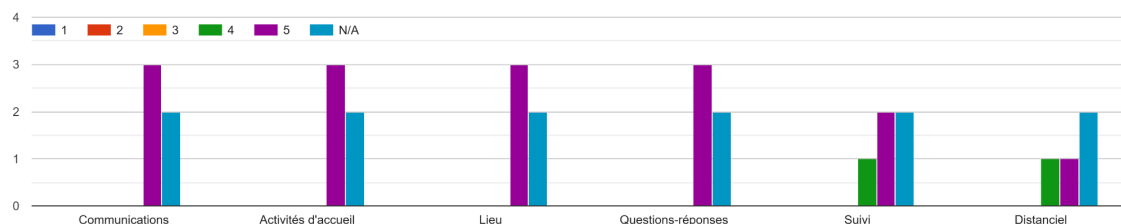


Fig 9: The rate of logistics :: Communication, Activities, Place, Questions & Answers, Follow-up, Distance

Question 5. To what extent did you find the relevant sessions for your professional needs?

Dans quelle mesure avez-vous trouvé les sessions pertinentes pour vos besoins professionnels ?

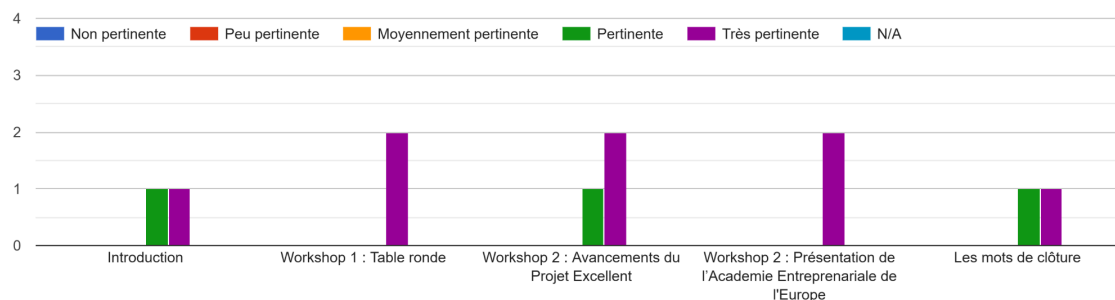


Fig 10: Session relevance: Introduction, Workshop 1 (round table), Workshop 2 (introduction of ExcellEnt project, European Entrepreneurship Academy, Closing words

Question 6. To what extent are you satisfied with the content of the sessions?

Dans quelle mesure êtes-vous satisfait du contenu des sessions ?

5 réponses

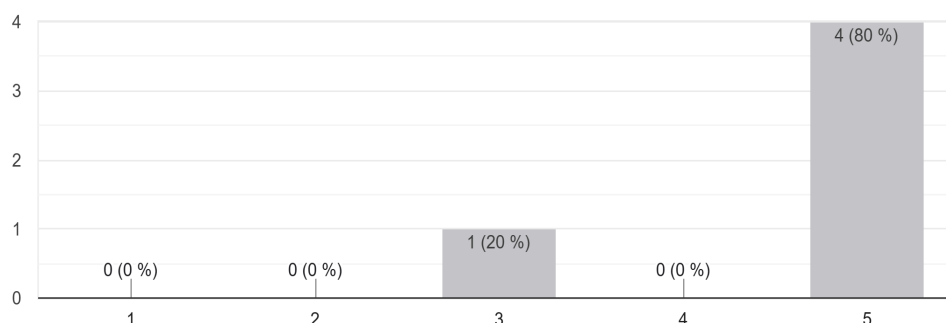


Fig 11: Overall satisfaction about the event

Question 7. What are your comments on sessions or Agenda? (free answers)

A: "I think it would be appropriate to integrate North Africa - possibly in your exchanges and experiences."

Ukraine

Participants provided valuable feedback through workshop evaluation forms, highlighting various aspects of the event, including format, content, and delivery.

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 stands for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree, please select how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

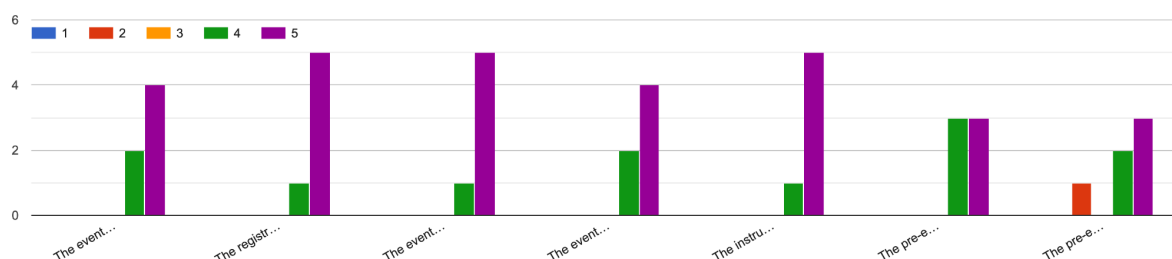


Fig 12 . Evaluation of the pre-event activities from on a scale 1 to 5.

The pre-event activities on promotion of the event, communication on agenda and topics were evaluated on average from 5 to 4. The negative feedback was on the pre-event networking opportunities, one of the attendees stated that it was not helpful.

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 stands for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree, please select how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

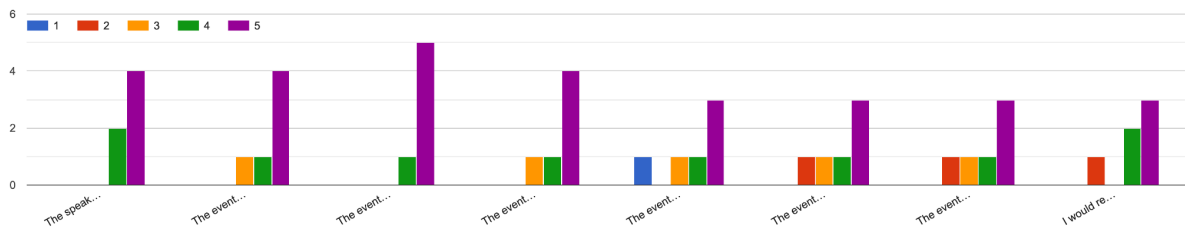


Fig 13 . Evaluation of activities during the event from on a scale 1 to 5.

Format:

Positive Response: The participants found the online format very convenient for them, allowing them to connect from other countries and learn more about innovation potential and business opportunities in Ukraine.

Suggestions for Improvement: Some participants suggested incorporating more hands-on activities or case studies to further reinforce key concepts.

Content & Delivery:

Positive Response: Many participants appreciated the workshop's topic and the level of invited speakers. They stated that the workshop provided actionable insights that they could apply to their entrepreneurial endeavors. The depth of discussion on topics such as access to funding, regulatory hurdles, and skills development was appreciated by participants. The expertise and credibility of the speakers, including panelists and keynote presenters, were widely acknowledged and praised.

Negative Feedback: Some participants lacked more practical information about doing business in Europe and worldwide.

Conclusion:

Overall, the workshop received positive feedback from participants, indicating its effectiveness in providing valuable insights and fostering meaningful discussions on Ukrainian innovative potential and entrepreneurship. While there were areas identified for improvement, the workshop succeeded in engaging participants and equipping them with actionable strategies for business development and expansion.

Ireland:

We applied the same set of evaluation questionnaires of the project's other National events.

Q1: Prior to the event - On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

Answered: 15 | Skipped: 0

Q1 Prior to the event - On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 stands for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree, please select how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

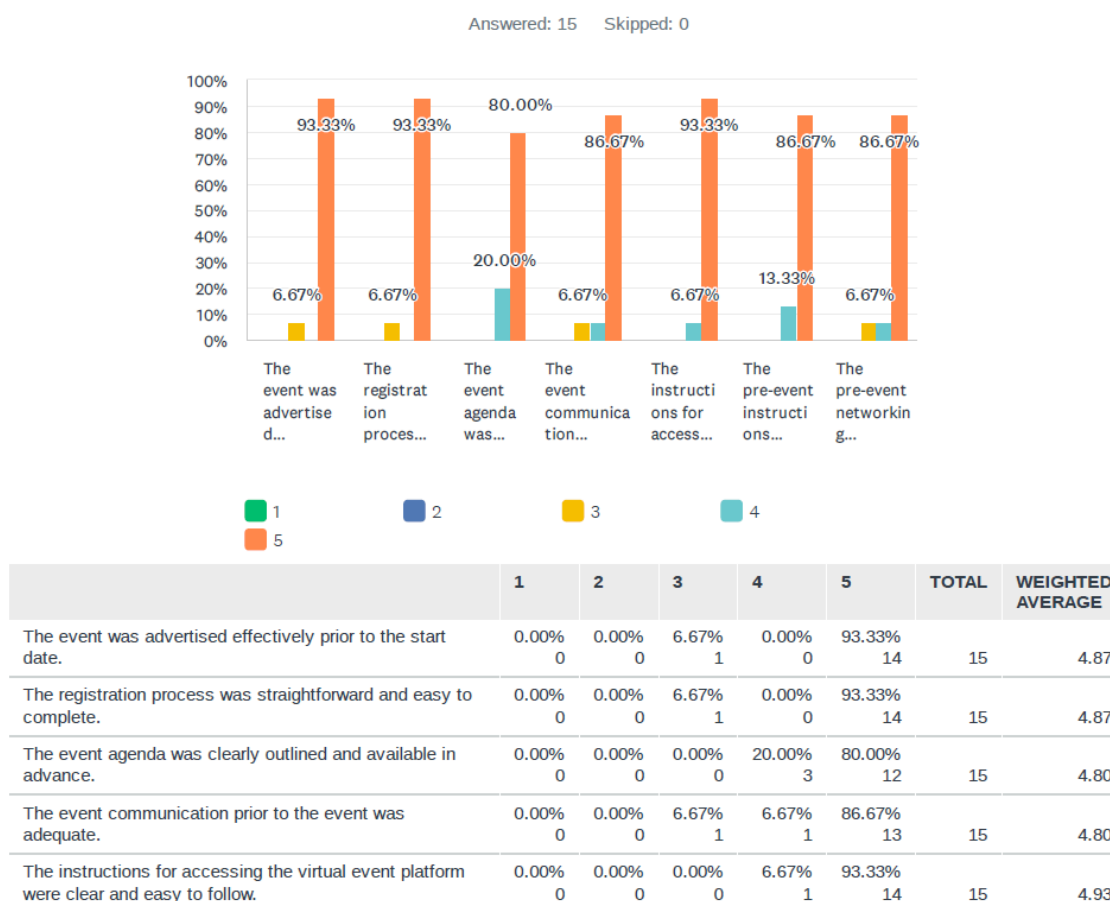


Fig 14.. The responses indicate a high level of satisfaction with the pre-event activities and preparations.

Key points include:

★ Event Advertisement:



Funded by
the European Union

ExcellEnt: Excellency in Entrepreneurship: Expanding European entrepreneurship by boosting youth (self) employability and promoting a sharing resources culture

- 93.33% of participants strongly agreed that the event was effectively advertised.
- The high level of agreement suggests that the marketing and outreach efforts successfully reached and engaged the target audience.

★ **Registration Process:**

- 93.33% of participants found the registration process straightforward and easy.
- This implies that the registration system was user-friendly and well-designed, contributing to a positive initial interaction with the event.

★ **Event Agenda and Communication:**

- The clarity and availability of the event agenda were rated highly (80% strongly agreed), along with the adequacy of pre-event communication (86.67% strongly agreed).
- These results indicate effective planning and communication strategies that helped attendees prepare for the event.

★ **Instructions for Access and Technology:**

- Clear instructions for accessing the virtual platform (93.33% strongly agreed) and pre-event technology requirements (86.67% strongly agreed) were appreciated.
- This highlights the importance of providing detailed and understandable guidelines to ensure smooth participation in virtual events.

★ **Pre-Event Networking:**

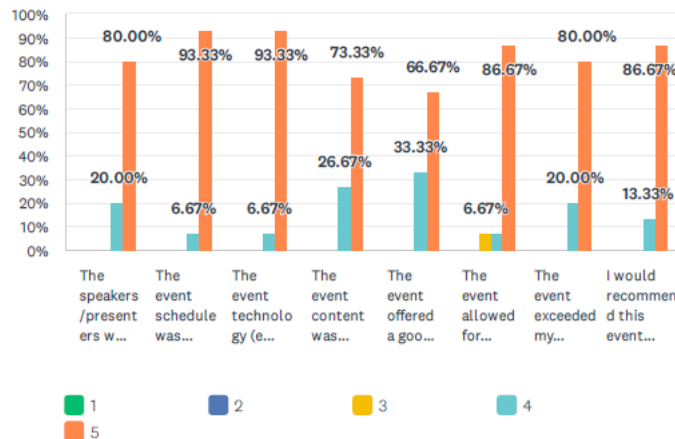
- The pre-event networking opportunities were deemed helpful by 86.67% of participants.
- Facilitating networking before the event helped participants establish connections and set the stage for productive interactions during the event.

Q2: During the event - On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

Answered: 15 | Skipped: 0

Q2 During the event - On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 stands for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree, please select how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

Answered: 15 Skipped: 0



| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | TOTAL | WEIGHTED AVERAGE |
|---|------------|------------|------------|-------------|--------------|-------|------------------|
| The speakers/presenters were engaging and knowledgeable. | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 20.00% 3 | 80.00% 12 | 15 | 4.80 |
| The event schedule was well-organized and easy to follow. | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 6.67% 1 | 93.33% 14 | 15 | 4.93 |
| The event technology (e.g. audiovisual equipment, internet connection) worked smoothly. | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 6.67% 1 | 93.33% 14 | 15 | 4.93 |
| The event content was relevant and informative. | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 26.67% 4 | 73.33% 11 | 15 | 4.73 |
| The event offered a good balance of theory and practical application. | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 33.33% 5 | 66.67% 10 | 15 | 4.67 |
| The event allowed for active participation and engagement. | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 6.67% 1 | 6.67% 1 | 86.67% 13 | 15 | 4.80 |
| The event exceeded my expectations. | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 20.00% 3 | 80.00% 12 | 15 | 4.80 |
| I would recommend this event to my colleagues. | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 13.33% 2 | 86.67% 13 | 15 | 4.87 |

Fig 15: Participants' feedback during the event was overwhelmingly positive, indicating a well-executed and engaging experience.

Key points include:

★ **Speakers and Presenters:**

- 80% of participants strongly agreed that the speakers were engaging and knowledgeable.



- This reflects the high quality of the content delivered and the expertise of the speakers.

★ **Event Schedule and Technology:**

- The organization of the event schedule (93.33% strongly agreed) and the smooth operation of event technology (93.33% strongly agreed) were highly praised.
- Efficient scheduling and reliable technology are critical to maintaining the flow and effectiveness of virtual events.

★ **Content Relevance and Balance:**

- 73.33% of participants strongly agreed that the content was relevant and informative, with 66.67% strongly agreeing that there was a good balance of theory and practical application.
- This balance is essential for keeping the audience engaged and ensuring that the material is applicable to their needs.

★ **Participation and Engagement:**

- Active participation and engagement were highly valued, with 86.67% of participants strongly agreeing.
- Providing interactive elements and opportunities for attendee involvement is crucial for the success of any event.

★ **Overall Satisfaction:**

- 80% of participants strongly agreed that the event exceeded their expectations, and 86.67% would recommend it to colleagues.
- These high satisfaction rates suggest that the event not only met but surpassed the participants' expectations.

Open-Ended Feedback

The open-ended responses provided additional qualitative insights as well:

Q3 What did you like the most about the event?

Answered: 6 Skipped: 9

| # | RESPONSES | DATE |
|---|---|------------------|
| 1 | Networking | 6/5/2024 7:30 PM |
| 2 | I liked how succinct and effective it was. | 6/5/2024 5:09 PM |
| 3 | whole organization was great! | 6/5/2024 4:48 PM |
| 4 | country focus and not trying to cover too many countries on one event | 6/5/2024 4:44 PM |
| 5 | The networking opportunities were really beneficial. | 6/5/2024 4:41 PM |
| 6 | It was well structured and focused | 6/5/2024 4:36 PM |

Fig 16: Overall rate of the event

Positive Aspects:

- ★ Networking opportunities, effective organization, focus on a single country, and well-structured content were highlighted as the most liked aspects.

Q4 What did you like the least about the event?

Answered: 2 Skipped: 13

| # | RESPONSES | DATE |
|---|--|------------------|
| 1 | Time schedule. | 6/5/2024 7:30 PM |
| 2 | The timing was in the middle of the work week. I would have preferred Thursday or Friday as the day because of some deadlines. :): | 6/5/2024 5:09 PM |

Fig 17: Areas for improvement

Areas for Improvement:

- ★ Some participants noted issues with the event timing, preferring a different day of the week to better accommodate their schedules.
- ★ Considering participant availability and scheduling events on more convenient days could enhance attendance and satisfaction.



Q5 Is there any feedback you would like to share about specific speakers or sessions?

Answered: 3 Skipped: 12

| # | RESPONSES | DATE |
|---|-----------|------------------|
| 1 | No | 6/5/2024 7:30 PM |
| 2 | N/A | 6/5/2024 5:09 PM |
| 3 | no. | 6/5/2024 4:36 PM |

Fig 18: General feedback

Speaker and Session Feedback:

- ★ There were no specific negative comments about the speakers or sessions, indicating general satisfaction with the presentations.

Overall, this survey results demonstrate a successful event with high participant satisfaction across various aspects, from pre-event communication and preparation to the quality of content and engagement during the event. The feedback highlights the importance of effective advertisement, clear instructions, engaging speakers, and well-balanced content. Addressing the minor concerns regarding event timing could further improve future events. Overall, the positive responses affirm the event's effectiveness in unlocking entrepreneurial potential and providing valuable insights and networking opportunities for participants.

Türkiye

The responses came back by the online survey on Google Form. The Turkish questions/answers are translated into English in the report.

Question 1: How would you assess your satisfaction with the content of the event?

The number of respondents participating in our survey was 4. But they have all stated their high satisfaction level of the event. All respondents stated that they were satisfied with the content of the event and the panelists. Almost all respondents stated that the event was beyond their expectations. All respondents find the content of the event as well balanced with theory as well as practice. They are also highly satisfied with the interaction and involvement opportunities.



Fig 19: Rate of the event

Question 2: How would you assess your satisfaction with the panelists?



Fig 20 : Assessment of panelists

Question 3: To what extent did the event meet your expectations?

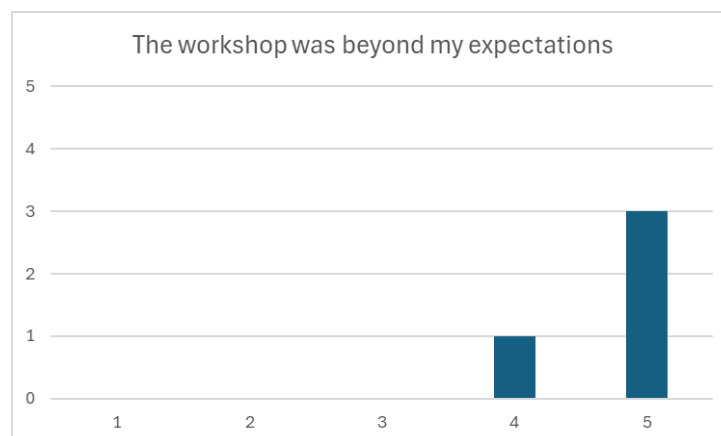


Fig 21: Rate of expectation of the Turkish workshop

Recommendations

The ExcellEnt project can influence six determinants in the European Entrepreneurial Ecosystem - as a summary of the key findings of the 6 national workshops. These determinants would lead the growth and development of the European Entrepreneurial Ecosystems in the next decades. These are:

#1. Competence development

The business owner of MSME or self-entrepreneur plays a crucial role in achieving success: the business and personal goals of the owner-manager must match his competencies. Pre and post-research show growth for all traits and skills of the entrepreneurial personality.

#2. Enterprising culture and leadership

Creating an entrepreneurial culture is a development that takes time. An entrepreneurial attitude as a skill can be fully integrated into education as one of the necessary skills. The instrument is already used for setting goals by individual students and for personal development.

#3. Financing

Access to financing for small and medium-sized businesses and/or self-entrepreneurs is limited at the moment; risks are often considered too large. ExcellEnt project consortium offers its support to meet the investors in Europe and beyond, on the success of a venture and its match with the businessperson.

#4. Networks and formal institutions

Besides the qualities of the company owner, the presence of ecosystems and stakeholders is also an essential precondition for successful and ambitious entrepreneurship. The network of **ExcellEnt** consortium in 6 countries and beyond is a good way for entrepreneurs to gain knowledge about other important components of the ecosystem, such as access to venture capital, technologies, and new markets.

#5. Talent and new knowledge

The presence of sufficient diversity and the ability of **talented human capital** is also important. Particularly, in relatively small fast-growing small businesses the owner does not always have the

knowledge and skills to adapt to changes quickly enough. Hence, the exchange of knowledge and interaction with experts is of great importance. The European Entrepreneurial Academy has a new platform where business coaches, mentors, and specialists can be linked to the entrepreneurial community.

#6. Intermediary services

The ecosystem cannot do without the intermediary services of advisors, coaches, in addition: small business and start-up coaches, support organizations, and (local) government policy. Moreover, a business development organization functions as a spider in the web and acts as a facilitator. That's a crucial part of any ecosystem.

Greece:

Based on workshop insights and participant feedback, the following strategic recommendations are proposed for stakeholders and policymakers:

- ★ Expand cascade funding programs and simplify application processes.
- ★ Provide clear guidelines and support for navigating regulatory requirements.
- ★ Foster partnerships between local entrepreneurs and international businesses to enhance market access.
- ★ Encourage the creation of collaborative networks among entrepreneurs, investors, and mentors to share knowledge and support growth.

Bulgaria

Based on insights from the workshop discussions and feedback from participants, as well as presentations by Ivaylo Ivanov, Iva Krasteva, and Georgi Kadrev, the following strategic recommendations are proposed for stakeholders and policymakers to enhance the entrepreneurial ecosystem:

1. Strengthen Academia-Industry Collaboration. The gap between academic research and practical business applications was a significant challenge discussed during the workshop. To address this we need to:

- Establish collaborative platforms and joint programs that align scientific research with market needs.
- Facilitate regular interaction through workshops and conferences, supporting initiatives that promote the co-development of technologies and products.

2. Clear Intellectual Property Frameworks. Effective IP management emerged as critical during discussions, particularly in Ivaylo Ivanov's session on pitching:

- Develop clear and fair IP agreements protecting both academic institutions and start-ups.
- Provide resources and training to help start-ups navigate IP laws and patent processes.
- Encourage universities to adopt flexible IP policies that foster a more entrepreneurial culture.

3. Emphasize Iterative Validation and Real-World Testing. Iterative validation was highlighted as essential by multiple speakers, including Ivaylo Ivanov and Iva Krasteva:

- ★ Encourage start-ups to engage in continuous testing and validation of their ideas with real customers.
- ★ Provide grants for prototype development and support innovation hubs and incubators offering mentorship for iterative development.

4. Enhance Entrepreneurial Education and Training. Educational programs should incorporate practical entrepreneurial training, as emphasized by Iva Krasteva:

- ★ Integrate design thinking and business model innovation into academic curricula.
- ★ Offer specialized workshops and boot camps on pitching, market analysis, and customer validation.
- ★ Provide mentorship programs connecting students and early-stage entrepreneurs with experienced business leaders.

5. Foster a Supportive Regulatory Environment. A supportive regulatory environment is crucial for start-up growth, as discussed by various speakers:

- Simplify business registration processes and reduce bureaucratic hurdles.

- Provide tax incentives and subsidies for start-ups, especially in high-impact sectors.
- Ensure regulatory frameworks are adaptable to the fast-evolving nature of start-ups and technological innovation.

6. Promote Access to Funding and Investment. Access to funding was identified as a significant barrier during the workshop:

- Establish public-private partnerships to create venture capital funds for early-stage investments.
- Offer grants for innovative solutions with high social or economic impact.
- Create platforms connecting start-ups with potential investors.

7. Support Networking and Strategic Partnerships Networking and strategic partnerships are vital for start-up success, as highlighted by Ivaylo Ivanov and Georgi Kadrev:

- Organize regular networking events, pitch competitions, and collaborative projects.
- Support the creation of clusters and consortia that bring together start-ups, established companies, investors, and academic institutions.
- Facilitate cross-border collaborations to expand market opportunities and access diverse resources.

Implementing these recommendations can create a dynamic ecosystem that fosters innovation, supports entrepreneurial ventures, and drives economic growth. These strategies, grounded in the findings and feedback from the workshop, aim to bridge gaps, enhance collaboration, and provide the necessary resources for start-ups to thrive.

France

The main recommendations from the workshop are strongly related to the key findings.

- ★ Speakers explored the ways to foster an entrepreneurial ecosystem that promotes **creativity, innovation and sustainable growth, rather than focusing solely on rapid expansion and exits.**
- ★ The team should continue to build the launch of ExcellEnt Best practices or invited guests again during the business missions of 20 delegates from 6 countries, and invite them to

join to the jury of the Pan-European competition of the best deep tech entrepreneurs, incorporating similar high level experts from the partner countries, from Ukraine, Bulgaria, Germany, Ireland and Greece.

- ★ **To extend the entrepreneurial ecosystem at a cross-border level** is key for success. The model of the German-France collaboration framework would be an example to assess and promote in Europe and beyond (preferably in North of Africa and Asia).

Ukraine

Based on the insights gathered from the workshop findings and participant feedback, here are actionable recommendations that can inform policy and practice to enhance the entrepreneurial landscape in Ukraine and contribute to a dynamic and resilient European market.

1. Enhanced Access to Capital

- ★ **Establish More Venture Capital Funds:** Develop new venture capital funds dedicated to supporting Ukrainian startups, particularly those in early stages of development.
- ★ **Create Funding Networks:** Facilitate connections between Ukrainian entrepreneurs and international investors through platforms and events.
- ★ **Government Grants and Subsidies:** Introduce government-backed grants and subsidies to reduce the financial risk for investors in Ukrainian startups.

2. Regulatory Reforms

- ★ **Simplify Regulatory Processes:** Streamline the regulatory framework to make it easier for startups to launch and operate. This includes reducing bureaucratic hurdles and providing clear guidelines.
- ★ **Regulatory Stability:** Ensure a stable and predictable regulatory environment to boost investor confidence and encourage long-term investments.
- ★ **Special Economic Zones:** Establish special economic zones with favorable regulatory and tax conditions for startups.

3. Market Development Programs

- ★ **Mentorship and Accelerator Programs:** Expand mentorship and accelerator programs to provide startups with guidance, resources, and networking opportunities.

- ★ Partnerships with Established Businesses: Encourage partnerships between startups and established businesses to facilitate market entry and expansion.
- ★ International Market Access: Support programs that help startups gain access to international markets, including participation in global conferences and trade shows.

4. Skill Development Initiatives

- ★ Entrepreneurial Education: Integrate entrepreneurship into educational curricula at all levels, from schools to universities.
- ★ Professional Training Programs: Develop professional training programs focused on key entrepreneurial skills, such as business management, marketing, and technology adoption.
- ★ Collaborative Workshops: Organize workshops and seminars in collaboration with high education institutions to continuously upskill entrepreneurs.

5. Building a Collaborative Ecosystem

- ★ Public-Private Partnerships: Strengthen public-private partnerships to create a supportive environment for startups and companies.
- ★ Innovation Hubs: Invest in innovation hubs and incubators that provide resources, space, and community for startups to thrive.
- ★ Community Engagement: Foster community involvement through events, funding opportunities, and public awareness campaigns to support startups.

6. Adaptability and Resilience

- ★ Crisis Management Training: Provide training on crisis management and resilience to help entrepreneurs navigate uncertain environments, such as the ongoing war.
- ★ Support Networks: Establish support networks that offer psychological and practical support to entrepreneurs facing challenging conditions.
- ★ Flexible Business Models: Encourage the development of flexible business models that can adapt to changing market conditions.

Conclusion:

By addressing the identified challenges and implementing these proposed strategies and best practices, Ukraine can significantly enhance its entrepreneurial landscape. These

recommendations aim to foster a vibrant, innovative, and resilient entrepreneurial ecosystem that not only drives economic growth within Ukraine but also contributes to the broader European market. Collaboration among stakeholders, including policymakers, investors, educators, and entrepreneurs, is crucial to achieving these goals and ensuring sustainable success.

Ireland:

There is a need to come up with a vision and the operative means to implement it that will go beyond the national or regional initiatives and modalities as these take place in the participating Excellent project partner countries. This might be the case of **exploring how the different regional and national innovation ecosystems help future entrepreneurs build European start-ups that will make use and take advantage from different countries and regions**. As an example, this means that there will be a transfer of paradigm in what currently takes place, and according to which an innovation hub in Ireland that currently supports entrepreneurs from the region, will seize the opportunity to connect them with similar or complementary individuals, teams or start-ups from other regions and countries in Europe. Practically speaking, this means that apart – or beside – the study of national (and respectively regional and / or local) cases, **in Excellent we have the opportunity to suggest a model on how entrepreneurs can exploit talent as well as funding and business opportunities available in other countries in Europe**. A possible reason that this aspect has been not receiving the necessary attention in the innovation and entrepreneurship support programs is that these are mainly related to indicators for improving e.g. employment at national / regional levels and the operation of new start-ups in a level that is EU-wide is something that might disable reporting that is essential for national / regional funding instruments that depend on meeting Key Performance Indicators that focus on criteria that are bound to satisfying location-related conditions. In a hypothetical example, why should not a team of students and researchers from Germany or Turkey not have the opportunity to consider building their start-up in Ireland and needing to keep it in their home or resident countries? Especially when considering the growth and scale-up of start-ups, a core team of researchers can build all the complimentary operations like business development or production lines in Ireland, while the core research team can be still located outside the country.

Turkiye:



Main insights from the workshop can be summarized as follows:

Speakers discussed **the challenges of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the Turkish landscape and explored the ways to improve the entrepreneurial ecosystem that promotes collaborations, networking, innovation and sustainable growth.** Networking and strategic partnerships are vital for start-up success. Therefore, organizing networking events, pitch competitions, and collaborative projects, and the role of universities and incubation centers for leading the establishment of these collaborations were discussed. **Facilitation of cross-border collaborations to expand market opportunities and access diverse resources** is another key recommendation derived from the event.

Experimenting and entrepreneurship methods which emphasize experimentation were highlighted by multiple speakers. The value of iterations, failures and learning from failures is the key for success. **These capabilities should be supported by entrepreneurship education and training given by HEIs and incubation programs. Government grants that would help HEIs and incubators to develop such a curriculum and opportunities are important.**

Access to funding was one of the key challenges **for startups in the ecosystem.** Improving the collaborations between incumbent companies and startups, supporting corporate entrepreneurship, creating platforms to connect startups to potential investors (local or abroad) would be beneficial for startups to overcome this barrier.

Annexes

Note: All the National Reports are uploaded on a common folder of ExcellEnt project (T2.2): [D6 National Reports - Google Drive](#)

A “Visual package” during the promotion of the national workshops on social media (Linkedin, Facebook, Instagram and X has been provided by TechUkraine and the national partners collaboratively.

Greece

ONLINE WORKSHOP

Unlocking Entrepreneurial Potential in Greece

Innovating in Greece and Shaping the Future of Entrepreneurship

Date: 17.05.24
Time: 15.00
Duration: 2 hours
Format: Online



Funded by the European Union



The Agenda

15:00 - 15:10 | Opening Remarks | Moderator: Andreas Almpanis, Projects & Proposals Manager, Institute of Entrepreneurship Development

Cultivating Entrepreneurial Excellence in Greece

15:10 - 15:20 | Opening Keynote Speech: Current Landscape and Future Trends of Greek Entrepreneurship | Speaker: Irene Sgourou, Female Entrepreneurship Ambassador, Concept Founder W4AI-Hellas

15:20 - 15:30 | The ExcellEnt Project Presentation | Speaker: Zoi Moza, Project Manager, Institute of Entrepreneurship Development

15:30 - 16:20 | Panel Discussion: Entrepreneurial Stories and Strategies

Speakers:

Theocharis Vlachopanagiotis, Co-founder & CEO of Rhoe

Petros Soukoullas, Co-founder of Seems

Konstantinos Akrivos, Co-founder & CTO of Oliveex

Ioannis Tsakmakis, Co-founder & CEO of ENVRIO

Theodora Tsokanari, Executive Manager of Thinc Thrace Incubator

16:20 - 16:30 | Q&A Session

Bridging Greek Innovation: Connecting Local Entrepreneurs to Global Opportunities

16:30 - 16:40 | Cascade Funding Explained | Speaker: Veronika Filippou, Innovation Community & Networking Manager, JOIST Innovation Park

16:40 - 16:50 | From Design Thinking to Pitching Investors | Speaker: Thomas Chalatsis, Project Manager, Institute of Entrepreneurship Development

16:50 - 17:00 | Closing Keynote Speech: Moving towards mature innovation ecosystems in Europe | Speaker: Theologos Prokopiou, CEO i4G SA

17:00 - 17:10 | Final Remarks and Workshop Closure | Moderator: Andreas Almpanis, Projects & Proposals Manager, Institute of Entrepreneurship Development

Bulgaria



Program

9:30 - Opening remarks | Prof. Silvia Ilieva, Director of the GATE Institute

9:30 – 11:05| Part 1. Key to success

Presentation of the ExcellEnt Project | Denitsa Stoilova (GATE)

Support for the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Bulgaria | Lora Yosifova (MIG)

An inspiring example from a leading entrepreneur | Georgi Kudrev (Kelvin Health)

Panel Discussion: Innovation Across Industry Sectors: Strategies and Experience Stories of Technology Entrepreneurs

Moderator: Ivan Draganov

Panelists: Radoslav Rizov (MIG), Stoyan Nedin (Vitosha Venture Partners), Entrepreneur, Prof. Todor Yalamov (Sofia University), Goran Varbanov (Quendoo)

11:20 – 12:30| Part 2. Techniques for developing entrepreneurial skills | European development opportunities

Developing design thinking and generating ideas | Iva Krasteva (GATE)

Pitching Preparation | Ivaylo Ivanov (Founder Institute).

European Academy of Entrepreneurship. Competition for entrepreneurs | Denitsa Stoilova (GATE)

12.30-13:00| Networking and informal discussions

France

ONLINE WORKSHOP

May 14, 2024 - Speakers:

Jean-Noël de GALZAIN - Founder & CEO, WALLIX Group

Fadwa Sube - President, SOVERENCY / Vice-President, Systematic Paris-Region

Yann. Gozlan - Managing Director, Creative Valley

Dr. Christophe AREND - Conseiller spécial relations franco-allemandes, Directeur de la représentation de la Sarre en France Saarland Staatskanzlei

Maëva Tordo - Director, Blue Factory ESCP

Dorina Stamou - Operations Lead, EIT Digital

Marc Teyssier - Principal Investigator & Creative Technologist, Pôle Léonard de Vinci

TUNDE KALLAI - Open Innovation & Living Lab expert, Creative Valley

Paul Stefanut - Co-founder, Booster Labs

Unlocking Entrepreneurial Potential in France

SAVE THE DATE

Unlocking Entrepreneurial Potential in France

Online Workshop

Date: 14.05.24
Format: Hybrid









Ukraine

Innovating in Ukraine and Shaping the Future of Entrepreneurship



June 7, 15:00-17:00 Kyiv Time



ZOI MOZA
EU Project Manager
ExcellEnt Project
IED - Institute of Entrepreneurship Development



NATALY VEREEMEVA
Director
TechUkraine



DMYTRO KUZMENKO
CEO
Ukrainian Venture Capital and Private Equity Association
UVCA



OLENA SHERSHUN
Associate Partner at
CIVITTA



YANA PALADIIIEVA
Head of projects and programs at
Ukrainian Startup Fund



JANE KLEPA
Director of Partnerships and Innovation at
SET University



TATIANA SKYDAN
Communication Lead at
EmpoWomen Programme



Funded by
the European Union

ExcellEnt: Excellency in Entrepreneurship: Expanding European entrepreneurship by boosting youth (self) employability and promoting a sharing resources culture

Ireland

ONLINE WORKSHOP

Unlocking Entrepreneurial Potential in Ireland

Date: May 28th **Time:** 14:00 CET



Tunde Kalai Gerard M. O'Brien Adamantios Koumpis Odysseas Spyroglou



Funded by the European Union



International Development Ireland

Türkiye

ONLINE WORKSHOP

Innovating in Türkiye and Shaping the Future of Entrepreneurship

Date: 28.05.2024 **Time:** 15:30-17:30



Metin Salt Ergi Şener



Ozan Sönmez Fatih Al Naci Kahraman

