****

**23,400 entrepreneurs supported by EU|BICs generating over 22,600 jobs, in 2018**

Toulon, France, 27 June 2019 – Today, the European Business and Innovation Centre Network (EBN) has officially launched the **‘**[**EU|BIC Impact and Activity Report 2019**](https://ebn.eu/downloads/impact/EBN-impact-report-2019-web.pdf)**’**during the Annual General Meeting (AGM), Toulon (France). This report comprehensively monitors the work performance of the EU|BICs over the past year. The report compiled from quantitative and qualitative data demonstrates the added value of EU|BICs to the European economy and within their regional ecosystems. Supporting 23,400 entrepreneurs and clients in total and facilitating the **creation of more than 22,600 jobs** the EU|BICs helped to **leverage more than 1.2 billion euros in funding** for innovative startups (45% of the total), SMEs and large companies (23%) and scale-up companies (16%), representing an increase of 115% compared to 2017.

This year’s report shows an increase in the number of enquiries received. The 117[[1]](https://ebn.eu/?p=post&c=2&a=a" \l "_ftn1) respondent **EU|BICs received over 40,000 enquiries, 40% more compared to the previous year**. This is in line to the widespread surge of people opting for self-employment and greater flexible working options.

The data also validates the increasingly important role that EU|BICs play in European economic growth. During 2018, EU|BICs improved their efficiency and capacity to help and support entrepreneurs. **The key services provided were Access to Markets (84%), Access to Finance (83%), Marketing (74%), Access to Open Innovation programmes (68%) and Team Development (65%).**

Javier Echarri, Chief Executive Officer at EBN: “We are very proud to confirm that the survival rate of companies supported by our EU|BICs is 93% during the support period, decreasing only to 89% three years after they exited the support programme. The enhanced efforts by EU|BICs to help companies internationalize and raise funding are showing excellent results.”

With 138 certified business and innovation centres, during the reported period, providing business support to these 23,400 startups, SMEs and large companies, EBN positions itself as a key player within the European innovation ecosystem. The EU|BICs are constantly adapting themselves to the new technologies, business models and market needs. “The most important element of the success of EU|BICs is the personal commitment and know-how of the professional staff and experts” adds Javier Echarri.

**-ENDS-**

**Background**

EBN is an established not-for-profit international association of EU|BICs, incubators, innovation centres, clusters and other intermediaries who help innovative startups and SMEs develop their innovative businesses. Our members are mostly public-private partnerships with local economic development remit. EBN’s 200+ members are spread over 40 countries in and out of Europe. Of those, around 138 are labelled quality-certified EU|BICs (Business and Innovation Centres). These EU|BICs are exclusively awarded a quality label by EBN that attests the excellence of their business support services. Every year, EBN conducts a performance survey to those 138 EU|BICs in order to track, identify and analyse the network’s added value to the economy. To date, EBN members have created thousands of new businesses and tens of thousands of new skilled and sustainable jobs.

**EU|BICs** – incubators, accelerators and other business support organisations whose quality of support services delivered to entrepreneurs is uniquely certified by EBN in collaboration with the European Commission.

**Press Contact:** Marta Gómez, [marta.gomez@ebn.eu](mailto:marta.gomez@ebn.eu), +32 2 761 10 88