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User's needs Report

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Project presentation

Project

PROGRAMME: Adriatic-Ionian Programme Interreg V-B (ADRION) 2014-2020

PROGRAMME PRIORITY SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: Support the development of a regional innovation system for the Adriatic-Ionian area

PROJECT ACRONYM: ECO-NautiNET

PROJECT TITLE: Network's support for SMEs in the Nautical sector of the Adriatic-Ionian Region

PERIOD: February 2018- January 2020

The ECO-NautiNET project pursues the objective of improving the competitiveness and innovation of SMEs in the nautical sector through an innovative NETWORK Model based on a multilevel approach, which includes:

- involvement, motivation and training of SMEs to improve their networking approach
- the selection and training of key figures to support the creation, maintenance and growth of networks (facilitators, tutors and brokers)
- the creation of a web platform with particular attention to ECO-solutions in the nautical sector. The platform will give SMEs the opportunity to create or join the Ionian Adriatic eco-networks and to support product innovation through the involvement of research institutes and universities. The ECO-NautiNET network, jointly managed by the local Business Support Organization, will work together with the Research Institutes to assist the related SMEs and develop important tools to promote innovation and internationalization of SMEs
- a joint management system between business support organizations, SMEs and research institutes
- the creation of tools (for example, e-learning programs in the platform) to guarantee and facilitate the growth and transferability of results
- the use of a specific tool to support innovation and the transfer of new technologies "ready for the market" by researchers to SMEs

The project will capitalize the existing experimental experiences in the nautical network, also providing innovative aspects for the transferability and duration of the network, providing the BSO (business support organization), SMEs and research institutes, the tools to support the creation and duration of the networks, with particular attention to the nautical sector.

Partners

CA - Επιμελητήριο Αχαΐας Chamber of Achaia

CNA RAVENNA- CONFEDERAZIONE NAZIONALE DELL'ARTIGIANATO E DELLA PICCOLA E MEDIA IMPRESA ASSOCIAZIONE TERRITORIALE DI RAVENNA

RRC KOPER- Regionalni Razvojni Center Koper

UNIZAG FSB- Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Fakultet strojarstva I Brodogradnje

CCE PULA- Hrvatska gospodarska komora

DURA- Dubrovačka Razvojna Agencija

CCIT- Dhoma e Tregtisë dhe Industrisë Tiranë

1. Introduction

In order to develop the electronic platform for the operation of the Network, a user needs analysis is required, for the development of software (electronic platform) compliant to the real user needs.

Towards this direction, the objective of the specific deliverable is to define the users and the role of each user in the platform. For each user a specific set of requirements is defined in order to extract the specifications of the electronic platform.

The specific deliverable is important and critical, since that this will model the real user needs in technical terms and will facilitate the work of the developer.

The specific deliverable will be the basis for the platform development by the WP3 leader.

The document is structured in chapters, as follows:

Chapter 2 - Methodology defines the methodology used to identify the user needs focusing on the main tools used by the partnership. An analysis of the general discussions, of transnational working groups and on-line survey are being described.

Chapter 3 - Transnational Working Groups are the key methodological tool to focus on the real discussions with different target groups. Transnational Working Groups are based on the focus group methodology and the aim of the discussions is to evaluate key findings and to adjust the results of the survey to the real needs on the end users.

Chapter 4 - Questionnaire report summarises the key findings of the online survey that was realised by the partnership. Online questionnaires were developed matching the different needs of each user type. In this chapter the answers of the questionnaires are being presented.

Chapter 5 - Final Set of User Needs presents the key findings of the overall activities aiming to define the final set of user needs.

2. Description of the Methodology

It is widely known that most successful portals and web platforms have been developed using a strong user-centred approach. The ECO-NautiNET project wanted to ensure that the prototype platform implemented features that would be used, rather than features, which fitted the technology well. For that reason, the over-arching methodology was to involve all type of users and formulate the user requirements from consultation.

2.1 General discussions

The ECO-NautiNET project from the beginning of its life cycle implemented activities involving stakeholders of the project such as Facilitators, SMEs, Brokers, Researchers, BSOs, etc. The project team took advantage of these joint activities and FSB UNIZAG scientific personnel presented and discussed the functionality of the platform with different types of users. The feedback received by these discussions were the basis for the better understanding of the real needs of the users and especially of the SMEs.

2.2 Transnational Working Groups

The methodology of FOCUS GROUPS is well known. Focus groups have long been a popular tool in market research and have become more popular in user research in the recent past too. They consist of a group of between 5 and 10 users who work with a moderator/facilitator/researcher. The moderator poses questions from a script to the group. Their answers are recorded, sometimes by the moderator sometimes by an observer or observers, and then analyzed and reported on at the end of the process.

Based on the specific method ECO-NautiNET organised two Transnational Working Groups in order to integrate project's stakeholders in the implementation of common activities. One of the objectives of these groups was to identify the user needs for the development of the platform.

The initial requirements resulting from the general discussions in several occasions and focus group sessions were documented and the key ones noted. These were then prioritised based on the apparent importance to users gleamed during the interviews and focus groups. The prioritised requirements formed the basis for the questions posed in the subsequent online survey.

2.3 Online survey

A Web-based questionnaire was used to compare the needs of the specific communities involved in the earlier stages of this work package with the wider ECO-NautiNET community. The survey had very tightly defined goals: prioritisation of user requirements; testing the completeness of the requirements found through the one-to-one and focus group sessions; and confirmation that these requirements were applicable to all types of users. It also provided opportunity for further consultation by encouraging comments on proposed functionality and perceived barriers to networking.

An analysis of the questionnaire returns enabled the ECO-NautiNET project team to adjust the requirement priorities of the proposed systems identified as a result of the general discussions and focus group sessions.

In order to develop the electronic platform for the operation of the Network, a user's needs analysis was conducted, for the development of the platform's functionalities, which will be compliant to the real user's needs. For each user type, a specific questionnaire was prepared, in order to extract the specifications of the electronic platform that will be useful for each type of user.

Collecting the views of stakeholders on their needs from the platform and desired functionalities was organized as illustrated by figure.

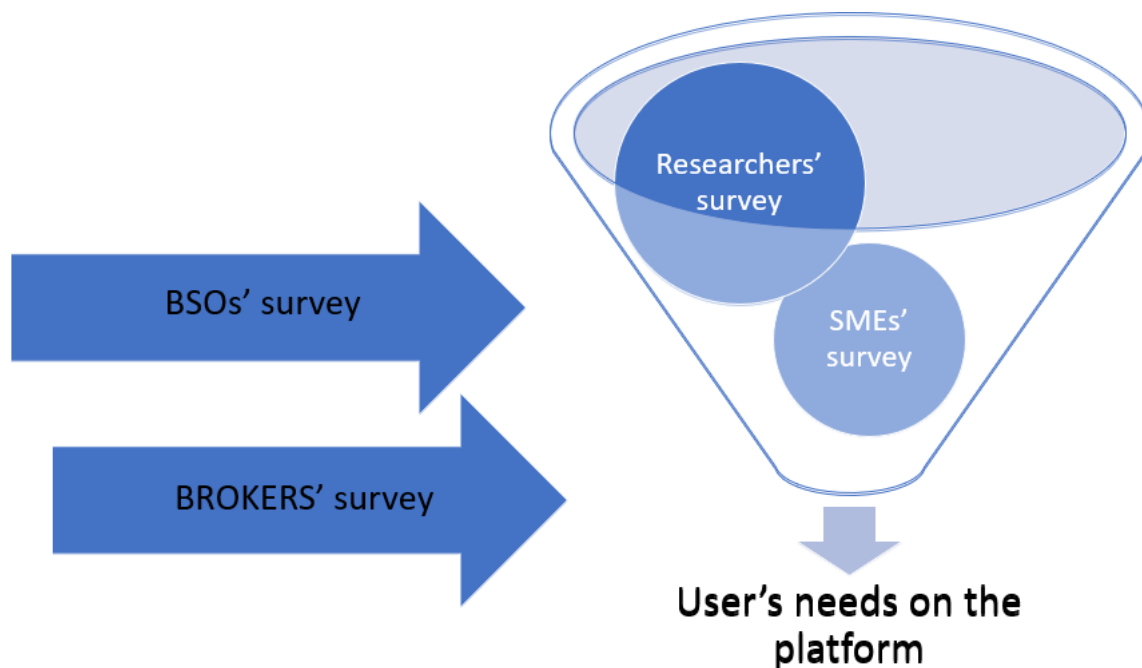


Figure 1 Method of user's needs collection

3. Transnational Working Groups

The ECO-NautiNET project foreseen the activity entitled “Transnational working groups enterprises/research”. The objective of the specific activity was for all partners to involve (at local level) strategic stakeholders and take part to the transnational working groups aiming at collecting the needs and expectations on the platform’s objectives and tools.

Two Transnational Working Groups were organised within the frames of the ECO-NautiNET project, one in Dubrovnik on the 20th and 21st of November 2018 with the participation of County Chamber of PULA, Regional Development of Koper, UNIZAG FSB, City of Dubrovnik Development Agency and several SMEs. The specific TWG was organized by the City of Dubrovnik Development Agency.

The second TWG was realized in Patras on the 27th and 28th of November 2018 with the participation of the Chamber of Achaia, UNIZAG FSB, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Tirana by skype and CAN Ravenna also by skype and several SMEs, Research Organisations, Universities, Local and Regional Policy Makers and Business Support Organisations. The specific TWG was organised by the Chamber of Achaia.

During these events, the main issue for discussion was the functionality of the platform and the scientific personnel of FSB UNIZAG operated as moderator to identify specific user needs for the platform of the project.

3.1 Transnational Working Group in Dubrovnik

The meeting started with official welcome from Mrs. Marijana Puljas, project manager of EcoNautiNET project, on behalf of the DURA.

List of participants:

- ADRIANA MARKOVIĆ, representing the County Chamber of PULA,
- ŽELJKO CETINA, representative the County Chamber of PULA,
- ALEN MODRUŠAN, representative of OG Victus d.o.o. - SME
- MARINA KIRAC, representative of Vito Nautica d.o.o. - SME
- PETRA ŠUŠAK, representative of Pyxis d.o.o. - SME
- MITJA PETEK, representative of Regional Development of Koper,
- ALBERTO MANZINI, representative of CENTER PIRAN d.o.o. - SME
- ANTUN PFEIFER, Associate at Power Engineering and Energy Management Chair, Department of Energy, Power and Environmental Engineering, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture, University of Zagreb,
- HRVOJE STANČIN, Associate at Power Engineering and Energy Management Chair, Department of Energy, Power and Environmental Engineering, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture, University of Zagreb,
- HRVOJE MIKULČIĆ, Postdoctoral researcher at Power Engineering and Energy Management Chair, Department of Energy, Power and Environmental Engineering, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture, University of Zagreb.
- MARIJANA PULJAS, representative of City of Dubrovnik Development Agency, DURA
- IVAN SALTARIĆ, representative of City of Dubrovnik Development Agency, DURA
- LJUBO NIKOLIĆ, representative of LAUS CC d.o.o. - SME
- VEDRAN VUKAS DŽAIĆ, representative of INTUIT d.o.o. - SME

After the introductions and greetings, Mr. ANTUN PFEIFER, proceeded by mentioning that the minutes of the TWG meeting will be prepared and elaborated by DURA and Faculty of Mechanical

Engineering and Naval Architecture, University of Zagreb, with the contribution of all present partners.

In continuation, Mr. Pfeifer proceeded by making a reference to the agenda of the TWG meeting, the issues and the tasks to be analyzed by each responsible partner.

Most specifically, and according to the schedule foreseen, during the meeting issues regarding initially overview of questionnaire responses, innovations and BAT collection will be developed and discussed, review of MoU will be performed with feedback from present representatives of SMEs and platform presentation will be performed in the continuation of the session on the second day, presenting tools and functionalities currently implemented and the feedback previously collected regarding all proposed tools.



Figure 2 Partners from Slovenia and Croatia meet the local SMEs

The first topic of the meeting was the presentation of questionnaire responses gathered prepared by UNIZAG FSB. Responses gathered so far on questionnaires for SMEs, Researchers and BSOs were presented and elaborated to the stakeholders, without further comments from their side. Regarding the Best available technologies collection, stakeholders are interested in short and simple information, emphasizing why it is the best available and what would be the benefit for users.



Figure 3 UNIZAG FSB presenting results of the user's needs questionnaire

First day of meeting was concluded with a short overview of the Memorandum of Understanding, as an entry document for all users of the platform. Discussion evolved around the legitimacy check, with proposal from the SMEs to involve VAT number check and check if the user is legal representative of the company they are presenting to the platform or not.



Figure 4 Presentation of the Interreg MED PELAGOS project's platform

Second day was opened with the presentation from the UNIZAG FSB, showing the current state of the platform and available functionalities. Before the presentation of the ECO-NautiNET web platform in development, Mr. HRVOJE MIKULČIĆ presented the currently operating cluster and web site of the Interreg MED PELAGOS project, which is similar to ECO-NautiNET in aspects of creating a network of stakeholders in the MED area, gathered around the Blue energy and possible cooperation to increase the transnational activity of innovative clusters and networks of key sectors connected to it. Suggestions from the SMEs for the functionalities that should be implemented on the platform include:

- For all companies to have a choice to fast communicate between cities (and countries) in case of emergency regarding ship reparation or maintenance
- To have a direct number of person in company on our web platform (Ship repair, divers, rental companies, etc.)
- To have an option to write a recommendation for company they met in our web platform (SME's consider important to have someone trustworthy)
- Possibility for registered companies to see on-line status of brokers and choose one they want to communicate
- Possibility to have more often chat with brokers and other consultants via Skype or other video call applications

They believe they will have benefit from it, if they have enough information in short period of time and gathered all in one place. Also, they are ready to recommend ECO-NautiNET web platform to other associates in order for platform to grow and develop, because they will have benefit from it.

In this short period of time, they explained what are the largest issues bothering them in daily business and what are best solutions for them. Also, they concluded that local working groups should meet more often, for more discussions and resolutions in the future in order to push forward the development of web platform.

3.2 Transnational Working Group in Patras

The first day, 27 November Mr. Kostas Giotopoulos representing the Chamber of Achaia - lead partner of the ECO-NautiNET project - welcomed the project partners and they began the works of the workshop as it is described in the agenda (see attached presentations) while firstly introduced themselves and their organizations.

List of partners :

- **KOSTAS GIOTOPOULOS**, representing the Development Company of Chamber of Achaia
- **KONSTANTINOS GRITSONIS**, representing the Development Company of Chamber of Achaia
- **ANTUN PFEIFER**, Associate at Power Engineering and Energy Management Chair, Department of Energy, Power and Environmental Engineering, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture, University of Zagreb
- **PERO PREBEG**, Asst. Prof., PhD - Head of the Laboratory for Marine Structures, Chair for Ship Structure Design at the Department of Naval Architecture and Ocean Engineering
- **ROBERT BEDOIĆ**, mag. eng. chemical engineering and technology, Associate at Power Engineering and Energy Management Chair, Department of Energy, Power and Environmental Engineering, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture, University of Zagreb
- **BUJAR MERSINI**, Administrator of Hudson Albanian Group on behalf of CCIT

After the introductions and greetings, Mr. **KOSTAS GIOTOPOULOS**, pointed out that Chamber of Achaia aims to support all local stakeholders of blue community sector in collaboration with the Chamber of Ileia and Chamber of Aitolokarnania. The overall objective is to valorize the ECO-

NautiNET Project to organize a Blue SMEs Community in Achaia and in Region of Western Greece respectively.



Figure 5 Mr Giotopoulos representative of Chamber of Achaia welcomed

Both Mr. **GIOTOPOULOS** and Mr. **KRITSONIS**, C.E.O. of the Development Company of Chamber of Achaia, mentioned that the Chamber of Achaia wants to support the SME's of nautical sector even after the end of the project.

Mr. Giotopoulos presented the actions that the Chamber of Achaia has realized in order to communicate the ECO-NautiNET project to local SME's and Stakeholders, aiming to involve them at the beginning of the project.

The Chamber of Achaia organised a communication event, within the frames of the PATRAS Innovation Quest exhibition, in Patras in April 2018 and invited all related SMEs to be part of the project. At least 27 SMEs and a Research organisation expressed their interest and two meetings were realised with them in July 2018. Also during the training seminar that was performed few days earlier, the SMEs expressed their interest to be part of the project, to organise a local network of SMEs and use the tools of the ECO-NautiNET project.

Mr. Giotopoulos presented all the main results of the continuous discussions that the Chamber had with the SMEs and especially the organizational structure of the local network and its main objectives. There was a discussion with all the other members in order to identify whether the Greek proposal could fit the needs of the other countries and whether this result could be a transnational output of the project.

All partners present there, agreed that this could be discussed in the next project meeting.

Afterwards a Skype Connection was performed with mrs. Maria Rosa Bordini (CNA Italy). Mrs. Bordini agreed with the key findings of the Greek procedure and she agreed that we need to discuss it in the next project meeting. Mrs. Bordini raised the issue to discuss the operation of the Platform, which will be the main tool for the establishment of the ECO-NautiNET network, will provide access

to all the tools and will facilitate the collaboration and synergies with SMEs.

An attempt to connect with Albanian partner – CCIT was performed without success.

Afterwards the speech was given to Mr. **ANTUN PFEIFER**, who presented an Overview of questionnaire responses gathered prepared by UNIZAG FSB. He also presented the Platform tools and functionalities (**see attached presentations**)

About the Review of MOU it was said that it must be open and flexible and receive solid benefit from the participation and what the project offers to them.

Mr. **Pero Prebeg**, continued afterwards in order to present the part related to Best Available Technologies and Innovation to Market issues in order to reach a common understanding between the project and innovation producers and demonstrate to them the gains and profits for researchers to join the ECO-NautiNET Network.

The two main issues raised are:

- within the network researchers will be able to publish their research profiles and mature research results and
- researchers will be associated with the profiles of SMEs in order to join forces and collaborate in common issues, problems and projects.

- **SECOND PART OF 1st DAYS WORKSHOP WITH PARTICIPATION OF STAKEHOLDERS**



Figure 6 Partners from Greece, Croatia and Albania meet the local SMEs

During the second part of the works, after a coffee break, more than 20 local stakeholders of maritime sector accepted the invitation to attend the works of the meeting and to give their feedback to the “ECO-Nautinet” organizers.

There were representatives from Academia (University of Patras, Hellenic Open University and Technological Educational Institute), Research Organisations (Industrial Systems Institute and

Computer Technology Institute), Chambers of Commerce (Aitolokarnania and Achaia), Municipality of Patras, Region of Western Greece and SMEs who are willing to become members of the Network.

The main issues that were raised from stakeholders were related to gains and profits from their participation to the Network. They all expressed their positive interest, but they said that the objectives, the activities and the responsibilities of the members should be clear. Also, a timeplan is required in order to organize their time and responsibilities in order to keep up with project activities.

Some of the most important issues raised are :

- The platform should provide best practices and success stories of participation,
- A special section regarding funding and growing of SMEs related to the project is also needed
- In the future the network will determine if it will end up with a legal identity such as association,
- The platform should give the possibility to see the profile of other members and to gain experience, to facilitate the co-operation between SME's and researchers,
- The network should allow its local members to meet and discuss local issues and problems of the Blue Sector such as the lack of infrastructure

Also, Mr. **ROBOLAS** from Chamber of Aitolokarnania asked for best practices and interaction between Chambers in order to capitalise the ECO-NautiNET experience to other areas.

ACTIONS MUST BE TAKEN

An important action is to establish a specific timetable and goals. It was proposed to organize regular meetings with SMEs, to decide the local network objectives, participate in April 2019 Patras IQ event exhibition, and present to the public, to local / regional stakeholders and policy makers the network and its objectives.

The network should have the possibility to organize b2b events of local SMEs with international members of the ECO-NautiNET and give feedback to the University of Zagreb regarding the functionality of the Platform and its operation.

With respect to the platform, the participants mentioned that terms and conditions of the platform should be clear, to give the possibility to have electronic registration, to keep in mind GDPR issues and have the functionality of Public and Private section of the Platform.



Figure 7 Snapshot of the meeting with the local SMEs

When focusing the discussion on best available technologies (BAT's) to be presented on the platform, stakeholders stipulated that the interest of SME's is the goal and that those should be mature technologies, which are in use, but not by the marine sector. Inspirational stories are also called for in order to raise interest.

It is possible that BAT's should be organized in thematic groups, making it easier to find those technologies which are of interest for SME's.

It is noted that SME's are not used to going to Universities and research institutions for aid, so more promotion is needed, while Academic capacity is huge in ADRION area, but not put to work enough. Also, funding and Intellectual Property Rights were discussed, as a consequence of real needs of the users, which was investigated through Questionnaires (distributed on multiple occasions before the event).

In order to secure the transparency of data and prevent misuse on the platform, it was also discussed that the VAT number and other data will be collected by the brokers to verify companies which approach and sign-in on platform.

Complete list of users will be available for all and help will be available through both Tutors and Brokers (later on). The creation of platform is done through co-shaping with collaborating SMEs.

Expectations from the platform:

- Interaction
- Participation in events and workshops advertised through platform
- Funding missions to other countries
- Engagement of users

Strategy to unlock potential was discussed as well. Driving force (active members) should be utilized by the BSOs to facilitate self-organizing. Specific time plan with specific goals is needed.

The question which was left for the end of discussion was “Do we expect too much?”. In order to achieve the results, success stories related to this network will be needed to promote the project goals and present them to wider audience. This includes individual success stories (innovations), stories about connecting people and so on.

After the discussion between ECO-NautiNET project and Regional Stakeholders mr., Giotopoulos informed that the Region of Western Greece has invited the Lead Partner to present the project in next assembly of the Regions Committee named “Alliance for Entrepreneurship and Development in Western Greece”.

After the conclusion remarks all project partners thanked the regional stakeholders for their active participation and the 1st day ended.

4. Questionnaires Report

In this chapter, the results of user's needs questionnaires, prepared by UNIZAG FSB and reviewed by all partners, who distributed them in their local working groups and transnational working groups, are presented. The following chapters give the overview of the questions and answers from each of the user groups.

4.1 Report from SMEs Questionnaires

The larger group of users are, of course, the SMEs, with overall 99 unique responses. Questions were organized in order to both, cover the functionalities which users would expect on the platform, but also their preferences regarding the partnership with research institutions.

The questions, together with statistics on answers received, are presented in following figures.

Your location:

99 responses

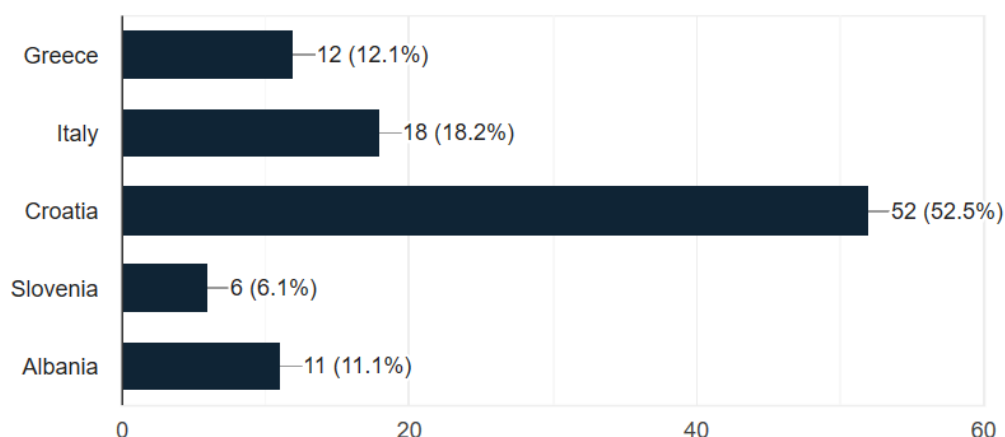


Figure 8 Location of the SMEs

Majority of SMEs responding to the questionnaire were from Croatia, which is logical, since 3 of the ECO-NautiNET partners are stationed in Croatia.

Your main activity:

99 responses

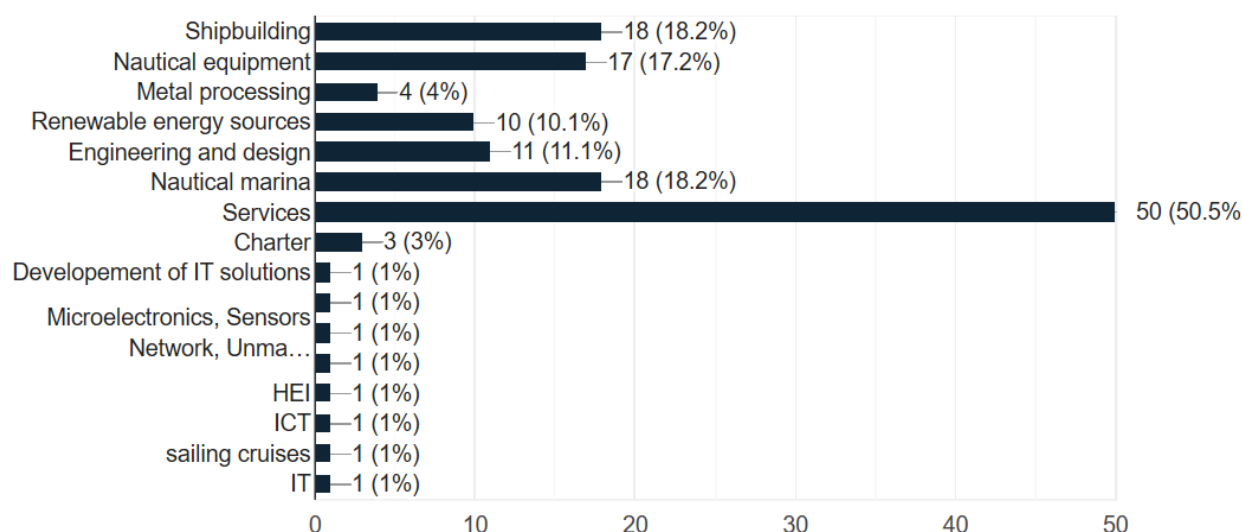


Figure 9 Sectors of main activity among SMEs

It is encouraging that there are many stakeholders (multiple choice was allowed) who are involved in shipbuilding, equipment, materials processing and engineering, although majority of the SMEs also deal with services as their field of work. This is logical, due to large tourism sector in all of the countries involved.

What is the minimal technology readiness level (TRL) of research institution innovation that you would be interesting for you to collaborate?

99 responses

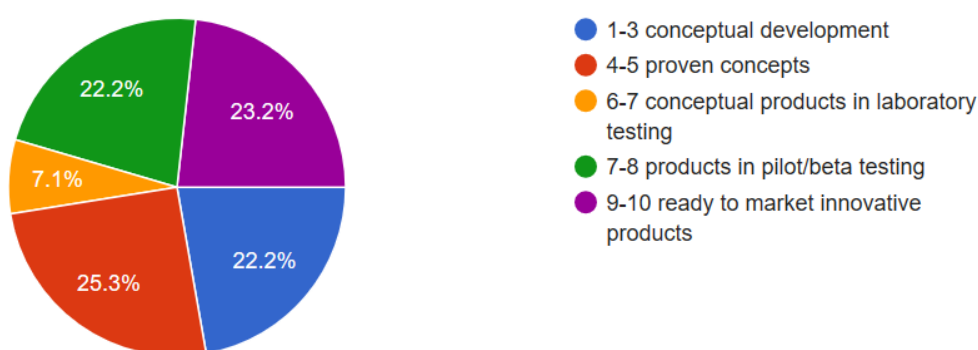


Figure 10 TRL level which SMEs find acceptable

This question was of importance from the network building point of view, since it is important to know the preferences of SMEs regarding the stage of development of potential innovative concepts offered by research institutions. Many of them do not have “ready to market” innovative products to offer, but have innovative concepts at some technology readiness level. In order to find the

right matching strategy, this question aimed to extract the information about minimal TRL level acceptable for the SMEs.

What source of funding for collaboration on the further development of research institution innovation you find acceptable?

99 responses

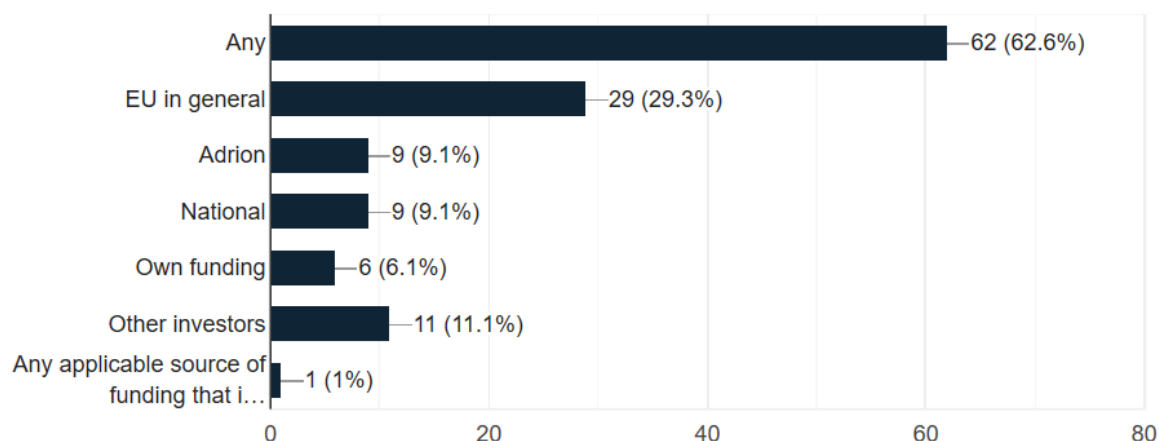


Figure 11 Sources of funding that are interesting for SMEs

Since help with finding the right funding opportunities is also an action which will be organized on the platform, this question investigates the preferences of SMEs and their level of information about programmes of the EU funds.

What is the estimated maximal time frame in which you could commit your company to collaborate on development of research institution?

99 responses

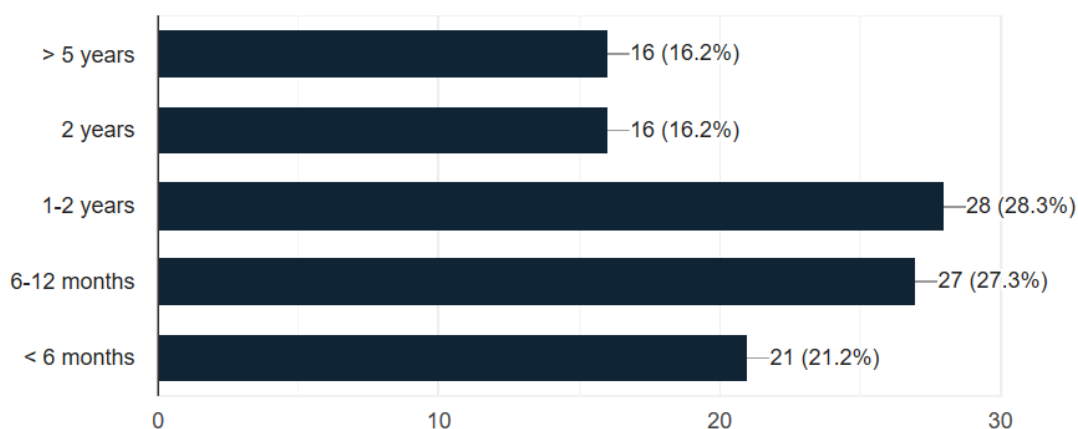


Figure 12 Time frame of collaboration for SMEs

This question is also relevant from the networking and broker actions perspective. SMEs and researchers have different window of time in view when approaching potential partnerships.

Appropriate partners need to have similar time frame in mind when starting their business agreements.

What is an estimated minimal level of innovation IPR rights that you expect to be transfer to your company if you finance the development of innovation from TRL level 6-7 (conceptual products proven in laboratory testing) to market ready solution?

98 responses

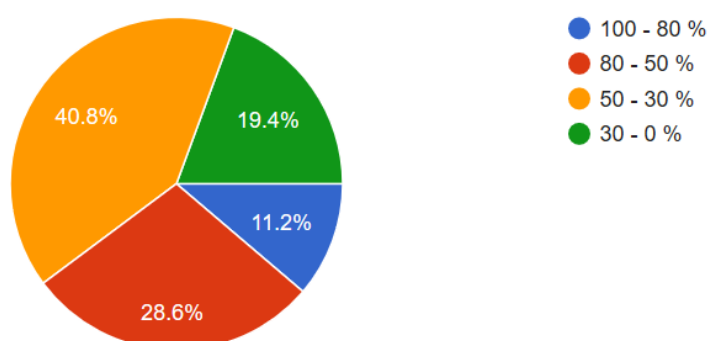


Figure 13 IPR rights share acceptable by SMEs

Another question concerning the networking. SMEs and research institutions have different conditions regarding the Intellectual property rights, so it is relevant to know the SME's view on how much of the rights to the future product they expect to receive in potential partnerships.

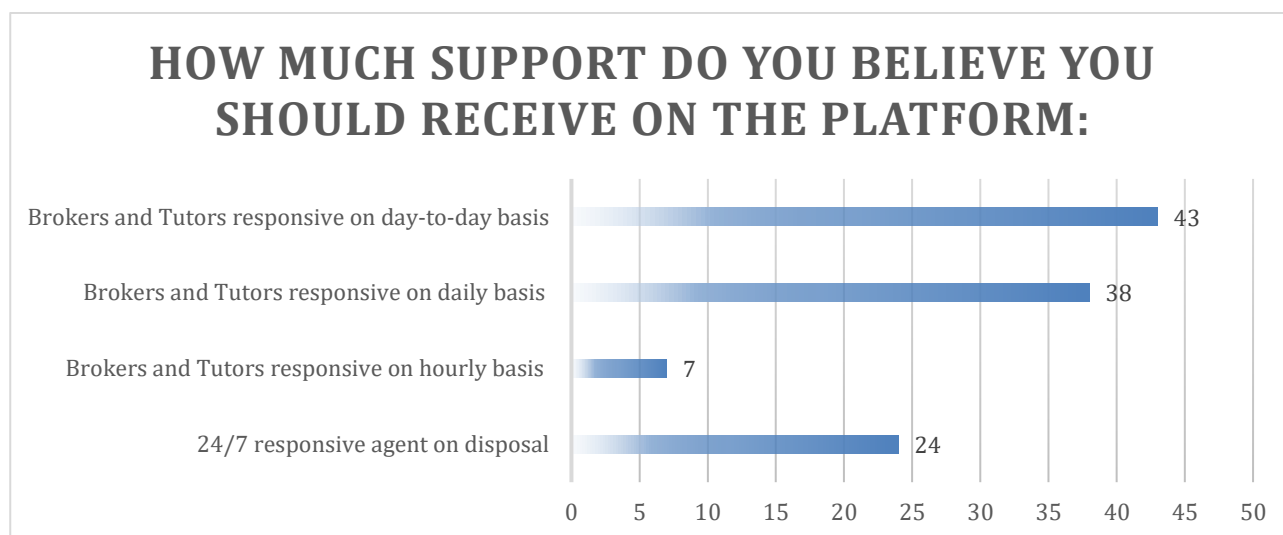


Figure 14 Level of support on the platform needed by SMEs

This question was relevant, since it will become important to know the expectations of the users as their number will grow during the life of the platform.

How many themes of interest (Yours or ones of potential partner) do You think should be defined as main search parameter in the user profile?

98 responses

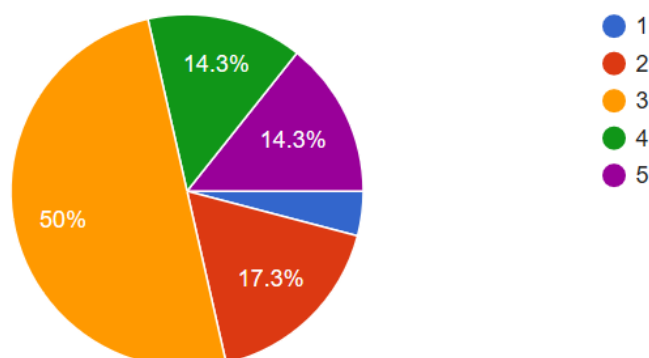


Figure 15 Number of interests that should be declared on the platform, according to SMEs

Number of interests is relevant for search mechanisms that will be implemented on the platform. Users will be able to choose a number of interests. If their interest was not suggested by the platform, they will be able to suggest their interest, which will remain for choice of all users which sign up after the user which initiated the new interest/field of work, if it is in the scope of the platform and the ECO-NautiNET network.

Do you require additional space provided on the server for Your dissemination material (information about Your products) ?

98 responses

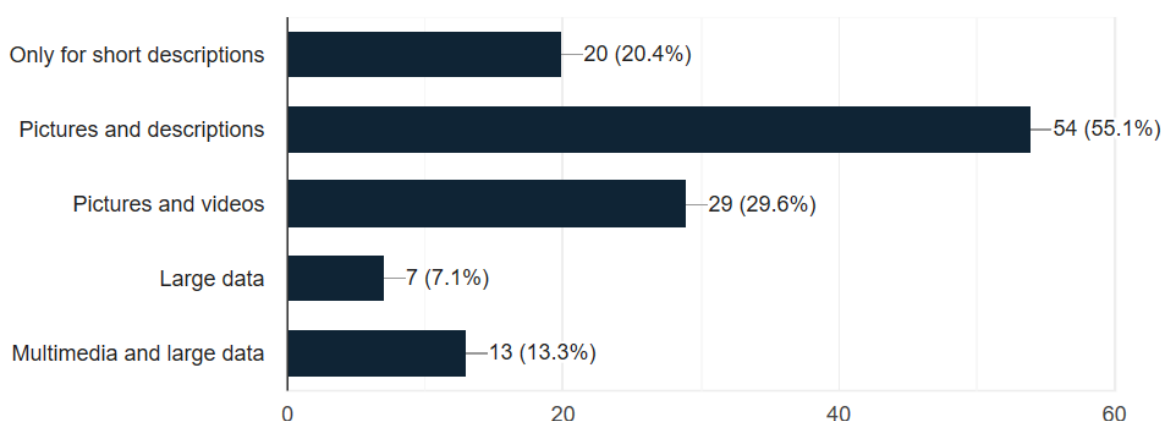


Figure 16 Space which SMEs require on the platform

In order to know what kind of limits in space a certain type of user will get during the operation of the platform, user's preferences were investigated.

WHICH LEVEL OF NOTIFICATIONS WOULD YOU PREFER?

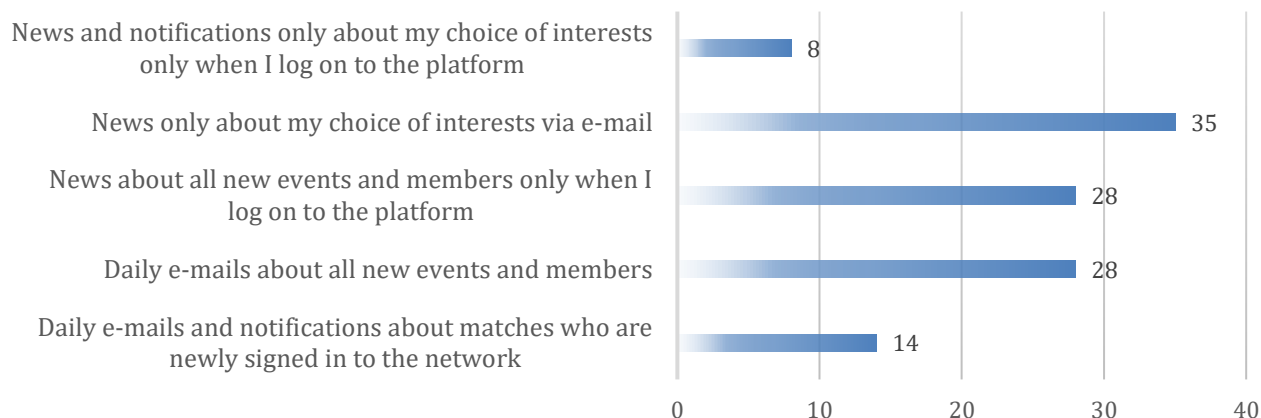


Figure 17 Level of notifications needed by SMEs

In order to know which kind of notifications will be offered to users, this question investigates their preferences on frequency and features they expect from the notifications on the platform.

Are You interested in internationalization of Your business through a help of a Broker?

98 responses

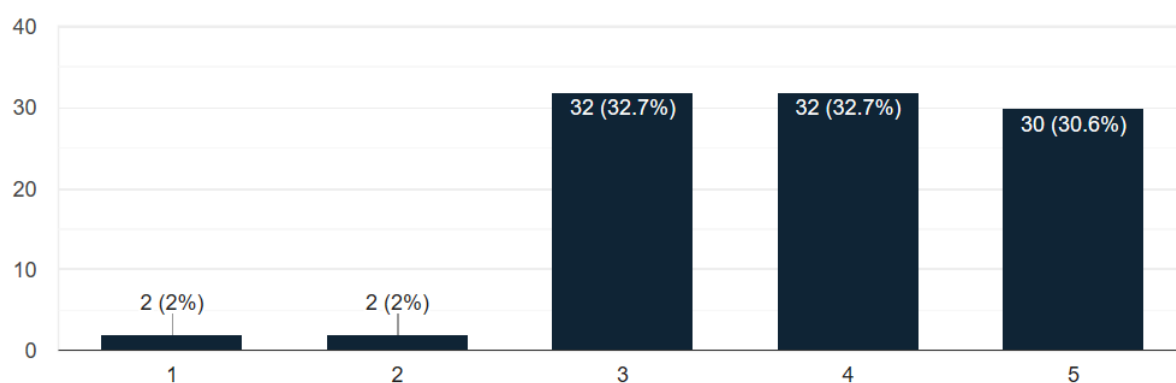


Figure 18 Need for Broker among the SMEs

Majority of responses justifies the role of the Broker on the platform, although this role might not yet be clear to the SMEs, since they did not have the opportunity to collaborate on the platform yet.

Do You believe a Tutor would be useful for You in first weeks after You first register on the platform?

99 responses

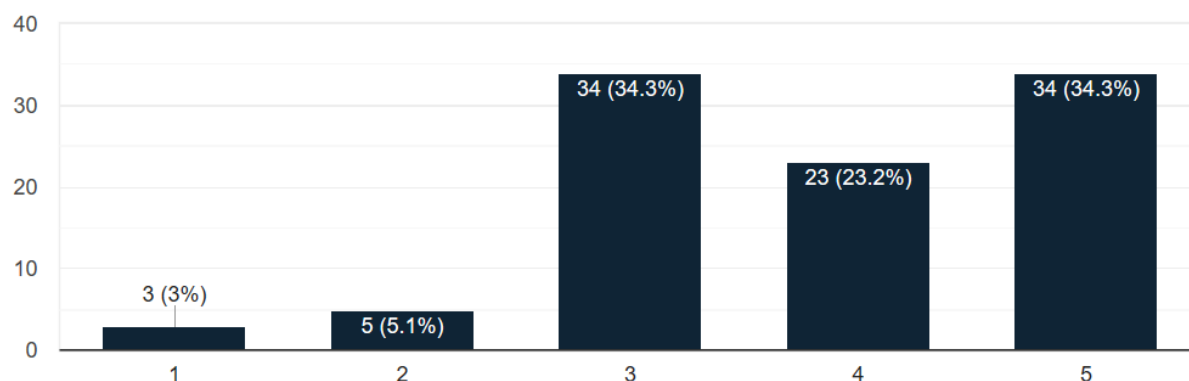


Figure 19 Need for Tutor among the SMEs

The result regarding the role of a Tutor on the platform is similar to those regarding a Broker, with slightly higher level of doubt from the SMEs.

WOULD YOU PREFER TO HAVE OPTIONS FOR DIFFERENT VISIBILITY OF YOUR DATA AND PROFILE?

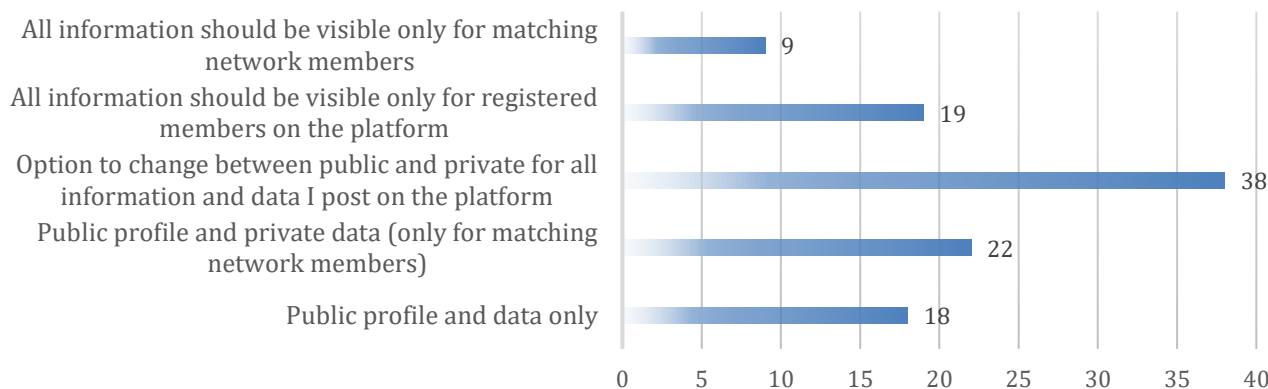


Figure 20 Data visibility among the SMEs

Visibility of the information on the platform is important having in mind the benefits of search for partnership on the platform and making this process as automated as possible. Difference between public and private data and information about some research or product will allow users to share more pre-defined information with one click, by accepting someone's request or allowing for a type of user to have access to the private information, or, at the end, sharing more information with users of the same interest.

Further on, for each of the functionalities proposed by UNIZAG FSB, SMEs were offered to prioritize them according to their needs. Some basic functionalities were offered below:

How important and useful do you find the following functionalities:

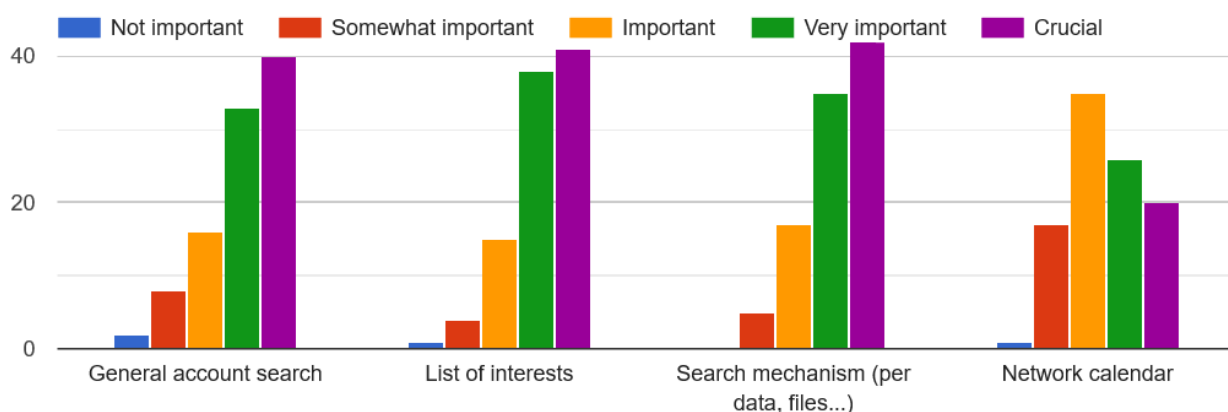


Figure 21 Functionalities (basic level)

Also, further functionalities, such as statistics, request match tool, messenger and mobile access were offered. Statistics were the least interesting for SMEs, so this functionality will be kept informative for general users, while it will be interactive for the partners and brokers.

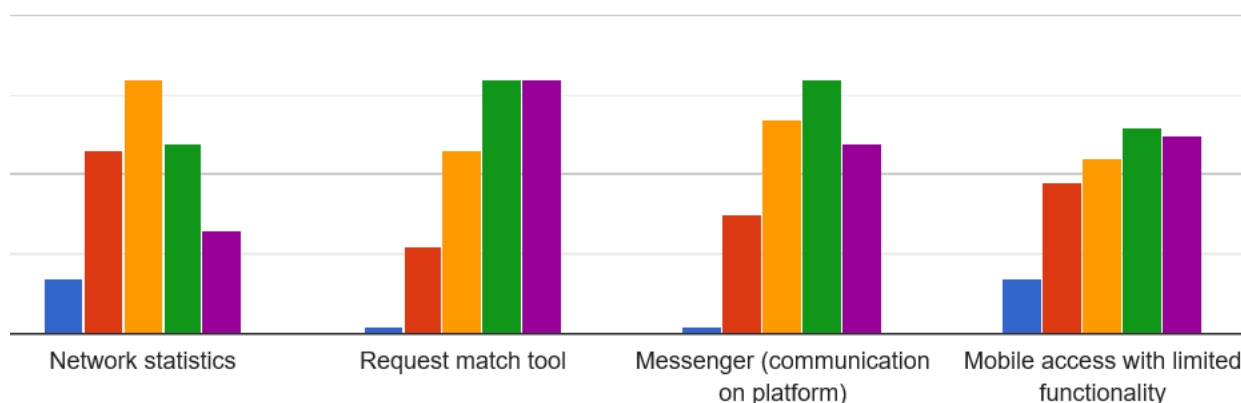


Figure 22 Functionalities (communication)

Regarding the possible mobile access or use of a mobile application, SMEs find it relevant if there will be full functionality of mobile access or if in case an application will be available.

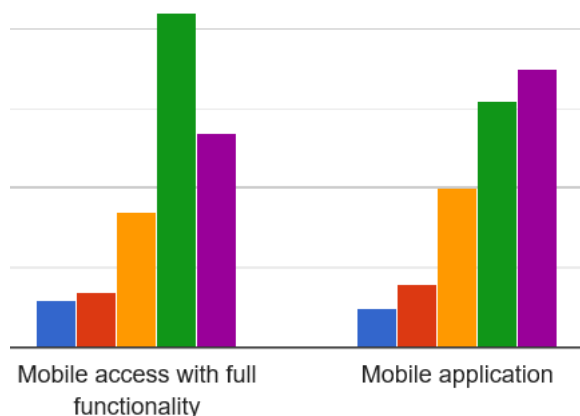


Figure 23 Functionalities (mobile)

Further suggestions focus on the fact that the platform was not published yet, so it is difficult to suggest anything creative.

Please list any suggestions which You find important for functionality of the platform, i.e. tools or options You would like to have available.

5 responses

Will know more when we try

Clear options and clear profile of the platform.

It would be great if we could get info regarding person in charge and it's email adress or telephone number so it could be easier to contact them.

It will be easier to see when the platform is up and running

Figure 24 Additional comments from SMEs

4.2 Report from Researchers Questionnaires

Your location:

31 responses

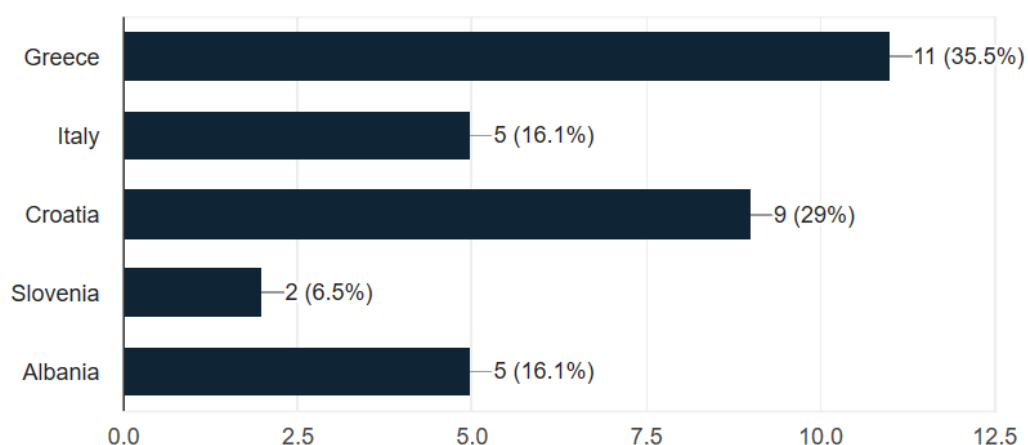


Figure 25 Location of Research institutions

Participation of researchers (RI) is balanced across all participating countries and satisfactory in numbers.

Your main activity:

31 responses

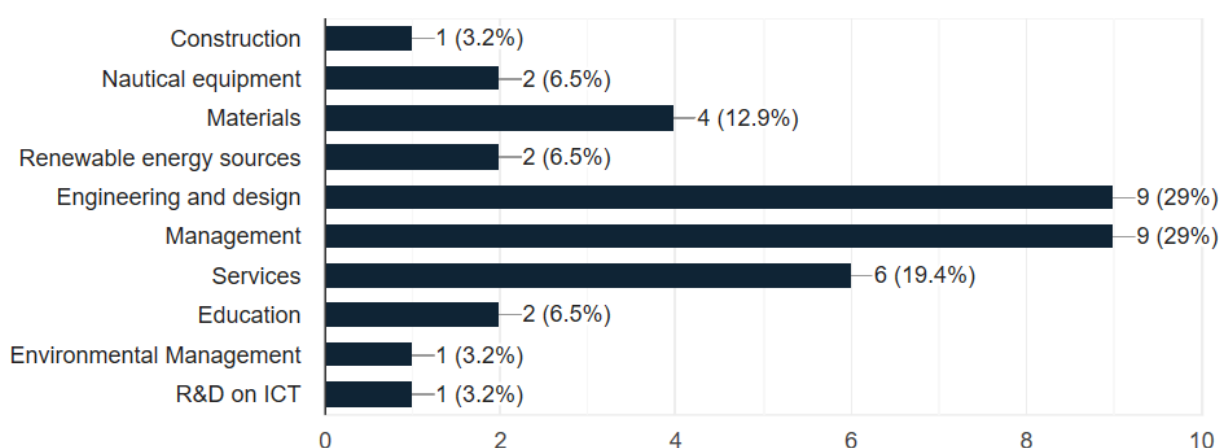


Figure 26 Fields of research for RI

Majority of researchers deals with problems of engineering and design, management and services, but also they have interest in materials science and nautical equipment.

Which technology readiness level would You be able to offer in Your innovative concepts on the platform?

31 responses

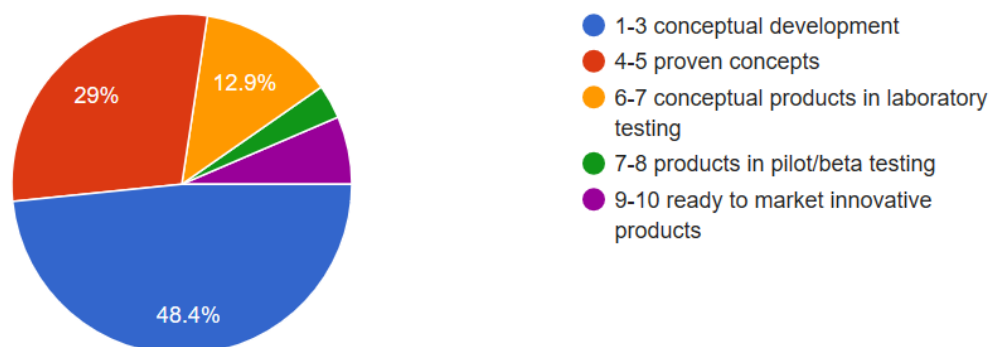


Figure 27 TRL available according to RI

Before the implementation of this action, it was expected that many of the researchers will have innovative concepts on TRL level lower than 6, which is confirmed by these results. This is due to lack of funding and laboratory equipment for development of prototypes and pilot projects, which is a very good window of opportunity for the network such as ECO-NautiNET, to contribute through network building and giving a platform for all stakeholders.

Are You interested in finding partners to apply for funding the maturing of Your conceptual research through funds that finance SME-Research partnerships?

31 responses

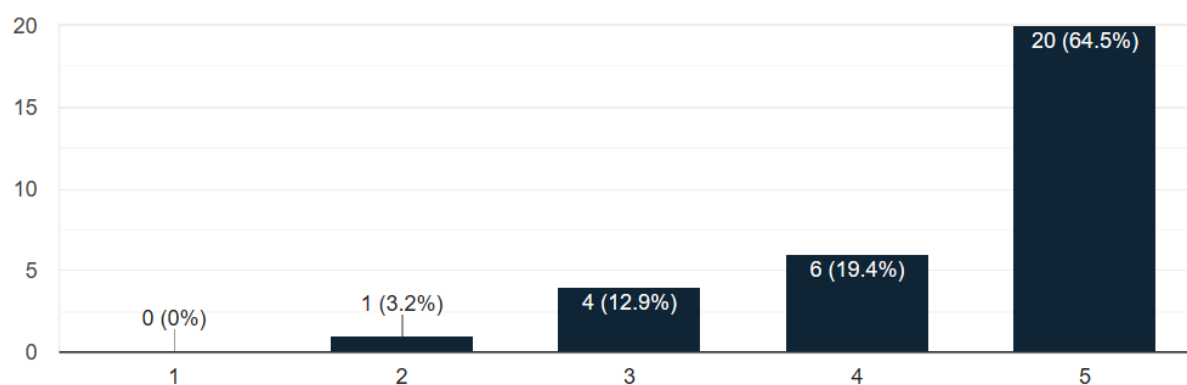


Figure 28 Interest in finding partners for innovation grants among the RI

Predominant answer shows high motivation and interest in funding in partnership with SME-s, which also gives a good window of opportunity for the ECO-NautiNET platform to facilitate such partnerships.

Who are the current owners of the innovation intellectual property rights (IPR)?

31 responses

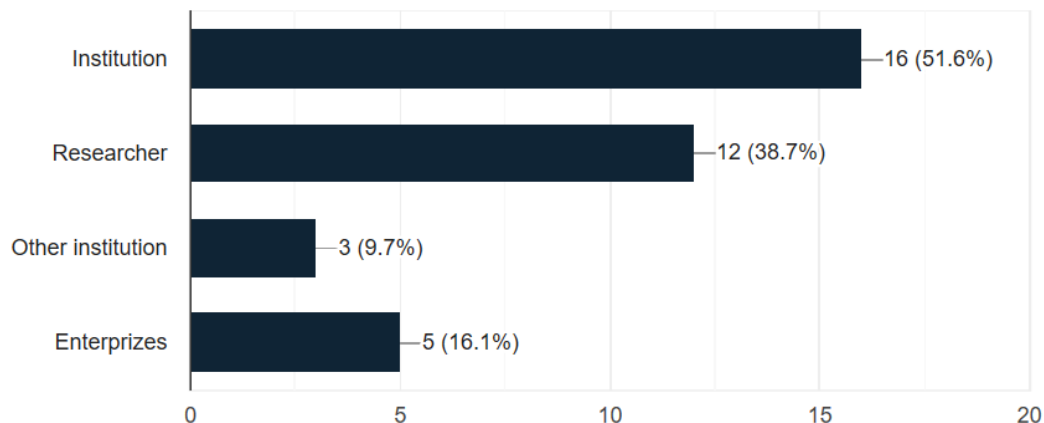


Figure 29 IPR rights ownership at the RI

This question, although not relevant from the platform functionalities point of view, is very important from the perspective of networking and future partnerships.

It is relevant to know which party is the owner of intellectual property rights, on the innovation presented by the research institution, since these institutions often stand at disadvantage in comparison to SMEs, where the owner is in most cases also the owner of intellectual property rights.

What is the preferable way for innovation IPR protection?

31 responses

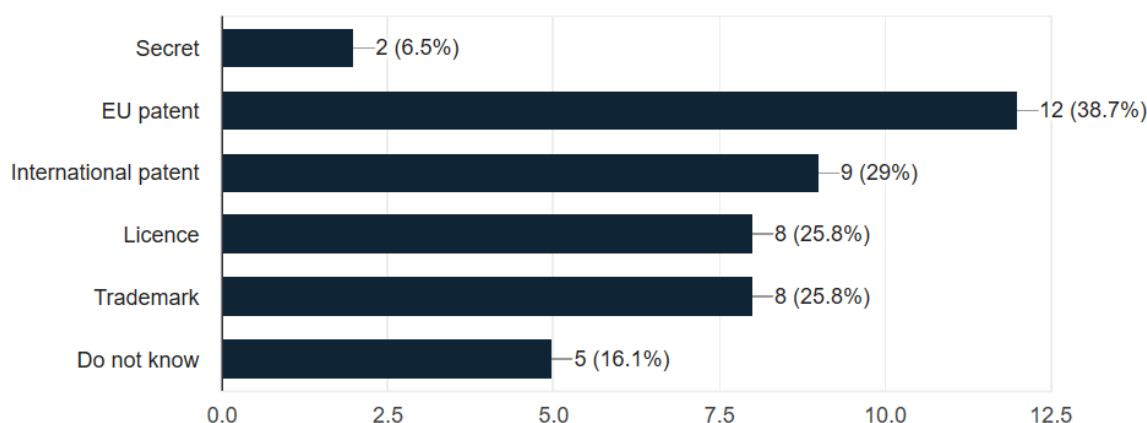


Figure 30 Innovation IPR protection preferences

Similar to the previous question, it is relevant to know how researchers would prefer to protect the IPR rights on their innovation. This is a good information for SMEs, concerning different procedures and approaches to partnership.

What is the estimated proportion of work time that you or your team can offer for the further development of innovation, if the financing is obtained?

31 responses

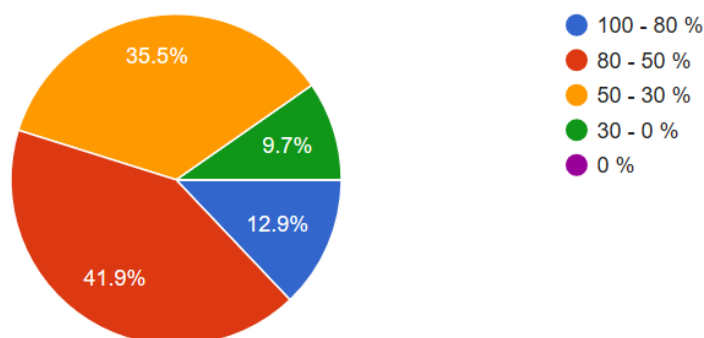


Figure 31 Work time available at the RI

Researchers time is often split into parts dedicated to teaching, research, collaboration and other work, so it is relevant for SMEs to know how much work is some researcher willing to dedicate to their collaboration.

What is the estimated rational time frame in which your innovation can be developed to the ready to market level?

31 responses

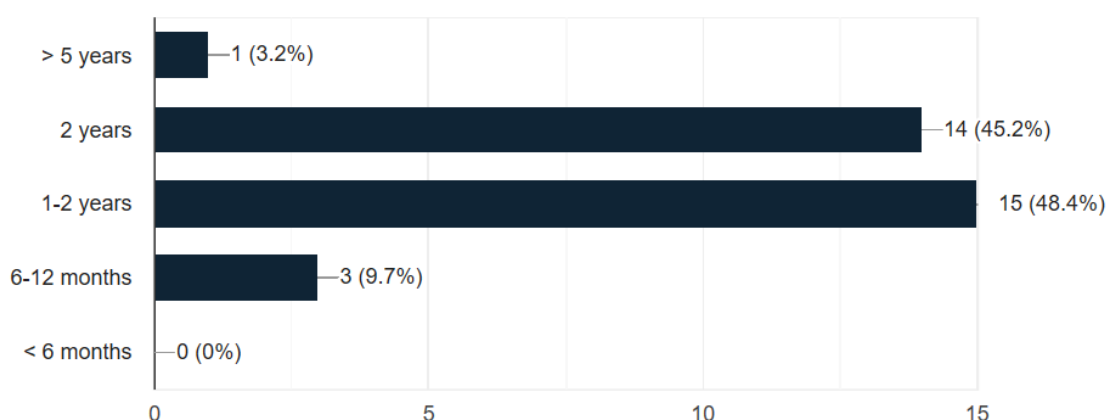


Figure 32 Time frame for developing the innovation among the RI

This information is also very relevant and represents common point of divergence between academia and entrepreneurship. Research usually takes more time then SMEs are willing to wait for the innovation to mature. So it is relevant to know how long do researchers believe it will take for their concept to become ready for market.

What source of funding for collaboration on the further development of research institution innovation you find acceptable?

31 responses

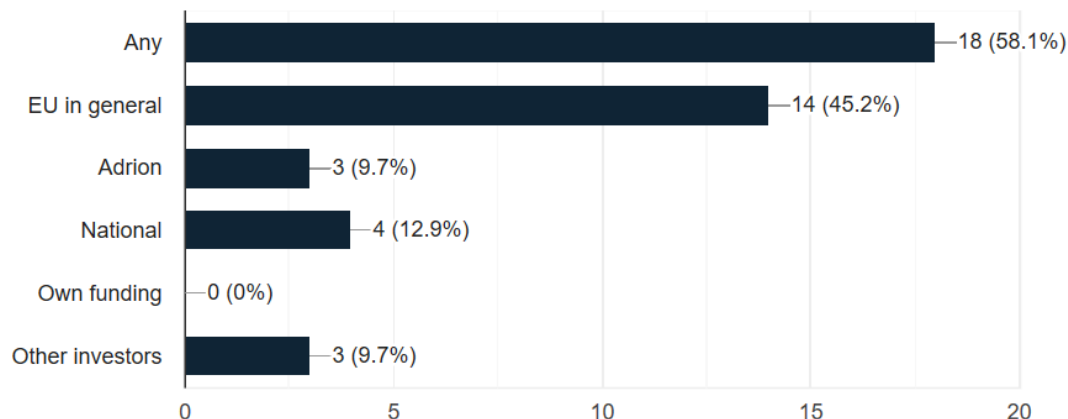


Figure 33 Sources of funding that are interesting to RI

Preferable source of funding will be a good indicator for brokers and BSOs, in order to inform all stakeholders on the platform about appropriate calls for funding and other opportunities, through publishing news and using the network calendar.

What is an estimated maximal level of innovation IPR rights that could be transferred to enterprise willing to finance increase of the current TRL to ready to market level?

31 responses

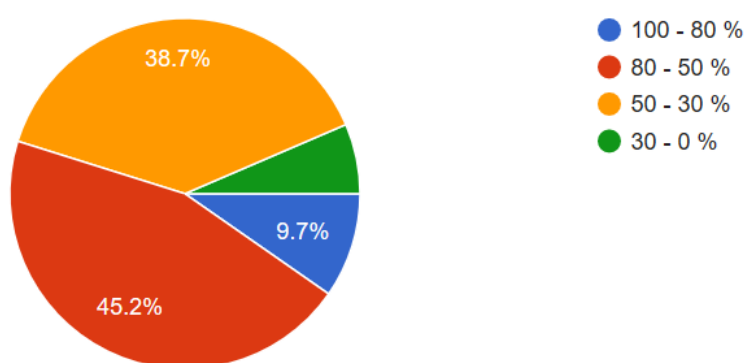


Figure 34 The level of IPR rights RI are willing to share with partners

This issue is also very important in finding the right match for researchers and SMEs and can be compared to Figure 13 in order to see how many SMEs would be a good match for the researchers in terms of sharing the property rights.

HOW MUCH SUPPORT DO YOU BELIEVE YOU SHOULD RECEIVE ON THE PLATFORM:

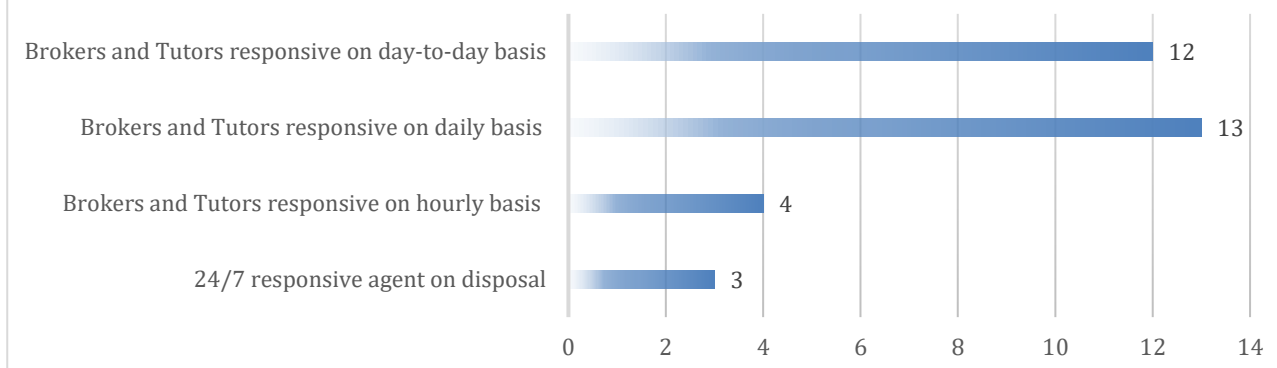


Figure 35 Support needed on the platform from RI perspective

This question is specifically relevant for brokers and tutors, in order to plan their work.

How many themes of interest (Yours or ones of potential partner) do You think should be defined as main search parameter in the user profile?

31 responses

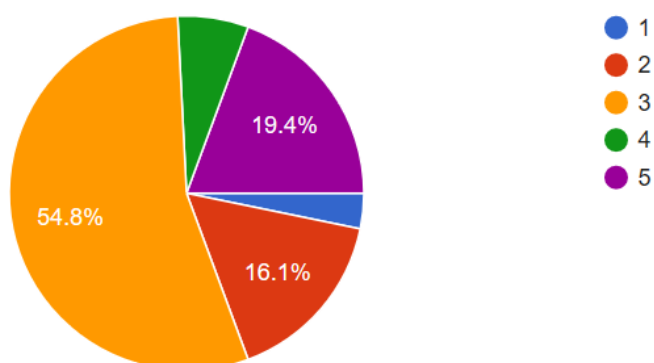


Figure 36 Number of fields of interest relevant for RI

A question is relevant for the search mechanism on the platform. Majority of responding researchers prefer to have 3 main interests stated.

Do you require additional space provided on the server for Your dissemination material (information about Your products) ?

31 responses

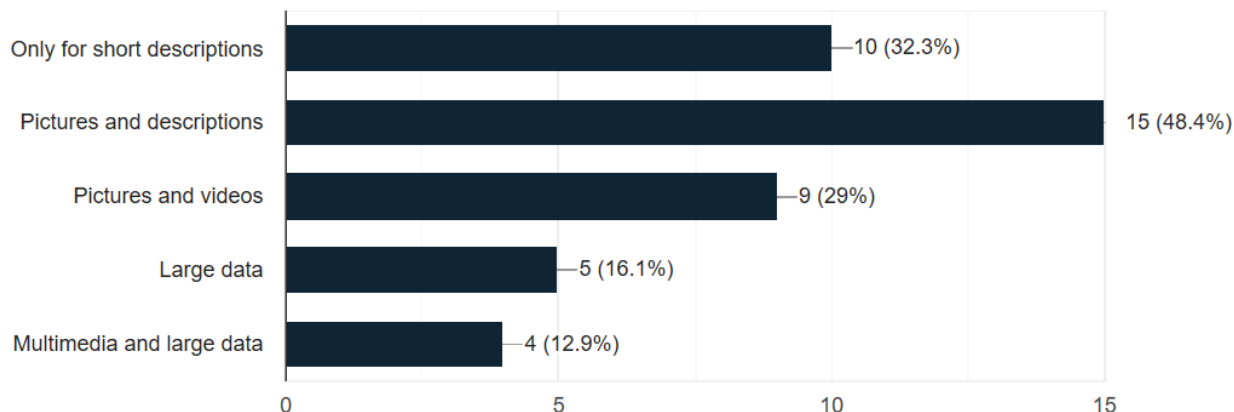


Figure 37 Platform space requirements by the RI

WHICH LEVEL OF NOTIFICATIONS WOULD YOU PREFER?

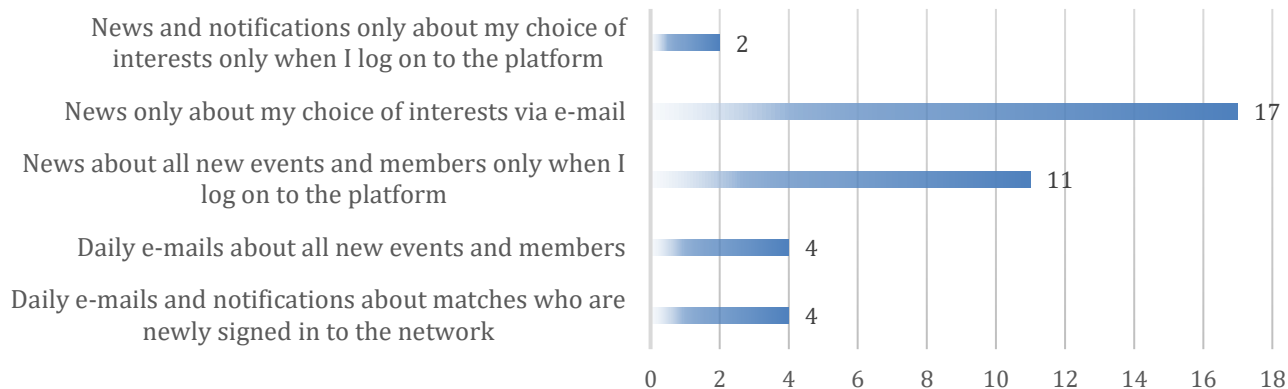


Figure 38 Level of notifications by the RI

Do You believe a Tutor would be useful for You in first weeks after You first register on the platform?

31 responses

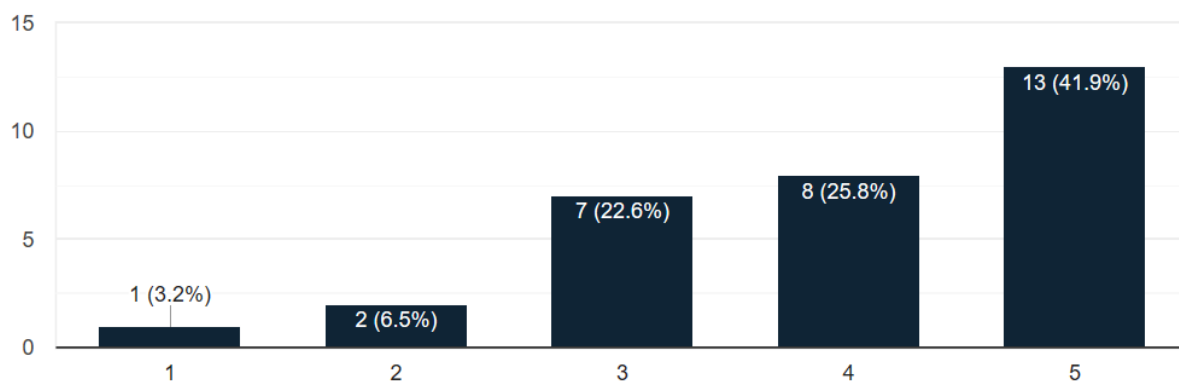


Figure 39 Need for Tutors by the RI

WOULD YOU PREFER TO HAVE OPTIONS FOR DIFFERENT VISIBILITY OF YOUR DATA AND PROFILE?

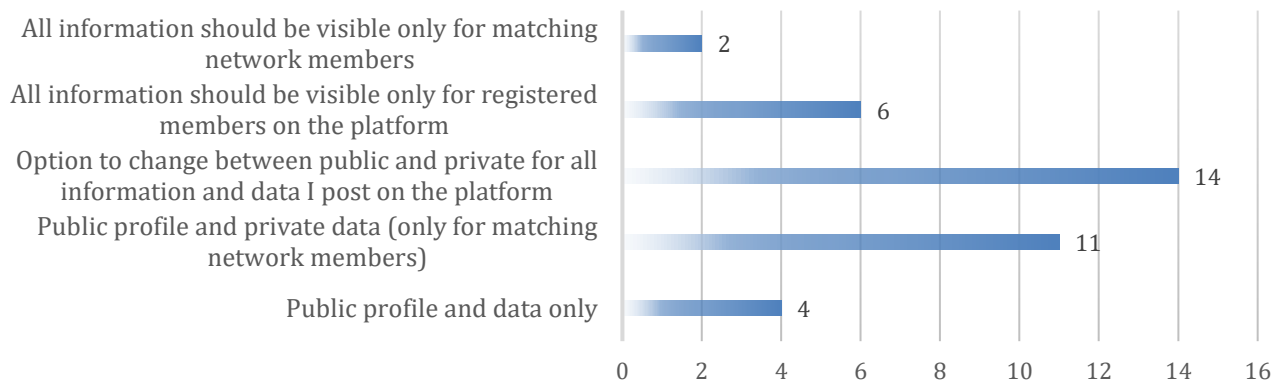


Figure 40 Data visibility for RI

How important and useful do you find the following functionalities:

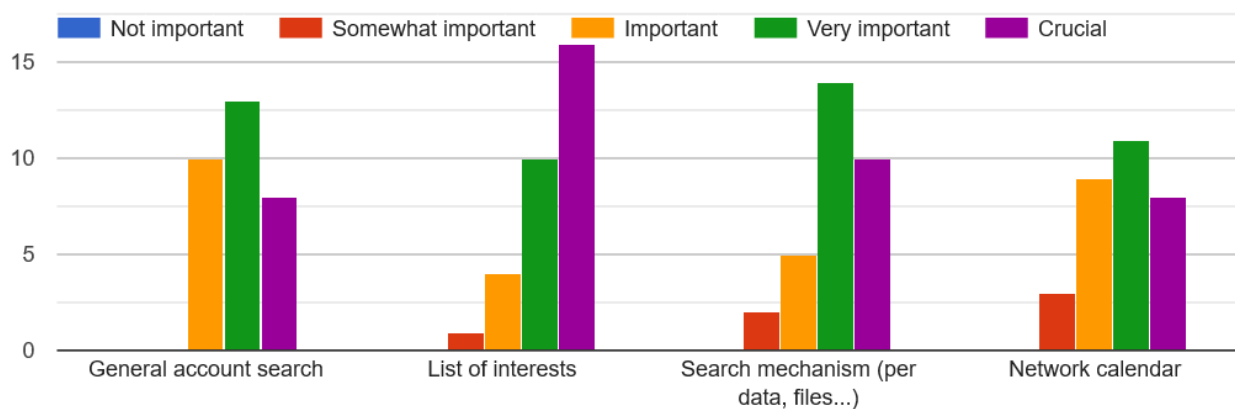


Figure 41 Functionalities (basic level)

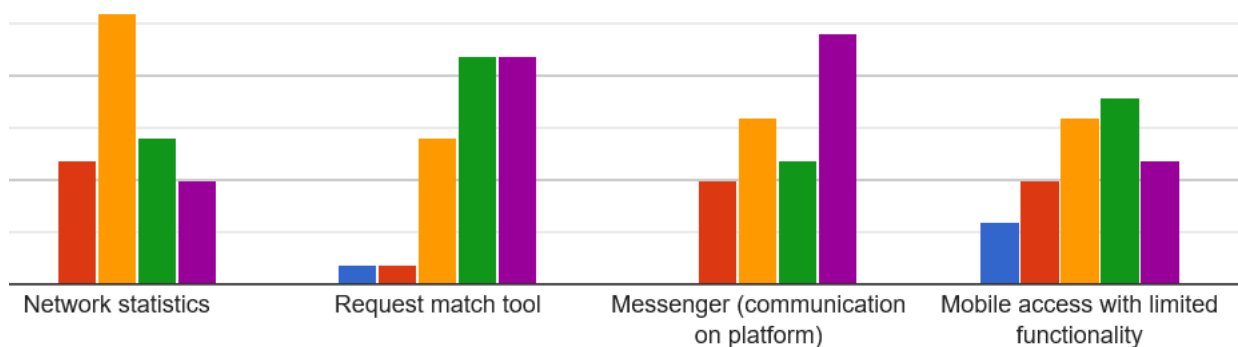


Figure 42 Functionalities (communication)

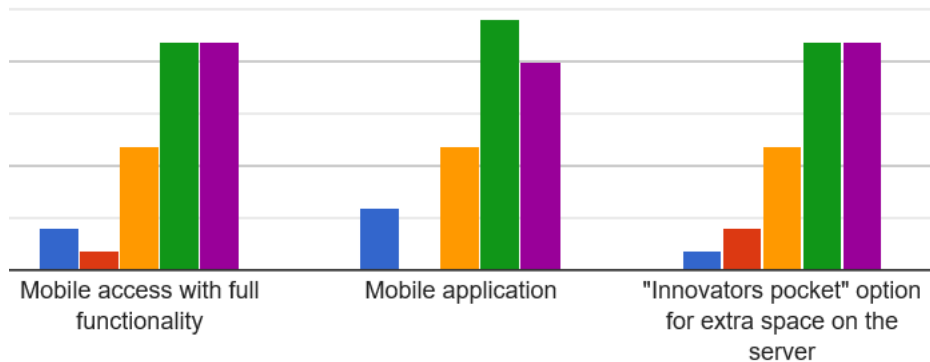


Figure 43 Functionalities (mobile and advanced)

Please list any suggestions which You find important for functionality of the platform, i.e. tools or options You would like to have available.

1 response

Group video chat on the messenger platform

Figure 44 Additional RI suggestions

4.3 Report from BSOs Questionnaires

Questions in survey for BSOs include typical questions regarding functionalities, with some additional options, which aim to enable and facilitate the work of BSOs on the platform and in ECO-NautiNET network, such as possibility to publish newsletters, news about events, to offer help to SMEs and facilitate their activities and applications to calls for funding, in particular in case of funding a partnership with researchers.

Your location:

35 responses

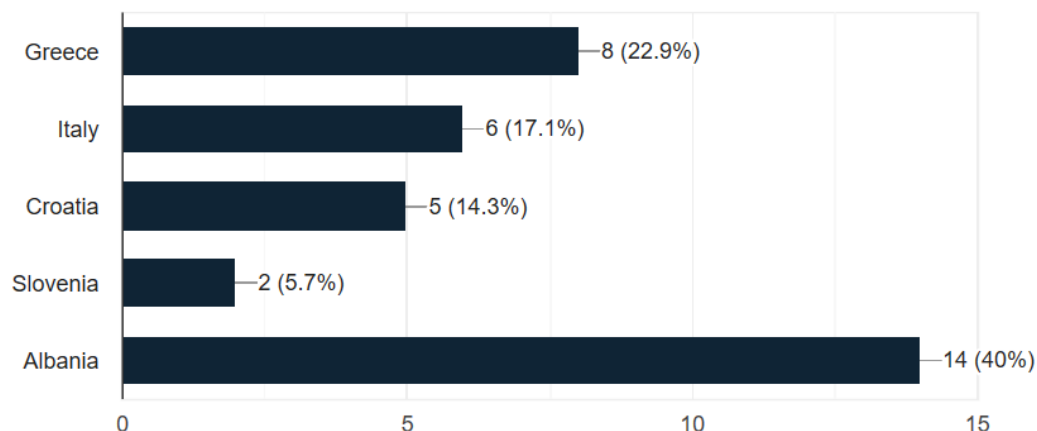


Figure 45 Location of BSOS

WHICH LEVEL OF NOTIFICATIONS WOULD YOU PREFER?

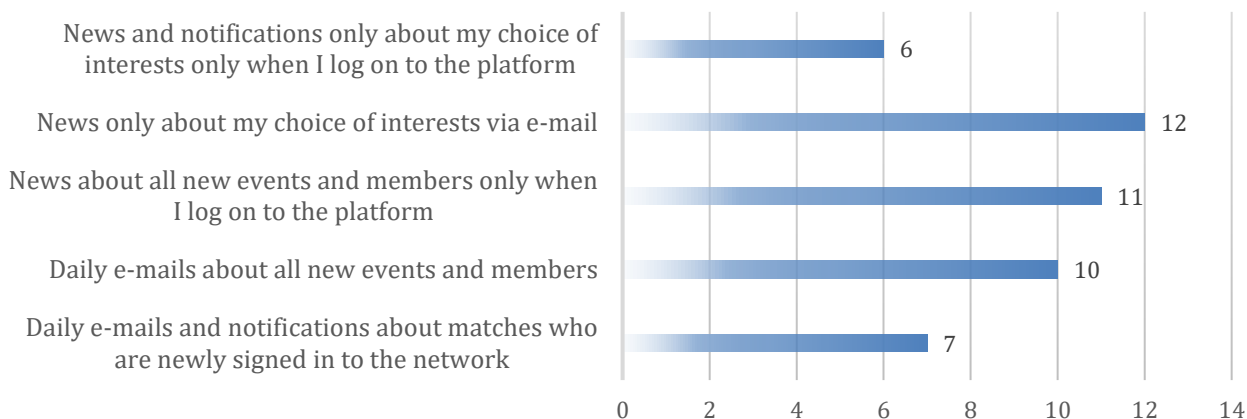


Figure 46 Notifications for BSOs

WOULD YOU PREFER TO HAVE OPTIONS FOR DIFFERENT VISIBILITY OF YOUR DATA AND PROFILE?

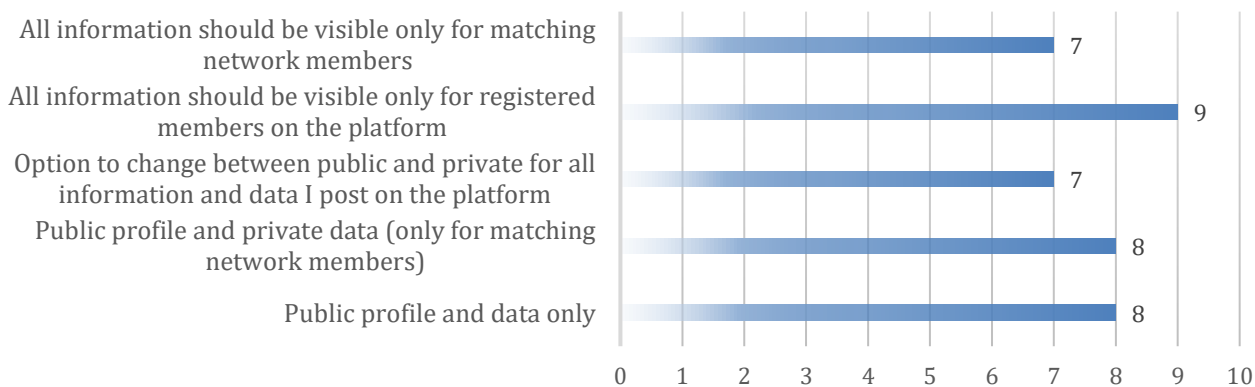


Figure 47 Data visibility for BSOs

Would You prefer to have special „info for BSO's“, including TRL limits and other parameters, which would inform you in more detail about interests of members from Your area?

35 responses

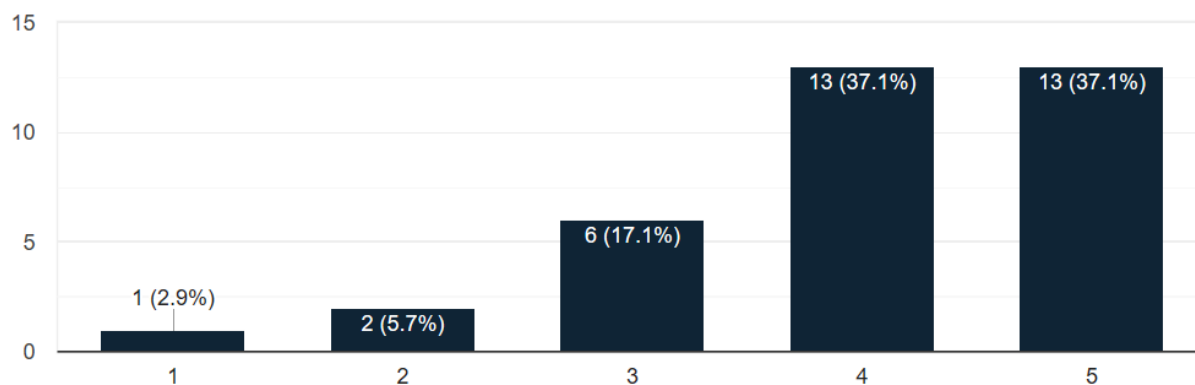


Figure 48 Info for BSOs option

Would You prefer to have specialized tool for drafting the newsletters or other way to communicate important information to the SMEs?

35 responses

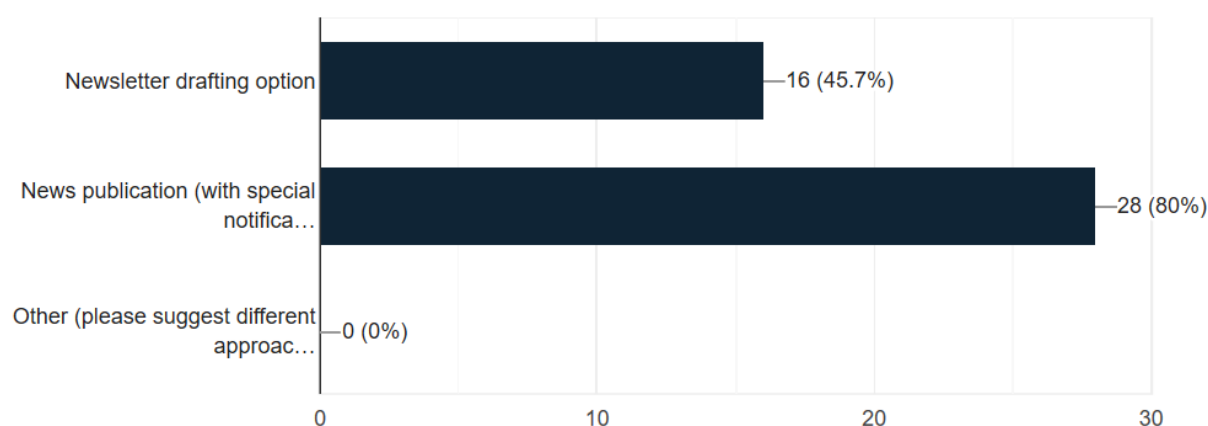


Figure 49 News and interactions options

Please list any suggestions which You find important for functionality of the platform, i.e. tools or options You would like to have available.

1 response

possibility of uploading fotos and images

Figure 50 BSOs suggestions

4.4 Report from Brokers Questionnaires

Your location:

7 responses

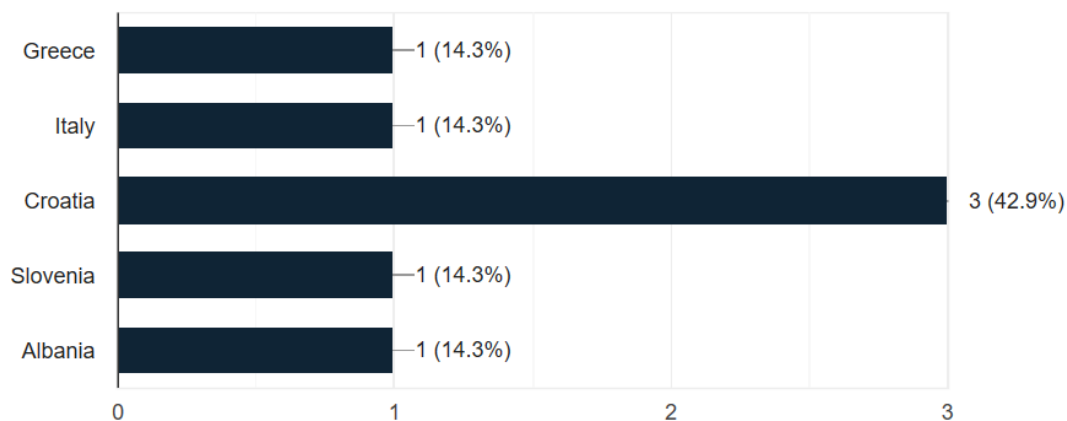


Figure 51 Brokers locations

Your main field of interest:

7 responses

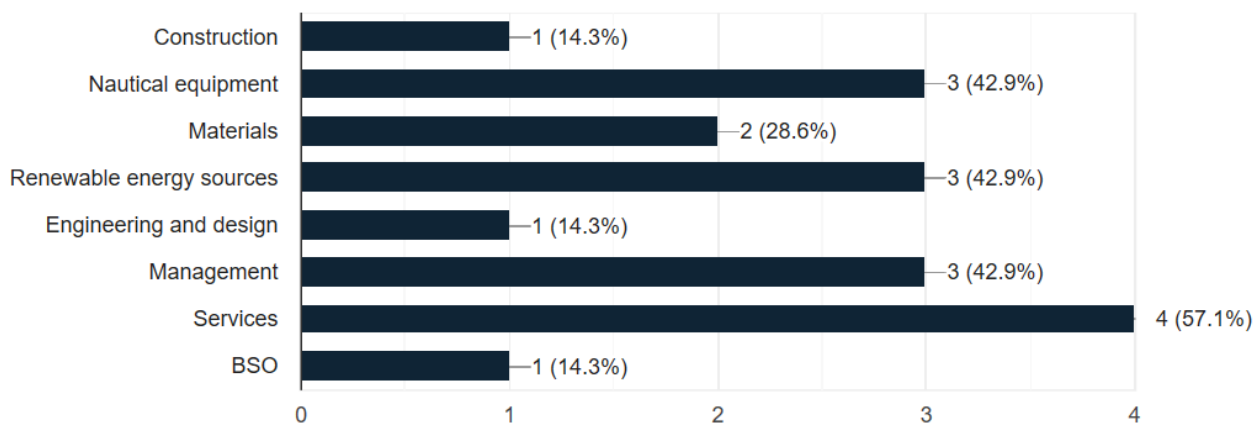


Figure 52 Broker's field of interest

How many themes of interest (Yours or ones of potential partner) do You think should be defined as main search parameter in the user profile?

7 responses

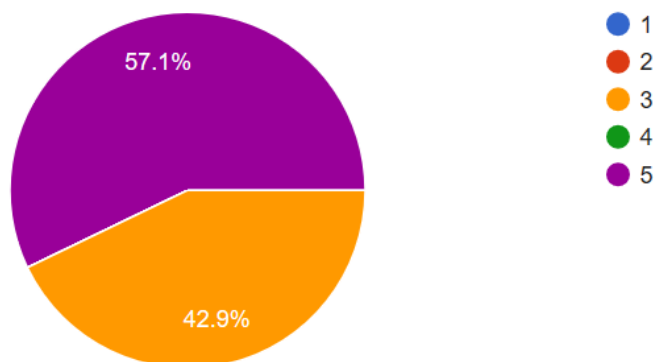


Figure 53 Number of themes according to Brokers

WHICH LEVEL OF NOTIFICATIONS WOULD YOU PREFER?

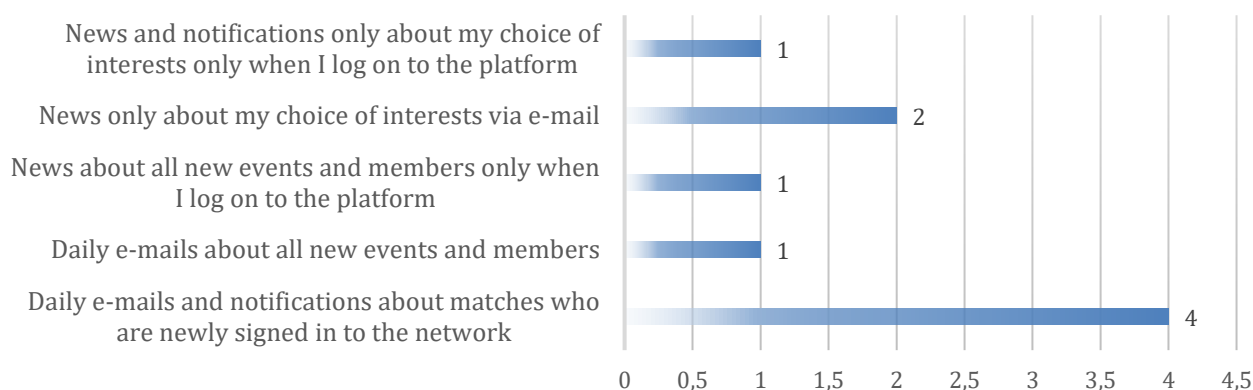


Figure 54 Level of notifications for Brokers

HOW WOULD YOU PREFER TO BE NOTIFIED ABOUT NEW „REQUEST MATCH“ IN YOUR AREA?

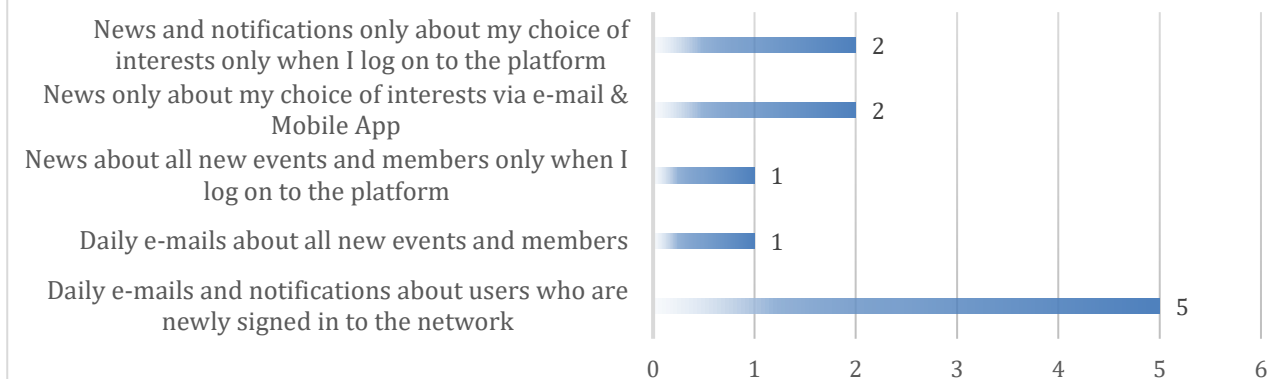


Figure 55 Request match notifications

Do You believe a special section of the platform should be available with advance statistics on users outside of Your area?

7 responses

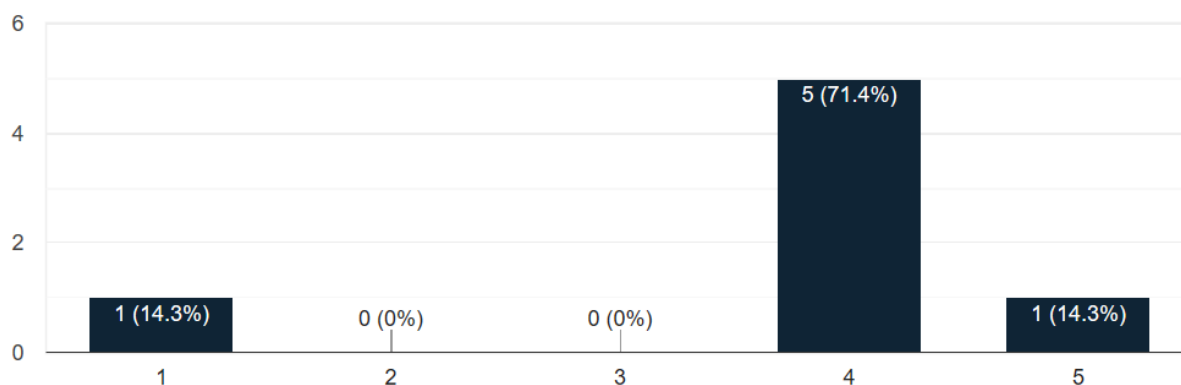


Figure 56 Special section with statistics

How important and useful do you find the following functionalities:

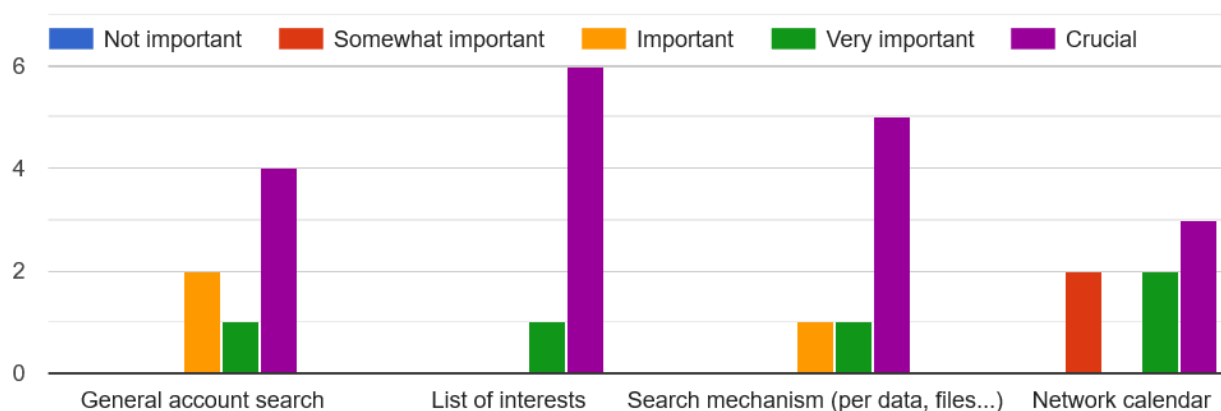


Figure 57 Functionalities (basic level)

Would you prefer to have special „info for brokers“, including TRL limits and other parameters, which users need to fill in before submission of „Request match“?

7 responses

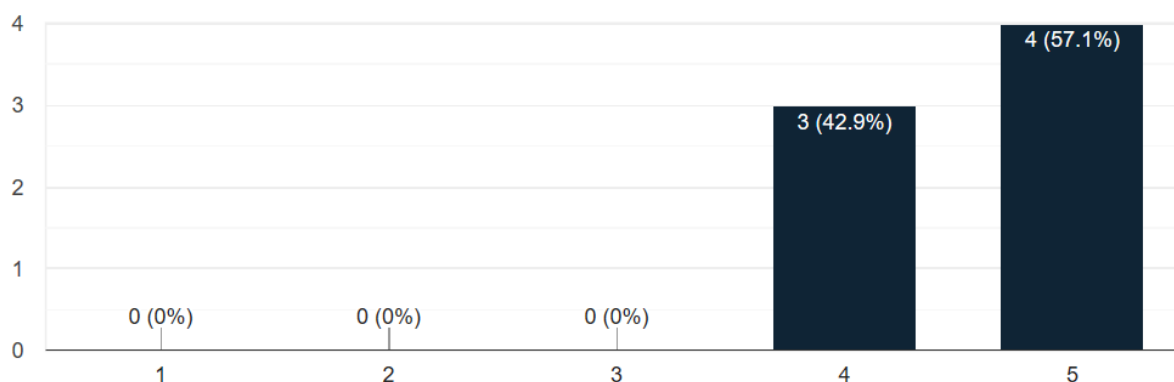


Figure 58 Info for brokers function

Please list any suggestions which You find important for functionality of the platform, i.e. tools or options You would like to have available.

5 responses

It would be interesting having a tool to phone directly the company (ex. skype call)
Social media (sharing option). Chat option for brokers - faster communication and on-site
user friendly, simple design
validation mechanism for new entries
Notifications of updates from all SMEs and RI

Figure 59 Suggestions regarding functionalities

Please list any suggestions regarding a tool needed for the follow-up of the matches You make (how would You approach the follow-up).

1 response

follow up matches should be on the top of the list, marked with different colour
--

Figure 60 Suggestions regarding the follow-up

During the Network Broker's training in Pula (24th of October 2018), there was a lot of discussion about the needed functionalities on the ECO-NautiNET platform between the brokers. In the following lines, general conclusions are listed in the following chapter, as minutes of these discussions.

Brokers were informed about present state of the platform, ideas and tools currently proposed by UNIZAG FSB and previously presented at the project meeting in Dubrovnik. Discussion was based on the questionnaires, which all brokers filled in after the initial presentation of the platform.

General search - some concern was expressed regarding the filters and the conclusion is that the search (both general search and search mechanism) should be kept as simple as possible.

Regarding the sign-ins of the new members, it is concluded that brokers from each country will be notified when new members from their area sign in for the first time and start creating basic profile. This is needed in order to assess if the new member is genuine and if their area of interest is in the scope of the platform/network. At the same time, the suggestion is that users should have the opportunity to choose the partner which will follow them as the Broker and help them, after initial help they will receive from the Tutor. In that way, it is always known who will answer the questions from each particular member.

The newly signed-in users will be „flagged“ by the brokers, signalling in that way that they are checking the new user's profile. Broker has maximum of 48 hours to verify the new user.

Suggestion was also that the info about users in the graphical interface of the platform is given in balloons (mouse movement over the object).

Symbols representing certain action need to be as clear as possible. Mouse-over balloons with explanations will be added.

Contact through the platform, instead of e-mail. Possible further enhancement would be the ability to call the contact directly, through Skype or otherwise (from the platform). This would include messenger on platform, so users can chat.

“Ask us question” option for the users. The Broker which should answer is defined by the user during the creation of their basic profile. This is to know who will receive the question which is asked by the particular user.

Info for Brokers should be obligatory for users which have toggled on the “Request match”.

Availability of Brokers will be on day-to-day basis.

News on the platform should be sharable on social networks. Each article should have social media links, also events and other content should be shareable.

Recommendation for the follow-up of the matching is that it should be done personally, though direct contact, phone call or similar, by the broker.

On sustainability of the platform:

Platform has materials, contacts and e-learning section, which all provide value for business support organizations (at least!), which have interest in their daily work to continue using the platform after the projects end. The next year of project implementation is a demonstration to all users, that the platform is a valuable virtual location from which they can learn and use the connections and materials. This is the time that the consortium has to prove this value to all users. After the project's end, only this proven value will keep the users on the platform, and, consequently, provide means for continuing operation. From the technical perspective, platform is stored on the UNIZAG FSB's server and will physically remain there after the projects end, as prescribed in the application form.

5. Final Set of User Needs

5.1 SMEs

- Equal share of SMEs accepts TRL levels 1-5 and 6-10 as interesting for cooperation.
- Majority of SMEs would dedicate less than 2 years to development of innovation.
- Majority of SMEs would be satisfied with platform support on 24-48 hours basis.
- Large majority of SMEs believe that at least 3 fields of interest should be declared by users on the platform.
- Majority of SMEs need space on the platform for pictures and descriptions of the company and products.
- SMEs are very diverse in their need for notifications, so different options have to be made available.
- SMEs need the option to change visibility between public and private for different data and materials they will publish on the platform.
- SMEs find basic level functionalities crucial for the platform operation (search mechanism, list of interests, general search), from the communication functions, most important is request match tool, while they also expressed the need for mobile application to be created

5.2 Researchers

- Majority of researcher's available concepts is bellow TRL level 5.
- Researchers have the same needs as SMEs regarding response time of platform support and number of relevant fields of interest that user should declare.
- Researchers require space mostly for descriptions and pictures, but some would also require space for videos.
- Researchers would mostly prefer notifications from the platform to be via e-mail about the topics of their choice, but some would also need notifications about news and new users when they log in.
- Researchers require options of changing visibility of their data between public and private, while some would limit visibility to some user groups.
- Researchers find list of interest, messenger, request match and mobile application to be most interesting functionalities, although all basic level functionalities are important to them.

5.3 Business support institutions

- BSOs have diverse opinion about notifications and data visibility.

5.4 Brokers

- Detailed discussion about the needs of the brokers is given in chapter 4.