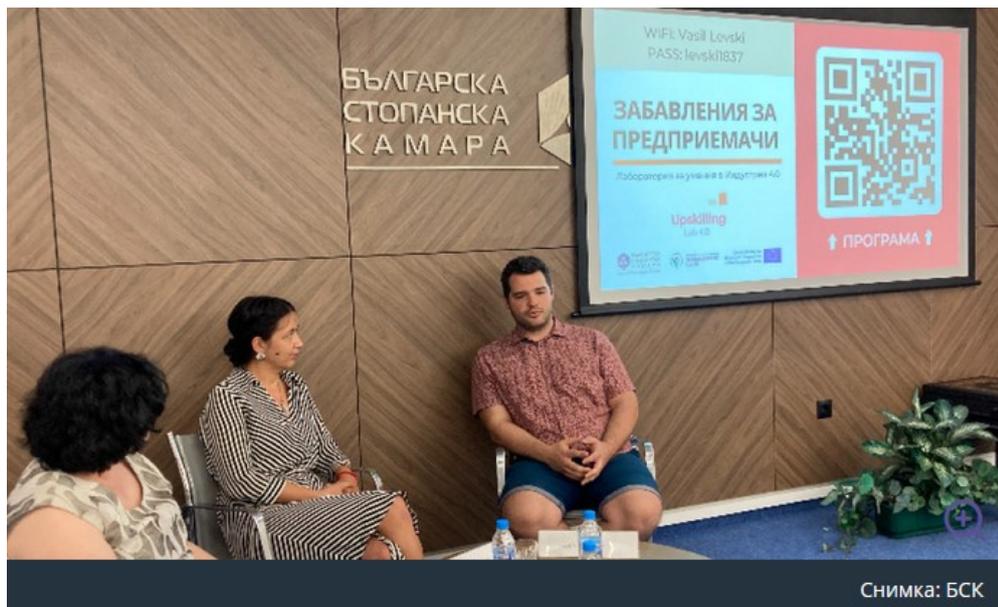# NEWSLETTER N.4

News:

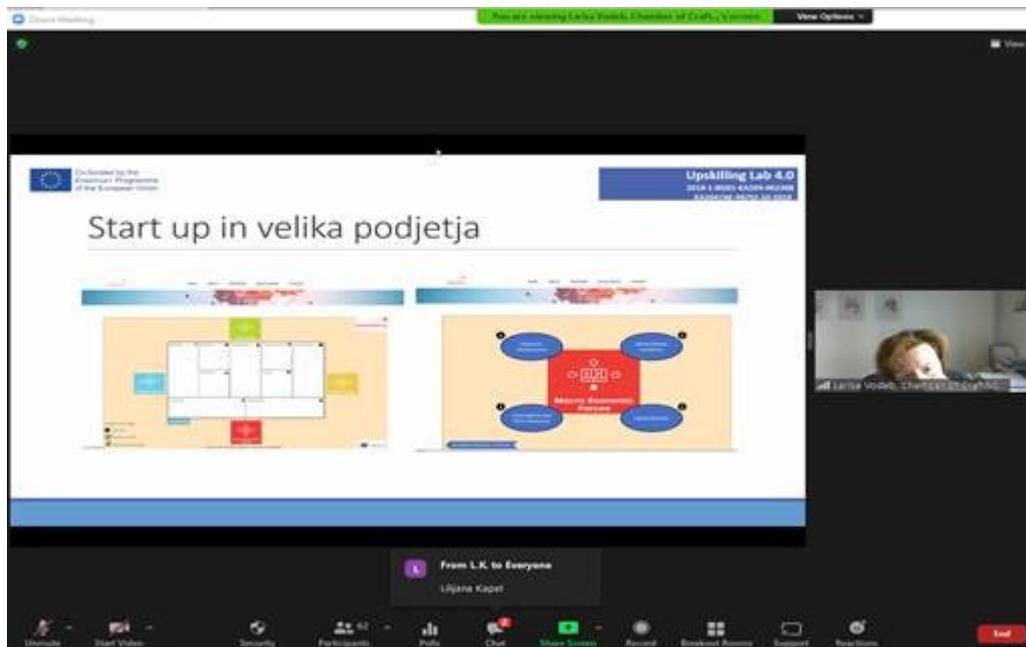**National Multiplier event in Bulgaria**

BIA and KISMC hosted the interactive event "Entrepreneurs Games or Skills Lab in Industry 4.0." on 1st July 2021.

It featured the presentation of the UpskillingLab 4.0 skills cards and the online tools to the audience of teachers, companies and consultancy experts and involved a panel discussion on artificial intelligence and Industry 4.0.

Guests at the event were the Executive Director of the Human Resources Development Centre, which is the Bulgarian Agency responsible for the Erasmus+ Programme, representatives of the AI Cluster Bulgaria and the CEO of Fund of Funds in Bulgaria.

National Multiplier event in Slovenia

In May 2021 Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia organised a virtual national multiplier event, where more than 60 participants – mainly micro companies took part and were given the chance to get familiar with the main outcomes of the projects. The micro companies were impressed by the IT tool to assist them in preparation of the business canvas in order to help them attract suitable investors.

National Multiplier event in The Netherlands

Inqubator Leeuwarden has organised the "The Upskilling Lab 4.0 model for collaboration" event on the 8th of July 2021.

During this event, the project Upskilling Lab 4.0 was presented, but also the outputs of the project, including the Toolkit for start-ups and scale-ups, the Toolkit for mid-sized and large companies and the Gamified platform. There were also workshops included, which focused on these Upskilling Lab 4.0 results.

The participants of the Multiplier Event represented the project's target groups and stakeholders. These varied from the Inqubator's inqubatees (start-ups from Inqubator Leeuwarden) to business supporting organisations.

Outputs:

The partners are about to finalise the creation of the Upskilling toolkits (O3) and the Gamified platform (O4).

Specifically, ESN and Inqubator have worked on the Training toolkit for start-ups/scale-ups (O3/A1) while BIA and KISMC have worked on the Training toolkit for mid-sized and large companies (O3/A2). KISMC and BIA have also worked on the Development of collaboration tools (O4/A1) and the Development of collaboration games (O4/A2). All these outputs were tested during several multiplier events.

Both O3 and O4 will shortly be showcased in the dedicated section of the website that you can find at the following link: https://www.upskillinglab.eu/outputs.html

FROM THE PARTNERS (news, projects and events)

HUBiquitous project

ESN is within the consortium of the HUBiquitous project, an Innovation Action aiming at creating a joint Africa-Europe Startup & Innovation Ecosystem for long-term collaborations and partnerships. The project has the ambition to increase the technology level and capacity building of 30 local DIHs/TechHubs in 5 African countries. The project proposes highly innovative concepts called Innovation Enablers (i.e. Solution Lab, Application Business Box and MeetHub online platform). The purpose of these enablers is to provide technical (e.g. IoT, AI and BigData disruptive technologies) as well as entrepreneurial development skills to DIHs and startups/entrepreneurs.

The project's website was recently launched, and you can find it at the following link: https://hubiquitous.eu/

Please check it out to have more information about the project, its activities and its consortium.

Scale-Up Europe

ESN is among the founding members of the Scale-Up Europe initiative. Scale-Up Europe gathers a select group of 170+ of Europe's leading tech founders, investors, researchers,

corporate CEOs and government officials around the same goal: to accelerate the rise of global tech leaders born in Europe in the service of both progress and technological sovereignty.

In the framework of such an initiative, a report on *How to build global tech leaders in Europe* was published, which include, among others, a section on the importance of the collaboration between startups and corporates.

Check it out:

https://content.sifted.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/15162949/Scale-Up-Europe-Report.pdf

Bind 4.0

Bind 4.0, the Basque open innovation showcase has celebrated its 5th edition on the 6th and 7th of July.

65+ corporate clients are open to collaborate with startups from all around the world that work with technologies that shape the future of Intelligent Industry, Clean Energy & Sustainability, Health and Food Sectors.

So far, these are the results from the 5 editions:

More info: BIND 4.0 Open Innovation & Acceleration Platform | Corporate - Startup Collaboration | Industrial Innovation in Action (bind40.com)

Basque Country Competitiveness Report 2020:

With the subtitle of "Resilience before, during and after the pandemic", Orkestra-Baque Institute of Competitiveness-Deusto Foundation has recently published a new report on the *Competitiveness of the Basque Country*.

The report highlights several strengths on which further advances will enable to build the resilience of the future, as well as some areas for improvement, particularly with respect to: economic and financial position of the firms; skills; investment in R&D; unit labour costs; internationalization; and digitization and energy ecosystem. Of course, the main concern keeps on being the recovery of employment.

More info: Basque Country Competitiveness Report 2020 - Orkestra Basque Institute of Competitiveness (deusto.es)

Slovenian Start: up of the Year 2021

The Chamber of Craft is delighted to see that the competition for the best startup of the year has not been called off due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Slovenian Start: up of the Year Award 2021 (the 14th edition), goes to the Bird Buddy, a startup that created a smart bird feeder - a modern birdhouse with a food container and a detachable module that includes a built-in small video camera with a microphone and sensor for motion detection.

MORE: https://www.startup.si/en-us/news/bird-buddy-is-slovenian-start-up-of-the-year-2021

Promising startups in Bulgaria

According to the magazine EU start-ups (https://www.eu-startups.com/) Bulgaria is one of the leaders in the FinTech sector as ranked by fDi, which ranked Sofia as the most cost-effective fintech city worldwide for 2019/20. The ecosystem of digital technologies, businesses and innovation in the sector is growing and Sofia is becoming one of the best places to build a startup with various local tech resources available. In the past few years the Bulgarian startups specialized in platform

building, big data analytics, machine learning, automation, and fintech. Some of the most successful digital and deep tech startups are:

Nasekomo, founded in 2017. It is an agro biotech producing animal feeds from organic waste using bio-converting insects. Nasekomo introduces insects to the food life cycle, unleashing their beneficial potential for tomorrow's sustainable world.

Payhawk, founded 2018. It simplifies expenses for businesses offering a paperless corporate card. The startup's unique platform enables business owners to manage the entire spending lifecycle, including loading corporate employee cards with funds, paying and collecting invoices and other operations and documents.

Evedo, the winner of the "Best Blockchain StartUp" from Bulgaria in the latest edition of the Central European StartUp Awards in 2019. Evedo is a blockchain-based platform that unifies all businesses and participants involved in organizing events.

HyperAspect, an AI software development and consultancy company that offers technological solutions and consulting to customers who seek to leverage unfiltered data for better business decisions.

Humans in the Loop, a digital startup with a social mission to provide model training and validation services for Machine Learning. It offers companies with continuous model improvement, from dataset collection to output verification, edge case handling, and insights on performance.

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

1. **Creating and Sustaining an Innovation Culture**

Learn how to scale and drive innovation in your organization by creating a culture that can sustain and support it.

https://www.edx.org/course/creating-and-sustaining-an-innovation-culture

2. **Agile Innovation and Problem Solving Skills**

Learn how to deliver greater value through Agile solution targeting and theory of constraints that unleash your team's innovative potential.

https://www.edx.org/course/agile-solutions-for-greater-innovation

3. Data Innovation Summit 2021

The Data Innovation Summit is an annual event bringing together the most innovative minds, enterprise practitioners, technology providers, start-ups and academics, working with Data Science, Big Data, Machine Learning, AI, Data Management, IoT and Analytics, to discuss ways to innovate through data.

https://www.linkedin.com/events/datainnovationsummit20216808022057293516800/

4. Funding Demystified - event

Arthayan has partnered up with reputed VCs and Angel Networks to bring to all the aspiring founders a power-packed 10 part lecture series over 2 days.

https://www.linkedin.com/events/fundingdemystified6822782991186608128/

5. The Future 100: Trends and Change to Watch

Wunderman Thompson Intelligence presents The Future 100: Trends and Change to Watch in 2021, an essential trend free almanac offering a snapshot of the year ahead and the most compelling trends to keep on the radar.

https://intelligence.wundermanthompson.com/trend-reports/the-future-100-2021/

6. The Evolution of a Startup CEO

While all business leaders evolve, the transformation of a startup CEO – from a founder with one or two colleagues to the leader of a business with hundreds of employees and customers and a formal board – requires personal and professional growth.

https://www.forbes.com/sites/asheemchandna/2021/07/22/the-evolution-of-a-start-up-ceo

7. Innovation Starts with Defining the Right Constraints

What drives big, breakthrough innovations? Often it's constraints — limitations that force designers to rethink the whole problem and come up with something completely new to address it.

https://hbr.org/2021/04/innovation-starts-with-defining-the-right-constraints