

SEETechnology Newsletter

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SEETechnology is a part of South East Europe (SEE) Transnational Cooperation Programme. The project is about co-operation of SEE (South East Europe) science parks for the promotion of transnational market uptake of R&D results and technologies by SMEs. It's about creating the environment for innovative entrepreneurship.

Message from Prof. Dr. Dean Korošak, SEETechnology Project Coordinator

Dear readers,

the SEETechnology project is slowly approaching its end-station. Looking back at two years of working together with our partners, we cannot but be proud of what we have achieved. We succeeded to set in place a variety of new effective and sustainable transnational tools and services to support innovative SMEs - the main objective of our project.

It has been a pleasure to work with our target segment, the SMEs, where we found fresh and vivid energy in working to succeed on the market. The effects of the persisting economic crisis have in the last few years demonstrated that the SMEs are indeed the backbone of Europe's economy representing 99 % of all European businesses. Setting up a transnational support mechanisms to leverage their efforts seems from this perspective even more important; relatively small instigations for innovative work can bring about significant results. In the frame of the SEETechnology project, we shaped the innovation support services in accordance with SMEs desires, expectations but criticisms of the present situation.

At the end of the project road, we share our ambition that the SEETech innovation support system becomes a referential *transnational and interdisciplinary* innovation support system. Because of its design and composition it will create value greater than the existing traditional support systems, which are confined to a certain geographical area (regional or national) or field of activity. Furthermore, we wish to take on an active stand in stimulating the shift in the attitude of the decision-makers (on the national and EU level) to invest their efforts in elaborating adequate policy solutions to support joint transnational EU *innovation and co-creation platforms* (i.e. Demola), which is proven to work in surpassing the prevailing limitations to particular sectors or regions or nation-states. When looking for new solutions, we have started new cooperation with the EIT ICT Labs and we co-founded the first Danube Innovation Summit (Budapest, 4-5 December 2014). All this represents a strong sustainability basis for the post-project period.

To our partners goes a big THANK YOU for your cooperation in the last two years and according to our plans for the future "*our ending has a new beginning.*"

Enjoy the walk through our stories below.

Dean Korošak, SEETechnology Coordinator

Inside this issue:

SEETechnology Project update	2
Dissemination activities & promotional events	5
Upcoming events	6
Project Partners	7

Jointly for our common future



Insight from the Transnational Workshop in Bologna, June 2014 (Photo by Marko Samec)

SEETechnology Project update

Activities on the project are proceeding as planned. The Managing Authority has confirmed the prolongation of the SEE Technology project to the 31 December 2014.

In terms of **WP1 (Transnational project management)**, activities are to be completed until the project end-date.

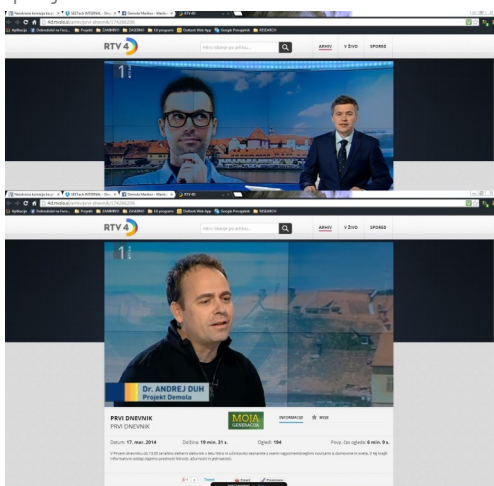
In **WP2 (Communication activities)**, we intensified communication activities with the publication of two project e-newsletters, 17 partner level e-newsletters, 9 thematic articles, 10 innovation lab meetings and 22 local information events presenting the project content and objectives of the project. Now that the project is entering its concluding phase and the project results are set into life; the awareness rising and promotional communication activities are gaining on momentum; all partners have been very active to promote and disseminate information through expert contributions in conferences, project presentations, innovation labs, information meetings with representatives of potential service users, students, stakeholders and authorities. In figures: 238 SMEs, 2.104 individuals (students, entrepreneurs, experts, stakeholders) and 9 innovation related authorities were reached by communication activities. The indicator values for this outputs set at the beginning of the project will be importantly surpassed by the end of the project.

All elements of **WP3 (Mapping of needs and capabilities and development, monitoring and evaluation of a joint service development strategy and elaboration of a joint business plan)** have been thoroughly collected, studied and analysed.

Activities included continuation of data collection on relevant resources and services aimed at offering innovation support to SMEs, which were summed up in the innovation service map. The findings of these activities were used in the shaping of the three strategic documents, which are important for reaching the sustainability of the project results. These are: Joint service development strategy; Monitoring and evaluation methodology and the Joint business plan. All partners contributed their input and the recent transnational workshop held in Zagreb (15 October 2014) offered a place for fruitful discussion on all important strategic elements that will help to sustain the project results.



Picture: Project partners discussing post-project strategic plans at the workshop in Zagreb



Picture: The Demola pilot that is being implemented in Maribor University received promotion in the News at the Slovenian National TV

In **WP4 (Capacity building and policy recommendations)**, development of common methodologies, tools, service descriptions and standards continued.

Each partner took part in the development of the new joint R&D transfer mechanisms and SME support services, focusing on the provision of professional expertise, research knowledge and technical support to feasibility and market analyses and to prototype services at a transnational level in their own surrounding. R&D transfer and SME support services description was upgraded and tested. In order to secure coherence in the transnational level a joint policy protocol has been developed, which defines

... Project update ...

standards and procedures in functioning of the developed support services and determines the roles and responsibilities (horizontal and vertical) of the staff involved in their implementation.

Special section of this WP is devoted to **training activities** of the staff that will work on the implementation of the SEETechnology services in the future.

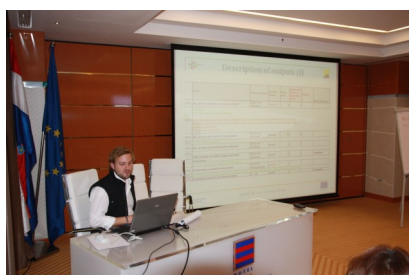
A joint transnational training event was held in November 2013 already, later partners organised their own local trainings, and some of them will have their training events in the last project phase, which still lies ahead.

Work also continued on the **development of the transnational and local organisational foundation for the sustainable operation of the developed services for the support of SMEs**. The final organisational documents, that will enable the functioning of the services after the project end, will be adopted in the final meeting in Budapest in December 2014.

The last part of this WP is dedicated to shaping of policy recommendations, which is intended to bring valuable messages from project partners, deriving from their SEETechnology experiences, to policy makers and innovation promoters at all levels in the area of the SEETechnology project. Partners already formulated some valuable recommendations and important cooperation has been established with selected EIT ICT Labs.

Partner from Budapest take a step further with the event by setting a target to convoke in the time of the final SEETechnology conference (4-5 December 2014) the first Danube Innovation summit, which will represent a cradle for the joint innovation hub for the SEETechnology project area with the ambition to grow with time also to other regions in Europe. With this incentive, the SEETechnology project is setting firm foundations for the effective collaboration among project partners in innovation support in the future.

*Picture:
WP4 outputs
discussion in
Zagreb*



In WP5 (Testing of the developed new services (pilots)), three pilots are in progress:

- Sharing structured and searchable information on patents, research products and research projects: review of the most used and free access patent databases in Europe, identification and analysis of existing tools and methods to support technology transfer and identification of support for SMEs, identification of possibilities for implementing pilot actions.

University of Bratislava is working on the Pre-pilot 1 action idea, which is envisaged to assist in sharing info on patents, research products and projects, which are key-data for innovation support to SMEs. The pilot is being tested on the example of the Slovak Current Research Innovation System – SK CRIS (the national database on research activities), existing public patent databases, PATLIB Bratislava and the Slovak national portal for technology transfer. The result of the tested activities will be the determination of the form and nature of data that are most suitable for SMEs and are to be included in the joint SEETechnology IT platform by all project partners.

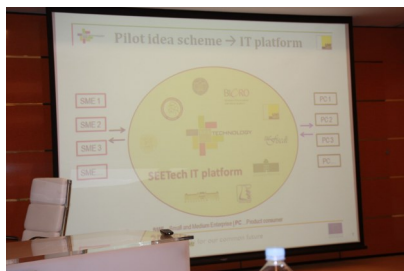
- Sharing business support facilities and resources, i.e. provision of technical infrastructure: testing "beta version" of User Interface of the IT Platform.

Pilot No. 1 titled **"A possible distribution path of SME products to its consumers (B2B)"** conducted by the University of Graz focused on the supply side of the innovation process – how to bring the product to the market. Specifically, 8 SMEs were selected as a testing sample. They were asked to provide info about their products, and the Chamber of Commerce then acted as the intermediary between those SMEs and product consumers. The feedback showed interest of the SMEs to receive a support service on the marketing of their products and would appreciate support in this area. The testing pilot showed also some insufficiencies; the two intermediaries (University and the chamber of commerce) in the process of linking SMEs to the consumers were estimated by SMEs as too complicated.

... Project update ...

The pilot was tested also in a confined regional area; its full potential can be developed in a transnational context, as the results showed that SMEs have no or very limited innovation cooperation ties with similar entities outside of their narrow regional circle.

The University of Graz pursued the idea of the second pilot “**Technology & innovation transfer to innovative SMEs**”, where the idea was to test, if services offered would foster interest of innovative SMEs to participate in Horizon 2020. This action was titled “On the search for SMEs”. The goal was to offer services to link SMEs with research groups and initiate joint projects within H2020. The University identified SMEs and possible projects, suitable R&D partners and provided administrative support. The feedback received from the SMEs was largely positive – they recognized the need to cooperate with R&D as well as the value of the service provided to them, suggesting, however, that there should be one SME entry point to simplify things.



Picture: Presentation of the pilot tested at the University of Graz

UNIBO has tested the following two services: **multidisciplinary consultancy services** and the **valorisation of patents**. The **testing of the first service** involved four enterprises. The infrastructure involved in the testing was the Centre of industrial research on ICT (CIRI). Results from the questionnaires showed that the testing experience was positive for both the SMEs and the CIRI, whereby some SMEs expressed some doubts whether the service can be applied at the transnational level. This uncertainty can be subscribed to the lack of international experience of SMEs and their restrain to open to transnational business. The **second service pilot** on the valorisation of patents (supply driven innovation) involved five SMEs. Reportedly it was difficult to make a market potential assessment because the patents to be assessed

were at an early stage of development, and it was difficult for SMEs to evaluate how the patent product could assist them in their production.



Picture: Pilots have been tested at the University of Bologna

- Pooling and making accessible expertise i.e. provision of professional expertise, research knowledge and technical support to feasibility and market analysis and to prototype development at transnational level. Demola platform represents a meeting point of companies, university in students; where all three factors work in inter-action on solving of real-life innovation cases. Demola is a form of open innovation, which adopts the view that R&D is an open system; valuable ideas can come from inside or outside the organisation, and they may enter the market from inside or outside the organisation. Demola-Maribor operation became the pilot under this action through the cooperation with Demola-Budapest from BME. Over 30 innovation projects have been completed already or are still in progress. The pilot has proven to be a success at the university level, in Slovenia it has in autumn 2014 even expanded to become a national Demola innovation platform.



Picture: DEMOLA pilot is successfully running at the Universities of Maribor and Budapest.

... Project update ...

Activities within **WP6 (Elaboration of a knowledge sharing IT platform)** are in progress.

The SEETechnology IT platform is being created as a one-entry point service for all SMEs seeking innovation support in the national or transnational frame. It is designed as an ICT tool which helps connecting SMEs with R&D organizations and SMEs among themselves. On one hand it enables an on-line collaboration, knowledge and resources sharing of the participating entities and personnel and supports their contact building and collaboration in an intelligent way, and on

the other hand supports the visibility, accessibility and active promotion of project results, services and information to the public in the region.

SEETechnology IT platform is not Yet Another Project/Patent/Service Catalogue system that replicated the already existing databases and internet sites. It is designed as an one-entry point to reach the links to the existing information, databases and websites and at the same time by the membership registration option it builds a transnational network of factors involved in the innovation work in any phase of its creation or exploitation.

When standing very close to the point when the final curtain of the SEETechnology project will fall, there are still some tasks to be completed; however one sees that a lot has been learned in the past two years, there have been some dead-ends and new paths explored.

We are yet glad to say that some very valuable support services and structures to support innovation needs of the SMEs have been developed, tested and put in place. In the project concluding conference, a joint transnational SMEs innovation support hub will be launched, which is a promise to secure innovation support to SMEs in the long run also after the project ends.

Dissemination activities & promotional events

Partners have been very active with the communication activities for the SEETech project, including articles for different regional and national magazines/newspaper, radio and television interviews, webpages updating, brochures dissemination and organising local events.

Preparation, organization and execution of wide promotional activities for the implementation of the pilots have been performed by all partners. Some of the events are presented in this issue of the newsletter.

See next page for the following events:

- *DEMOLA Final Pitch; University of Maribor, Maribor, 16 June 2014;*
- *Local information event in Graz; 9 October 2014;*
- *Transnational Workshop in Zagreb; 15 October 2014.*

NEWSLETTER TRANSLATION

Thanks to partners' effort, previous issues of the newsletter are now available in English, German, Hungarian and Slovak language. Also our Romanian colleagues are preparing their local version of the SEETechnology newsletter.

So, check the SEETechnology website (<http://www.seetechnology.eu>) and enjoy the reading!

DEMOLA Final Pitch (Maribor, 16 June 2014)

On 16 June 2014, Demola FINAL PITCH was held in front of the University of Maribor, where students presented their results from three and a half months of hard work in just five minutes, which were given to each team.

DEMOLA Maribor Second season winners were announced:

1st place: Birds on electrical overhead wire conductors (Electro Maribor): Samo Žogan, Niki Kozoderc, Gašper Kogelnik, Matej Lakič

2nd place: Tracking Guard (Kreativne ideje): Rebeka Pinosa, Nino Kuhar, Tilen Mlinar, Luka Mlakar, Jaka Kodrič

3rd place: Every invoice can turn in to an e-invoice! (Halcom): Albin Jordan, Damir Podbojec, Klemen Furman

Congratulations! :-)



Picture: From the DEMOLA Final Pitch

Local information event (Graz, 9 October 2014)

A SEETechnology local information event was held on 9 October at Faculty for Natural Sciences of Graz University.

The agenda of the event covered:

- Information about the SEETechnology project and its aims in general;
- Presentation of the role of Graz University within the SEETechnology project;
- Discussion of planned upcoming activities within SEETechnology and
- Discussion about possible collaboration of the Graz SEETechnology team with the Faculty for Natural Sciences of Graz University;
- Discussion of the research database developed within SEETechnology and possible use by the Faculty to foster technology transfer.

Transnational Workshop (Zagreb, 15 October 2014)

SEETech Transnational Workshop & Steering Group meeting were held in Zagreb on 15 October 2014.

The meeting presented an analysis, by WP, of the project goals attained to date, and those that remain to be completed. More has already been presented within the project update.



Picture: From Zagreb

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- SEETechnology Final conference: Budapest, 4–5 December, with the title “Danube Innovation Summit”.

Project partners:



University of Maribor
(Slovenia)
dean.korosak@um.si

Univerza v Mariboru



Budapest University of Technology
and Economics (Hungary)
bacs@ik.bme.hu



Alma Mater Studiorum - University
of Bologna (Italy)
alessandra.baccigotti@unibo.it



University of Graz
(Austria)
volker.ribitsch@uni-graz.at



»Petru Poni« Institute of
Macromolecular Chemistry (Romania)
coseris@icmpp.ro



University of Zagreb
(Croatia)
zstiper@geog.pmf.hr



Comenius University in
Bratislava (Slovakia)
turna@rec.uniba.sk



Executive Agency for Higher Education,
Research, Development and Innovation
Funding (Romania)
marius.mitroi@uefiscdi.ro



Croatian Agency for SMEs,
innovations and
investments (HAMAG-BICRO)
(Croatia)
ivana.buce@bicro.hr

JAPTI - Public Agency for Entrepreneurship
and Foreign Investment (Slovenia)

ASTER Joint Stock Consortium (Italy)

Styrian Government - Department 3,
Science and Research (Austria)

Industrial Property Office of the Slovak
Republic (Slovakia)

Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical
Information (Slovakia)

Hungarian Investment and Trade Agency
(Hungary)

Styrian Business Development Agency
(Austria)

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More information about the project:

Website:

<http://www.seetechnology.eu/>



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Editorial Board: Dean Korošak, Jasmina Klojčnik, Andreja Čurin, Andrej Duh, Marko Samec, University of Maribor; Jasna Poženeš, IPMIT d.o.o.

Contact e-mail: seetech@ipmit.si