

Boost potential of Young Innovators to pioneer change in energy efficiency inside Danube Macro-region

DANUBE ENERGY +

Institutional and Stakeholder Learning Scheme

0.T3.3

Civitta Slovakia

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Institutional (at regional public administration side) and Stakeholder (at other RA members' side) learning in regions was carried out through a workshop format with a goal to upscale individual representatives' knowledge on Package, its Pilot and Impact to further representatives, reaching critical mass of regional administration and RA members' employees that could ensure seamless facilitation, development and sustainable operation of created Danube Energy+ Hubs, contributing to PSO1 and PSO3.

Learning scheme for institutions and stakeholders is part of the final, 5th work package and builds on learning activities between partners carried out in previous work packages. Learning for stakeholders and institutions was organized in the format of workshops designed for knowledge exchange and focused on the educational Tool with ramifications for the Hub preparations. It was however not the only opportunity for stakeholder learning, as the project carried out other meetings and roundtables.

Workshops consisted of several standard parts: presentation of the Tool's results and the next steps in regard to the Hub development were common to all of the workshops held. Some partners also offered more structured experience sharing, showcased Young Innovators or delivered Tool's activities with the participants. Learning scheme yielded satisfactory results as the open discussion and value brought by the workshops has kick-started Hub collaborations and partnerships, supporting the project's sustainability.

This document is a summary of key points raised during the organization and implementation of the learning workshops. Detailed accounts of the workshops can be found in the partners' deliverables documents.

1 LEARNING FORMAT

Learning between the partners and among the larger stakeholder ecosystem has been one of the key pillars of the Danube Energy+ project. While the previous, 4th work package focused its outputs on mutual learning during the educational Tool implementation the 5th and final work package developed a line of activities targeted at representatives of institutions and stakeholders – Institutional and Stakeholder learning scheme. This report summarizes the delivery and outcomes of the scheme, which took shape of a series of workshops designed specifically for knowledge exchange and focused on the educational Tool. It was however not the only opportunity for stakeholder learning, as the project carried out other meetings and roundtables, and often the lines between the various format became somewhat blurred, as can be witnessed in the section 2 of this report with workshops often contributing also to the Hub development.

1.1 Workshop as the ideal format for learning

Project partners have selected the workshop format to facilitate learning, transfer know-how from the hitherto executed activities, and stimulate interest of institutions and stakeholders in the topics of entrepreneurial education, energy efficiency and sustainability, and the future Danube Energy+ Hubs. While learning occurred in all of the bilateral and multilateral meetings organized in the framework of the project, such as roundtables, RA meetings or networking events, specific workshops were also planned. These were destined to provide base for sustainability measures and ensure fluent facilitation process for Regional Energy+ Hubs Action Plan development (A5.3). Institutional learning workshops for employees of regional public authorities as key actors of RAs and Stakeholder learning for Regional Alliance members were to be organized in each region to upscale individual experience and knowledge of representatives taking part in Pilot to all relevant employees of regional public administration and RA members who were instrumental for the subsequent Hubs' Regional Action Plan development.

Originally, as many as four workshops were to be organized by the PPs: two for representatives of a chosen institution or institutions with a policy outreach, and two for stakeholders, including, but not limited to, Regional Alliance members. Institutional learning workshop planned to assemble at least 5 representatives of a regional authority or institution during two, 1-day long workshops. The first workshop was to focus on energy business and challenges using the dynamic presentation, on the pre-acceleration learning scheme via the Danube Energy+ Tool itself using the learning materials from Training workshop (A3.3), and on Transregional Impact Report stating the impact of the developed Tool. The second workshop was to focus on work with Young Innovators via learning materials and experience from identification and motivation process and organization of connection events with ecosystem actors. Stakeholder learning workshops were to be organized for two separate groups of stakeholders, delivering tailored content to each group during 1-day long workshops. Participation target was set to 10 stakeholder representatives, reaching the total stakeholder and institutional representatives' headcount of 15 individuals.

Work package lead partner provided the PPs with a detailed Guideline, outlining possible activities to carry out during the workshops. Proposed activities were drawing heavily from the Tool and Package materials,

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with the aim to showcase entrepreneurial education in practice, by testing out the methods with the stakeholders and institutional representatives. PPs were free to use the guidelines as a Toolbox and supplement or even replace the proposed activities with activities more suited to the level of understanding or interests of the workshop participants. The guidelines are attached to the document as Annex 1.

1.2 Regional variances in learning interactions

Pandemic situation led to a pronounced online-meeting fatigue across the partner regions. Additionally, each region approached the workshop organization based on their know-how of the regional ecosystem and its actors. Threading carefully was key, as to not invite stakeholders excessively to formats without direct outcomes or calls to action. In this spirit, the Guidelines provided by the WP5 lead partner allowed for a high degree of flexibility to accommodate regional variances.

As to limit “meetings for meetings” mentality, partners were encouraged to scout for interests and needs of the potential invitees in order to develop relevant workshop program. Serbian partner conducted a survey in the target group to identify potential topics, Slovak partner focused on streamlining the target groups around the topics, as to not gather a too large group with overlaps few and far in-between. The need to define workshop topics with care and a “customer-first” approach led also to a large overlap with Hub creation and ideation, as few organizations were willing to participate at a purely educational activity without a follow-up.

Most of partners opted for online format, which due to its lower direct costs allowed for larger audiences. Bulgarian partner organized workshops as a fully online event with open, and to a some degree, “passive” audience, using the workshop platform to present the WP4 and the Pilot outcomes, showcase participating young innovators in public and tease the upcoming project activities, offering opportunities for open discussion and a feedback round. This sizeable event was connected with other topics and relevant EITs in Bulgaria to leverage collaboration and synergies, attracting 167 registered guests, reaching over 7 000 people through Facebook and YouTube livestreaming and 22 shares of the event in real time. The expectations of the participants were related to the exchange of information, presentation of current programs and initiatives for start support, sharing of visions and plans for the upcoming years and the new programming period 2021-2027.

With the exception of Serbian and Ukrainian partners, all workshops were merged and combined into fewer events, in order to keep the target group focused and interested. Germany decided to opt for “bilateral” workshops or more streamlined interactions, as the local ecosystem is quite advanced and knowledgeable in the area of entrepreneurship education. Interactions therefore required to be more in-depth and action oriented. Lead partner InnoEnergy hence discussed with Founders alliance in Karlsruhe, startups or the Automotive Engineering Network on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

2 KEY LESSONS LEARNED

Workshops consisted of several standard parts: presentation of the Tool's results and the next steps in regard to the Hub development were common to all of the workshops held. Some partners also offered more structured experience sharing, showcased Young Innovators or delivered Tool's activities with the participants. Below we summarize the best practices regarding stakeholder and institutional learning and some points for improvement for mostly future collaboration and entrepreneurial education.

2.1 Best practice

While AP listed stakeholders and institutions as separate groups to be reached to during separate events, many partners merged the target groups with positive effect, leveraging the interest of public authorities to interact with the stakeholders to gain input for their current actions. In case of Bulgaria, the Ministry of Economy raised the new programming period as an issue and an area of Interest to receive feedback from the community. Likewise, in Slovakia, the Ministry of Economy was interested to find a way to reach the community on common terms, understand the needs of the ecosystem and synchronize the efforts. Direct outcome was then a close collaboration and co-opting of the Slovak DE+ Hub by the Ministry.

Especially for the institutional representatives, the goal with workshops was to acquaint them with the startup world and spark their interest in collaboration and support. Best way to present the ecosystem and reach understanding and exchange is on the basis of concrete examples – to hear directly from the Young Innovators themselves about their work and contribution of entrepreneurial education programs, such as DE+ Tool Pilot. Several partners invited alumni of the Pilot implementation to the workshops and some delivered parts of the Tool was workshop's program, showing hands-on how entrepreneurial education brings out innovation (Czechia). In Romania, local partner took the time to meet informally with the members of the City Hall to get them acquainted with the startup world (what it means to be a startup, what makes an idea innovative, business models, stages of valuation). Moreover, representatives of the City hall were invited to take part in a hackathon for ideas on reducing plastic waste to mentor and judge the teams participating, so that they become acquainted with ideas from fields other than Smart City and HealthTech (the two verticals heavily promoted by the city).

In addition to the benefits of connecting stakeholders with policy institutions, partners promoted another type of connectivity: that of multidisciplinary. For many partner regions, energy efficiency is too narrow of a field to generate synergies and ideas, or alternatively, the field is too small to gather interest from the policy makers. Workshops were therefore an opportunity to connect topical silos, leveraging the way energy efficiency is deeply intertwined with climate change topics, sustainability, buildings sector or IT. This approach mirrors the new Horizon Europe, organized in problem-solving areas on a topical level, leading to cross-sectoral and integrated initiatives. Larger, but interconnected scope of workshops helped attract representatives from the highest-level national administrations dealing with innovation, economic development, and investments – who need to be economic with their time.

While workshops are the key part of the Institutional and Stakeholder learning scheme, pure learning was never their sole goal. Learning exchanges were meant to build up interest of the participants and

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strengthen their response to our calls to action, using the workshop as an opportunity for an open discussion about past activities, and as a bridge to discuss follow-up – Danube Energy+ Hubs. Calling to action was supported by bypassing larger strategies and diving directly into concreteness of the support to the Hub. In Czechia, workshop participants raised a possibility of financial subsidies for startups planned for the upcoming programming period. In Romania, the outcome of the workshop was creation of working groups on specific topics, which then continued the work in the Hub preparation time, leading to a tangible outcome of an Innovation Fund for Young Innovators and a set of template documents.

In most cases, workshops were not the first forum in which regional project partners interacted with the participants. Relationships have been crafted from the start of the project in 2018 and already then, they built on existing rapports. Crafting cooperation on existing relationships helped the project partners to lead an open discussion with the participants and upgrade the workshop from a purely learning experience to a working session and consulting meetings. The experience of DE+ helped project partners better understand how to work with multiple partners and create a series of common achievable goals and standards of work, despite each individual organization having additional goals and mission.

2.2 Space for improvement

The best practices for stakeholder engagement acquired during the run of the DE+ project helped eliminate errors in the workshop organizations, leading to the best practices used and presented above. Project partners did however identify several areas with room for improvement, relating to the institutional and stakeholder groups separately.

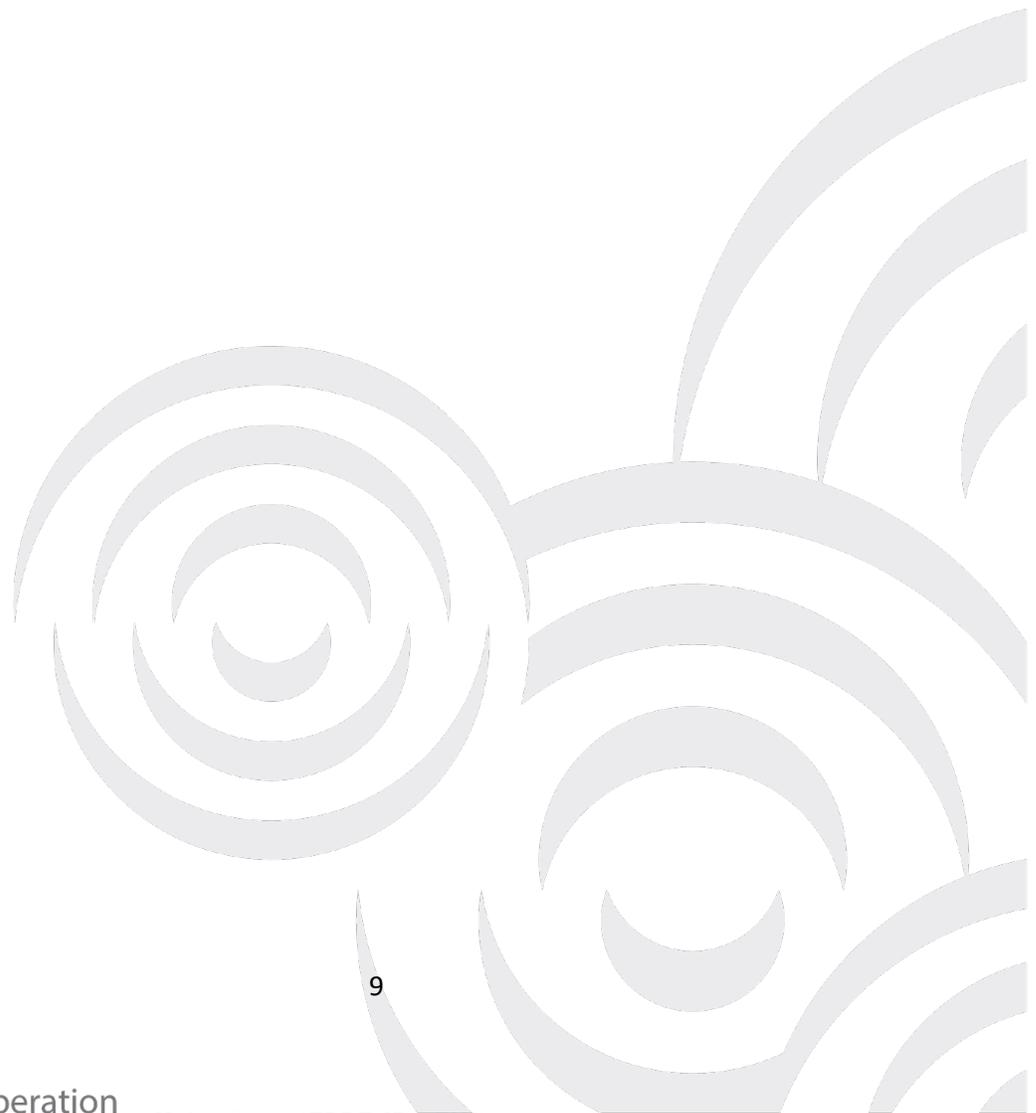
Public authorities and institutions that took part at the workshops had usually some ties to the actors in the local ecosystem and shared a common understanding of how crucial a functioning startup ecosystem and support to Young Innovators are for the innovation and economy at large. In most cases however institutions (their representatives) do not fully understand how startup programs are run, what type of resources are needed and with what frequency. A lot of interest and support is being proclaimed with concrete actions taken scarcely. Workshops were a suitable occasion to bring out not only experiences, results and best practices, but to also formulate the needs of support for entrepreneurship education to continue.

Several of the present stakeholders were representatives of other acceleration and pre-acceleration programs, with whom the project partners exchanged experiences and, in many cases, drafted a cooperation for the Hub. In terms of the entrepreneurship education as such, space for improvement was defined in these terms:

- Creating a wholesome and unified program while aligning individual young innovators' needs and reflecting their expectations
- Motivating new mentors and workshop leaders and creating an inspiring, rewarding work environment (including financial rewards)
- Establishing a sustainable business model of a program not depending on external resources

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- Tracking success and impact of the program on young innovators
- Nourishing cooperation between various accelerators and programs, not to duplicate the existing



INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING WORKSHOP - GUIDELINES

D5.1.1

August 2020

Civitta Slovakia

Danube Energy+

This document provides a guideline for organization of the Institutional Learning Workshop aiming to initiate collaboration with the public authorities. The goal of collaboration with a selected public authority – be it a municipality, a region or a ministry – is to demonstrate the importance of the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystems, the role young innovators play in the ecosystem and how these can be supported on a legislative and public level. Motivated public authority, co-opting the position of ecosystem supporter, can then act to maintain and develop the ecosystem after the end of the Danube Energy+ project.

1. Target audience

The workshop aims to assemble at least 5 representatives of a public authority, meaning regional authorities with legal mandates to administrate a part/aspect of public life, directly involved in the legislative process. e.g. Ministries, Municipalities, or Regional Councils. Representatives should be normal employees, as our purpose is to engage the executing officers in the agenda. Partner may reach the representatives by contacting a section lead in charge of the innovation/entrepreneurship/youth agenda, ideally with an already proclaimed interest in the topic and with previous connection to the project. The senior staffer can then identify his/her subordinates to participate in the workshop. The participants can be from one section or from across the authority, depending on whether the workshop's goal is spread awareness or to provide hands-on experience for staffers already working in the topic. More on selecting the content of the workshop based on the audience below.

2. Timeframe

Workshop can be organized within 1 or 2 days, depending on the amount of chosen activities and its feasibility. It may be advisable to start on half-a-day.

3. Goal

Workshop is essential to kick-off potential collaboration with public authorities and to boost their interest in the program. Since for building an innovation ecosystem it is essential to have support of those directly involved in the legislative process, engagement of public authorities in the process is absolutely crucial.

4. Methodology

Please, be aware that the suggested methodology should be accommodated to your regional environment, your attendees, their background and primary interests, their level of expertise and experience etc. Feel free to pick as many modules as you think would be appropriate and don't hesitate to adjust them to your needs and possibilities. The modules are designed to assure transfer of knowledge and experience from the Danube Energy+ Package and its Pilot.

5.1 Scenario 1: PA are interested in the energy sector and keen on gaining know-how and insight into this topic.

Energy sector and innovations in energy efficiency (1 hour)

Opening lecture/talk on innovations in energy sector using the energy business and challenges using the dynamic presentation of energy sector.

- What are the current trends and upcoming shifts?
- What opportunities may arise from the changing needs of the market?
- Why is it essential to innovate?
- What are the potential benefits?
- Concrete examples of successful innovative startups/implanted ideas/solutions (provided by energy expert + representative of a significant company + auspicious startup)

5.2 Scenario 2: PA are interested in acquiring entrepreneurship skills and getting entrepreneurial experience

Module 2A

Teaching entrepreneurial skills – example of ideation workshop (4 hours)

- Design a shorter version of an ideation workshop or presentation skills workshop (how to pitch, what is a pitch), which can draw heavily from the activities from the pilot
- Icebreaker activity
- Problem identification – the workshop participants may come up with the problems they are facing in their worklife
- Individual identification of one's own interest and capabilities, developing of own idea
- Team brainstorming, sharing the ideas, dot-method voting
- Simulated Idea Validation – or Idea Validation from other staffers at the authority
- Lean Canvas
- Pitching

Module 2B

Structured discussion on the design of the pre-acceleration learning scheme using the Danube Energy+ Tool and learning materials from Training workshop (A3.3). Discussion on the impact of such a scheme drawing on the Transregional Impact Report stating the impact of developed Tools. The discussion should contrast the authority's employees experiences with organizing/participating in /supporting of similar learning schemes and create an additional layer of understanding.

5.3 Scenario 3: PA are interested in gaining access to young innovators/startups and understanding their needs and motivations

Engaging with Young Innovators – learning from their needs and motivations (2 hours)

Module will focus on work with Young Innovators via learning materials and experience from identification and motivation process and organization of connection events with ecosystem actors.

- Presenting the results of the Pilot – lessons learned, identified problems and pains, needs and motivations of YI
- Showcase of the outputs created by Pilot participants
- Discussion session with representatives of YI, university representatives or connected ecosystem actors
- Invite participants from the Pilot to pitch and discuss with the authority in person

5.4 Scenario 4: PA are interested in getting visibility, inter-regional collaboration and creating partnerships

Module 4

Networking and sparking collaboration (3 hours)

- Organize a collaborative/networking session for experience sharing and dissemination of best practices and creation of synergies – invite partners from the consortium or reach out to the ASPs

Resources

Try to use the knowledge gathered from the Pilot and build upon your regional experience. In case the Pilot has not been run, try to use experience from other accelerator programs, gather information and representation of university students and young entrepreneurship initiatives.

Materials

- Welcoming space, pens, markers, flipchart, post-its
- In case of online version – Zoom or another platform of your choosing, cameras on all the time

Outputs

Please summarize the workshop and its outputs in:

- Institutional Learning Workshop Report
- Lessons Learnt Report

Detailed participants lists and description of their involvement can be found in the PPs Deliverables D.T3.1.1 – Reports from the Workshops.

List of organizations participating at the Workshops	
Bulgaria ¹	Ministry of Economy
Bulgaria	Ministry of Education and Science
Bulgaria	Executive agency for promotion of the SMEs
Bulgaria	Sofia Municipality
Bulgaria	CASTRA
Bulgaria	Biotechnology and Health Cluster
Bulgaria	Electric Vehicles Industrial Cluster
Bulgaria	Sofia University
Bulgaria	The Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands
Bulgaria	IKEM
Croatia	Zagreb Innovation Centar
Croatia	Innovation Centar Čakovec
Croatia	Science and technology park Rijeka
Croatia	Technology park Varaždin
Croatia	TERA digital innovation center, Osijek
Croatia	10 Business support organizations ²
Croatia	27 regional public administrations, BSOs
Czechia	Ministry of Industry and Trade
Czechia	Ministry of Finance
Czechia	City of Pardubice
Czechia	Charles University
Czechia	Chamber of Commerce
Czechia	Czech Academy of Science
Czechia	Regional Chamber of Commerce
Czechia	DisruptiveHUB
Czechia	Century21
Czechia	Adaptine
Germany	City of Karlsruhe

¹ As Bulgaria hosted open online events, the list of participating organizations is not exhaustive.

² Croatia did not provide detailed participants' list

Germany	Automotive Engineering Network
Germany	Founders' Alliance Karlsruhe
Germany	Vulcan Energy
Germany	Steinbeis Europa
Germany	Fokus Energie
Germany	Volksbank Karlsruhe
Romania	Cluj Napoca City Hall
Romania	RO TSA
Romania	Spherik Accelerator
Romania	Legal Accelerators
Romania	Cluj Napoca Startup City
Romania	PONT Group
Romania	TeleportHQ
Romania	PropTech Romania
Romania	Technical University Cluj-Napoca
Serbia	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Serbia	Environmental Protection Agency
Serbia	Nis City Council
Serbia	Belgrade City Council
Serbia	Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications
Serbia	Ministry of Youth and Sports
Serbia	Municipality of Zemun, Belgrade
Serbia	The city of Zrenjanin
Serbia	Chamber of Commerce
Serbia	Climate Innovation Hub
Serbia	Faculty of Applied Ecology
Serbia	UNDP
Serbia	Innovation Fund
Serbia	University of Novi Sad
Serbia	SEENERGY Storage
Serbia	ECO TECH
Serbia	Typhoon HULL
Serbia	Climate 101
Serbia	Faculty of Technical Sciences
Serbia	Dordevic startup
Serbia	Faculty of Mechanical Engineering

Serbia	CYRBS
Serbia	Strawberry Energy
Serbia	Vifkons
Serbia	Faculty of Electronics
Serbia	Faculty of Mining and Geology
Slovakia	Ministry of Regional Development
Slovakia	Ministry of Economy
Slovakia	SIEA
Slovakia	SBA
Slovakia	InQb
Slovakia	Nadacia Pontis
Slovakia	Campus 0100
Slovakia	Perry Talents
Slovakia	Mazars
Slovakia	Vacuumlabs
Slovakia	RWS Moravia
Slovakia	CBIM
Slovakia	SAPIE
Slovakia	MMLaw
Slovakia	Neulogy VC
Slovenia	Slovenian Enterprise Fund
Slovenia	IBM
Slovenia	School of business and economics Ljubljana
Slovenia	Faculty of Computer and Information Science
Slovenia	Business Angels of Slovenia
Slovenia	Flexkeeping
Slovenia	VisionAnchor
Ukraine	Uzhhorod City Council
Ukraine	NGO Youth Space
Ukraine	Agency of Regional Development "Transcarpathia"
Ukraine	NGO Ecosphere
Ukraine	Uzhhorod National University,
Ukraine	Association of Ukrainian Cities
Ukraine	IARDI
Ukraine	Agency of Regional Development "Transcarpathia"
Ukraine	ANKON Company

Ukraine	Yadro.Lab
Ukraine	Uzhhorod city council
Ukraine	Association of Ukrainian Cities

