ERASMUS+ 2027 · THEMATIC PROFILE 12 OF 35

SME Digitalisation and Business Transformation

Partner Identification Form · Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University (AYBU), Türkiye

Why include AYBU in your consortium? Evidence-based digital and green transformation support for SMEs, drawn from a strong SME research record. AYBU is a public university in Ankara with an Erasmus Charter for Higher Education and 28 Erasmus+ cooperation projects in the Commission's project database since 2014, 17 as coordinator. One contact for every thematic profile: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Musab Talha Akpınar, mtakpinar@aybu.edu.tr.

1. Five reasons specific to this theme

1. A series of SSCI-indexed articles based on survey data from Turkish SMEs
2. Evidence on mobile applications, motivation and job performance in SMEs (Kybernetes, 2024)
3. Evidence linking green information systems to environmental and financial performance
4. A completed TÜBİTAK 1001 project on SME internationalisation
5. Applications prepared with employer confederations and chambers in earlier calls

2. Thematic institutional profile

Small and medium-sized enterprises are the most studied organisations in the AYBU Business School. Articles in SSCI journals examine their use of digital technology during the pandemic, green information systems and environmental performance, business ties and adaptive capability under technological turbulence, government support and employee motivation, and knowledge sharing. A TÜBİTAK project studied managerial cultural intelligence and internationalisation. This evidence base supports training and advisory tools that respond to what actually drives performance in small firms.

Relevant faculties, departments and centres

- Business School – Departments of Management and MIS
- Competitiveness and Innovation Research Centre (REKMER)
- Teknopark Ankara
- Continuing Education Centre

Research and training infrastructure

- Established survey access to SMEs
- Continuing Education Centre for SME staff training

3. Relevant previous projects

Project number	Title	Action	Call	AYBU role	EU grant (project)	Status
101244836	BIAD - AI-Enabled Skill-Building for Tourism and Hospitality: Bridging the Industry-Academia Divide	Alliances for Education and Enterprises	2025	Partner	EUR 1 489 605	Ongoing
2025-1-TR01-KA220-YOU-000352941	YouthGreen 5.0 – Fair Transition with Green Skills and Circular Economy	Cooperation partnerships in youth	2025	Partner	EUR 250 000	Ongoing
2020-1-TR01-KA203-094567	Network Marketing and Initiatives	Strategic Partnerships for higher education	2020	Coordinator	EUR 148 580	Completed

Source: European Commission, Erasmus+ project lists, export of 19.11.2026. Grant = total EU grant of the project as awarded.

4. Key academic experts

Expert	Unit	Relevance to this theme	Profile
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Semih Ceyhan	Business School – Management (Management and Organisation)	SME performance, digital technology use, green information systems, adaptive capability	AVESIS
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Emre Burak Ekmekçioğlu	Business School – Management (Management and Organisation)	Knowledge sharing, leadership and green HRM in SMEs	AVESIS
Asst. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Ünsalan	Business School – Management (Marketing)	AI in marketing; SME internationalisation and cultural intelligence	AVESIS
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vildan Ateş	Business School – Management Information Systems	Data governance for businesses; business process management	AVESIS
Res. Asst. Ahmet Şükrü Pampal	Business School – International Trade and Business	Innovative climate and innovative work behaviour in SMEs	AVESIS

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Semih Ceyhan. Associate Professor of Management at the AYBU Business School, teaching strategic management, entrepreneurship, project development and sustainability in business. His research addresses SME performance, green human resource management, green information systems and digital technology use. He has worked on Erasmus+ partnerships since 2014, leads AYBU's team in Empathetic Classrooms and served as senior expert in an EU technical assistance project. Teaching covers strategic Management; Project Development and Management; Entrepreneurship; BUS 318 Sustainability and Business.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Emre Burak Ekmekçioğlu. Associate Professor of Management and Organisation and Vice Dean of the AYBU Business School, with 23 Scopus-indexed publications and a Scopus h-index of 9. He studies leadership,

knowledge sharing, green human resource management and employees' environmental behaviour, mostly in small and medium-sized enterprises, and teaches organisational behaviour and teamwork. His survey and modelling expertise supports needs analysis and impact evaluation. Teaching covers organizational Behavior; Team Work and Group Dynamics. Research record on AVESIS: 71 publications (23 in Scopus), Scopus h-index 9 (262 citations), Google Scholar h-index 19.

Asst. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Ünsalan. Assistant Professor of Marketing and Deputy Head of the Department of Management at the AYBU Business School, with a doctorate from Marmara University and an MBA from the University of New Haven. He studies AI in marketing, brand loyalty, consumer response to information and destination marketing, and has worked on projects about SME internationalisation, destination promotion and university–business cooperation. Teaching covers marketing courses. Research record on AVESIS: 38 publications, Google Scholar h-index 5 (158 citations), 3 projects, 8 theses supervised.

5. Keywords

SME digitalisation · digital technology adoption · green information systems · adaptive capability · business ties · knowledge sharing · SME performance · digital marketing · internationalisation · managerial capabilities · data governance · business model change · employee motivation · resilience of small firms · advisory tools

6. Alignment with Erasmus+ 2027

Digital transformation and green transition of the economy through skills of owners, managers and employees of small firms; adult and vocational learning.

Relevant 2027 action	Deadline (Brussels time)	Grant per project	Role AYBU can take
Cooperation Partnerships in vocational education and training	9 March 2027, 12:00 Brussels time	Lump sum EUR 120 000, 250 000 or 400 000	Coordinator and partner
Cooperation Partnerships in adult education	9 March 2027, 12:00 Brussels time	Lump sum EUR 120 000, 250 000 or 400 000	Coordinator and partner
Alliances for Innovation	14 September 2027, 17:00 Brussels time	EUR 1 000 000 for a 2-year project, EUR 1 500 000 for a 3-year project (Lot 1); EUR 4 000 000 for a 4-year project (Lot 2) (Guide p. 322)	Partner or work-package leader; coordinator for a focused Lot 1
Cooperation Partnerships in higher education	9 March 2027, 12:00 Brussels time	Lump sum EUR 120 000, 250 000 or 400 000	Coordinator and partner

7. What AYBU can contribute

Contributions described here are potential contributions based on verified institutional capacity; they become commitments only in a signed proposal. Named experts are proposed on the basis of their published work and their participation in a given proposal is subject to their confirmation.

Potential project objectives

- Give SME owners and staff practical digital and data skills
- Link digital investment with measurable business results
- Support small firms in combining digital and green change

Potential activities

- Diagnostic survey of digital maturity in SMEs
- Self-assessment tool and micro-learning units
- Coaching programme for owner-managers
- Case studies of successful transformation

Work packages AYBU could lead or co-lead

- Digital maturity diagnosis
- Self-assessment and learning tools
- Coaching pilots
- Evidence report and recommendations

Training modules AYBU could deliver

- Digital tools that pay off in small firms
- Data governance on a small budget
- Leading change in a small team

Potential deliverables

- Digital maturity report
- Online self-assessment tool
- Micro-learning units
- Case study collection

Potential pilot activities

- Self-assessment and coaching pilot with SMEs in Ankara
- Micro-learning pilot through a chamber or business association

Target groups AYBU can reach

- SME owner-managers
- SME employees
- Business advisers
- Trainers in chambers

Expected institutional contribution

- Survey design and analysis with SMEs
- Evidence-based training content
- Self-assessment tool specification

- Evaluation of business effects
- Access to SMEs through technopark and partners

8. Management, quality and dissemination capacity

EU projects at AYBU are run by academic project teams with support from the Business School's projects office and the Competitiveness and Innovation Research Centre (REKMER). Financial administration follows Turkish public financial management and control legislation (Law No. 5018); EU grants are kept in dedicated project accounts and the university is subject to external audit by the Turkish Court of Accounts. In the Commission's project database AYBU appears in 28 Erasmus+ cooperation, policy and Jean Monnet projects from call years 2014–2026, 17 of them as coordinator; 9 are running today.

For each project AYBU proposes a quality plan with internal peer review of deliverables, milestone monitoring and partner feedback surveys. The university operates an institutional quality management system under the national Higher Education Quality Council framework, and Business School staff include an accredited external evaluator of that Council.

AYBU disseminates through its institutional website and faculty pages, official social media accounts, a community of more than 26 000 students and about 2 600 staff, its partner universities and its links with ministries, municipalities, chambers and Teknopark Ankara. Multiplier events and training activities can be hosted on its Ankara campuses, and online courses can be delivered through the Distance Education Research Centre.

Results can be sustained through courses in degree programmes, certificate programmes of the Continuing Education Centre, online delivery by the Distance Education Research Centre and follow-up funding from national programmes such as TÜBİTAK. Open publication of materials is the default.

9. Partners we would like to work with

- Chambers and SME associations
- Digital innovation hubs
- VET and adult education providers
- Business schools
- Technology companies

10. Organisation identification

Legal name (national language)	ANKARA YILDIRIM BEYAZIT ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Legal name (Latin characters)	ANKARA YILDIRIM BEYAZIT UNIVERSITESI
Name in English	Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University (AYBU)
Organisation ID (OID)	E10137893
PIC	952723525
National / fiscal ID	9600521531
Type of organisation	Higher education institution (tertiary level); Public (state) university; non-profit public body

Erasmus Charter for Higher Education	Erasmus Charter for Higher Education holder — Erasmus code TR ANKARA15
Established	21 July 2010 (decision published in the Official Gazette)
Registered address	AYBÜ Etlik Milli İrade Binası, B-Blok, Ayvalı Mah. Gazze Cad. No: 7, Etlik, Keçiören, 06010 Ankara, Türkiye
Main campus	Esenboğa Merkez Külliyesi, Dumlupınar Mah., 06760 Çubuk / Ankara
Region (NUTS)	TR51 – Ankara
Website	https://aybu.edu.tr
General e-mail / telephone	basin@aybu.edu.tr / +90 312 906 10 00

11. Institutional representative and contact

Legal representative

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Main contact person

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12. Links

- University: https://aybu.edu.tr
- Business School: https://aybu.edu.tr/isletme/en
- Academic profiles (AVESIS): https://avesis.aybu.edu.tr
- AYBU projects in the Erasmus+ project database: https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects

Data verified on 20.11.2026. Institutional figures from aybu.edu.tr and AYBU records; project data from the European Commission's Erasmus+ project lists; staff data from AVESIS.