



University of Maribor
Faculty of Economics and Business



THE “Y” BEHIND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP POLICY

YEPA Workshop 6, Group I



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Faculty of Economics and Business
University of Maribor, Slovenia
Institute for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management







Why should supporting youth entrepreneurship be a policy priority?

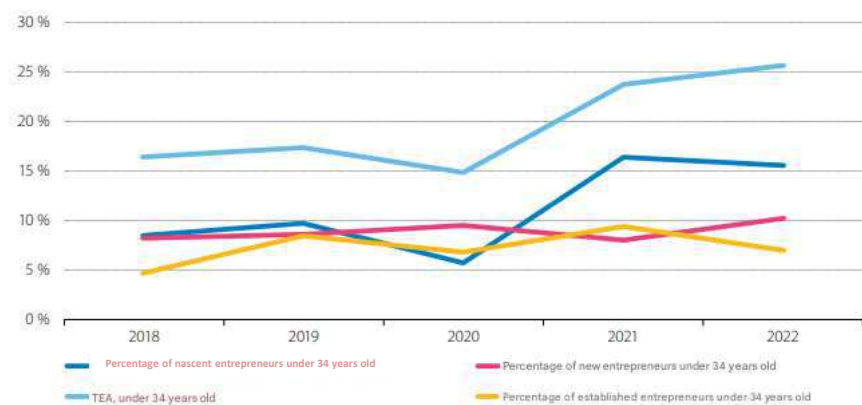




Why should supporting youth entrepreneurship be a policy priority?



Entrepreneurial activity of young entrepreneurs in Slovenia



It's harder than it looks

- In EU 40 to 45% of youth aged 18 to 30 express a clear interest in starting their own business

- only about 7% of youth aged 20 to 29 are actually self-employed

- Slovenia follows a similar trend.

Based on data from the OECD/European Commission, Flash Eurobarometer, and Eurostat (2020, 2023).

Key barriers to youth entrepreneurship

Personal barriers

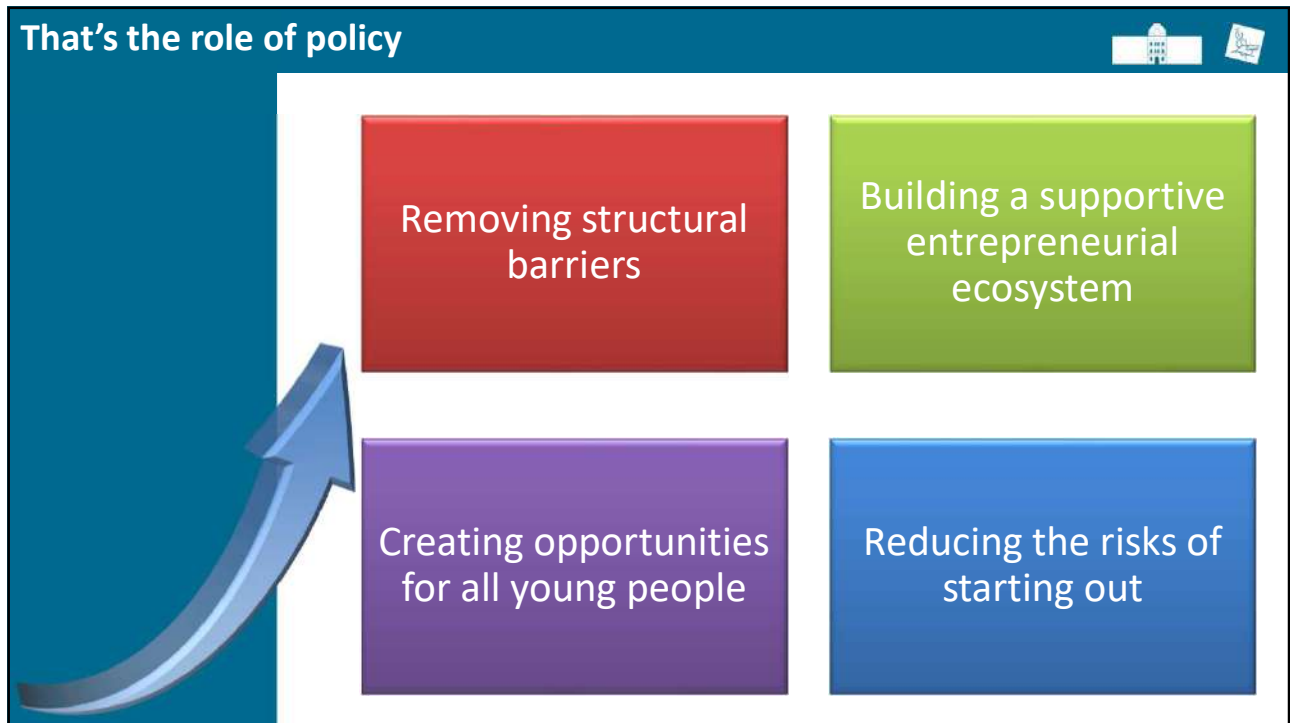
- Lack of experience
- Fear of failure
- Low confidence
- Limited entrepreneurial mindset or business know-how
- Risk aversion due to lack of safety nets

Systemic barriers

- Limited access to finance
- Complex administrative and regulatory procedures
- Lack of tailored support (e.g. youth-specific coaching or mentoring)
- Weak social protection
- Poor access to markets and customers

Contextual barriers

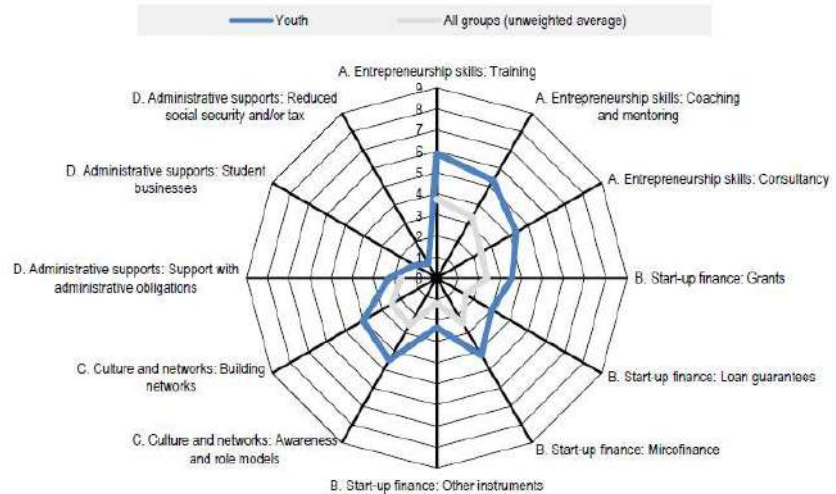
- Underdeveloped networks (professional, business, or peer)
- Limited exposure to entrepreneurship in formal education
- Lack of visible role models or awareness campaigns
- Cultural or family expectations favouring traditional employment
- Unequal access to infrastructure



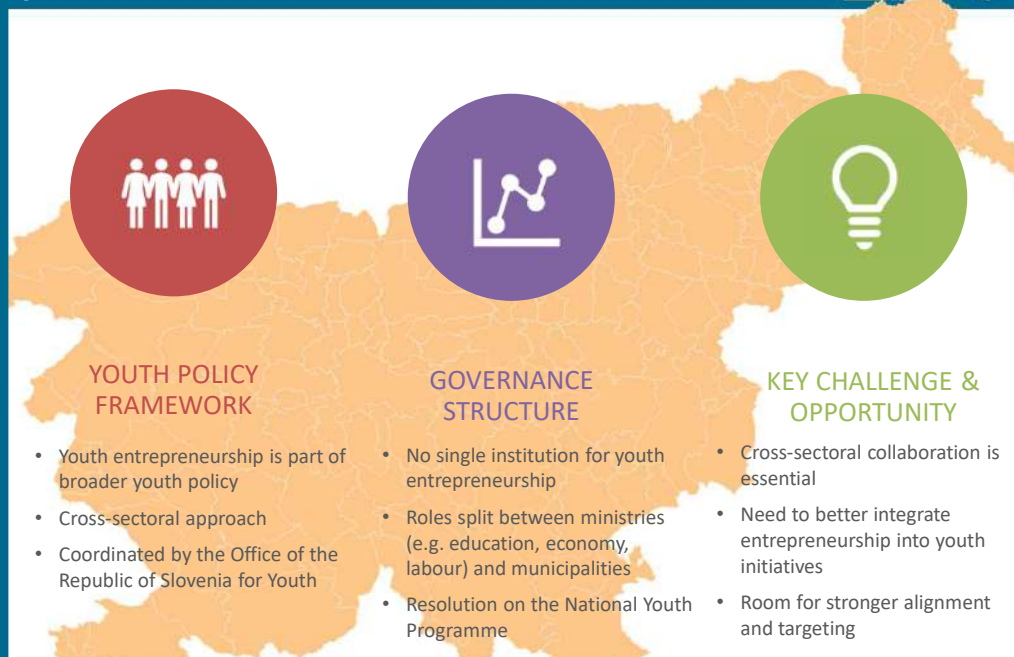
Where we stand today - EU support landscape

EU Youth Strategy (2019-2027)		
Strategic Initiatives	Financial Instruments	Skills & Policy Tools
- Youth Guarantee - Youth Employment Initiative - European Pillar of Social Rights	NextGeneration EU / Recovery and Resilience Facility	- EntreComp Framework - Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs - Inclusive Entrepreneurship (OECD & EC)

Most widely available form of support for youth

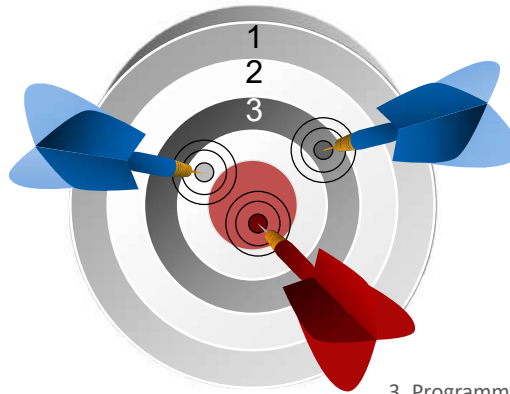


Slovenia: Policy context



Long-term impact of quality support

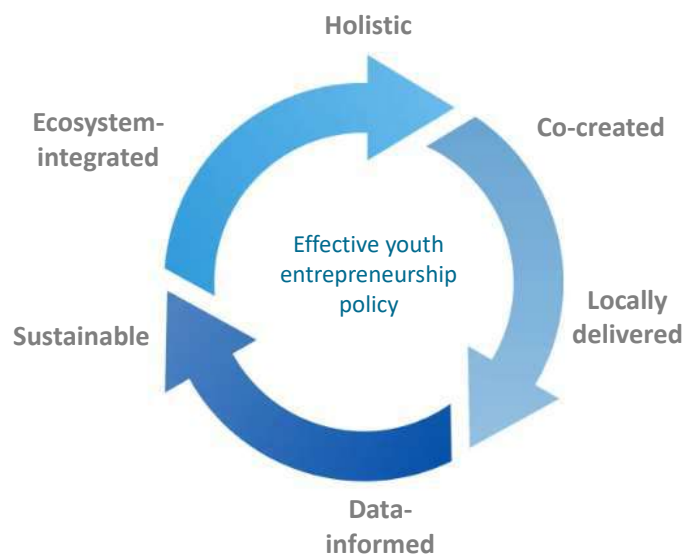
1. Timely, targeted, and high-quality support increases the long-term survival and stability of youth-led businesses.



2. It promotes upward social mobility – especially for youth from disadvantaged or underrepresented groups.

3. Programmes that combine mentoring, experiential learning, and real-world practice are significantly more effective than traditional lecture-based approaches.

Effective youth entrepreneurship policy must be



From insight to action



The impact of youth entrepreneurship depends on what we build around it

Entrepreneurship is not just a career choice – it is a form of agency

More inclusive, more resilient and more innovative future

Comprehensive and inclusive entrepreneurship policies

Partnerships

YEPA

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...for your attention!

Institute for entrepreneurship and
small business management

<https://ipmmp.um.si/>



**Youth Entrepreneurship
Policy Academy**

YEPA Workshop 6

Youth Entrepreneurship Policy Design and Delivery

Designing Youth Entrepreneurship Policies and Programmes

Prof Leonie Baldacchino, PhD (Warw.)

The Edward de Bono Institute, University of Malta

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L-Università ta' Malta
The Edward de Bono Institute
for Creative Thinking & Innovation



Creativity



Innovation
Management



Entrepreneurship



Futures Studies



Critical Thinking

© Prof Leonie Baldacchino

Insight 1

- **Youths** (and women) **are the best served** of the under-represented groups targeted by the OECD for inclusive entrepreneurship policies and programmes
- **Take-up rates for these programmes have been decreasing** and remain low across different initiatives, possibly due in part to duplication of support, mismatch of offerings and a saturation of support schemes



Recommendations

- We need to **better understand** today's young people and how to **bridge the generation gap**
- **Streamline** youth entrepreneurship support initiatives to minimise duplication, inefficiencies or mismatches between offerings and young people's interests and needs



Insight 2

- Youths are a **vastly heterogeneous group**, and **many of them form part of other under-represented groups**
- Many policies and programmes are generic, or 'one-size-fits-all', as **fine-grained tailored policies are challenging** to design and implement



Recommendations

- Entrepreneurship policies and programmes for youths, should ideally **include both a basic component that can be administered to various cohorts, and a more personalised element**
- **Packaging** of inclusive entrepreneurship training with other types of support should not take place at the outset, but **only after aspiring entrepreneurs have acquired the basic skills and show heightened willingness and promise** to pursue the self-employment path



Insight 3

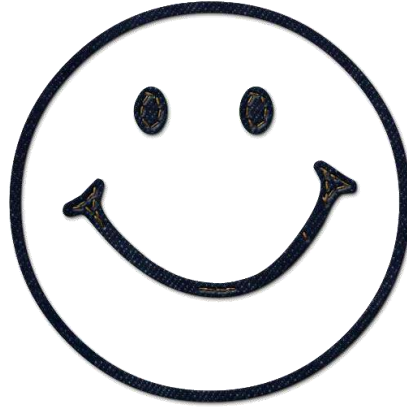
- **Policy has come a long way** from focusing on the hard business skills and instruments, to also integrate soft skills (like 21st Century skills) and support
- **Personal well-being is still not a priority**, even though research has shown that well-being is a challenge for young people



Recommendations

- Adapt policies and programmes to **include well-being measures and values**
- In a world that seems to glorify busyness, it is important to take some time-out (**balance**)
- In a world that seems competitive and cut-throat, it pays to **be kind and compassionate** (to oneself and others)





THANK YOU!

Prof Leonie Baldacchino, PhD (Warw.)

The Edward de Bono Institute, University of Malta

leonie.baldacchino@um.edu.mt, www.um.edu.mt/create, www.facebook.com/loTM.um



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Creativity



Innovation
Management



Entrepreneurship



Futures Studies



Critical Thinking

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POLICY DESIGN TO CREATE A STARTUP ECOSYSTEM

FERNANDO JARDIM

Failed Startup Founder
351 Startups Leader
Startup Genome BizDev.
Techstars Portugal

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→ **Overview org I am part of**

→ Why policy & delivery?

→ Policies & Programs to create Startup Ecosystems

Cases

→ Q&A

- Overview org I am part of
- **Why policy & delivery?**
- Policies & Programs to create Startup Ecosystems
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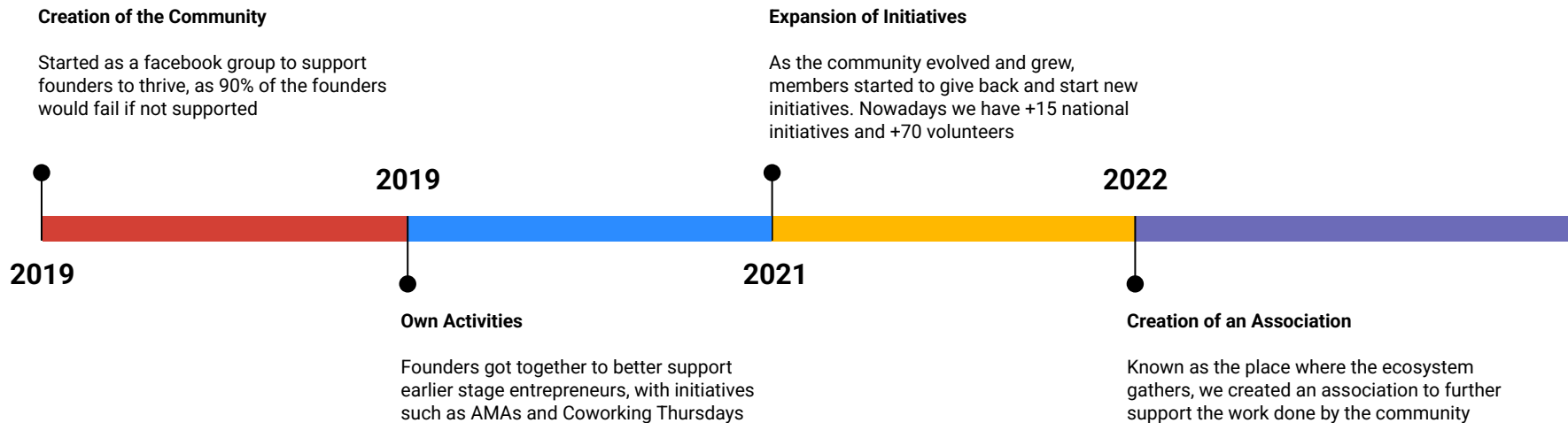
Cases

→ Q&A



About 351 Startups

We are the largest, most active and inclusive entrepreneurship community in Portugal



IN 2024 ALONE

WE HAD

+2.300

Members

impacted

+31.000

people

+160

Initiatives

+4.000

Startups applied for
351 programs in 2024

[Impact report here](#)

European Startup Network



9,831 followers

2mo • Edited •

The first EU Startup Policy Hackathon was a Success! Last Friday, we brought together some of the sharpest minds in the European startup ecosystem to rethink policies and pitch bold ideas to the Startup Commissioner. The energy, creativity, and ...more



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In case you missed it: the [European Commission](#) today released the eagerly awaited EU Startup and Scaleup Strategy and announced a significant expansion of the [EIC - European Innovation Council](#) to make good on its plans to turn ...more



EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

Brussels, 28.5.2025
SWD(2025) 138 final

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT
Accompanying the document

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

The EU Startup and Scaleup Strategy

Choose Europe to start and scale

DESIGNING POLICIES & PROGRAMS TO CREATE STARTUP ECOSYSTEMS

<https://351.community>
team@351.community

- **Convening & Converging**
- Mapping gaps & Benchmarking
- Creating an action plan
- Executing it & pushing for policies

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Our Vision (yes, we're ambitious)

**Transform the Portuguese Startup Ecosystem
into the most dynamic in the world**

- **Convening & Converging**
- Mapping gaps & Benchmarking
- Creating an action plan
- Executing it & pushing for policies

Founders on our board



Carolina Amorim

[Linkedin](#)



Djalmo Edgar Gomes

[Linkedin](#)



Felipe Costa Ávila

[Linkedin](#)



Joana Figueiredo Pinto

[Linkedin](#)



Pedro Oliveira

[Linkedin](#)



Mário Ribeiro Alves

[Linkedin](#)



Marta Palmeiro

[Linkedin](#)



Martim Caldeira

[Linkedin](#)



Pauline Foessel

[Linkedin](#)



Wendy van Leeuwen

[Linkedin](#)



Players on our board



Daniela Monteiro
[Linkedin](#)



Inês Santos Silva
[Linkedin](#)



João Mendes Borga (tbc)
[Linkedin](#)



Mariana Gorjão Henriques
[Linkedin](#)



Micaela Vieira
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Miguel Amador
[Linkedin](#)



Paulo Bandeira
[Linkedin](#)



Pedro Sacramento
[Linkedin](#)



Rita Vilas-Boas
[Linkedin](#)

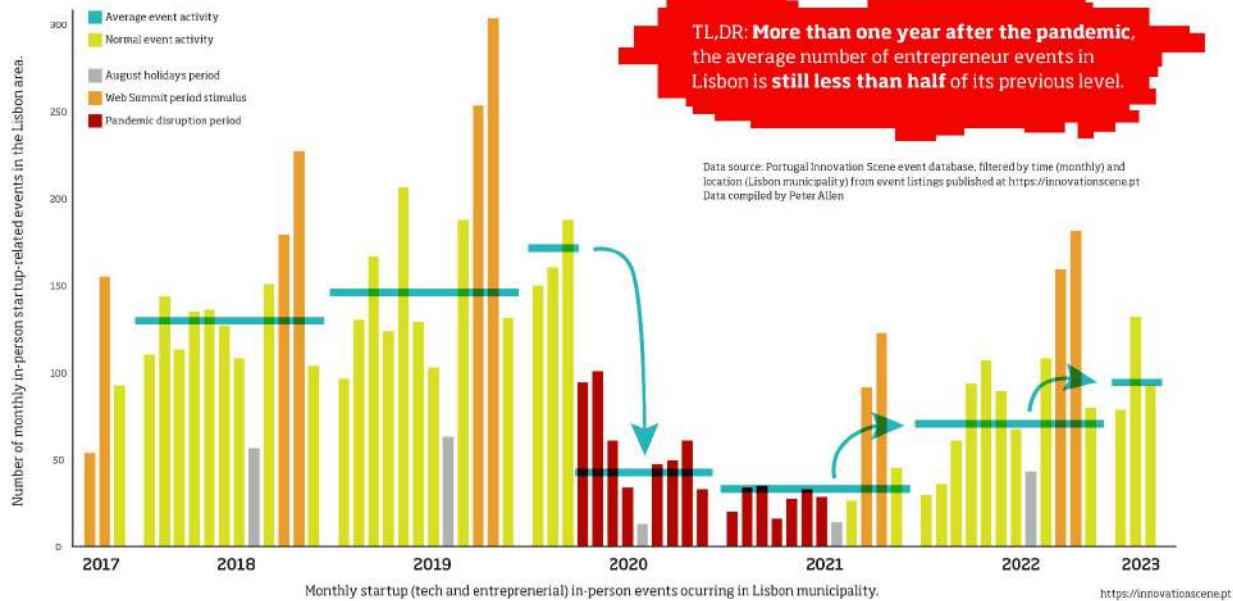


- Convening & Converging
- **Mapping gaps & Benchmarking**
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COMMUNITY FUND



The effect of the pandemic on startup events in Lisbon

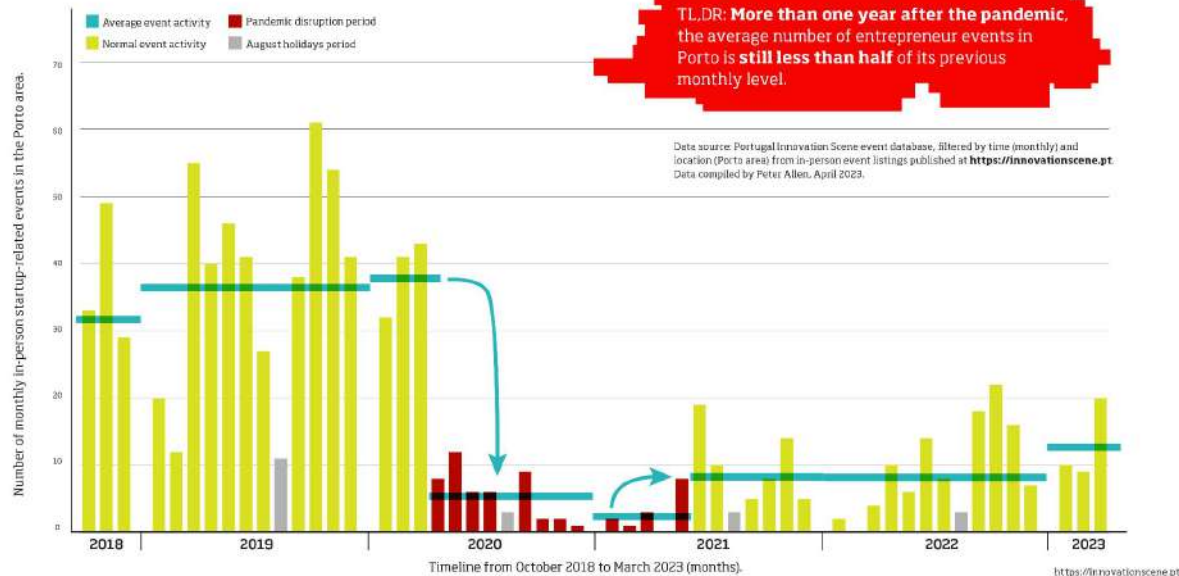


*351 will not charge any fee to administer the fund. All savings in the fund will be allocated towards the organisation of initiatives, events, trainings and other activities that will benefit the national startup ecosystem.

COMMUNITY FUND



The effect of the pandemic on startup events in Porto



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Portugal Attrition Funnel*



- From 2019-2021, **only 1 startup raised a Series C+ round by 2023.**

CONFIDENTIAL

*Source: **Startup Genome**
(based on Pitchbook, Dealroom and Crunchbase data)

Portugal Attrition Funnel*

2260 Startups to be created to:

226 Startups

raised seed rounds in 2019 - 2021

35 Startups

raised Series A in 2020 - 2022

7 Startups

Series B 2021 - 2023

1 Startup

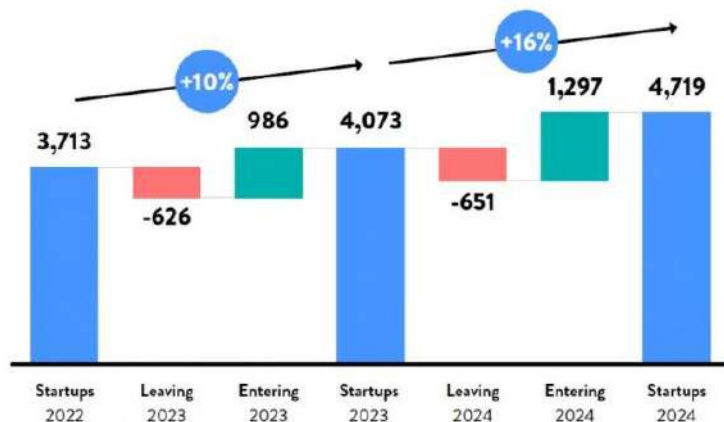
Series C 22 -23

- **9 out of 10 startups fail**; to produce 226 successful seed rounds, 2,260 startups would need to be created to achieve 1 startup on Series C.

CONFIDENTIAL

*Source: **Startup Genome**
(based on Pitchbook, Dealroom and Crunchbase data)

NUMBER OF STARTUPS IN PORTUGAL



- Portugal only created 1,297 startups in 2024, which is way below the 2.260 startups need it, and it is not growing to the right pace.

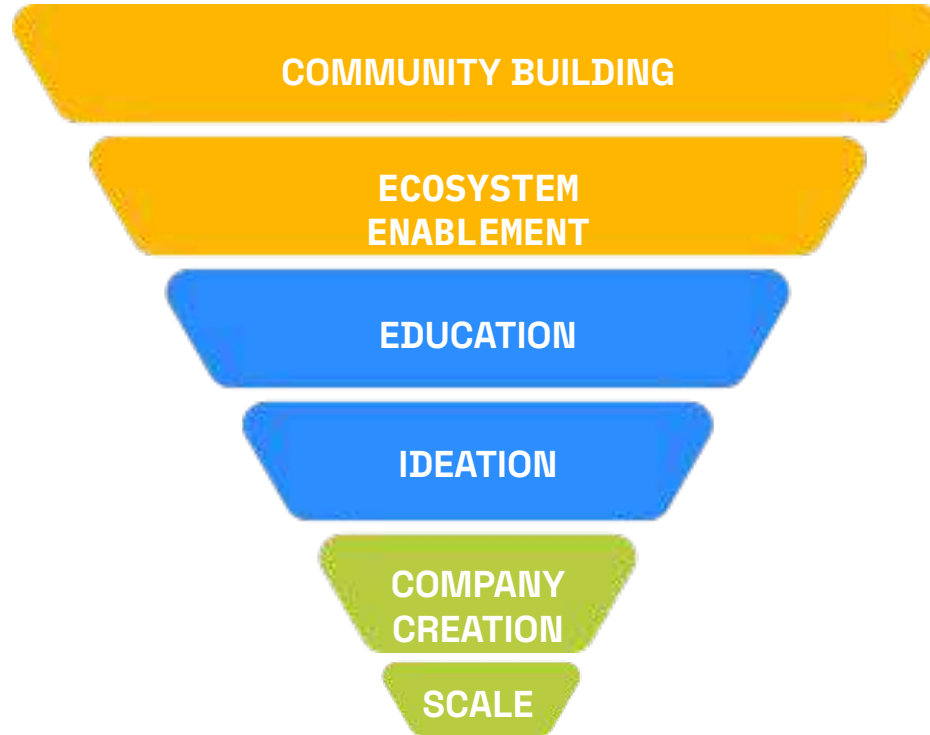
**IF WE IMPROVE THESE RATES, WHAT
IS ITS GROWTH POTENTIAL?**

Potential of Growth: LISBON x Same Sized Cities

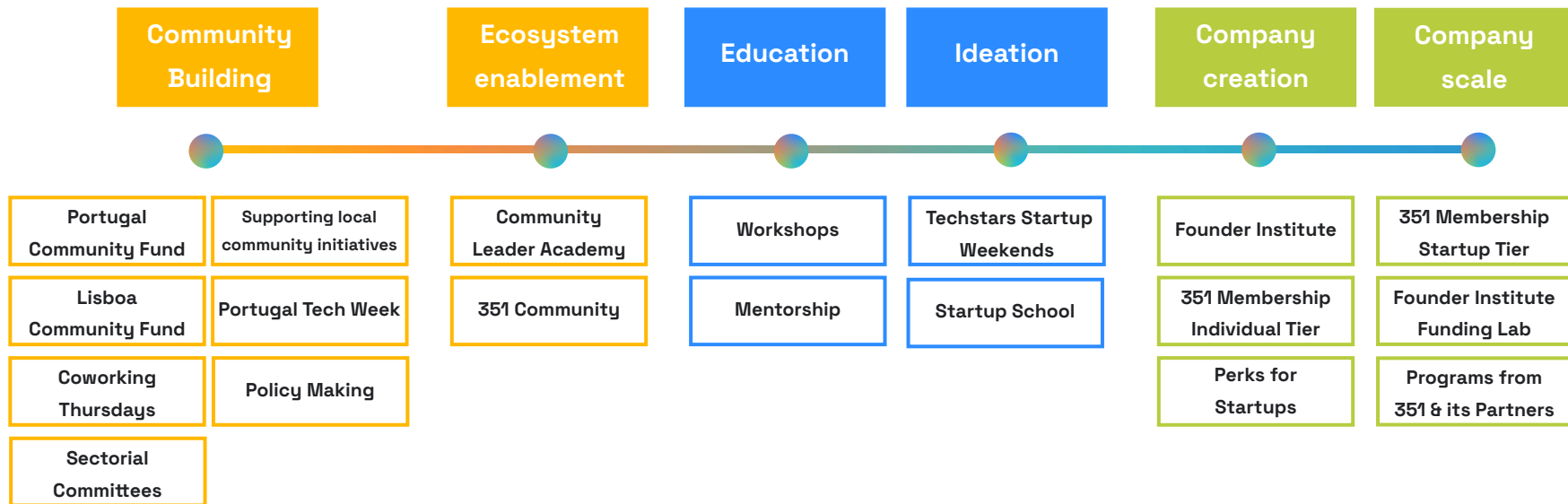
	25 Ranking*	Population	25 Ecosystem Value*
LISBON	61 - 70	570K	\$24.8B
ZURICH	31 - 40	450K	\$42.5B
ATLANTA	21 - 30	460K	\$44.2B

- Convening & Converging
- Mapping gaps & Benchmarking
- Creating an action plan**
- Executing it & pushing for policies

**HEALING THE
CAUSE, NOT THE
SYMPTOM...**



351 Initiatives & Events



DIRECT RESULTS OF TECHSTARS PORTUGAL

+ 50 INITIATIVES DEVELOPED

+ 5000 PEOPLE IMPACTED

+ 400 STARTUPS CREATED

PRE-ACCELERATOR: 40 SEATS TO FOUNDER CATALYST

12 STARTUPS RAISING PRE SEED-ROUND



NATIONAL REACH VIA REGIONAL ECOSYSTEM PARTNERS



PARTNERS BUILDING THE ECOSYSTEM WITH US

National Partners:



International Partners:



- Convening & Converging
- Mapping gaps & Benchmarking
- Creating an action plan
- Executing it & pushing for policies**

Over 6 months (from October 2024 to April 2025), we pulled off
5 Techstars Startup Weekends across 5 cities in different regions of Portugal.

277 people signed up
196 participated at the 3 days.



58 (22%) of registered people were foreign, and some of them came to Portugal specifically for the Weekend.

470+ participants at our main events
19 different nationalities
38 startups were born
63 mentors and judges got involved

We had 7 free pre-Weekend workshops that brought in 320 registrations and 195 attendees.

56 partners and sponsors backed us
20+ articles published in media and press
700+ people mobilized across all our initiatives
1,000+ people impacted by everything we've done so far

**lisboa
innovation.**



LISBOA'S COMMUNITY FUND

Get your community initiative funded!

Get Started!



[About Us](#) [Contact](#)

PORTUGAL COMMUNITY FUND

Get your community initiative funded!

GET STARTED!

2024 IMPACT SUMMARY

+300
EVENTS

+20
CITIES

+23000
UNIQUE
USERS

+50
EVENTS
ORGANISED
BY OUR
CURATORS &
AMBASSADORS

32
ECOSYSTEM
PARTNERS

● Tech Days
● Other events



1 → TECH RUN

Portugal
TECH
WEEK

INNOVATION
ON THE MOVE.

NOVEMBER 10TH
8:30 AM.

📍 BEATO INNOVATION DISTRICT.

351 PORTUGUESE
STARTUP
ASSOCIATION

TECH RUN



ELÉTRICO PITCH



BEJA TECH DAY - PHOTOS

Portugal
TECH
WEEK



Portugal Tech Week 2024

WINNER EEPA 2024

Portugal
TECH
WEEK



First place - Category 1:

"Promoting the spirit of entrepreneurship"

EEPA is an initiative of the European Commission that distinguishes the best business promotion projects and initiatives in the 27 Member States of the European Union

[LINK](#)

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QUESTIONS?

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THANK YOU

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351 PORTUGUESE
STARTUP
COMMUNITY

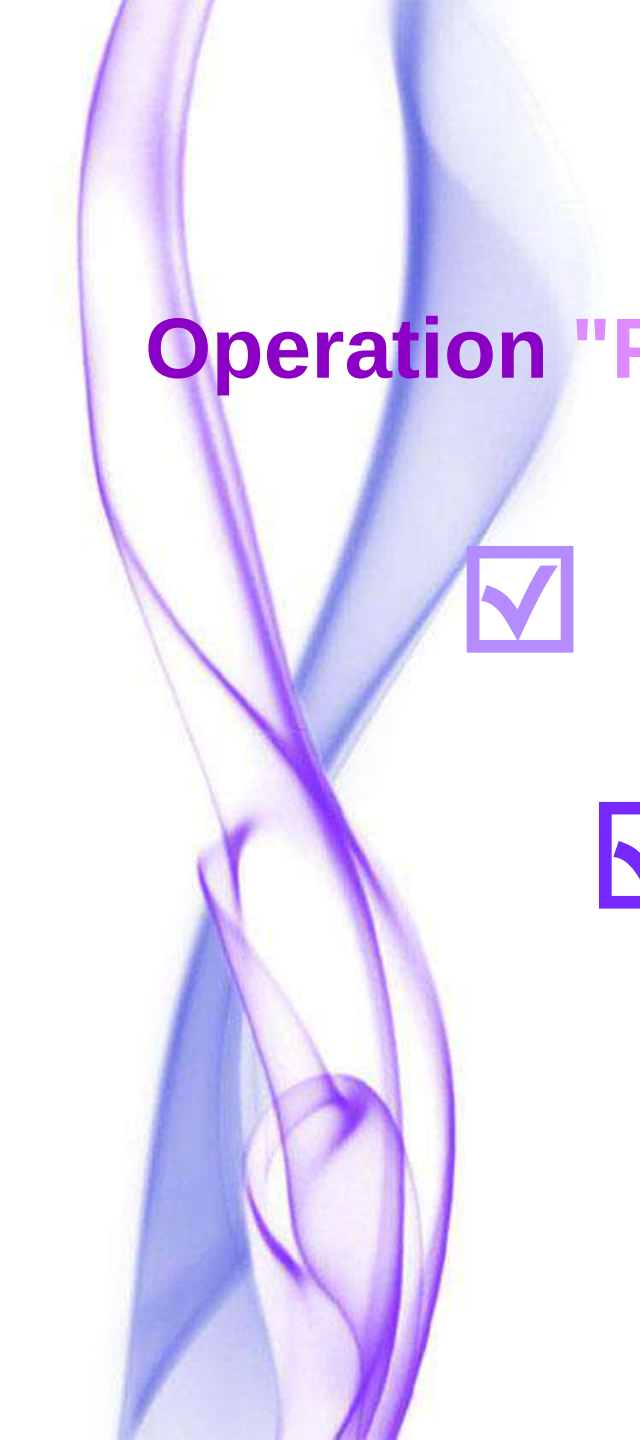
BULGARIA and YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

RUMEN DONEV – expert, Ministry of labour and social policy, Sofia, Bulgaria

<http://www.free-powerpoint-templates-design.com>



**THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA
MINISTRY OF LABOR
AND SOCIAL POLICY**



Currently

Bulgaria is implementing

Operation "Promoting Entrepreneurship in Northern Bulgaria"



It aims to support the development of entrepreneurship in the less developed part of the country - to be an incubator and to finance gratuitous up to 1,000 new (start-up) businesses



It will provide support throughout the entire cycle from the formation of a business idea to its initial implementation



Providing opportunities for the development of self-employment and entrepreneurial skills aims to encourage the creation of new jobs, which in turn will lead to the prevention of poverty and social exclusion.

It will be implemented in two components:

Component 1

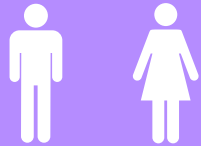


Within which future entrepreneurs will receive support for the development of their business ideas and their transformation into specific business plans for the implementation of entrepreneurial activity and (after registering the new enterprise)



It will be implemented in two components:

Component 2



Eligible target groups under Component 2 will be unemployed persons, inactive persons, job seekers, and young people. They should be aged 16 to 65.



Provision of grants - up to 50,000 leva for financing the implementation of the specific business plan. Under Component 2, newly registered enterprises with approved business plans in Component 1 will be provided with a grant of up to BGN 50,000, which will financially support the start-up of the business and the implementation of the plans in their initial stage - for a period not exceeding 2 years.

A graphic with a blurred background of hands holding a tablet. Overlaid on this is a dark rectangular box with the text 'STARTUP FUNDING' in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The background also features faint, light blue geometric patterns like circles and lines.

**STARTUP
FUNDING**

Entrepreneurship support centers



...which will provide specific consulting support for starting their own business to future entrepreneurs, including training for the development of their entrepreneurial skills.



Within the framework of the operation, the **Employment Agency** will establish three entrepreneurship support centers in northern Bulgaria ...



Within the framework of the Employment action plans in 2024

numerous activities were implemented to promote entrepreneurship among the unemployed,

including young people which provide an opportunity to realize their innovative potential

According to the Employment Act, unemployed young people are encouraged to start their own business as a micro-enterprise

Starting a business is supported with funds of up to BGN 5,800 (approximately EUR 2,900) for expenses incurred in starting a self-employed business, as set out in the business plan.



Young entrepreneurs,

also receive additional monthly amounts for social and health insurance and training funds for acquiring professional qualifications in the subject of the business activity or for its management.

Their costs for external consulting services and/or accompanying services used are also reimbursed.

The measures are **financed** with funds from the state budget for active labor market policy.



In 2024, 130 took advantage of the opportunity provided **to start a self-employed business**. Of these, 124 people signed a contract for the payment of additional monthly amounts for paid social security contributions.

The costs of **external consulting services and/or ancillary services** used by **39 people** who started their own business were reimbursed

These people can also benefit from an option for additional funds for acquiring professional qualifications in the subject of activity and/or its management under the approved business project.

Additional monthly amounts can be provided immediately after starting the activity, but for no more than 12 months.

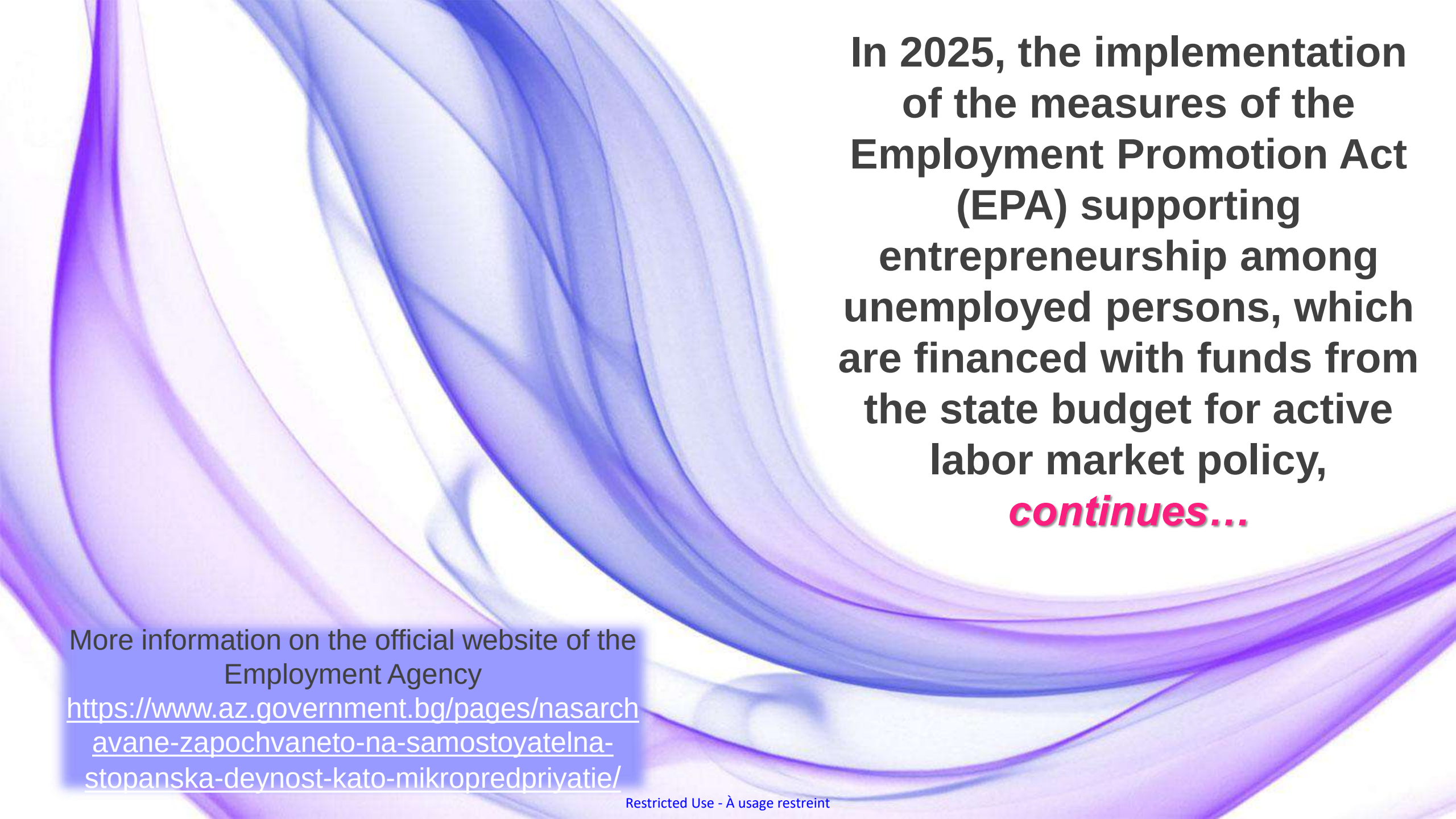
The total funds invested from the state budget for the implementation of measures to promote entrepreneurship under the Employment Promotion Act amount to **1,600,212 BGN**.



Also, unemployed people (including young people) who are entitled to cash benefits under the national regulations and wish to start a business activity for the production of goods and/or services individually or together, are provided with lump sums of money at the expense of the Unemployment Fund after approval of a business project by the territorial divisions of the Employment Agency.

Those people who have received a lump sum of money and who provide employment under the approved project to another unemployed person without the right to cash **benefits** for unemployment are also provided with additional funds in the form of a credit for qualification in the subject of the business activity under the approved business project and/or its management.





**In 2025, the implementation
of the measures of the
Employment Promotion Act
(EPA) supporting
entrepreneurship among
unemployed persons, which
are financed with funds from
the state budget for active
labor market policy,
*continues...***

More information on the official website of the
Employment Agency

<https://www.az.government.bg/pages/nasarchavane-zapochvaneto-na-samostoyatelna-stopanska-deynost-kato-mikropredpriatie/>



Also, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy is about to approve a new two-year action plan for the social and solidarity economy, where special attention will be paid to measures for youth entrepreneurship.



Currently, the MLSP has built and maintains a network of **six regional centers** for the development of the social economy, in whose activities, according to the new action plan, youth entrepreneurship will also be included

In these centers, young entrepreneurs will be able to **receive advice on their entrepreneurial activity** - relations with local authorities, labor legislation and taxation.

Entrepreneurship support centers



The idea is for these regional centers to be formed as **business incubators**, both for young and social entrepreneurs.



Youth entrepreneurship will also be able to benefit from the already established networks for the promotion of social entrepreneurship, which include higher education institutions, civil organizations and various business structures



THANK YOU



EVALUATING YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMS

YEPA WORKSHOP 6: YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP POLICY DESIGN AND DELIVERY

Petra Edina Reszkető, Budapest Institute

June 2025

A historical map of Budapest, Hungary, showing the city's layout with various districts and landmarks. The map is in a sepia tone with red lines indicating roads or boundaries. Labels in Hungarian are visible, such as 'Istenhegy', 'Rákospálva', and 'Fehérúti dűlő'.

EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE SHOWS...

Entrepreneurship
programmes (EPs)

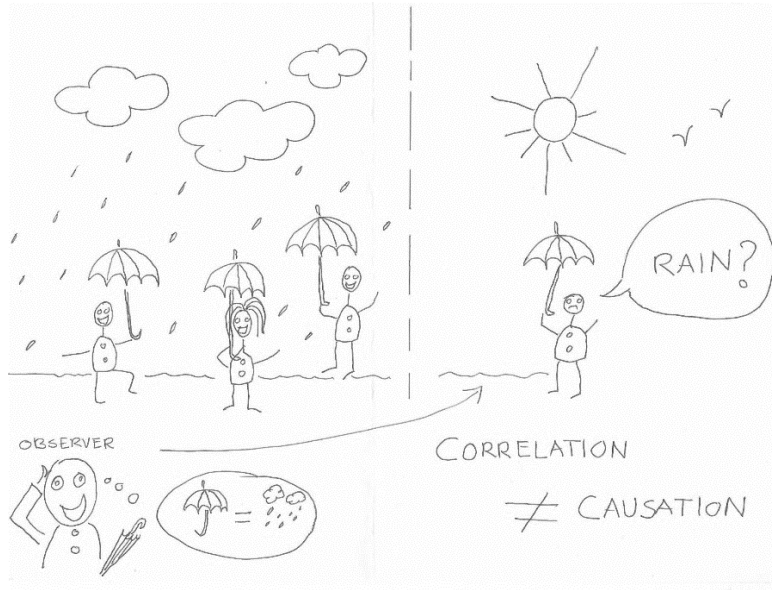
can be effective

- Higher entrepreneurship rates (employment) rates
- Better access to finance
- Improved skills & creativity fostered

BUT

- Outcomes vary
- Unintended consequences (e.g., steered away from competitive advantage)
- Even the positive impacts can fade over time

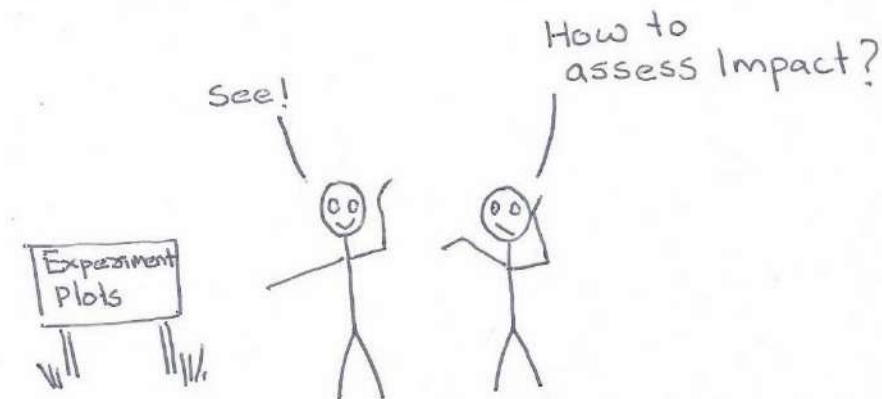
HOW TO ENSURE EFFECTIVENESS & SUSTAINABILITY?



“In God we trust, rest bring data”

Edward Deming

➤ **Adopt an evidence-based approach**





Q1

**Have you ever run
an evaluation or impact assessment project?**



Q2

Why did you run this evaluation / IA project?

YOUR NEED FOR EVALUATION – HOW TO PROVE ALL THIS?

Prove that donors's money was used as planned

- Monitoring inputs, outcome and outputs, the performance of the target group

- ✂ Easy to do in-house
- ✂ Design and use of indicators that focus on key inputs/outcomes and results
- ✂ Standard, simple statistics based on monitoring information

Prove that your approach is adequate & effective (worthy of funding)

- Approach: Intervention logic (*theory of change*)
- Evaluation *versus* Counterfactual Impact Evaluation (CIE)

- ✂ Ex ante evaluation
- ✂ Rely on the support of an external expert
- ✂ Impact is calculated as difference in outcomes of participants and control group using administrative data or survey on participants
- ✂ May be difficult to find suitable control group due to design of the program or ethical concerns
- ✂ May be costly and difficult to collect data

Identify ways to make your approach more effective

- Testing A/B variations of your approach/intervention logic using CIE

- ✂ Compares outcomes for two groups of participants randomly allocated to two different versions of the program
- ✂ Good to involve experts in designing random allocation, otherwise easy to do in-house

Show potential magnitude of wider /long-term social impact

- Social Return on Investment (SROI)

- ✂ Calculation of potential net (monetary) gains based on existing evidence, assumptions and data on the outcomes and costs of the program
- ✂ Useful to combine with CIE, esp., if existing evidence is limited or inconclusive
- ✂ Reliability depends on quality of existing evidence

HOW TO PROVE ALL THIS?

Prove that donors's money was used as planned

- **Monitoring inputs, outcome and outputs, the performance of the target group**

✂ **Easy to do in-house**

- ✂ **Design and use of indicators that focus on key inputs/outcomes and results (beware of perverse incentives)**

E.g., number of young people registered
% received training / mentoring
% dropping out
% completing training/ mentoring
% starting a business registration
% running a business within 3 months after program
% running a business 12/18/24 months after program (OR is employed)

Prove that your approach is adequate & effective (worthy of funding)

- **Approach: Intervention logic (*theory of change*)**
- **Evaluation *versus* Counterfactual Impact Evaluation (CIE)**

✂ ***Ex ante* evaluation**

✂ **Rely on the validation by an external expert**

- ✂ Impact is calculated as difference in outcomes of participants and control group using administrative data or survey on participants

Identify ways to make your approach more effective

- **Testing A/B variations of your approach/intervention logic using CIE**

✂ Compares outcomes for two groups of participants randomly allocated to two different versions of the program

✂ Good to involve experts in designing random allocation, otherwise easy to do in-house

Show potential magnitude of wider /long-term social impact

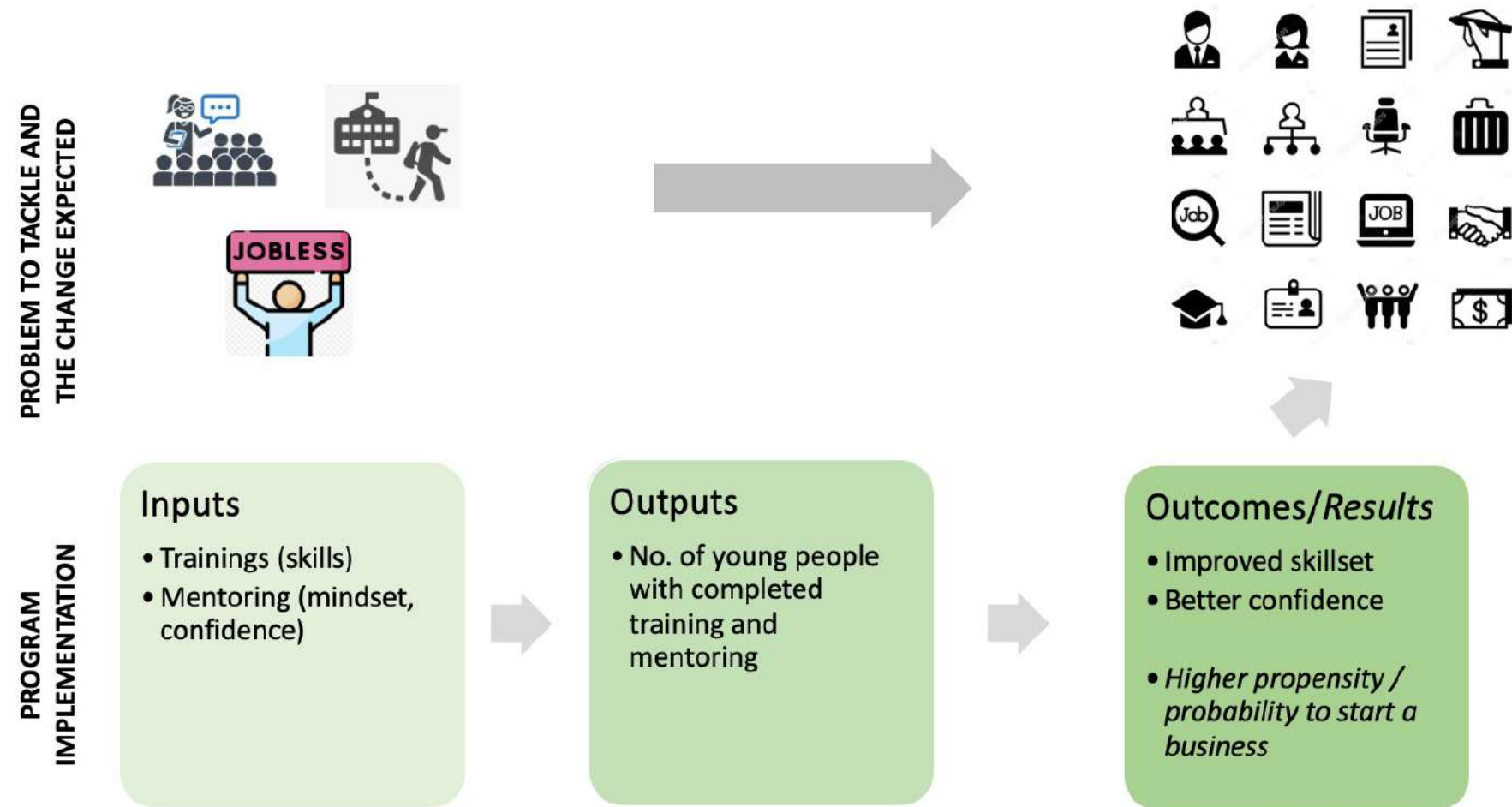
- **Social Return on Investment (SROI)**

✂ Calculation of potential net (monetary) gains based on existing evidence, assumptions and data on the outcomes and costs of the program

✂ Useful to combine with CIE, esp., if existing evidence is limited or inconclusive

✂ Reliability depends on quality of existing evidence

CORE EP: INTERVENTION LOGIC (*THEORY OF CHANGE*)



HOW TO PROVE ALL THIS?

Prove that donors's money was used as planned

- **Monitoring inputs, outcome and outputs, the performance of the target group**

- ✂ Easy to do in-house
- ✂ Design and use of indicators that focus on key inputs/outcomes and results
- ✂ Standard, simple statistics based on monitoring information

Prove that your approach is adequate & effective (worthy of funding)

- **Approach: Intervention logic (*theory of change*)**
- **Evaluation *versus* Counterfactual Impact Evaluation (CIE)**

- ✂ Ex ante evaluation
- ✂ Rely on the support of an external expert
- ✂ **Impact is calculated as difference in outcomes/ results of participants and control group using administrative data or survey on participants**

Identify ways to make your approach more effective

- **Testing A/B variations of your approach/intervention logic using CIE**

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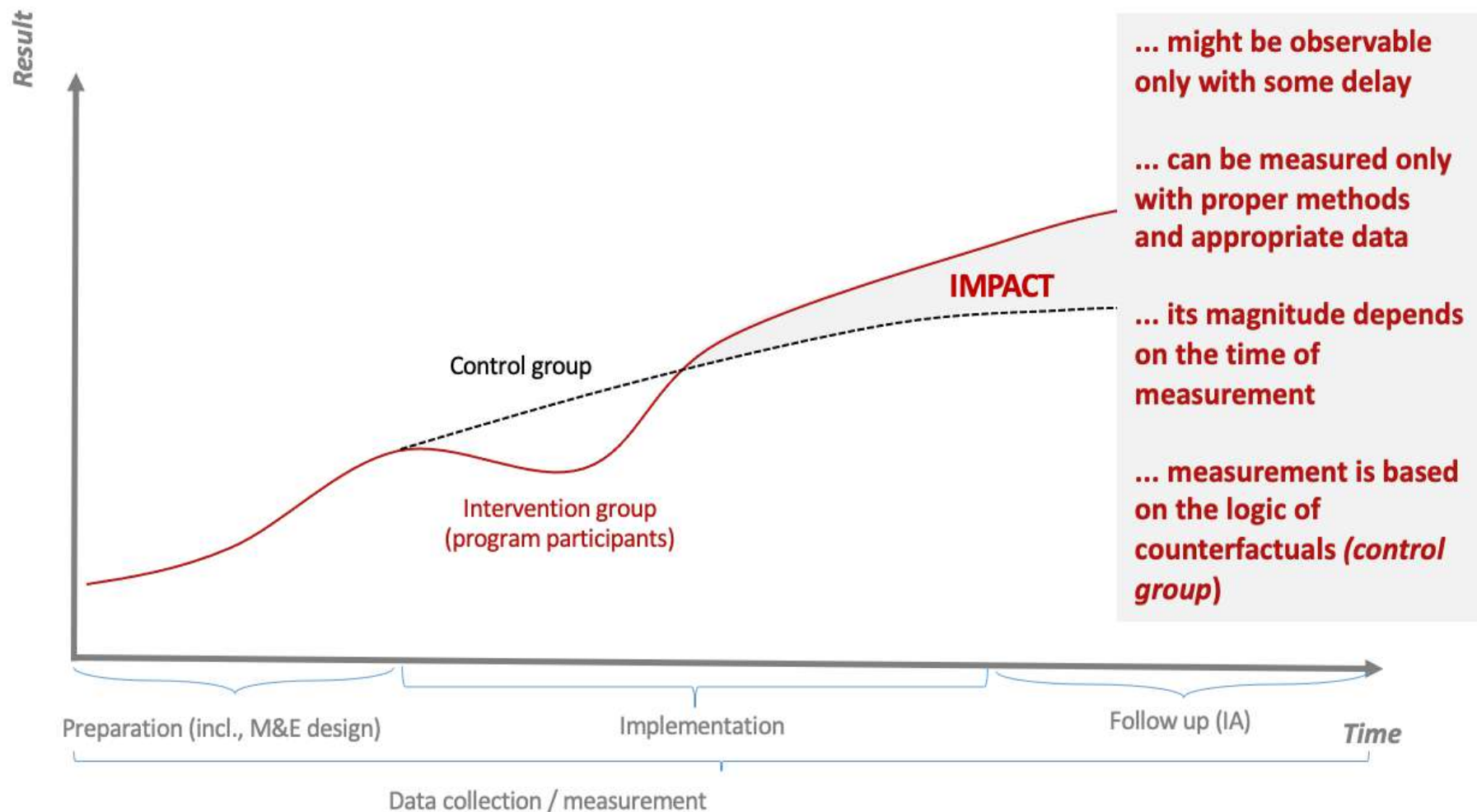
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COUNTERFACTUAL IMPACT EVALUATION

*Control group = on average similar to participants in all characteristics that may influence results, except that they are **not participants***



HOW TO FIND THE CONTROL GROUP?

Ideally, by experimental design!

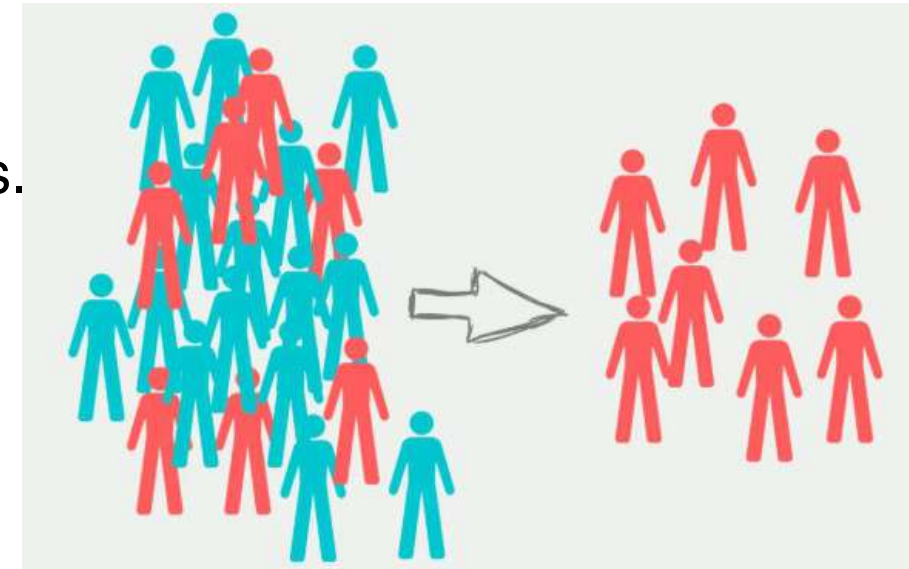
Of all CIE methods, **randomized controlled trial (RCT)** is the most reliable, as it helps to eliminate selection bias.

Participants are often different from non-participants in important ways:

- more motivated
- better informed /connected
- better skilled

In this case comparing participants to non-participants would lead to *overestimating the impact*.

Randomization ensures that the composition of the intervention and control group is the same. Random selection is usually the first best, but there are other quasi-experimental/ statistical methods, as well.



A historical map of Budapest, Hungary, showing the city's layout with various districts and landmarks. The map is in a sepia tone with red lines indicating roads or boundaries. Labels in Hungarian are visible, such as 'Rákospalota', 'Fehérvári út', and 'Istvánmező'.

CHALLENGES, CONCERNS - SOLUTIONS ☺

Challenges, concerns

Difficulty to find suitable control group due to design of the program / ethical concerns

Ethical concerns (randomization)

Costly to collect data (esp., *ex post*)

Time-consuming to collect data

Lack of analytical capacity, measurement problems

Solutions

Still, chance to validate the *ToC* by external evaluators

Policy for repeated intervention (entry with a time lag)

Think about evaluation/CIE during the fundraising/program design phase
Plus, start data collection early on(!)

Use existing administrative data (PES) and cooperate with experts early on

Look for external experts and include M&E design into the budgeting



NO “ONE SIZE FITS ALL” – TARGETED INTERVENTION

Barriers young people face differ significantly across markets, countries, even regions and resources; **plus** youth is a very diverse group, different segments of youth have different needs and require different support system

- Think about specific age groups, literacy levels, language / communication skills, different types of entrepreneurs and stages of development of the enterprise when identifying target beneficiaries

While there are core elements of an EP (training, business development support and access to finance), the specificities of the local context will define the main problems to address; **plus** it will also determine the solutions

- Think about contextual factors that may impact your outcomes/ results, *but* are beyond your control (e.g., their access to public transport, financial institutions, public attitudes/ discrimination)

A historical map of Budapest, Hungary, showing the city's layout with various districts and landmarks. The map is in a sepia tone with red lines indicating roads or boundaries. Labels in Hungarian are visible, such as 'Istenhegy', 'Rákospálva', and 'Fehérvári út'.

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Further, useful resources:

Evaluation Community: <https://www.evalcommunity.com/>

Better Evaluation: <https://www.betterevaluation.org/>

JRC Counterfactual Impact Evaluation toolkit:

https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/projects-and-activities/counterfactual-impact-evaluation_en

Competence Centre on Microeconomic Evaluation:

https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/microeconomic-evaluation_en

A historical map of Budapest, Hungary, showing the city's layout with various districts and landmarks. The map is in a sepia tone and includes labels for places like 'Istenhegy', 'Rákospálva', and 'Fehérúti út'.

FURTHER, USEFUL RESOURCES

ACE Evaluation Toolkit. Australian Centre for Evaluation, Australian Government. (*Very practical online resource with templates for authorities on how to commission evaluations, section on impact evaluation, etc.* <https://evaluation.treasury.gov.au/index.php/toolkit/commonwealth-evaluation-toolkit>)

ILO 2018. Guide on measuring decent jobs for youth. (*A guide providing basic understanding of quantitative research methods*)

https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_emp/documents/instructionalmaterial/wcms_627313.pdf

World Bank 2016. Impact evaluation in practice. (*A practical handbook on impact evaluation methods for policy makers and development practitioners*)

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/sief-trust-fund/publication/impact-evaluation-in-practice>

European Commission 2021. Design and commissioning of counterfactual impact evaluations. (*A practical guidance for ESF managing authorities*)

<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/dd4a4fc7-42a3-11ec-89db-01aa75ed71a1>



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Youth Business International (YBI)

Youth Entrepreneurship Policy Guide

Who we are

Our goal is to drive economic growth and job creation through supporting and scaling youth-led businesses globally.

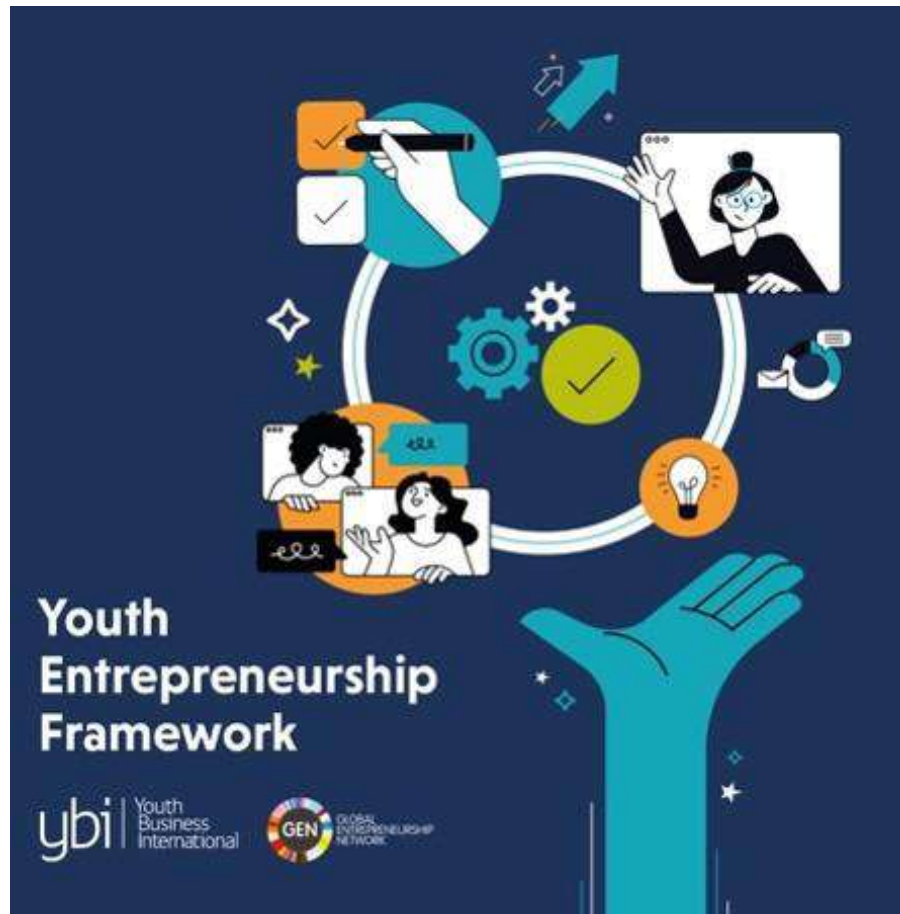
- We are the global leader in youth entrepreneurship. For over 25 years we've combined global influence with local knowledge and experience.
- All work with young people is delivered by and designed in consultation with local experts and organisations enabling us to successfully deliver global programmes with bespoke solutions in varied context.
- Our model enables us to deliver a wide range of solutions that span geographies, respond to thematic priorities and evolve with new technologies and fresh challenges.

Advocacy, as a global network

- Guide and shape - not dictate
- Locally rooted experience and expertise - backed by a global power-house
- Broad enough to influence key actors in the ecosystem
- Narrow enough to be a practical tool to be used by our members



The Framework



- In collaboration with the Global Entrepreneurship Network
- Building on UNCTAD's policy guide
- A new insight into the challenges of and barriers into youth entrepreneurship
- Present suggestions for practical support and policy changes needed to harness the powerful potential of young entrepreneurs

Goals and methodology

Goals

- Recommendations for the entire youth entrepreneurial ecosystem without delving into the detail
- A comprehensive overview of the levers available to policy makers
- Enable ESOs and other actors to identify areas of weakness of support
- Showcase successful youth-focused policy initiatives

Methodology

- Extensive interviews with international organizations and experts
- Comprehensive literature review
- Building on UNCTAD's 2015 Policy Guide
- 50 targeted solutions for policymakers to consider
- Detailed policy case studies from the GEN Atlas

Emerging trends

Youth Employment

- Global youth unemployment rate 13%
- 20% of young people not in employment, education, or training (NEET)
- Entrepreneurship as a solution: 40% of youth aspire to launch a business
- ILO estimates tackling the issue could contribute between 4.4% and 7% to global GDP (approx. \$3.7 trillion)

Meaningful Work

- New research shows there is growing desire amongst young people to find work that aligns with their social values
- 86% of Gen Z and 89% of Millennials prioritize purpose in work
- Entrepreneurs under 35 are more than twice as likely to say their business exists to solve a societal problem, compared to over 35s

Green & social entrepreneurship

- Entrepreneurs under 35 are much more likely to prioritize promoting diversity and social good over profit than those over 35 (41% vs 25%)
- 73% of Gen Z and 77% of Millennials are taking action to reduce their impact on the environment

Barriers to youth entrepreneurship

Skills & opportunity

- Lack of self-belief amongst many young people that they are capable of becoming entrepreneurs
- Limited opportunities to develop skills
- Economic and time constraints
- Underserved communities excluded from entrepreneurial activities

Business Environment

- High barriers to business registrations
- Unnecessarily complex regulatory procedures in areas such as licensing and taxation
- Legal consequences of business failure
- Fragmented advice and guidance for new entrepreneurs

Access to finance

- Stringent creditworthiness criteria and collateral demands
- Low levels of financial literacy
- Complicated application processes for financial support
- Inappropriate financial products and services for young people

Access to support

- Lack of quality mentorship
- Limited support for commercializing ideas
- Access to physical workspace and technical facilities
- Underdeveloped networks
- Can become "trapped" in the youth ecosystem
- Inadequate support for green + social

Next steps for policymakers



**Ecosystem
audits**



**Engage with
youth
entrepreneurs**



**Coordinate
between
departments**



**Launch a national
entrepreneurship
strategy**



**Integrate with
other national
strategies**

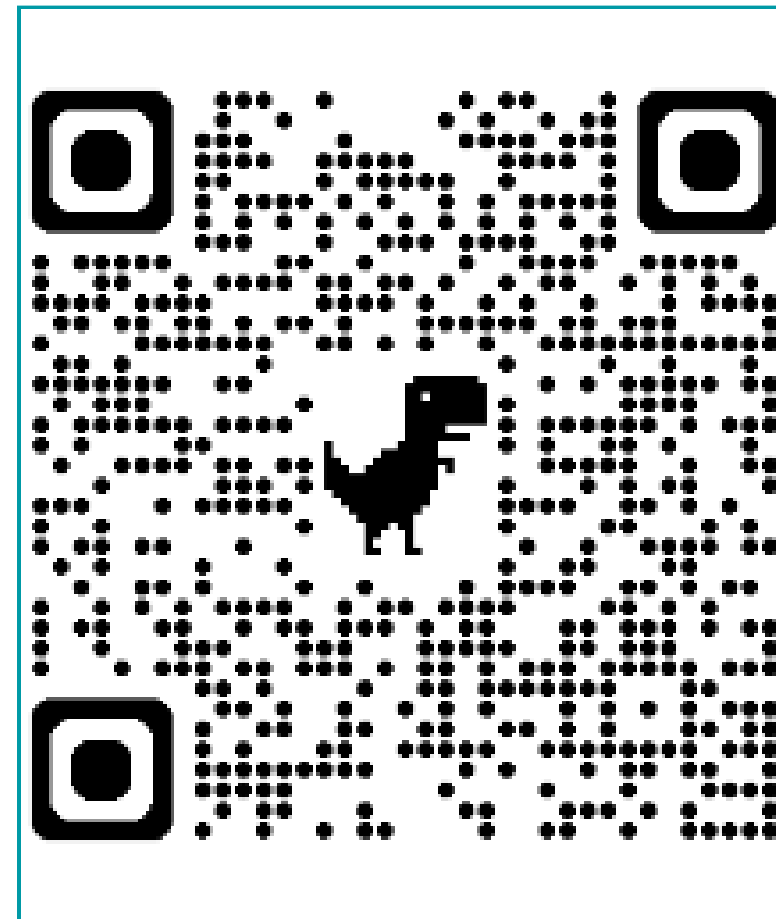
Additional takeaways

- 1. Linking networks:** Important to link youth networks to more experienced networks to avoid young entrepreneurs getting “trapped” within the youth ecosystem
- 2. Economic opportunity:** The financial freedom to start a business is a unique issue that needs its own solutions that are distinct from barriers relating to access to capital
- 3. Emphasize teamwork:** Nurturing diverse teams of co-founders can have a greater impact than focusing on individual entrepreneurs.
- 4. Early exposure:** Entrepreneurial behavior is a muscle that needs to be trained. The earlier young people are exposed to entrepreneurship the more confident, open and ready they will be.

Thank you and stay in touch

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 www.youthbusiness.org

 Youth Business International (YBI)

 /youthbusiness

 @YouthBizInt

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REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA
Ministarstvo rada, mirovinskoga
sustava, obitelji i socijalne politike

Designing the microfinance scheme in Croatia

YEPA Workshop 6 – Youth Entrepreneurship Policy Design and Delivery

18 June 2025



Sufinancira
Europska unija

Ex-ante Assessment for Appropriate Support from the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) through Financial Instruments 2021-2027

- ❑ The assessment aims to justify the use of financial instruments (FIs) within the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) to support key priorities from the Programme Efficient Human Resources 2021-2027
- ❑ Financial allocation for financial instruments is planned within Priority 1 - **"Inclusive Labour Market and Employment Promotion"**
- ❑ A key objective under this priority is "Greater access to employment and activation measures for all job seekers, **especially young people**, in particular through the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, for the long-term unemployed and disadvantaged groups in the labour market and for inactive persons, as well as by promoting self-employment and the social economy,,
- ❑ This explicitly positions youth as a central focus for intervention through this microfinance scheme

Ex-ante Assessment for Appropriate Support from the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) through Financial Instruments 2021-2027

❑ European Commission's Country Report for Croatia (2022):

- ❑ The rate of young people not in employment, education, or training (NEET) has continuously increased since 2019 (2019 - 14.2%, 2020 - 14.6%, 2021 - 14.9%; EU average in 2021 – 12.2%)
- ❑ Prevention and outreach measures for inactive NEETs remain underdeveloped
- ❑ The employment rate of recently graduated higher education students was one of the lowest in the EU (2020 - 77.2% in Croatia compared to an EU average of 83.7%)
- ❑ A notable trend in Croatia is that **people often start businesses out of necessity** (earning a living, as there are no other employment opportunities) - these individuals are often less prepared for entrepreneurial activities
- ❑ **European Commission's Country Report for Croatia (2024):** vulnerable groups, including **young people**, continue to face persistent barriers to accessing the labour market and securing quality employment, which constrains overall labour participation and productivity

Microfinance schemes in Croatia

- ❑ **Self-employment scheme** (Croatian Employment Service – CES) = provides financial support (grants) to unemployed individuals who decide to start their own business (first-time entrepreneurs have some advantage during the scoring process) - high level of survival of businesses developed through the measure
- ❑ **ESF+ Micro-loans for growth and employment**
 - ❑ Microfinance scheme designed to support targeted groups with the greatest difficulty accessing financial products
 - ❑ Good complement to the self-employment measure
 - ❑ Young people are specifically identified as a vulnerable group for employment support within the framework of this micro-loan (18 – 29 years)

Key features of the financial instrument (1)

ESF+ micro loan for growth and employment

Eligible final recipients	Newly established companies (up to three years in existence) (including natural persons with the intention of establishing a business entity)	Companies whose owners are members of following vulnerable groups: • persons with disabilities • persons over 55 years of age • persons aged 18 to 29 years • persons without completed high school education
Amount	1.000,00 to 25.000,00 EUR	
Interest rate	Base rate for Croatia calculated in accordance with the Communication from the Commission on the revision of the method for setting the reference and discount rates (OJ EU, C 14, dated 19.1.2008) reduced by 2.5 percentage points (not less than 0.5 percentage points), fixed for the entire loan repayment period (currently = <u>0,5%</u>).	

Key features of the financial instrument (2)

ESF+ micro loan for growth and employment

Capital rebate (FI/grant combination)	Amount of write-off	• Up to 30% of the loan amount • It is not possible to write off the loan amount that has already been repaid
	Write-off conditions	• Additional employment of a person who is a member of a vulnerable group (full-time contract, write-off can be claimed after a minimum of 1 year of employment of the vulnerable person) • Eligible categories of vulnerable groups: ○ persons with disabilities ○ persons over 55 years of age ○ long-term unemployed (persons up to 25 years old - 6 months unemployed, 25 years and older - 12 months unemployed) ○ young people up to 29 years of age without work experience • Proper repayment of the loan in question

Conclusion

- ❑ The ESF+ financial instrument under the Programme Efficient Human Resources 2021-2027 places a **strong emphasis on supporting youth** in Croatia
- ❑ ESF+ micro loan is expected to **contribute to preserving existing jobs and creating new ones** by encouraging investments in micro and small enterprises
- ❑ In addition, by **combining micro loans with performance-based incentives for employment, the microfinance financial instrument** aims to tackle critical labour market challenges faced by young people (among other vulnerable groups)

THANK YOU!

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<https://esf.hr/esfplus/>