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TURKEYⁱⁿ
HORIZON 2020
COOPERATION INNOVATION COMPETITIVENESS

Technical Assistance for Turkey in Horizon 2020 Phase-II

EuropeAid/139098/IH/SER/TR

Turkey in Horizon 2020 II

“Turkish experience of SME training needs in H2020 – an
overview”

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Ankara, 03/15/2019



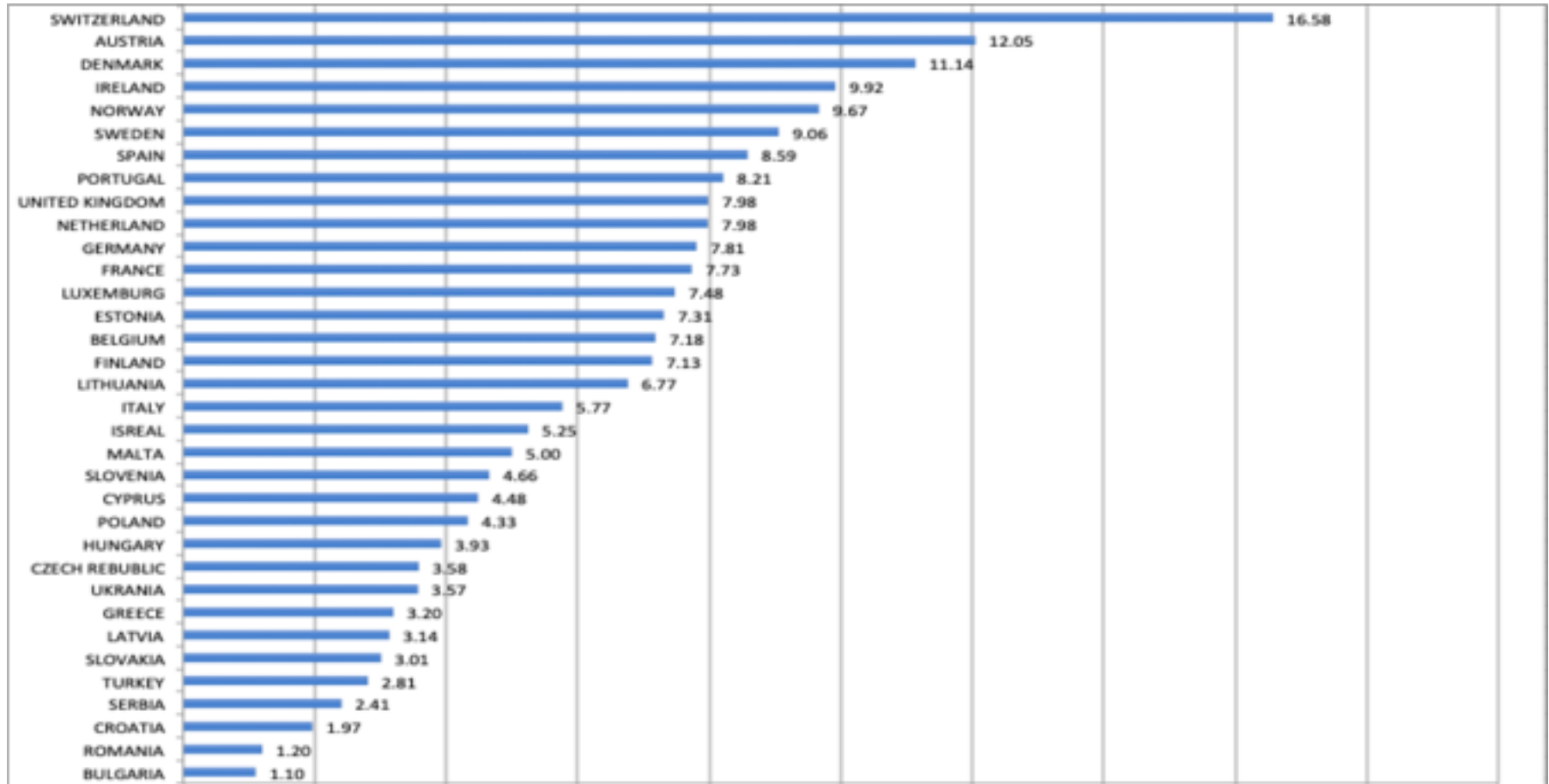
REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY
AND TECHNOLOGY



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
- Sometimes there is poor ‘absorptive capacity’
- Too easily satisfied with ‘more of the same’ – but 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, product development or R&D – prefer things they can get hold of!
- Many businesses still do very well despite these issues – but they could do so much better!



Areas which contribute to innovative capacity

- Finance – enough resources?
- Co-operation – networks to keep informed?
- Technology – product and manufacturing
- Process- project management
- Market – awareness and data
- Risks – financial, technical, market, etc.
- Management – overall approach to innovation and associated expertise

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
- Some will not be capitalising on good talent, resources and ideas
- Much of this is 'common sense' stuff in business terms but didn't happen for reasons of time, tradition, lack of expertise, etc.

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 market or customer base
- 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 buy-in that it can be achieved
- 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/service strategy
- 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
- 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 the trainings at all.

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Teşekkür ederim!

Thank you!



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