The Eurostars programme for SMEs is clearly demonstrating that there is a direct positive correlation between R&D investment and economic growth.

Eurostars.
What’s in it for you?

Eurostars is a joint programme between national funding bodies gathered within EUREKA - and the EU. Eurostars focuses on R&D-performing SMEs that wish to lead transnational collaborative research projects, with rapidly-commercialised results.
We particularly appreciate the fact that Eurostars offers a dedicated and secured funding in so many countries. Our counterparts in national funding bodies in other countries ensure that all partners are funded in an international research project.

ARNOLD MEIJER
The Netherlands Enterprise Agency

If you are a small company in need of public funding to carry out your project and if you have a clear development strategy via innovation at international level, Eurostars is for you!

AMANDINE KAROUJ
Bpifrance - France
What does Eurostars mean for National Funding Bodies (NFBs)?

There are several European programmes designed to foster international collaboration. It is the role of the NFBs to guide SMEs to the best suited programme.

Eurostars offers a unique combination of centralised evaluation and management, with decentralised funding and project follow-up in all participating countries. National funding is allocated according to the rules of the NFBs involved. They say that “Eurostars is an ideal model for future national and international research programmes,” while it also succeeds in reducing fragmentation of national and European research efforts.

The NFBs form an essential component of the implementation of Eurostars, by ensuring that the programme is known, understood and readily accessible to all potential applicants.

Eurostars has proved to be a very good support instrument for our SMEs. It is a great match for specific stages in product development (both new and existing). The main advantage is its international visibility, cooperation with other programmes, new clients, quality of projects, central application.

TOMAS ARONSSON
VINNOVA - Sweden

We believe the design of the Eurostars programme is excellent, and should be used as a model for other transnational and international collaborative programmes.

PATRICK CORNET
Bpifrance - France
R&D-performing SMEs in the driving seat...

It is widely recognised that the dynamism of smaller companies is a key contributor to a successful economy. This attribute is also important for larger firms. Outsourcing of R&D to SMEs, specialised labs and universities has grown threefold since 2005 (source: 2005 Annual Impact Review of EUREKA).

SMEs have an important role to play in the European innovation system. With more than 20 million SMEs in the EU, they represent the bulk of economic activities and are a driver of innovation and technological development. In many fields, high-technology SMEs have a key role in developing and exploiting new technologies. It is therefore crucial to unlock their potential, supporting their R&D efforts.

The introduction of Eurostars as an instrument offered by NFBs has been a success story in itself. For this reason, NFBs have increased their support and funding to SMEs, as well as the EU: its commitment to the programme increased to a maximum of EUR 287 million under Horizon 2020. This Eurostars-2 programme runs from 2014-2020. This programme covers the previously overlooked sector of R&D-performing SMEs, at the forefront of technological progress.

Eurostars enables R&D-performing SMEs to improve performance through its support of in-house research. The objective of Eurostars is bringing increased value to the economy, higher growth and more job opportunities.

Eurostars promotes internationalisation of the participating SMEs. Their involvement in international research projects enables participants to combine and share creativity and expertise, and eases access to previously uncharted markets for the resulting innovation.

All organisations are funded in the Netherlands, but the programme is tailor-made for SMEs. About 80% of our Eurostars participants are SMEs. Eurostars is an SME-driven programme and we like this.

ARNOLD MEIJER
The Netherlands Enterprise Agency

Eurostars is in line with the current trend of SME-based R&D activities and it fits well with our development policies, which currently strongly emphasize the importance of nurturing SMEs.

GITAE SHIM
KIAT - South Korea

Through this programme, we give companies much appreciated access to financial resources, which for a small business can involve relatively significant sums.

TOMAS ARONSSON
VINNOVA - Sweden

EUROSTARS-2
SME PROFILE

65 %
R&D performing SMEs

84 %
SMEs have less than 50 employees

40 %
SMEs workforce is dedicated to R&D activities
We knew we would have to face big challenges and the only way to overcome them would be to get more knowledge into the company. That is what Eurostars helped us to achieve.

JAN REICHELT
President of Mendeley - Eurostars MAKIN’IT project
Eurostars-2, a unique programme for R&D performing SMEs

A TYPICAL EUROSTARS-2 PROJECT IS...

- **3-4 participants**
- **2-3 countries**
- **29 months average duration**
- **14 M€ average project cost**

A PROGRAMME TAILOR-MADE FOR SMES

- **69%** R&D performing SMEs & SMEs

PROJECTS SUBMITTED

**CUT-OFF 1-5**

- **2.0 billion €** Total costs of applications
- **4,951** Number of applicants

**CUT-OFF 1-4**

- **24%** Success rate (funded vs submitted)
- **526 M€** Total costs of applications funded
- **226 M€** Estimated public funding

TECHNOLOGICAL AREAS

PROJECTS SUBMITTED

- Electronics, IT and telecoms technology: **30%**
- Biological sciences/technologies: **27%**
- Industrial manufacturing, material and transport: **14%**
- Energy technology: **6%**
- Other: **24%**

MARKET AREAS

PROJECT SUBMITTED

- Medical/health related: **33%**
- Industrial products/manufacturing: **18%**
- Computer related: **8%**
- Energy: **7%**
- Other: **34%**
A broad participation at European and international level

**IMPACT ACHIEVED**

- Public funds: 1 M€
- Private funds: 1.3 M€
- Additional turnover: 2.8 M€

**IMPACT EXPECTED**

- 10,000 jobs created
- 2,000 products, process or services released on the market
- 1 M€ public funds
- 10.9 M€ additional turnover expected
- 60% increased number of employees
- Double annual turnover
What is the added value of Eurostars for National Funding Bodies?

1 - EU ‘top-up’

The EU supports the programme financially by ‘topping up’ contributions of participating countries. With a total of 287 million euros, it represents a maximum of 33% of the contributions of participating countries.

For our National Funding Body, the added value of Eurostars is definitely the access it offers to the EU ‘top-up’. For every 75 euros put in by the national administrations, 25 euros of top-up are given by the EU.

BIRUTĖ BUKAUSKAITĖ
MITA - Lithuania

2 - Centralised evaluation & monitoring

Eurostars offers the unique combination of centralised management with decentralised funding.

From a more qualitative point of view, we believe this is a good programme, supported by a proactive team at the EUREKA Secretariat (ESE) and an efficient process. The centralised services provided by the ESE ensure a horizontal management of the programme.

PATRICK CORNET
Bpifrance - France

We try to make it as simple as possible. With this in mind, the principle of lean administration is very important. For example, we accept the Eurostars Project Progress Report and Final report for our national monitoring. We believe a low administrative burden is crucial.

ARNOLD MEIJER
The Netherlands Enterprise Agency

The quality of the international evaluation is very important. It is also cost-efficient. The decision is trusted and the results can be approved very fast, without additional national evaluation.

VASILE LUNGU
ANCS - Romania

The key selling point of Eurostars for us is the specific process, which offers the same opportunity to SMEs in different countries, with a dedicated centralised system and funding available and secured in Eurostars participating countries.

AMANDINE KAROU
Bpifrance - France
3 - Internationalisation

Involvement in international research projects allows access to previously uncharted markets.

First and foremost, we expect to expand our international networks so that we can enhance our international cooperation with other NFBs at EU level.

GITAE SHIM
KIAT - South Korea

With the Netherlands being an open economy, and trade as the major contributor to our GDP, we believe international cooperation is the way to go forward for Dutch SMEs. It offers new opportunities and opens up new markets. Eurostars is one such way for the Dutch SMEs to achieve this.

ARNOLD MEIJER
The Netherlands Enterprise Agency

4 - Involvement in the decision-making process

NFBs are the key decision-making body of Eurostars.

NFBs offer highly professional support services and form an essential component of Eurostars implementation by raising awareness of the innovation activities in Eurostars and ensuring that Eurostars is known and readily accessible to all potential applicants.

ANA TOMAŠEK
BICRO - Croatia

5 - The role of the EUREKA Secretariat (ESE)

The ESE is responsible for the implementation of Eurostars. It manages evaluation and monitoring processes, communications and network-development activities.

One of the biggest benefits of working with the ESE on Eurostars is its sound expertise and that it’s a kind of forum for discussions between funding bodies, where we can compare national practices and set benchmarks. Also, for a small country like Switzerland, the independent and central evaluation and the pool of international experts with market experience is in itself a great value and an advantage compared to other SME programmes.

ANDREAS GUT
SBFI - Switzerland
NFBs in the Eurostars National Implementation Group

NFBs are an official body in the governance of Eurostars, tasked with the critical objective of implementing progressive milestones to achieve a short time to contract, balanced funding and more harmonisation. They will have a key role to play during the current phase of Eurostars under Horizon 2020.

To improve previous shortcomings on time to contract and funding potential, Eurostars participating countries and the EU have tripled their budget (from 400 million euros to 1.2 billion euros) for the next phase of Eurostars under Horizon 2020.

To implement and monitor progress towards achieving the milestones listed here, a Eurostars National Implementation Group has been established. This group is composed of NFB representatives and coordinated by the EUREKA Secretariat.

Milestones for Eurostars under Horizon 2020

- **7 months**
  - time-to-contract

- **Funding of the top-50 projects**

- **50-75%**
  - Funding of the projects that are positively evaluated

- **A common reporting system and financial viability methodology**
“NFBs are an official body in the governance of Eurostars with the key objective of setting up and implementing important milestones.”

ANA TOMAŠEK
BICRO - Croatia
This publication is dedicated to National Funding Bodies (NFBs) and their significant contribution to the strengthening of Europe’s economic performance, by facilitating innovation development through support of their countries’ national and international R&D&I programmes. By coordinating their efforts with European, national and regional institutions, they contribute to completing the European Research and Innovation Area.