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Ex-post evaluation

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AutoNet

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1 BACKGROUND

The purpose of this ex-post evaluation is to systematically collect and analyse the remarks and comments of all partners and their associated institutions in order to gather the feedback, review the proposals for improvements and to make judgments of the MM activities throughout the project life.

Moreover, the ex-post evaluation is an assessment of the relevance, effectiveness and impact of project specific activities, namely Match Making, that were carried out during the project life. It is to be undertaken directly after completion of those activities. The intention is to identify the factors of success or failure, to assess the sustainability of results and impacts, and to draw conclusions that may inform other projects and programmes.

The main purposes for carrying out this evaluation are to:

- Accountability – to demonstrate how far WP4 has achieved its objectives and what has been its impact
- Learn from the factors of success and failure
- Assess the impact of WP4 activities
- Assess the sustainability of the results

2 METHODOLOGY

The methodology of the ex-post evaluation followed the survey methodology by collecting the project partner's opinions on the topic related to the Match Making activities.

Project partners were asked to fill in questionnaires in cooperation with their associated institution. Based on the questionnaire which was distributed to all project partners we have prepared the statistical analysis following their answers.

The questionnaires were filled in by all partners.

3 OVERVIEW OF WP 4 ACTIVITIES

Activities within the work package no. 4 were focused on creation of new ventures or cooperation agreements to produce innovative solutions by trans-regional cooperation of automotive actors from participating region. Project partners developed the methodology using BelCar and TCAS matchmaking methodology as the input. AutoNet methodology was adapted to fit the CE regional requirements as well as to be fully transferable to Web based CE Matchmaking Database Service. Adaption of the previous was done in cooperation with EASN.

Based on the methodology WP4 leader in cooperation with intense cooperation with all project partners developed and launched the solution (database), which is the sustainable core output of the project. Database was during the project filled by entries inserted by project partners to guarantee high quality and consistent inputs. Project partners were intensively disseminating the Matchmaking activities regionally and also train the regional actors in the effective usage of this platform.

Project partners also intensively scanned the regions in order to identify high quality entries and the most suitable participants for the MM events based on the defined topics of the each event. The local actors will insert new entries into the database after the project closure by themselves.

During the project life, project partners organized altogether 12 MM events, among which 9 of them were organized within the central Europe area (by all project partners) and 3 outside of EU. Selected regional actors identified through regional dissemination and via platform met personally with other actors from participating region in order to discuss their innovative ideas or needs for innovative solutions. Core output of the project was the signature of 5 EU + 2 non EU cooperation agreements proposing development of innovative solutions between SMEs, RTDs, universities or other actors.

3.1 MM events

The MM events were organized in following locations:

Table 1: List of all MatchMaking events during AutoNet project life

Date	Event	Location
November 2010	1st MM event	Nitra, Slovakia
January 2011	2nd MM event	Emilia Romagna, Italy
March 2011	3rd MM event	Leipzig, Germany
June 2011	4th MM event	Rzeszów, Poland
September 2011	5th + 6th MM event	Ostrava, Czech Republic
March 2012	1st non-EU MM event	Istanbul, Turkey
April 2012	2nd non-EU MM event	Kiev, Ukraine
July 2012	7th MM event	Bergamo, Italy
September 2012	8th MM event	Balatonfured, Hungary
October 2012	3rd non-EU event	Kaluga, Russia
December 2012	9th MM event	Wroclaw, Poland

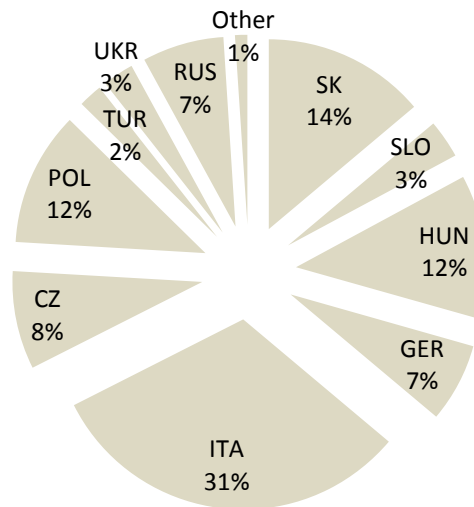
Match Making database currently contains the following amount of entries from more than 11 different countries:

Table 2: Number of entries in the AutoNet online database

Participating countries	Number of companies in the database
Slovakia	68
Slovenia	16
Hungary	60
Germany	33
Italy	154
Czech Republic	41
Poland	56
Turkey	10
Ukraine	13
Russia	34
Other	5
TOTAL	490

Till end of the project 490 entities were inserted to AutoNet database. Mainly the entries were inserted during the registration process to the particular MM events. All partners were asked to continuously follow and evaluate the quality of the entries. In case the quality did not meet the minimum criteria (description of the production programme, contact details) the partners either removed or improved the profiled of the affected entity.

Chart 1: % of entries in the AutoNet online database



Majority of the entries in the database is coming from Italy, given two project partners and two MM events which were held there. Italy is followed by Slovakia, the lead partner's country with 14 %, Hungary and Poland with 12 %. Also from Poland there were 2 project partners involved in the project.

Table no. 3 below is showing the number of the meetings held during each particular MM event. The table presents the number of official meetings, which are the meetings planned and scheduled by the online MM application. For each of these meetings, the participants received personalized schedules. Additionally some "non-official" meetings were held on the spot of the MM event. These meetings were realized spontaneously, because not all participants always registered and acquired the personalized meeting's schedule. The estimation of these "non-official" additional meetings is an estimation based on the signed attendance list as well as the host partners who were assisting the match making course on the spot and were able to track the happening during the MM's.

Table 3: Number of meetings at the Match Making events

Date	Place	Number of official meetings	Number of additional meetings organized	TOTAL Number of meetings
November 2010	Nitra, Slovakia	320	0	320
January 2011	Emilia Romagna, Italy	119	20	139
March 2011	Leipzig, Germany	60	35	95
June 2011	Rzeszów, Poland	22	21	43
September 2011	Ostrava, Czech Rep.	173	0	173
March 2012	Istanbul, Turkey	207	0	207
April 2012	Kiev, Ukraine	74	6	80

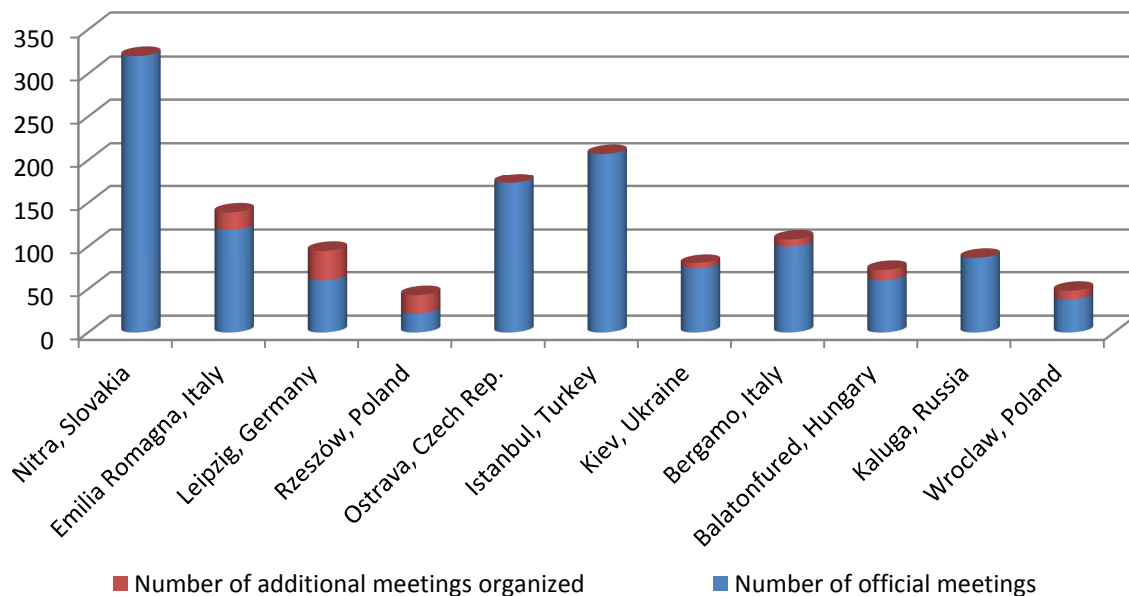
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July 2012	Bergamo, Italy	100	8	108
September 2012	Balatonfured, Hungary	60	12	72
October 2012	Kaluga, Russia	87	0	87
December 2012	Wroclaw, Poland	38	10	48
TOTAL		1260	112	1372

*Based on estimation

Chart no. 2 is showing the number of meetings at the Match Making events. The highest amount of the meetings was realized at the first MM event in Nitra, where AutoNet MM event was joined with the 4th Slovak MM fair. Second highest amount of the meetings had the first non-EU event in Turkey, where participants ranked very intensively with other participants and therefore realized 207 bilateral meetings in total. Lowest amount of the meetings were realized in Rzeszów, Poland, where only 22 official meetings were held and additionally are estimated 21 informal meetings. Reasons for low attendance might be twofold. One of them is the fact that the event was planned rather behind the standard MM time plan and therefore not many companies from other regions were able to manage their trips there. Second reason was the location, which is not one of the recognized ones in the automotive industry and rather bad/expensive accessibility of the city where the meeting was held which decreased the interest of the other companies.

Chart 2: Number of meetings at the Match Making events



From the chart no. 3 is seen the share of the official and additional meetings which were held during the MM events. As presented, the most additional meetings in relative measures happened during the MM event in Rzeszów, Poland, followed by the MM event in Leipzig, Germany (max in absolute measures) and Emilia Romagna, Italy.

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Chart 3: Share of official and additional meetings at the Match Making events

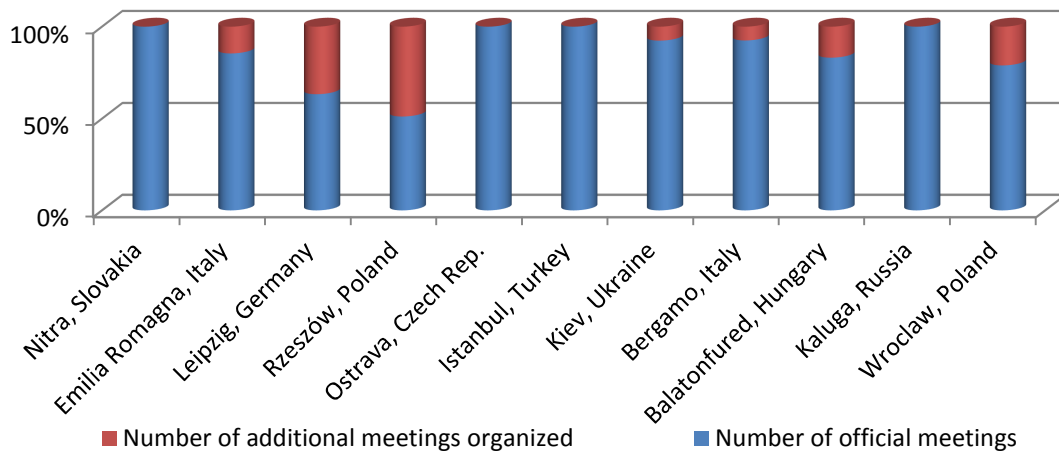


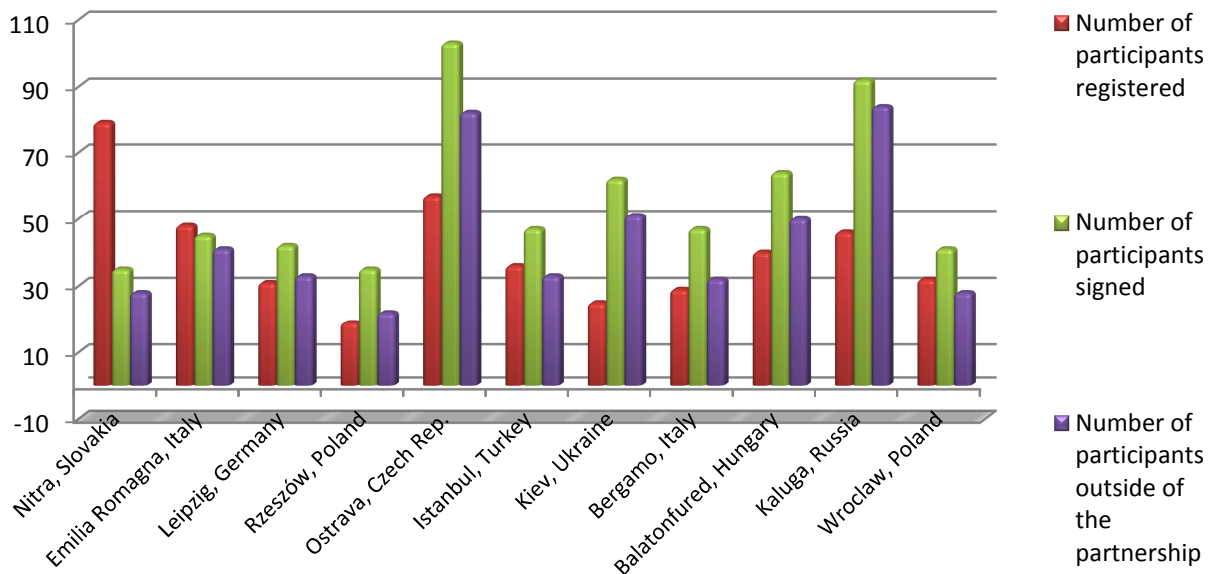
Table no. 4 is showing the number of participants which registered to each particular MM event through the on-line application platform and who signed the attendance list. Additionally there are separated the participants outside of partnership who attended as well as the target number of participants as according to the application form. In the last column we can observe the discrepancy between the target value and real number of participants.

Table 4: Number of participants at the MM events

Event	Number of participants registered	Number of participants signed	Number of participants outside of the partnership	Target number of participants	Discrepancy
1st MM event: Nitra, Slovakia	79	35	28	40	-12
2nd MM event: Emilia Romagna, Italy	48	45	41	40	1
3rd MM event: Leipzig, Germany	31	42	33	40	-7
4th MM event: Rzeszów, Poland	19	35	22	40	-18
5th + 6th MM event: Ostrava, Czech Rep.	57	103	82	80	23
1st non-EU MM event: Istanbul, Turkey	36	47	33	70	-37
2nd non-EU MM event: Kiev, Ukraine	25	62	51	70	-19
7th MM event: Bergamo, Italy	29	47	32	40	-8
8th MM event, Balatonfured, Hungary	40	64	50	40	10

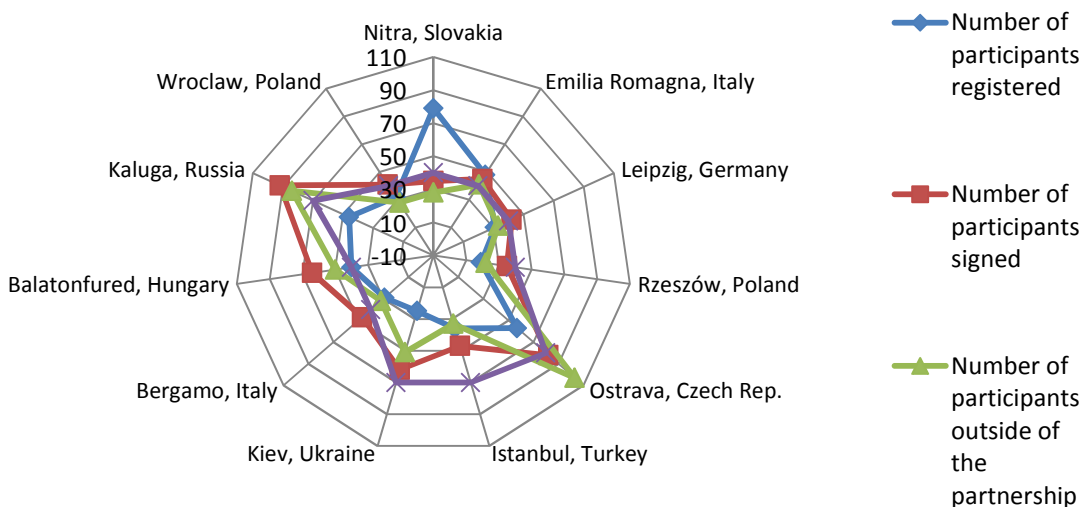
3rd non-EU MM event, Kaluga, Russia	46	92	84	70	14
9th MM event: Wroclaw, Poland	32	41	28	40	-12
TOTAL	442	613	484	570	-86

Chart 4: Number of participants at the MM events



Also charts no. 4 and 5 are graphically demonstrating the number of participants (registered, signed, outside of partnership) per each MM event.

Chart 5: Number of participants at the MM events



3.2 Cooperation agreements

During the project life project partners performed regular scans of the potential cooperation agreements which could be signed among the participants who attended the MM events. Project partners identified the following 9 EU and 2 non-EU cooperation agreements until this time:

Table 5: list of EU cooperation agreements

No	Parties	Description
1.	City of Trnava and Nyugat Pannon Regionalis Fejlesztési Zrt	The related Parties intend to establish a long-term mutual cooperation focused on support and development of entrepreneurship infrastructure in respective regions. Within the frame of "Programme of cross-border cooperation between Hungary and Slovakia 2007 - 2013", the 4th call published in June 2011 (ID : HUSK/11101) related parties have agreed to create a partnership with aim to prepare an application form for new project under Priority axis 1.1.1 - Development of entrepreneur infrastructure.
2.	Fidia S,r.f. and Central Transdanubian Regional Innovation Agency	The parties will cooperate on building network composed by various field's SME. The purpose of network is involvement in European projects aimed at technological innovation; organizing innovation; local development. Agreement intends to connect European SME with the aim to formalize a needs context on local and national level, collect and share SME data and information and identify organizing needs. In order to this agreement the Parties will assemble local partnership in Italy and in Hungary to submit proposals to EU aimed at SME development. Cooperation of the Parties can occur in the following forms: data exchange, cooperative activities organization (in particular: organize meetings, seminars following the results of new technologies adoption for experience), joint projects cooperation for locale development and SME improvement, disclose and share the information and data which are a part of cooperation agreement activities; provide the proof ground for new materials, test them in the production; other forms of co-operation under the Parties agreement, carrying out the activities throughout the term of cooperation agreement validity

3.	Simulplast, s.r.o and VŠB Technical University of Ostrava	Parties will cooperate on simulation of material structures and prediction of their physical behaviour in forms of cooperative activities (meetings, seminars following the results of new technologies adoption for experience), joint project cooperation on material research)
4. - 7.	Comunimprese and Europartners srl, TSA solutions srl, Intellimech and Fidia srl	4 – 7th cooperation agreement were signed between Comunimprese and 3 local companies from Italy (Europartners srl, TSA solutions srl, and Fidia srl). With all of them the cooperation of the Parties can occur in the following forms: data exchange, cooperative activities organization (in particular: organize meetings, seminars following the results of new technologies adoption for experience), joint projects cooperation: mutual stimulus on activities and opportunities that might result in opportunities of growth for both parties, disclose and share the information and data which are a part of cooperation agreement activities; provide the proof ground for new materials, test them in the production and other. The cooperation agreements are rather weak in terms of transnational cooperation as they are signed among the participants coming from the same country and region.
8	Automotive Cluster of Slovenia and Bakony-Balaton Mechatronic and Automotive Cluster	The parties will cooperate on exchanging and enhancing the innovative practices particularly focused on innovative concepts and solutions which are offered to the members of both institutions. The cooperation will focus to improve the quality of the services offered to the members, by improvement of the processes of the organizations and by adding the new innovative solutions as a result of this cooperation. The goal of this agreement is to encourage cooperation between the parties in the common work areas and to recognize the progress made by the GIZ ACS and Chamber of Commerce and Industry Veszprém. Organizations will commonly work on organization of meetings with innovation potential for SME's and other stakeholders of the cluster, seminars following the results of new technologies adoption for experience, sharing the information (mapping) about the innovative potential in each region, advisory and support to the member with technology transfers or pilot applications, providing support to the members when entering to the other party's market, joint innovative projects preparation (in the framework of the transnational cooperation programmes (in the new programming period).
9.	Stuba Green Team	The goal of this Agreement is to exchange experience in fields of Hybrid and electric vehicles and their components of cooperation between the

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	<p>and VSB – Technical University Ostrava</p>	<p>parties in the common work areas and to recognize the progress made by the Stuba Green Team from Slovakia and VSB – Technical University Ostrava from Czech Republic. Parties will cooperate on common practice for research of alternative propulsion for vehicles and participation in the simulation of vehicles with electric power drive. Technical University Ostrava will also provide know-how for building laboratories for hydrogen fuel cells to Stuba Green Team.</p>
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Table 6: list of non-EU cooperation agreements

No.	Parties	Description
1.	<p>Svetloba- Aljoša Huber and Energometrologija – Dmitry Anatolevich Docenko and Vladimir Vasilevich Putkin</p>	<p>The subject of this non-EU cooperation agreement was the establishment of a new company Reflecta RUS, which will enable the companies in Russia to save up to 80% of energy with REFLECTA intelligent systems of industrial lighting. By that the companies will be able to join the set of companies that already generate high savings: Toyota, Hyundai, Kia, Zetor, etc. In addition, this Russian partners, will in cooperation with Slovene company Svetloba establish an R&D activity and production in Russia. The signature was a result of activities in Russia in framework of the project AutoNet, where ACS facilitated the start of the cooperation between company Svetloba and Russian partners.</p>
2	<p>Automotive cluster West Slovakia and Agency for regional development of the Kaluga region</p>	<p>The parties of this cooperation agreement, will exchange data, cooperate on organization of cooperative activities (in particular conferences, meetings, seminars following results of new technologies adoption for experience), disclose and share the information and data in common interest and carry out the activities throughout the terms of cooperation.</p>
3	<p>Automotive cluster of Slovenia and UkrAutoprom</p>	<p>The main aim of this cooperation agreement is to raise the level of innovativeness and cooperation between Slovenian and Ukrainian companies and institutions from the automotive sector. Identified were the investment opportunities in productive enterprises of the Republic of Slovenia and the number of issues for the creation and development of joint projects in Ukraine in the automotive industry.</p>

4 ANALYSIS OF THE ANSWERS

This chapter gives an overview about the results of the evaluation done among the project partners and their associated institutions. Below are presented average evaluation scores based on 5 point scale, given 5 as the best grade and 1 the worst one based on different chapters of WP4.

All project partners provided the answers to the questionnaire prepared by the WP4 leader which was structured as it is presented in this chapter.

4.1 Information, concept

Partners together with their associated institutions had in the first section a chance to evaluate the general information provided and a concept itself.

Table 7: Evaluation part 1: information / concept

Information	Average
Regional dissemination of the MM events	4,13
Web announcements	3,88
Concept	
General concept of the MM – methodology	4,25
Standard MM agenda	4,25
Topics of the MM events	3,88
Organization of the Host partners	4,38
Cooperation/support of the WP4 leader	4,75

5 = excellent, 4= very good, 3= good, 2= satisfying, 1=unsatisfying

Above are presented average evaluation scores related to information provided about the MM activities within the project as well as the general concept of it. Based on it we can conclude that partners would generally appreciate better web promotion of the MM events (web announcements, scored 3,88), which would mainly provide information earlier and in more targeted way.

Topics of the MM events were defined by the host partners, based on the regional particularities and strengths in particular fields of the automotive industry. Some of the topics of the MM event were not appreciated fully by all partners. Some partners namely had problems to scan and identify relevant regional actors in given fields, which were sometimes defined rather narrow. On contrary, some partners had problems motivating the regional actors to attend relatively open / wide topics of the MM events. This mainly depended on the profile and role of the project partners in local contexts.

4.2 MM events

Next module of the questionnaire was dedicated to evaluation of the MM events in general in terms of the quality of participating companies / institutions, quality of the panellists, overall organization, information provided, etc.

Table 8: Evaluation part 2: MM events

Evaluation of the MM EVENTS	
1 st MM event – Nitra, Slovakia	3,88
2 nd MM event – Emilia Romagna, Italy	4,38
3 rd MM event – Leipzig, Germany	3,75
4 th MM event – Rzeszów, Poland	2,75
5 th + 6 th MM event – Ostrava, Czech Republic	4,38
1 st non-EU MM event – Istanbul, Turkey	4,57
2 nd non-EU MM event – Kiev, Ukraine	4,14
7 th MM event – Bergamo, Italy	4,00
8 th MM event – Balatonfured, Hungary	4,25
3 rd non-EU event – Kaluga, Russia	4,83
9 th MM event – Wroclaw, Poland	4,13

5 = excellent, 4= very good, 3= good, 2= satisfying, 1=unsatisfying

Partners generally liked the most the MM event in Kaluga, Russia, followed by the MM event in Istanbul, Turkey, MM event in Emilia Romagna, Italy and Ostrava, Czech Republic. As a result of the MM event in Kaluga, Russia, partners also signed 2 cooperation agreements, showing that this MM event was indeed one of the most successful ones.

4.3 Dissemination

Further the project partners were evaluating the dissemination activities and the tools provided by the project. Approach towards the target group from the side of the project partners was examined as well.

Table 9: Evaluation part 3: Information (dissemination) about the events

Dissemination	yes	no
1. Were the dissemination tools which project provided appropriate to the type of the target participants?	87,5%	12,5%
2. Did you use also other dissemination/communication tools than those provided by AutoNet?	87,5%	12,5%

3. Did you use direct contacts also?	100,0%	-
4. Did the MM trainings help regional actors to register to the database and insert high quality profiles?	87,5%	12,5%
5. Did any of your local companies attend the MM events more than once?	62,5%	37,5%

Those partners who used also other dissemination/communication tools than those provided by AutoNet used the tools as: Internal information system, communication by email, phone communication, participating at conferences organised outside of AutoNet partnership, internal newsletter distribution, web announcements on partners and other medias, export promotion event posters, direct contacts, advertisement other commercial activities/tools.

62,5 % of partners brought the same company / institution more than once to the MM events. On average 3 companies from the same partner attended approximately two MM events.

4.4 Outputs

Fourth segment of the evaluation sheet were the outputs and tangible results achieved during the WP4 implementation.

Table 10: Evaluation part 3: Outputs

Outputs	yes	don't know	no
Did the participants you have brought to the MM event sign any cooperation agreement for cooperation in future?	62,5%	12,5%	25,0%
Do they cooperate but are not willing to sign the cooperation agreement?	12,5%	62,5%	25,0%
How would you evaluate the quality of other participants on the events? Were they generally fitting to the topic of the MM event?	100,0%	-	-

62,5 % of partners managed to track the cooperation agreement settled between their local participant and another company/institution from different region. Only one partner is not sure whether the participants they have brought to the MM event signed any cooperation agreement for cooperation in future. Two partners (25 %) haven't managed to identify any of their participants who signed or settled any further cooperation in form of the cooperation agreement.

Full consent was given to the question related to the quality of other participants on the events. Partners think that the participants were generally fitting to the topic of the MM events. This shows that the regional activities such as MM trainings, intensive dissemination as well as scanning and identification of target participants were successful.

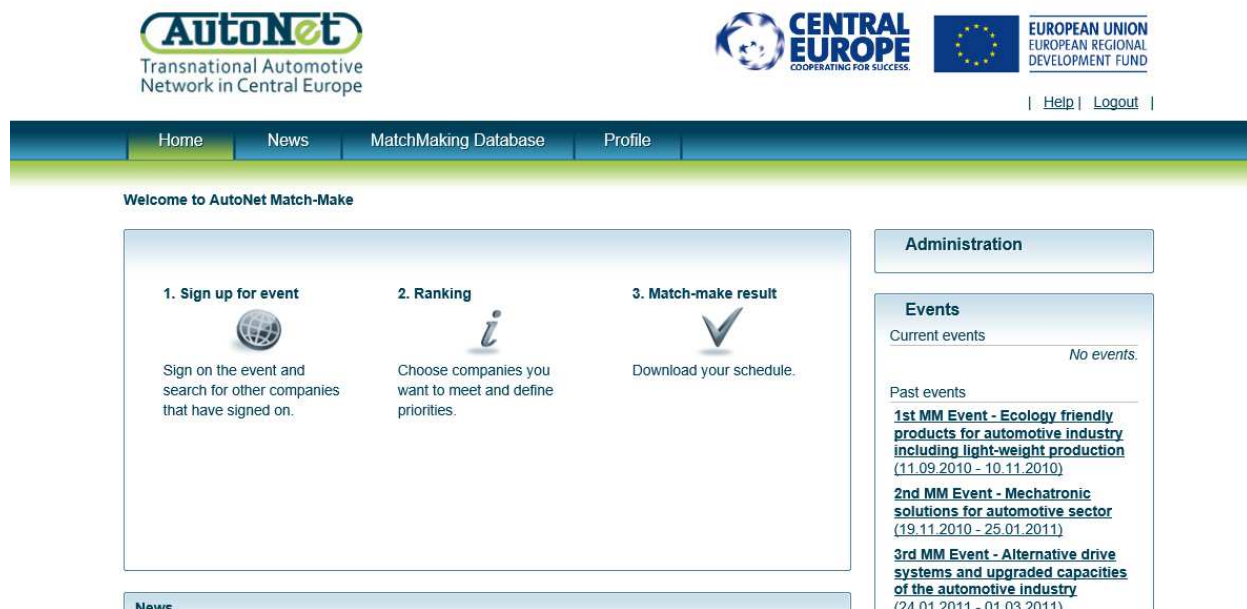
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4.5 MM database

MM database is a sustainable tool developed as a part of the online solution for MM activities. Matchmaking database was developed to boost cooperation in development of innovation services (products, processes, materials etc.) in automotive industry.

The direct result during the project implementation is an identification of actors they could be the participants at the MM events and finally create cooperation agreement or venture with other actors across partnering regions.

CE Matchmaking database will stay accessible for free to all interested actors also in post-project phase. CE Matchmaking database is a powerful matchmaking tool allowing really creating matches between demand and supply in INNOVATION.



Partners provided following opinion related to the MM database:

Table 11: Evaluation part 3: MM database

MM database	yes	don't know	no
Do you find MM web based database useful?	87,5%	12,5%	-
Do you find it easy to use (user-friendly)?	87,5%	-	12,5%
Do you use it anytime for seeking for a contact?	75,0%	-	25,0%

Do you continuously promote database among local actors?	100,0%	-	-
Do you find MM online registration application useful?	100,0%	-	-
Did you have any difficulties using it?	12,5%	-	87,5%

Generally the MM database as well as online MM application was evaluated as useful and user-friendly tool for MM as well as for seeking for new contacts.

4.6 Opinion of the project partners

Project partners were asked to provide opinion on the following three topics:

1. How would you evaluate past MM events (concept of the organization, topics of the MM events, attendance on the MM events,..) ?

- MM events at later stage of the project were more precisely organized and better known among the members of organizations in the regions
- Sometimes partners invited participants not totally related to the topic
- From organizational and conceptual aspect , very professional
- MM event as an initiative is generally speaking a good instrument for promoting contacts and relations among companies, if well chosen
- Since it is not a B2B model initiative, what we can expect to the most is to create a transnational networking of operators that might always get back to one another for any future development
- The organisation of MM events was very good, although lack of some registered companies caused interferences
- All of the hosts did their best in both of ex-ante, in-progress and ex-post phases; and the WP4 Leader has been a real mentor of these meetings since the beginning of the project
- The developed MM methodology is a practice-oriented and unambiguous reference document
- The topics of last MM events represented actual development directions of the automotive industry
- The registration process has been on easier and smooth way – due to efficient MM trainings were held at every partner
- The level of attendance was higher towards the end of the project than at the first half of the project, the level of participation related to partner countries out of the host is at higher level as well, but it was relatively poor in some cases (e.g. in Bergamo)
- The unique study-tour(s) at companies were able to increase the interests

- In general there was a raising of quality visible compared to the ones at the beginning of the project (more professional, more precise, ...)
- unfortunately the Polish event was not based on the standard agenda and from the few attending companies only some were from the specific topic

2. How would you evaluate the organization from the side of the host partners / WP 4 leader?

- Prompt reactions to solve organizational and IT issues
- Host partners always prepared the best conditions for participants
- WP4 leader was always willing to help and assist
- Satisfactorily; we all put efforts in delivering a good product, maybe not the best but a functioning one. As we said the learning by doing process helped us in improving the quality of the MM event, and this applies to every aspect: organizational, operational and to content
- WP4 leader has been very helpful and competent during project lifetime
- All of the hosts did their best in both of ex-ante, in-progress and ex-post phases; and the WP4 Leader has efficiently supported the hosts since the beginning of the project
- The facts are saying for themselves – MM Events' Lifetime has already been at developed phase, the “boom” has been realised since the integrated event was held in Ostrava
- Organization was professional, precise and open for suggestions

3. What have you missed?

- Better support and cooperation by most of the partners
- Sometimes we acted too individually and very rarely sharing the burden of the work behind
- It would be efficient to spread out information in e-format about all of domestic participants a month before the event in order to increase the interests of possible participants from other AutoNet regions
- company profiles in printed forms at the MME itself

5 CONCLUSIONS

The present ex-post evaluation gave an outlook to the WP4, its activities, results and outputs achieved and performed during the entire project life. Generally speaking, the project partners performed all foreseen activities and reached all outputs with minor deviations related to the number of participants outside of partnership who attended MM events.

Namely the project partners have managed to organize all foreseen MatchMaking events; however the final number of participants slightly deviated from the targeted one. Project partners had sometimes difficulties to identify and later also attract sufficient number of participants, who would fit to the topic of particular MM events. Nevertheless, the number of participants towards the end of the project didn't diminish but the opposite, was getting better and the participation at the MM events in Hungary and Russia (which happened in the last period) even significantly exceeded the target value.

The proof that the project partners gave advantage to quality of participants rather than only a quantity is reflected in the ex-post questionnaires, where 100 % of partners replied that the participants were generally fitting to the topic of the MM events.

Project partners have also clear opinion, that the quality of the overall MM events was rising towards the end of the project, which is showing that the lessons learned and the first and second MM evaluations fulfilled the purpose to monitor and raise the quality based on the opinion and suggestions from all partners.

Some of the topics of the MM event were not appreciated fully by all partners. Some partners namely had problems to scan and identify relevant regional actors in given fields, which were sometimes defined rather narrow. On contrary, some partners had problems motivating the regional actors to attend relatively open / wide topics of the MM events. This mainly depended on the profile and role of the project partners in local contexts.

Cooperation agreements as one of the tangible results of the MM activities exceeded the expectations and outreached the target value for more than 100 % and some of them present good factor of sustainability of the project results.

Overall wp 4 was evaluated as very good (grade 4) and it could be said that it was implemented punctually, precisely and with efforts of all partners of AutoNet project.

It is now up to the project partners as well as up to the participants to utilize the outputs of the match making activities in a most beneficial way. Partners have the opportunity to capitalize the lessons learned from the project, to further exploit all contacts and innovative ideas gained during the MM events, as well as to use the MM database which is the sustainable output of the AutoNet and will be kept alive as a part of the AutoNet network services in future.