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[1]

The ICT innovation voucher aims to support micro-enterprises and SMEs to use digital technologies to innovate and increase their competitiveness.
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The ICT innovation vouchers' scheme is a useful instrument to include in strategies for innovation and growth implemented at local and regional levels. It enables regional and national authorities to facilitate SMEs' access to digital know-how and technology by giving them the incentive to connect with ICT knowledge and service providers. The aim is to encourage the use of new ICT-based business models.

Each scheme is not only tailored to the regional situation but is also designed in such a way as to be easy for SMEs to implement. The regions can set up and fund an ICT Innovation vouchers scheme notably through the EU structural and investment funds (ESIF). The implementation of the scheme will be processed in a decentralised way by each region or country that will decide to use this instrument to trigger SMEs' digitization and contribute to their business development.

- Guide [2] for regional authorities to develop the scheme
- Basic questions answered in this brochure [3]

What is the voucher used for?

Micro-enterprises and SMEs benefitting from a voucher can exchange the latter against ICT services, including services from private companies, universities, research centres and other accredited ICT knowledge and service providers. The voucher provides the company with easy access to specialist services, such as creating a business website and using it profitably, learning to use e-commerce tools to buy or sell, or adopting more sophisticated ICT tools for internal processes, such as better resource planning, supply chain management, and customer relations management.

ICT innovation vouchers in action

Find more about best practices by reading the fact sheets [4] of several existing ICT innovation vouchers schemes already running in Europe.

Some of the Innovation vouchers' programme managers took the opportunity to share their

experience as implementing bodies during the workshop [5] organised in the context of the Open Days 2014 [6].

Tags:

innovation [7]
- ict [8]
- vouchers [9]
- ict innovation vouchers [10]
- regional funds [11]
- funding [12]

Source URL: https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/ict-innovation-vouchers-scheme-regions

Links
[1] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/sites/digital-agenda/files/Innovation%20Voucher.jpg
[2] http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/node/67716
[3] http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/node/67113
[4] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/ict-innovation-vouchers-action-1
[5] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/news/ict-innovation-vouchers-workshop-exchanging-best-practices
[6] http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/conferences/od2014/index.cfm
[7] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/tags/innovation-1868
[8] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/tags/ict
[9] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/tags/vouchers
[10] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/tags/ict-innovation-vouchers
[11] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/tags/regional-funds
[12] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/tags/funding-0