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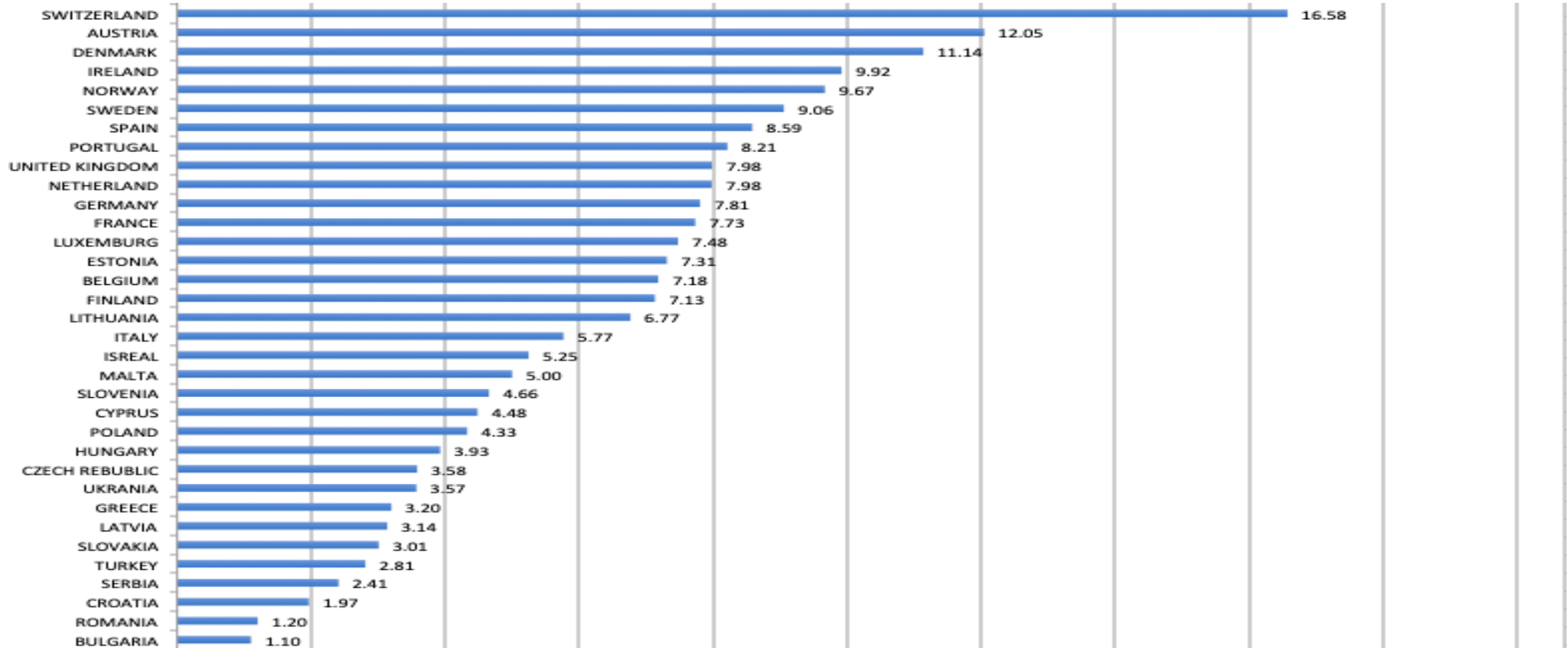
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‘Turkish experience of SME needs in H2020 – an overview’

Short Bio

- Deputy Project Director of Turkey in H2020 Project and Manager of IDI's Turkey Office;
- Over 13 years of professional experience in Technopark Management, Technology Transfer, Innovation Management, Proposal Evaluation, Entrepreneurship Support and Cluster Management;
- Worked for 9 years in largest technoparks in Turkey
- Between 2014-2018 acted as an External Evaluator for H2020 SME Instrument Programme and for H2020 Fast Track to Innovation Programme. Evaluated close to 300 proposals
- Has written 8 successful proposals (4 Phase 1 & 4 Phase 2) and 15 proposals above threshold (Seal of Excellence)

Success Rate of Turkey vs. EU Average



***What could be the reasons behind
this low success rate?***

Most companies are lacking strategic views

- Not fully aware of their potential- less ambitious
- Sometimes there is poor 'absorptive capacity'- not open to outsiders' recommendations/ view/opinion
- Too easily satisfied with 'more of the same' –some don't want to grow!
- Little awareness of what competitors are doing
- Short-sighted on markets and what influences them
- Little investment in marketing or product development– prefer things they can get hold of!
- Many businesses still do very well despite these issues – but they could do so much better!

Some examples from the SME visits in the previous project

- Most of these businesses didn't have any formal written strategy nor business plan
- Each could lose considerable sums if they carry on in the directions they have taken because they were not strategy driven
- Some didn't capitalise on good talent, resources and ideas

Some examples from the SME visits in the previous project

- Proposed product already exist in several countries
- They don't use company's main expertise
- Not their core target market or customer base
- Too much Investment needed – time & money
- Focus on opportunities in own sector/market first?
- Company too busy to bother with strategy and H2020 bids
- Confusing business model
- Meanwhile, not enough manpower to market internationally

Most companies lack a strategic view....

- Mainly trade in home market
- Often little awareness of what's out there
- Low investment in marketing, product development or R&D
- Often managed wholly by technical people
- See R&D programmes as a source of funding – not how to get new products into the market

What should be done?

- Essential to go through this review process before attempting a formal SMEI application
- Essential data is gathered ahead of formal business plan – and to establish credibility and
- Good foundation needed before building a bid!
- Danger is that without this process a bid simply becomes a time-consuming form-filling exercise to win funding

To sum up

- Not fully aware of their potential – facilities, expertise, etc.
- Too easily satisfied with ‘more of the same’
- Little awareness of what the competition are doing until it is too late
- Short-sighted on customer needs, markets and what influences them
- Prefer to deal with national R&D grants

....resulting in:

- No formal business strategy
- No product strategy but project based
- No strategy for R&D
- Simply respond to customer requirements – the customer takes over the control
- Poor spread of management skills
- Technology and R&D is what really excites them!

But it is not desperate at all !

- Good talent, very smart engineers
- Very good technologic developments at Technoparks
- Increase of national VCs and private funds, which increase the motivation of tech companies to be more market oriented
- TUBITAK is very supportive during H2020 application process both in technical and financial terms; very motivating coordinator supports and awards

(<https://ufuk2020.org.tr/en/supports-and-awards>)

How could we improve it through trainings?

- SME Instrument proposal is not just a regular grant proposal it is the business plan of your company
- So the application process needs a change in the mindset of the SME founders/ managers
- It needs more than participating to a 1-2 days trainings. So be ready to commit more!
- Now be Honest! How many of you have a regularly updated 1-3-5 years BP/ strategy document of your company?
- You have to be fully involved in the preparation of your proposal even if you work with a professional consultant
- No external person can know your business strategy better than you. They can just guide you!

My experience with successful trainings

- Participation of a decision maker/ company owner in the trainings not a developer/IT person/ accountant
- Active involvement during the training
- Not just listening but implementing & collaborating and most importantly SHARING!
- Coming to the trainings prepared; having studied the proposal template, having prepared your draft answers for each question
- Sharing your project not only with the trainers but with other participants. Trying to get everyone's feedback on your project idea.
- If you can't commit 1 full day focused only in the training without being interrupted by emails, messages and other daily work you may not benefit.