Midterm evaluation of Bulgarian participation in Digital Europe Programme

16th meeting Digital Europe Programme Committee
19 June 2025

#DigitalEUProgramme

PURPOSE OF EVALUATION

✓ To analyze the implementation in Bulgaria and first results

✓ To increase participation and success rate

Data collection consisted of document analyses, stakeholders feedback and information from 100 projects with 260 participants.

MAIN CHALLENGES

- ✓ Co-financing
- ✓ Lack of resources
- ✓ Finding partners

Main sources of information – Funding and Tenders, Digital Europe's website, Ministry of Transport and Communication's website

38.4 % of the Bulgarian organisations participating in the Digital Europe Programme and 36 % of the submitted proposals had received funds from the Digital Europe programme

Main obstacles:
✓the proposals align well with most of the objectives outlined in the calls. However, the description lacks the requisite depth to substantiate how these objectives will be achieved;

✓the implementation plan is not sound and of high quality;

✓unbalanced consortium;

✓the identified risks in the proposal are confined in scope;

✓the impact of the project is not clearly explained and lacks sufficient detail
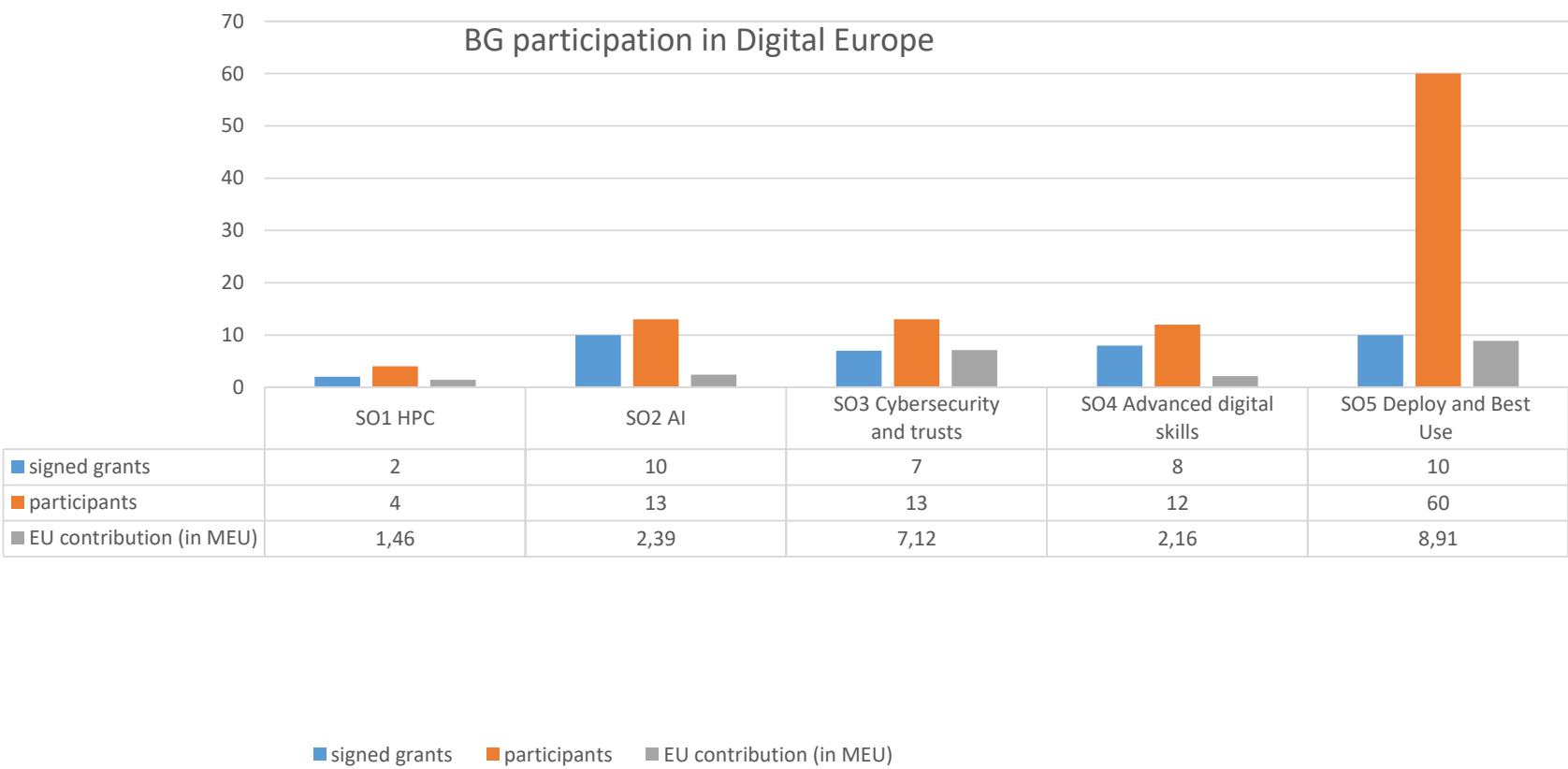
BULGARIAN PARTICIPATION

- ✓ **Success rate:** 34.45%
- ✓ **Signed grants:** 38
- ✓ **Coordinators**: 8
- ✓ **Participations:** 104
- ✓ **Unique participants:** 85
- ✓ **Main SOs:** SO 3, SO 5
- ✓ **Total costs:** 41.06 MEUR
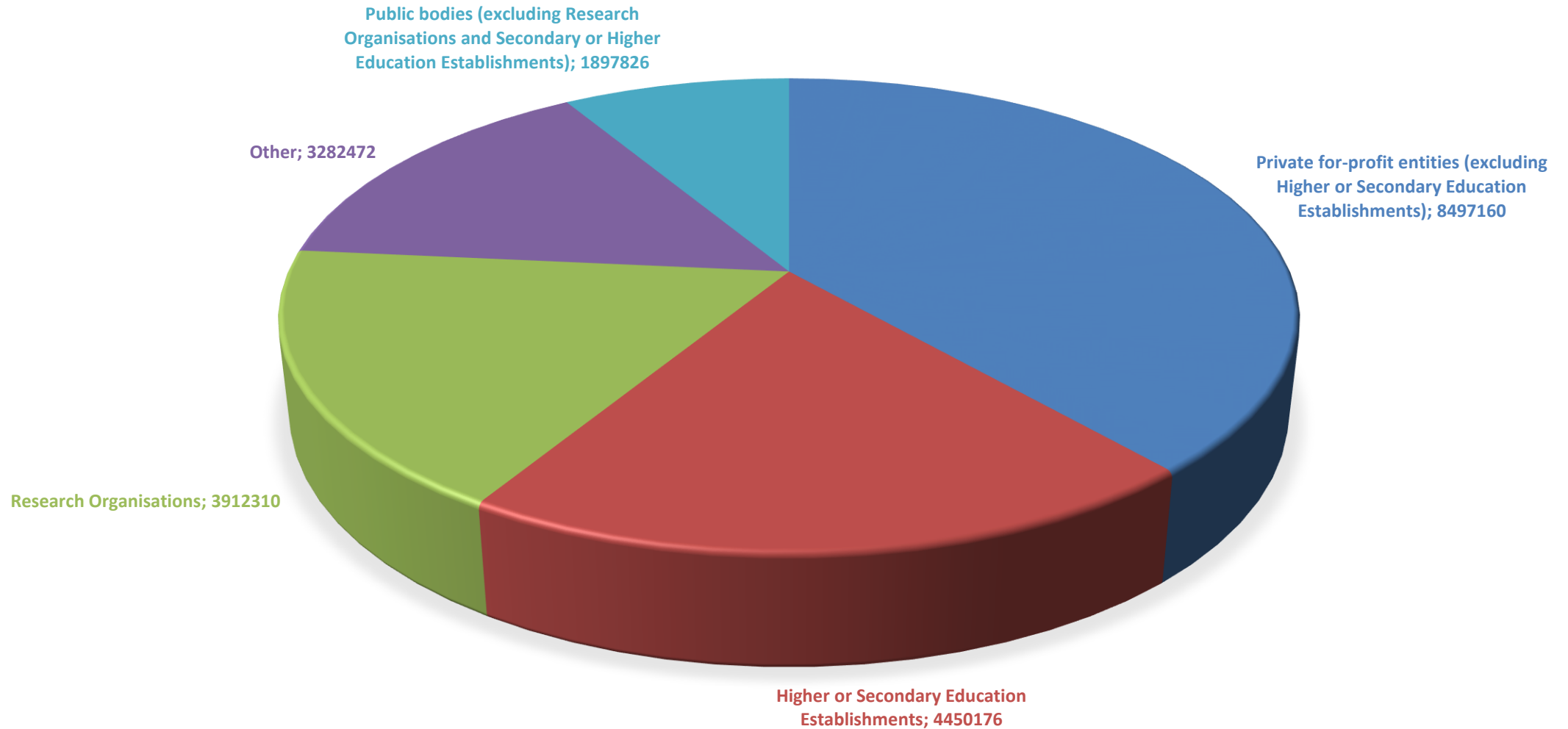- ✓ **EU contribution:** 22.14 MEUR
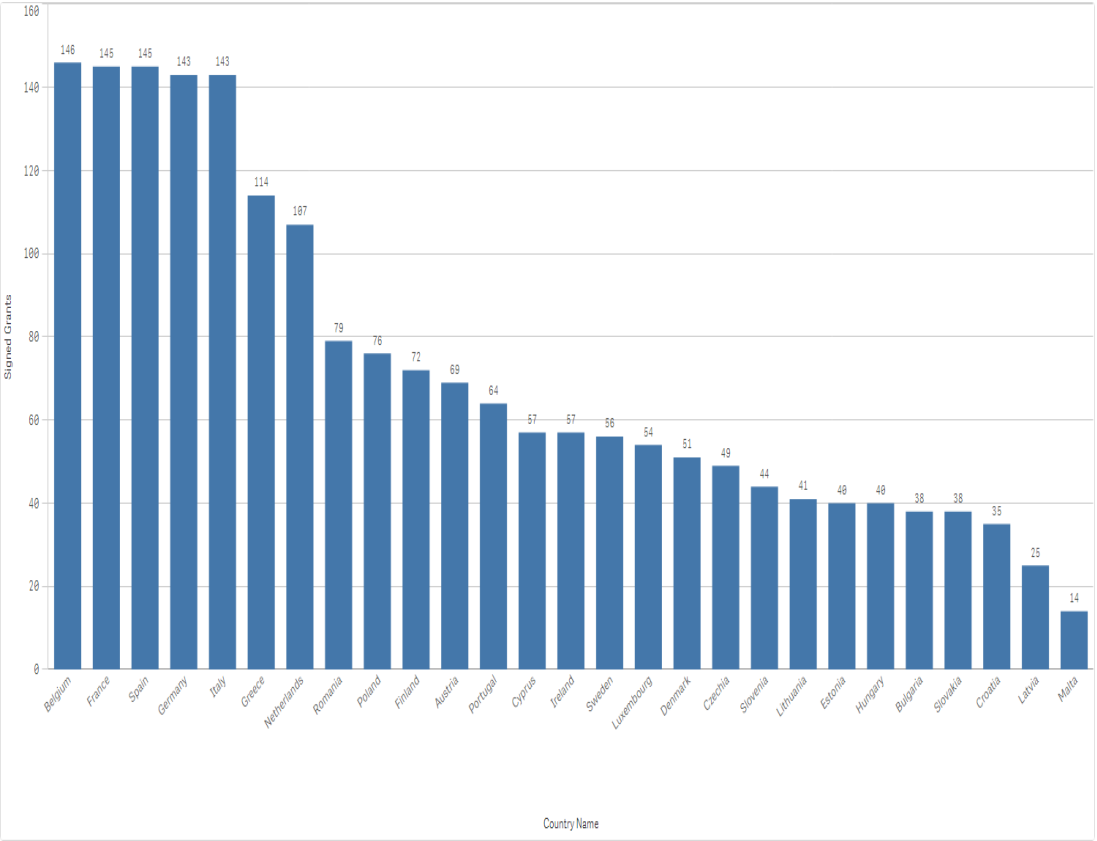
BG PARTICIPATION/SOs

BG participation in Digital Europe

	SO1 HPC	SO2 AI	SO3 Cybersecurity and trusts	SO4 Advanced digital skills	SO5 Deploy and Best Use
signed grants	2	10	7	8	10
participants	4	13	13	12	60
EU contribution (in MEU)	1,46	2,39	7,12	2,16	8,91

■ signed grants ■ participants ■ EU contribution (in MEU)

EU Contribution (EUR)/Organisation type

Public bodies (excluding Research Organisations and Secondary or Higher Education Establishments); 1897826

Other; 3282472

Private for-profit entities (excluding Higher or Secondary Education Establishments); 8497160

Research Organisations; 3912310

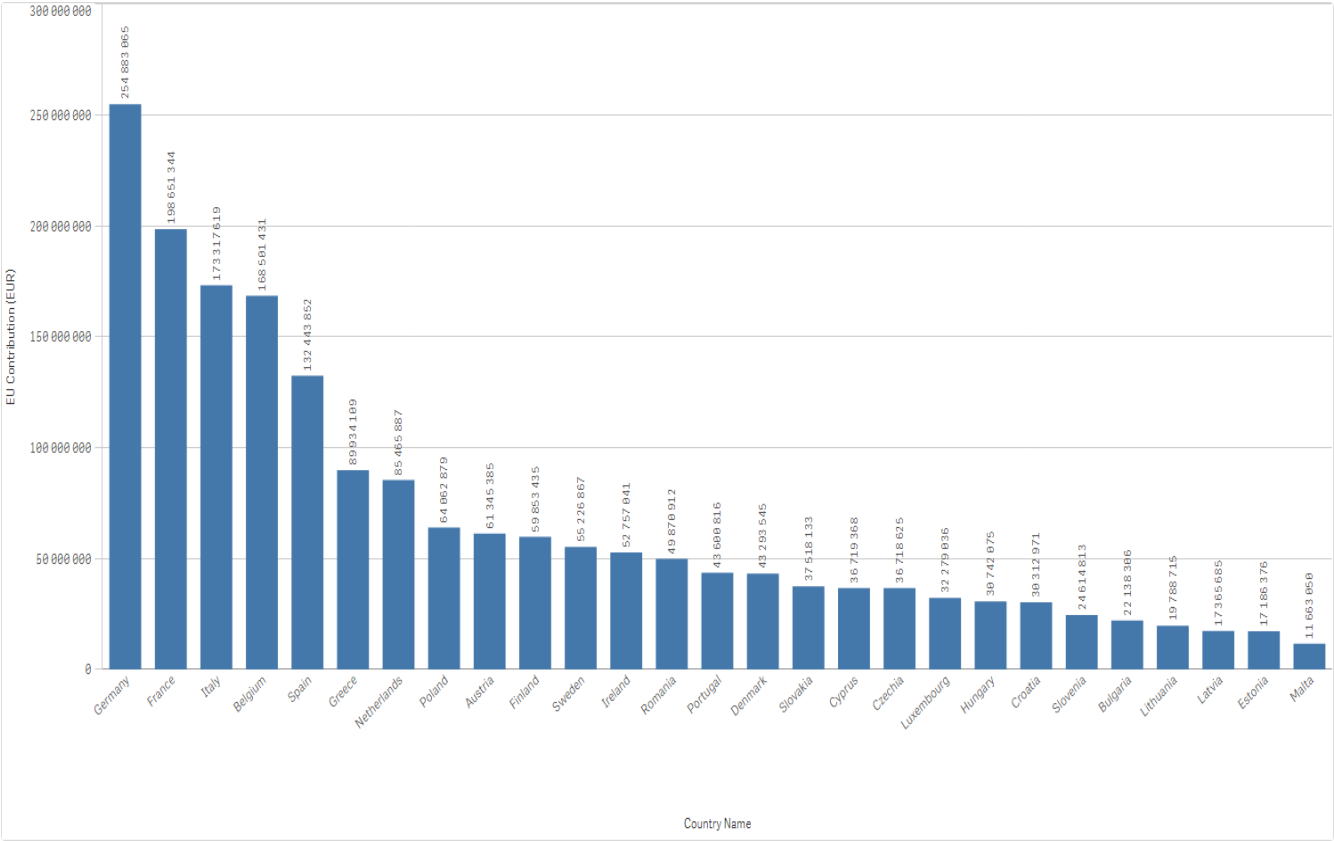Higher or Secondary Education Establishments; 4450176

Signed grants/MSs

EU contribution/MSs

AI FACTORIES

Bulgaria – one of the sixth selected additional AI Factories to Strengthen Europe's AI Leadership

The Bulgarian AI Factory BRAIN++ aims to position Bulgaria as a regional leader in AI innovation

KEY CONTRIBUTIONS

Ministry of Transport and Communications

Promotes the Digital Europe Programme and conditions for participation, provides administrative support in the application process

National Contact Points

Provide consultation and support on the stakeholders, organize information events

European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIHs)

Provide opportunities for test before invest, conduct various trainings and workshops

RECOMMENDATIONS

✓ Raise Awareness and Improve Communication: Organize more info sessions, webinars and promotional materials, targeting specific sectors and stakeholders, share success stories of successful projects to encourage participation;

✓ Strengthen the role of National Contact Points (NCPs);

✓ Ensuring national co-financing for some actions;

✓ Collect feedback: Regularly survey participants to identify barriers and improve processes.

THANK YOU

Bulgarian Ministry of Transport and Communications

https://www.mtc.government.bg/