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## WHAT WE DO

The community of EU|BICs comprises 160+ quality-certified support organisations and associate members that use business and innovation as a force for regional economic, sustainable, and social development in Europe and beyond.

Supported by the EBN Secretariat, our purpose is to use the best possible actions to create thriving startups and SMEs, taking real steps to ensure that our services are best advantageous to our clients and enhancing society in general.

Our growing community represents a dynamic and effective way of stimulating innovative businesses: by offering high-quality support services and building connected innovation ecosystems that identify and co-develop innovative solutions.

Our work goes beyond the quality-certified services that we offer along the full innovation support spectrum. EU|BICs and our Associate members incorporated specific and detailed focus areas into our services, including the elements that might otherwise be ignored under a strategy dedicated to solely maximising impact at the expense of the EU|BIC's values, quality standards and the contribution to our shared regional missions.

These have become our community's four specific purposes. **Regional Sustainable, Economic and Social Development**, from its origins until today, we endeavour to build strong innovation networks that support the development of European regions. **Quality Business Support**, we conduct our operations in a manner that delivers the highest-quality support services possible. **Access to Finance**, we strive to provide a steady pipeline of innovative, investment-ready companies and foster supportive investment opportunities. **Scaling European Innovation**, our pan-European nature is a strong asset to bolster the expansion potential of European startups, scale-ups and innovative SMEs.



# OUR ACTIONS

## Regional Development

We focus on fostering entrepreneurial innovations, including the acceleration of new enterprises, and driving innovation in existing enterprises; promoting entrepreneurial culture; (modernising, digitalising and diversifying industries; stimulating job creation; and partnering strategically with universities, research and science parks, corporates, investors and public authorities to form a vast, diverse, collaborative and connected European business innovation ecosystem.

Learn about our ecosystem building actions through the (i) diversity of sectors and actors we connect, our (ii) support provided to underrepresented entrepreneurs, (iii) our strategic alliances, among others with 3rd party investors, and ultimately (iv) the number of companies our community creates.

## Quality Business Support

Our quality-certified smart selection, ideation, incubation, and acceleration programmes are designed to support startups, scale-ups, SMEs and innovators of all kinds to keep succeeding in achieving their mission. In support of our commitment, we use our position as experts to share best practices with other businesses in our communities and facilitate the development of social capital by encouraging people to meet and collaborate in mutual innovation projects—leaving no one behind.

With our business support services provided, we can guide companies through each stage from ideation to scale-up. With above-average survival rates, EU|BIC supported startups and SMEs prove to be long-term contributors to the socio-economic growth and well-being of our regions.

## Access to Finance

Ensuring the continuity of the businesses and innovations that a competitive European economy needs, the EU|BIC community's access to financial services includes, access to private investments, (non)EU grants, loans, and equity funds. With a network of networks that spans over 35 countries in Europe and beyond, and an ecosystem of partners, our actions rely on tested tools, programmes, and best practices to embed innovation to finance, finance innovation and (non-)financial investments processes in our service offering.

## Scaling European Innovation

To support those who aspire to operate on an international scale and to reinforce Europe as a global leader in entrepreneurial research and innovation. We apply our understanding of the different needs of our client entrepreneurs throughout the various stages of growth and leverage the support network so they can benefit from the same quality of support in any region they target for expansion. The EU|BIC community is open to all its member's companies and provides them with access to markets, networking, strategic partnering, and investment attraction by creating dedicated international soft-landing zones.





## INTRODUCTION

**The pandemic is not the only crisis we have and are still facing in 2021. Current megatrends demonstrate the urgent need for a transition to a fair and sustainable society. Now, more than ever, the world has been looking to the innovation community for responses to existential challenges and new pathways towards wellbeing and global development.**

The Coronavirus pandemic – both in Europe and beyond – has caused significant turmoil and great enthusiasm. Turmoil because every business model in our sector has been tested and many turned upside down, and our client companies retracted to look after their resources in a time of economic contraction. Enthusiasm as the actions and conversations for a green, digital and inclusive future has become even more mainstream, governments, companies, investors and support organisations have started looking actively for complementary solutions to make the transition. Our EU|BIC community has shown its best sides and has attracted the attention of policymakers locally and globally eager to forge new directions forward towards greater wellbeing and socio-economic development – fostered by a resilient and connected network of innovation actors.

2020 marked the beginning of what promised to be our most connected, trusted and strongest year yet as a community. Perhaps one day we will look back and reflect: yes it was challenging yet we came out stronger. Indeed, we continued to support our client companies under testing conditions, our programmes and training succeeded digitally, our reach expanded, our ambition strengthened, our teams proved to be resilient, and our partners stood by us through it all. We lived up to our promise and continued to deliver on our commitment to our shared missions.



We are proud to share here the highlight from our EU|BIC community over the last year. At the top of all sectors represented by EU|BICs we see crucial support to companies active in Biotech & Life Sciences, Energy & Clean Technology and increased support to companies working in AI, Blockchain and Cyber Security. EU|BICs continue to be crucial intermediaries for startups & SMEs for attracting funding. In 2020/2021 the community reported having attracted more than 1.2 billion euros in capital. The great majority of our community now offer Internationalisation services (Access to markets) as a core service.

As we enter our emergent future, with the pandemic receding, and the confidence that we are going back to some kind of normality, let us be intently discussing development narratives and explore together possible scenarios and pathways for our organisations. The issues created over the years need entrepreneurial innovators, support actors, policymakers, funders and citizens to make bold choices to make a future that is chosen, not endured, a future that does not happen upon us but is made by all of us. The issues we face, together with those amplified by the pandemic, need entrepreneurial innovators as crucial building blocks in driving agile responses and supporting resilient regions, fostering the transition to a digital, green, and fair future society.

EU|BICs all over the world, have been supporting over 28,600 startups and a growing number of long-term sustainable SMEs to move forward, and we hope you enjoy reading this Impact Report. We are an essential partner in our society's transition towards 2030. On behalf of the EBN Secretariat team, we are proud to support you on your mission. And we do our utmost to help you make an even greater impact. For the EU|BIC community to rise to our future challenges we need to continue the ongoing transition to fair and sustainable regions and societies. We are ready to work with you and make this happen.

**Laura Lecci,**  
CEO EBN

## THIS IS WHAT MAKES AN EU|BIC



### **TO SUPPORT STARTUPS YOU MUST BE A BIT LIKE A STARTUP YOURSELF”**

“These rough times have taught me that the future is truly unpredictable and the best way to find the path in times of uncertainty is to be open-minded, agile, and ready to try new things – just like the startups we are supporting! Thus, I will continue curiously looking into the future of incubation, acceleration and innovative schemes to support young companies and, at the same time, to ensure that we, at PPNT, keep leading the way in our ecosystem.”

– **Dr Anna Torz**, International Cooperation Officer, [EU|BIC Poznan Science and Technology Park](#) (PL)



### **UNLIKE OTHER ORGANISATIONS, EU|BICS HAVE ONE SPECIAL THING IN COMMON: A QUALITY STANDARD, WHICH MAKES THEM A GREAT DISTRIBUTED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENT”**

[EU|BIC Trentino Sviluppo](#) is the largest EU|BIC in Italy and manages six incubators - two out of them are Technology Poles dealing with green-tech and mechatronics - hosting about 130 tenants of different sizes, from startups to large companies. Our owner is Provincia Autonoma di Trento which delegated our BIC to support entrepreneurship and innovation in the province of Trento. Through supporting the creation of startups and the growth of SMEs, our EU|BIC directly contributes to the creation of high skilled jobs (about 800 people work in the companies we host).

– **Luca Capra**, Deputy Head of Incubation and Startup, [EU|BIC Trentino Sviluppo](#) (IT)



**WE BELIEVE THE EU|BIC MEMBERSHIP WILL HELP US WITH OUR CONTINUOUS (INTERNATIONAL) DEVELOPMENT”**

‘EU|BIC’ Technology Centre Hradec Králové (TCHK) is a well-established, long-standing company that has been in the field of start-up business support in the Czech Republic for 13 years. Our goal is to provide startups with long-term and systematic support - not only in the city of Hradec Králové, which is the founder of TCHK, but also in the entire Hradec Králové Region. For us, the EU|BIC certification is an important tool that will support our position while setting conditions and negotiating with the government of the Hradec Králové Region. We would like to become a part of the European innovation ecosystem, develop international cooperation on interesting projects, and share best practices with other EU|BICs.”

- **Jiří Štěpán**, Startup Manager, EU|BIC TECHNOLOGY CENTRE Hradec Králové (CZ)



**EUROPEAN STANDARD AND AN OPEN DOOR TO INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS”**

“Joining the EU|BIC community means a leap in quality in services to companies in the region, but also being able to extend our offer to these companies with new support services, training, exchange of experiences, networking, etc. Being part of the community also opens the doors to a network of potential strategic partners with whom we can work on the development of European public policies that can significantly and positively impact the region.”

- **Francisco Pizarro**, Director at EU|BIC CEEI Extremadura (SP)





## OUR MISSIONS' APPROACH

Compiling what we have learned as a community in innovation support in combination with what we have mastered with our partners, our four specific mission commitments offer trusted testbeds for exploration, experimentation and applied action. Now more than ever in recent history, collaboration for innovative entrepreneurial solutions is necessary for social and economic recovery, environmental sustainability, and resilience.

*Our four specific mission commitments are focused on: Regional Sustainable, Social, Economic Development; Quality Business Support; Access to Finance; Scaling European Innovation. We have selected these areas based on their relevance and contribution to the direction of innovation and support to innovative entrepreneurs. As we call for inclusive, sustainable, and thriving regional economies, we need to move beyond a technological understanding of innovation into the art of building innovation ecosystems that put societies, ideas, and people at its core.*



## HIGHLIGHTS ON OUR MISSION: REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To address important challenges in a responsible way EU|BICs are building interconnected, inclusive regional innovation ecosystems across Europe that support the scaling of companies and spur innovation. This actively encourages and engages all actors – from universities, researchers, and students to startups, corporates, and industry leaders - and territories to set, undertake and achieve collective ambitions towards challenges for the benefit of society. What if we used our cross-sectorial and interconnected local-national-European position to make a real impact across our regions and accelerate the green, digital, and social transitions?

### 1. Entrepreneurial culture at Wageningen University and Research

We aim to startup people. This means that the focus lies not only on creating as many start-ups as possible but also on stimulating an entrepreneurial mindset among our students and young scientists. This reflects in students finding jobs that require a more entrepreneurial way of working; always considering people, profit, planet. It also results in research projects that have a clear value creation pathway.

EU|BIC StartHub Wageningen follows several processes that help in fostering this entrepreneurial culture. Our programme covers three different stages before the actual incubation of start-ups. We start with Inspiration; a series of events such as thought-provoking webinars, showcasing success and failure stories and discussions about relevant topics. The second stage is Ideation, where student teams can join a 5-week programme to develop their start-up idea. The third stage is called Realisation, a one-week full-time boot camp to kick start their company. We have many other facilities in place, and this unique programme stands at the core of our offering.

[Continue reading the full story here.](#)

## 2. Restorative Neurotechnologies, company supported by EU|BIC Consorzio Arca (IT)

**Restorative Neurotechnologies** born as a spin-off of the University of Palermo in 2018 works closely with **EU|BIC Consorzio ARCA**, the certified incubator based in the same University. Consorzio ARCA has supported the company since its ideation phase and throughout the most significant stages of its growth path: from developing the business model, registering intellectual property, preparing the pitch and on to access to rewards and financing.

Restorative Neurotechnologies has developed a unique treatment of neurological disorders, such as impaired attention, language, and memory, which typically afflict victims of strokes. In a short time, it has won the EIT Health Headstart 2019 grant (€40,000) and the Social Fare call which allowed the first €100,000 in financing and significantly accelerated the closing of €1 million investment from a consortium of three investors. *“The important investment operation in our company represents a unique opportunity to support research and clinical applications but also to offer job opportunities to young people, with socio-economic repercussions in the South of Italy”*, explains Massimiliano Oliveri, CEO of Restorative Neurotechnologies and Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience at the University of Palermo.

[Continue reading the full story here.](#)

## 3. The international benchmark for Open Innovation in Industry 4.0

**BIND 4.0**, led by the Basque Government & SPRI Group in collaboration with the EU|BICs of the Basque Country (Araba, Gipuzkoa, Bizkaia, and Bizkaia Ezkerraldea), is an international initiative created to become a meeting point for innovative startups, large companies and agents of the Industry 4.0 ecosystem.

Based on “The Venture Client Method” wherein large companies work with startup teams by contracting them to implement solutions for real Industry 4.0 projects, the Open Innovation Platform encourages the immersion of startups in the Basque industrial ecosystem. BIND 4.0 has been established at an international level, as a benchmark platform for open innovation, realising disruptive Industry 4.0 projects and growing the entrepreneurial ecosystem. It was awarded the first prize in the Improving the Business Environment category at the European Enterprise Promotion Awards at the SME Assembly 2020. The International consulting firm Gartner declared BIND 4.0 as one of the best platforms driving innovation in industrial ecosystems.

[Continue reading the full story here.](#)

## HIGHLIGHTS ON OUR MISSION: QUALITY BUSINESS SUPPORT

Business incubators and accelerators have generally demonstrated a positive impact: for the entrepreneurs through improved survival rates, better profitability, enlarged networks, and improved access to finance and new markets; and for the local innovation ecosystem with among others increased technology transfer and job creation. Still, incubation programmes on their own do not necessarily lead to positive outcomes, for entrepreneurs and local economies. EU|BICs stimulate sustainable business growth with high societal value.

Business survival is only improved by business support programmes, if the entrepreneur goes beyond the formal workshops and training by also seeking advice and assistance from their networks, partners and/or other public support programmes. Likewise, for local economies, *there may be untapped potential to use business incubators and business accelerators as part of a suite of inclusive entrepreneurship policies and programmes to support people from groups that are under-represented or disadvantaged in entrepreneurship (e.g. women, youth, immigrants, seniors, the unemployed, people with disabilities).*

### 1. Business modelling support through global mentorship network

The International Business Mentors Network, founded by EU|BIC [madri+d](#) aims to promote the excellence of mentoring for entrepreneurs, a service of great value for all of us who support innovative entrepreneurs. We realise how important it is to dedicate time and effort to follow a quality mentoring methodology, where mentors and entrepreneurs share techniques and meet periodically to advance their development plans. A new methodology created from scratch was the basis of international quality certification, now widely recognized.

The Network has more than 450 Business Mentors in 33 countries, mainly in Europe and Latin America. Certified business mentors benefit from the recognition of the certification in the world of entrepreneurship and business management. The key is not to have many mentors in your network, but to differentiate yourself from the many mentoring networks that exist today. The quality certification processes give the trust and confidence required by mentors or by managers of startup mentoring programmes. The [madri+d](#) Foundation is the body of the Madrid Regional Government responsible for Accreditation and Certification of the Quality of Higher Education which enables us to guarantee certification with our resources and procedures.

[Continue reading the full story here.](#)

## 2. Startup accelerator as an intermediary for knowledge, investment, and industry

Every year the international renown [Órbita accelerator](#) operated by [EU|BIC CEEI Castellón](#) selects ten outstanding projects (Early Stage and Seed Phase startups in any sector) to take them through a process of scalable and sustainable growth while guaranteeing access to private financing, including €100K in equity-free prizes.

“We are convinced that opportunities for startups arise not only by supporting their go-to-market but also through fostering collaboration with each other, technology transfer, alliances and connecting with large corporates. As a result, we have been focusing the programme on open innovation dynamics which provide business opportunities for startups, and multiply their impact both in the market and in the territory of the accelerator.”

In 2020, the startups accelerated by Órbita generated a turnover of €1,306,422 with a forecast turnover of €6,242,983 for 2021. Moreover, the selected projects generated 56 direct jobs, with a forecast of 98 by 2021. The total investment received by the selected startups was €1,948,345.

[Continue reading the full story here.](#)

## 3. Fostering youth entrepreneurship

The DNA Cascais Entrepreneurship Programme, operated by [EU|BIC DNA Cascais](#) is one of the largest education programmes for entrepreneurship in Portugal. Its main objective is to eliminate some of the gaps in the Portuguese educational system, preparing young people for the labour market, instilling them with an entrepreneurial attitude, as well as equipping them with other business competencies. We believe entrepreneurship to be more than the act of creating a business... it is an attitude, one that is rooted in knowledge and innovation, and in the implementation of initiatives that generate value.

Over 15 editions of the project, provided more than 58,000 students to take part in these journeys for a better future. DNA Cascais co-developed NES (Network of Entrepreneurial Schools) which functions as a learning community of Schools, Municipalities, Local Development Agencies, and promoters of entrepreneurship education projects that seek to improve educational practices and promote an entrepreneurial attitude within the school ecosystem.

[Continue reading the full story here.](#)

## HIGHLIGHTS ON OUR MISSION: ACCESS TO FINANCE

In Europe, 25 million small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) represent over 99% of businesses in the EU. They employ two out of every three employees, create 85% of all new jobs and generate about three-fifth of the EU value-added. Our focus is on those start-ups and scale-ups that seek to stay competitive and innovative usually relying on external finance for product development, digitalisation, internationalisation, and upskilling. It requires tailor-made support to help them grow and innovate at all stages of development. To achieve this ambition, lenders, granters, business angels and venture capitalists should be rooted locally and well-connected globally.

### 1. ‘Systematise’ contacts between firms and investors

[EU|BIC St John’s Innovation Centre](#) unites its vast connection with business angel actors, groups and networks in the annual PitchFest event, making the process more efficient through scale.

“The key ingredients at the outset ensure that supply and demand are in balance and that our selection and training added enough value to keep both companies and investors engaged. In our experience, investors are often willing to provide informal advice in the early years of a cluster’s development, but they will soon lose interest unless investable proposals start coming through regularly.

Pitchfest’s (East of England editions) cumulative figures over 6 years show an investment of £23M in 33 companies, including sectors such as IT & Telematics, Manufacturing & Engineering, and Bioscience & Healthcare, with 43 jobs created and 46 jobs preserved. Since early 2021, we have been rolling out this service across the country, working with partner organisations, as part of a service funded by Innovate UK EDGE. By Spring 2022, two cohorts of around 15 companies each will have been put through Pitchfest in each of the English regions, Wales and (soon) Northern Ireland. That means that over 200 companies will have been drilled intensively to become investment ready, out of a pool of 1,000 applicants. And the longer-term legacy will be embedding the know-how in organisations like St John’s across the UK.

[Continue reading the full story here.](#)

## 2. Support the full funding cycle for startups

**Loanitt** is a FinTech Credit Intermediary focused on improving the credit application journey. It has become Ireland's largest credit intermediary in car finance in under 12 months. Loanitt just launched its Agri and Commercial Finance division at the end of 2020 where they expect a similar growth trajectory this year. Support by **EU|BIC Southeast BIC**, the Loanitt team started an intensive investment readiness process and prepared to pitch to the South East Business Angel Network, part of Halo Business Angel Network (HBAN) and they, along with Enterprise Ireland have invested €570,000 in the fintech startup.

Aidan Shine, CEO of EU|BIC South East BIC said: "We are proud to have finalised this funding round for one of the island's most exciting and dynamic fintech start-ups via SEBAN and are delighted to have worked closely with the Loanitt team throughout the preparation process through to supporting their funding application." Padraig Nolan, COO, Loanitt says of their experience with South East BIC: "The continued support we received from Rosemary, Aidan, Siobhan and the South East BIC team throughout this journey has been invaluable. They were very helpful and informative throughout our initial fundraising round and played a key role in helping us secure that investment. They are always on hand with practical advice to help us steer into uncharted territory.

[Continue reading the full story here.](#)





## HIGHLIGHTS ON OUR MISSION: SCALING EUROPEAN INNOVATION

Innovative companies thrive through the support of an interconnected, global ecosystem that provides supporting capabilities, data, customers, and knowledge. As such, our pan European, global EU|BIC community greatly contributes to sustainable business growth with high societal value. We are focused on meeting the concrete needs of our client companies and stimulating the expansion of their solutions which lead the shift towards a more competitive EU and a more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient world.

### 1. Small innovation ecosystems need internationalisation support as a key service

“For an EU|BIC it is crucial to have internationalisation as one of its main cornerstones. Especially for those that support start-ups in small ecosystems like the catchment, we operate in as [EU|BIC FudacióBit](#). This is because the competitiveness of companies and their survival is directly linked to offering services, products or technologies that are competitive internationally as well as scalable and easily exportable. EU|BIC FundacioBit is a non-profit organization of the Spanish Balearic Islands Government directly involved in the implementation of innovation and technological development public policies and strategies, as well as actions concerning systems and strategies of science, innovation and business in the Balearic Islands.

“The exchange of practices among EU|BICs that are providing both internationalisation and scale-up services can be beneficial as it allows us to both enrich our methodology and increase our knowledge of interested EU|BICs, which can lead to future partnerships.” Over four years-time FundacioBit’s incubation programme sees half of its supported startups enter new foreign markets before the programme ends. To increase these success rates, they are now implementing a formal scale-up programme targeting companies younger than 8 years with a high potential of leading in their specific market niche.

[Continue reading the full story here.](#)

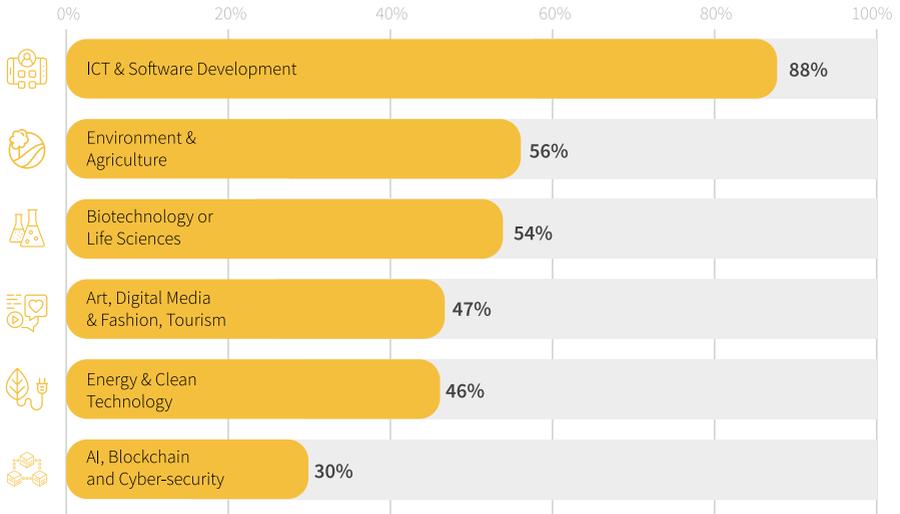
*A large majority of EU|BICs supports companies in their internationalisation effort. 78% supports companies in their access to markets as part of start-up services; 73% do so in the scale-up phase as well. Disaggregating the data by different organisation types, however, some interesting differences emerge. Science/technology parks more frequently provide support in access to markets as a start-up service (9 out of 12 do so, i.e., 75%) than in the scale-up phase (50%). The same pattern can be recognised in the case of EU|BICs that are government organisations: while 80% of them offer support for access to markets as a start-up service, 60% do so in the scale-up phase as well.*



# OUR METRICS

## REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

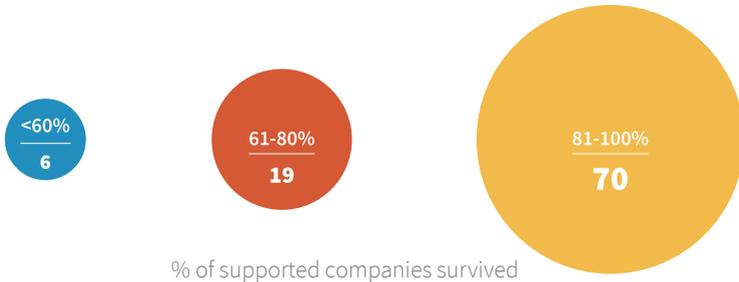
### 1. MAIN SECTORS



### 2. JOB CREATION



### 3. SURVIVAL RATE AFTER 3 YEARS



# QUALITY BUSINESS SUPPORT

## 1. COMPANIES SUPPORTED

52 000+

enquiries  
received



10 000+

start-ups  
supported



15 800 +

entrepreneurs  
selected



18 600+

SMEs  
supported



## 2. STIMULATION SERVICES



Over  
5,200  
events run

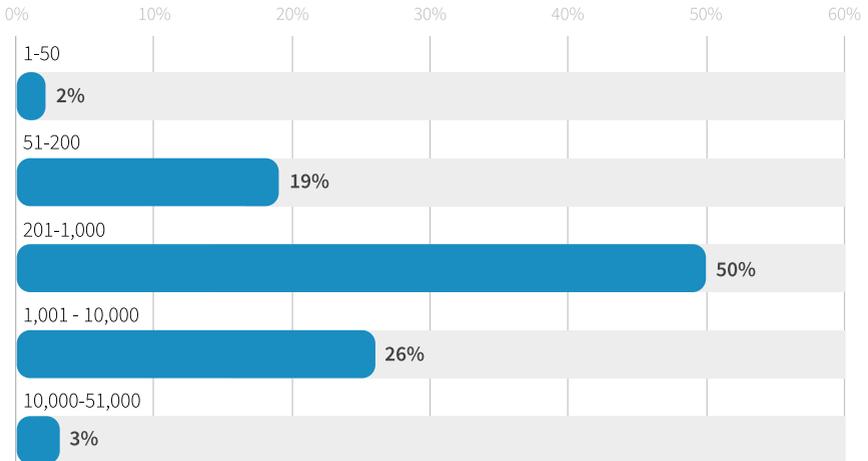


On average  
52  
events per EU|BIC



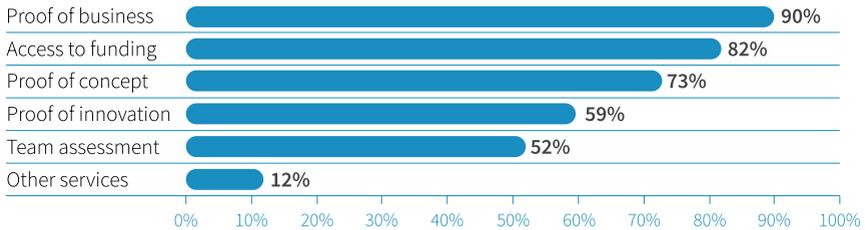
Over  
190,000  
participants

### Participants in awareness-raising events



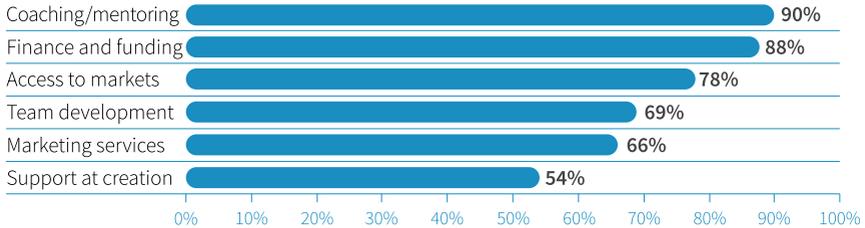
### 3. SELECTION SERVICES (PRE-SEED)

#### Selection services provided



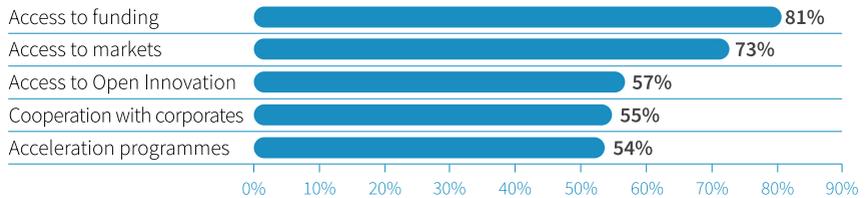
### 4. START-UP SERVICES

#### Main start-up services provided



### 5. SCALE-UP SERVICES

#### Main growth services provided



### 6. MENTORING & COACHING

328

Average days of coaching & mentoring



30,000+

days in total

## ACCESS TO FINANCE

### COMPANIES ACCESSING FUNDS



**1 500+**

Potential entrepreneurs  
(pre-seed investments)  
accessing funding through EU|BIC support

Average: **16 per EU|BIC**

**3 100+**

Start-ups accessing funding  
through EU|BIC support



Average of **33 per EU|BIC**



**18 100**

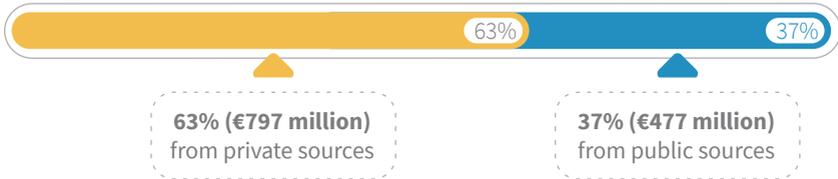
SMEs accessing funding through  
EU|BIC support

Average of **187 per EU|BIC**

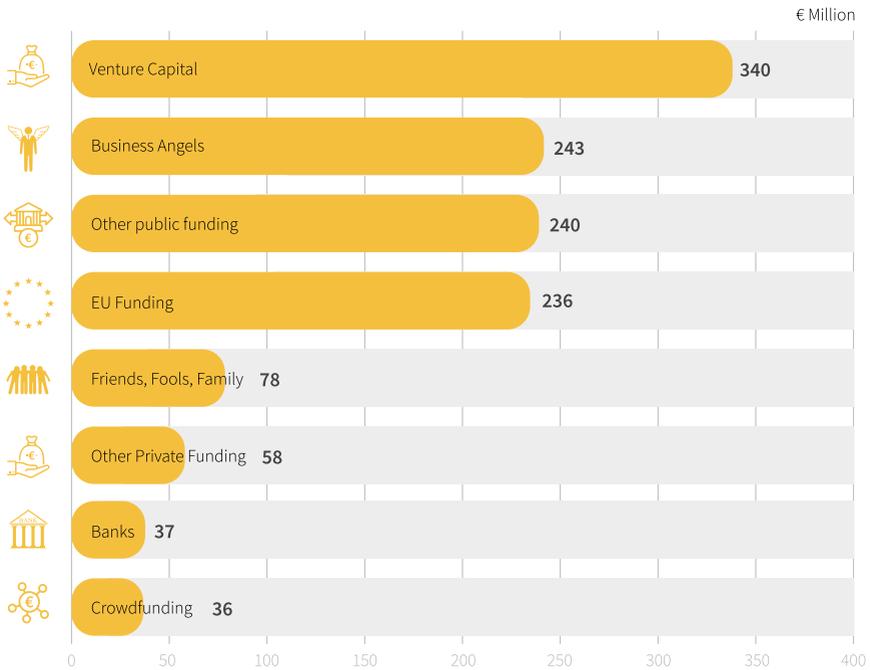


## FUNDS RAISED

Over of **€ 1.27 billion** raised, of which:

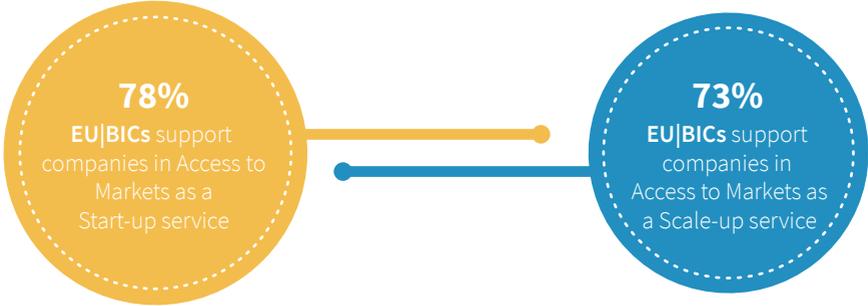


Amount of funding raised by companies supported by EU|BICs, per investor type



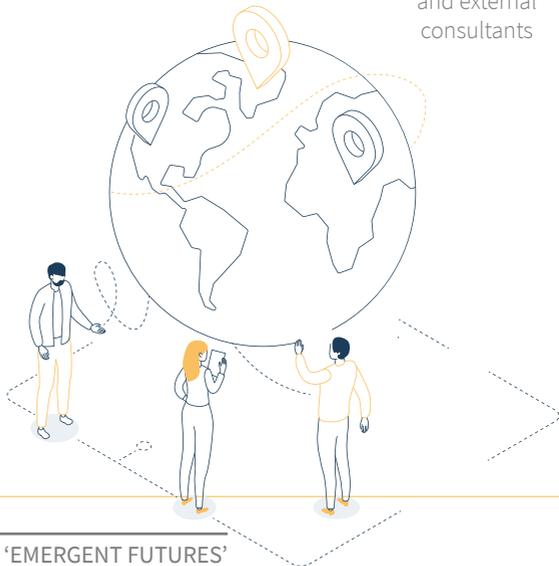
# INTERNATIONALISATION OF COMPANIES

## SUPPORT IN ACCESS TO MARKETS



## INTERNATIONALISATION AS A CORE EXPERTISE

**82%** EU|BICs have expertise in internationalisation support





## HOW WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE



*Without young talented entrepreneurs driving their start-ups towards international success any change will be impossible! EBN is our reference organisation to join forces, provide better services and contribute to a faster transition to a digital, green, and fair future society.”*

**- Andrea Di Anselmo**, President at Meta Group



*EU|BICs continuously show that by offering the right set of quality support services they deliver much better results compared to other business and innovation centres from the same region. EU|BICs startup rates are higher, success rates are higher, and job creation and sustainability are higher.”*

**- European Court of Auditors, 2014**, ‘Special report on the contribution of the FEDER (European Regional Development Fund) to the development and effectiveness of business incubators’, European Union.

# THE EU|BIC COMMUNITY

THE CURRENT MEMBERS OF EBN NETWORK. GRAND TOTAL: 169

110  
EU|BICs and  
19 Satellites

40  
Associate Members  
(including 6 Partner Networks)



# HOW EBN SUPPORTS THE EU|BIC COMMUNITY

Connect



Grow



Promote



## 5 Special Interest Groups

Space

Eco-innovation

Creative Industries

Social Impact

Smart Manufacturing

## 1 EBN Congress

Regional Ecosystems shaping European Innovation

3-4 November 2020, online.

EBN Congress gathered around

**400** participants from Europe and beyond,

**12** exhibitors,

**38** speakers over 2 days (45% gender balance),

**1000+** contacts were made online, and

**163** meetings took place over the two days on the hosting platform.



## 3 new internationalisation opportunities.

EBN secretariat is pleased to have been awarded new European funded projects focused on Africa

**BIC Africa**

(DG INTPA),

**ENRICH in Africa**

(DG RTD),

**Africa Europe Digital Innovation Bridge**

(DG CNECT)

## 8 new members



(6 Associate Members and 2 EU|BICs) coming from Austria, Cyprus, Croatia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, France.

**2 new certified EU|BICs:**

**Accent Inkubator**  
(Austria)

**Genopole**  
(France)

**23 international projects** involved 100+ EU|BIC and Associate Members their client companies.

*Thanks to the EBN Secretariat's project portfolio we have involved our members and/or their companies in more than ...*



**35+ webinars and pitching events** for and by members presenting tools, methodologies and success stories to improve client companies growth (e-pitching, investment readiness, internationalisation, business modelling).

**80+ training events** for members and involving members as trainers/experts

**130+ project partner meetings** showcasing members activities, projects tools and results, and client companies' success stories.



**#EBNvsCovid19 social media campaign** promoted 49 initiatives from members, 92 solutions launched by companies and shared 14 EU initiatives put in place to react and fight against the pandemic.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## CSIL & METHODOLOGY

### 2021 Impact and Activity Study – methodology

Based on the replies submitted by the EU|BICs participating in the 2021 EBN Quality Survey, the following methodology has been adopted to carry out the analysis.

The first phase has focused on data consolidation, to develop the replies received into a clean and consistent database suitable for elaboration and analysis. To this end, three actions have been taken.

- Cases of missing replies to individual questions can pose a threat to database comprehensiveness and representativeness. A tailored approach was chosen to deal with them, considering the nature of the gap and the importance of the indicator in the survey. In cases where the reply could be deduced using information gathered through desk research or as a consequence of other replies in the survey, the corresponding value has been entered ex-post. Due to the peculiarity of 2020, a year characterised by the far-reaching impact of the Covid pandemic worldwide, the choice was taken to avoid entering values derived from the 2019 survey as a substitute, to protect the database from undue distortions. In other selected cases, punctual requests for complementing information were made to respondents.
- Checking for consistency in the format and measurement unit of replies is instrumental to prepare a database for elaboration, as it ensures comparability of replies and makes the automatic processing of information possible. Data cleaning procedures were carried out to address this need. Even though cases of formal inconsistency were minimal thanks to the rigid questionnaire structure, several replies made a fine-tuning necessary, for instance, to introduce coherent decimal separators, or to transform replies provided in form of range into single numbers (in this case, the range average was used).

- Beyond formal aspects, replies have been checked for actual inconsistencies as well. More specifically, consistency was checked for across replies to different questions by the same respondent (horizontal checks), and across replies to the same question by different respondents (vertical checks). Horizontal checks were based on evident links between different questions (for instance, a group of questions focusing on different aspects of incubation space) and managed to shed light on apparent discrepancies, which were subsequently solved either through available information or punctual requests for clarification. Vertical checks highlighted outliers instead (i.e., data entries that are much bigger or much smaller than the other replies to the same question), which pose a significant challenge to the analysis. On one hand, outliers may reflect the diversity of the EBN network and have a high informative value (pointing for instance to different contexts, or particularly brilliant performances); on the other hand, these anomalies may represent input errors or derive from a different understanding of specific questions. A case-by-case approach and different techniques have been adopted in these cases to ensure the correctness of outliers, among which: checking for relative consistency between 2020 and 2019 replies by the same respondent; requesting punctual clarification; in very few cases, correcting or removing values (in absence of substitutes) that clearly represented wrong inputs and would have therefore flawed the analysis.

Overall, this first phase of data consolidation resulted in a reliable, consistent and comprehensive database, allowing the correct processing of data. In the second phase, data elaboration and analysis were carried out.

- Numerical data entries (for instance, annual income or survival rates of supported companies) were grouped in ranges, calibrated considering the ranges presented in the last edition of the Impact and Activity Report as well as the numerosity of replies falling into each range this year. More broadly, the definition of ranges tried to strike a balance between different aspirations: granularity of information; a clear presentation; informative value; and comparability across report editions.
- For most questions, tables and graphs have been produced to display the overall distribution of replies across the whole sample of respondents.
- Correlations between different questions have been investigated as well. To do so, in selected cases the replies have been disaggregated by relevant dimensions (for instance, by type of organisation, location or catchment area) to identify relevant patterns and shed light on information not immediately emerging from the raw database. Focusing the analysis on subsets of the sample enables an enhanced understanding, and further underscores the value of the EBN network's richness.

After developing a narrative approach for the presentation of preliminary results to EBN members in June 2021, finally, the analysis has been fine-tuned and the main evidence emerging from the survey is now presented in this Report.



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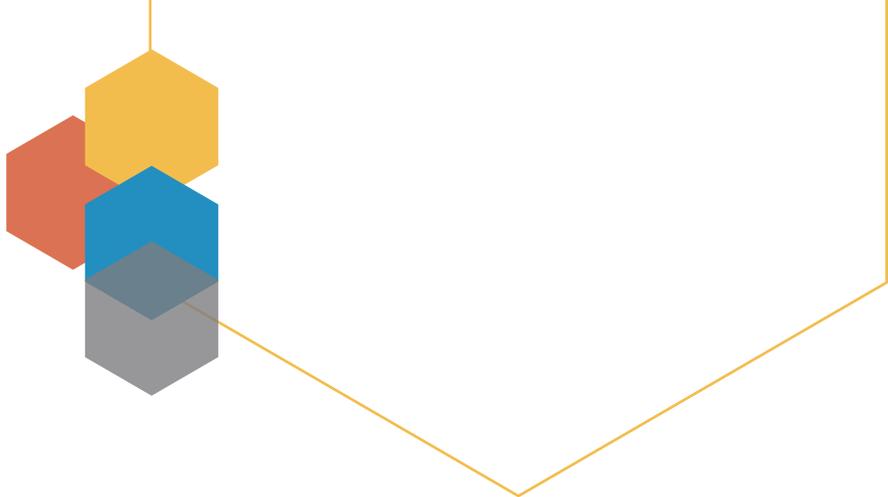
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