DELIVERABLE D.T2.3.2

DT2.3.2 Rollout guideline for BSO capacity building - sustainability beyond project

Version 1
03 2022

Project information	
Project Index Number:	CE1644
Project Acronym:	Boost4BSO
Project Title:	Boosting CE Business Support Organizations (BSOs) capacities for I4.0 scaleup support
Website:	http://interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/Boost4BSO.html
Start Date of the Project:	01.04.2020
Duration:	24 Months
Document Control page	
Deliverable Title:	DT2.3.1 Boost4BSO focus group on a well-established intermediaries' platform
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1. INTRODUCTION

Exploitation is the part of the project that deals with the use of the results for policymaking, by identifying the results obtained during the action and their subsequent use in further research activities as well as developing, creating and marketing a process or service. It guarantees a *"return on investment"* of the funding provided by the Commission in term of *shared knowledge with the community*, strengthening the position and competitiveness of Europe in the global market.

This deliverable aims at resuming the main lessons learnt identified during the project's life span- included the results of *D.T2.2.4 Feedback and lessons learnt from external trainings (wave 2)*- together with the FOCUS Group suggestions, and to define some guidelines and tips for their sustainable use beyond project end.

2. THE ROLE OF THE WAVE 2: A STEP BACK

The second wave of BSOs capacity building have been organized and implemented by PPs towards external BSOs (beneficiaries) that have been trained on how to provide effective and efficient support services for local companies, covering all key aspects of transformation towards I4.0. Due to the pandemic, the partnership had to adapt the training methodology and decided to start with online training sessions in English language and to finalize the wave 2 with local sessions in native language. Here the list:

- ✓ Event 1 **I4.0 opportunity assessment**
- ✓ Event 2 **Understanding I4.0 technology**.
- ✓ Event 3 **Understanding I4.0 business implications**
- ✓ Event 4 **Design of I4.0 transformation roadmap**
- ⭐ Event 5 **Local workshop in native language**, **with knowledge exchange, discussion about Do's and Don'ts, best/worst practices**

The Wave two allowed the partners to better focalise the main areas of support intervention that SMEs and BSOs need, and, in the meantime, the tools to be provided in the competence pack.

3. EXPLORING PERSPECTIVES: LESSONS LEARNT IN LOCAL WORKSHOP WITH BSOs

The local workshops in native language have been an occasion to exchange and explore how WAVE 2 participants liked and found useful the training. Their feedback has been useful to optimize the competence pack for BSOs: the details per country are available in the deliverable *D.T2.2.3 Wave 2: Capacity building for associated and external BSO:* here a general analysis of the feedbacks that have been clustered in 3 main areas: METHODOLOGY, BSO PERSPECTIVE and SME PERSPECTIVE.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology proposed during the Capacity Building wave was, for some, a useful recap of the most important instruments and approaches to I4.0 consultancy, for others it consisted in a new methodology, which will be used for supporting SMEs in their I4.0 evolution process. Moreover, the dynamic approach of the organizers and the overall processing of presentations was very much appreciated by the external BSOs: the assessment of the industry 4.0 readiness has been

evaluated as a good tool that allows SMEs to better understand their state of play. The transformation roadmap has been appreciated too, since it's a typical situation that SMEs experience during a digital transformation process. The VDMA METHODOLOGY - splitting the chain into single steps - offered a comprehensive overview on the state of the art, and has been evaluated a good tool in helping small companies to understand the complexity of the production (general vision) and to harmonise them.

The Pilot Actions have been considered as an opportunity for BSOs both to test the new methodology proposed and to offer a useful service to local SMEs, supporting the enterprises in understanding the benefits of I 4.0 transformation.

<u>BSOs ON THEIRSELVES</u>

BSOs considered trust essential, when cooperating with SMEs, as well as the use of clear and understandable terms, to commit SMEs in digital transformation. They should be able to stress the potential benefits (not only financial) produced by the I4.0 implementation because most of the SMEs are not aware of, and consequently they do not know they could need it; moreover, the support should pay attention on the implementation phase too, with tutoring services according to the SME specific needs.

The cooperation with the smaller companies is time consuming and most of them are not ready to take the next step: they still face organisational challenges and need to jump first from Industry 2.0 to Industry 3.0 (basic automation, MES, ERP). Consequently, BSOs should offer a progressive support program, to mitigate "shock".

<u>BSOs TOWARDS SMEs</u>

There is a considerable gap between large and medium enterprises on the one hand, who have already entered Industry 4.0 and on the other hand small enterprises, which are at the very beginning. Moreover, it represented an opportunity to increase knowledge (local, Central EU) about the general level of the

✓ Companies that are aware they are lacking something and they are open for input from outside;

✓ Companies that are aware of the challenges and intend to solve them internally, but are hardly open to listen to the proposals of external consultants, because once you involve a consultant, you will have to stick to him/her; some of them do not trust externals regarding non-disclosure and for that reason SMEs appreciate when they are supported by an independent BSO, who has no need to sell any product and who does not intend to become irreplaceable for the company (consultant lock-in);

✓ Companies that are already advanced in digital transformation, but still have some "blind spots", e.g. the production lines are already digitalized, but the business models need to be adapted to exploit all generated data, and/or to provide new services.

More important than the technical progress, is the company's organisational culture, and the innovation culture. The "human" factor becomes more important when approaching digitalization: because SMEs must have people who are able and willing to work with systems. Organizational changes in a company have to be considered because they play a key role, e.g., needed due to the growth of a company, from a patriarchy scheme in a small company (the founder/owner decides everything) to a more democratic or distributed decision-making process in a medium sized company.

SMEs usually concern that calls for proposals related to digital transformation are too much technology focussed with little space for discussion on business models and organisational cultures: in fact, digital transformation should not only be seen through industrial technologies. There are many companies thinking about including digital technologies to improve HR management, relations with clients and suppliers, or to deliver intelligent services.

4. FOCUS GROUP: COLLECTING INPUTS AND SHARE KNOWLEDGE

The online focus group organised on 26th January 2022 – to foster closer cooperation between European clusters and BSOs - contributed to offer a European perspective on the main actions to ensure a sustainable use and exploitation of the Boost4BSO capacity-building programme: it involved seven persons representing seven clusters and eight EU projects.

The focus group has been an occasion for **disseminating** the project goals and the methodology adopted for supporting BSOs, and consequently SMEs, in facing the new challenges given by the transformation towards I4.0. At the same time, it represented the chance for sharing **ideas and experiences** among very skilled BSOs, representing EU clusters and EU projects. The final remarks of the focus group have been in line with the Boost4BSOmain observations: **technology is only one part of the overall framework.** BSOs with relatively poor experience in this specific field should acquire new competences and Boost4BSO can give those tools and methodology.

5. SUSTAINABILITY SEEDS: ROLLOUT GUIDELINE FOR BSO CAPACITY BUILDING

Sustainability is a challenging topic because after the project end: on the one hand, partners have less occasions to meet and work together and to organise events, keeping the same pace as during the development of the project: on the other hand, the possible beneficiaries of the Boos4BSO outputs are quite numerous and distributed all over Europe. The consortium will try to maintain the attention on project's heritage by adopting a practical and agile sustainable methodology, stressing the role of the project platform as the place to

- ✓ find the methodology for supporting adoption of new I4.0 technologies by SMEs, and to explore relevant analysis on SMEs digital path;

- ✓ find or present technology solutions about I4.0: partners will promote this digital showcase to their ecosystems to encourage companies to present their solutions or find collaborative/commercial partners;

- ✓ get in contacts with Experts and public support for Industry 4.0 transformation projects: BSOs that have less experience can find experts that can accelerate their skill in 4.0 topics and analysis to support SMEs.

The **INTERNAL COMMUNICATION** works tightly linked to the sustainability of the project, aiming to guarantee a fluid interaction among partners and avoid having the previous issues limiting capacity for exploitation and dissemination actions. Projects partners agreed to pursue collaboration after the formal end of the project. The consortium agreed
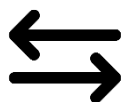
- ✓ in **organising online meetings every 3 months** to discuss about further collaborative opportunities, events and sharing knowledge on 4.0 topics and beyond;

- organising a **minimum number of events under the framework of BOOST4BSO** to stress the availability of the platform that will exist after the project end and it will be the right tool;

- **exchange information and opportunities** useful for their ecosystems (i.e., Open Calls, pilot actions, webinars, ...) related to BOOST4BSO topics;

- **exchange best practices, methodologies** improving their capacity to support companies in their digital transition

- **involving partners in focus groups, co-creation workshops, networking events** to present BOOST4BSO methodologies and tools.

- **update of knowledge platform Boost4BSO.org – once per month by one PP (excel list, which PP is publishing content in which month)**

The **EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION** plays a key role in sustainable and exploitable action towards project, maintaining a high level of **attention regarding I4.0 topics** as well as the **BOOST4BSO partners and tools.** The strategy includes two levels of communication: 1) maintaining the contacts with external BSOs and stakeholders involved in project's activities, 2) disseminate project's results and tools' opportunities to general audience.

COMMUNITY: A key factor in the success of sustainable exploitation is to **turn potential project "customers" into participants** by making them embrace the project idea at an early stage. In fact, the **FOCUS GROUP as well as WAVE 2** can be seen as a starting point creating with project partners a **BOOST4BSOs community** (since now community partners) in defining the competence pack and the tools available through which they

- **increased knowledge on 4.0 topics** (common taxonomy adopted, megatrend analyses on companies, BSOs skills needs/gaps/opportunities…)

- had an **example on how they can work with BSOs in COVID time** to commit people (Online events/Waves and Championship);

- have been **inspired from the pilot actions** that tested the approach with companies (Wave 3) and replicate it or use their results;

- can be **inspired from other experiences** and perspectives of EU projects to have a panorama of their methodologies and opportunities: a **"land of synergies" with other organisations** to create room for improvement and resource sharing when possible;

- can **accelerate their networking opportunities** among central Europe;

Interconnectedness among community partners and other EU projects has been encouraged by BOOST4BSO since the beginning as indicated by Things+, InnoPeer AVM and IoT4Industry that explicated their role of Ambassador on LinkedIn. This "loudspeaker mechanism" will be extent for other European initiatives (i.e., EDIHs), as already realised by MIND4MACHINES, an Innosup initiative (36 months) aiming at facilitate the cross-sectoral and cross-border support needed by manufacturing SMEs to test and adopt the latest digital technologies for transformation towards smarter, greener, and more resource-efficient manufacturing, aligned with the latest EU policies. The project demonstrated its engagement on LinkedIn but also included Boost4BSO methodology into its **Joint Strategic Agenda** as part of the coming soon open call (27th April 2022). See the here below table, that shows how BOOST4BSO has been able to interconnect with MIND4MACHINES project:

Table 2. Relevant EU Funded Projects linked to MIND4MACHINES Proposal

Project	Information	Potential Collaboration Opportunities	Relevant Partner /s
Boost4BSO - Boosting Central Europe (CE) Business Support Organizations (BSOs) capacities for I4.0 scale up support	Focusing on Industry 4.0/Advanced Manufacturing, improving knowledge build-up and sustainable knowledge transfer linkages among Central Europe (CE) and business support organizations (BSO), providing effective and efficient support services for local companies, covering all key aspects of transformation towards I4.0.	MIND4MACHINES' partners may have profits of the knowledge transfer between CE and BSOs which is covering all key aspects of transformation towards I4.0.	MESAP

DISSEMINATION: Project Partners agreed on **publishing at least one digital case per year per partners** on the project platform and in their main communication tools (social media, website, ECCP, ...) to foster the attention on it and to help BSOs to clarify the methodology. In fact, **real cases often contribute** to clarify how to tune in with companies to support them in the transition.

External partners included in **community partners** (not only) will be invited to **share their cases on the project's platform** and this exchange will increase the general knowledge and the use of standard methods at stakeholders' disposal. Moreover, they will be encouraged **to give evidence through their channels** too, including the BOOST4BSO in the description/storytelling (i.e., tag on LinkedIn).