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A Guide to potential women entrepreneurs in the field of Smart Mobility

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ANNEX: a volume including 14 motivational portraits of successful ladies across the European Union.

Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
CE	European Commission
CEF	Connecting Europe Facility
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CF	Cohesion Fund
CF	Cohesion Fund
EEN	Enterprise Europe Network
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
EUROSTAT	Statistical Office of the European Union
FFT	Family, Friends, Fools
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
H2020	EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation
InvestEU	The InvestEU Programme
ITS	Intelligent Transport Systems
ITS	Intelligent Transportation System
MaaS	Mobility as a Service
NGEU	Next Generation EU fund
SM	Smart Mobility [<i>Mobilitate inteligentă</i>]
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TInnGO	Transport I nnovation G ender O bservatory
UE	European Union
WEgate	European online Platform for women entrepreneurs
WES	European network for women's entrepreneurship
WSC	Women Startup Competition
WP	Work Package
Task	Task

Introduction

The present Guide aims at providing minimum information to assist any person willing to gain an insight into how to become an entrepreneur.

The Guide tries to provide answers to the following queries a person concerned may have:

- Weighing up the pros and the cons, would I rather be an employee, or become an entrepreneur?
- If I want to be an entrepreneur, do I have the necessary qualities to engage in such an undertaking?
- If I want to set up a startup, how shall I begin?
- Can a woman be successful in this undertaking?
- Why would it be desirable to set up a startup in the field of Transport – Smart Mobility, and what do I know about this domain?

The Guide, developed under the works of the project **Transport Innovation Gender Observatory - TInnGO** - (<http://www.tinnngo.eu/>) financed under the European Union research – development programme HORIZON 2020, with 20 partners (Universities, R&D companies and local authorities) from 13 participant countries, will develop a framework and mechanisms for a sustainable game change in European transport using the transformative strategy of gender and diversity sensitive smart mobility.

The Guide was not expressly stipulated in the description of the TinnGO project, but the works in Task 9.5 – ‘Women entrepreneur in Smart Mobility’, as well as the webinars and tentative discussions with potential women entrepreneurs pointed out that it is essential for them to be provided a selection of brief information on both entrepreneurship and the specific character related to gender and smart mobility.

The Guide is structured across the following chapters:

1. Entrepreneurship

Based on the analysis of some works in the field of entrepreneurship, as well as on shared first-hand experiences, the Guide attempts at making a synthesis of the most important information specific to this domain.

The information provided was ordered and interpreted as we considered it best fit to spark the interest of potential women entrepreneurs, and to make it clear that entrepreneurship can be an interesting and feasible option worth considering.

The Guide provides the main information benefiting any person thinking over their possible options in life and in professional development. Entrepreneurship is perhaps the most exciting professional option which can secure the most important advantages (social, financial, in terms of professional- and personal life quality etc.), while being also highly risk taking.

Making one’s debut as an entrepreneur – by creating a startup – is a difficult undertaking, and calls for a minimum of specific information. According to startup guru Steve Blank, a startup is a ‘temporary organization designed to search for a repeatable and scalable business model’ [1]

The Guide is trying to provide this minimum of information necessary for the person who is either analysing the possible options in their life and professional development, or considering creating a startup.

2. Women entrepreneurs

Based on the research under the TinnGO project, and particularly on Deliverable D9.5 ‘Case studies regarding women entrepreneurs’, the Guide presents some entrepreneurship- related gender specific issues.

Various gender- related opportunities and advice given by successful women are presented in support of the potential women entrepreneurs.

3. Sustainable Transport. Sustainable and smart mobility.

A presentation of the concepts of Sustainable Transport, Sustainable Mobility and Smart Mobility – SM, and of the EU strategies aimed at developing these domains.

The Guide provides information from the European Union strategies referring to the importance and innovative dynamism characteristic of these domains, which is both a challenge and an opportunity for potential women entrepreneurs.

The Guide presents briefly the advantages of the Sustainable Transport – Smart Mobility (SM) domain, as well as the diversity and dynamics of the current and future products and services in this domain.

4. Bibliographical recommendations for further information

It includes a list of 11 books appreciated as among the most useful for a potential woman entrepreneur having decided to create and run her own startup, to enhance her knowledge.

ANNEX

The Annex presents a volume of 14 motivational portraits of successful ladies across the European Union. The 14 portraits from 10 countries were selected out of a large number of contacts of the lady partners from the TInnGO HUBs, the information being processed and inserted, as a component part of Deliverable D9.5 'Case studies of women entrepreneurs'.

The portraits were also uploaded on the site <https://transportgenderobservatory.eu/the-observatory/> of TinnGO Observatory.

As the portraits are genuine role models to follow, prove it is really possible to take up an interesting successful career, and provide precious advice to those willing to follow this path, we have also introduced them in the Annex to this Guide.

Key words: women entrepreneurs; gender in transport; smart mobility

1. ENTREPRENEURSHIP

1.1. General considerations. Definitions.

Economists have never had a consistent definition of "entrepreneur" or "entrepreneurship" [2] However, researching several sources and considering the specific character of this Guide, we can give the following definitions:

- An entrepreneur is a physical or legal person that binds themselves to carry out various works or services to the benefit of another person or organization, based on previously agreed terms.
- An entrepreneur is a representative economic agent in the market economy, who adopts an intrepid, active and innovative behaviour specific of the economic systems based on competition, risk and private initiative. These are people having the necessary skills and initiative to anticipate the current and future needs, and bring new good ideas on the market.
- An entrepreneur is a person who is willing and able to convert a new idea into a successful business [3]
- An entrepreneur is one who undertakes innovations, finance and business acumen in an effort to transform innovations into economic goods. [3].
- A strong desire to start a business, combined with a good idea, careful planning and hard work, can lead to a very engaging and profitable endeavour. [3]
- An entrepreneur is an individual who creates a new business, bearing most of the risks and enjoying most of the rewards. [4]
- An entrepreneur starts by creating a startup, and goes on evaluating in order to make a successful entrepreneur. A startup is a business under the form of a company, a partnership, or a temporary organization designed to search for a repeatable and scalable business model. [1]

1.2. Qualities necessary to a successful entrepreneur.

Being an entrepreneur calls for specific qualities.

A lot of people who are not entrepreneurs are endowed with these qualities, without being aware of it. When somebody would like to create their own startup, thus becoming an entrepreneur, they should make a minimum research on the skills and knowledge necessary for such an undertaking.

There are a lot of works to assist with first self-testing and research. [5]

Of course, the number and order of the necessary qualities differ across specialised literature.

We consider it necessary to recommend a very small number of qualities, which we regard as really instrumental to embrace a career in entrepreneurship. Many other qualities may be of help as well, but they can differ from case to case, being specific to each and every entrepreneur.

We are trying in what follows to draw up a list of the main qualities based on their importance, while also accounting for our ranking them so:

1.2.1 Independence

Most people start their careers as employees. This status allows them to gain new knowledge, to perfect themselves and get ahead, ending up in management positions at various levels.

To a lot of people, the prospects of developing and getting ahead in a company are the targets they set themselves for a successful career, particularly if the respective job involves activities in which they take pleasure.

However, there are people who want to forge their own future, and perceive the strictness and hierarchical discipline imposed on an employee as constraints and limitations to their own possibilities and aspirations to develop, and who want to be in control of the business and the activities, shaping them in keeping with their own personality and vision.

An entrepreneur's career can bring major satisfactions, surpassing an employee's, even though he or she is in a managing position. However, these satisfactions come with highly risk taking.

Overcoming the difficulties and risks depends on each entrepreneur's qualities .

The fervent wish of independence, as a sine qua non prerequisite of personal development aspirations is the first must for a person thinking through their options, at the beginning of their career, or at a certain point throughout it, to make the decision to give entrepreneurship a try. The wish of being independent and of becoming an entrepreneur, performing with passion in a domain their are knowledgeable about,

is the main argument in favour of the decision to actually become one, and the solid foundation to build a successful entrepreneur career on.

This is generally a genetic quality, defining the availability for a career as an entrepreneur. Of course, this can be a latent quality, namely personal options can change along an employee's career, and that person may be more and more willing to take their career into their own hands, whatever the risks. We consider that all the other necessary qualities, apart from this one, are inherent to each person to a smaller or larger extent, and they can be enhanced through knowledge, ambition, determination.

1.2.2 Vision

After thinking the options through, and making the firm decision to embrace entrepreneurship, there are some steps to be taken. They differ with the type of the business one wants to develop, and with their own personality. However, before setting these steps, it is necessary to have a vision. An outstanding intelligence, numerous diplomas and passing exams with flying colours may not necessarily count among entrepreneurial qualities; yet, having a vision is a must. Vision can be enhanced through studies, examples of other entrepreneurs or mentors, and, most of all, by being a keen observer and by pondering. Observing the world around, and pondering about it, one can get ideas of how certain products or services could be improved, or completed by new ones.

Pondering about such ideas creates entrepreneurial vision and projects it against one's own career dream so as to find the ways to put innovative ideas into practice, to identify the barriers and the modalities to overcome them, as well as to highlight the opportunities, the steps and the actions to take. The entrepreneur to-be should envisage as comprehensive as possible and successful a vision. Of course, implementing a vision is not an immutable process. Special situations are sure to occur along the way, but the vision shall be permanently enlarged or changed accordingly, so that the foreseen final results may be obtained.

The actual business development involves other activities and managerial skills as well, but we consider initial vision the second prerequisite in order embrace entrepreneurship.

The vision must be middle- or long-term (strategic), but updated with the short-term vision, which will include the activity- and business plans to reach the first objectives.

An entrepreneur must have a holistic approach through which these visions can be developed in synergy. As follows from the above, an entrepreneur need not have a 9 to 5 working programme. He / she may work fewer hours than his / her employees, yet he / she will be ceaselessly concerned to work out new ideas, to develop a vision, to subsequently enhance and put it into practice.

1.2.3 Self-confidence

Once the first two conditions are met, the entrepreneur to-be is aware of taking his / her first step along a new path with many obstacles and risks that his / her vision cannot pinpoint in totality. At the same time, an entrepreneur must firmly stand by his / her vision, and be convinced that, in order to substantiate it, it is himself / herself, that is he / she who has developed the vision, who is most entitled to work out the solutions aimed at overcoming any foreseen or unforeseen obstacles.

An entrepreneur must always be confident in his / her own power. It is this self-confidence that will help him/her find the best solutions and work out the problems. At the beginning, such self-confidence may look like arrogance, or fanaticism, but as soon as each stage has been covered step by step, self-confidence will enhance, and the employees, collaborators and customers will know for certain they have met a genuine leader who will always solve problems and get the expected results.

An entrepreneur's qualities get continuously enhanced, even following failures, but we appreciate that self-confidence is the third prerequisite to take up a career in entrepreneurship.

1.2.4 Perseverance

When taking up entrepreneurship, one must expect they will sometimes engage in Sisyphean activities. Unforeseen or inimical circumstances may entail failure.

Perseverance is the capacity to keep on, in spite of difficulties or failures, by approaching other methods, or repeating the previous ones, more determined, always going on, until reaching the expected results.

Perseverance is a developing quality, potentiated by self-confidence and the determination to reach both the financial and the human objectives (contract pledges, the employees' and the collaborators' expectations, passing on to the next stage etc.). Of course, research and taking counsel with the collaborators are necessary, but, based on the information, the entrepreneurs must make the decisions to allow them to go on their way to reach the objectives set.

1.2.5 Creativity

For any business to be successful, it must develop products, ideas, or services sought for by clients. On the other hand, the market is highly dynamic, thus calling for a permanent diversification and upgrading of the already existing products and services, or for new complementary ones.

That is why an entrepreneur should be creative, namely develop new or upgraded solutions required on the market. Entrepreneurial vision must be developed following a minute market research, in order to come up with new solutions.

One needn't necessarily invent new products and services, but the proposed ones must come up with something new to compete with those already existing on the market. Creative people make a careful market research, are keen observers of the trends and opportunities, compare the markets and / or the customers' expectations against each other etc.

The new products or solutions must feature new or upgraded functions, or be more attractive, cheaper, more user friendly, more reliable in operation, benefit from information / advertising campaigns etc.

Entrepreneurs are creative not only through their own ideas, but also by generating a creative environment in which further people to come up with ones, and to compete against each other. The bigger and more ambitious the business, the more necessary for the entrepreneur to make up a team to trust and muster. Making up a team, setting the objectives, and inspiring the team members to work efficiently, competitively, and to take pleasure in what they are doing is an important entrepreneurial activity, also based on the entrepreneur's creativity and flexibility.

1.2.6 Further qualities or prerequisites for an entrepreneur

- An entrepreneur must be well versed in their activity field, and passionate about their own business. It is a necessary prerequisite adding up to the above ones.
- An entrepreneur must be a decision maker, a problem solver, to have a gut feeling, personal ethics, and positive thinking.
- An entrepreneur must be motivated, determined, ambitious, optimistic, inventive, a man of integrity, consistent, focused, flexible, a good diplomat, communicative, balanced, inquisitive, honest, charismatic, and have a fair and friendly behaviour as to customers, collaborators and suppliers.
- An entrepreneur must be a risk taker, sales-, team-, leadership-, objective- and output- oriented, and admit failure.
- An entrepreneur must form a competitive and motivated team performing in a friendly environment based on trust, discipline and competition.

Apart (partially) from the first quality listed (namely independence), we appreciate that all the other required qualities do exist in everybody, to a larger or smaller extent, and that they can be developed through knowledge, ambition, determination and discipline.

1.3. Starting a business.

Starting a business comes alongside the decision to give entrepreneurship a try, after thinking through the career path to take (see chapter 1.2).

Starting a business takes specific knowledge. One can study books on entrepreneurship [6] [7], available podcasts of successful entrepreneurs, specialised programmes for entrepreneurial education [8] etc.

For those who have made no research yet, we recommend several such TV broadcasts.

For instance, Dragons' Den – a BBC show and an international brand with versions airing in countries across the globe. Budding entrepreneurs get three minutes to pitch their business ideas to five multimillionaires who are willing to invest their own cash. [9] The show, launched in 2005 has been tremendously successful (over 200 episodes). Over 20 countries broadcast similar licensed shows.

The Romanian versions of this TV business show are called 'The Lions' Arena' and 'The Lions' Empire'. You will find in these TV business shows designed in an interesting and attractive way, an extremely wide range of both business ideas, and of proponents (men, women, children, elderly people, more or less educated people, disabled people etc.).

To be noticed that this wide variety does not influence success. Success will be triggered by the originality of the idea, the chance of having a large number of clients, and by a credible presentation to be given credit by the business plan, the previous achievements, the social effects, the quality of the proponent and of his / her team etc.

Watching these shows is educative, and can stimulate one's capacity to come up with ideas to embrace a career in entrepreneurship.

It is ideal that entrepreneurial education should start in school, at an early age, and be a lifetime training, firstly as a result of keen observation and reading.

However, there are plenty of young people with ideas who, having the right qualities, being daring and determined, as well as highly knowledgeable about a certain domain, although not about entrepreneurship, have quit studies, or very sought after jobs, to become successful entrepreneurs. Here are some examples: Bill Gates – Paul Allen (Microsoft), Steve Jobs - Steve Wozniak (Apple). Michael Dell, Larry Ellison (Oracle), Mark Zuckerberg (Facebook), Larry Page – Sergey Brin (Google), Jeff Bezos (Amazon), Elon Musk (SpaceX, Tesla, ...) etc.

Age, the level of education, even intelligence are not barriers to an entrepreneur, but it is necessary that their first ideas refer to a domain they are highly versed in. A good knowledge of the respective domain will allow them to be aware of what the current products / services lack, and to come up with innovative ideas.

Starting a business comes alongside the decision to give entrepreneurship a try, after thinking through the career path to take (see chapter 1.2). If you have given it serious thought, if you have decided you want to become an entrepreneur, and you can come up with some ideas, then you can give it a try, even with a minimum of specific knowledge.

The role of this Guide is to provide a selection of minimum necessary knowledge. Of course, once the business is launched, it is necessary to gain further knowledge related to the various activities or stages.

1.3.1. Business ideas

The main prerequisites for an idea to be opportune to starting a business are:

- The proposed product or service should bring something new and attractive as compared to those already existing on the market.
- The novelty envisaged should be something people need, so that there can be a significant number of clients willing to acquire that product. It is necessary to estimate the total number of potential clients. It is necessary to be aware of the typology of the target potential clients (age, gender, education level, professions) and of the specific utilizations. There are available statistics on clients and utilization of the products / services we are to compete against.
- Identify the advantages. Analyse the advantages the new product / service could feature as compared to those already existing on the market (cost price, advantages to the user, attractive design, fiability, lower consumption / emissions, easier / quicker production process, frequency and necessity of utilization, market evolution trend etc.). This holistic analysis can contribute to upgrading the idea in order to get as many and as obvious as possible advantages.
- Approach. The entrepreneur is trying to come up with as many ideas as possible to best work out the market needs. This is done by a thorough local market / other markets research, by carefully observing various examples / information from the specialised literature etc. As soon as the entrepreneur comes up with his / her first ideas, he / she will never stop thinking and dreaming of solutions to upgrading these ideas so as to maximise the advantages.

One may turn their ideas over in their mind, and keep dreaming of them anywhere; however, we recommend to draw up a list of the problems, the proposed solutions, the foreseen results, in all the variants considered.

The entrepreneur will permanently bear in mind this list, continuously in progress, in an attempt to upgrade it. Permanent observation and information, study, discussions with other people, etc. can help or stimulate these efforts. A questionnaire with the main questions, as filled out on social networking platforms, or by known people, can validate certain ideas / solutions, clear up certain doubts, provide a first answer regarding the interest the new product / service will spark, the market trends and demands.

1.3.2. Business Plan

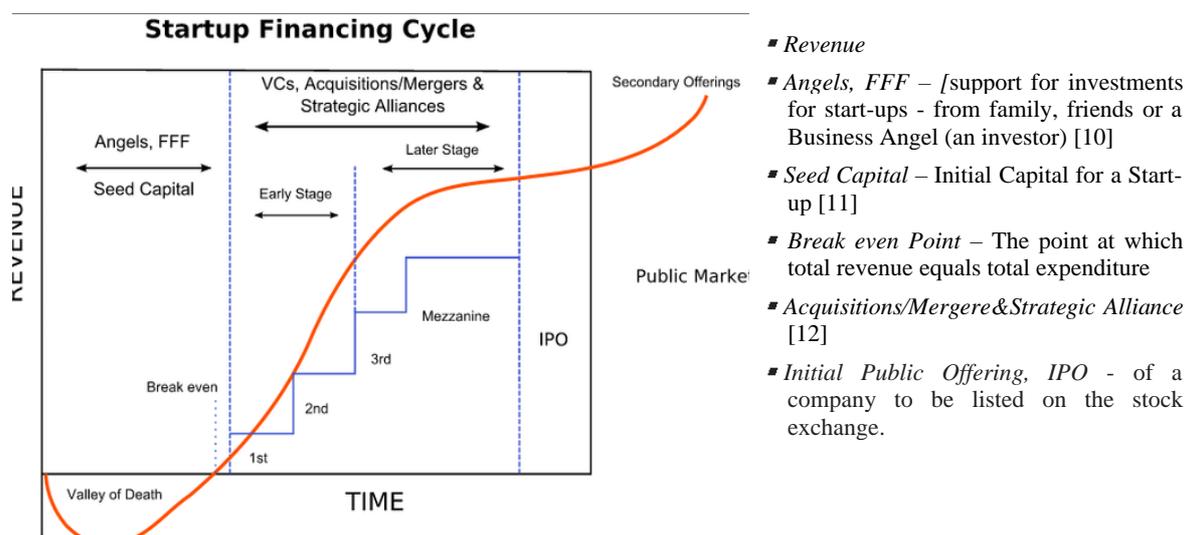
It is advisable this document should be drafted before starting the business.

Drawing it up as correctly as possible will be important first for the entrepreneur to-be.

It is only based on this document that the initial and subsequent financial needs, the profit, the stage duration, the objectives etc., can be estimated.

The specialised literature shows a start-up financing cycle.

The diagram details, the duration, and the growth slopes will be different, but it is necessary to be aware of the general diagram, in order to get the stages into perspective, to set the objectives and to monitor them.



- *Revenue*
- *Angels, FFF* – [support for investments for start-ups - from family, friends or a Business Angel (an investor) [10]
- *Seed Capital* – Initial Capital for a Start-up [11]
- *Break even Point* – The point at which total revenue equals total expenditure
- *Acquisitions/Mergere&Strategic Alliance* [12]
- *Initial Public Offering, IPO* - of a company to be listed on the stock exchange.

Diagram of a start-up financial cycle [3]

In the attempt to transpose the diagram into the business plan, there are two very important aspects that need to be carefully analysed:

- The zone named in an inspired way 'Valley of Death' shows the duration of the necessary initial investment and its value, from its beginning to the moment the business starts to yield revenue. The entrepreneur should best estimate this value and duration, make sure that he / she has the respective fund, and that he / she will be able to subsist throughout this duration (plus the period in which the benefit will not be enough) It is the most financially difficult and critical period – as the business has not proved yet its capacity to yield revenue.
- The benefit foreseen at the level of each stage should cover the necessary expenditures, as well as provide a motivating enough profit as related to the expectations and to other investment modalities.

The business plan can be required by a bank or an investor, or is drawn up in order to help the entrepreneur clear up his / her ideas.

According to its purpose, a business plan can be drawn up and detailed in different ways, but its structure mainly includes as follows:

- **Introductory page** – name of the business, address, contact data, business type and further possible impact information.
- **Summary** – a synthetic summary of the Business Plan. Apart from the chapter titles, the summary must also include the essential information to convince an investor that the business in question is valuable.
- **Market research and fabrication analysis.** The following should be given a clear and concise description: current state of the market, market evolution and trends, major producers / suppliers, direct competitors, market segments.
- **Business description.** A description of the new product / service, while also providing sound arguments in favour of why it is necessary, why there is a demand for it by the clients, and what are its most important plus points as compared to the already existing products and to the competitors. The entrepreneur, the business management, the team, the resources used, how the business has been going since its setting up, and in the future.
- **Activity Plan** – a detailed listing and description of activities, objectives, performance indicators, results. Necessary sums of money. Deadlines. People in charge. Collaborators. Financers.
- **Marketing Plan.** It is advisable to make a preliminary well grounded market research and analysis of the competitors, as well as a SWOT analysis [*Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats*]

Mention should be made that the first two categories refer to the internal factors of the business / company, and the last two, to the external environmental ones (market, competition).

- Organizational Plan – the company organigram and organization, shareholders, operation rules, management
- Risk assessment. It is necessary to correctly identify and present all the risks, their effects, the strategy and action plan aimed at risk prevention and mitigation.
- Financial Plan – will include the Profit and Loss Account, the Balance and the Cash Flow.

The Cash Flow is the most important document. It must be well grounded to make sure there will not be any critical periods during which the company may run a default risk. The Cash Flow, not the profit, should be the point of focus, particularly at the beginning.

Once the activities start, the accounting documents, as well as carrying out the activities and reaching the objectives must be permanently monitored and compared against the documents in the business plan. In the case of discrepancies in terms of expenditures and receipts, the cash flow must be immediately updated throughout the planned period. When, following the updates, there appear periods with insufficient cash, the entrepreneur and his/her collaborators must analyse the situation at once, in order to find a suitable way out.

- Annexes – any documents which can make the financiers provide the requested funding. This category may include: CVs of the entrepreneur and the key team members, description and documents referring to some previous achievements, recommendations, market researches, patents etc.

1.4. Financing sources.

The decision to embrace entrepreneurship comes (also) from the desire to be one's own master, and enjoy the big benefits of successful businesses. However, what really drives a real entrepreneur is his / her desire to develop an innovative product / service with major plus factors as compared to the current ones on the market.

A valuable idea depends on the entrepreneur's talent and permanent concern to upgrade it, but its putting into practice requires funds for the team pay, facilities, materials, premises etc.

More often than not, setting up a business calls for significant funds over quite a long time (see the diagram at chapter 1.3.2.), and the entrepreneur is bound to secure them.

That is why, from the very beginning, the business idea must be completed with a business / funding strategy. Even though the entrepreneur is a technician par excellence, and will turn to a financial manager to collaborate with, he/she cannot steer clear of this essential issue. He / she will have to get actively involved, and in the know, too, in all the decisions to be made, as well as in the relationships with the financiers.

There is not one optimum safe financing solution. The financing strategy and tactic must consider several variants to promote selectively or in parallel, according to the financing needs, their urgency, the conditions and risks related to each financing.

Here is in what follows a list of classical financing types:

1.4.1. Financing without external resources

To expedite starting a business, or because there is no other choice, a business is sometimes set up from the entrepreneur's (or the associated entrepreneurs') own funds. The funds may already exist, or be obtained by taking out a mortgage on their own house etc. It seems to be a major risk to take, but the entrepreneur-to-be must be so confident in his / her capacity, ideas and vision that he / she will take any risk without a hesitation.

Setting up a business involves taking quite a number of personal risks, and the entrepreneur's 100% direct and creative commitment is a must!

As these funds are usually insufficient, the entrepreneur will adopt a drastic policy of reducing all the expenditures and stopping those which are not altogether indispensable to launching the business. The method is known as 'Bootstrapping' – securing financing by efficiently using one's own resources, without external ones.

For instance, a business can be started in one's own flat, in a garage, with arrangements and makeshift work setups made by the entrepreneurs (the way Bill Gates started his business – Microsoft) and so on. One can use already existing objects, second-hand purchases, bartered purchases or services, appealing to volunteers, getting money in advance for the services provided etc.

The business can be promoted personally, from man to man, on the internet etc.

The negotiations with the potential clients must be convincing and flexible, particularly at the beginning, when it is so important to win over each client, and the soonest possible, too. Always remember the diagram under 1.3.2, bearing in mind that you must do whatever it takes to go past the 'Valley of Death'. It is a very difficult period in order to bring to life the future business, yet passion, working under pressure with a maximum adrenaline rush, solving out quite a lot of problems of all sorts – all that stands for the future entrepreneur's training – a Spartan, yet an extremely efficient one – and boosts his / her self-confidence.

If you are not self-confident enough, or if you find it very hard on you, just remember this is exactly how Microsoft, Apple, Dell and many other big or small companies started.

1.4.2. FFF – Family, Friends, Fools

It is an American concept; it is not meant in a pejorative way, though. Probably that is why the British concept includes only the first two Fs.

The idea behind the American concept is that any relative, friend, or acquaintance should be contacted in an attempt to get funding or a loan. Actually, particularly nowadays, nobody will provide any funding or loan unless they fully trust the requester's honesty and special capacities. The third American F is most likely to date back to those times when there were a lot of people eager to invest in order to get rich without making any effort, relying only on catchy stories.

Such an approach may be preferred over others because it is faster, requires fewer formalities (as compared to the financings described in what follows), fewer checks along the way, and sometimes, it is less risk taking. This modality of financing should be requested only by those who firmly believe in the success of their business, or that they will pay off their debts, and who, by all means, refrain from imposing excessive risks on close people who cannot afford to lose (for instance, a mortgage on their parents' house). Unfortunately, most often than not, such supports are asked for in a less responsible way, and if they are obtained easily, they are spent equally easily, which reduces the chance to successfully cross the 'Valley of Death'. This is probably why the statistical data show that, with this type of financing, there are the least chances for the new business to be successful. The lack of responsibility and commitment of quite a lot of entrepreneurs, and the high percentage of failures probably account for the third F in the American concept.

1.4.3. Angel Investors, Business Angels

The English name is derived also from the American concept.

It is about people (or entities) with high financial power, who are willing to invest in start-ups standing a chance to become profitable successful businesses. We are referring, as a rule, to people who are highly versed and experienced in entrepreneurship and business, able to analyse the information and the documents submitted by the entrepreneurs, while also having the flair for the entrepreneur's capacity, determination and chances they stand.

Many times, the chemistry between the requester and the Angel is also important, as it is based on a certain typology and similar visions, as well as on mutual trust.

These Angels often require a percentage of the shares of the future business, and get directly involved, providing support to the entrepreneur's undertaking, through their expertise, or facilitating through their own businesses, some stages of the start-up.

Such Angels are also those in the TV shows mentioned under chapter 1.3, under the name of Dragons (BBC TV Show) [13] or Lions (TDR 2 / Pro TV Romania).

Mention should be made that the BBC show Dragons' Den [9], established as the most important international TV show-business format, with licensed shows in over 20 countries, was launched in 2005.

All the selected British dragons are nowadays known as entrepreneurs, Angels, mentors / trainers in entrepreneurship schools or programmes, businesspeople.

In numerous countries there are entrepreneurship schools or programmes which also organise Angels-type financing contests. In such cases, the entrepreneurs submit documentations and application for financing, or directly contact people in charge of project selection.

If the business idea has got potential, and the entrepreneur to-be knows how to present it and himself / herself, the access to this type of financing may be easier and faster. Besides, the association with an experienced entrepreneur and with a successful businessperson can facilitate and expedite many of the start-up development stages. Of course, in this case, too, the entrepreneur must be directly, totally and

efficiently committed, for both the business success and for keeping the Angel's support. At the same time, he / she will have to give up a number of the start-up shares (as negotiated).

What to have in view when presenting the new startup to an Angel:

- a) A clear description of the idea, and of the modality and prospects to develop the startup, based on a good knowledge of the market and of the competition, as well as on a realistic and well grounded business plan
- b) A convincing portrait of the entrepreneur, based on his / her previous successful results, in-depth knowledge of the domain, abilities, vision, a good understanding of the problems and risks, recommendations, moral profile etc. You must be aware that your presentation will not be enough, and, before investing, the Angel will make his own research, and analyse both the documents submitted by you and your profile – from the social networks, various contacts etc.
- c) The investment you apply for should be reasonable and justified (its utilization should be well grounded). The application should be also correlated with the Angel's antecedents and capacities (some do not invest big amounts of money, others do not go for small businesses)
- d) The startup should reach a reasonable turnover (for example, over 25% /year) according to a business scenario.

When making your choice of an Angel to turn to, it would be advisable that:

- a) The Angel should have expertise and good results as an entrepreneur / business person / Angel in the field of your startup or in related / complementary fields.
- b) The Angel should be willing to get actively involved in supporting your startup. You may possibly find out about previous examples of his / her activity as an Angel, or discuss with entrepreneurs or managers he / she has collaborated with.
- c) The Angel should dispose of sufficient funds, logistics, promotion means, contacts and any other means through which he / she could provide support to your startup.
- d) The Angel's premises should be relatively in close vicinity, so as to find it easy to meet with each other quite frequently. Moreover, mutual trust could be usually bigger if you perform in the same area, have mutual acquaintances etc. Long-term collaboration if the startup is difficult to launch, or, on the contrary, if it is highly successful financially, will stand good chances only between people who unfailingly go by the principles of ethics and equity, and if there is some chemistry between them.
- e) Avoid an Angel who does not have an established expertise and acknowledged good results, even if he / she has a lot of money. His / her investment may be aimed merely at money laundering, or he / she will not be committed to supporting your startup, or your association with him / her may bring you some damages.

Financings provided by Angels or financial institutions [14] [15] [16] , and many further contacts.

1.4.4. Startup projects contests

Always check for the Calls for proposals organised by the private institutions in your own country, or abroad, as well as for the programmes aimed at supporting startups out of the structural funds of the ministries or authorities in your country or in the European Union. The notification of these Calls comes out alongside the terms of eligibility and the list of documents to be submitted with the application for funding the start-up.

If you do not have the experience and the expertise to write an offer, there are consultants and companies able to draw up these offers professionally, of course, with your participation, in order to provide them the necessary explanations and documents.

It is also such consultants / companies that can do the searching for calls for you, selecting those for which you meet the eligibility conditions. Try to choose a consultant / company with expertise, also including in the field of your startup proposal, and with positive results in such actions, too.

Even if each contest has its own specific set of rules, it would be very good if you could prepare the usual documents, and draft an offer for your proposal, may it be in the absence of a Call. In this case, it will be possible to elaborate your offer in a short time. If you collaborate with a consultant or a company with a view to drawing up the offer, it is advisable that you yourself do the detailed description of your idea, and then ask for their opinion shortly before the submission of the offer, while taking care that the original elements of your ideas are not be revealed.

It is very important you should find out about a Call for proposals as soon as it is published. The deadlines for offer submission are generally short, and preparing a competitive documentation is a laborious process. Moreover, with some Calls, the offers are analysed, and the financing is provided in the order in which the offers were submitted.

Among the numerous programmes which can finance such startups, we mention as follows:

- Romania: Startup nation – 200.000 Lei of 100% non-reimbursable financing [17] [18]
 - The National Plan of Investments and Economic Recovery [19] – inclusively grants for startups.
 - Romania HUB programme – financings for training young entrepreneurs and SMEs [20]
- In all UE countries there are financing programmes for startups / SMEs [21] [22] [23] [24]
 - Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs is a cross-border exchange programme which gives new or aspiring entrepreneurs the chance to learn from experienced entrepreneurs running small businesses in other Participant Countries. [25]

The information can be completed through online research, by appealing to the National European Centre, or by contacting a company providing consultancy on fund accessing.

1.4.5. Financing from banks

This option must be considered, even though there are numerous applicants who point out that there are generally some advantages to it:

- Elaborate time-consuming bureaucratic procedures with doubtful results
- Big bank guarantees (as compared to other financial markets), according to the credit applied for
- High actual costs (rates of interest and overall costs)
- In the case of delayed payments, banks are rather rigid, applying either extra penalties, or enforcing the guarantees

1.4.6 Support tools for women entrepreneurs

The Commission supports several tools, such as networks and an electronic platform, which help women become entrepreneurs, and run successful enterprises.

Support tools and networks for women [26]:

- The European online Platform for women entrepreneurs WEgate [27]. WEgate is an online platform that aims to help women entrepreneurs to start and build up their business with the help of our engaging community and knowledge sharing. We want to enable them to find the best networking opportunities, experienced mentorship and a space for growth.
- The European Community of Women Business Angels and women entrepreneurs [28] - is to support women entrepreneurs in accessing alternative sources of funding. It will do so by raising the awareness about business angels, training women who would like to become business angels and helping women entrepreneurs to present their business ideas to potential investors.
- The European network to promote women's entrepreneurship (WES) [29] - is a policy network with members from 31 European nations. WES members provide advice, support, information, and contacts regarding existing support measures for female entrepreneurs. They also help identify good practices.
- The Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) [30] has a women entrepreneurship group on Facebook. The group connects women entrepreneurs to the network's business and innovation support activities and provides concrete services, such as business partnering, access to foreign markets, cooperation with local networks, as well as access to EU funding.
- A European network of mentors and ambassadors for women entrepreneurs [31]. The network provides role models, raises awareness, and encourages entrepreneurship as a career option.
- Further financing opportunities
- The Commission is launching a gender-smart finance initiative under the InvestEU programme, to stimulate funding for female-led companies and funds. [32]
- The paper Gender Smart Financing Investing In & With Women: Opportunities for Europe, edited by the European Commission is a minute study of this theme area [33].
- The Horizon-EIC-2021 Programme - EU Prize for Women Innovators [34] – Call for grants

- Grow F is one of Europe's highest ranked accelerators for female founders – it supports the launching of startups created or run by women [35]. 3-month online programme with around 18 Meetings and 45 hours of programme with top-notch speakers and experts
- WSC (Women Startup Competition) is the biggest event of its kind in Europe [36].
The aim of Women Startup Competition is to grow the presence of women in business, therefore we provide trainings and opportunities for more and more gender-diverse startups
- Romania: - Financing for the Woman Manager [37].
 - Future Makers is a startup incubator for future-oriented business ideas, international mentorship; business, startup Grants [35]
 - The biggest business women club in Romania, Elite Business Women Club, in partnership with Netherlands Romania Chamber of Commerce (NRCC), launched the mentorship programme for women, Elite Academy 2021 [38]
 - Programmes for SMEs, including a programme for developing entrepreneurial culture among women

1.5. Business Development Management.

It is the entrepreneur's responsibility to permanently monitor that the business management meets the business plan in order to reach all the set objectives, and work out all the problems that arise.

Here is in what follows, a short list of the main problems, as well as recommendations as to how to work them out:

1.5.1. Financial pressure:

- Permanent monitoring and updating of the cash flows and of their projection for the next period, and adopting the necessary measures so that the funds may be always enough for the current- and the development expenditures
- Analysis of the activities and measures aimed at reducing the time necessary to reach the objectives
- Make purchases thriftily and with utmost care, having in view their efficiency and pay off duration
- Analysis of current costs (salaries, rent, taxes, utilities) following up their efficiency

1.5.2. Pressure on human resources:

- The team can develop to the extent it is necessary and financially possible
- Even though the entrepreneur starts only through one's own efforts, as the business takes off, he / she will have to delegate more and more of his / her activities, so that he / she may focus on the most important activities in order to either reach the objectives and develop the business, or set up new businesses.
- Each employee must bring his / her own measurable input which is to exceed as much as possible the expenditures the company incurs (salary, taxes, overheads). Each employee should take on responsibility, be well trained professionally, a team worker, and motivated to consider himself / herself directly involved in the business success.
- The entrepreneur is directly responsible for forming a professional well proportioned, capable team motivated to work in order to reach the objectives, as if these were their own. Working in this way, the entrepreneur must secure the necessary conditions and ambiance for the team to enjoy working, be interested in what they are doing, and collaborate properly.
- Although, particularly at the beginning, the entrepreneur is directly responsible for all the activities, it is necessary he / she should train somebody to rely on and trust to step in for him / her under certain circumstances, and to take over as many as possible of his / her initial responsibilities.

1.5.3. Analysis of entering and developing on a market

It is important to perform those activities which should secure the expected clients, and an increase in their number. Among such activities, let us mention as follows:

- Monitor the competitor products market. Have a good knowledge of their characteristics.
- Monitor the clients. Have a good knowledge of their characteristics (age groups, gender, education, preferences, discontentments, evolution prospects etc.).
- Upgrade the products / services in order to enhance their attractiveness and make them all the more necessary
- Take steps in order to enter and develop on the market: inform and attract clients, as well as make them loyal patrons, use advertising, build your own brand of products / services.
- Launch related or complementary products / services within the same brand.
- Entry the market. Find the right methods to inform and attract clients, while turning them into loyal patrons.
- Solutions to making the products / services more efficient and to developing them: upstream (analysis and selection of suppliers), downstream (analysis of the solutions regarding packing, storing, transport, supply, service, in order to make them more efficient), horizontally (diversification of the range of products / services)
- External resources. At a certain development stage, one should also analyse various procedures of alliances, mergers, externalization or internalization of services, in order to select the best solutions with a view to developing.

1.5.4. Participation in public procurements. Financial mechanisms. Partnerships and business models.

As the business develops, there arise problems of other types, which call for a diversified modality of approach. We will briefly exemplify, in what follows, the most important types of problems a company may be faced with:

- In order to sell its products, the company will have to participate in competitive procedures of public procurements. The modality of participation in such a procedure calls for a large variety of advanced knowledge (technical, legal, economic, modality of presentation, specific procedures, guarantees, life-cycle costs of the product / service provided, share, external costs etc.) of preparing and editing the offers, advocating them in the evaluation procedures, making up and presenting the project work- and management team, following up the products / service in terms of technical performance and costs under guarantee etc.
- Any development of the company or products / services will need extra financing which, more often than not, exceeds the company's capacity. That is why a good knowledge of the financial mechanisms to be used to this end in view will be necessary. Being knowledgeable about the financial mechanisms the local authorities make use of in support of developing certain sectors / services will be useful for developing a strategy to promote one's own products / services.
- In order to develop a business, it is necessary to be acquainted with innovative business models. Getting financing will take elaborating bankable projects, innovative business models etc. To stand bigger promotion chances, it will be useful to identify and foster joining partnerships capable, through their complementarity and excellence, of adding value and of being highly competitive as compared to competitors.
- In order to promote businesses in the field of transport – mobility, it is necessary to be knowledgeable about the strategies and requirements intended for a sustainable development of these sectors, as well as about the wide range of related innovative products and services which can contribute to the holistic and efficient development of these sectors.

In-depth knowledge of these complex aspects with a dynamic development at a high pace is difficult to acquire, and needs a thorough study in order to understand the phenomena and identify the solutions to benefiting one's own business development.

Of course, these aspects do not make the object of this guide to initiating those who intend to take up entrepreneurship. However, we recommend several recent studies conducted under the SUITS research project.

SUITS (Supporting Urban Integrated Transport Systems) is a project completed in 2021 under the European Union Research – Development Programme HORIZON 2020. [39]

The project, with 21 partners from 11 EU countries taking part, was coordinated by Coventry University. U.K.

Under SUITS Project Work Package WP4 (coordinated by Integral Consulting R&D), the following Guidelines were developed. We recommend them to you, as they provide a synthesis of the important innovative aspects related to the above mentioned issues.

- Guidelines to Innovative Procurement – Integral Consulting R&D, Romania. [40]
- Guidelines to Innovative Financing – Arcadis, U.K. [41]
- Guidelines to Developing bankable projects, new business models and partnerships - Eurokleis, Italy [42]
- Integrated Decision Support Tool – Integral Consulting R&D, Romania [43]

Examples and detailed presentations of some of the most important and innovative issues in the domain described as a whole in the respective Guidelines are presented in the related annexes to them.

The Integrated Decision Support Tool stands for an instrument for online consulting the Guidelines, as well as for enabling a dialogue with those who access it, to quickly find answers or information related to the issues and aspects they are interested in.

1.6. Conclusions

This Guide provides the main necessary information and recommendations we have regarded as to be of assistance to anybody considering setting up their own business, and deciding to take this career path.

If the potential entrepreneur has an innovative idea to entry the market, and provided he / she is disciplined, tenacious and creative enough to put it into practice, we hope the information above will be of help and sufficient.

Since the moment of putting the business idea into practice, throughout its development, the problems will be more and more numerous and complex. Besides being endowed with the already mentioned qualities, and making use of them, the entrepreneur will have to enlarge both his / her specific knowledge, and a team to rely on and to support him / her.

The information on entrepreneurship will be further enlarged in the following chapters with related specific pieces on gender and the field of Transport and Smart Mobility.

2. Women Entrepreneurs

2.1. General Considerations.

Based on the research under the TinnGO project, and particularly on Deliverable D9.5 'Case studies on women entrepreneurs', we are going to present in what follows the entrepreneurship- related specific gender issues.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are the backbone of Europe's economy. They represent 99% of all businesses in the European Union. They employ around 100 million people, account for more than half of Europe's GDP, and play a key role in adding value in every sector of the economy. [44]

Women account for 52% of Europe's total population, while only 34,4% of them have their own business, and 30% are startup entrepreneurs. Only 14,8% of the startup founders are women [45]. Women entrepreneurship is the domain in which intrepid women's creative and managerial potential can manifest at its highest.

At the European level, only few women have ventured to take the path of transport- and mobility- related entrepreneurship and business.

Nevertheless, the existence of powerful businesses set up by women, and the outputs highlighted by the research under the TinnGO project show that success does not depend on gender, and that it is only performance that makes the difference. The research is based and capitalises on the experiences of some women entrepreneurs and / or successful career women working in various branches in transports and mobility, against 10 socially and politically different national backgrounds (UK, Germany, France, Sweden, Italy, Spain, Romania, Portugal, Lithuania, Greece).

45% of these women have set up startups, and run their own businesses, are freelancers, or own a business alongside other family members. These businesses refer to: alternative transport, electric car- design, manufacture and market, consultancy services, automotive transport digitalization, project management, urban planning and green mobility, freight road transport and logistics, fleet management, driving school management, smart city digital platforms and smart city data analytics and so on.

For 47% of these women, the main driver to their choosing the transport sector was the dynamic and challenging environment they had taken interest in, and been passionate about ever since their childhood.

All these ladies declared that their success is based firstly on an important personal investment including: unabated work, determination, passion, creativity, vision, proper approach to changes and full commitment.

Deliverable D9.5 'Case studies on women entrepreneurs' is aimed at promoting role models of successful business women and career women in the field of transport and smart mobility, by showcasing motivational and inspirational portraits, thus providing arguments for as many women as possible to embrace a career, or invest in this domain.

Fourteen portraits of ladies (see the Annex) who have distinguished themselves in business and career in the field of transport and mobility, are revealing their motivations and speak about their deep personal qualities which have driven them to turn their ideas into reality, and highlight their approaches to gender opportunities and barriers, the mentalities and behaviours through which they have succeeded in performing in career and business.

These ladies have interesting experiences about their early career years, the obstacles and challenges they had to face, but also about the lessons that they have been taught and that have helped them become what they are today.

Each of these ladies stands for a genuine role model having the force to motivate and inspire as many women as possible to take a 'confidence leap' in themselves and in their actions, and choose a career in transports.

The powerful example these remarkable ladies give is actually on the one hand, a priceless chance for further women to learn, and on the other hand, a necessary stimulus to take bold approaches.

They are worth meeting!

In *Annex 1* there are presented 'Fourteen motivational portraits of successful ladies from the European Union'.

2.2. Opportunities for women entrepreneurs.

The transports sector is characterised by the diversity of opportunities in terms of possible types of business and jobs. In this respect, one of the successful ladies showed that *'women are still to conquer quite a lot of spaces, and they can create their own space in the field of mobility and services, more than in other sectors'*.

The transports sector is undergoing fast-paced changes, emerging modern technologies, new services to be developed and organised, highly complex challenges at a social and environmental level.

The extended use of automation and digitalization in the field of transport and smart mobility will bring about changes in the workforce structure and in the work content, as well as the emergence of new jobs and business models.

There is a window of opportunity for jobs and businesses to become more appealing to women in the field of transport and smart mobility.

This is probably the best time for women to embrace entrepreneurship in third domain.

2.3. Women- specific qualities – plus factors in performing as an entrepreneur.

- A woman running a business in transport? Do you find it unsuitable?
- You are interested in running your own business, yet you do not know whether you have, at least partly, the makings of an entrepreneur?
- Would you like to know something about the way to success?
- Have you got some fears, and are you afraid of taking a risk?

We find the most credible answers to the above questions, and the best advice to take, in the fascinating stories of the fourteen successful ladies from ten EU countries, who generously shared their experiences with us.

These ladies differ from each other in terms of mentality, behaviour and perspective, yet, each of them, defying gender stereotypes and prejudices, has succeeded in a traditionally male- dominated sector. They live in different countries, belong to distinct cultures, work in various branches and environments in the transports sector, but share some characteristics.

What do these ladies with different profiles and interests share in common?

- Self-awareness, which has given them self-confidence and the confidence in what they are doing. They know very well that, if one is not convinced they will be successful, they cannot reach too far;
- Unabated work, ambition, vision and perseverance to overcome all obstacles;
- The determination with which they have taken their career path;
- Education and a good knowledge of the respective domain;
- Life-long learning and development;
- Openness to new opportunities. They have the capacity to take the opportunities as they come, without fear, and to react fast and efficiently;

Each of these ladies has proved the above through her own experience. However, they have understood that success never comes without effort, and is reached based on a personal investment including perseverance, passion, determination, unabated work, creativity, professionalism, seriousness ...

Actually, each successful entrepreneur started from the bottom rung of the career ladder.

2.4. Specific recommendations for women entrepreneurs.

- Do you need motivation, inspiration, or recommendations?

In a few words, yet with powerful messages, each of these successful ladies has offered some pieces of motivating and inspirational advice:

- *'You can overcome any difficulties in your career when you are well prepared and thorough at what you are doing'*.
- *'Build a powerful team made up of people who are open to challenges and to novelty!'*

- 'Do not be afraid to set forth your standpoint and to make yourself heard.'
- 'Do not let other people's comments make you feel mean. You are valuable, your standpoint is as valid as everybody else's, therefore keep calm, stand your ground, and never give up the struggle'
- 'Be strong, target- oriented, and, above all, be confident in yourself, in your principles and ideas. It is only in this way that you will be able to form great teams who will follow you as they will acknowledge you as a leader'
- 'I recommend getting connected within networks'
- 'Do not underestimate your standpoint and experience as a woman, whether you act as a user or as an observer. Use them as precious assets, and as plus factors to your subsequent evolution'
- 'Do not hesitate to showcase your success!'
- 'Never lose sight of your own objectives.'
- 'Women in managerial positions should combine a male's attitude (authoritarian and task-oriented) with a female's one (democratic, people- oriented).'
- 'It is important to regard difficulties not only as problems, but as challenges for you to take up and deal with as critical material, in order to learn something which could be adapted in the future.'
- 'Do not give up upon running into the first obstacle.'
- 'Be strong, target- oriented, and, above all, be confident in yourself, in your principles and ideas. It is only in this way that you will be able to form great teams to follow you as they will acknowledge you as a leader.'

2.5. Conclusions.

An important and encouraging finding is that in all the countries participant in the study, progress is being made as to entrepreneurship and gender mainstreaming in the sector of transports and mobility.

'The space to be occupied is infinite, and it takes women's commitment, creativity, intelligence and competence', as one of the successful ladies said.

The perspective and experience of each of the fourteen successful ladies stand for a valuable source of inspiration and motivation for further women who are still reluctant to embrace entrepreneurship in the field of transports and mobility.

Catherine Trautmann¹: *'The more women are aware of their role in various mobility modes and related utilization patterns, the more they will choose to play an active part by working for these networks and leading them. I think that, for the transports industry, women are a genuine source of innovation and creativity in the new services.'* [46]

¹ Catherine Trautmann, former Minister of Culture of France from 1997 – 2000 and Member of the European Parliament 1989–1997 and 2004–2014

3. Sustainable Transport. Sustainable and Smart Mobility

Transports account for a domain of utmost importance of the economic and social activity, because they secure freight and passenger travel in space, in order to meet the human society's material and spiritual needs.

Coming second in terms of expenditures, the transports sector contributes with 5% to the European GDP, and directly employs approximately 10 million workers.

According to the Inquiry on the work force, conducted by Eurostat, in most of the EU member states, women account (as of 2016) for approximately 20% of the work force in the field of transports. [47]

As early as 2011, the European Commission set, through the strategic document The White Paper on Transports, the EU roadmap towards a competitive and sustainable transport [48]. The objectives set and described in this strategy highlight a very dynamic development towards 'a single European transport area' – in which, by year 2050, vehicles will be zero-emissions, the freight- and passenger transport along medium- and long distances will go by rail, as a priority, the high speed railway network will triple, a framework will be established for a European multimodal transport information, management and payment system, as well as for modern infrastructure and smart payment, transport external costs will be externalized (according to the 'user pays' and 'polluter pays' principles), and transport security will be ensured.

In order to reach these objectives, a European research-, innovation- and implementation strategy is adopted in transports. [49] Through this strategy, a new concept is developed regarding mobility and the European mobility network. Urban mobility should allow for city economic growth, higher quality of citizens' lives, and environmental protection. [50]

In 2020, the European Commission adopted 'The Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy' [51] [*Smart Mobility – SM*], as well as the 'Action Plan for its transposing into practice'. [52]

This strategy foresees, among others, as follows:

- People should enjoy a seamless multimodal experience throughout their journey, through sustainable mobility choices, as a result of digitalization and automation.
- The Commission will encourage research and innovation, by means of a new European partnership on Connected- Cooperative- and Automated Mobility CCAM [53] as foreseen under the Europe Horizon programme, and by means of further digital technology- focused partnerships.
- EU research programmes will be instrumental to the future implementation, by means of tools such as the Connecting Europe Facility - CEF [54], the Cohesion Fund - CF [55], the European Regional Development Fund – ERDF [56], or InvestEU. [57]. The total budget for the CEF from 2014 to 2020 comes to around €33 billion, out of which, around €26 billion for transport; [58]
- Smart interoperable payment- and ticketing services shall be further developed;
- Capacities distribution, and efficient traffic management shall be secured, in order to avoid a lack of capacities and to reduce CO2 emissions.
- EU shall secure the highest level of performance to the digital infrastructure, particularly through 5G technology, which provides a wide range of services, and contributes to reaching a higher automation level to the various mobility applications [59] [60]
- UE shall make sure the key digital factors are implemented, including the electronic components for mobility, the network infrastructure, the 'cloud-to-edge' type resources, the data and governance technologies, as well as artificial intelligence
- The Commission foresees an European ecosystem of excellence and trust in AI [Artificial Intelligence –AI], by financing research, innovation and implementation under the Europe Horizon and Digital Europe programmes. In order to develop viable projects and accelerate investments, public authorities and project promoters need supporting.
- Covering the 'investment deficit in terms of green and digital transition' for infrastructure would further add EUR 100 billion per year.
- Investments should be coordinated and prioritised under the EU financing programmes for those projects with the highest value added at social-, economic- and EU level, also with a direct impact on jobs, economic growth and resilience.

- SMEs need to access financing more easily. This can be achieved through clearer communication and guidance, specific administrative support, and simplified schemes of financial support. In 2017, an overwhelming majority of the EU enterprises (98.9%) employed below 49 people (small enterprises). Overall, SMEs employed 83,9 million people in 2017, which accounted for 67% of the total number of the employees [61]. In 2017 there were over 1.1 million enterprises in the transport and storing services in EU-27, employing 8,1% of the overall number of people in economy. More than half of them are employed by SMEs.
- The most valuable asset of the sector are, by far, people, and the sustainable and smart transition will not be possible without the support and participation of the workers in transports.
- The economic shock highlighted the must of accessible and equitable mobility affordable to all passengers (*disabled- and low mobility people included*) and other transport services users.
- The digital transition underway provides new opportunities, for example a better working environment, and quality jobs which could become more appealing to women and young people.
- The Commission will adequately apply gender mainstreaming in its policy initiatives in the field of transports, and provide further support to all parties concerned, and to sharing best practice regarding the objective 'More women in transports – A platform for change', with a view to increasing the number of women in transport jobs. Also, it will raise public awareness of equality-related issues, by creating and supporting a network of ambassadors of diversity. All the future proposals regarding transports will be in line with the Commission's gender equality strategy [62] and disabled people strategy. [63].
- The recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic crisis should be used to accelerate a zero-emission modernised transport- and mobility system as a whole, limiting its negative environmental impact, and enhancing our citizens' safety and health. The double transition, green and digital, should rebuild connectivity, and revitalise economy.
- A higher share of modal public transport, walking and cycling, as well as of automated-, connected- and multimodal mobility will considerably reduce transport- generated pollution and congestion, while enhancing people's health and wellbeing.
- The increasing pressure on public transport systems has increased the demand for new and innovative solutions, as various transport services are integrated in a service available on demand, in line with the Mobility as a Service (MasS) concept [64]]. Cities witness a re-orientation towards shared and collaborative mobility services (carpooling, bike-sharing, carsharing and other forms of micro-mobility, park and ride- type facilities which are made possible by intermediate platforms which allow for traffic reducing.
- EU transports external costs will be covered by the transport users by 2050 at the latest. Each year, there is an amount of EUR 987 billion in external costs for transport [65] (habitat- and climate damage, air pollution, accidents, noise).
- The EU should make the most of smart digital solutions and of smart transport systems (STS) [66] [67]. The newly set up enterprises and the technology developers need a flexible regulatory framework for innovation, to support solutions implementation on the market.
- The current strategy should support the sector and relevant ecosystems, such as journeys and tourism, to recover following this sanitary crisis, become greener, smarter and more resilient.
- Rapid investments are necessary, including significant public and private investments at the national level.
- The non-refundable fund, through the new recovery and resilience mechanism NextGeneration EU, of ERDF, of the Cohesion Fund and of the Innovation Fund should have priority for the projects having the highest value added at the social-, environmental-, economic-, and EU level, with a direct impact on jobs, economic growth and resilience.
- The Commission puts forward a comprehensive set of measures as mentioned in the Action Plan of this strategy, to guide the EU towards a sustainable mobility system.

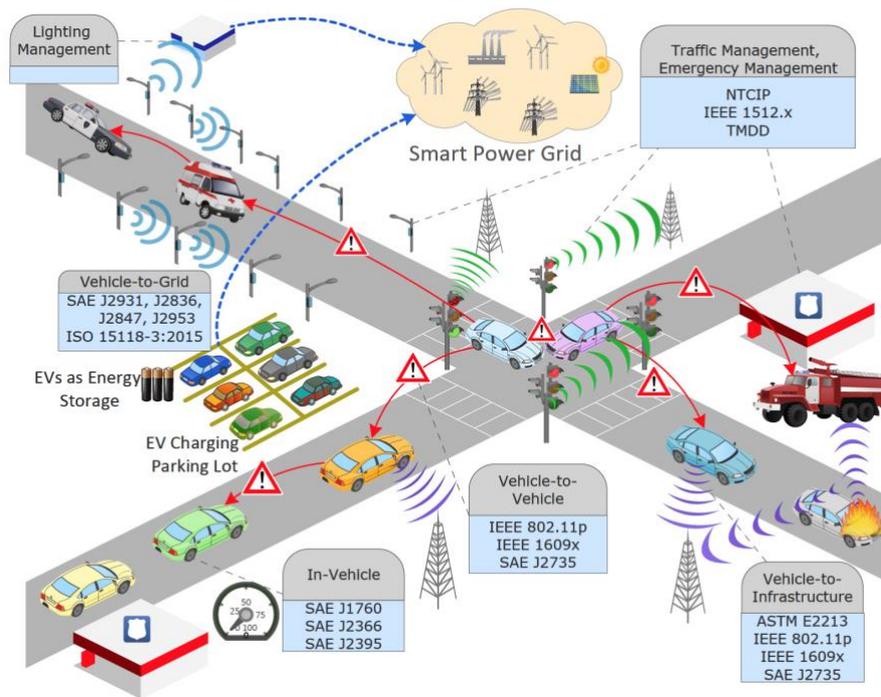


Figure – The ITS ecosystem diagram that integrates the concept of Smart City [68]

Out of the most important EU strategies, we have selected the above information which highlights the very dynamic and diversified range of services, products and financing opportunities in the field of Transports and Smart Mobility.

These characteristics make the Transport and Smart Mobility sector perhaps the most important and attractive economic sector, in terms of opportunities of both startup launching, and being addressed by women.

A potential woman entrepreneur will thus have a minimum of necessary information on this domain, and will be able to do further research, by accessing the most representative of the quoted documents.

You will find in the fourteen Portraits of successful ladies (see the ANNEX) convincing arguments regarding the domain diversity, and women's chances of success.

4. Bibliographical recommendations for further information

- The Art of the Start 2.0 - Guy Kawasaki. 2015
- HBR's 10 Must Reads on Entrepreneurship and Startups (Featuring Bonus Article "Why the Lean Startup Changes Everything" by Steve Blank), Paperback - Harvard Business Review. 2018 [https://moodle2.units.it/pluginfile.php/287259/mod_resource/content/1/HBR_readings_underlined.pdf]
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- Zero to One: Notes on Startups, or How to Build the Future – Peter Thiel, 2014
- The One Minute Entrepreneur – Ken Blanchard, Don Hutson, Ethan Willis. 2008
- Start with WHY. How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone To Take Action - Simon Sinek. 2011
- The Startup Playbook - David S. Kidder. 2013
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ANNEX: 14 Motivational Portraits of Successful Ladies from the European Union.

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