

OVERVIEW OF EU INSTRUMENTS CONTRIBUTING TO THE INTERNATIONALISATION OF EUROPEAN BUSINESSES

2 MARCH 2017

The elaboration of this overview came as a response to the observed fact that potential stakeholders in the field of business internationalisation have often fragmented knowledge on the funding possibilities and the instruments (direct and indirect) that exist in the framework of several EU programmes. European businesses and SMEs in particular are not sufficiently aware of these EU actions supporting internationalisation and the opportunities they provide.

It was therefore felt necessary in order to clarify the situation and better inform European businesses to collect factual information on the EU instruments contributing to the internationalisation of European enterprises. Several Directorates General of the European Commission have contributed to the overview reflecting the increasing interest from different EU policies in the internationalisation of European businesses.

The objective is to rationalise, simplify and articulate existing EU instruments contributing to the internationalisation of European businesses, so that they form a coherent and user-friendly package of tools.

In a world where most of the future economic growth is expected to happen outside the EU, optimal use should be made of all levers to promote EU economic interests and prosperity in a global context.

The Commission services, EEAS and EIB have started a strategic reflection on EU Economic Diplomacy for developing together a pro-active and coherent approach to the external dimension of the EU's economic agenda that can decisively contribute to competitiveness, growth and jobs inside the Union.

Important EU initiatives are not included in this overview given that they are not operational yet. This is the case of the Commission proposals for (i) Revision of the EIB External lending Mandate¹ for in particular strengthening support to SMEs operating outside the EU, and a revision of eligible countries, and (ii) the European External Investment Plan² including an integrated approach to promoting investment in Africa and in the European Neighbourhood.

This overview is available on the DG GROW web site:

https://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/international-aspects_en

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¹ COM (2016) 583 final

² COM (2016) 586 final

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1. COSME (2014-2020, €2.3 billion, DG GROW)

- Enterprise Europe Network
- IPR SME Helpdesks
- EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation
- Network of European Business Organisations in Third countries
- Cluster internationalisation
- Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme (in the EU and COSME countries)
- Small Business Act (SBA)
- Business Beyond Borders
- Ready2GO

COSME (Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises)'s aim is to strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of the Union's enterprises, including by promoting their internationalisation. It largely continues the activities started under the previous programme, the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (EIP) and ensures continuity of initiatives and actions already undertaken under it, such as the Enterprise Europe Network and the IPR SME helpdesks. COSME is open to third countries' participation as defined under Article 6 of the COSME Regulation^[1]. Countries that have joined the Programme are: Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Montenegro, Moldova, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey. Ukraine ratified the International Agreement on 22 February 2017. It will enter into force once the President signs the law.

http://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/international-aspects/index_en.htm

Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) (2015-2021, € 49 million/year for EU28 and COSME participating countries, no EU contribution for EEN Business Cooperation Centres

<http://een.ec.europa.eu/>

The Enterprise Europe Network helps European SMEs find the right partners to innovate and grow internationally. It is a true one-stop shop, helping SMEs to develop their business in new markets, source or license new technologies, and get access to EU finance and EU funding. The Network has some 600 partners (SME support service providers) in more than 50 countries. Network partners have been selected in EU Member States and in the COSME participating countries, as well as in other third countries (Business Cooperation Centres).

^[1]The following groups of countries are eligible for participation in COSME:

- a. European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries which are members of the European Economic Area (EEA), in accordance with the conditions laid down in the EEA Agreement, and other European countries when agreements and procedures so allow;
- b. Accessing countries, candidate countries and potential candidates in accordance with the general principles and general terms and conditions for the participation of those countries in the Union's programmes established in the respective Framework Agreements and Association Council Decisions, or similar arrangements;
- c. Countries falling within the scope of the European neighbourhood policies, when agreements and procedures so allow and in accordance with the general principles and general terms and conditions for the participation of those countries in the Union's programmes established in the respective Framework Agreements, Protocols to Association Agreements and Association Council Decisions.

The Network's services:

Business co-operation

- Services to develop trans-national (within the EU) and international (beyond the EU) commercial co-operation between SMEs.

Innovation and transfer of technology and knowledge

- Helping SMEs become more innovative;
- Services for the trans-national and international transfer of technology, knowledge and research cooperation.

Enterprise Europe Network partners based in countries participating in the Horizon 2020 programme provide specific services to help SMEs in their regions enhance their innovation management capacities.

The Network also offers specific services to help SMEs find appropriate finance, including support for further developing investment readiness, brokerage activities linking SMEs with private investors, assistance for applying for risk finance under EU schemes managed via financial intermediaries, and a range of other innovation support activities and services.

Internationalisation beyond the EU

- Help SMEs finding suitable business partners to expand their business and enter new markets, notably through matchmaking services and the provision of market information by Business Cooperation Centres.

Advice

- Advice and information to EU-based SMEs to help them become more competitive, and to enable them to benefit from opportunities in the single market, including advice on EU legislation.
- New services to support scale-ups will be launched in mid-2017.

Feedback

- Providing feedback from EU-based SMEs to the Commission to ensure that future legislation responds to the companies' needs.

IPR SME Helpdesks for China, ASEAN and MERCOSUR (2016-2020, €7 million)

The EU's IPR SME Helpdesks provide advice for SMEs on intellectual property rights. The helpdesks offer first-line expert advice on IPR matters, liaison with outside experts and preparation of general and customised training.

- The **China IPR SME Helpdesk** supports European Union (EU) small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to both protect and enforce their Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) in or relating to China, through the provision of free information and services. These take the form of jargon-free, first-line, confidential advice on intellectual property and related issues, plus training, materials and online resources. The Helpdesk's free services for European SMEs include Helpdesk Enquiry Service, training on China IPR protection and enforcement in Europe and China, tailored to the needs of SMEs, general IPR issues,

including IP registration and establishing an IP protection strategy, practical business challenges such as choosing a Chinese business partner, attending a trade fair, licensing, helpdesk IPR Clinics. The multi-lingual online portal provides easy access for all EU SMEs to Helpdesk information and services, including Helpdesk guides, E-learning modules, event information, and live webinars.

<http://www.china-iprhelpdesk.eu>

- The **ASEAN IPR SME Helpdesk** project supports overall COSME objectives through the specific aims of its seven linked Work Packages. 1. Provision of dedicated Enquiry Helpline to provide personalised first line IP advice; 2. Development of state-of-the art IPR training materials and state of the art research; 3. Delivery of online and offline training events in South-East Asia and Europe; 4. Monitoring of IP policy and legislation in South-East Asia as well as facilitation of initial contact with local law enforcement agencies; 5. Supporting IP practices within EU-South-East Asia business partnerships; 6. Dissemination of project outputs and marketing activities for greater service uptake including website and common front page and the establishment of an effective cooperation mechanism across all three Helpdesks; 7. Support of joint actions between regional helpdesks and European Helpdesk. A successful implementation of the ASEAN IPR SME Helpdesk ensures that all objectives will be reached through an integrated marketing and communications strategy, which maximises outreach to EU SMEs through intermediary organisations and directly via social media.

<http://www.asean-iprhelpdesk.eu>

- The **MERCOSUR IPR SME Helpdesk** facilitates the expansion of the European Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) which are interested in or already operating in the MERCOSUR region and Chile, through increased know-how of the usage and enforcement of the Intellectual Property (IP) rights system. Accessible services are free of charge, user-friendly, first-line personalised and confidential advice on IP and related issues, plus factsheets, training, and online resources.

<http://www.mercosur-iprhelpdesk.eu/>

EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation (€2,8 million/year)

<http://www.eu-japan.eu/>

The Centre 'objectives are to improve European competitiveness through the facilitation of access to the Japanese market for European enterprises and SMEs in particular. The Centre supports trade exchanges, investments and access to public procurements. It develops a better knowledge of the business environment in Japan through executive training programmes, studies, seminars, helpdesk and business information support and logistic support. The "Vulcanus in Japan" programme provides industrial placements for European engineering and science students in Japan.

European Business Organisations (EBO) Network (€ 0.1 million / year)

<http://www.ebowwn.com/>

The EBO Worldwide Network is the sole network representing EU-wide business interests in Third Countries. Its main objectives are to promote the exchange of views between these associations and their host countries, to raise awareness on EU policy priorities and to improve the market access for European business in Third countries. Budget is only for facilitating meetings

Cluster internationalisation Programme for SMEs (2014-2020, €19 million)

http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/cluster/internationalisation/index_en.htm

The "Cluster internationalisation Programme for SMEs" under COSME contributes to establish and support pan-European cluster consortia to accelerate the development of more world-class clusters in all COSME participating countries by facilitating cluster internationalisation in a more strategic manner at EU level and by reinforcing cluster cooperation to better support European SMEs in global competition. The programme includes:

- A **“Cluster Go International”** action aimed to support the establishment of a number of "European Strategic Cluster Partnerships - Going International" (ESCP-4i) that will lead to international cluster cooperation in fields of strategic interest. This action contributes to encourage European clusters to work concretely together to exploit synergies across borders and sectors and develop a joint internationalisation strategy with common goals towards specific third markets. These partnerships provide a vehicle to help European SMEs involved in clusters contribute to the emergence of new industrial value chains and take a leading position globally (2014-2020, €15.5 million) and;
- The **European Cluster Collaboration Platform** (ECCP) represents the European hub connecting the cluster community within and beyond Europe and supports international cluster cooperation through (a) the mapping and profiling of cluster organisations and a partner search tool facilitating networking between cluster across Europe from and beyond Europe (the Platform includes currently over 500 clusters registered), (b) the organisation of **international cluster matchmaking events** with clusters and business organisations from third countries (in 2016, cluster matchmakings events were organised with USA, Taiwan, Iran, Mexico and Brazil gathering more than 200 European clusters and generating over 1,000 one-to-one meetings), and (c) the promotion of up-to-date information on the cluster landscape in strategic third countries with a view to promote international cluster cooperation and facilitate the integration of European SMEs in global value chains. See at: <http://www.clustercollaboration.eu/>

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme (in the EU and COSME countries) (2014-2020, € 55.3 million)

<http://www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu/index.php>

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs is a cross-border exchange programme aiming to facilitate the exchange of entrepreneurial and management experience between entrepreneurs from participating countries.

The exchange is implemented by a stay (duration of 1-6 months) of the newly established or potential entrepreneur with a well-experienced entrepreneur running an SME in another country. The exchange helps the new entrepreneur (NE) acquire the skills needed to run a small firm. The host entrepreneur (HE) benefits from fresh perspectives on his/her business and gets the opportunities to cooperate with foreign partners or explore new markets. The programme in the past has been running under the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP).

Currently, nationals from 37 COSME participating countries can participate in Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs. At the moment the programme has local contact point in 30 participating countries (26 EU Member States including Outermost Regions of EU and OCTs plus 4 COSME participating countries (Albania, Armenia, Serbia and Turkey).

Small Business Act

https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/small-business-act_en

The Small Business Act (SBA) is an overarching framework for the EU policy on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). It aims to improve the approach to entrepreneurship in Europe, simplify the regulatory and policy environment for SMEs, and remove the remaining barriers to their development. The SME Performance Review is one of the main tools the European Commission uses to monitor and assess countries' progress in implementing the SBA on a yearly basis. With an emphasis on the measures from the SBA Action Plan, the review brings comprehensive information on the performance of SMEs in EU countries and other partner countries. It consists of two parts: an annual report on European SMEs and SBA country fact sheets.

The European Small Business Act, a set of policy guidelines and recommendations to enable Member States to improve various aspects of the business environment for SME's, has, although initially intended as an internal EU policy co-ordination instrument, become an important co-operation tool in the EU's relations with the "near abroad".

Financial Instruments

www.access2finance.eu.

The Equity Facility for Growth (EFG)

Through COSME EFG, the European Investment Fund invests in selected venture capital and private equity funds – acting as financial intermediaries – that provide funding to SMEs predominantly in their expansion and growth stages. COSME EFG also invests in funds helping portfolio companies to expand and to internationalise. The EFG is a successor to the High Growth and Innovative SME Facility (“GIF2”), under the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) implemented in 2007-2013. SMEs interested in these sources of finance can contact one of the intermediaries available under COSME and other EU programmes at the following website:

The Loan Guarantee Facility (LGF)

Through COSME LGF, the European Investment Fund offers guarantees and counter guarantees to selected financial intermediaries (e.g. guarantee institutions, banks, leasing companies) to help them to provide loans and leases to SMEs which they would otherwise not support. By sharing the risk, the COSME guarantees allow the financial intermediaries to widen the range of SMEs and the type of transactions that they can finance. Via the LGF, the EIF also offers guarantees for the securitisation of SME debt finance portfolios with the aim of enabling financial intermediaries to generate new SME debt finance portfolios. LGF is a successor to the SME Guarantee Facility (SMEG), successfully implemented under the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) in the 2007-2013 programming period. SMEs interested in these sources of finance can contact one of the intermediaries available under COSME and other EU programmes at the following website:

www.access2finance.eu.

Business Beyond Borders (2016-2019)

<http://www.businessbeyondborders.info/>

Business Beyond Borders is a new initiative with the objective to help EU businesses, in particular Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Clusters, to operate internationally. The goal of the initiative is to increase economic growth within and outside Europe. Among the services offered, the initiative helps firms maximise the benefits of their participation in international fairs and exhibitions, notably through the organisation of Business to Business (B2B) and Cluster to Cluster (C2C) matchmaking events. The initiative is coordinated by EUROCHAMBRES and will be organised as 10 two-day events in the framework of major international fairs inside and outside the EU, including Australia, South Africa, India, Chile, Iran, among others.

Ready2GO (2016-2018)

www.b2match.eu/ready2go

The aim of "Ready2GO" is to select 80 SMEs in the EU and other COSME countries to assist them from the very first steps of their internationalisation process in five target third country markets (Canada, USA, Chile, Cameroon, India). This initiative is implemented as a first test project aimed to empirically identify all elements, processes, obstacles in the path that SMEs need to follow to internationalise their business. All over "Ready2GO", SMEs will be provided with the necessary tools for guaranteed success abroad (individual training and coaching programme to draft an international business plan, matchmaking and brokerage events...).

2. ICI (2007-2013, €172 million, FPI)

- **European Business and Regulatory Cooperation with Taiwan**
- **EU Business and Information Programme with Hong Kong/Macau**
- **EU-GCC Trade and Business Cooperation Facility**

The Industrialised Countries Instrument (ICI) has been the main vehicle for cooperation with 17 industrialised and other high-income countries and territories in North America, Asia-Pacific and in the Gulf region.) under the financing period 2007-2013 FPI that is responsible for this instrument, manages the following two programmes:

European Business and Regulatory Cooperation (EBRC) with Taiwan, Service contract (600,000 EUR)

<http://www.ebrc.com.tw/>

The first objective is to enhance the regulatory environment for trade and investment in Taiwan and to promote European solutions and disseminate best practices for regulatory issues. This would be served by organising seminars, workshops, study tours and other activities that promote closer cooperation between the EU and the Republic of China on specific topics such as standardisation, certification, sectorial regulatory issues (e.g. electric products, health industry etc), intellectual property rights (IPR), public procurement, food safety, financial services regulations, telecommunication, green solutions and other service sectors, etc.

The second objective is to enhance the visibility of the EU in Taiwan by organising business and economy related events to promote European excellence in specific sectors such as low carbon economy and technology /ICT where there are higher potentials for developing closer industrial cooperation between the EU and Taiwan. *This project will be operational until the end of 2017.*

EU Business and Information Programme with Hong Kong/Macao (400,000 EUR)

The general objective of the Business Information Programme is to strengthen economic partnership and business cooperation with Hong Kong and Macao and ensure a stronger and coordinated representation of European business and its interests in Hong Kong and Macao.

A first specific objective is to ensure the continuation and servicing of existing Councils and disseminate timely and accurate information about relevant regulatory developments at European Union level. The project will as well facilitate the establishment of one additional Business Council for a sector relevant for EU business.

A second objective is to promote the visibility and projection of the EU image in Hong Kong and/or Macao by organising business and economy related events. In the framework of the project, two outreach activities will be organised, one of which one will be in cooperation with the European Chamber of Commerce in Shenzhen and/or in Guangzhou. This event will target EU companies entering the mainland Chinese market via Hong Kong and Macao. *This project will be operational until mid-2017.*

EU-GCC Trade and Business Cooperation Facility, (€ 2,4 million)

<http://eu-gcc.org/>

The overall objective of this facility is to strengthen EU-GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) sustainable trade, investment and business cooperation through mutual understanding and dialogue. The project purpose is to increase trade and investment opportunities through creating stronger business to business links and policy dialogues between the EU and GCC countries. Three components will achieve the project purpose (i) Policy Support, (ii) Trainings and (iii) Events and Communication. The first EU-GCC Business Forum was held in Brussels in May 2016 and the second one took place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on 9 January 2017. The two business Fora focused on infrastructure development and investment, and PPP opportunities in the GCC.

3. ICI+ (EU budgets 2012-2013) and Preparatory Actions China/Asia Middle Income Countries (EU budgets 2007-2010), DG DEVCO

- **EU SME Centre in China**
- **European Association for Business and Commerce (EABC) in Thailand**
- **European Chamber of Commerce in Myanmar**
- **EuroCham Malaysia**
- **EuroCham Philippines**
- **EuroCham Laos**
- **EuroCham Cambodia**
- **EuroCham Indonesia +**
- **European Indonesian Business Network (EIBN) Indonesia**
- **European Vietnamese Business Network (EVBN) Vietnam**

- **Coordination Platform for Asia, covering all actions mentioned above**
- **European and Latin American Business Services and Innovation Network**

Preparatory Actions were adopted by the EU budgetary authority as a pilot instrument or the geographically targeted pursuit of EU political, economic, commercial, academic and research interests and priorities. Those led to the amendment of the legal basis for the Instrument for cooperation with industrialised countries that extended its eligibility to non-ACP developing countries (ICI+). It aims to strengthen the EU relationships with strategic developing country partners in the pursuit of EU own and global interests.

EU support for European business in emerging Asian markets

To significantly strengthen the local capacity of European business to conduct advocacy, with one single voice, on market access related issues and more broadly the local business environment and to assist all EU companies to establish and develop a business (trade, commercial presence, investment) presence in a given third country market through a "first entry support" service, including website-based access to professional first-entry information, combined with active promotion, visibility and outreach in the EU. Implementation to be guided by 3 firm principles: complementarity with EU MS existing support measures for national business internationalisation, European value added, financial sustainability.

All measures below are implemented through grant contracts, with co-funding by the beneficiary consortium.

EU co-funding for "new structures":

- **EU SME Centre in China** (2010-2018, 2-phase funding totalling €7 million) Consortium of mainly China-based pan- and bilateral European business support structures (led by the British Chinese Business Association). The Centre provides a comprehensive range of first-line and hands-on support services to European SMEs, getting them ready to do business in China. The EU SME Centre team of experts provides online advice and support in four areas: business development, law, standards and conformity assessment and human resources.
www.eusmecentre.org.cn
- **European Chamber of Commerce in Myanmar** (2014-2019, €2.7 million) consortium under the lead of the French-Burmese bilateral chamber of commerce, with EU-based EuroChambres as partner.

EU co-funding for existing locally-based pan-European EuroChams, and for other locally-based business support structures to significantly strengthen the business support service already provided, namely "single voice of European business/advocacy", and to develop new business support services with pan-European scope, in particular "first entry support for European SMEs", combined with pro-active dissemination and outreach activities directed at EU-based SMEs

- **EuroCham Malaysia** (2013-2018, €2.7 million) one single grant contract for all pan-European services
<http://www.eumcci.com/>
- **EuroCham Philippines** (2013-2018, €3.5 million) one single grant contract for all pan-European services

<http://www.eccp.com/>

- **EuroCham Laos** (2014-2020, €2 million) one single grant contract for all pan-European services
<http://eccil.org/>
- **EuroCham Cambodia** (2014-2019, €2.5 million) one single grant contract for all pan-European services
<http://www.eurocham-cambodia.org/>
- **EuroCham Indonesia** (2013-2018, € 2 million) for "single voice of European business/advocacy" service only.
<http://www.eurocham.or.id/>
(Exceptional situation of two distinct grant contracts reflecting the local MoU-based split of competences between the EuroCham (in charge of advocacy only) and the local bilateral Chambers of commerce of EU member states (EIBN) – see below)

Other locally based business support structures:

- **European Indonesian Business Network (EIBN) Indonesia** (2013-2018, €2.6 million) grant contract with a locally-based consortium of EU MS bilateral chambers, to strengthen the local capacity of "first entry support and outreach" consortium led by the German-Indonesian Chamber
<http://www.eibn.org/>
- **European Vietnamese Business Network (EVBN) Vietnam** (2013-2018, €3.8 million) consortium led by the French-Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce) with the local bilateral Italian chamber of commerce, and 3 EU-based chambers. EuroCham Vietnam decided in February 2015 to cooperate with the consortium with a view to closely cooperate in the advocacy component which is its initial mission.
<http://evbn.org/>

Coordination Platform for Asia, covering all actions mentioned above

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

This Platform (€ 1.3 million, 2015-2018) will focus on creating a virtual bridge between those measures, in Asia, and the national and pan-European business support organisations, chambers of commerce and business associations based in the EU, and on nurturing the collaboration and coordination among those above measures in the areas of (i) outreach to EU-based companies, and (ii) coordinated advocacy activities at e.g. EU-ASEAN and EU levels. It will promote coordination and synergy between participants to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. EU MS or pan-European business support organisations, chambers of commerce and associations may join the Platform as partners.

The European and Latin American Business Services (ELANbiz)

<http://www.elanbiz.org/home>

2015-2017, Component 1 - €5.5 million for the Business Services: " How-to-do business Information Services".

The purpose of ELAN biz (ELAN – Component 1) is to provide up-to-date and comprehensive information on how-to-do business³ in specific Latin American countries for European SMEs interested in entering and growing in these markets. This information platform facilitates market access, highlight opportunities and serve as a basis for advocating in favour of general European business interests. The platform is connected to existing European and Latin American business support organisations and networks, located in the countries or in the EU (business associations and chambers, trade promotion agencies, European Enterprise Network, other Member States business service structures, etc.) and is accessible for EU SMEs. This contributes to improve the operations of European SMEs in Latin America. In addition, ELAN identifies concrete sectors of strategic interests for European economic activities and highlights business opportunities and potential risks (failure to enforce intellectual property rights, red tape, etc.) on a country and region level, i.e. breaking it down to specific clusters, countries or economic areas. An updated and comprehensive website ensures the visibility and facilitates coordination with all stakeholders. Countries covered are at least Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and Costa Rica (as regional hub for Central America). This very light and cheap infrastructure is complemented by a service provider "*ask the expert*" which is at the disposal of European SMEs, Eurocamaras and EU business institutions.

The European and Latin American Innovation Network (ELANnetwork)

<http://www.elannetwork.org/>

2015-2017, Component 2 - €5.5 million for the innovation networking: "how to meet the Latin American demand for knowledge and innovative technology".

(ELAN Network) main purpose is to generate technology-based business opportunities between European and Latin American SMEs. The ELAN Network is a space for collaboration, co-generation and development of technology based business opportunities between Europe and Latin America. It brings together key European and Latin American research and innovation actors (R&I), who promote technology based transformation processes and economic growth, in order to promote the generation of technology based business opportunities between European and Latin American SMEs, promote the exchange of knowledge, technology transfer and co-creation processes to foster the competitiveness of SMEs and an equitable and sustainable socio-economic development; accompany innovative SMEs in their efforts to transfer technology to new geographical markets.

ELAN Network will be organising networking events to generate technology-based business opportunities in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico and Peru. It has a special focus on renewable energy, biotechnology, environmental technology, new materials, health, ICT and nanotechnology.

4. PARTNERSHIP INSTRUMENT (PI) (2014-2020, €954 million, FPI)

³ This includes information regarding goods, services, regulatory and standards issues, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards, Intellectual Property Rights - as collected and elaborated by the IPR Help desk -, procurement, investment rules and investment incentives, legal issues, administrative procedures related to business activities, social laws, taxes, regulatory environment and standards, specific market information, collection of market studies, business opportunities, financing mechanisms, all kind of issues relevant for doing business, data about relevant local business events such as fairs, events, etc

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/fpi/what-we-do/partnership_instrument_en.htm

- **Clean energy cooperation with India**
- **EU Gateway/Business Avenues in South East Asia**
- **Green Gateway to Korea**
- **EU Gateway to China**
- **Low carbon business action in Brazil and Mexico**
- **Market access and trade & investment agreement negotiation & implementation facility**
- **Public Procurement Initiative**
- **Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX)**
- **EU-China Aviation project**
- **International urban cooperation**
- **Resources efficiency initiative in India**
- **Green Gateway to Japan**
- **EU-South East Asia civil aviation project**
- **Feasibility study for an EU-Canada mineral investment facility**
- **Support to CETA implementation & EU Chambers' coordination**

The PI is a new foreign policy instrument whose objective is to promote thorough cooperation the EU interests and reinforce the EU as a political player on the world scene. The PI intends to support EU's efforts towards enhanced engagement with EU Strategic partners and emerging economies, inter alia by promoting adherence to global standards through regulatory co-operation, by helping to strengthen EU Market Access Teams on the ground, by fostering policy dialogue and technical assistance on issues such as Intellectual Property Rights, by promoting business co-operation, innovation and knowledge management, as well as by underpinning co-operation with international institutions.

The **PI 2014 Annual Action Plan** includes a number of actions of direct and indirect interest to European businesses willing to internationalise their activities such as the:

- **Clean energy cooperation with India (€5 million)**

The project aims to enhance India's capacity to deploy low carbon energy production and improve energy efficiency, thus contributing to the mitigation of global climate change. Project activities will support India's efforts to secure the supply of energy and contribute to global energy security. Finally, the project will create opportunities for European businesses in the energy technologies sector (renewables, energy efficiency, electrical network equipment).

- **EU Gateway/Business Avenues in South East Asia (€25 million)**

Building on the EU Gateway programme model, this project will promote trade and business cooperation with South East Asia and create valuable business links for European SMEs with emerging markets in the region. It will aim to strengthen the presence of EU companies in key markets in South East Asia, thus contributing to economic and job growth in the EU. By establishing direct business contacts with ASEAN companies in priority sectors (energy, environment, health technology), the project will also accompany the implementation of the FTA with Singapore and facilitate the attainment of EU objectives at regulatory dialogue level and further on-going FTA negotiations with Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. The project will use Singapore as hub,

reach out to markets in Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia and Thailand – (possibly extending to other ASEAN countries). The objective is to recruit up to 200 European companies per year and organise 3 to 4 business missions per year into dual markets. At business level, the project targets a growth in the number of direct business cooperation deals and negotiations for partnership between the EU and South East Asian companies. Additionally, activities are intended to foster strengthened business-to-business links and enhanced networking between EU and South East Asian companies, resulting in the realisation of new trade and investment opportunities. Priority sectors are energy, environment, and health technology.

www.businessavenues.eu www.eu-gateway.eu

- **Green Gateway to Korea (€20 million)**

The EU Green Gateway Programme for Korea aims to strengthen the presence of EU companies in Korea, through an increase and diversification of export or investments supporting green growth. It will also complement the efforts made at regulatory dialogue level and FTA implementation to remove regulatory obstacles to trade.

It specifically focuses on a) Facilitating trade and business cooperation with Korea; b) Assisting EU companies, in particular SMEs, to create business links in Korea in clean technologies, products and services; c) Assisting EU companies in gaining a better understanding of the local business culture, market rules and practices. The target is to recruit up to 200 European companies per year and organise 4 business missions per year (i.e. 20 over 5 years). Among the expected results is the increase of the number of direct business cooperation deals and partnership negotiations between European and Korean SMEs.

- **EU Gateway to China (pilot €5 million)**

Gateway to China is a pilot project. Through it, business missions for EU companies (mainly SMEs) to China will be organised (expected 4 business missions for around 200 companies). The project will provide coaching and targeted information to selected companies, thereby complementing other instruments currently used to address market access barriers (regulatory dialogue, trade promotion and business centres). The proposed project would facilitate EU companies (especially SMEs) without the leverage to successfully penetrate the Chinese market on their own and, to expand their activities. It will also help create employment opportunities for European citizens. As a pilot, this action will test the effectiveness of the Gateway methodology in addressing market access barriers in China.

- **Low carbon business action in Brazil (€ 3 million) and Mexico (€1.5 million)**

These two are pilot projects aim at facilitating the adoption of low emission technology by existing industry. They will help enable and support Brazil and Mexico industries to adopt low emission technology by means of technology transfer contracts from EU SMEs to counter-parts SMEs (as many as 80 and 40 for both countries respectively). This should support the transformation of industrial energy systems towards greater sustainability through energy efficiency and expanded renewable energy sources.

The two projects will foster the creation of low emission technology industries. They will help establish and expand emerging industries that can deliver low emission technologies and solutions. This includes technology itself as well as the provision of environmental and energy consulting and services, e.g. for monitoring, measuring and analysis services.

Both projects will promote the internationalisation of EU SMEs by facilitating industrial cooperation between low emission solution providers from the EU and industrial partners, resulting in long-term cooperation between clusters and their member SMEs, research centres, science parks and incubation centres, etc. in the field of low emission technologies and related services.

- **Market access and trade & investment agreement negotiation & implementation facility (€2 million)**

The objective of this facility is to provide assistance in the field of trade: legal analysis and advice, expertise to support Delegations coordinating Market Access Teams, translations, statistics and collection of data and analysis, expert seminars, workshops, technical assistance to support partner countries implement necessary reforms, monitoring of trade agreements. The project will promote a secure environment for investment and business, including protection of intellectual property rights, tackling market access barriers, reinforced regulatory cooperation, and promotion of opportunities for Europe's goods and services, especially in areas where Europe has a competitive advantage, and international standards. Support for the negotiation, implementation and enforcement of EU trade and investment agreements

Priority: i) strategic partner countries, ii) countries with which the EU has signed or is negotiating trade and investment agreements, iii) countries with EU Market Access Teams (Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong and Macao, Colombia, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway and Iceland, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Switzerland, Taiwan, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, US, Vietnam). Higher take-up of concluded trade and investment agreements by European businesses. Proper enforcement of WTO rules and agreements by partner countries

- **Public Procurement Initiative (€4.5 million)**

This initiative aims to improve the availability, coverage and quality of data on public procurement (including on cross-border access to public markets). In the framework of the project, an appropriate methodological approach for assessing public procurement markets will be defined. At a second stage, the project will also look into the identification of policy instruments and practices that restrain market access in third country public procurement markets. The ultimate goal will be to provide the analytical tools to assess – in the context of trade negotiations on procurement – (i) the size of procurement markets; (ii) the positive effects of improved market access and (iii) the degree of contestability of a procurement market for European companies. The project will establish a methodology for assessing the public procurement markets in third countries and gather data in three pilot countries (Brazil, India and Thailand) where the methodology will be tested. These data will serve as inputs for the negotiations of trade and investment agreements

- **Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX) (€1 million)**

The objective is the implementation of EU bilateral cooperation agreements or similar policy agreements, with a focus on regulatory convergence in partners countries, to share with them experience, know-how and information on EU policies and legislation in the widest sense and to support the implementation of mutually agreed commitments. Activities include seminars, workshops, conferences, expert missions and study visits. Expected results are the sharing of EU best practices and know-how with partner countries through the provision of short term technical assistance delivered by experts from Member States public administrations. TAIEX was set up in 1996 to assist candidate

countries to integrate the EU acquis. Its mission was later broadened to the European Neighbourhood countries. Given its successful implementation in these countries in the past, DG NEAR and FPI decided to enlarge further the scope of TAIEX by extending to PI countries.

- **EU-China Aviation project (€10 million)**

This project aims to support European aviation industry in China by facilitating access to the biggest aviation growth market and by contributing to a continued high level of aviation safety. Areas of intervention will include regulatory and technical cooperation with a focus on aviation safety, notably in the area airworthiness and monitoring of civil aeronautical products as highlighted in the Letter of Intent between DG MOVE and the CAAC (Civil Aviation Authority of China), support closer aviation ties and policy dialogue at official level and improve EU visibility and industry promotion. Other DGs will be involved to ensure that EU industrial policy, environment and market access related aspects are taken into account during relevant exchanges.

The **PI Annual Action Plan 2015** has been adopted by the Commission on 22 June 2015 includes a number of actions of direct and indirect interest to European businesses willing to internationalise their activities such as:

- **International urban cooperation (€20.2 million)**

The programme will develop and lead international urban cooperation with key partner countries in Asia and the Americas. The general objective is to develop and lead international urban diplomacy and cooperation through actions on sustainable urban development, climate change through a focus on sustainable energy and innovation in key partner countries in line with the external dimension of "Europe 2020" and the climate change policy.

This cooperation will be achieved through developing city-to-city cooperation on sustainable urban development (component 1), a Covenant of Mayors initiative to key climate change actors (component 2) and region-to region cooperation on innovation (component 3). The cooperation will increase the reach of EU policies and actions in the relevant areas as well as multiply urban diplomacy.

The programme will be embedded in the EU's political dialogue with partner countries and includes an important element of EU economic growth through promotion of business opportunities.

- **Resources efficiency initiative in India (€2.5 million)**

The action will contribute to the promotion of EU standards and business best-practices in fostering an efficient and sustainable use of natural resources in India. It will facilitate the involvement of European stakeholders active in the resource efficiency sector (including designers, producers, recycling industries, farmers, sustainability experts, local and national authorities, NGOs and other stakeholders), thus helping boost jobs and growth in the EU through the export of green economy solutions to India. The work packages are: Resource Efficiency Partnership India, Mobility, Buildings, Renewable Energy, Resource Recovery from Waste, Resource Efficiency in Food production, and Outreach for Resource Efficiency.

- **Water platforms in India (€2.4 million) and in China (€6 million)**

On 26 May 2016, the European Commission approved under the Partnership Instrument projects to boost the EU's cooperation with strategic partners on areas of common interest such as sustainable environment and water diplomacy. The set-up of “Water platforms” (Indo-European € 2.4 million; China-Europe € 6 million) will strengthen the official dialogues on water management and improve management in rural and urban areas of India and China with a positive impact on the environment of those countries.

India-EU Water Partnership (IEWP)

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/fpi/documents/2016-aap/20160527_1_a6_-_c_2016_2989_f1_annex_en_v1_p1_850275_en.pdf

China Europe Water Platform project

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/fpi/documents/2016-aap/20160527_1_a5_-_c_2016_2989_f1_annex_en_v1_p1_850177_en.pdf

These projects are bringing together governments, business and other key stakeholders for the promotion of innovative approaches and for the elaboration of new policies and/or legislation on water protection, based on EU longstanding experience and vast know-how. The approach followed by this project should favor transfer of relevant parts of EU policies and legislation, as well as best practices in the sector, thereby opening business opportunities for EU companies through the implementation of pilot demonstration projects showing effectiveness and cost-efficiency of new technologies and systems applied in the EU. These projects are implemented in close cooperation with EU Member States.

- **Green Gateway to Japan (€10 million)**

The EU's Green Gateway to Japan Programme (Green Gateway) aims to provide assistance to European SMEs' willing to access the Japanese market. The proposed new phase will include two new features vis-à-vis earlier editions of the Gateway Programme, namely (a) The promotion of European green technologies and (b) The search for business opportunities in Japan's public procurement markets in collaboration with the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation (CIC).

Green Gateway will consist of market scoping missions to Japan for carefully selected 520 EU companies that trade and invest in green technologies in the following industries: (i) construction, (ii) energy, (iii) environment, (iv) medical devices and (v) railway components & parts. The market scoping missions will serve to introduce companies to Japan by providing a first contact with the market, including the public procurement market.

- **EU-South East Asia civil aviation project (€7.5 million)**

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to the development of European aviation interests in South Asia in order to provide a more compatible and open market for the European aviation industry. This should be done by promoting European aviation policies, standards and technology which will also foster a higher level of aviation safety and environmental standards in the region.

- **Feasibility study for an EU-Canada mineral investment facility (€1.0 million)**

The general objective of this action is to support the Raw Materials Initiative objective of guaranteeing access to a secure and sustainable supply of Raw Materials for the EU industry. The feasibility study, together with associated events and stakeholder dialogue, should analyse and conclude as to whether this goal could be achieved through the establishment of a mineral investment facility between the EU and Canada (EU-Canada MIF), and make proposal on the best design of a MIF, if applicable. The establishment of such a facility would have as main objectives to (1) promote mining investment in Europe from responsible and reliable sources, (2) foster cooperation with Canada on promoting the positive impacts of mining (economic, environmental and social), including exchange of best practices in raw materials policy and social acceptance and (3) support, through specific strategies, actions and diplomatic channels, the European mining companies in the field of exploration and development of mining projects in Canada; (4) encourage business links between Canadian and European mining companies and suppliers of mining services and technology.

- **Support to CETA implementation & EU Chambers' coordination (€1.0 million)**

Negotiations of the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) were finalised in August 2014, opening the process towards formal conclusion and entering-into-force/provisional application as of 2017. The objective of the project is to enable EU companies in Canada to take full advantage of CETA. The project shall improve synergies and best practice sharing at the European, national and regional business association level and strengthen European advocacy of EU business community related activities. Once the project implementation has started, the European Chamber is meant to develop into an information hub; on the one side distributing relevant information on market access and trade issues in Canada, as well as on CETA, via a specific website and a newsletter. On the other hand, with the help of the experts, useful information and data via regular surveys and reports shall be collected. With these actions, the reinforced European Chamber and the market studies under this project will support the EU, individual chambers and EU businesses in addressing market access obstacles, as well as in implementing and drawing full benefit from CETA.

5. EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD INSTRUMENT (ENI) (2014-2020, €15.4 billion, DG NEAR)

Neighbourhood South:

- **Euromed Invest (EU Support to business and investment partnerships in Southern Mediterranean)**
- **Support to the improvement of the business environment in Southern Mediterranean Support to the development of culture and creative industries and clusters in Southern Mediterranean**
- **Euro-Mediterranean Trade and Investment Facilitation Mechanism**
- **Support to trade development in the Southern Mediterranean**
- **Support to the preparation of Agreements on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of industrial products**
- **Support to the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue on the future of the textiles and clothing sector**

Neighbourhood East (Eastern Partnership):

- **SME Flagship including:**

- **Support to SMEs Competitiveness**
- **STAREP**
- **East Invest**
- **Small Business Support**
- **SME Finance Facility**
- **DCFTA Facility**
- **Bilateral DCFTA and SMEs support programmes in Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine**
- **Bilateral technical cooperation facilities**
- **Horizontal assistance: SIGMA**

ENI replaces the European neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). It promotes enhanced political cooperation and economic integration between the Union and neighbour countries. ENI is mainly supporting SMEs that are operational in the Neighbourhood region.

<http://www.euneighbours.eu/ENI>

Concerning the **South Mediterranean area**, the following regional programmes in support to **private sector development** in the region are of particular interest to European enterprises:

Enhancement of the Business Environment in the Southern Mediterranean (€3 Million, Jan 2014 – Nov. 2017)

<http://www.ebesm.eu/index.html>

The “Enhancement of the Business Environment in the Southern Mediterranean” (henceforth called the EBESM project), is a partnership between the European Union (EU) and the ten countries of the South European Neighbourhood (ENP-South) region, namely, Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria [1] and Tunisia. It aims to contribute to the improvement of the business enabling environment for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) in the ENP-South region in line with EU best practices through the strengthening of the technical expertise and capacity of targeted public and private stakeholders.

Additionally, the project aims at raising awareness and strengthening the policy dialogue around MSME development issues, including access to finance, in particular to give greater attention to SMEs as creators of employment. This is expected to expand the private sector in the region through the development of more robust, inclusive and sustainable growth.

The EBESM Project was initiated in January 2014 and is planned to end on Nov. 2017. The Project is based in GIZ IS offices in Brussels with activities implemented throughout the ENP South Region and in the EU.

EUROMED INVEST (EU Support to business and investment partnerships in Southern Mediterranean (€5 Million, Jan 2014 - June 2017)

<http://www.euromedinvest.eu>

The objective of the action is to strengthen Euro-Med business and investment networks. It offers, inter alia, an online business matchmaking platform, a market intelligence portal, business roadshows, entrepreneurs mentoring and training sessions, business networks in key sectors such as agri-food, water and renewable energy, tourism, transport and

logistics, cultural and creative industries. Its implementation is coordinated by ANIMA Investment Network, a multi-country cooperation platform for economic development in the Mediterranean;

Support to the development of culture and creative industries and clusters in Southern Mediterranean (€5.6 Million, Jan 2014 – Dec. 2017)

<http://www.cci-clusters.com>

The objective of this action is to foster entrepreneurial co-operation in the culture and creative Industries. The action will provide financial and technical support to pilot cluster projects in these sectors.

Enhancing Innovation and Growth in the Southern Neighbourhood (€7 Million, Jan 2017 – Jan. 2020)

The **global objective** of this programme is: to assist partner countries' ownership and capacity to implement policies and initiatives regarding innovation aiming to enhance inclusive and sustainable growth and employment.

The **specific objectives** are:

- 1) *at macro level* – to support the formulation and implementation of policies and initiatives stimulating the development of innovation ecosystems in Southern Mediterranean countries:

Providing support to the enabling environment for innovative entrepreneurship; stimulating public private dialogue of innovation stakeholders (public, private and academic sectors), in particular on reforms of the regulatory framework at country/regional level, in line with the principles of the "Small Business Act" (SBA) for Europe and its implementation process in the Mediterranean countries; up-scaling of relevant activities implemented in the context of the Euro-Med industrial cooperation process, in line with the Common Euro-Mediterranean Innovation Agenda launched by the Euro-Mediterranean Group of Senior Officials in Research and Innovation.

- 2) *at meso level* – to improve capacities and networking, in particular with EU counterparts, of innovation organisations in the region:

Capacity building, networking and exchange of good practices between innovation support structures and other relevant stakeholders (e.g. clusters, technology parks, business incubators, technology transfer offices, seed accelerators, business angels and early stage investors), including international networking in particular with EU counterparts.

- 3) *at micro level* – to support pilot actions of innovation organisations, start-ups and SME innovation / industry clusters (including science parks) in the region in generating value-added activities, new sources of economic growth and employment, and promote them through the dissemination of successful experiences. The design of the proposed action should aim at generating jobs and developing competitive and innovative industries in the economies of the South Neighbourhood region.

In addition, the project aims at linking up public sector and innovation support structures to private initiatives, such as business angels, industry leaders and private accelerators. The networking aspects will also aim at supporting initiatives promoted

by the scientific, innovation and business diaspora, trained or working in the European Union, in relevant sectors of industrial activity.

EU-OECD programme to Enhance Investment policies and Investment promotion in Southern Mediterranean Region (€3 million, 2016-2019)

<https://www.oecd.org/mena/competitiveness>

The overall objective of the programme is to assist partner countries' ownership and capacity to implement investment policies and initiatives regarding investment aiming to enhance inclusive and sustainable growth and employment. This EU-OECD joint initiative aims at boosting private investment and job creation opportunities in the Southern Mediterranean region, through support to the implementation of sound and inclusive investment frameworks and policies, capacity building to investment promotion agencies (IPAs) in the region and networking, in particular with EU counterparts.

Euro-Mediterranean Trade and Investment Facilitation Mechanism (€2 million, 2014 – 2016)

<http://www.intracen.org/euomed/>

This joint initiative between the European Union (EU) and the International Trade Centre (ITC) will provide an online portal of information – the EuroMed Trade Helpdesk –, covering Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia and Turkey. The EuroMed Trade Helpdesk, will be modelled on the EU Export Helpdesk and will contain information on: trade statistics; applied customs tariffs and preferential arrangements, rules and certificates of origin, VAT and excise taxes; general requirements and product specific market requirements (such as sanitary and phytosanitary regulations, labelling regulations etc.); business contacts (e.g. relevant institutions, chambers of commerce etc.) as well as news and events.

In addition, a problem solving network of national institutions, will be responsible for responding to enquiries posted to the online portal, so as to facilitate trade and investment.

Support to trade development in the Southern Mediterranean (€4 million, 2013-2016)

<http://www.agadiragreement.org>

This action will help to develop trade and business in the region through the implementation of the Agadir Agreement that was signed by Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia in 2004 to remove barriers to trade and investment with the EU and between the countries themselves.

Support to trade development in Southern Mediterranean through the Agadir Agreement – Phase IV (€5 million euros, 2016-2019)

<http://www.agadiragreement.org>

This action aims to increase trade development and economic integration among southern Mediterranean countries through support to the implementation of the Agadir Agreement, as a milestone towards the realisation of a Euro-Mediterranean free trade area.

Support to the preparation of Agreements on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of industrial products (ACAAs)

Through its TAIEX and Twinning instruments, the European Commission provides short- and long-term technical assistance to MED countries to prepare ACAAs. These Agreements aim at facilitating trade of manufactured goods with MED countries in selected sectors. Once a MED country has aligned its regulations, standards and quality system with those of the EU for a chosen sector, an ACAA can be signed, and double testing is no longer required when goods in the given sector are exported to the partner's market.

Support to the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue on the future of the textiles and clothing sector

Through its TAIEX instrument, the European Commission supports the exchange of views and good practice between EU and MED businesses and stakeholders operating in this sector with a view to joining forces and being more competitive in the global economy.

Neighbourhood East – Eastern Partnership (EaP)

There are several **bilateral and regional programmes** in support of SMEs and private sector development in the Neighbourhood East region. We also have bilateral and regional programmes helping those countries (Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia) that signed new Association Agreements (AAs) including Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTAs) with the EU adapt to the challenges and opportunities of these new trade agreements.

EU4Business initiative

www.eu4business.eu

The **EU4Business** initiative brings all regional and bilateral support in the Eastern partner countries together under one umbrella in order to tackle the common challenges hampering SME and business growth: limited access to finance, difficulty to conquer new markets, lack of business skills and a difficult business climate. As of 2017, the EU4Business initiative consists of a portfolio of active projects addressing these challenges of more than EUR 260 million, out of which more than EUR 225 million are provided through European Financial Institutions (EFIs) – leveraging about ten times more investment for SMEs in the region. **EU4Business** offers support at three levels, namely at policy level (OECD projects, STAREP, FORBIZ in Ukraine), Business Support Organisations (eg: East Invest, support to business support centers in Ukraine, support to EBA in Armenia) and directly to SMEs (Finance Facilities and Business Advisory Services):

Regional projects:

East Invest

www.east-invest.eu

East Invest is a European Commission initiative, managed by EUROCHAMBRES. It has successfully created a network of EU and EaP BSOs and helps SMEs in the EaP to access

the EU market and to attract financing (as of today over 200 BSO representatives as well as around 120 companies were already trained as part of this programme). The first phase of the project started end of 2010 with an EU contribution of EUR 7 million. A second phase of the project started in July 2015 and will run up until end of 2017 with EU support of EUR 6.5 million. The second phase is implemented in partnership with the European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (UEAPME).

Improve SME Policy Development and Financial report

www.oecd.org/daf/psd/eurasia

The EU in cooperation with the OECD and other partner organisations evaluates SME policy-making in partner countries through the SBA (Small Business Act for Europe) Assessment. The assessment monitors the progress in the implementation of the ten principles of the SBA and measures convergence towards EU practices and standards. The SBA principles are designed to create a level-playing field for SMEs and to foster entrepreneurship and competitiveness. The SBA Assessment provides policymakers with a detailed overview of SME policy performance and gives direction on how to make improvements within each policy area. Additionally, the EU and the OECD jointly assist EaP countries with the implementation of policy reforms based on concrete recommendations resulting from the Small Business Act assessment. Through the SBA Assessment the responsiveness of governments to SMEs' needs and requests is increased and public private dialogue at national level improved. This in turn strengthens policy dialogue and peer review at regional level with regard to SME competitiveness in the EaP region and increases cooperation between SME stakeholders from the region and facilitates exchange of best practices. The total budget of both projects is EUR 3.1 million. A new project with a budget of EUR 4 million is currently in the pipeline which will be structured around two pillars:

(a) a regional pillar to support regional policy dialogue, facilitate peer-learning and sharing of good practices, and to benchmark policy performance across the region through a new SBA Assessment cycle (2018-2019);

(b) a country-level pillar to provide tailored support in the design, monitoring and upgrading of policy instruments to support SME competitiveness (e.g. improving SME statistics collection, key performance indicators and tools to assess SME support programmes, advising on the implementation of the SME strategy, promoting SME internationalisation in the regions, supporting high-growth SME innovation and/or internationalisation).

STAREP (Strengthening Accounting and Reporting in the Eastern partner region)

<http://go.worldbank.org/EK4H164GR0>

The EU is contributing with EUR 1 million to the programme which is implemented by the World Bank Centre for Financial Reporting Reform. It aims to build stakeholder awareness of, and commitment to, corporate financial reforms, provides EaP officials with technical advice on Corporate Financial Reporting (CFR) reforms and implementation. Additionally, it improves the capacity of CFR institutions to fulfil their mandate effectively and provides business support services required by SMEs and supports access for SME borrowers to finance through modernised accounting and financial reporting.

Financial Instruments in support to SMEs

At SME level, the EU supports SME access to finance and access to markets through a wide range of programmes involving European Financial Institutions. In 2015 this included a portfolio of approximately EUR 75 million of ongoing projects leveraging about 10 times more investments by SMEs. An example of such facility is the SME Finance Facility (EUR 15 million) which is implemented by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB), and the German development bank (KfW) under the umbrella of the Neighbourhood Investment Facility. Another example are business development services to SMEs which are provided through the EBRD's Small Business Support programme (EUR 8 million). Green economy is also included within this portfolio through the Green for Growth Fund (GGF) where the Commission is represented by the EIB and that allows investment into energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in the region. Similarly the EU is supporting a number of facilities that are part of the EBRD Sustainable Energy Financing Facility such as the Caucasus Sustainable Energy Finance Facility (CEEP), (EUR 5.3 million), which is implemented through local partner banks to help companies and private households finance sustainable energy investments. Finally the Women in Business programme (EUR 4.8 million) was launched at the end of 2015 to promote women entrepreneurship. Implemented by the EBRD, its aim is to secure loans and tailored technical assistance to local banks and to small businesses run by women.

DCFTA Facility for SMEs

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-5013_en.htm

The DCFTA Facility for SMEs has been established for the three countries which have signed an AA/DCFTA with the EU. The DCFTA Facility has the purpose to support SMEs in order for them to be able to:

- o Finance necessary investments to comply with the provisions of the DCFTA;
- o Seize trade opportunities with the EU and within the region which have been opened up due to the DCFTA;
- o Benefit from the inflow of foreign direct investment.

The DCFTA Facility consists of a set of programmes to be implemented by EIB, EBRD and KfW. SMEs will benefit from the EU grants by accessing four types of support: risk sharing mechanisms, currency hedging, investment incentives and technical assistance. The grant element from the EU will be blended with EFIs loan to maximise the impact of the DCFTA. The DCFTA Facility will mobilise EUR 200 million of EU grant, in order to leverag at least 10 times more funds from EFIs. The DCFTA Facility for SMEs is fully operational as of January 2017.

Under the Advice for Small Businesses programme implemented by EBRD with EUR 8 000 000 of EU grant, the SMEs are supported in the identification of suitable technologies for investments, preparation of credit applications and in the optimal use of new technologies introduced, including certification of products and processes, as required. Tailored assistance can also be provided to explore what products are in demand and

potentially competitive on EU markets, and what should be done to meet EU import requirements.

The DCFTA Direct Facility implemented by EBRD, to which EU provides EUR 10 000 000 of grant to leverage some EUR 69 000 000 in loans, provides technical assistance to and direct lending, also in local currency, to medium sized companies. The EU already contributes to the DCFTA Facility with a grant of EUR10 million to a EUR69 million programme implemented by the EBRD.

Under the EBRD DCFTA Facility with EUR 19 000 000 of EU grant, the SMEs are supported by reducing costs of investments necessary to upgrade their technology and production or service processes, in order for them to comply with EU standards and regulations. Thanks to the EU funding, 10 – 15% of each loan, taken up by an SME to finance such investments can be converted into a grant when specific conditions are met.

The EIB DCFTA Initiative East to which EU contributes with EUR 62 000 000 aims at improving credit conditions for SMEs by reducing the risk for local financial institutions in lending to them through guarantees other risk sharing mechanisms. This will enable financial intermediaries to take on more risk and reach out underserved segments of the economy. Concrete benefits for SMEs will vary from longer maturity of provided loans, lower cost of borrowing, and exchange risk mitigation to reduced collateral request.

Under the SME Finance facility Phase II It will also be possible for SMEs to borrow in local currency at accessible rates thanks to programme with EBRD to which EU provides EUR 5 000 000 of grants and thanks to programme with KfW where the EU provides another EUR 5 000 000 of grants.

Small Business Support

The EU4Business SBS programme, implemented by EBRD, provides tailor-made services to individual companies. For instance, it helps companies meet the required technical standards and provides advice on how to run a business in an efficient way, apply best practices, and prepare good business plans. SBS can also provide advice on how to grow a successful small business to achieve higher turn-over and generate increased employment. The EU has contributed to this programme over several phases already up to EUR 18 million and a further EUR 8 million will be contracted this year.

From 2011 until 2015, the SBS programme carried out nearly 1 200 projects with local consultants. 46 % of all projects aimed at improving the management effectiveness of enterprises while 37 % sought to improve the market performance of SMEs. The advisory services most in demand are in Information and Communication Technology (38 % of the project portfolio) and marketing (representing 23 % of all projects).

Bilateral DCFTA support programmes (Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine)

These bilateral programmes help the government and the business community adapt to the challenges and opportunities of DCFTAs with the EU.

In **Georgia** (EUR 51 million, ongoing until 2020), the EU helps small businesses benefit from the AA/DCFTA agreement (such as benefitting from increased trade flows, better

safety of consumer products, and a boost in the inflow of foreign direct investment). The support is also provided to core trade institutions implementing DCFTA requirements.

In **Moldova** (EUR 30 million, ongoing until 2017), EU support to the implementation of the DCFTA process targets competitiveness of Moldovan SMEs, development of national legislation in line with EU quality standards, promotion of export and investment opportunities, and communication campaigns on the benefits of the trade agreement with the EU.

In **Ukraine** (EUR 40 million, ongoing until 2020), the EU will provide business advice and support to SMEs through a network of Business Support Centres (BSC). This is to improve the competitiveness of the SME sector by connecting local small businesses to a network of local consultants and international industry experts. BSCs will also advise SMEs on how to access financing and how to adapt to and benefit from the establishment of the DCFTA with the EU. In addition, a support goes to an EIB Guarantee Facility channelled through the Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF) under the umbrella of regional DCFTA Facility for SMEs.

Technical cooperation facilities

Technical cooperation facilities fund ad hoc technical cooperation and twinning projects to address acquis-related needs for the implementation of AAs/DCFTAs and other ad hoc needs linked to key agreements with the EU that could not be addressed under bilateral sector reform programmes.

Horizontal assistance: SIGMA

SIGMA (Support for Improvement in Governance and Management) is a joint initiative of the European Union and the OECD.

AA/DCFTA implementation is regarded as one of the strategic priorities for the most effective use of both TAIEX and SIGMA resources.

6. THE INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPAII) (2014-2020, €11.7 billion, DG NEAR)

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/instruments/overview/index_en.htm#ipa2

The Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) is the means by which the EU supports reforms in the enlargement countries⁴ with financial and technical help. The IPA funds build up the capacities of the countries, resulting in progressive, positive developments in the region.

The growth and competitiveness pillar aims at supporting the socio-economic development in the region, in line with EU 2020 targets and contribute to create a better business environment, in particular for SMEs, attract foreign investments; improve the functioning of

⁴ Candidate countries: Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey; potential candidates: Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo

the business sector, especially for SMEs and entrepreneurs, improved access to finance, increased clustering, networking and SME internationalisation.

IPA II finances the technical assistance facility of the Western Balkans regional Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility (EDIF) which aims at increasing governments' support for strategic investments, particularly in infrastructure, energy efficiency and private sector development, to support socio-economic development and EU accession across the Region.

EDIF provides improved access to finance for SMEs in the Western Balkans in order to help develop the local economy as well as regional venture capital markets.

Furthermore, the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) is also funded by the EU and promotes the South East Europe 2020 Strategy (SEE 2020) which aims to improve trade and investment, competitiveness, and regional economic integration, closely following EU 2020 targets.

The business environment of pre-accession countries benefits also of short-term TAIEX assistance (financed by the Regional Programme of IPA II) and longer-term Twinning projects (financed by the national envelopes of IPA II), both focusing in particular on regulatory, acquis-related aspects.

OECD Technical assistance for the Economic Reform Programmes in the Western Balkans and Turkey

<http://www.oecd.org/investmentcompact/economic-reform-programmes.htm>

Economic governance has become one of the pillars of EU's enlargement policy, mirroring developments within the EU to strengthen economic policy under the European Semester. A new approach has been developed to help the enlargement partners strengthen macroeconomic stability, boost growth and meet the economic criteria for accession. As a result, as of 2015, all candidate countries and potential candidates submit annual Economic Reform Programmes (ERPs). These programmes contain medium-term macroeconomic projections (including for GDP growth, inflation, trade balance and capital flows), budgetary plans for the next three years and a structural reform agenda. The structural reform agenda includes reforms to boost competitiveness and improve conditions for growth and job creation. In 2017, all enlargement countries have submitted their third annual Economic Reform Programmes covering the period 2017-2019. They will be assessed by the European Commission and the European Central Bank. Based on these assessments, Joint Conclusions with country-specific policy guidance will be agreed and adopted by all seven enlargement partners and the EU at ministerial level in May. The implementation of the reforms outlined in the programmes, and in particular of the recommendations upon in the dialogue with the EU, will be reviewed in next year's ERP exercise. The OECD assists these economies to develop and implement Economic Reform Programmes.

Small Business Act Assessment in the Western Balkans and Turkey

https://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/international-aspects/enlarging-eu_en

The European Small Business Act, a set of policy guidelines and recommendations to enable Member States to improve various aspects of the business environment for SME's, has, although initially intended as an internal EU policy co-ordination instrument, become an important co-operation tool in the EU's relations with the "near abroad". In co-operation with the OECD, the European Training Foundation and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, a concise measurement and benchmarking instrument has been developed, to assess and compare the relative strengths and weaknesses of each country in different fields of

the Small Business Act. The ten policy dimensions of this SBA have been unpacked and disaggregated into a number of indicators, allowing countries to score five different levels, depending on policy achievements according to these indicators. This process is an inclusive and participatory process, in which countries provide self and independent assessments and organise meetings of policy stakeholders to debate the policies and the assessments. The process is a regular one, repeated usually every two years, to assess progress made over time. It has first been introduced in the Western Balkans in 2007 (Turkey joined in the 2012 SBA assessment), then in the Mediterranean partner countries and subsequently in the Eastern European partner countries, implying that already more than 20 non-EU countries use the SBA to develop their SME policies. The findings of the regular reports are also often used to identify and implement reforms in specific areas where the EU (and other donors) could provide financial and technical assistance. For the Western Balkans and Turkey, a fifth report of this kind will be published in 2019 (previous reports in 2007, 2009, 2012 and 2016).

Horizontal assistance: SIGMA

<http://www.sigmaweb.org/>

SIGMA (Support for Improvement in Governance and Management) is a joint initiative of the OECD and the European Union, principally financed by the European Union. Its key objective is to strengthen the foundations for improved public governance in the Western Balkans and Turkey, and hence support socio-economic development through building the capacities of the public sector, enhancing horizontal governance and improving the design and implementation of public administration reforms, including proper prioritisation, sequencing and budgeting.

7. EU Development Policy: Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) and European Development Fund (EDF) - (DG DEVCO)

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/development-cooperation-instrument-dci_en

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/about-funding/where-does-money-come/european-development-fund_en

Examples:

- **AL-INVEST**
- **SWITCH regional programmes**

The Commission adopted in May 2014 a Communication on "A stronger Role of the Private Sector in Achieving Inclusive and Sustainable Growth in Developing Countries" that sets out the future direction of EU policy and support for private sector development in developing countries. The Communication proposes 12 concrete actions to address, among others, regulatory and business environments, business development services, access to finance, with a particular focus on local micro, small and medium enterprises. The EU support will be focused on sectors with strong multiplier effect on developing countries' economies such as sustainable agriculture, sustainable energy and infrastructures. The Commission will also encourage responsible investments and will promote private sector engagement in development through the inclusive business and in the context of companies' core activities. While the development policy instruments such as European Development Fund (EDF) and Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) cannot be used to support directly EU SMEs, the EU can in particular support a better business environment and investment climate in the

developing countries, strengthen partners countries MSMEs, and support an eco-system favorable to private sector active pursuit of positive development outcomes creating a "win-win" situation for local private sector and EU SMEs who wish to internationalize.

Examples:

AL-INVEST (2014-2020, €26 million)

AL-INVEST is an economic co-operation programme that aims to improve productivity of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in Latin America, in collaboration with their European partners in order to contribute to social cohesion in the region. Primary target groups are Latin American MSMEs that benefit from a wide range of support services. Main beneficiaries and providers of these services are business membership and business intermediary organisations. AL-INVEST builds the institutional capacity of participating business organisations, fosters regional networks as a basis for enhanced regional integration, develops markets for business development services, connects public and private actors in strategic alliances and contributes to SME promotion policies for a conducive business environment.

SWITCH regional programmes (Asia and Africa, 2014-2020, EUR 140 million)

<http://www.switch-asia.eu/>

<http://www.switchafricagreen.org/>

The objective of the programmes is to promote sustainable production and sustainable consumption patterns and behaviours in Asia and Africa. This objective should be achieved by supporting the establishment of enabling policy frameworks and by supporting SMEs and consumers in adopting sustainable consumption and production practices and activities by getting access to finance, and by mobilizing the relevant stakeholders such as the private sector, financial intermediaries, retailers, producers and consumer organisations and groups, individual consumers along with relevant public sector authorities.

Support is delivered through the organisation of calls for proposals, which encourage partnerships between applicants from EU and Asian/African counterparts, and through policy support and networking activities.

8. HORIZON 2020 (2014-2020, €77 billion, DG RTD and several other DGs)

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/home.html>

<http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en>

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/iscp/index.cfm>

Horizon 2020, the EU programme for research and innovation running from 2014-2020 with a budget of nearly €80 billion, provides funding for every stage of the innovation process from frontier science to close-to-market innovation.

Key elements of Horizon 2020 include:

- The development of the technologies and innovations that will underpin tomorrow's businesses and help innovative European SMEs to grow into world-leading companies:
 - Investment in industrial and enabling technologies: information and communications technology (ICT), nanotechnology, advanced materials, biotechnology, advanced manufacturing and processing and space

- Access to debt and equity finance for R&D and innovation-driven companies and projects at all stages of development (see below for more details)
- SME-tailored support to stimulate all forms of innovation in SMEs, targeting those with the potential to grow and internationalise across the single market and beyond
- A dedicated SME Instrument and a Fast Track to Innovation pilot scheme to speed up the time from idea to market, and to increase the participation of industry, in particular first-time applicants
- Innovative public-private partnerships in areas such as new medicines, greener aircraft technologies and electronics
- A challenge-based approach to key issues facing societies: (a) Health, demographic change and well-being; (b) Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine, maritime and inland water research, and the Bio-economy; (c) Secure, clean and efficient energy; (d) Smart, green and integrated transport; (e) Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials; (f) Europe in a changing world - Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies; (g) Secure societies
- A reinforcement and extension of the excellence of the EU's science base notably through the European Research Council and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions and a consolidation of the European Research Area make the EU's research and innovation system more competitive and attractive on a global scale
- A reinforced European Institute of Innovation and Technology

Horizon 2020 is open to the world and promotes cooperation with countries around the world based on common interest and mutual benefit. International cooperation ensures that partners have access to talent and resources wherever they are located; that they can tackle global societal challenges effectively; and that companies participate in global value chains and can access new and emerging markets.

Any European business can use Horizon 2020 as a tool to internationalise by partnering with non-European companies or other actors to carry out joint research and innovation activities. These activities could be, for instance: joint research where partners have complementary expertise; integration of a technology supply chain; demonstration or piloting of a new product, service or technology; accessing facilities, data or services etc.

From 2007 to 2013 (FP7, the previous EU research programme), around 20% of all projects had at least one partner from outside Europe as part of the consortium.

Financial Instruments

InnovFin SME Venture Capital (InnovFin SME VC)

The InnovFin SME Venture Capital Facility is an early stage window in the Single EU Equity Financial Instrument, focusing on venture capital funds. The EUR 430m early stage allocation will target enterprises located in the 28 Member States and Horizon 2020 Associated Countries. In addition, a EUR 30 million pilot scheme under InnovFin SME VC will help finance investments by business angels (BAs) in innovative SMEs and small midcaps that want to commercialise new products and services, mainly in the domain of Information and Communication Technology.

Financial intermediaries are selected based on an open call for expression of interest published on the EIF's website. EIF expects to invest in around 30 financial intermediaries, catalysing a total amount to be invested in companies of between EUR 1.2 and EUR 1.6bn.

www.access2finance.eu.

http://www.eif.org/what_we_do/equity/single_eu_equity_instrument/innovfin-sme-vc/index.htm

InnovFin SME Guarantee (InnovFin SMEG)

InnovFin SME Guarantee provides guarantees and counter-guarantees on debt financing of between €25,000 and €7.5 million, in order to improve access to loan finance for innovative small and medium-sized enterprises and small midcaps (up to 499 employees). This facility is implemented by the European Investment Fund, and will be rolled out through financial intermediaries – banks and other financial institutions – in EU Member States and Associated Countries. Under this facility, financial intermediaries will be guaranteed by the EIF against a proportion of their losses incurred on the debt financing covered under the facility.

www.access2finance.eu.

http://www.eif.org/what_we_do/guarantees/single_eu_debt_instrument/innovfin-guarantee-facility/index.htm

SME Instrument's Overseas Trade Fairs Programme

<https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/sme-instrument-s-overseas-trade-fairs-programme>

As part of the SME Instrument's support to commercialisation services 15 international trade fairs are organised in 11 countries outside the European Union. The main objective is to organise access to international events and building skills to access new geographical markets for the SMEs that were funded through the SME Instrument Programme. This action will help the Funded SMEs to operate internationally by exploiting business opportunities in regions with strong clusters of clients and potential business partners. The target beneficiaries of this action are the Funded SMEs selected under the SME Instrument.

9. EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL AND INVESTMENT FUNDS (ESIF) (2014-2020, DGs REGIO, EMPL, AGRI, MARE)

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/themes/sme-competitiveness/

Support to SME competitiveness is a top priority for the European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds, in particular the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). Also the European Social Fund (ESF) supports SME competitiveness mainly via support to self-employment, entrepreneurship, business creation and development of related skills. ERDF investment priorities include entrepreneurship promotion, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms including through business incubators, developing and implementing new business models for SMEs, in particular with regard to internationalisation, supporting the creation and extension of advanced capacities for product and service development and supporting the capacity of SMEs to grow in regional, national and international markets and to engage in innovation processes, save energy and resources.

ESI Funds can finance a whole range of SME internationalisation measures making companies fit for global competition and often include funding and advisory support services for market access (e.g. participation in trade fairs and foreign trade missions), financial services (export guarantees, loans), market intelligence, assistance in identifying business partners, support to international activities of clusters and business networks, the creation of cross-European value chains and the development of more competitive 'world-class' clusters, etc. Internationalisation is also a goal of smart specialization strategies, the policy frameworks including ERDF research and innovation investments for and within SMES.

The choice of specific objectives and measures, the development and publication of calls and the project selection are the responsibility of national and regional authorities based on seven-year Operational Programmes negotiated with the Commission. Therefore, not all of the over 300 ESI Fund programmes that include SME competitiveness investments foresee internationalisation support measures, as the programmes are conceived to complement own national or regional support programmes and focus on key issues for the specific region or country. For the present period 2014-2020 around € 57 billion ERDF will be focused on SME support measures, € 27 billion by the EAFRD, € 2.6 billion EMFF and over € 8 billion from the ESF will support SME competitiveness and entrepreneurship.⁵ This SME support under ESIF is increasingly channelled through targeted financial instruments (loans, guarantees, equity etc.). The Investment Plan for Europe's aim is to have 50% of all ESIF SME support through financial instruments (because of their higher leverage, revolving nature etc.).⁶

Information on individual ESI fund programmes and explanations on how to access the funds are available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/funding/accessing-funds/

A Guide on how to support internationalisation of SMEs using the structural and investment funds has been recently published by the European Commission:

http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/regional-policies/index_en.htm

10. PROMOTION OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS (€883 million, 2014-2020, DG AGRI)

http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/promotion/index_en.htm

The main objective of the reformed promotion regime, governed by Regulation (EU) 1144/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council applicable as from 1 December 2015, is to enhance the competitiveness of the Union agricultural sector by raising its profile both inside and outside the Union with a special focus to those markets in third countries that have the highest growth potential.

The Union financially supports campaigns to promote farm products and inform consumers about how they were produced. The assistance is normally given to professional

⁵ see <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/themes/3> and http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/evaluations/data-for-research/

⁶ COM(2014) 903 final

organisations, for example representative trade or inter-trade organisations or agri-food sector bodies promoting particular approaches to agriculture, such as organic farming.

The reform will also broaden the number of eligible products and beneficiaries and simplify the administrative procedures. Eligible proposing organisations will in principle be able to apply for 70 % (simple programs on internal market) or 80% (external market or multi country programs) financing for campaigns concerning agricultural products.

For more information see also the The Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (Chafea) web-portal on agricultural promotion (www.agripromotion.eu)

11. LIFE PROGRAMME (2014-2017, DG ENV and DG CLIMA)

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm>

The LIFE programme is the EU's funding instrument for the environment and climate action. The general objective of LIFE is to contribute to the implementation, updating and development of EU environmental and climate policy and legislation by co-financing projects with European added value.

Since its creation in 1992, LIFE has co-financed more than 4200 projects, contributing approximately €3.4 billion euros to the protection of the environment and climate. The European Commission (DG Environment and DG Climate Action) manages the LIFE programme. The Commission has delegated the implementation of many components of the LIFE programme to the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME). External selection, monitoring and communication teams provide assistance to the Commission and EASME.

The European Investment Bank manages the two new financial instruments (NCFE and PF4EE).

The sub-programme 'Environment' of the programme covers three priority areas: environment and resource efficiency; nature and biodiversity; and environmental governance and information. The sub-programme 'Climate Action' covers climate change mitigation; climate change adaptation; and climate governance and information.

The programme is open to the participation of third countries and provides for activities outside the EU (and partners in third countries) under certain conditions. It also provides a framework for cooperation with international organisations.

12. OTHER ACTIONS

- **Seconded European Standardization Experts in third countries**
- **Industrial and Regulatory Dialogues with Third Countries**
- **Market Access Database**
- **Export Helpdesk**
- **SME Trade Defence Helpdesk**
- **Technical Barriers to Trade – Enquiry Point**
- **EU-US Transatlantic IPR portal**
- **EU Business Fora in/with Africa**

- **Taxation and Customs**
- **Trade fairs**
- **Economic Missions abroad**

Seconded European Standardization Experts in third countries (DG GROW, EFTA and ESOs)

The main objective of the action is to establish a Seconded European Standardisation Expert in India (SESEI) and in China acting as the focal point of the European standardisation community. The scope is the dialogue and cooperation on standards and standards related activities in support of an increase of trade between the EU and these third countries. The projects aim at establishing a European Standardization Expert to operate in India and one to operate in China with the task to increase visibility of European standardization and promote cooperation on standards related issues. The overall objective is to open up channels of communication and increase cooperation between EU/EFTA and Indian / Chinese decision makers, opinion setters and stakeholders in the standardization and regulatory system, both at the policy making level as well as in a series of sectors identified as high priority.

<http://www.cencenelec.eu/intcoop/projects/visibility/SESEI/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://www.cencenelec.eu/intcoop/projects/visibility/SESEC/Pages/default.aspx>

Industrial and Regulatory Dialogues with Third Countries (DG GROW)

Industrial and regulatory dialogues are implemented with the USA, China, Russia, Japan, Korea and Brazil and multilaterally in the Eastern Partnership, the Mediterranean neighbour countries and the enlargement countries to increase chances of success for European SMEs in selected third markets.

Market Access Database (DG TRADE)

<http://madb.europa.eu/>

The Market Access Database (MADB), an important tool of the Market Access Strategy, is a valuable instrument for EU exporters. It offers EU businesses free online information on customs duties, import formalities, rules of origin, as well as important non-tariff barriers in non-EU countries. Recent independent evaluations confirmed the usefulness of the Market Access Strategy, its related services and of the MADB to improve access to global markets.

Export Helpdesk (DG TRADE)

<http://exporthelp.europa.eu/thdapp/index.htm>

The Export helpdesk is a freely accessible online database which reflects in real time the EU's import conditions for any type of product, be it machinery, handbags, textiles, food or wines. Businesses can look up the applied customs duties for goods, rules and certificates of origin, trade statistics, VAT and excise duties in the EU Member States, the required documents for customs procedures, and all product specific market requirements such as sanitary and phyto-sanitary rules, technical standards, labelling rules etc. The data are regularly updated throughout the year. In addition, users can lodge product specific information requests.

SME Trade Defence Helpdesk (DG TRADE)

Trade Defence Instruments (TDI) ensure fair trade for EU enterprises, including SMEs and help to protect enterprises against unfair trade measures, including low-priced imports due to prohibited subsidies or dumping practices from non-EU countries. The European Commission also provides advice and support if an enterprise that is exporting to a non-EU country is affected by an anti-dumping, anti-subsidy or safeguard measures applied by that country.

Technical Barriers to Trade – Enquiry Point (DG GROW)

<http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/tbt/en/>

In order for EU small businesses to take full advantage of international trade, unnecessary and unjustified technical barriers need to be removed. The EU-TBT-Enquiry-Point, located at Unit C3 of DG GROW plays a central role in this. The EU-TBT-Enquiry-Point coordinates and prepares the EU comments on the draft technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures notified by the WTO Members under the TBT Agreement. By doing so, it relies both on the assessment of the competent Commission services and of the economic operators. During the comment period, all contributions received from economic operators, including SMEs, are welcome and taken into account during the assessment. By using this mechanism, economic operators can signal possible technical barriers to trade already at a draft stage and the EU can issue comments and engage in a dialogue with the notifying WTO Member to prevent them. The EU-TBT-Enquiry-Point also maintains a free, comprehensive on-line database, containing all TBT notifications and the related comments. It is easily searchable and contains a mailing list function, which can help, among others, also SMEs to follow the new notifications of their interests.

EU-US Transatlantic IPR portal (DG GROW)

http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/ipr/index_en.htm

This portal encourages enterprises on both sides of the Atlantic to access a wide range of resources on Intellectual property rights (IPR). Enterprises can enter new international markets more effectively by protecting their intellectual assets. SMEs can obtain information on numerous third countries and their intellectual property systems through factsheets. Companies can reach IPR advice from specialised IPR support measures and access self-help materials through the portal. Firms can also learn about the latest news on IP issues and about available IPR trainings on third countries.

EU Business Fora in/with Africa (DG DEVCO and DG GROW)

The Commission has been organising the EU Africa Business Forum (EABF) since 2006. The event takes place in margins of the EU-Africa Summit. The EABF is an important opportunity to bring together representatives from the leading business organisations and political communities of the EU and Africa to discuss challenges, propose solutions, strengthen their bilateral relationship and look forward to constructive cooperation in the future. Similar initiatives at local level have been recently organised by/with EU Delegations in some African countries such as Ethiopia (EU Business Forum to Ethiopia), Uganda (European Business Forum), Tanzania (EU Business Group), Senegal (Memorandum of Understanding with “Conseil des Investisseurs Européens au Sénégal”), Republic of South Africa (EU-SA Business Forum) and Ghana (European Business Organisation).

European business forum in Ethiopia (EUBFE) <http://www.eubfe.eu/>

Conseil des Investisseurs Européens au Sénégal <http://cies.sn/>

European Business Forum (EBF) - Uganda - <http://www.ebf.ug/index.php>

Taxation and Customs (DG TAXUD)

Several databases of interest to businesses are developed and operated by the Commission in conjunction with Member States' Customs and Taxation Services:

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/common/databases/index_en.htm

Cooperation at international level between the custom authorities is an important tool for the fight against fraud and illegal activities. For the benefit of world trade and international assistance to fight against customs fraud, the European Union has signed customs cooperation and mutual administrative assistance agreements (Korea, Canada, Hong Kong, US, India, China and Japan). The European Union also has Partnership and Co-operation Agreements with a number of countries, including Russia and Ukraine, which cover customs co-operation and include a protocol on mutual administrative assistance.

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/common/international_affairs/index_en.htm

Economic Missions abroad led by Commissioners together with European Businesses

Several economic missions have been organised in 2016:

- Colombia and Mexico, Agri-food, (8-12 February 2016)
- China and Japan, Agri-food, (16-22 April 2016)
- Chile, Circular Economy, (25-26 April 2016)
- Iran, Multi-sectors, (16-19 October 2016)
- Vietnam, Singapore and Indonesia, Agri-food, (2-9 November 2016)
- China, Circular Economy, (22-25 November 2016)
- Argentina, Multi sectors, (6-7 December 2016)

Planned missions for 2017-2018:

- Canada, Agri-food, (30 April – 3 May 2017)
- South Africa, Circular Economy, (2-5 May 2017)
- Colombia, Circular Economy, (October 2017)
- Saudi Arabia and Iran, Agri-food, (Beginning Nov. 2017)
- Indonesia, Circular Economy, (December 2017 tbc)
- India, Circular Economy, (2018 tbc)
- Argentina, Circular Economy, (2018 tbc)

13. EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK

www.EIB.org

The EIB, the EU Bank, operates in EU Member States and in more than 140 countries. EIB supports the internationalisation of EU businesses in multiple ways, comprising:

- a) Financing of innovation and skills within the EU, which contributes to improving the competitiveness of the EU economy;
- b) Support to outward and cross-border investments;

- c) Enhances opportunities for EU companies to participate in projects as suppliers or contractors;
- d) Support to working capital facilities in favour of SMEs and Mid-Caps active in EU/non-EU trade;

Dedicated trade finance and export credit facilities supporting the internationalisation of EU SMEs and mid-caps have also been implemented in some countries. EIB also partners with other institutions: an example of which is the EIB-Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Joint Initiative to support investments from Latin American SMEs and mid-caps in the EU and vice versa or providing financing to exporters in global markets

EIB Group already proposes a palette of products for SMEs and Midcaps (loans, trade finance guarantees and equity) that can support the internationalisation of companies, including with third countries. The EIB can also provide long term financing in support of EU presence in partner countries through foreign direct investments (FDI) within areas covered by the external mandates' objectives or at its own risk, and in support of access to financing for SMEs from the EU investing in the external mandates' regions.

An example of EIB support to the internationalization of European businesses (SMEs) is the October 2014 partnership with the IDB (Inter-American Development Bank) where the two institutions have joined forces to set-up a loan facility (up to USD 500m from each institutions) for SMEs and midcaps from Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) seeking to expand to the EU and, conversely, for EU SMEs and midcaps seeking to invest in or expand to LAC. The main objective is to increase trade and internationalisation of companies, and ultimately support employment.

Products for SMEs are being proposed by partner banks and financial institutions (list on www.eib.org, www.eif.org)

The European Investment Bank will continue assessing further contribution to enhancing European companies' internationalisation.

EIB offices in 22 countries outside the EU:

<http://www.eib.europa.eu/infocentre/contact/offices/index.htm>

Tentative breakdown of instruments
Direct / Indirect Support + Geographic Focus

Countries / Regions		DIRECT support to Business internationalisation	INDIRECT support for better framework conditions, business environment and information
Global		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cluster internationalisation • Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme to third countries • Horizon2020 • Structural and Investment Funds • Export Helpdesk • SME Trade Defence Helpdesk • Technical Barriers to Trade Enquiry Point • Financial Instruments • Promotion of Agricultural products • Life Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprise Europe Network • Network of European Business Organisations in Third countries • Small Business Act (SBA) • Market access and trade & investment agreement negotiation & implementation facility • Public Procurement Initiative • Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX) • Development policy: DCI and EDF • Industrial and Regulatory Dialogues with Third Countries • Market Access Database • Taxation and Customs • International urban cooperation
Asia			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination Platform for Asia, covering all actions mentioned below
	ASEAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPR Helpdesks • EU Gateway/Business Avenues in South East Asia • EU-South East Asia aviation project 	
	China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPR Helpdesks • SME Centre in China • EU Gateway to China • EU-China aviation project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seconded European Standardization Experts in Third Countries
	Japan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation • Green Gateway to Japan 	
	Taiwan		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Business and Regulatory Cooperation with Taiwan
	Hong Kong / Macau		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Business and Information Programme with Hong Kong/Macau
	India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Business and Technology • Clean energy cooperation with India • Resources efficiency in India 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seconded European Standardization Experts in Third Countries
	Thailand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Association for Business and Commerce (EABC) in Thailand 	
	Myanmar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Chamber of Commerce in Myanmar 	
	Malaysia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EuroCham Malaysia 	

	Philippines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EuroCham Philippines 	
	Laos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EuroCham Laos 	
	Cambodia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EuroCham Cambodia 	
	Indonesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EuroCham Indonesia + European Indonesian Business Network (EIBN) 	
	Vietnam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Vietnamese Business Network (EVBN) Vietnam 	
	Korea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Gateway to Korea 	
North America		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU-US Transatlantic IPR portal • Support to CETA implementation & EU Chambers' coordination • Feasibility study for an EU-Canada mineral investment facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
South America		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European and Latin American Business Services and Innovation Network 	
	Brazil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low carbon business action in Brazil and Mexico 	
	Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low carbon business action in Brazil and Mexico 	
Pre-accession countries			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instrument for pre-accession assistance • OECD Technical assistance for the Economic Reform Programmes in the Western Balkans and Turkey • Small Business Act Assessment in the Western Balkans and Turkey • Horizontal assistance: SIGMA
Africa		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Business Fora in/with Africa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network of experts in South Africa, EU – South Africa Business Links
	Ethiopia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European business forum in Ethiopia (EUBFE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
	Senegal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conseil des Investisseurs Européens au Sénégal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
	Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Business Forum (EBF) - Uganda - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Southern Mediterranean			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Euromed Invest (EU Support to business and investment partnerships in Southern Mediterranean) • Support to the development of culture and creative industries and clusters in Southern Mediterranean • Euro-Mediterranean Trade and Investment Facilitation Mechanism • Support to trade development in the Southern Mediterranean

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to the preparation of Agreements on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of industrial products • Support to the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue on the future of the textiles and clothing sector • EU-GCC trade and business cooperation facility
Neighbourhood East			<p>SME Flagship including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to SMEs Competitiveness • STAREP • East Invest • Small Business Support • SME Finance Facility • DCFTA Facility <p>Bilateral DCFTA and SMEs support programmes (Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine)</p> <p>Bilateral technical cooperation facilities in the Neighbourhood East</p> <p>Horizontal assistance: SIGMA</p>