

# WOMEN IN BUSINESS

Fostering the Young Women Entrepreneurship in the Danube Region

## WOMEN IN BUSINESS Fostering the Young Women Entrepreneurship in the Danube Region



Mariya Zlateva

RAPIV

Klaudia Keringer

PBN

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iFem Power 2. Multiplier Event

Project co-funded by European Union Funds (ERDF, IPA, ENI)

## Main data



**Title of the project:** Fostering the Young Women Entrepreneurship in the Danube Region

The project is approved under the **2<sup>nd</sup> call of the Interreg Danube Transnational Programme.**

**Project duration:** 36 months

**Project budget:** 2 021 050.00 €

**Partners:** 14 partners from 9 DR countries - Bulgaria, Austria, Croatia, Germany, Slovenia, Hungary, Romania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova.



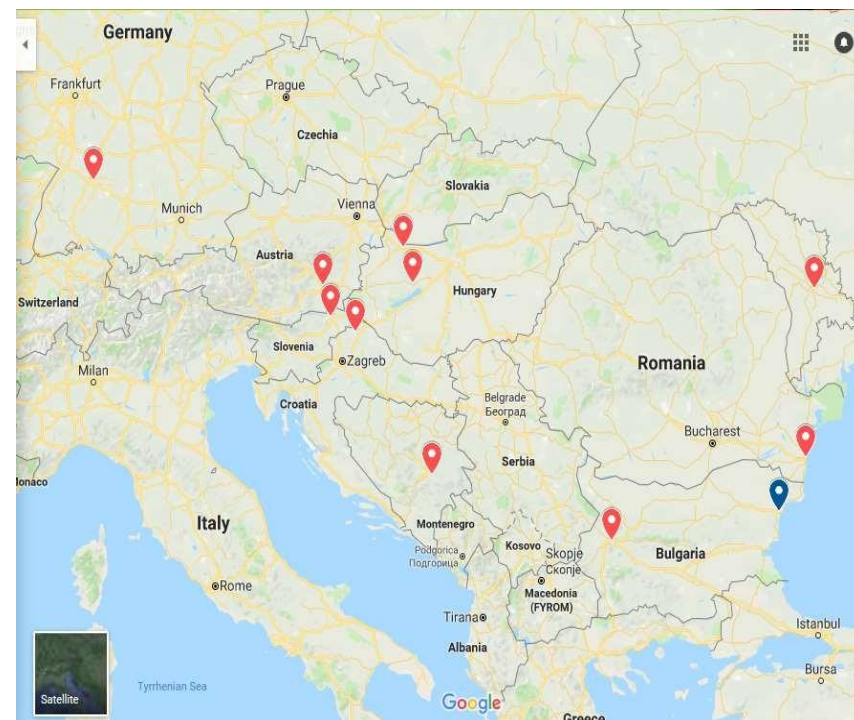
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# Main data



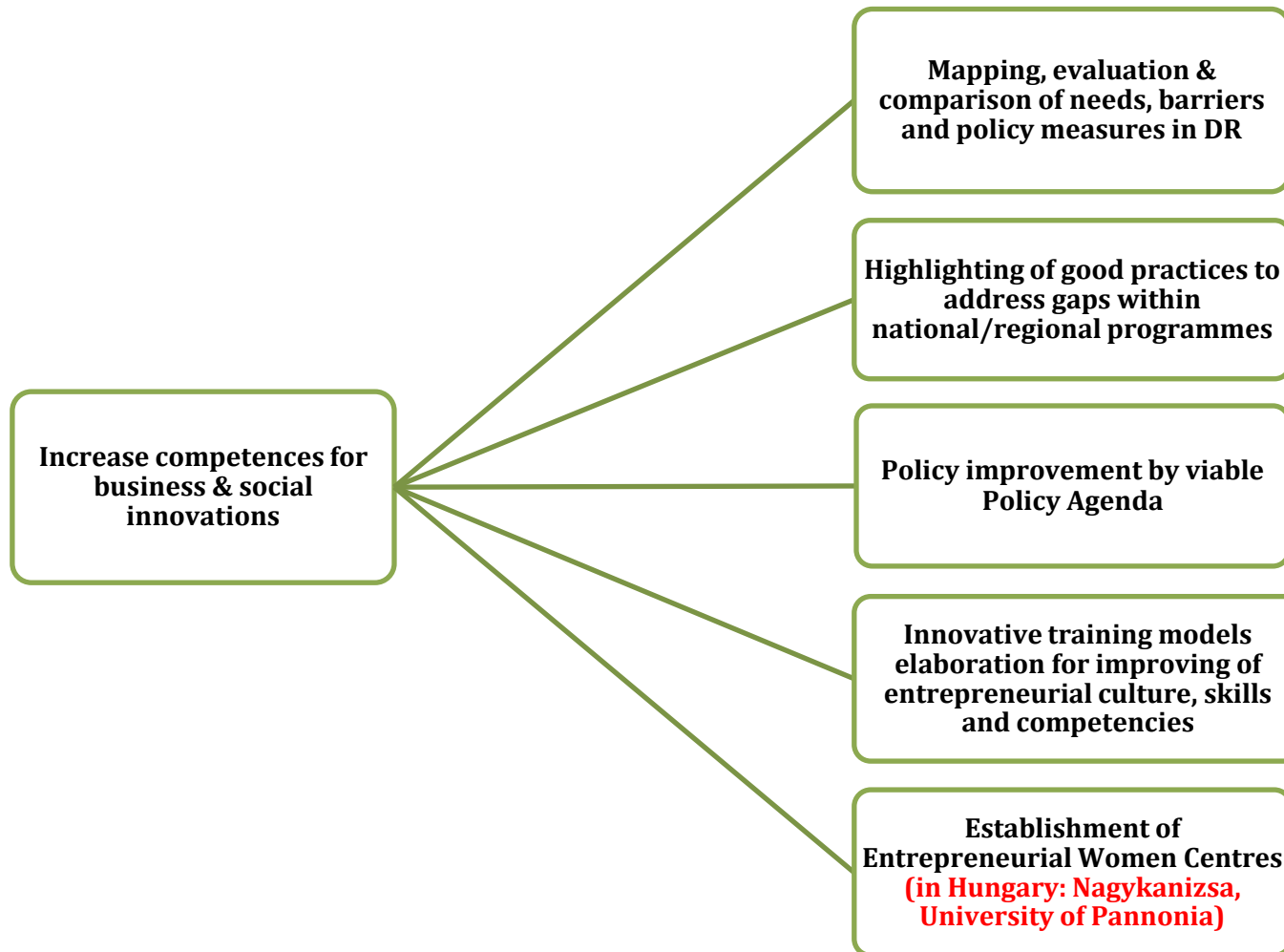
- LP - Regional Agency for Entrepreneurship and Innovations – Varna, BG
- PP 1 - Innovation Region Styria Ltd., AT
- PP 2 - Varna Free University “Chernorizets Hrabar”, BG
- PP 3 - Technology Park Varazdin Ltd., HR /member of Women Entrepreneurship Sector Group of EEN/
- PP 4 - bwcon GmbH, DE
- PP 5 - Maribor Development Agency, SL
- PP 6 - Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Stajerska, SL /Regional council of business women/
- PP 7 - Pannon Business Network Association, HU**
- PP 8 - University of Pannonia, HU
- PP 9 - Association of SMEs of Constanta, RO
- PP 10 - Ovidius University of Constanta, RO
- PP 11 - School of Economics and Business, University of Sarajevo, BA
- PP 12 - Organization for SME Sector Development, MD
- PP 13 - Ministry of Economy, BG (ASP)



6 business support organizations, 4 universities,  
1 ministry, 1 regional agency, 1 chamber of commerce,  
1 NGO



# Main and specific objectives



# Achieved so far



## WP 1

- Project Handbook
- Rules for SCOM
- Risk Plan

## WP 2

- Communication Plan
- Capitalization Plan
- Stakeholder Database
- On-line presence, Newsletter, web page
- Kick-off Dissemination Event, July 2018, Varna

## WP 3

- Guidelines for Study of current state
- On-line survey in DR on needs and barriers
- Interviews with stakeholders on opportunities provided
- Interviews with successful business women
- 9 Reports on results from surveys
- 9 National states of Currents States
- 1 Transnational Study of Current State

## WP 4

- Transnational Learning Events Guidelines
- GPs Evaluation Guide
- 6 Transnational Learning Events – RO & MD,HU, SL,B&H,CROATIA

## WP 5

- 9 National Stakeholder Groups set up
- 8 National Stakeholder Group Meetings
- 16 Members of Advisory Board

## WP 6

- Concept of EWC
- EWC in Hungary: Nagykanizsa



# Mapping, evaluation & comparison of needs, barriers



**Survey** conducted in Sept-Oct.2018 among **young women entrepreneurs and would be entrepreneurs, aged 15 - 34** in 9 DR countries – **1970** received replies



**INSPIRING WOMEN IN BUSINESS**

27 inspiring women entrepreneurs share their stories of overcoming challenges, achieving of personal growth and business success.



**NASTJA VERDNIK's story:**

Nastja (32) is an owner of the first dog bakery in Slovenia "HOV – HOV", where they bake healthy and natural pet food. She started in 2013 and now she has two stores in Slovenia and franchises in Serbia and Slovakia, and at the same time, her company cooperates with major distributors across Europe.

**Challenges:**

As she could not find the job, she took the opportunity and participated in the entrepreneurship program "Entrepreneurially in the business world", conducted by Maribor Development Agency, and gain the insights in the entrepreneurial world.

The major turning point was the store she opened after the finishing the course. In the beginning, she wanted only to take care about herself and her mother, but having employed other people was a necessity but is also big responsibility. Although she started her business blindly, she successfully overcome the legislative (lack of regulation for dog cookies) as well as financial obstacles.

**She recommends:**

*"The state could ease the start-ups, especially in the first two-years, when they are not able to present good financial results and have to focus on products development"*

Interviewed **stakeholders** – around **54**;  
Interviewed **young successful business women** – **27**.



# Territorial needs and challenges



**Low level of women entrepreneurs : 52%** of the DR population but only **30%** of them are **self-employed** and **30%** of them are **start-ups**

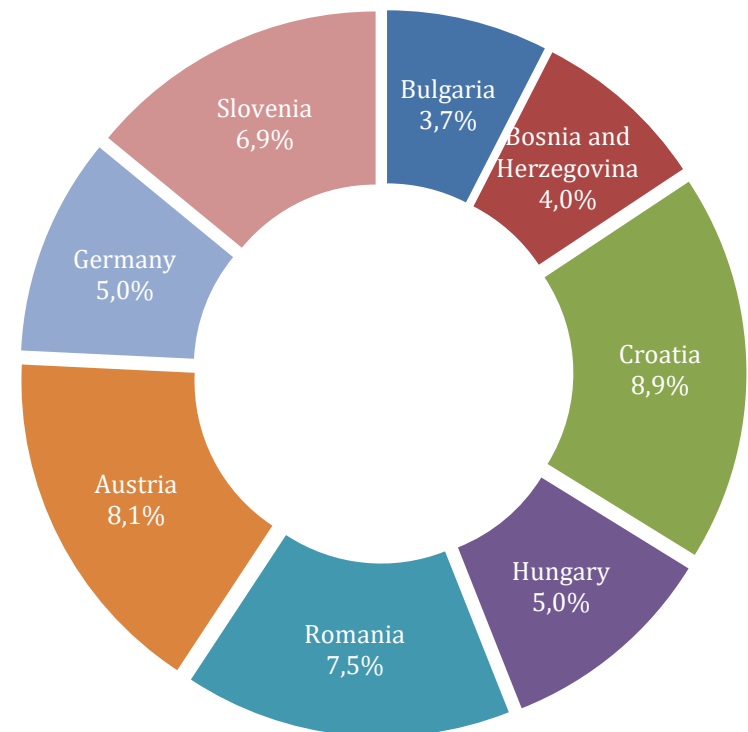
Low level of viability of **female start-ups** – **only 2%** of them **lasts more than 42 months**

**Low level of young women willing to start business** – **3.7% - 8.9%**;

## Barriers faced by women:

- **Contextual barriers** – stereotypes, male-dominated sectors, etc.
- **Economic barriers** – access to finance, etc.
- **Soft barriers** – classic model of entrepreneurship rather than full spectrum of possibilities

TEA Indicator for project DR countries (2016-2017)



# National Study of Current State



- Personal discussions
- Interviews, meetings with local, experienced entrepreneurs
- Contact with different business support institutions
- Non-regional institutions
- Education System
- Private entrepreneurs club for women(e.g. Női Vállalkozói Klub Egyesület)





# National Study of Current State



## Based on these, the followings are the most important conclusions:

- National culture increasingly supports women entrepreneurs, and this process is steadily improving thanks to governmental support programs.
- Female entrepreneurs can rely on family support, but to reconcile their family life with their entrepreneurship is difficult to many of them
- Female entrepreneurs surveyed by us would prefer female entrepreneurs to get more allowance, tax-reduces and other benefits. This is especially important for starting up their business.

# National Study of Current State



## The policy makers should consider the followings:

- More campaigns should be launched to start businesses and young people should be encouraged to set up their own business
- Promotion of good practices from Western Europe
- Creating a strong mentoring network - supporting organizations (accelerators and incubators) that already build strong networks;
- Women living in rural areas should have more focus
- Nurseries, Kindergartens, Schools should have more flexible afternoon care



# Transnational Study of Current State



## Main conclusions of the TSoC:

- There are **no adequate data** that would provide more insights into the current state of engagement of women entrepreneurs;
- **The national culture** in transitional countries, including **less developed EU members**, such as **Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania** is **still not supportive enough for women entrepreneurs**, do not encourage women to engage in entrepreneurship and advance in their careers. However, for those who are successful, **the biggest support is** found in **their families** and inner circle of **friends**.
- The **main obstacle** for YWE is **the access to finance**, followed by lack of savings. In transition countries, an important barrier to start the own business is **high corruption**, followed by the red tape and overall the **weak economic environment**.
- The most important competences barrier is **the lack of information about how to start business**, followed by **lack of entrepreneurial skills**. Surprisingly, the respondents do not consider that traditional views about role of women in society as a high barrier.

# Transnational Study of Current State



## The governments and policy makers across all Danube region countries should be concerned with development or improvement of:

- Specialized programmes for business women start-ups;
- Policies that provide fiscal stimulants for women entrepreneurs together with financial instruments (bank loans, preferential rates, risk capital, etc.) for Women Entrepreneurs
- Government policies to stimulate female entrepreneurship and leadership in business
- Strategy to harmonize the business environment with the family environment for support and relief for women in their care for children, elderly parents, family life and recreation
- New companies in specific sectors of production and knowledge based services, owned and/or managed by women
- A strong network of mentors and supporting the organisations who are already building those networks;
- Both urban and rural female entrepreneurship;
- Successful entrepreneurial educational programmes for all stages of the business and promoting them to both public and private persons of interest
- Concrete projects which transfer best practices from the region.



# EWC in Hungary



- **Responsible Partner:** University of Pannonia
- **Where:** Incubator and Innovation Center of Nagykanizsa, Nagykanizsa, Hungary
- **Involved partners:** Pannon Business Network, Nagykanizsa Incubation and Innovation Center, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Nagykanizsa
- **Why there?** It is equipped with modern energy supply system, offers a meeting room, and a conference room (including translation equipment) for local and international event organizers. The center is home to more than 30 SMEs, and provides number of services and business-technical assistance for first-time entrepreneurs below market price contributing to business development and new job creation.
- **Contact person:** Nikoletta Simon [simon.nikoletta@uni-pen.hu](mailto:simon.nikoletta@uni-pen.hu)



These EWCs will run after the end of the project with the same focus. This could be accomplished by providing free access to the results and outputs of the **WOMEN IN BUSINESS** project.



Project co-funded by European Union Funds (ERDF, IPA, ENI)



# Training Model Guide



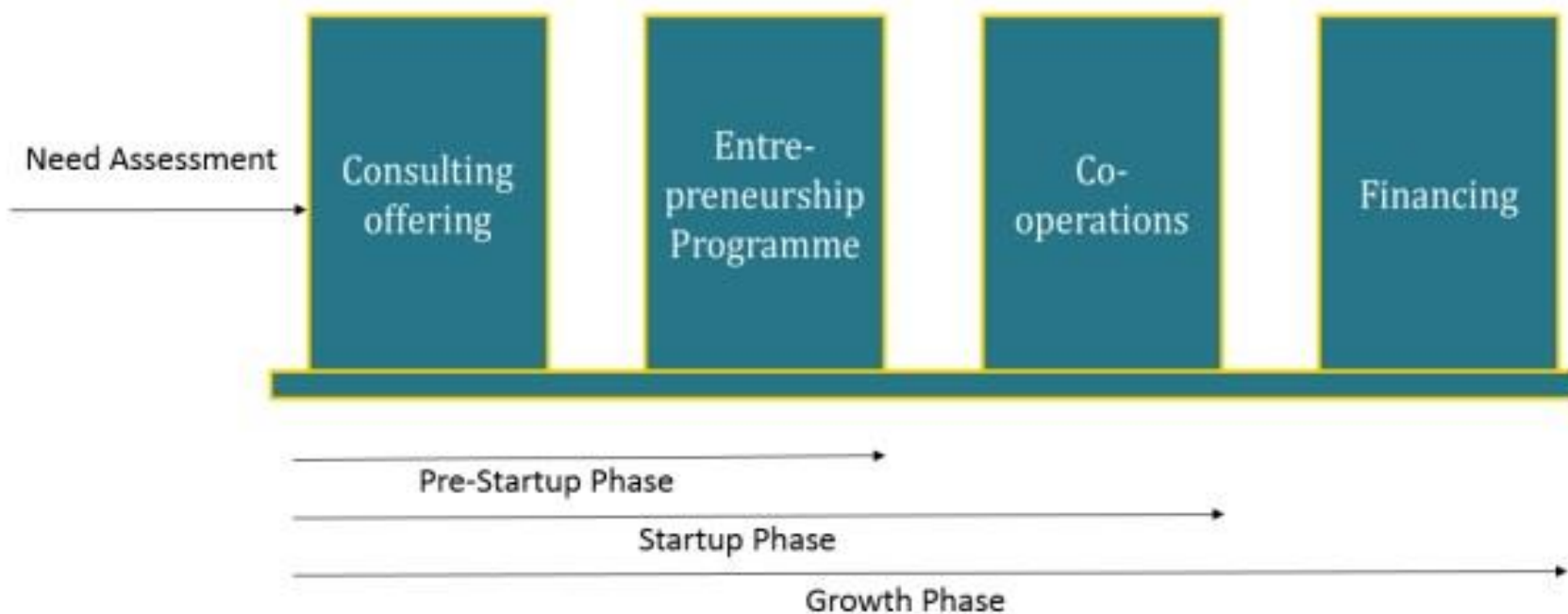
## The following criteria for admission will be applied:

- The candidate must be a **woman, up to 34-years old**;
- The candidate **has a business idea** and **would like to start** or **has already started** for-profit company. No priority will be given for a specific sector;
- **The business is/ will be formed under EU law and operating in the EU**;
- The business **has a growth potential**;
- The company is **in early stage of development (up to 5 years since its establishment)**;
- **A priority will be given to candidates who have established prototype or product.**

# Training Model Guide



For the concept of the EWCs is the following initial 4 pillar structure recommended:





# Training Model Guide



## **1. Consulting offering/ Coaching**

The first pillar is representing the consulting offering. At this stage it is expected that the young women entrepreneur has a business idea or wants to get a business idea and information on how to further develop this process.

## **2. Entrepreneurship Programme**

In parallel with participating in the EWC, young female talents will be offered the possibility to increase their entrepreneurial skills by attending an entrepreneurial training organized regionally by each partner. (Online Webinars, workshops and events)

## **3. Cooperation/ Match Making**

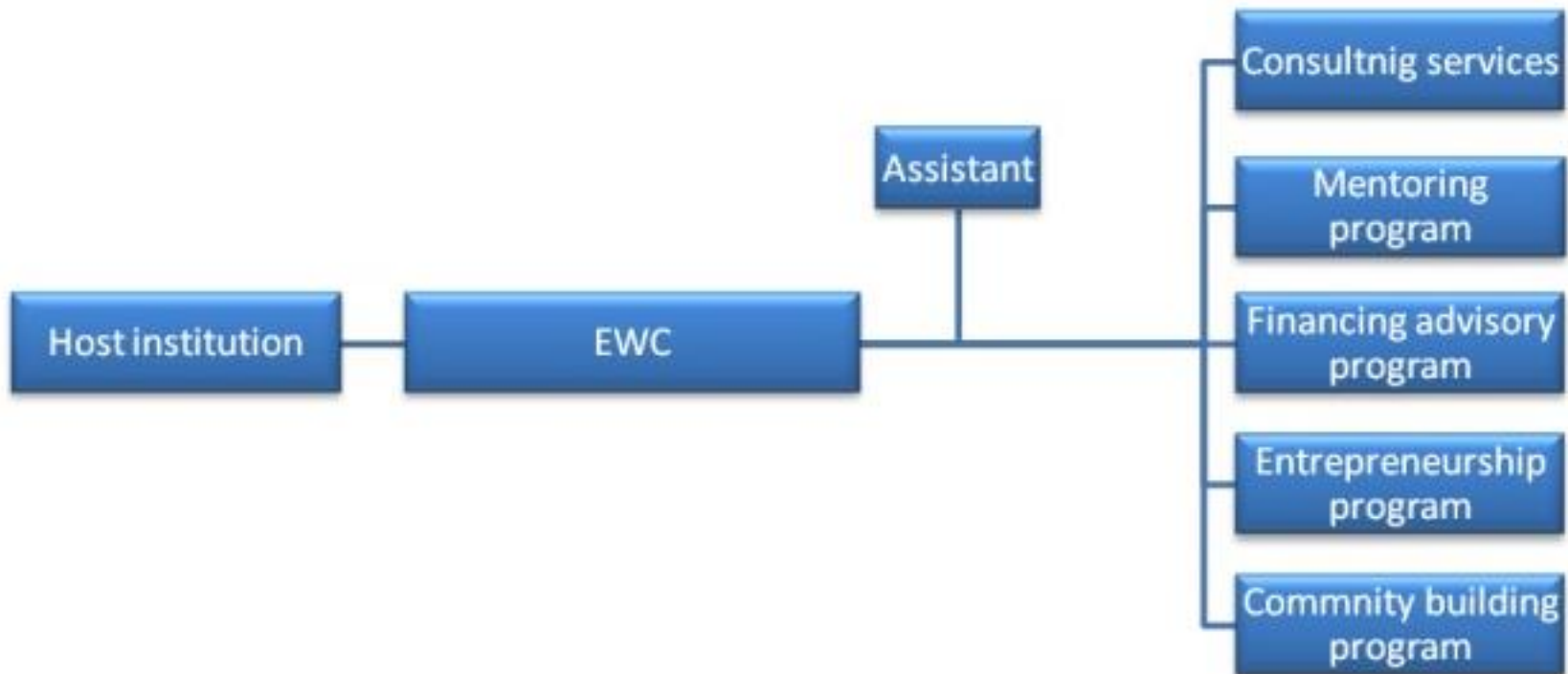
The third pillar is about stimulating (transnational) cooperation amongst participant of different Centers and other international actors and to foster matchmaking processes with the business sectors.

## **4. Financing/ Funding**

Setting up a network of finance partners. Since women tend to experience obstacles in financing, it is crucial to have specific finance contacts for women entrepreneurs: e.g. “Venture Ladies”: female Business Angels as well as informing about national & international Funding programmes and supporting them in the respective applications.



# Training Model Guide



# Training Model Guide



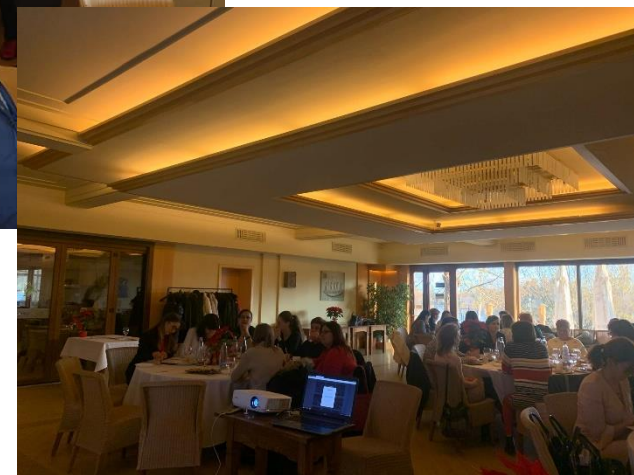
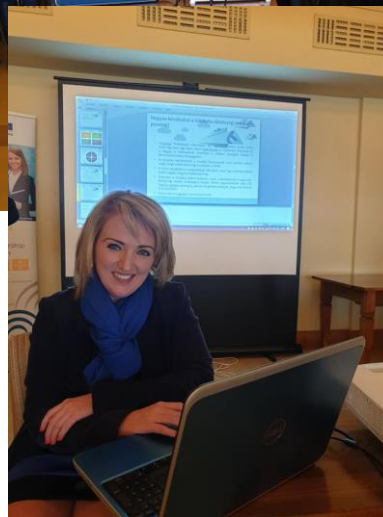
- The Women in Business trainings will start this year
- University of Pannonia (Nagykanizsa, HU)
- Free of charge
- PBN cooperated with Women Entrepreneurs Club Association in order to help UP to develop the needed strategy
- PBN has regular meetings with UP regarding the future trainings
- PBN is planning to invite UP to held trainings in PBN HQ for local women in Vas County (free of charge, no need to pay for their travel to UP)
- Next meeting and workshops regarding the training: Varna, Bulgaria (25-27. February 2020.)

# How to help in the Training model?



- PBN organized Women in Business 3. stakeholder meeting and a training-related workshop afternoon
- Cooperated with Women Entrepreneurs Club and UP
- Collected the educational needs of women entrepreneurs
- Study about the afternoon -> forward to UP to help in the training model

# Women in Business 3.stakeholder meeting and workshop afternoon (PBN)





## ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

<b>Country</b>	<b>Organization/ Person</b>
Austria	<b>Yasmin Kreiner</b> , SFG-Steirische Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaft mbH <b>Lisa Fassl</b> , Female Founders Global
Bosnia and Herzegovina	<b>University of Sarajevo</b> <b>SPARK digital accelerator</b>
Bulgaria	<b>Tatyana Gicheva</b> / Chamber of Commerce and Industry - Dobrich <b>Tatyana Kmetova</b> / Center of Women's Studies and Policies Foundation
Croatia	<b>Nina Begičević-Ređep</b> , Faculty of Organisation and Informatics, <b>Martina Jerbić-Cecelja</b> , Polyclinic Nanna
Germany	<b>Prof Dr. Katja Putenaus-Birkenbach</b>
<b>Hungary</b>	<b>Női Vállalkozói Klub Egyesület (Szombathely, Vas County)- Women Entrepreneurs Club Association</b>
Moldova	<b>Iulia Costin</b> / Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure <b>Ms. Valentina Bulgaru</b> , Technical University of Moldova
Romania	<b>Bianca Tudor</b> / Elite Business Women <b>Anca Maria Vladoi</b> /Domeniul Vladoi
Slovenia	<b>Franci Kotnik</b> / Savinjsko-Šaleška Chamber Of Commerce And Industry <b>Vida Perko</b> / Regional Board of Business Women and Women Entrepreneurs by Chamber of commerce and industry of Štajerska





Thank you for your attention!

**Contact us:**

**Mariya Zlateva, Project Coordinator,  
RAPIV**

**+359 52 383 700  
petkova@rapiv.org**

**Klaudia Keringer, Project Manager  
PBN**

**klaudia.keringer@pbn.hu**