



**AeroSpace and Defence**  
Industries Association of Europe

# **ASD support for SMEs and the Aeroportal project**

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AeroSpace and Defence  
Industries Association of Europe

**Federation of associations representing:  
28 associations in 20 countries**

**Key figures:**

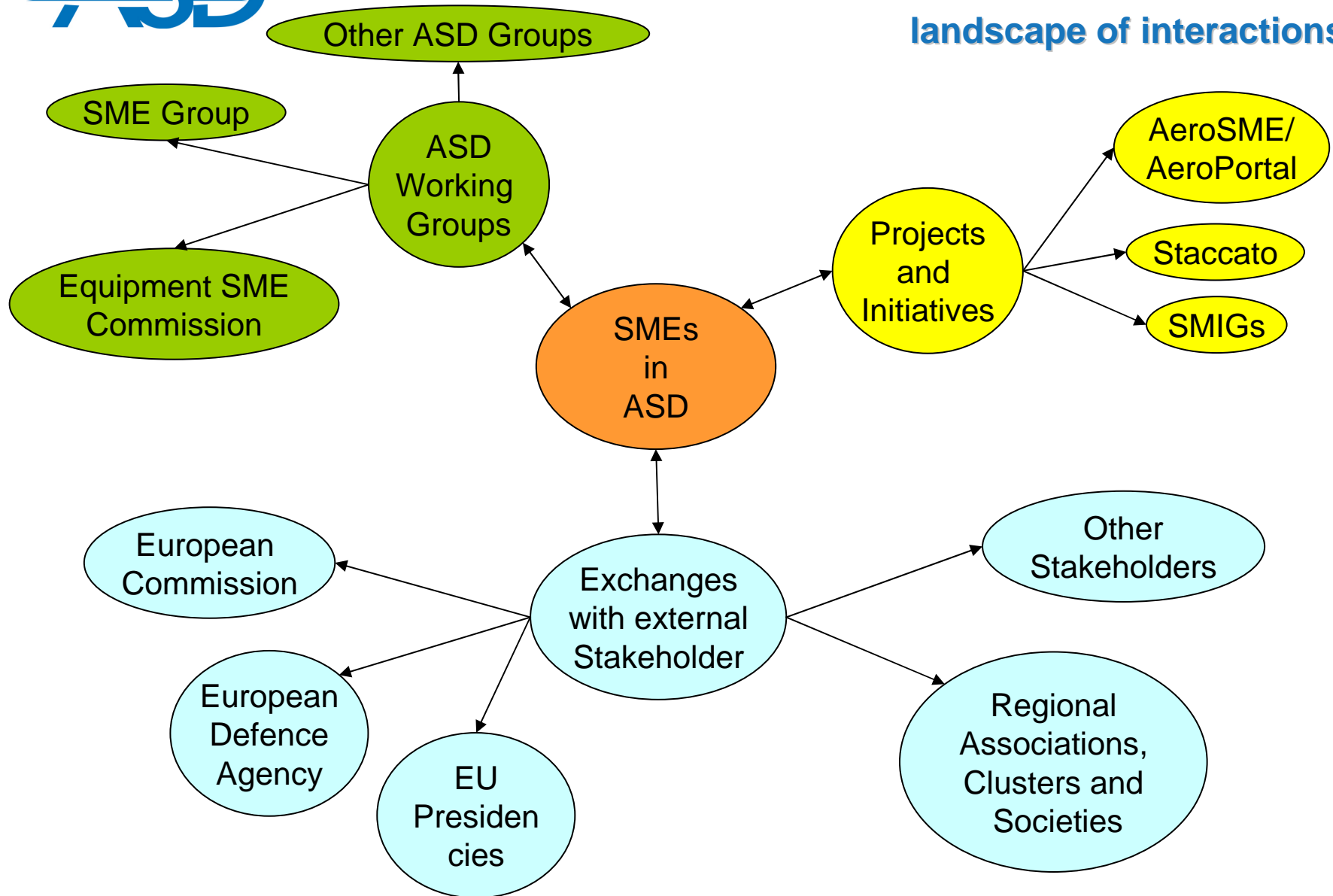
- **around €137 billion turnover**
- **52,9 % in military**
- **over 2000 companies**
  - **with further 80.000 suppliers**
- **676,000 employees**

AIP-DANOTEC





# ASD and SMEs landscape of interactions





## SMEs in the Defence Sector? *some typical questions*

- *Who are the SMEs in the European defence sector?*
  - *What is a typical „defence SME“?*
  - *How many European SMEs are active in the defence sector?*
  
  - *To what extent applies the European SME definition to our sectors?  
(*< 250 employees, turn-over < 50 mn euro, balance sheet total < 43 mn, autonomous*)*
  - *Is the definition of the German Mittelstand more appropriate?  
(*companies with < 500 employees*)*
  
  - *Who represents them (national or regional associations, Clusters, other)?*
- ⇒ **A clear understanding of the sector is the basis of establishing adequate supporting measures**
- ⇒ **There is a strong need for a market study**



## The Establishment of an European Defence Technological and Industrial Base and its implications for SMEs?

Selection of issues for SMEs in defence, which were identified and discussed in the various past events:

- Missing awareness about opportunities and information
- How to get access to relevant information?
- Need for visibility of the own company
- Need for development of cross-sectoral skills
  - language
  - knowledge about
    - rules
    - market specificities
    - contacts
- Contract sizes do not fit with company size (resources, budget, ..)
- Difficulties to enter into well established supply chains and customer relations
- New competitors appear on the market



## Best practice

*Assumption: “Aerospace SMEs entering European research projects face similar issues than SMEs in Defence”*

### Typical issues for SMEs in Aerospace

- Acquiring information on project opportunities and potential partners
- To be seen by their customers or potential partners
- To establish a business relation with new customers
- To enter new business areas / technologies
- To develop the necessary skills in terms of procedures, language, etc.
- To find partners in order to gain the necessary size or know-how for participation to a project

Similarity of Issues is evident!

What is done in the Aeronautics Sector to deal with this situation?



## Support for SMEs in Aeronautics From AeroSME to Aeroportal



### Point of departure in 1998

- ❑ ASD's support for aeronautics SMEs started in 1998 with AeroSME
- ❑ Pilot Study to investigate low participation of SMEs in European Research Programme FP4 (roughly less than 3%)
- ❑ Implementation Phase started with last call of FP5 (end 2000), putting in place services to encourage and increase participation of SMEs



## Methodology (1)

### 1. Provide Information

- ❑ On project proposals under preparation
- ❑ On the aerospace sector
- ❑ How?
  - ✓ Website
  - ✓ Newsletters (Info on funding, events, partner searches, etc)
  - ✓ Helpdesk
  - ✓ National/Regional workshops in all countries participating to EC Research Programmes

### 2. Create an Entry Point to Industry

- ❑ Focal point for the Integrated Project co-ordinators
- ❑ Wide contact network across Europe



### 3. Establish a SME Database (today over 1200 entries)

- ❑ Freely accessible on the internet
- ❑ Over 400 visits per month by external users from across Europe
- ❑ Used to find partners for both research projects and commercial activities

### 4. Support to Join & Set up Proposals

- ❑ Free-of-charge individual consulting
- ❑ “First aid” on participation matters or project set-up
- ❑ Partner searches

- ✓ AeroSME provided a platform to communicate and give visibility to SME related issues
- ✓ It became a “one-stop shop” – the project was a point of reference for all Framework Programme related questions



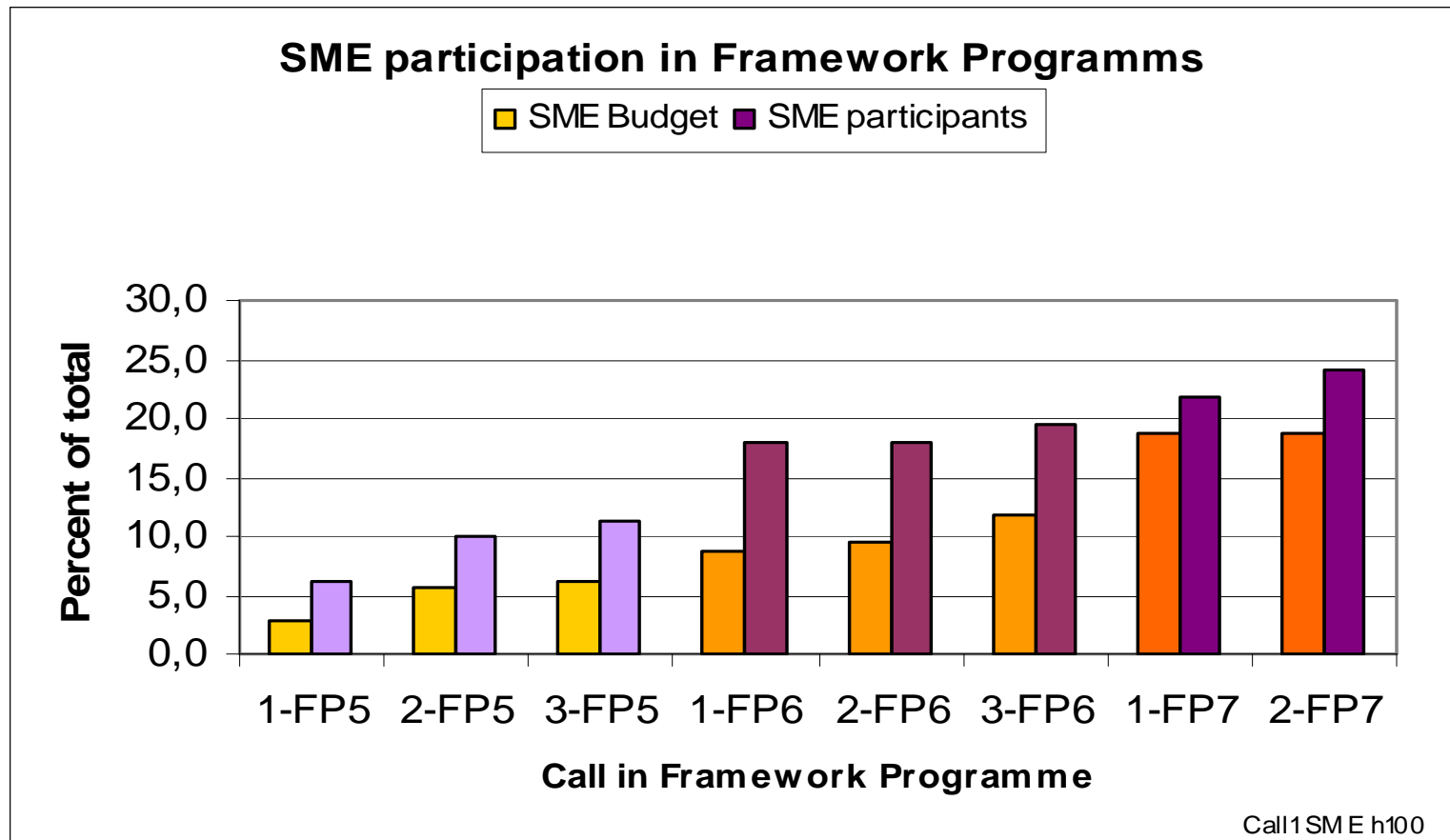
▶ AeroSME became well known “brand” in the community

- ✓ The AeroSME activities improved exchange of information and transparency in EU funded research, by encouraging a more open approach from large companies and other organisations
- ✓ To raise the awareness of SMEs on research opportunities, more than 100 events and information days were held across Europe
- ✓ It supported the development of the aerospace sector of new Member States and Accession Countries to join the European aerospace community



## Aeroportal Creation of a unique portal with improved services

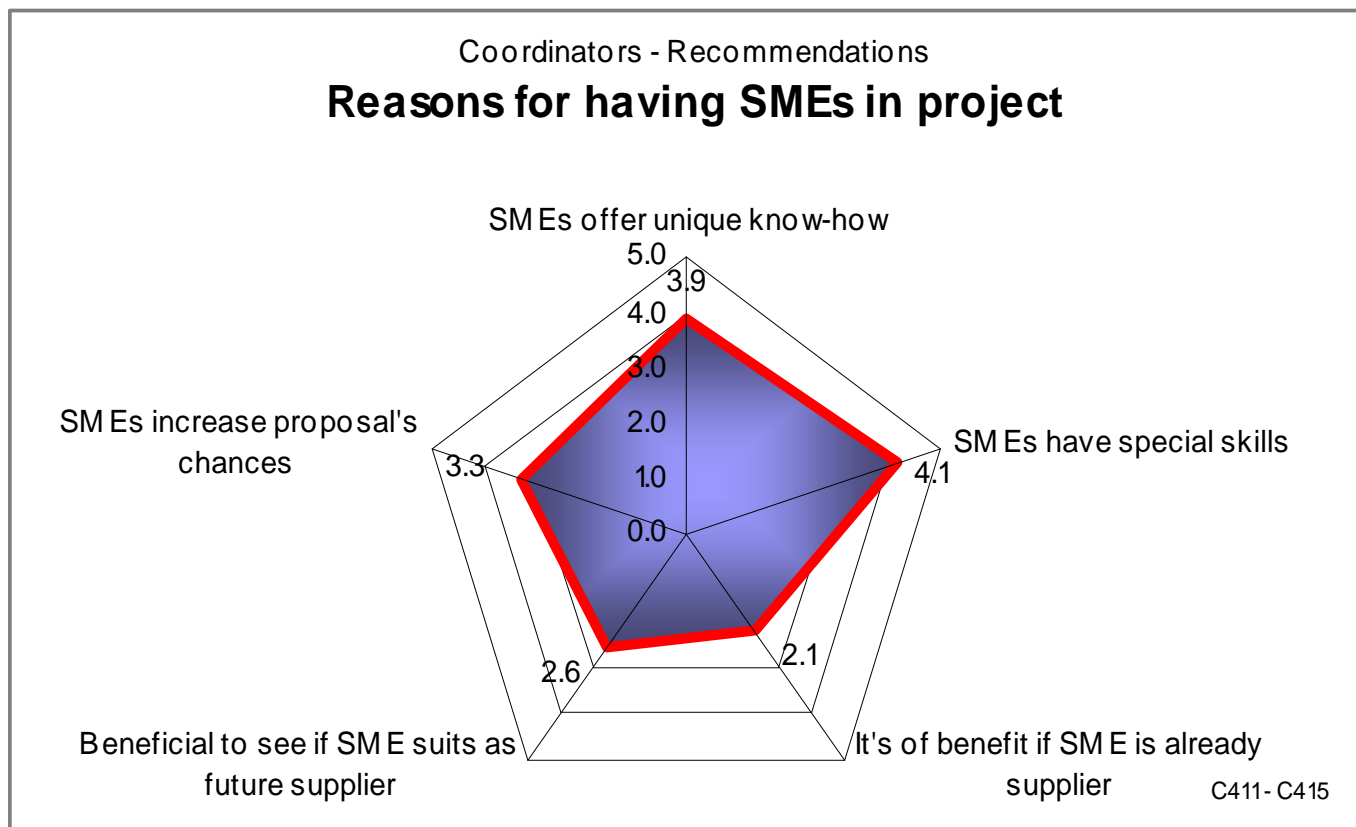
- Creation of a unique European portal for Aerospace SMEs searching
  - Information
  - Awareness
  - Training (new)
- Providing additional information on other SME relevant initiatives
  - Clean Sky JTI (new)
  - SESAR (new)
  - And many other events
- In 2008 creation of Aeroportal through a merger with Scratch project adding additional training and support in proposal writing



The budget share of SMEs in Aeronautics projects rose steadily through FP5, FP6 and FP7 (from 3 % to 18 %), as did the number of SME-participants

**AeroSME and Aeroportal are important building blocks in the support for Aeronautical SMEs**

**SMEs have to offer unique skills and/or know-how in order to “attract” attention**



Rating scale: "not important" > 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 < "very important"



## Support for SMEs in Defence ASD proposal

Based on existing best practices ASD proposes to establish a support for SMEs in defence:

- Providing information and awareness on business/contract opportunities
- Offering networking and partnering opportunities
- Offering SMEs the means to present their companies
- Building and maintaining a database of SMEs / suppliers based on a “labelling system”
- Supporting prime contractors in their search for suppliers
- Training of SMEs interested in
  - Raising their profile
  - increasing maturity of processes
- Organisation of national workshops for
  - Information/awareness raising
  - Supporting clustering and partnering



## Support for SMEs in Defence Final words

Integration/harmonisation with already existing activities and tools can be an advantage

A “proliferation” of supporting measures should be avoided

**European Commission, EDA and ASD to find an integrated solution**

**National Support is needed**



**Thank you for your attention !**

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