

OUTPUT FACTSHEET

Project index number	CE0100383	Acronym	SMERF			
Output type ("x" to be included)	Strategy/ action plan		Pilot action		Solution	X
Output number (O.xx)	O2.2	Output title	SMERF Diagnosis Tool			
If the output target is > 1 in the AF, please specify the output(s) described in the factsheet						
Output delivery date	31.03.2026					
Project website	https://www.interreg-central.eu/projects/smerf/					

Summary description of the output

Please present the output by addressing the following topics.

Territorial challenges and needs in the regions specifically addressed by the output
(max. 700 characters)

Central European SMEs face significant challenges related to low adoption of digital technologies, circular economy practices and innovation-driven business models. Many lack managerial and technological capacities, as well as access to structured transformation support. At the same time, regional disparities limit knowledge transfer and innovation uptake. There is a strong need for practical, accessible tools enabling SMEs to assess their readiness and receive tailored, actionable guidance for digital, green and resilient transformation.

Main aim(s) of the output and how it contributes to tackle the identified challenge(s)

(max. 500 characters)

The main aim of the SMERF Diagnosis Tool (SDT) is to support SMEs in assessing their level of advancement across four transformation pillars and to generate tailored transformation scenarios. The tool addresses capacity gaps by providing structured self-assessment, actionable recommendations and access to knowledge resources, enabling SMEs to identify improvement areas and plan their transformation pathways in a systematic and accessible way.

Technical description of the output (e.g. scope, main features, innovative elements etc.)

(max. 1500 characters)

The SMERF Diagnosis Tool (SDT) is an online, open-access solution supporting SMEs in assessing their transformation readiness and identifying tailored improvement pathways across four pillars: Innovation Culture, Digital Manufacturing, Open Innovation & Sharing Economy, and Green & Circular Economy.

Scope:

The tool targets SMEs across Central Europe, providing a structured self-assessment combined with automated analysis and recommendations. It supports companies at different stages of development, enabling both initial diagnosis and more in-depth analysis of selected areas.

Main features:

The SDT consists of three components:

- (1) a self-assessment questionnaire with visual outputs (scores, charts),
- (2) an expert system that translates user responses into tailored recommendations using a traffic-light logic and predefined activity categories (training, mentoring, expert consultation),
- (3) a personalised transformation scenario supported by an Inspiration Knowledge Base providing relevant resources and guidance.

Innovative elements:

The tool integrates diagnostic, analytical and advisory functions in one digital solution. It directly maps user's responses to activities, enabling targeted recommendations addressing performance gaps. Its user-friendly design and automated scenario generation allow SMEs to independently assess and plan transformation actions.

Involvement of target groups during output development and/or implementation

(max. 700 characters)

Target groups, particularly SMEs, were actively involved in the development and validation of the SDT through a structured pilot testing process. The tool was tested in three phases (internal testing and two rounds with SMEs), involving over 180 companies across partner regions. SMEs provided feedback on usability, clarity and relevance of recommendations, while project partners supported testing, data collection and refinement. This iterative process ensured that the final tool reflects real user needs and business contexts.

Cooperation dimension of the output, i.e. joint development within the partnership and, if applicable, joint implementation (see output indicator definitions in chapter 1.3.3 and Annex 2 of the programme manual)

(max. 700 characters)

The SDT was jointly developed by all project partners through a transnational, iterative process combining expertise from different regions. Partners contributed to tool design, testing, evaluation and upgrade through coordinated activities (A2.1-A2.4). The development included joint pilot actions, shared feedback collection, and collective decision-making (e.g. voting and workshops on improvements), ensuring that the final solution reflects diverse regional needs and is applicable across Central Europe.

Results - expected change and lasting effects in the territories generated specifically by the output, its uptake by relevant organisations and benefits for target groups

(max. 1000 characters)

The SDT is expected to increase SMEs' awareness of their transformation needs and improve their capacity to adopt digital, green and innovation-driven practices. The tool supports more informed decision-making, facilitates strategic planning and enhances access to tailored support measures.

Testing results confirm high usefulness and acceptance - over 90% of SMEs found the tool valuable and actionable, and most would recommend it to others.

In the long term, the tool contributes to strengthening innovation capacity, accelerating transformation processes and reducing regional disparities by providing a scalable and accessible support instrument for SMEs and innovation intermediaries.

Ownership and durability of the output after the project end, considering financial and institutional support including, if applicable, maintenance

(max. 700 characters)

The SDT will remain available as an open, online tool maintained by the SMERF partnership. Institutional support from project partners (including HEIs and innovation intermediaries) will ensure its further use, dissemination and potential updates. Its durability will be ensured through a joint commitment formalised in the SMERF Memorandum of Understanding, Institutional support from project partners, including integration into their service offers, will ensure continued use and updates. Additional sustainability will be supported by adoption by external organisations (LOIs) and follow-up funding through synergies with regional and national programmes.

Transferability of the output to other territories, sectors or target groups and planned measures for supporting such transfer
 (max. 700 characters)

The SDT is highly transferable due to its modular design, digital format and methodological grounding. Based on the SMERF Strategy and Action Plan, including a defined assessment framework and measurement system, the tool can be easily adapted to new regions, sectors and target groups by extending pillars, features and content. Its flexibility allows integration with other support instruments and ecosystems. Transfer will be supported through dissemination, stakeholder engagement and cooperation with European networks and innovation intermediaries.

Related final deliverable(s) (Number(s) and title(s) to be included)	D.2.1.1 - Report on SMERF Diagnosis self-assessment functionality and expert system development; D.2.1.2 - Preliminary guidebook on how to use SMERF Diagnosis Tool; D.2.2.2 - Report on SMERF Diagnosis Tool testing pilot action; D.2.4.1 - Report on SMERF Diagnosis Tool upgrade;
Output web link (if applicable)	https://smerftool.eu/
GPS coordinates (if applicable)	