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**Project start date:** 01/01/2010      **Project end date:** 31/12/2011

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## POSMETRANS

**P**OLICY measures for innovation in **T**RANSport sector with special focus on **S**mall- and **M**edium sized **E**nterprises  
 - factors and recommendations for success and sustainability -

### Deliverable 4.2

*Panel meeting to validate the outcomes/analysis by experts (Minutes)*  
*How innovation could be stimulated by networks?*

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<b>PP</b>	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	
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**List of Attendees**

<b>POSMETRANS Partners:</b>	<b>Experts:</b>
<b>Steinbeis-Europa-Zentrum:</b> Robert Gohla Dr. Aude Pélisson-Schecker Samantha Michaux Jens-Jochen Roth	<i>Hartmut Gündra</i> - Netzwerk Geoinformation Metropolregion Rhein Neckar <i>Holger Bach</i> - Kooperationszentrum Logistik e.V. (KLOK) <i>Peter Hirsch</i> - Wirtschaftsberatung Peter M. Hirsch
<b>ACCIONA:</b> Juan Saenz Arostegui	<i>David Cipres</i> – Centro Tecnológico y TICS <i>Fernando Liesa Carrera</i> – Logistop <i>David Quesada</i> - ATOS Origin
<b>EGE University:</b> Prof. Dr. Cengiz Akdeniz Aykut Gülalanlar Mustafa Cakir	<i>Prof. Dr. Okan Tuna</i> - 9 Eylül University – Maritime Faculty (Logistics)
<b>Politechnika Krakowska:</b> Andrzej Szarata Katarzyna Nosal Bogna Grochola	<i>Zbigniew Turek</i> - National Contact Point
<b>UnionCamere Piemonte:</b> Marta Serrano	

**Actual list of experts attending**

<b>List of participants - Expert Panel 2</b>		
Person	Organization	Signature
David Cipres	Centro Tecnológico y TICS (ITA)	
David Quesada	ATOS Origin	
Fernando Liesa Carrera	Logistop	
Gabriele Schwarz	Schwarz GmbH & Co-KG	<i>NOT COMING</i>
Hartmut Gündra	Netzwerk Geoinformation Metropolregion Rhein-Neckar	
Holger Bach	Kooperationszentrum Logistik e.V. (KLOK)	
Peter Hirsch	Wirtschaftsberatung Peter M. Hirsch	
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## Introduction

### Background information about the project

POSMETRANS aims at drawing conclusions for policy measures in order to accelerate the market take-up of innovative technologies and processes in transport. Moreover, POSMETRANS will provide a framework for the impact assessment and evaluation of EU measures aiming at innovation.

POSMETRANS Partners:

- Steinbeis-Europa-Zentrum der Steinbeis Innovation gGmbH, Germany (**SEZ**)
- ACCIONA, Spain (**ACCIONA**)
- EGE University Scientific and Technology Center, Turkey (**EGE**)
- Technology Transfer Centre Cracow University of Technology, Poland (**CUT**)
- Unioncamere Piemonte, Italy (**URCC**)

## POSMETRANS Expert Panel Meeting – Background Context

### 1.1. Objectives

The POSMETRANS Expert Panel Meeting II about the topic “how innovation can be stimulated by networks” is enshrined within the framework of the activities foreseen in WP 4.

The main aim of organising Expert Panel Meetings is to present before a competent panel of experts the first results emerging from POSMETRANS survey, in order to critically analyse them and complement them.

Such a survey was conducted through the implementation of ad hoc questionnaires addressed to innovative key players. The questionnaires implemented were aimed at analysing the network-related policies on European, national and regional level, in order to identify which ways best practice measures can stimulate innovation within the context of networks and clusters. This analysis will help increase awareness among the partners about the opinions and experiences of these networks when it comes to policies.

The questionnaire addressed to the network consists of six sections:

- Contact information pertaining to the individual stakeholders.
- Technology profile of the network (which technologies are relevant for its daily business and to which extent).
- Diffusion of innovation: how significant innovation is for stakeholders, how they obtain (respectively, diffuse) information about innovation and what the main difficulties are when performing R&D activities.

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- The role of networks: demand concerning network services, usage of services, and importance of networks for political initiatives.
- Impact of European and National Policies on innovation.
- Statistical information of the network.

The main objectives of the Expert Panel Meetings are identified as follows:

1. Validation of the findings presented;
2. Foster dissemination of POSMETRANS and its results.

The presentation of the results and facts as well as the moderation of the panel meeting was conducted by Marta Serrano (Unioncamere Piemonte).

## **1.2. Experts Invited**

The Expert Panel Meeting was composed by independent experts coming from four different European countries. In order to have a balanced composition of experts, POSMETRANS partners coordinated their efforts in order to invite experts covering different – and complementary - fields of expertise.

The experts attending the Expert Panel Meeting can be grouped in four main categories, namely:

- Networks
- Companies
- Public Bodies
- Research Institutes (Private and Public)

## **1.3. Methodology followed**

In order to give the experts a general overview about the project and the results of the questionnaires implemented, they were provided in advance with a drafted SWOT analysis summarising the main findings emerging from the questionnaires' implementation.

The methodology used for the Data Collection was:

- a) Collecting innovative technologies

The data collection was defined in different steps:

- Definition of keywords for search engines
- Web-browsing

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- Review of EU and national action plans, papers surveys
- Review of EU and national R&D projects and programmes
- Taking part in workshops, congress, symposia etc.

b) Completing the list of innovative technologies

In the project, six thematic technology fields in total have been defined. They are categorized in following topics:

- **Vehicle Technologies:** Greening, New Materials, ICT
- **Infrastructure Technologies:** Co-Modality, Safety and security, ICT

The next step was to identify the application fields. In this context, we made a difference between the transport mode and transport type:

- **Transport Mode:** Road, Rail, Water
- **Transport Type:** Passenger, Freight and Logistics

c) Analysis of innovative technologies

The key aspects in this point are shown as follows:

- Identification of the related policies
- Definition of the criteria for analysis
- Assessment of technologies against the criteria defined
- Rankings and selection of technologies for analysis
- Identify best practices
- Analysis of paths on how innovation spreads into the market

d) Questionnaires

Concerning the questionnaires, following tasks have been done:

- Design of questionnaires
- Surveys among key players
- Data recompilation and analysis

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- Conclusions of innovation performances

e) Expert Panel

The main task of the expert panel is to discuss and validate the preliminary conclusions of the analysis. The results of the discussion and validation process are the basis for elaborating final recommendations about the identification of best practices for market adoption.

The results were presented on slides (cf. D4.1) with graphs and tables in order to make them more understandable. The Expert Panel Meeting II was conducted in six chapters:

1. General presentation of the POSMETRANS project
2. Description of technologies analyzed
3. Description of criteria for assessment
4. Main conclusions of the analysis
5. Main conclusions of analysis of questionnaires to stakeholders
6. Discussion with experts

## Summary of Expert Panel Meeting discussions

Short introduction by Robert Gohla (SEZ)

- **Presentation of the POSMETRANS Project (Gohla)**
  - POSMETRANS objectives
  - POSMETRANS Work Packages:
    - WP 1 → Definition of methodology, identification of technologies and policy measures
    - WP 2 → Identification of key players in innovation
    - WP 3 → Analysis of how innovation spreads into the market
    - WP 4 → Analysis of how innovation could be stimulated in networks
    - WP 5 → Analysis of the impact of policy measures
    - WP 6 → Conceptual framework for policy measures
    - WP 7 → Promotion and Dissemination
    - WP 8 → Management

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**- Objectives of the Expert Panel Meeting**

The main objectives and expectations of the Expert Panel Meeting were explained to all participants.

**2.1. Short introduction of participants**

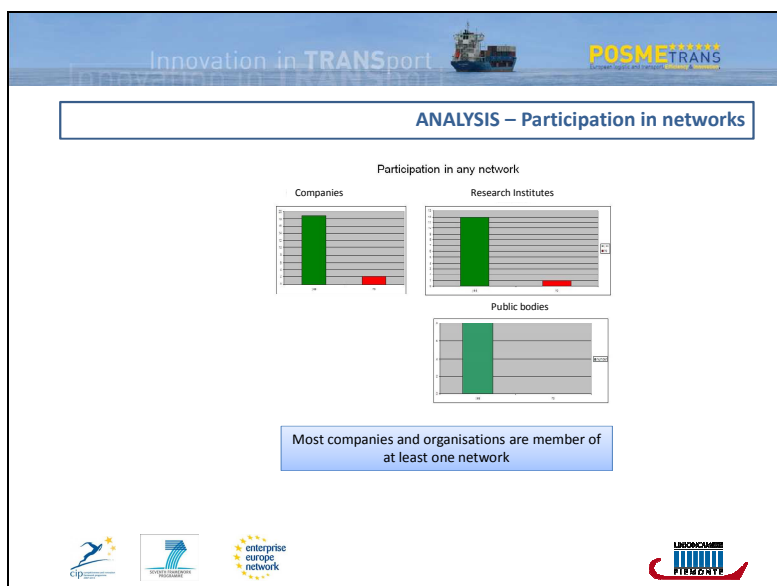
In this section, all participants briefly introduced themselves. All participants mentioned their field of expertise as well as the organisation they were representing.

**2.2. Presentation of the analysis of the survey results**

In this section, Marta Serrano (URCC) shortly presented the list of key players and networks interviewed during the survey. As an introduction to the panel, she defined the concept of networks as structures gathering companies, research centres and stakeholders of innovation, namely clusters, platforms, SMEs associations and technology parks.

Following topics have been analysed within the survey and provide a background for the discussion:

**- Slide 1: The participation in networks:**



Most companies seem to be part of at least one network but just few of them are members of innovation clusters/groups, which is a significant remark in relation with the origin and usage rates of network services.



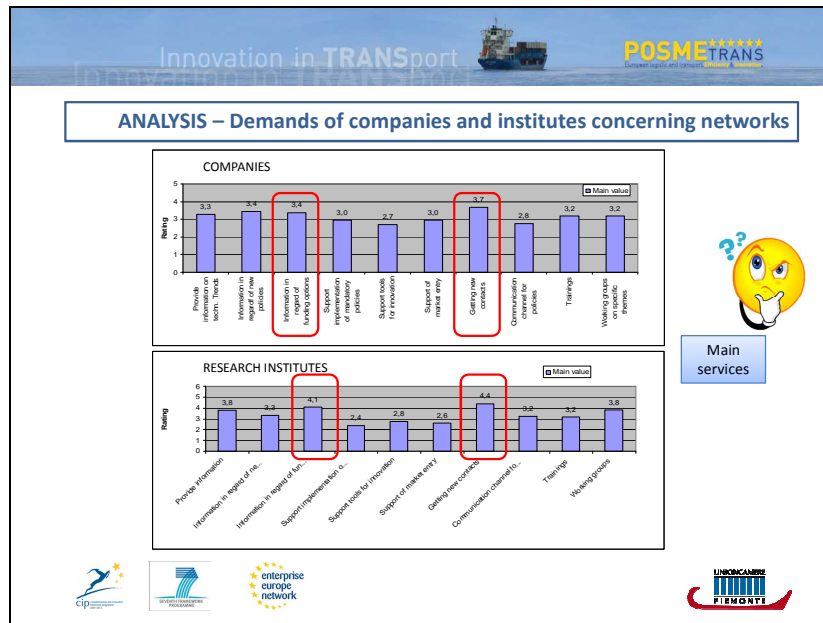
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**- Slide 2: Demands of companies and institutes concerning networks:**



Services mostly mentioned by users both companies and research institutes are funding opportunities and new contacts basically.

Indeed brokerage for technology transfer and partnership events are well recognized as useful services.

Such fact is however a threaten since networks might be seen by SMEs only as a means to get funds, acquiring information or gaining awareness on particular items. This becomes a problem as far as SMEs take networks as “functional” and do not really feel committed with them in terms of partnership.

**DISCUSSION WITH EXPERTS:**

**Question:** As a result of the POSMETRANS survey addressed to companies and research organisations, evident difference is noticed and it appears that the latter know more about funding opportunities than companies. Why?

**Experts:** The main issues seem to be lack of time to follow evolution of programmes and thus lack of information. But probably bureaucratic burden implied by participation rules decrease interest on behalf of SMEs.

In general terms, SMEs are in any case better to be involved in small projects rather than larger scale ones (short-term thinking). Some bad experiences when starting with too large projects were mentioned and often the perception of SMEs leads to misunderstanding and think that networks dismissed their needs.

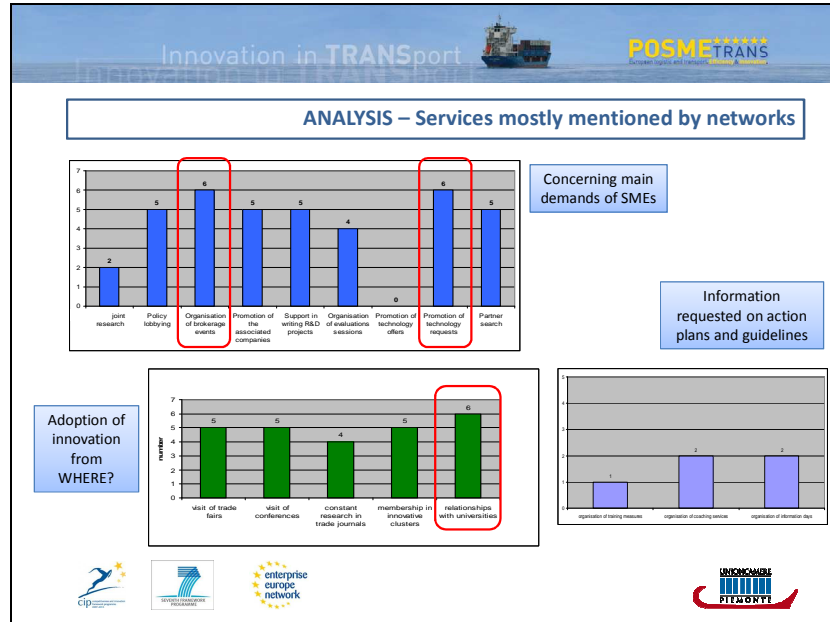
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**- Slide 3: Services mostly mentioned by networks:**



Concerning the main demands from SMEs, networks focus on services such as organisation of brokerage events and promotion of technology requests.

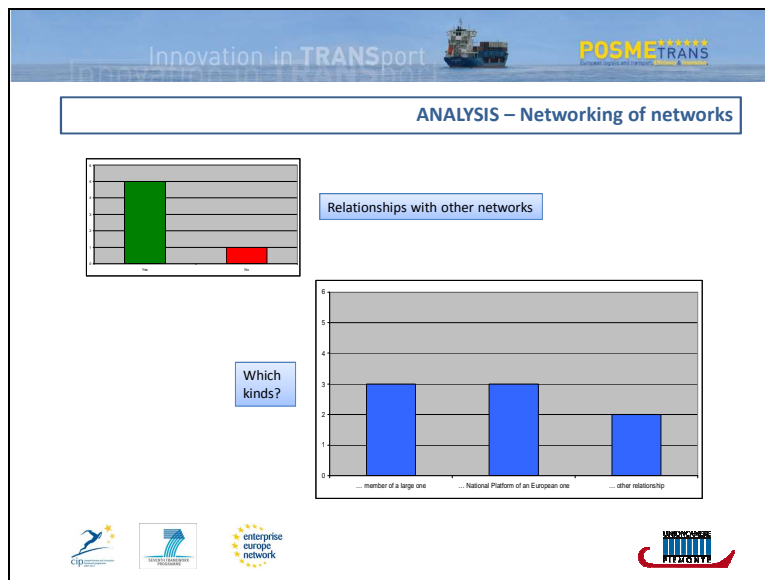
The access to innovation sources is a widely requested service remarked by most of the companies. Networks indeed apparently promote the participation in trade fairs, conferences, and develop relationships with Universities as suitable instruments to approach innovation too.

The highest rate is assigned to the link with universities that are well considered as worth innovation developers.

The instruments considered most useful are the organisation of training measures and regional information days, while coaching services, and information days too, are mainly demanded in order to get information on action plans and guidelines.

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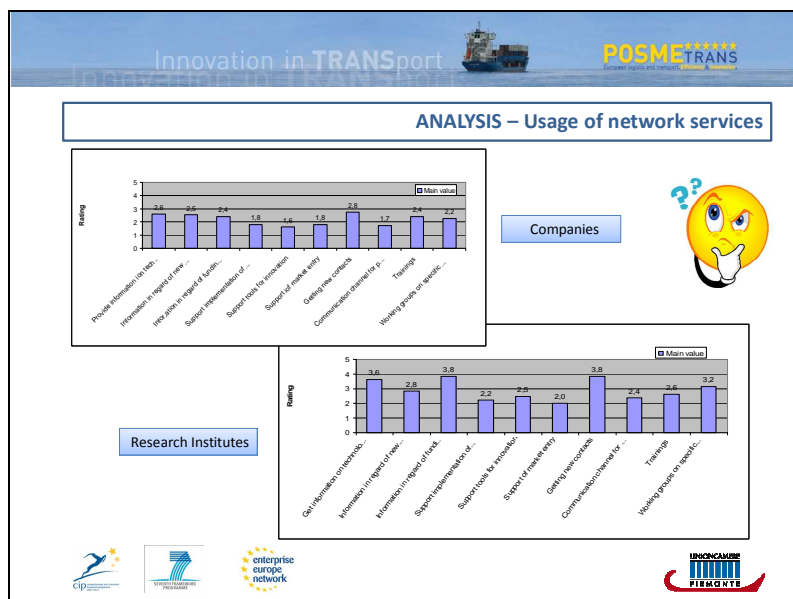
**- Slide 4: Networking of networks:**



On this purpose, the need to foster also transnational relationships between networks at the same level, offering complementary skills, or aiming at similar research interests is remarked.

It is significant that networks develop relationships with other partners, which often are other networks. In particular, the collected data point out that most of them are members of a large one and/or are national branches of a European platform.

**- Slide 5: Usage of networks services:**



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On a general basis, it is remarked that R&D institutes and, on a lower level, companies make an enormous usage of events and tools for promoting innovation.

**DISCUSSION WITH EXPERTS:**

**Question:** A wide range of services (cf. section 4 in the POSMETRANS questionnaire) is seemingly proposed by networks but they are not much exploited.

Generally speaking companies show lower usage of network services (highest value is 2.8). Research Institutes use them more. Why are companies not interested in these services? (Lack of time, insufficient communication, other...)

**Experts:** As far as Clusters are set up because of a specific demand by SMEs (Companies) normally they work efficiently and are well recognised by their members (know the point, why they meet etc.).

In other cases they are born upon evolution of former networks and it becomes a sort of networking of networks. Small networks know each other better and know what they are for.

The threaten may appear when they offer broad services since SMEs better appreciate a focus on specific services that really respond to a need, which in fact depend on the target sector.

**Question:** About the promotion of technology. Who can tell experiences dealing with the introduction of new technologies on the market?

**Experts:** It is not easy to be general. In the sector of cargo transport (maritime sector), for example, there aren't any SMEs, only big companies whereas as far as ICT related to the food sector is concerned SMEs are often producers; they follow the regulations but are not very much aware of the possible tracer based on ICT available on the market.

Regarding RFID for 10 years or more this technology has seemingly not been that much widely used. Now it is introduced "anywhere".

**Question:** Among the following innovation boosting services (brokerage events, promotion of the network members, technology requests etc.), which are the most effective that should be especially supported by public authorities?

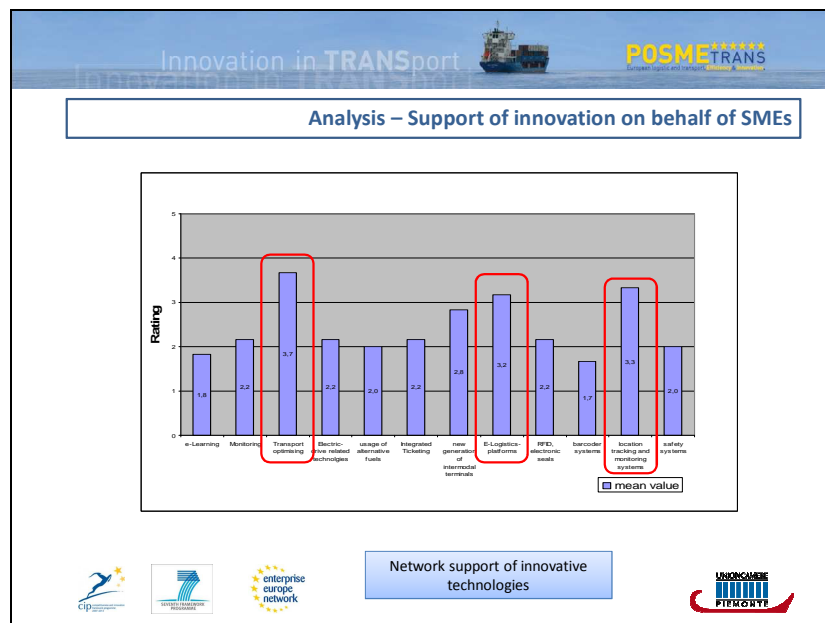
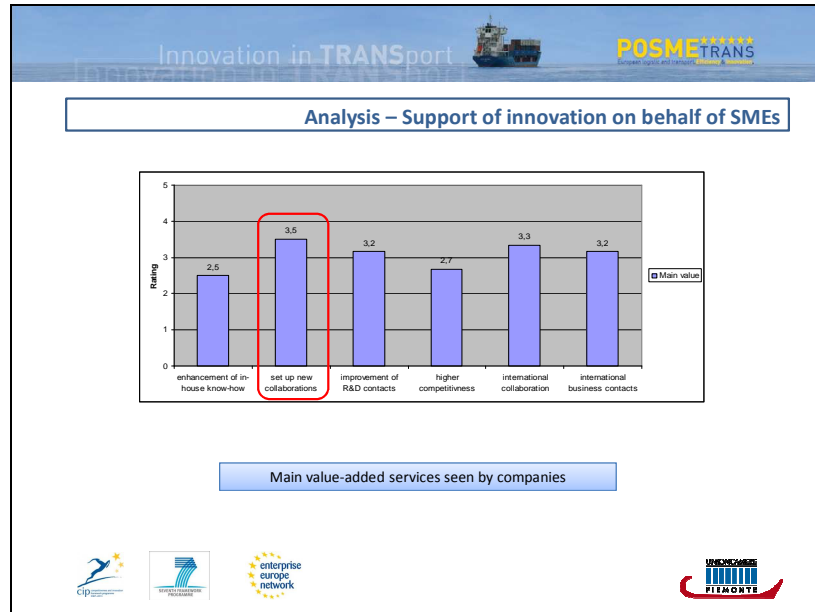
**Experts:** it is not easy to bring up conclusions on such a small sample size of surveys but as an example participation in technology platforms should be mentioned as a valuable tool to bring significant feedback from industry to EC.

**- Slide 6 & 7: Support of innovation on behalf of SMEs:**

Indeed seeking new contacts is a standard practice nowadays through promoting technological profiles in the transport sector and, according to the survey, companies consider a source of opportunity for innovation any kind of collaboration that may arise in such a framework.

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In terms of subjects or technology fields, the technology offers and requests promoted are mainly related to the area of transport optimising, e-logistic platforms, location tracking and monitoring systems.



**DISCUSSION WITH EXPERTS:**

**Question:** How to improve the situation, especially for SMEs? What is the role of the network in this regard? See Best practices.

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**Experts:** It is difficult to establish a general statement valid for all member States. Sometimes “clustering” is considered a bad practice in itself since SMEs often think or focus their needs on a short-term basis, usually making reference to a current functional need. Normally it is the case in Spain and also in Italy where business is seen 6 months ahead but not years. Investments and commitment on grouping practices are not then a valid practice for them.

Turkey reports bring out a situation in which SMEs leave innovation to large companies whereas they often better focus on daily short-term operations.

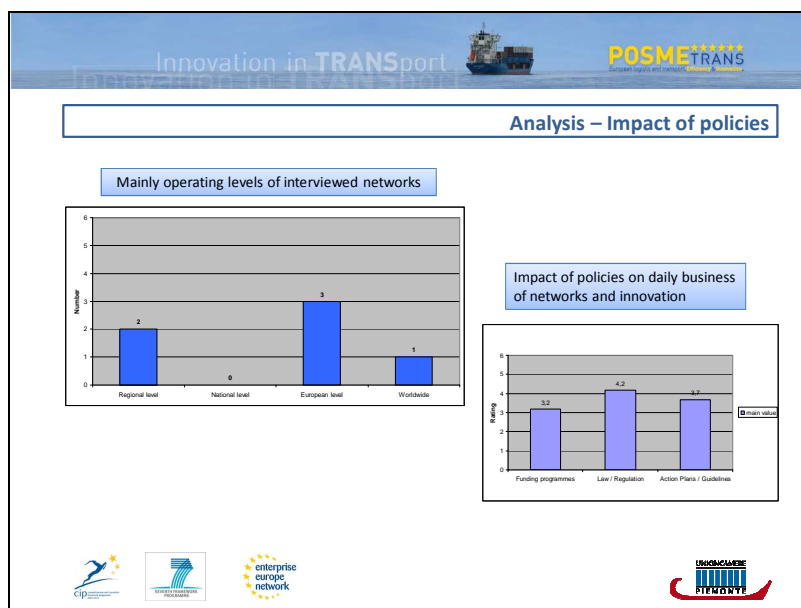
The framework programme includes special calls for SMEs to participate in projects. But the problem arises when the projects are completed. Instead of many major projects, innovation vouchers could be efficient and sufficient in order to involve a larger number of SMEs.

It’s difficult to measure the success of a network as far as SMEs are concerned (it would be interesting but difficult to measure histories). One of the main indicators for success of a network is its sustainability.

**Question:** How the participation of SMEs can be improved on an EU level?

**Experts:** The current state of the art reveals limited means for SMEs. However, there are many national SME programmes that should be opened if necessary. Such a fact shall be guided by many efforts particularly on a national basis. For this purpose, networks have a larger influence than single actors and may bring key benefits.

**- Slide 8: Impact on policies:**



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The survey conducted has pointed out that laws and regulations mostly influence innovation processes; they are followed by action plans and guidelines, and, just to a lesser degree, by funding programmes.

#### **DISCUSSION WITH EXPERTS:**

**Question:** What is the importance of networks in the establishment of political initiatives? How to increase the awareness of industry and research actors about the policy lobbying activities of networks?

**Experts:** Networks have surely an important role to play. They are involved in lots of lobbying actions (writing position papers etc.). As far as the added value of networks is concerned there are two levels: one for participants and one for public authorities (National and EU level). Networks fill the gap of knowledge of ministries, public bodies regarding the field of experience. They provide with a general overview of a section, its situation, evolution. For example, European technology platforms were only created to take in this role of advisory council for EU.

**Question:** What about the collaboration between national and EU technical platforms?

**Experts:** It depends. National platforms are involved and often asked for some feedback at European level. This is their greatest value.

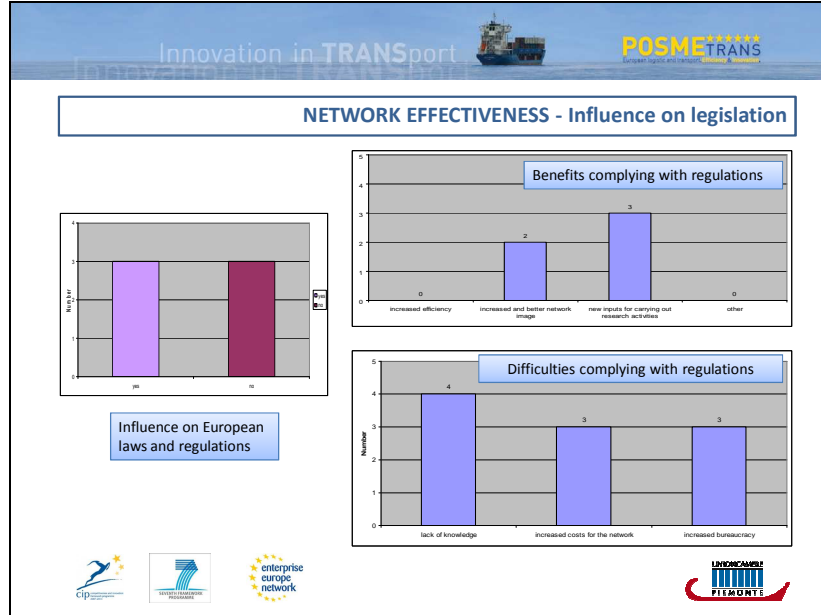
***- Slide 9, 10 and 11: Network Effectiveness – Influence on legislation on political initiatives and on market adoption for innovation:***

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Half of the interviewed networks seem to be able to have some influence on the legislative process aimed at elaborating laws and regulations.

As by complying with regulations, networks and their members can both get important advantages and face particular difficulties. The advantages mainly come out in terms of new inputs for carrying out research activities, in line with the legislative requests; furthermore, in a lesser degree, by complying with regulations networks seem also to achieve an increased and better image.

On the other hand, difficulties are mainly related to costs increasing for the network in order to deal with new legislative requests and, above all, to fill the gap concerning the lack of knowledge about them: here again the necessity for effective information activity on laws and regulation.

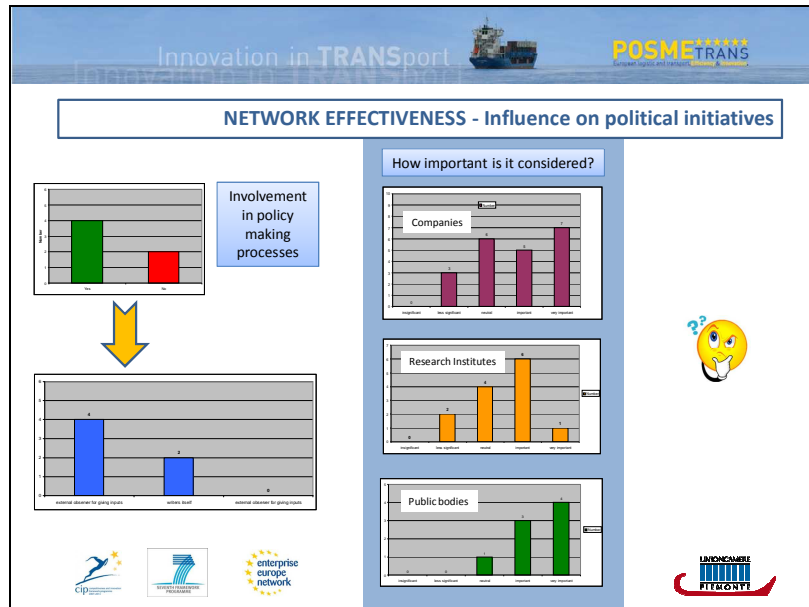


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It is observed that most of the networks analysed actually participate in policy making processes, but the major part of them seem to be involved only as external observers for giving inputs, while just a few of them are actively involved as writers themselves. Then, considering the importance of policies, laws and regulations for the innovation process, it would be essential to find a way to reach more active participation levels of networks in the decisional processes.

**DISCUSSION WITH EXPERTS:**

**Question:** Many decisions are guided by politics. Projects go further on many times without innovating for many years which is not always reasonable but there are often political interests. Do we need rationalisation of networking? What would happen if we stopped all funding for innovation projects?

**Experts:**

The importance of networks in policy driving is confirmed by experts but it is very time consuming and value generally is not recognised by SMEs  
It is observed that many networks start and end according to new project objectives aiming the same start from scratch with other partners. As it was the case of the networks of excellence in FP5, it is difficult to make up the idea that there should be a business structure able to finance the project on a self-sustainable basis.

Indeed, good networks don't need long-term government subsidiaries since they can manage autonomously. But in many cases, as in FP5 above, if public funds are not there

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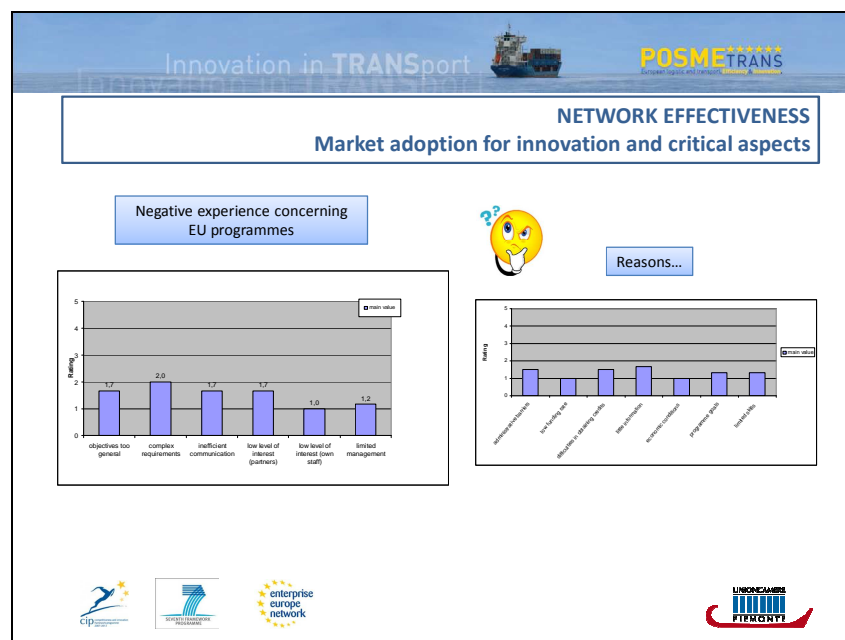
activities could not be continued and even when there are some public funds, they seem never sufficient. A reasonable practice would imply some investment on behalf of members. Clusters that started by private initiatives are for example best practices as they answer to specific requests.

Apart from companies also **public authorities** gain great value from being part of networks in terms of policy driving. Networks indeed:

- draw the real industrial scenario towards public authorities and policy makers
- bring out needs, concerns, strengths of the context

**Question:** Is there an effective link between national and European markets?

**Experts:** It depends on the sector and the national networks, on the actors and on the amount of actors.



As far as market adoption of innovation is concerned, there is a significant number of companies and institutes which consider the support of networks “less significant” on this purpose, and many other companies seem to consider their role “neutral”. On the other hand, networks result to be much more essential for organisations: in fact, most of them judge the networks’ support for the market entry of innovative products “very important”, some others consider it “important”, and a fewer number “neutral”, while none of them answered describing the role of networks “less significant” or “insignificant” as far as concerns market adoption of innovation.

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Rates concerning adoption of SMEs innovation into the market seems to be 50% average but not too high which on a theoretical basis implies a significant waste of resources. Indeed it is very difficult to measure the effectiveness of networks on such a subject.

## **DISCUSSION WITH EXPERTS:**

**Question:** Many networks exist which represents a large amount of public money. Do they really have added value?

What would you suggest to a network to ensure sustainability of the project after the end of the funding period, which would require a self investment of the company?

**Experts:** It depends whether the project results are promising or rather risky. At present the European Commission is carrying out some work regarding demo/pilot projects. As a concept, there should be a seamless way from one funding opportunity to the next work all along the life of a project (i.e. from the 1<sup>st</sup> study to the full implementation)

However, most companies think that they don't have the capacity to participate in EU projects and thus it is difficult that they spontaneously get committed with. That would imply much efforts for creating further awareness on benefits for them.

**Question:** Technologies in some specific sectors seem to be easier than others. Do you agree with that? The introduction of technology into the market is not easy in any field

**Experts:** It depends on the customers / end-users. For example, large food companies can be market-driving. Other examples are stated in areas such as Maritime area, ICT field or RFID technologies.

**Question:** For example, 30 strategical projects have been defined by EC for European transport networks. Do you think that those strategies are well related to or synchronised with priorities in funding programme?

**Experts:** We should not compare TEN T projects to R&D projects. TEN T are not innovation projects (no R&D) and consequently not technology driven!

For example the main task in Transitects: go through priority corridors for containers for synchronisation problem / subcontracting with SMEs to get them in the project but they have a very indirect experience of those priorities.

These projects do not encourage future projects, as there is no future if SMEs cannot participate → where is the R&D approach? Recommendation: R&D should be combined with investment programs.

**Question:** Why don't developing a programme that links the global strategy with the industry, especially SMEs? It must be coherent.

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Clusters promote in many cases technology programmes. Are these really effective methods? Do platforms deal with such issues?

**Experts:** There is agreement on the fact that such big investment priorities should be linked with R&D (e.g. at least 10% of the budget should be used to develop e.g. specific technology).

In some cases, at national level, there are some requirements to dedicate a part of the budget for innovation. In order to implement high quality technology services in those corridors, it must be run in parallel though.

Many cases are limited by public procurement rules that obliges to take the cheapest offer. A good example for public procurement is that applied to green cars (Euro2, Euro5 etc.).

We need another crisis to come out with such good ideas or projects!

**Question:** Some examples for best practices on networking are stated:

- France: “Pôle de Compétitivité”: one of the first to have applied this model e.g. 7 pc in France in transport sector is well known for their performance on a self-sustainability basis, policy driving, public/private collaborative projects, technology driven...
- The Piemonte region has created a few years ago 12 innovation poles following this model too.
- Networks such as EEN offer services like customer management, brokerage events, partner search, etc.

Do you know such models of network? Or other models?

**Experts:** Innovation Poles and EEN are well known and confirmed by experts as appliers of an efficient methodology for supporting innovation into the market.

The ESA technology platform represents a good model of how to spread patent into the market but at an EU level of funding programme, there is a loss of innovation by lack of communication on the projects and real use after the end of the projects.

In other countries there are further well-noticed best practices:

- “Aviation Centre for Advanced Technology” – network of excellence;
- “Institute for aeronautics engines” – provide support for NCP for e.g. PR, workshop organisation etc.
- Geoinformation that counts several success stories but no significant quantitative measures Platform Logistop (ES)
- Logistic network in Baden-Wuttenberg
- ITA and regional network of SMEs in ICT (ES)

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## Conclusions

### 2.3. Summary of expert observations

- The sample size of survey is too small to evaluate the innovation services which should be boosted by public authorities.
- Networks' members are not always fully aware of their main reasons to belong to a network; SME's should actively participate.
- SME's feel often misunderstood in their needs and dismissed by networks.
- SME's mainly focus on short term issues; they think that innovation can only be applied by large companies.
- Networks have a very important role to play in the establishment of political initiatives; they hold an intermediate position between the industry, research organisations and the public bodies and ministries.
- Conversely politics decide which network will be funded. There are politic interests involved.
- Sustainability is a main success factor for networks.

### 2.4. Recommendations

- ✓ Networks should apply a better strategy for information in order to make SMEs more aware of the benefits they can get through a membership and get them more involved.
- ✓ Networks offer broad services but the focus should be on specific services in response to a specific need.
- ✓ Networks should apply a better strategy for dissemination of the results after the end of the project in order to motivate new stakeholders to invest in innovation (by the diffusion of best practices cases)
- ✓ The partnership should make efforts to collect further impressions on this item so that the survey is more complete and significant.

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