



ΗΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

## Best Practices for NEETs: description and evaluation of the YOUTHShare project

**YOUTHShare** | A Place for Youth in Mediterranean EEA:  
Resilient and Sharing Economies for NEETs

<http://www.youthshare-project.org/>

### Best Practices Report

Coordinator

Stelios Gialis (UoA)

Authors

Evanthia Dova (NUP)

Georgios Chatzichristos (UoA)

Ioannis Papageorgiou (UoA)

Ioannis Pissourios (NUP)

Maria Pina Triunfo (ST)

Miriam Judit Gómez Romero (UCAM)

Nektaria Marava (NESC)

Strand Anne Hege (FAFO)

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

## PREFACE

This report has been created in the framework of the project “A Place for Youth in Mediterranean European Economic Area (EEA): Social and Sharing Economy for the youth Not Employed, in Education or Training (NEETs)” (YOUTHShare) which is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment. The YOUTHShare project (<http://www.youthshare-project.org/>) aims at reducing youth unemployment and inactivity across regions of the Mediterranean EEA, especially in the coastal and island regions of Greece, Italy, Spain, and Cyprus. The project is coordinated by a variety of stakeholders (universities, research centres, Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs), enterprises, etc.) during the time frame of 2018-2022. The report is structured as follows:

Chapter 1 outlines the current situation of NEETs in the EEA Mediterranean region, i.e., basic definitions, a comprehensive literature review, and European Union (EU) labour market integration practises. Similarly, Chapter 2 presents the situation of the social economy in the Mediterranean region. At the analytical level, a careful overview of the social economy sector in each of the countries studied-Greece, Cyprus, Italy, and Spain-is provided. Chapter 3 describes the YOUTHShare project, its objectives, challenges and structure, and the project's goals and methods. In the following Chapter 4, an ex-post evaluation of the YOUTHShare project is developed based on two axes: a summative evaluation based on standardised measures and outcomes, and a developmental evaluation, which is the dynamic part of the evaluation that incorporates qualitative data into ongoing measures. The final Chapter 5 discusses the findings and results of the project and derives valuable lessons for policy makers.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

## GLOSSARY

CSR: Corporate Social Responsibility

EEA: European Economic Area

EPSR: European Pillar of Social Rights

NEET: Not Employed, in Education or Training

NGO: Non-governmental Organisation

NPO: Non-profit Organisation (also: Not-for-profit or Nonprofit organisation)

SSE: Social and Solidarity Economy

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

## Contents

Abstract .....	7
<b>Chapter 1 The existing situation of NEETs in the Mediterranean EEA: an overview</b>	<b>8</b>
1.1 Definitions/ literature review .....	8
1.2 Labour market integration policies: The EU Policy Framework on Youth and NEET Employment from 2008 to the present.....	10
1.2.1 2005-2010: The European Youth Pact and Youth on the Move .....	11
1.2.2 2011-2012: The Youth Opportunities Initiative and Towards a Rich Job Recovery .....	11
1.2.3 2013 onwards: The Youth Guarantee basis: the Youth Employment Package and the Youth Employment Initiative .....	12
1.2.4 The Europe 2030 strategy and the Reinforced Youth Guarantee: under the threat of a new crisis.....	13
<b>Chapter 2 Social Economy in the Mediterranean EEA: an overview.....</b>	<b>15</b>
2.1 Greece .....	16
2.1.1 An overview of the legislation.....	16
2.1.2 Examples of Social Enterprises in Greece .....	19
2.2 Cyprus .....	21
2.2.1 An overview of the legislation.....	21
2.2.2 Examples of Social Enterprises in Cyprus .....	23
2.3 Italy.....	25
2.3.1 An overview of the legislation.....	25
2.3.2 Examples of social Enterprises in Italy .....	26
2.4 Spain.....	29
2.4.1 An overview of the legislation.....	29
2.4.2 Examples of Social Enterprises in Spain .....	30
2.5 Conclusion.....	32
<b>Chapter 3 The YOUTHShare project.....</b>	<b>34</b>
3.1 An overview of the YOUTHShare project and its background.....	34
3.2 The Outcomes and Outputs of the YOUTHShare Project .....	36
3.3 The YOUTHShare project in Working Packages .....	37
3.3.1 WP1: Stimulate Trans-locally A: A transnational Research Network on the study of Youth Employment policies in MED EEA .....	37

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

3.3.2	WP2. Stimulate Trans-locally B: A transnational Employment Centre delivering tailored engagement for youth employment in social enterprises.....	38
3.3.3	WP3. Building European A: Delivering toolkits and IT platforms for training, counselling, job matching and skills utilizing based on expertise knowledge and EU best practices .....	39
3.3.4	WP4. Building European B: Training, apprenticeships and mobility schemes in social economy and resilient sectors .....	40
3.3.5	WP5. Spread Globally: Best practices for NEETs identified and implemented through start up empowerment in social entrepreneurship and new sharing economy structures .....	41
3.4	The YOUTHShare partners .....	42
3.4.1	The consortium.....	42
3.4.2	The partners and their roles in the project.....	43
<b>Chapter 4 The YOUTHShare evaluation .....</b>		<b>52</b>
4.1	Introduction .....	52
4.2	Summative Evaluation .....	54
4.2.1	YOUTHShare Transnational Research Network and YOUTHShare researchers' work.....	54
4.2.2	The work and deliverables of Employment Centers and Key Account Managers (WP2).....	58
4.2.3	The toolkits produced for outreach and training activities (WP3) ....	63
4.3	Developmental evaluation.....	72
4.3.1	Introduction.....	72
4.3.2	Methodology .....	73
4.3.3	Insights from the interviews.....	74
4.4	Conclusions .....	80
<b>Chapter 5 Discussion and policy recommendations .....</b>		<b>82</b>
5.1	YOUTHShare Transnational Research Network <i>and</i> YOUTHShare researchers' work: .....	82
5.2	The work and deliverables of Employment Centers and Key Account Managers .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
5.3	Outreach and training activities.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
5.4	The training and the internship's/mobility process and implementation across partner's countries.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
5.5	Conclusions .....	90
<b>References.....</b>		<b>93</b>
<b>Annex 1: Interviews scripts with key actors of the project .....</b>		<b>101</b>

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

## Abstract

Significantly high unemployment rates are present in many of the Mediterranean regions of the European Economic Area (EEA). The statistics, however, focus on specific qualitative traits. The economically inactive (NEETs - Not in Employment, Education or Training) and particularly young people between the ages of 25 and 29 within the general unemployed population confront serious economic and social issues. The bigger picture does not merely include youth unemployment. A group of "very-hard-hit" economies from the current financial crisis includes countries in southern Europe. A "toxic cocktail" of high unemployment, considerable underrepresentation of younger generations, and sluggish growth in the wake of the recession affects several countries, but especially Greece, Italy, Spain, and Cyprus. By improving young NEETs' abilities in translocally resilient economic sectors like agri-food production and related circular economies, the YOUTHShare initiative seeks to reduce youth unemployment in coastal and island regions of the Mediterranean EEA. In order to lessen economic inequality and promote social integration, a multi-scale technique and practice was used to improve the potential of social entrepreneurship and the sharing economy. Trans-local, European, and global scales of intervention were identified by YOUTHShare as part of an integrated methodology that unraveled from local to global and back in a densely woven multi-level intervention. The current report identifies and analyses the YOUTHShare project, in terms of the best practices that emerged for NEETs' training and work. The dynamic (summative and developmental) YOUTHShare evaluation provides the impetus for policy recommendations, as well as a broader discussion on future policies, programming and research strategies to be undertaken.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

# Chapter 1 The existing situation of NEETs in the Mediterranean EEA: an overview

## 1.1 Definitions/ literature review

The transformation of the social and economic environment in Europe and around the globe over the past decades and the recent recession (2008-2012) have set the ground for new types of work and employment conditions. Changes in the contemporary labour markets have disproportionately affected young people, who face significant difficulties in getting and/or maintaining a job after school, when, at the same time, the rates of early school leaving have been rising in certain areas<sup>1</sup>. A successful transition from school to further education, training or employment is, however, considered a critical step towards social inclusion, financial independence and improved future job prospects (Pemberton, 2008). Therefore, in response, the European Commission has developed policies and programmes to promote education and training (European Parliament, 2008), whilst researchers have been studying this phenomenon of youth's "withdrawal" from conventional social and economic structures.

In this context, the acronym "NEET" is used to describe this group of people who are 'Not in Employment, Education or Training'. The term made its first appearance in 1999 in the UK in a discussion of youth marginalization (Great Britain et al., 1999), and encompasses both the unemployed and the economically inactive populations. Originally it was used for the 16-18 age group, but it has since been broadened to include young people aged 15-29 (Eurofound, Mascherini, et al., 2016), and may be even further broadened to take in people up to 34 years old in order to reflect the extension of this precariousness into adulthood (Vancea & Utzet, 2018). The NEET phenomenon has serious financial and social consequences. In the field of economy, it signifies a loss of human productivity, an added consideration in welfare schemes and a hindrance to economic growth (Eurofound et al., 2012). Socially, it suggests a condition of prolonged unproductivity, which sets obstacles in improving the human

---

<sup>1</sup> The economic downturn related to the COVID-19 pandemic is another aggravating factor, but, as a fairly recent phenomenon, its consequences have not been adequately studied to include in this report. According to Eurostat (2022b), the beginning of the pandemic in 2020 triggered a rise in the share of young adults not in education, employment or training, after a continuous decrease between 2013 (the previous crisis) and 2019.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment



capital, and may lead to long-term unemployment or precarious work, social exclusion, family instability and delinquency or even mental health problems (Quintano et al., 2018).

In the countries of the European Union, NEET rates vary considerably. For 2021, and among the countries involved in the YOUTHShare project, Spain has the lowest NEET rate (14.1%), which is a little higher than the EU average (13.1%). In Cyprus and Greece the NEET rates rise to 15.4% and 17.3% respectively, while Italy has the highest EU rate at 23.1% (Eurostat, 2022b). For the 15-29 age group, the European Union has set an EU-level target to lower the share of NEETs to under 9% by 2030 (Eurostat, 2022b).

The NEET classification may be useful in policy discussions, but it is applied on a very diverse group that needs extensive analysis to be understood and effectively approached. A series of individual characteristics factor in the NEET condition (e.g., gender, race, place of residence -rural or urban location-, level of educational attainment, family/ economic/ social background, origin -having been born in a country within or outside the EU-, disability, other temporal factors/ life situation) and shape a variety of profiles for NEET youth. Structural factors (e.g., globalisation and neo-liberalism, economic recession, educational system, normalisation of flexibility in the labour market) also have a significant impact and cannot be excluded from any policy discussions (Paabort & Beilmann, 2021).

In this framework, at least seven subgroups of young NEETs can be identified (Emmanouil et al., 2020, pp. 21–22):

- Re-entrants: people who have recently attended an education or training programme and will soon re-enter employment, education or training.
- Short-term unemployed: they have been unemployed for less than a year, are actively seeking employment and are available to start within short notice. This group is considered as moderately vulnerable.
- Long-term unemployed: they have been unemployed for more than a year, are actively seeking employment and are available to start within short notice. This group is considered as highly vulnerable.
- Unavailable due to illness or disability: this group is not seeking employment and cannot start a job within short notice.
- Carers: people in this group are not seeking employment and cannot have a paying job because they have to care for children or adults, have other family responsibilities, or cannot afford child or adult care in order to join the labour market.
- Discouraged workers: this group comprises those who have been disheartened by the labour market and have stopped seeking work.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

- Other inactive: an even more diverse group, whose members range from the most vulnerable to the most privileged, who have chosen alternative lifestyles (e.g., artists).

This classification is based on the degree of young people's involvement with employment, education or training, but overlooks more individual characteristics which form other subgroups of young NEETs and which play an important role in this engagement (or disengagement). In this context, the YOUTHShare project has focused on groups that, although quite noticeable in the Southern European regions, have so far remained in the margins: the 25-29-year-old age group, where the NEET share is considerably higher than in the younger age groups (Eurostat, 2022b), the inactive young women, the non-registered NEETs, and the refugees or migrant NEETs, where the NEET rate is even higher<sup>2</sup>. This suggests that these target subgroups are among the most vulnerable ones within a population group that is already at risk. In particular, the target groups were further refined as:

- Low-skilled women, preferably aged between 25 and 29 years: this group is amongst the most vulnerable as, among others, women receive few benefits from the weak social welfare systems of the MED EEA.
- Migrants, especially asylum-seekers and refugees between 25 and 29 years old who live in the Detention Centres of the coastal and insular MED EEA regions. This group faces many strains in terms of living conditions and employment opportunities.

## 1.2 Labour market integration policies: The EU Policy Framework on Youth and NEET Employment from 2008 to the present

In times of socio-economic crises, such as the current one, youth employment is severely strained. Scholars attribute this to structural factors such as wages, education or experience (see Artner, 2013) or to a cycle (O'Higgins, 2001), but the impact of unemployment for youth, especially when it is persistent, is discouragement and labour market inactivity. Youth employment is therefore a key concern of the

---

<sup>2</sup> Research within the EU countries concluded that young women are more likely to find themselves in NEET status than men –a chance that increases with age (Eurostat, 2022b), and that young migrants have a 70% higher chance of becoming NEET than young people from the country under study (Eurofound et al., 2012). Also, the NEET rate of women immigrants is much higher than that of native females (Eurofound, Mascherini, et al., 2016).

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

European Union, and has been targeted with a series of recommendations and policies from 2008 to today.

### 1.2.1 2005-2010: The European Youth Pact and Youth on the Move

Even before the 2008 crisis, in order to achieve the Europe 2010 targets for growth and employment, the EU recommended measures to increase employment supply and flexibility, to address the skills mismatch and to invest in human capital (Council Recommendation 2005/601/EC, 2005). In this framework, and to tackle the demographic problems of an aging Europe, the Council adopted The European Youth Pact, which consisted of three courses of action: i) employment, integration, and social advancement; ii) education, training, and mobility; and iii) reconciliation of family life and working life (European Commission, 2005). For the first course of action, the recommendations aim to attract young people into employment, training and entrepreneurship. For the second course of action, education and training are to be supported through mobility and cooperation between Member States. Lastly, for the third course of action, child-friendly and equal partnership policies are encouraged. Further reforms are suggested to shape more inclusive labour markets, to create more adaptable workers and enterprises, and to increase investment in human capital. These recommendations remained, however, vague and were to be supported by measures taken at the national and local levels of each Member State.

The 2008 debt crisis shifted the EU policies attention to matters of national finances and underscored the need for increasing coordination and monitoring among Member States. The European Economic Recovery Plan proposed two main directions out of the crisis: supporting purchasing power to boost markets, and reinforcing Europe's competitiveness through "smart" investment in skills, operations and infrastructure oriented to green energy and clean technology (European Commission, 2008). Within this context, the Youth on the Move Initiative (European Commission, 2010) contained four themes: i) encouraging lifelong learning, also through non-formal or informal activities, ii) increasing participation in higher education, iii) enhancing mobility in education and training within the EU, and iv) improving the employment situation of young people by facilitating the transition from school to work. A "European Vacancy Monitor" was set in place to track job and skill trends in the EU, and a "Youth Guarantee" measure was suggested, to ensure that all young people would be in a job or further education within four months of leaving school.

### 1.2.2 2011-2012: The Youth Opportunities Initiative and Towards a Rich Job Recovery

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

The Youth Opportunities Initiative was launched in 2011, while youth unemployment in the EU rose over 20% and even reached 40% in countries most severely hit by the crisis (European Commission, 2011). Fearing “a lost generation”, the policy included all NEETs up to 25 years of age, and drew the attention of Member States to tackling youth unemployment and early school leaving, through national and regional policies supported by the EU. Again, this was a set of suggestions and guidelines that each Member State should take into account when planning their own policies on supporting the transition of young people from school to work, and that would be further refined in following discussions with each Member State.

A second Communication “Towards a Rich Job Recovery” followed in 2012 (European Commission, 2012a) to propose three basic fields of action: job creation, restoration of the labour markets dynamics and the enhancement of EU governance. The recommendations for job creation involved hiring subsidies for new recruitment to target the young or the long-term unemployed, reducing the tax wedge on labour, promoting self-employment and the social economy, aligning salaries with productivity development and transforming informal or undeclared work into regular employment.

At the same time, a Eurofound review drew a comprehensive picture of the NEET phenomenon in the EU and provided data to inform policy (Eurofound et al., 2012). It also included a series of findings on the relationship of temporary employment regulations, wages, educational systems, growth and social dialogue with NEET rates. These findings validated some of the EU directions, such as prioritising job creation and placing emphasis on individual responsibility.

### 1.2.3 2013 onwards: The Youth Guarantee basis: the Youth Employment Package and the Youth Employment Initiative

In 2012, with the youth unemployment rate (under 25 years old) in the EU being more than twice as high as the rate for adults in most Member States, and rising NEET rates, the threat of young people’s marginalisation all over Europe was clear and direct. Towards the end of 2012 the European Commission proposed the Youth Employment Package (European Commission, 2012b) which included a recommendation to Member States to introduce the “Youth Guarantee” (YG) tool that had already been developed in Finland and Austria. The YG scheme, integrated in national employment policies and financially supported by the European Social Fund, would ensure that, within a certain time after leaving school or becoming unemployed, young people would receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship (European Commission, 2012c). This recommendation also promoted transnational mobility for education or employment and the

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

development of EURES, the pan-EU job search network. Soon thereafter, in February 2013, the European Council (2013) launched the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), a funding tool available at the NUTS 2 regional level, for regions with youth unemployment rates of more than 25%, to support the implementation of the Youth Guarantee.

The results and impact of the YG and the YEI programmes have been the subject of study for both European or national institutions and independent researchers. The variety of contexts among the Member States (i.e., NEET rates, socioeconomic environment, funding support, existing mechanisms) led to a variety of policies and outcomes among the different regions. The Commission published a *Guidance on Evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative* to set a comprehensive framework for monitoring YEI supported programmes and evaluating their success and effects (European Commission, 2015).

The International Labour Office conducted a systematic review of the YG scheme and suggested specific conditions for the effective implementation of YGs, such as clear eligibility criteria, adequate financing, implementing policy packages instead of isolated measures and supporting the human and economic resources of Public Employment Services. Although the review acknowledged the positive role of the YGs, some areas still demanded attention: the lack of sufficient resources had prevented some countries from assisting all NEETs within the time allocated (four months), and the inability to provide a timely intervention ran the risk of weakening the effectiveness of the policies. The report also noted the different challenges that each country faced and the research necessary to conduct in this field.

The European Parliament Resolution (2018) on the implementation of the Youth Employment Initiative looks at the YG and the YEI from the long-term perspective, and stresses the importance of more integrated macroeconomic strategies to ease the transition of young people into the labour market. In this respect, it calls on Member States to better integrate the YG with their national policies, to improve the monitoring processes –also involving the beneficiaries themselves-, to ensure the quality of offers and to reach out to the most excluded youth.

#### 1.2.4 The Europe 2030 strategy and the Reinforced Youth Guarantee: under the threat of a new crisis.

The Covid-19 pandemic had a dire impact on the economy and on employment, decreasing the employment rate for the 20-64 population from 73.1% in 2019 to 71.7% in 2020 (Eurostat, 2022a), and in May 2020, the Next Generation EU instrument was introduced as a recovery tool to boost jobs, growth, social and environmental

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

resilience (European Commission, 2020). The European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan (EPSR), published in 2021, sets 20 key principles and rights for the labour markets and welfare systems of 21<sup>st</sup> century Europe, and a set of primary goals for 2030: i) a 78% employment rate for the 20-64 age group; ii) a participation of at least 60% of all adults in training every year; and iii) a reduction in the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion by at least 15 million (European Council, 2020). Concerning the NEET phenomenon in particular, as already mentioned, the European Council aims to lower the share of NEETs between 15-29 at the EU level to under 9%.

Largely based on the EPSR, the Bridge to Jobs Recommendation introduced a Reinforced Youth Guarantee in 2020 (European Council, 2020). These guidelines continue to support young people in their transition from school to work, through offering valuable work experience and skills, and further strengthen the individualised approach and the development of synergies across policy fields. They also acknowledge the need to broaden the age bracket to include 25-29-year-olds, and anticipate the changes brought about by the digital age and the growth of jobs in the green economy. Lastly, they include a more concrete plan of action for the Member States, following five stages: i) a mapping of the target groups, available services, and the skills needed and a tracking of those most vulnerable as an early warning system; ii) outreach activities through improved communications and specialised service providers or social partners; iii) appropriate preparation with individualised action plans, counselling and training in digital and other skills; iv) offering well-designed employment and training incentives that conform to the EPSR principles; and v) enabling the effort by promoting social partnerships and integrated practices, monitoring the schemes and making optimal use of the available resources and funds. This document underlines the EU's commitment to investing in the human capital of young Europeans and to securing the future of Europe's social market economies.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

## Chapter 2 Social Economy in the Mediterranean EEA: an overview

The purpose of this chapter is to identify the state of the art of the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) in the partner countries and the best practices in existing enterprises belonging to resilient sectors in the focus countries.

For working purposes, the Social and Solidarity Economy sector may be defined as “The set of private, formally-organised enterprises, with autonomy of decision and freedom of membership, created to meet their members’ needs through the market by producing goods and providing services, insurance and finance, where decision-making and any distribution of profits or surpluses among the members are not directly linked to the capital or fees contributed by each member, each of whom has one vote, or at all events take place through democratic and participative decision-making processes. The social economy also includes private, formally-organised organisations with autonomy of decision and freedom of membership that produce non-market services for households and whose surpluses, if any, cannot be appropriated by the economic agents that create, control or finance them (Chaves & Monzón, 2012, p. 22)”.

One consequence of the already mentioned economic environment was that it fostered the introduction of the Social and Solidarity Economy and its evolution as an important model of production – consumption in the economic and political scene. During the previous years, numerous European governments have applied policies to boost the social economy, after a call from the European Union. The interest of the policy-making actors towards the sector has increased as a reaction against the financial crisis of 2012, since it was considered as an alternative mode of tackling unemployment and mitigating some of the consequences of the economic recession through sustainable development.

As such, we proceed to provide some indicative examples from the four countries participating in the YOUTHShare project, which contribute to a set of best practices that the SE has produced. These and similar cases could function as models for other enterprises in the study countries as well as for other countries in order to alleviate the NEET phenomenon through socially conscious and solidarity-based methods.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

## 2.1 Greece

### 2.1.1 An overview of the legislation

In Greece, the social economy is neither a new nor an old process. This is due to many elements, such as the cooperative movements that have grown over the years. However, more recent inputs, such as new legislation, have had a big impact in the current social economy framework. The first steps of the social economy in Greece are linked to the farming and agricultural sectors, where cooperativism has a long tradition (Kiouпкиolis & Karyotis, 2015). However, before 2000 the social economy did not represent a big part of the sector and did not have many participants until 2011.

Certainly, several factors have contributed to the growth of the SSE sector since 2010, such as the lack of job security, the high unemployment rate, the emergence of political movements linked to the SSE and the reduction of spending in the public sector. It also seems that the economic crisis further triggered the establishment of SSE organisations in Greece, as indicated by a 2018 analysis which noted that 76% of the SSE enterprises under study were founded after 2010 (Papadaki & Kalogeraki, 2018, p. 47).

Consequently, the SSE sector in Greece is developing quite fast; however, it needs support in the form of skills development, finance and enabling policies and networking.

Law 4019/2011 on the social economy and social cooperative enterprise (2011) is one of the most important recent legislative elements. Thanks to this law, which established the definitions of both social cooperative enterprises and the social economy, citizens and residents of Greece were given the opportunity to start cooperative enterprises with a social purpose.

The aforementioned law, based on the objectives pursued, indicates three types of social cooperative enterprises:

- The social cooperative enterprises for integration,
- The social services social cooperative enterprises and,
- The social cooperative enterprises with a collective and productive purpose.

The creation and introduction of the MoL Register of Social Cooperative Enterprises (Koin.S.Ep) and of Limited Liability Social Cooperatives (Koi.SPE), in which all organisations have been registered, were important characteristics of Law 4019/2011. The law, despite many positive aspects, has also faced numerous criticisms; it has in fact been described as “restrictive, discordant to the European theoretical tradition on Social Economy and the Greek historical reality” (Nasioulas, 2011, p. 7). Nasioulas

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment



also highlighted the presence of elements that create barriers against conventional and social economy enterprises, as well as practices that can lead to "clientelistic transactions between the government and such enterprises" (2011, p. 14).

Law 4430/2016 (2016) entered into force in October 2016. This legislation has offered a new framework for different types of organisations or businesses that have a clear collective and social impact. This was intended to improve the previous legislation, including Law 4019/2011, now no longer in force. With Law 4430/2016, SSE organisations are no longer defined in terms of their legal form, but based on their legal status (that is, any legal form can qualify as an SSE organisation, as long as it meets the criteria established by law). These criteria concern entrepreneurial activity in the private market (the revenues of public bodies must not exceed 65% of the total turnover within three years), democratic governance (one member - one vote) and a social purpose with intended profit to the collective and social benefit (up to 95% of annual profits).

A mapping study of the SSE environment in Greece carried out on behalf of the European Commission illustrates a picture of the social enterprises ecosystem in the country (ICF Consulting Services et al., 2014). The study presents 530 social cooperative enterprises (of which 100-200 are operational), 140 agro-enterprises or women tourism cooperatives (of which 90 operational) and 23 limited liability social cooperatives (of which 16 operational); according to this, out of a total of 690 social enterprises, only between 225 and 325 (or 30% - 50%) were operational in 2014.

The SSE context is also in the process of development, with a noticeable increase in the organisations that aim to support SSE enterprises: financing institutions, providers of workspaces or co-working spaces, business consulting firms, incubators and accelerators, networks and trade associations (European Village & Social Enterprise UK, 2017). These organisations can be formal or informal, with a local focus or parts of international networks, such as Ashoka Greece and Impact Hub Athens. Their funds may come from the state or independent sources. Some belong to the larger third sector (non-public and non-profit entities), they may be SSE organisations themselves, and a few belong to the private and public sectors. However, there is insufficient data on whether existing support structures are fit for the purpose or offer adequate support to SSE organisations (European Village & Social Enterprise UK, 2017, p. 25).

The main types of SSE support organisations are classified in terms of identity/status, by law or based on their constitution and the main activities and services they provide.

This section provides an overview of the main SSE organisations in Greece, classified according to their identity/status, and provides a description of the services they provide. Some organisations focus exclusively on the SSE sector, others offer their

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

services to all types of businesses and third sector organisations. According to the kind of identity or its status, the types of Greek SSE support organisations fall into the following categories:

- Social enterprise development support: incubators, accelerators and workspaces
- Financial, funding and impact investment services organisations
- Education and research institutions
- Forums and networks
- Advisory and policy organisations
- Chambers of commerce, industry associations and business advisory bodies
- Government and local authority support structures.

Also, the list of services these organisations offer can be classified as:

- Awareness-raising
- Business plan support services
- Social impact plan support services
- Access to finance
- Seed capital financing or funding
- Social Impact investing or funding
- Operations financing or funding
- Scale up financing or funding
- Educational programmes, content and methodology
- Market facilitation
- Policy-making
- Vulnerable group members inclusion support services
- Sustainable development support services.

The SSE in Greece has a great opportunity to grow and expand its impact. SSE organisations are helping to face some of the country's most significant challenges, particularly poverty and unemployment, while also seeking to promote and demonstrate alternative business models that incorporate social benefits alongside their economic activity. However, SSEs in Greece are still underdeveloped compared to other European countries, with over 94% of businesses in Greece being very small (fewer than 100 employees) (Eurostat, 2022) and newly established companies, which at the same time face complicated challenges regarding their start-up businesses, financial sustainability and market growth.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

## 2.1.2 Examples of Social Enterprises in Greece

### *Horippos*

The Education, Diagnosis, Sports and Therapy Centre Horippos is a Social Cooperative Enterprise which was founded in October 2013, active in the integration of children and adults with learning and mobility difficulties into groups of peers and the reduction of socially unacceptable behaviours. It offers comprehensive support and high quality innovative services with programs accessible to all social groups and is particularly interested in economically vulnerable groups. The services that Horippos offers include many based on psychomotor activities, such as psychomotor education, pilates classes for children and adolescents, adjusted exercise in water, basketball, running and other sports and programmes with horses. The company also provides daily study help for elementary school students, as well as support activities like strengthening writing skills. They also work on the field of diagnosis for specific learning disabilities, corrective action reading, writing and mathematics for children with dyslexia, dysgraphia, dysorthografia, dyscalculia, etc.

Website: <http://www.horippos.gr>

### *Xenios Zeus*

The urban NPO “Xenios Zeus” was founded in 2001 and has been certified as a provider of Social Care Services. It is a member of the United Global Compact and CSR in Greece. The company offers a range of services in primary and secondary psychosocial health care for the wider community; it collaborates with other institutions in actions that battle social exclusion and promote the social integration of vulnerable populations; it also cooperates with Public and Private Educational Institutes in training students, professionals and volunteers on providing social care and mental health services.

Website: <http://www.xenioszeus.org.gr>

### *Apo Koinou*

“Apo Koinou”, a phrase that means both “together” and “from common people”, was chosen as the name of a self-sufficient cooperative community based in Heraklion, Crete and established in 2013. Striving to achieve a more just, ethical and sustainable way of life, the “Apo Koinou” community is active in three inter-related fields: agricultural production, education on alternative farming techniques and the

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

promotion of traditional culture. The community produces and sells a wide range of farming products with natural methods, which they deliver or sell online, and runs a small cooperative café in Heraklion.

Website: <http://www.apokinou.gr>

#### *Livadi social women cooperative “O Sofras”*

A similar idea inspired the formation of the “O Sofras” Social Women Cooperative, in Livadi, Thessaly, in 2002, which was assisted by the Ministry of Rural Development and Food, the Hellenic Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED) and local administrative bodies. The Cooperative is engaged in a series of activities on the production, processing and marketing of agricultural products, using fresh produce to prepare handmade sweets and spreads, pasta, pastries and pies, and operates a traditional restaurant in the middle of Livadi. Its members participate in competitions, promotion and training events, and informational visits with other similar cooperatives in Greece. This is one example from a wide range of similar cooperatives active in Greece (see also *Society Profits*, n.d.).

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/osofras/>

#### *Commons Lab*

This is an example of an SSE organisation that provides support to other SSE enterprises. CommonsLab Makerspace is a technology hub established as a social cooperative, which develops open source software and hardware tools in collaboration with public or private companies and clients. The cooperative supports a workshop for its members, equipped with a wide range of conventional and digital tools, from screwdrivers to 3D-printers, CNC and sensors, in order to experiment with innovative ideas and develop prototypes, and is open to artists, engineers, architects, designers, students and other professionals.

Website: <http://www.commonslab.gr>

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

## 2.2 Cyprus

### 2.2.1 An overview of the legislation

Thanks to its long tradition of cooperative societies, the Republic of Cyprus has a strong history in the social economy. In Cyprus, Cooperative Societies were first founded in 1904 and were supported by both the British colonial government and the Republic of Cyprus after independence. This is why there were over 100 cooperatives in Cyprus in 2012. Within this old and well-established legislative and regulatory context, a number of social and solidarity enterprises became cooperatives (Apostolides, 2015).

Cypriot cooperatives were divided in two categories: not-credit cooperative and/or production cooperatives of credit unions as well as credit unions based on the Raiffeisen values of social solidarity, self-help and sustainability. Until recently, the operational principles of the Credit cooperatives (C-Coops) were granting credit and unlimited liability to members. That was not the case for marketing and/or production cooperatives, as they were limited liability companies, but they often had direct links with the local C-Coop. If that was not the case, at least the members of the local C-Coop had those direct links. Although often of rural origin and aiming to support rural activities, C-Coops sometimes operated as building societies as well, and became active in house construction and financing small and medium-sized enterprises in cities.

The Cypriot banking crisis of March 2013 affected these two cooperative types very differently. The credit unions found themselves at a crossroads, having to accept government aid or face extinction. Only 18 out of 98 C-coops survived through a forced agglomeration process in order to qualify for state financial support. Also, as a condition for receiving a total of 1.5 billion ESM bailout funds, ownership of the cooperatives was mostly transferred to the state; in 2014 the government owned 99% of the collective cooperative credit, and the original C-Coop members owned the remaining 1% (Apostolides, 2015). At the time, C-Coops were governed by the Central Bank of Cyprus and the Cyprus Cooperative Bank, as well as being subject to scrutiny by the government's general accountant. As part of the same process, restrictions were placed on the ability of C-Coops members to repurchase part of the stake, as requested by the EU Commission. As a result, many feared the loss of the credit unions' social economy characteristics, and raised concerns that private market ownership would also infiltrate the social economy features of these cooperatives. Despite this, and with about a third of all loans and deposits, C-Coops were the second largest credit institution in Cyprus when the European Central Bank repealed the

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

licence of the Cyprus Cooperative Bank to operate as a credit institution in 2018, after a series of problems that led to the Bank's collapse (Gosling, 2019).

The impact of the economic crisis in Cyprus has caused a big reduction in the number of companies in the cooperative movement, with a respective growth in non-cooperative social economy endeavours that may be legally classified as social clubs, private enterprises, charities and non-profit enterprises (those are the only legal forms available for them in the country).

The position of the government on the social economy was, until recently, not easily discernible. In Cyprus, charities are the only organisations that receive tax incentives, yet through processes that suffer from opaqueness, bureaucracy and lack of structure, and therefore stymie social economy efforts. A few local and civil society initiatives such as social supermarkets and soup kitchens usually get state support, but again, these are individual actions rather than part of an organised policy. There is, however, an apparent intention to support the social economy principles in the new development strategy put forward by the Ministry of Finance and the Directorate General for Growth. An Authority for Cooperative Societies was instituted in 2012, in order to monitor the operation of SSE companies in Cyprus and support their social, economic and cultural role.

The Office of the Commissioner for Volunteerism and NGOs aims to promote civil society in policy-making, but there is no awareness of the potential of SSE in this field. Although a new Law came into effect in 2017 ([Cypriot Law] N. 104(I)/2017 [on Associations, Foundations & Clubs], 2017), that for the first time acknowledges the existence of non-profit companies in line with European standards, there was no mention of social economy enterprises, let alone any special provisions. Different NGOs have been promoting initiatives to modify the legislative and regulatory framework for more participatory endeavours (e.g., McBride et al., 2015; *NGO Support Centre*, n.d.), and promote discourse, but their impact is still limited.

The recently introduced legislation on Social Enterprises ([Cypriot Law] N. 207(I)/2020 [on Social Enterprises], 2020), which defines the characteristics of a social enterprise and sets up a Social Enterprise Registry is a clearly positive step in this direction.

Among the many activities carried out outside the cooperative movement, we find advocacy, support for the well-being of vulnerable groups, the environment and other community initiatives. Nonetheless, the lack of a framework in terms of awareness of social economy principles, as well as in terms of governmental rules, has been noticeable. This lack has led to many enterprises starting on an ad-hoc basis and prone to failure after the initial spurs of funding and interest wear off. Those that managed

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

to survive until 2015 appear to have more solid foundations in terms of planning and of being aware of their part in the social economy.

Those activities we mentioned are mostly related to social elements, community initiatives and initiatives in support of new social economy projects or small and medium enterprises. Administrative confusion and the lack of legal directives about the social economy initiatives' role often results in these initiatives not labelling themselves as social enterprises, despite the fact that they are indeed involved in social economy issues. Up to 185 organisations have been acknowledged as belonging to the social economy sphere (European Commission, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, 2013), but the number would be much lower if companies were to identify as such on their own.

## 2.2.2 Examples of Social Enterprises in Cyprus

### *Anakyklos Perivallontiki*

Anakyklos Perivallontiki was established in 2010 as a non-profit environmental organisation. Its main activity is the Textile Collection and Recycling Project, whereby used clothes, shoes, linen and other items are collected and either reused as such or repurposed as wiping cloths, fibre, insulation and other materials. It also operates employment projects through their recycling stores or agricultural activities, conducts environmental studies, seminars, information programmes and counselling on environmental issues, and distributes local seeds to preserve biodiversity.

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/anakyklosp/>

### *Citizens In Power (CIP)*

Citizens In Power (CIP) is an independent non-profit educational and research organisation that aims to promote entrepreneurship, social innovation and new technologies in education, STEM education and research, as well as life-long learning (with a particular interest in disadvantaged or marginalised populations). CIP collaborates on project development with a range of educational and research institutions in Cyprus and abroad, and provides consulting and training services in entrepreneurship and business, natural sciences, culture and social economy.

Source: Website: <http://www.citizensinpower.org>

### *Future Worlds Center (FWC)*

Future Worlds Center (FWC) is a non-profit initiative of social entrepreneurs that is active in a variety of fields. It participates in projects that use emerging technologies

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

and science to promote regional peace (e.g., the 1997 Technology for Peace initiative), efforts to help development within Europe and in Sub-Saharan countries (Millennium Development Goals) through educational initiatives, and projects that support vulnerable groups such as refugees, asylum seekers, or victims of torture.

Website: <http://www.futureworldscenter.org/>

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment



## 2.3 Italy

### 2.3.1 An overview of the legislation

The clientele of social cooperatives began to take shape in an evident manner starting from the 1970s. In Italy, these were the decades in which cultural and civil movements that supported the values of egalitarianism, participation and liberation spread widely. As these ideals are considered the pillars on which social cooperation flourishes and develops, this period marked an explosion of social companies that grew exponentially and as a consequence, cooperatives began to establish themselves as organisations capable of giving answers to questions that at that moment had no interlocutors, launching new market areas (Borzaga et al., 2020, p. 16). Therefore, the notion of a “social enterprise” emerged quite early in Italy, to describe these groups of volunteers that undertook economic activity as part of a social project (European Commission, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, 2020a).

However, it was necessary to wait until the 1990s for the regulatory landscape and for the definition of social cooperatives as a subset of non-profit institutions that "have the purpose of pursuing the general interest of the community in human promotion and the social integration of citizens" (Art. 1, [Italian Law] L. 381/1991 Disciplina delle cooperative sociali, 1991). Although in the first half of the 1970s the cooperatives involved in this field were very few, from 1976-78 their presence became more and more significant, until reaching considerable numbers in the years following 1985.

In the following years, Laws 381/1991 and 328/2000 were approved. In 1991, with Law 381 "Discipline of social cooperatives", the role of cooperation in the system of social assistance services was specifically defined. While Law 381/1991 governed social cooperatives, outlining their characteristics, purposes, methods of establishment and the tax regime, Law 328/2000 brought the creation of an integrated system of interventions and social services for individuals and families to guarantee the quality of life, ensure equal opportunities, remove discrimination, prevent, eliminate or reduce conditions of need and hardship ([Italian Law] L. 328/2000 Legge quadro per la realizzazione del sistema integrato di interventi e servizi sociali, 2000).

Indeed, in Italy the concept of social economy has so far been little used, while research, public debate and legislative activity have favoured individual components: mutual cooperatives, on the one hand, and the various types of associations, social cooperatives and social enterprises, on the other. Recently, since 2016, this second component has been unified by the legislator and identified as the Third Sector.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

Therefore, it is now possible and useful to add to the knowledge of the different organisational forms also the reconstruction of a unitary framework of the dimensions and characteristics of the entire social economy in Italy, in the belief that this constitutes a condition for grasping its economic and social role with greater precision. Consequently, it also provides the appropriate methods of support and control.

In reality, the need to proceed with this reconstruction has been supported and urged internationally since 2006 with the publication of the first manual for the construction of the satellite account of the social economy. This account was essentially made to coincide in this case with cooperatives and mutual aid societies - precisely to provide an operational tool useful for dealing with the invisible institutionalism that characterised this set of organisations in contrast with their growing importance.

In this perspective, institutions such as the Italian statistical office (ISTAT), on the one hand, are developing an Integrated System of Registers (SIR) and, on the other, have embarked on the path of permanent censuses. The SIR is a system aimed at guaranteeing a unitary management of the various issues (social, environmental, economic, etc.) and a conceptual as well as physical integration between the statistical units that compose it. The permanent censuses, unlike those of the past, tend to guarantee greater timeliness and the possibility of longitudinal analysis of the phenomena with less statistical harassment.

A recent effort to map the spectrum of social enterprises active in Italy has revealed the significance of the SSE sector in Italian economy: in 2017, an estimated 102,000 social enterprises employed about 900,000 people and had an annual turnover of €42,700 million (Borzaga et al., 2020, p. 11). This is a growing sector, yet it is still heavily dependent on public policies and resources. Among the key future challenges, there are, therefore, the diversification into new markets (which would include the private users), experimentation with innovative technologies to widen the range of services provided and the strengthening of collaborations with more conventional enterprises (European Commission, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, 2020a, p. 12).

### 2.3.2 Examples of social Enterprises in Italy

#### *K-Pax*

The K-Pax social cooperative was established in 2008 in Breno, Lombardia, by a group of social services operators and their guests in assistance and reception programmes. The cooperative targets the needs of migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and people in difficulty. K-Pax provides five main types of services: reception services for asylum

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

seekers and political refugees, social housing, social and cultural integration, training activities including prevention and counselling, awareness-raising activities and entertainment in local communities. K-Pax has also succeeded in refurbishing a hotel in Breno, following ecological and sustainability principles, which provides employment to beneficiaries of its reception projects, uses locally produced organic products and promotes local activities for visitors.

Website: <http://www.k-pax.eu/>

### *L'Incontro Industria*

L'Incontro Industria is a social enterprise in Treviso, Veneto, that has been in operation since 1997. It is active in the field of industrial assembly and wiring, with a turnover of € 10 million (in 2015). L'Incontro Industria integrates the entrepreneurial aspect (it is a tech company with more than 70 clients) with the social purpose of inserting disadvantaged people into the labour market. Through supporting financial independence, personal responsibility and professional skills, employment is considered as the main vehicle for the social inclusion of vulnerable populations.

Website: <http://www.lincontroindustria.it/>

### *Nuova Dimensione*

Nuova Dimensione is a social cooperative founded in 1981 in Perugia and provides physical, mental and social health services. It began with offering childcare and home assistance for disadvantaged people (the elderly, people with disabilities or psychiatric conditions), and currently employs more than 200 workers, almost 80% of whom are also its members. Nuova Dimensione focuses in three main areas: disability services (school and home assistance to people with severely restricted personal autonomy), home/ hospital assistance and day care centres for non-self-sufficient elderly and Alzheimer's patients, and social and sustainable tourism in Umbria to facilitate both social inclusion and the economic development of local communities.

Website: <http://www.nuovadimensione.com/>

### *La Città Essenziale*

La Città Essenziale is a Consortium of 34 cooperatives forming a second level entrepreneurial structure of social cooperation that operates directly and through its members in the province of Matera. The members of the cooperative provide services for children and families (Kindergartens, Day Centres, Recreational Centres, Home Educational Assistance), home care, residential and mental health services for the elderly, services for tourists, and employment opportunities for vulnerable groups. In

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

turn, La Città Essenziale is also a member of the CGM Cooperative Group Consortium, which, with more than 10,000 operational service units throughout Italy, represents the most articulated network of non-profit organised services offered directly to citizens. The Cooperative cultivates an organic connection with the community and a democratic and participatory management system that integrates all its members into the cooperative.

Website: <http://www.lacittaessenziale.it/>

### *MADE in JAIL*

MADE IN JAIL was born as an idea and was set up as an association in 1983 behind the walls of Rome's Rebibbia prison by a group of inmates who, during their incarceration, decided to find a way to express art through screen printing and printing T-shirts with writings, images and drawings. At the end of the 1980s, and after their release, this group of ex-prisoners created the Cooperative: a real movement that would work inside and outside Italian Penitentiary Institutions and that would change the lives of many people, providing re-education through work, professional and cultural training. Now, the enterprise sets its sights on expansion and with this on the creation of more jobs for prisoners and ex-prisoners who wish to have an opportunity and a place in the world.

Website: <https://bit.ly/2Pn62Oy>

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

## 2.4 Spain

### 2.4.1 An overview of the legislation

The social economy, as an identifying concept of an economic reality, was first recognised in Spanish legislation with the State General Budget Law 31/1990 (Art. 98, [Spanish Law] L. 31/1990, de 27 de Diciembre, de Presupuestos Generales Del Estado Para 1991, 1990). This Law created the National Institute for the Promotion of the Social Economy (INFES) as an Autonomous Organisation of an administrative nature, attached to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, replacing the until then General Directorate of Cooperatives and Labour-Related Companies. The functions and powers of the National Institute for the Promotion of the Social Economy were transferred in 1997 to the General Directorate for the Promotion of the Social Economy and the European Social Fund. The administrative structure changed, but the social economy remained a priority area for the Administration.

The approval of the Resolution of the European Parliament on the Social Economy in 2009 shows that, despite the advantages that the social economy brought to the development of the European economy, it would not be able to prosper if certain conditions were not met. For this, the Parliament established a series of recommendations that revolved around the recognition of the concept of social economy; the recognition of the European legal statutes of associations, foundations and mutual societies; statistical recognition of social economy companies and recognition of the representatives of these entities as social partners. Driven by the 2009 European Parliament Resolution and by the work that had been carried out since March 2007 around the social economy within the Committee on Economy and Finance of the Congress of Deputies, the Spanish Parliament approved the Law on Social Economy in March 2011 ([Spanish Law] L. 5/2011, de 29 de Marzo, de Economía Social, 2011).

The social economy had been present in the national and regional public institutions, and had already been the subject of various public promotion policies. However, until 2011 the Spanish legal system was not clear on what should be understood by the term 'social economy'. Law 5/2011 provided a definition that complemented the various allusions that the regulations had been making to this economic reality; this definition followed the EU description of SSEs, and was accompanied by the pertinent legal framework for all social economy entities (European Parliament, Directorate General for Internal Policies of the Union, 2022, p. 5).

In addition to providing a definition, this Law also pointed out the guiding principles of social economy; it identified the entities that form part of the social economy and

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

created a catalogue of them in the Ministry of Labour and Immigration; it described what should be understood by representative intersectoral confederations at state level; it recognised the promotion, encouragement and development of social economy entities and their representative organisations as a task of general interest, and pointed out the objectives of policies to promote the social economy by public authorities; and lastly, it established the Council for the Promotion of the Social Economy. In addition, the law identified certain legal forms as social economy entities, but without exhaustive intent, extending said consideration to those other entities whose operating rules respond to the principles reflected in the law, and were included in the catalogue of social economy entities (European Commission, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, 2020b, pp. 25–26).

Under this framework, the entities that participate in the social economy in Spain are structured according to the following three main types: Social initiative cooperatives; Employment integration enterprises; and Special Employment centres of social initiative. The law also includes certain associations and foundations, while CEPES (the Spanish Social Economy Employers' Confederation) also embraces cooperatives (in general), labour societies (employee-owned enterprises), mutual aid societies and fishermen guilds as social economy entities (Pfeilstetter & Gómez-Carrasco, 2016).

In 2020, according to the report on the social economy in Spain by the Spanish Business Confederation of Social Economy (CEPES, 2020), the Spanish social economy represented 10% of the country's GDP, and comprised 43,192 companies with 2,184,234 employees.

#### 2.4.2 Examples of Social Enterprises in Spain

##### *Laboral Kutxa*

A member company of the Mondragón Cooperative Group (the largest social economy business group in Spain), Laboral Kutxa is a credit cooperative based in Mondragón, Euskadi. Its purpose is to meet the financial needs of its partners and customers, preferably individuals and companies active in the social economy sector. With more than 2,200 worker members, the entity preferentially channels its desire for social promotion through unique support for the activity of corporate institutions. Likewise, it extends its social commitment to the economic and socio-cultural development of the society in which it operates, with special attention to the Basque language and culture, in the case of Euskal Herria.

Website: <https://corporativa.laboralkutxa.com/>

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

### *Grupo Hefame*

Grupo Hefame was founded in the 1950s in Murcia as Hermandad Farmacéutica Murciana S.C.L. As a company within the framework of the Social Economy, it was founded as a pharmaceutical wholesale distribution cooperative and continues as such. Its corporate purpose is the distribution of medicines and parapharmaceutical items to pharmacies. Grupo Hefame is the first private company in the Region of Murcia by volume of turnover, and is among the first three in the ranking of Pharmaceutical Distribution companies in Spain. It is also the company that has achieved the greatest growth in this market during the last years. In 2020, their share was 11.03% of the total Pharmaceutical Distribution market.

Website: <https://www.hefame.es/>

### *LA LUNA shipping*

LA LUNA shipping is a company specialising in international and national transport and express courier. This SSE started as a cooperative created by four people and is an alternative project based on the values of social solidarity and climate responsibility. The company manages all types of shipments and transport, from an envelope to a container, from urban shipments to transport, air, land, and maritime cargo throughout the world. Initially established in 1995 as bicycle couriers, they now deliver packages locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Website: <https://laluna.coop/>

### *UpSocial*

The purpose of UpSocial is to strengthen all agents of change. The services of UpSocial focus on consulting clients on how to apply innovations that guide them into becoming agents of change, training them to acquire the skills their clients need to facilitate change, and provide scaling solutions (adaptation and implementation of innovations to projects), lobbying and policy support. The company aims to contribute to the development of solutions that are systemic, sustainable and oriented to the scale of each project. In order to achieve that, they are organised in five lines of work: Innovations, capacity building, scaling, policies and learnings.

Website: <https://upsocial.org/en/>

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

## 2.5 Conclusion

As evident from the preceding accounts, every country has its own trajectory in the social economy. Each country had to deal with different obstacles in order to structure the actual operating framework that governs the SSE within its borders. Thus, among the countries studied, the relevance of the SSE is not the same. Nonetheless, SSE is considered an optimal approach for developing a solidarity-based economy, and a way to consolidate the third sector.

Before moving into a deeper analysis, we want to highlight that the contribution and acceptance of the SSE is very different from country to country (Borzaga et al., 2020). For example, this economic approach is not as developed in Cyprus as it is in Spain, nor is it evenly distributed within each country. Nonetheless, this is not the only aspect of SSE with an unequal distribution; the contribution of SSE among the various economic sectors also varies widely. In some sectors, the SSE is better established and for a longer time than in others, e.g., agriculture, where the SSE represents a bigger percent of the total output. Following the example of Spain, a very relevant case is linked to the Basque cooperative movement (Elorriaga, 2005), a region where strong activity supporting the pillars of the SSE was established during the middle of the 20th century.

Another noticeable aspect is the importance of the different crises in the development of the legislation related to the SSE (Papadaki & Kalogeraki, 2018). The pressure that crises exert over the people, such as the oil crisis in the 1980s or the financial crisis during the first years of the 21st century, corresponds to the creation of newer quests for solutions that fit; innovative solutions that can solve the problems behind the crises. Thus, the creation, improvement and development of many rules, laws and decrees on SSE are approved at the aftermath of an economic depression. This does not imply that it is always like that or that the many reasons for pushing the SSE forward are crises. However, it seems that in the study countries such situations acted as catalysts for similar policies to advance into a better implementation.

Therefore, the SSE is proven to be resilient. It is not only considered a valuable solution to avoid crises; it has also been demonstrated that the SSE mitigated the negative effects of economic impacts in the study countries (Martínez-Campillo et al., 2018) and appears as a sustainable path for the economy (Chaves & Monzón, 2012). Thus, the effects of a more developed SSE sector include not only a better solution in case of an increase in unemployment, but also market, labour and salary flexibility to avoid bigger externalities linked to such problems. Furthermore, the essence of the SSE enterprises, which usually include a strong connection with their goals and vision,

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment



implies a bigger contribution to the community than that of the private companies (Pérez-Sanz et al., 2019).

In this chapter, we aimed to show a small collection of SSE enterprises that are examples of good practices and that can contribute to the solutions for the NEET problem. Of course, the SSE does not represent a solution just for NEETs, in the sense that its applications are not necessarily targeted to this group of youth, not even to the youth in general. Nonetheless, its resilient nature works perfectly for people in the NEET situation, and many studies have already proven the opportunity that the SSE represents for the NEETs (e.g., Fialho et al., 2018). This specific perspective, the contribution of SSE to improve the NEET situation is a matter of further study. However, the YOUTHShare project in general and this report in particular will present valuable information and examples in this direction.

The YOUTHShare project explored the topic further by encouraging SSE endeavours for NEET youth in the participating countries. Although at the time of writing this report this part of the project has not been completed, the approach of the YOUTHShare project, the solutions proposed and an evaluation of its achievements will be further discussed in a subsequent chapter, along with the different obstacles that the project faced in pursuing its goals. Our aim is to add to the existing literature on the contribution of social entrepreneurship and new sharing economy structures to ameliorate the NEET situation and to contribute to a map of best practices for NEETs in the SSE.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

## Chapter 3 The YOUTHShare project

### 3.1 An overview of the YOUTHShare project and its background

#### *Understanding the problem*

Many of the Mediterranean regions of the European Economic Area face significantly high unemployment rates. The statistics, however, cover particular qualitative characteristics. Among the general unemployed population, the economically inactive (NEETs – Not in Employment, Education or Training) and especially young persons between 25- 29 years old face pressing economic, and social problems. To this day, lack of coordination between actors and interventions, as well as absence of personalized support, have been hindering any prospect of solution.

#### *Territorial challenges and opportunities*

The unemployment of young people is only a part of the bigger picture. Southern European countries belong to the cluster of the economies ‘very-hard-hit’ by the current economic crisis. Specifically, Greece, Italy, Spain and Cyprus face a ‘toxic mix’ of high unemployment, with significant representation of the younger generations, and anaemic growth in the aftermath of the recession. In addition to that, the political geography of the Mediterranean regions of the European Economic Area has also been unfavourable the last years. Greece, Italy, Spain and Cyprus have become the entry points of mixed migration flows. The economic pressure of managing the humanitarian aspect of the flows and of contributing in the migrants’ integration later on adds to the socio-economic pressure of tackling unemployment. Neither has the territorial geography been supportive. Insularity, mountainous environments and generally the fractured landscape hinder mobility, communication and resource management.

The Mediterranean societies, however, have been enduring extremities for thousands of years, demonstrating not only a remarkable resilience, but also the development of several civilisations. Trans-local communication and transfer of know how has been the cornerstone of that resilience. The same principles need to be employed to tackle such a poly-parametric problem. Transnational cooperation, coordinated research and new empirically-grounded solutions based on transfer of expertise will be applied to cover three needs: i) to train specific target groups (economically inactive women and migrants) in locally resilient sectors; ii) to enhance employability by advancing knowledge and skills in social entrepreneurship and platform economy; iii) to establish

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

long-lasting labour market engagement by involving stakeholders, research and Employment Centres.

### *The objective, the target groups and the deliverables of the YOUTHShare project*

The YOUTHShare project aims at reducing youth unemployment in coastal and island regions of Mediterranean EEA by advancing young NEETs skills in trans-locally resilient agri-food production and the pertinent circular economies. By boosting the potential of those sectors through *social entrepreneurship* and *sharing economy platforms*, it pursues to reduce economic disparities in the target area.

The direct target groups are the, usually ignored, between 25-29, *inactive low-skilled women and migrants*, the latter selected from Reception Centres (RICs) of the area, while the end beneficiaries are regional-scale non-traditional actors, supporting youth employability. The first target group includes inactive low-skilled women aged 25-29. This segment of the “economically inactive” population is amongst the most vulnerable parts of contemporary NEETs, especially when it comes to women of the residual social welfare systems of MED EEA. The second target group includes migrants, preferably asylum-seekers and refugees aged 25-29, that live in Reception Centres of the coastal and insular MED EEA areas. This is a highly increasing NEET population that face harsh living conditions and few, if any, employment opportunities.

The project will deliver a *transnational Research Network* and an *Employment Centre*, leading to informed institutional engagement for NEETs. Knowledge transfer will deliver *toolkits for counselling and training*, thus enhancing employability. Finally, work-based training on social entrepreneurship and *start-up empowerment by sharing platforms* will boost entrepreneurship.

### *The methodology*

The successful implementation and scalability of the project will be measured through an *integrated methodology of evaluation and replication* of its main results. In addition to their profitable activity, the platforms, new social enterprises and the other outputs will last long, based on either direct funding from various stakeholders or through co-applying for subsidies and grants.

YOUTHShare identifies three scales of intervention in a holistic methodology that unravels from local to global and back in a tightly interwoven multi-level intervention:

- *Stimulate Trans-Locally*. By mobilizing resilient niches with particular focus on trans-local culture, tourism value chains, insularity, path-dependent practices and human capital.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

- *Build European.* By coupling local strengths with properly adapted good practices or EU-scale best practices (e.g. social economy practices).
- *Spread Globally.* By boosting NEETs potential in Mediterranean EEA through sharing economy, expansion of social entrepreneurship and development of locally embedded yet transnationally-linked clusters of agri-food production and pertinent circular economies.

### 3.2 The Outcomes and Outputs of the YOUTHShare Project

Following an integrated methodology and theoretically-informed structure design, the YOUTHShare project comprises 18 *Outputs*. These Outputs contribute to the accomplishment of five (5) *Outcomes*, organised as per below:

Outcome 1: *“Increased capacity on evaluating effects of employment initiatives for NEETs/ target group in research institutions”* includes:

- the submission of three (3) PhD dissertations doing impact studies in various employment-related fields and
- the preparation of three (3) trans-national reports that increase the capacity of Research Institutions on employment initiatives evaluation.

Outcome 2: *“Increased knowledge of the effects of employment initiatives targeting NEETs/target group”* includes:

- the submission of three (3) papers focusing on the above fields and
- the preparation of one (1) report/manual on the recording of best practices.

Outcome 3: *“Innovative approaches on lowering youth unemployment have been developed or adopted”* includes:

- the establishment of Trans-national Employment Centres in Greece, Italy, Spain and Cyprus, staffed with Key Account Managers (KAMs),
- the preparation of a training manual for KAMs on NEETs' outreaching, coaching, job matching and skills utilizing,
- the preparation of modules, handbooks & manuals for training NEETs in resilient sectors, social economy, and sharing economy,
- the design and delivery of one (1) e-learning platform on resilient sectors and pertinent social and sharing economy and
- the design and delivery of one (1) sharing economy e-platform for the networking of social enterprises in resilient sectors.

Outcome 4: *“Increased participation in education and training of former NEETs/target group”* includes:

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

- the delivery of two (2) cycles of classes for the training of 300 selected NEETs in resilient sectors, social and sharing economy, and relevant IT tools and
- the implementation of Apprenticeship & Mobility schemes across Greece, Italy, Spain and Cyprus.

Outcome 5: *“Improved employment situation of NEETs/target group”* includes:

- mentoring support to former NEETs for establishing at least one social enterprise in resilient sectors per country.

### 3.3 The YOUTHShare project in Working Packages

The YOUTHShare project is organized in seven (7) Working Packages (WPs). Two of them, namely WP6 and WP7, relate to the management (administration, organization and overall supervision) and the communication strategy of the project. The first five WPs include the work toward the delivery of the Outcomes and Outputs presented in the previous sections. It is upon these five WPs that the present report focuses, thus they are presented in detail below.

#### 3.3.1 WP1: Stimulate Trans-locally A: A transnational Research Network on the study of Youth Employment policies in MED EEA

WP1 aims to Stimulate Trans-Locally actors, institutions and stakeholders on the issue of NEETs by creating a Trans-National Research Network that offers advanced research results on Youth Employment Policies in the Mediterranean EEA. Specifically, it aims to enhance the training curriculum of NEETs (with a focus on target groups) in order to enable them to have the skills demanded by the productive sector. Along with target groups, an explicit analysis of current employment services, youth counselling centres and services, and youth employability providers will be conducted. Regarding activities, mainly, it will be designed, implemented and deliver research and analysis expertise knowledge, drawing among others upon the Spanish structures and experiences, and focusing on the particular characteristics of the NEETs within the Mediterranean EEA context. The activities will be: recruiting or selecting specific people for the aforementioned tasks; supervising the Fellowship PhD researchers; hosting during research fieldwork; completing a literature review leading to formation of concepts and methodological framework across MED EEA; data collection and primary analysis based on concepts and methodological approach; expert counselling and contribution in final synthesis; preparation and submission of paper on employment initiatives and resilient sectors (introduction, methodology, data analysis, synthesis and discussion); contribution in the discussion section of the paper.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

These activities will lead to statistically update and report the current situation of NEETs in the Mediterranean EEA context. The reports will describe and inform about the resilient sectors in MED EEA, as well as the impact of employment initiatives on resilient sectors & trans-local value chains. It will allow a better and fitted design for the planned training activities, to be developed in the next steps of the project implementation, connecting NEETs' needs with training activities fitting with labour market demands and designing the internships according to a realistic acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes strongly linked to the individual pathways of the NEETs to access quality job posts.

In terms of Outputs, WP1 includes activities leading to:

- the submission of three (3) PhD dissertations doing impact studies in various employment-related fields,
- the preparation of three (3) trans-national reports that increase the capacity of Research Institutions on employment initiatives evaluation, and
- the submission of three (3) papers focusing on the above fields.

### 3.3.2 WP2. Stimulate Trans-locally B: A transnational Employment Centre delivering tailored engagement for youth employment in social enterprises

WP2 aims to increase Trans-Local Stimulation of actors, institutions and stakeholders on the issue of NEETs by establishing and staffing a Trans-national Employment Centre that offers genuine new services to the target groups. Specifically, it aims to launch a transnational employment centre to facilitate the mobility of NEETs in planned internships in enterprises, business and firms in the Mediterranean EEA area, in coherence with the research results and the designed training activities for a tailored engagement for the target groups, women and migrants between 25-29 years old, as established in the project. Under this working package, the following activities would be implemented: establishing and operating the four branches of the Trans-national Employment Centre & Social Economy Observatory in Greece, Cyprus, Italy and Spain; coordination, monitoring and standards compliance control of the Trans-national Employment Centre; Key Account Managers (KAM) appointment in Greece, Cyprus, Italy and Spain for networking, selecting NEETS; job matching of former NEETs with employment positions through the Employment Centre delivered.

This network of branches is designed to monitor the individual pathway of the NEETs selected as target group, to avoid duplicity with the EURES work or the existing Employment National and Regional Services. The tasks allocated in this working package will be developed in coordination and communication with the local public

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

authorities (some of the consortium members have such entities) to ensure the adequate counselling for the users of the Centre, to facilitate the mobility of the selected NEETs to placements fitting with their professional, academic, vocational and personal background, to follow-up their progress during the internships and to support and to assess the final results for such internships. The individual support by the figures of the KAM will strengthen the possibilities of access to the labour market by the NEETs participating in the project.

Thus, activities undertaken in WP2 contribute to the outputs and outcomes of the project as the Trans-national Employment Centre established and staffed with Key Account Managers (KAM) offers a new innovative approach and genuine service to the NEETs/ target groups, that never existed as such across the Mediterranean EEA before.

In terms of Outputs, WP2 includes activities leading to:

- the establishment of Trans-national Employment Centres in Greece, Italy, Spain and Cyprus, staffed with Key Account Managers (KAMs).

### **3.3.3 WP3. Building European A: Delivering toolkits and IT platforms for training, counselling, job matching and skills utilizing based on expertise knowledge and EU best practices**

WP3 is the first working package of the project that builds on a European perspective. Its main objective is to deliver all the necessary infrastructure that is essential to the training of all end-users and participants of the project, i.e. from the Key Account Managers of the Employment Centres to the educators and the trainees of the seminars, and for doing so, this WP uses the best available EU-scale best practices (e.g., FAFO's 'Ripples in the Water' methodology) to service local needs (e.g., job matching).

In terms of Outputs, WP3 includes activities leading to:

- the preparation of a training manual for KAMs on NEETs' outreaching, coaching, job matching and skills utilizing,
- the preparation of modules, handbooks & manuals for training NEETs in resilient sectors, social economy, and sharing economy,
- the design and delivery of one (1) e-learning platform on resilient sectors and pertinent social and sharing economy.

It should be stressed that the development of the above is crucial in order to allow any future replication of the project by other actors. It is obvious that the main contribution of the project does not lie in the employment of a small number of NEETs,

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

but it lies in the infrastructure that will be set in place and in the knowledge that will be acquired by the application of the proposed project (in relation to the acquired knowledge, see WP5). In this direction, the outcomes of this WP focus on setting up the infrastructure to be used in the next WPs, and as such infrastructure should be regarded, not only the e-learning platform and the job matching toolkits, but also the various manuals and handbooks that will be freely available and will form a corpus of solid knowledge ready to be extended or re-implemented by any actor, ensuring the lasting impact on the NEET phenomenon. The selection of the proposed infrastructure was based: a) on the best use of the available human resources (job matching & skills utilizing), b) on the easy replicability of the project (see: training handbooks/manuals & e-learning platform) and c) on the ability to maximize the potential audience of the training with low cost (see e-learning platform).

### 3.3.4 **WP4. Building European B: Training, apprenticeships and mobility schemes in social economy and resilient sectors**

WP4 aims to enhance the employability of NEETs, by advancing their knowledge and skills connected to niche markets in the agri-food production and in other circular economies, which have the potential to provide them with a long-lasting and stable employment.

In terms of Outputs, WP4 includes activities leading to:

- the delivery of two (2) cycles of classes for the training of 300 selected NEETs in resilient sectors, social and sharing economy, and relevant IT tools and
- the implementation of Apprenticeship & Mobility schemes across Greece, Italy, Spain and Cyprus.

The implementation of the above outputs is based on the infrastructure produced in WP3 (toolkits, manuals, handbooks and IT platforms).

It should be stressed that the selection of niche markets in the agri-food production or in other circular economies, has been preferred due to the established linkages between them and tourism. It should also be noted that all participating counties in the project (Greece, Italy, Spain and Cyprus) constitute international touristic destinations, with unique local characters that form a key part of their touristic brand name. Moreover, the common cultural framework of the aforementioned Mediterranean counties, especially evident in the agri-food sector (e.g., in olive oil production), magnifies the synergies of the proposed outcomes and deliverables and strengthens the scalability of the whole project.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment



As these niche markets associated with agri-food production and circular economies are interwoven with the Mediterranean culture, the proposed apprenticeship does not only aim at transferring empirical knowledge, but also at linking trainees to the general social and cultural Mediterranean context. It should be emphasized that the main spatial and social characteristic of the insular and coastal areas, in which the project is applied, is their small population size and their strong local character, which lead to the formation of “closed” communities and, as a result, to social exclusion of any disadvantaged social group (such as migrants). Thus, the promotion of social inclusion via apprenticeships comprises an adjacent but crucial dimension of the proposed WP that enhances the future employability of the NEETs. The also proposed mobility scheme of 20% of the NEETs serves the same objective.

### 3.3.5 WP5. Spread Globally: Best practices for NEETs identified and implemented through start up empowerment in social entrepreneurship and new sharing economy structures

WP5 aims to spread globally the potential of NEETs in Mediterranean EEA through sharing economy, expansion of social entrepreneurship and development of locally embedded, yet transnationally linked, clusters of agri-food production and pertinent circular economies. As the “spread globally” objective can only be achieved through the dissemination of relative best practices, the main side objective of this WP is the actual boosting of start-up entrepreneurs in social and sharing economies pertinent to agri-food production. This objective is aligned with our belief that such best practices can only stem by cases which offer empirically grounded solutions and have been tested against real world problems. Moreover, the analytical description of the whole procedure that led to a best practice, starting with the selection and job matching of the NEETs, continuing with their training and apprenticeship and leading to the establishment of a new entrepreneurship, has equally strong educational and paradigmatic power.

In terms of Outputs, WP5 includes activities leading to:

- the design and delivery of one (1) sharing economy e-platform for the networking of social enterprises in resilient sectors.
- mentoring support to former NEETs for establishing at least one social enterprise in resilient sectors per country.
- the preparation of one (1) report/manual on the recording of best practices.

In relation to the selection of the above activities, the following points should be noted:

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

- The sharing economy e-platform, which will inter-connect the social enterprises, is selected as the main vehicle of NEETs towards entrepreneurship, as it minimizes the starting-up cost and is able to host and provide service to a great variety of different users and business, while being flexible to future adjustments.
- The presentation of best practices will comprise a step-by-step descriptive guide to all stages of the procedure (from selection of the NEETs to their first steps towards entrepreneurship), and as such comprises a holistic approach to the employability of NEETs and allows its full replication.

## 3.4 The YOUTHShare partners

### 3.4.1 The consortium

The YOUTHShare consortium comprises the following 10 partners:<sup>3</sup>

- The *University of the Aegean (UoA)*, which is the Lead Partner, of the project, and:
  - the *Network for Employment and Social Care (NESC)*,
  - the *Neapolis University Pafos (NUP)*,
  - the *Centre for the Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology (CARDET)*,
  - the *Catholic University of Murcia (UCAM)*,
  - the *Educational Association for Integration and Equality (AEII)*,
  - the *Sistema Turismo srl (ST)*,
  - the *Local Action Group (GAL)*,
  - the *Regional Agency for Employment and Training (ARLAB)*,
  - the *Institute for Labour and Social Research (FAFO)*.

It should be noted that the following organisations also participated in the initial phase of the project. More specifically:

- the *Cyprus Authority for Cooperative Societies (ACS)*, participated the project till 2020,
- the *Territorial Association Communita Montana Alto Bassento (CMAB)* from Spain was replaced in 2020 by ARLAB, and

---

3

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

- the *Social Cooperatives' Network of Central Macedonia* (SCENCM) left the project from the very beginning.

With regards to the geographical distribution of the partners:

- two partners are located in Greece (UoA, NESCS),
- two partners are located in Cyprus (NUP, CARDET),
- two partners are located in Spain (UCAM, AEII),
- three partners are located in Italy (ST, GAL, ARLAB), and
- one partner is located in Norway (FAFO).

The synthesis of the consortium was driven by the research and implementation needs of the project, which call for close cooperation between:

- a. universities and research organisations (UoA, NUP, UCAM, CARDET),
- b. training, consulting and networking organisations (NESCS, ST, GAL, AEII, ARLAB), as well as,
- c. expertise partners (FAFO).

A detailed presentation of the profiles of the partner and their roles in the project is provided in the following section.

### 3.4.2 The partners and their roles in the project

#### *University of the Aegean (UoA)*

The *University of the Aegean* was founded in 1984 and it is essentially a network of six campuses spread across islands in the Aegean Archipelago. Thanks to its long experience in academic research and transnational project implementation, the UoA assumes the role of the project leader. It is part of the tripartite group of universities/higher education institutions aiming at research and analysis on the resilient value-chains of trans-local agri-food and circular economies, identification of NEETs training needs and design of modules particularly for the Mediterranean EEA insular and coastal context.

In terms of contribution, UoA is expected to:

- Establish a Transnational Research Network through hosting doctoral research on NEETs and drafting expert policy analysis and recommendations reports.
- Establish a trans-local employment centre and support Key Account Managers
- Design training modules.
- Draft Key Account Managers', trainees' and educators' manuals.
- Contribute to the design of e-learning and sharing economy platforms.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

- Train and support former NEETs in completing apprenticeships and in mobility programs.
- Support social economy start-ups established by former NEETs.
- Lead the general administration of the project and contribute in the progress reports.
- Preside in the various partners' meetings.
- Design a detailed communication plan including a documentary film and its wide presentation.
- Contribute to the publicity and dissemination of the project through scientific publications, conference presentations and organisations, website and social media profiles.

### *Neapolis University Pafos (NUP)*

*Neapolis University Pafos* is one of the leading private Universities of Cyprus. Established in 2010, it is a vibrant academic institution with emphasis in the provision of high-quality Higher Education and the creation of cutting-edge applied knowledge. NUP is part of the group of universities and higher education institutions of the project aiming at providing research and analysis on the value-chains of trans-local agri-food and pertinent circular economies, identification of NEETs training needs, design and implementation of training modules particularly for the Cypriot context. In that way, the project benefits through a research and analysis expert in the beneficiary country of Cyprus focusing on the particular characteristics of the local NEETs, while being highly informed on the transnational level. At the same time, as a higher education institute, NUP provides essential contribution to the training of NEETs and the required networking for their transnational apprenticeships.

In terms of contribution, NUP is expected to:

- Establish a Transnational Research Network through hosting doctoral research on NEETs employment and social entrepreneurship.
- Draft reports on the resilient sectors of the target areas, on the impact of existing employment policies and NEETs training needs.
- Design training modules for NEETs.
- Draft trainees and educators' manuals.
- Train former NEETs.
- Contribute in the development of innovative IT applications and particularly of e-learning platforms and networking platforms for sharing economy.
- Contribute to the kick-off, Steering Committee, Stakeholder and sectoral meetings.
- Contribute to the general administration.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

- Contribute to publicity and dissemination through scientific publications and conference presentations and/or organisations.

### *Catholic University of Murcia (UCAM)*

The *Catholic University of Murcia* is a private university founded in 1996 with a clear mission: to provide students with the knowledge and skills to serve society, to contribute to the further expansion of human knowledge through research and development, and to participate in the Evangelical mission of the Catholic Church in the areas of education and culture. UCAM participates in the group of universities and higher education institutions of the project, aiming at providing research and analysis on the value-chains of trans-local agri-food and circular economies with particular focus on ICT, identification of NEETs and their training needs, design and implementation of training modules particularly for the Spanish context. In that way, the project benefits through a research and analysis expert in the Spain focusing on the particular characteristics of the NEETs within the Mediterranean EEA context. At the same time, UCAM provides an essential contribution to the training of NEETs especially in ICT tools and the required networking for their transnational cooperation.

In terms of contribution, UCAM is expected to:

- Establish a Transnational Research Network through hosting doctoral research on NEETs employment and social entrepreneurship.
- Draft reports on the resilient sectors of the target areas, on the impact of existing employment policies and NEETs training needs.
- Design training modules for NEETs.
- Draft trainees and educators' manuals.
- Train former NEETs.
- Draft manuals for the utilization of former NEETs skills.
- Contribute to the kick-off, Steering Committee, Stakeholder and sectoral meetings.
- Contribute to the general administration of the project.
- Contribute to publicity and dissemination through scientific publications, conference presentations and/ or organisation.

### *Centre for the Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology (CARDET)*

The *Centre for the Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology* offers research, evaluation and development services in formal and informal education. Owing to its experience and expertise, CARDET is part of the group of training and consulting partners of the project with particular responsibility to

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

provide insights from the Cypriot context. In that way, the project benefits through a training and counselling expert on the field with expertise on special parts of the population, such as low-skilled or migrants NEETs and their labour market integration in Cyprus and abroad. CARDET ensures the establishment of links with the local societies, especially Cyprus, as well as the identification of NEETs and their needs.

In terms of contribution, CARDET is expected to:

- Contribute to building rapport and communicating locally with the target groups of the project.
- Support or appoint a Key Account Manager of the trans-local employment centre with particular responsibility on Cyprus.
- Support the job matching of former NEETs with apprenticeship positions.
- Support the trans-local mobility among beneficiary countries of former NEETs in apprenticeships.
- Contribute to drafting modules for the training of former NEETs.
- Design the IT platforms (e-learning, social economy enterprises networking) of the project.
- Contribute to the kick-off, Steering Committee, Stakeholder and sectoral meetings.
- Contribute to the implementation of the communication plan through dissemination and publicity (e.g., documentary film premieres, press releases etc.).
- Contribute to the general administration.

#### *Network for Employment and Social Care (NESC)*

The *Network for Employment and Social Care* offers expert services in professional and entrepreneurial counselling, mentoring for employers and young entrepreneurs and support for social enterprises, since 2011. Due to that expertise, NESC is part of the group of the training and consulting partners of the project. In that way, the project benefits with a training and counselling expert on the field in Greece, who ensures the establishment of links with the local society, as well as the identification of NEETs and their needs.

In terms of contribution, NESC is expected to:

- Build rapport and communicate with the target groups locally (e.g., workshops with migrant NEETs).
- Support or appoint a Key Account Manager of the trans-local employment centre with particular responsibility on Greece.
- Support the job matching of former NEETs with apprenticeship positions.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

- Support the trans-local mobility among beneficiary countries of former NEETs in apprenticeships.
- Prepare and deliver the methodology of the counselling sessions of the project.
- Draft manuals for the utilization of skills of former NEETs.
- Draft Evaluation and Scalability Strategy Plans.
- Contribute to the design of web based counselling tools (Vocational Profiler, Skills Assessment Tests).
- Contribute to the kick-off, Steering Committee, Stakeholder and sectoral meetings.
- Contribute to the implementation of the communication plan through dissemination and publicity (e.g., documentary film premieres, press releases etc.) monitoring of project regulation for partners' internal communication and interaction.
- Contribute to the material presented at the conferences.
- Contribute to the general administration.

### *Sistema Turismo srl (ST)*

Since 1996, *Sistema Turismo srl* offers expert services in promoting, organising and managing internships and educational programmes for young students, teaching staff, unemployed, young workers and organisations especially in areas where unfavourable economic, historical and social characteristics hinder the beneficiaries' career prospects. Owing to that expertise, ST is part of the group of the training and consulting partners of the project. In that way, the project benefits with an accredited training and counselling expert on the field regarding Italy and abroad, who ensures the identification of NEETs, the quality of their training according to the needs of the local resilient sectors and their own needs. Moreover, ST's contribution consolidates the experience of efficiently utilizing the skills of former NEETs within the Mediterranean EEA context.

In terms of contribution, ST is expected to:

- Contribute to analysing the NEETs training needs in Basilicata Region.
- Build rapport and communicating with the target groups trans-locally (workshops with NEETs).
- Contribute to the training of former NEETs.
- Support the job matching of former NEETs with apprenticeship positions.
- Draft manuals for the utilization of skills of former NEETs.
- Contribute in monitoring the progress of the project through reports.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

- Contribute to the kick-off, Steering Committee, Stakeholder and sectoral meetings.
- Contribute to the implementation of the communication plan through dissemination of the documentary film and conference organisation.
- Contribute to the general administration.

#### *Local Action Group (GAL)*

*Local Action Group “La Cittadella del Sapere”* is a for-profit organization, active in the field of local development, social inclusion, agri-food competitiveness and cooperation in Basilicata Region. GAL represents 27 municipalities mostly on the coastal areas of the Tyrrhenian and Ionian seas. GAL assumes the role of mediator between research, communities and public authorities, in order to facilitate the implementation of innovative policy solutions and the practical support of the social economy start-ups that will be established. In that way, the project benefits from a joint venture between public authorities and local private interests, aiming at local development, social inclusion and re-integration in the labour market, issues that are already part of GAL’s Local Development Strategy. GAL ensures the cooperation of the social cooperative ISKRA and the Work Agency of Basilicata. GAL also focuses on integrating the project in regional integration policies (funded by ESI funds like ERDF, EARDF, EFS, EMF).

In terms of contribution, GAL is expected to:

- Support or appoint a Key Account Manager of the trans-local employment centre with particular responsibility on Italy.
- Build rapport and communicate with the target groups trans-locally.
- Support the apprenticeship of former NEETs.
- Support trans-local mobility during apprenticeships in social enterprises.
- Contribute to and support the establishment of trans-local social economy start-ups by former NEETs that completed training and apprenticeship.
- Contribute to the kick-off, Steering Committee, Stakeholder and sectoral meetings.
- Contribute to the dissemination of the documentary film.
- Contribute to the publicity of the project through press releases etc.
- Contribute to the general administration.

#### *Educational Association for Integration and Equality (AEII)*

The *Educational Association for Integration and Equality* is an accredited education and training provider in the areas of general and adult education, vocational education and training. AEII develops psycho-social services and training for different groups of

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment



professionals working with socially disadvantaged groups to provide them with information, counselling and educational solutions, as well as methodological support. Thanks to that expertise, AEII is part of the group of the training and consulting partners of the project. In that way, the project benefits with a training and counselling expert on the field in Spain and abroad, who ensures the establishment of links with the local society, the identification of NEETs and their needs and finally their training and entrepreneurial support.

In terms of contribution, AEII is expected to:

- Co-establish the trans-local employment centre.
- Support or appoint a Key Account Manager of the trans-local employment centre for Spain.
- Build rapport and communicating with the target groups trans-locally.
- Contribute to the training of former NEETs.
- Support the job matching of former NEETs with apprenticeship positions.
- Support the trans-local mobility among beneficiary countries of former NEETs in apprenticeships.
- Contribute to and support the establishment of trans-local social economy start-ups by former NEETs that completed training and apprenticeship.
- Contribute to the kick-off, Steering Committee, Stakeholder and sectoral meetings.
- Contribute to the general administration.
- Contribute to the implementation of the communication plan by organising certain publicity and dissemination activities.

#### *Regional Agency for Employment and Training (ARLAB)*

The *Regional Agency for Employment and Training* was established in the Basilicata Region in 2016, aiming to promote work and the transitions in active life. It implements training, education, work orientation and active labour policies and certifies manpower's skills. ARLAB has significant experience in the development and implementation of international projects that include the transfer of Know How and contributes in the formation of Best Practices across Europe. Through that experience and its strong administrative and financial capacity, ARLAB supports the mobility of former NEETs in the framework of the YOUTHShare project, as well as the local enterprises in organising apprenticeships for those NEETs.

In terms of contribution, ARLAB is expected to:

- Co-establish the trans-local employment centre.
- Support the apprenticeships of former NEETs.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

- Support trans-local mobility during apprenticeships in social enterprises.
- Contribute to the kick-off, Steering Committee, Stakeholder and sectoral meetings.
- Contribute to the general administration.

### *Institute for Labour and Social Research (FAFO)*

The *Institute for Labour and Social Research* is an independent research centre founded by the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) in 1982 and reorganised as an independent organisation in 1993. FAFO conducts research on the lifestyle and working conditions changes, industrial relations, societal participation, democracy and development in Norway, Europe and beyond. FAFO assumes the role of expertise partner in the project, offering know-how and consulting to the lead and the beneficiary partners of the project. In that way, the project benefits with the transfer of expert knowledge from FAFO in both the “Ripples in the Water” methodology, as well as in sharing economy studies, suitably adapted in the Mediterranean EEA and trans-local context. FAFO commits research personnel for the continuous mentoring, monitoring and evaluation of the progress of the project, as well as for the delivery of scientific outputs, such as scientific publications and conference presentations.

In terms of contribution, FAFO is expected to:

- Participate in the Transnational Research Network by offering expert knowledge in doctoral research on NEETs and in best practices in policy analysis and recommendations reports
- Establish the trans-local employment centre and support the Key Account Managers, especially in mentoring, counselling and job-matching.
- Draft Key Account Managers’, trainees’ and educators’ manuals.
- Evaluate the design of e-learning and sharing economy platforms based on its relevant experience.
- Develop a step-by-step guide based on "water in ripples" method.
- Contribute to the general administration.
- Contribute to the kick-off, Steering Committee, Stakeholder and sectoral meetings.
- Design a detailed communication plan including a documentary film and its wide presentation.
- Contribute to the publicity of the project through scientific publications and conference presentations.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

### *Cyprus Authority for Cooperative Societies (ACS)*

The *Cyprus Authority for Cooperative Societies* is a public entity established, initially under a different legal status, since 1914. ACS is responsible for the monitoring and coordination of the cooperative societies in Cyprus. Due to that expertise, ACS was part of the group of chambers/networking institutions of the project with a particular role on local and trans-national entrepreneurial networking, on creating trans-local links, on implementing the innovative policy solutions and on supporting the social economy start-ups that were established. In that way, the project was planning to benefit from a public authority that has by default experience and expertise in the field of social economy in Cyprus and abroad. ACS further ensured effective completion of its roles and a wide dissemination among cooperative societies. ACS noted the interest of three cooperative societies ('Commandaria Producers' Organization', 'Cooperative Society of Rose Producers of Agros' & 'Cooperative Organization of Production and Supply of Vine Products') in participating in job-matching and apprenticeships mobility. Moreover, the public status of the authority provided the required reliability in the established trans-local employment centre, the sharing economy platform and the networking among the social economy start-ups that were established.

In terms of contribution, ACS was expected to:

- Co-establish the trans-local employment centre.
- Support the apprenticeships of former NEETs.
- Support trans-local mobility during apprenticeships in social enterprises.
- Support the establishment of social economy start-ups.
- Contribute to the kick-off, Steering Committee, Stakeholder and sectoral meetings.
- Contribute to the general administration.

It should be mentioned that ACS withdrew from the project in 2020 and its activities were undertaken by other partners, mainly by CARDET and NUP.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

## Chapter 4 The YOUTHShare evaluation

### 4.1 Introduction

The **YOUTHShare** project has aimed at **reducing youth unemployment in coastal and island regions of the Mediterranean EEA** by advancing young NEETs' skills in **trans-locally resilient agri-food production** and **pertinent circular economies**. The project has delivered several deliverables so far. A Transnational **Employment Centre with four branches**, leading to an informed engagement for NEETs. **Toolkits for counselling and training** and **an e-learning platform** were also produced for facilitating work-based training on social entrepreneurship. This chapter aims at evaluating the YOUTHShare impact and its achieved objectives.

The objective of the current evaluation is to determine how the main activities/tasks of YOUTHShare have been implemented, and thus to shed light on the possible discrepancy between the initial proposal and the actual implementation of the YOUTHShare project. However, our ambition is to focus not only on the actions, but also on the framework in which these actions took place, and finally on the core of things and what we learned from this process (how our actions have been implemented in different contexts, values and beliefs). Thus, the main objective of the current evaluation is not only to review the effectiveness of the activities and the services provided but also to identify the main lessons learned from the management of the YOUTHShare project activities.

The traditional formative and summative assessment methods are frequently used by organizations and projects that aim to create social value, which stifles the experimentation and adaptation that are essential to their success (Preskill and Beer, 2012). According to Preskill and Beer, following a set of predetermined goods and activities is often counterproductive since it prevents adaptation to a changing environment. Meanwhile, standard evaluations are frequently viewed as insufficient, which leads to the early abandoning of programs (Preskill and Beer, 2012, 5). Contrarily, policy evaluation should have more goals than only proving its worth to the public (High and Nemes, 2007). Evaluation needs to support this developmental perspective (Milley et al., 2018), where outcomes are incorporated into the dynamic and continuous activity. The term "developmental evaluation" (DE) is used to describe this strategy, which has gained popularity in social capital and social innovation contexts (Patton, 2011). To this end, the current evaluation deploys mainstream, summative tools -reports, adherence to deliverables etc- as well as dynamic tools -

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

interviews and field observations among. By studying the implementation process through such a two-way evaluation, key aspects of the process (success factors, measures to ensure performance, barriers, relationships, incentives) are identified, lessons are learned from the project and shared with other partners, and finally a list of recommendations for future action is generated.<sup>4</sup>

Along these lines, the starting point of the assessment is the well-accepted grouping of YOUTHShare's key activities -identified to the respective working packages (WP)- as follows:

- ✓ The research work and deliverables produced by YOUTHShare Transnational Research Network and YOUTHShare researchers (WP1)
- ✓ The work conducted by Employment Centres and the Key Account Managers (WP2)
- ✓ The toolkits produced for outreaching NEETs and for delivering training activities (WP3)
- ✓ The **training and the internship/mobility process** and implementation across partners' countries (WP4).

Then, a common pool of research questions was examined in each of them. These are:

- ✓ How have the deliverables been produced? How did the pandemic impact this process? How does change occur?
- ✓ What are the key and crucial activities that ensured the performance and quality of the YOUTHShare project?
- ✓ What were the main barriers /obstacles to each one of the above grouping of activities? Had been overcome or not?
- ✓ What were the main motivations, and positive factors, and what's their impact on the performance and quality of YOUTHShare's deliverables?

As already underlined, to dwell on this framework, the assessment deploys both quantitative and qualitative evaluation tools. Specifically, it worked on the above grouping of activities/themes by:

- a) Comparing the **process of managing and implementing them** by studying notes of interim and output reports (summative evaluation)
- b) Organising a series of **semi-structured interviews (SSI)** following a strategic sampling to identify the main tasks, obstacles, and barriers encountered and how they were overcome. The same interviews also discussed the key motivations and actions that ensured performance and high-quality outcomes;

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.projectmanagementqualification.com/blog/2019/08/21/lessons-learned/>

Implemented By

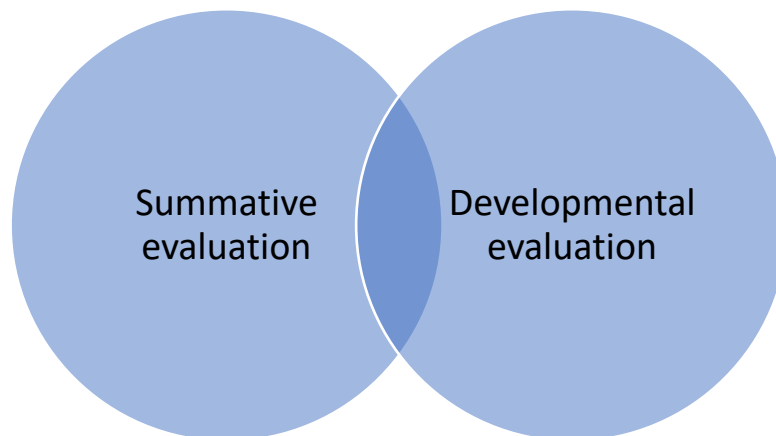


YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

what lessons each partner learned; and how they shared this knowledge with other partners (dynamic evaluation).

It should be noted that the two approaches are not always distinct, but the above distinction is made mainly for schematic and methodological reasons. However, there is an intermediate space in which the two perspectives essentially overlap or even complement each other.

Figure 5.1. YOUTHshare evaluation



## 4.2 Summative Evaluation

### 4.2.1 YOUTHShare Transnational Research Network and YOUTHShare researchers' work

- The YOUTHShare transnational research centre (**YOUTHShare T-N.R.C.**) has been partially delivered.
- Transnational reports were delivered,
- Research papers were co-written
  
- PhD theses were not yet delivered.
- Overall, there was no evidence of strong transnational cooperation.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

Despite the shortcomings, WP1 produced research outputs of a very high quality, as described below.

**Evaluation question package 1: How have deliverables been produced? How did the pandemic impact this process? How did changes occur?**

Through the study of the reference notes and the interviews conducted, both the negative and positive impacts of the pandemic on the research project were identified.

In terms of negative impacts, the lockouts imposed difficulties in travelling and working abroad, so transnational research projects faced complications that some could not overcome. Nevertheless, this was an opportunity to organise more online meetings and some field visits were also carried out.

On the other hand, the lock-in imposed disruptions to the normal activities of the research work, such as more hours of working from home, reduced fieldwork hours and overload of teaching activities (adapted to e-learning). However, this has been a common impact across Europe, which seemed to affect early-stage researchers.

Yet, one key evidence of positive change was the number of submitted papers to peer-reviewed journals. YOUTHShare researchers due to COVID-19 and lockdowns had more time to desk research and write papers, despite the initial cancellation of conferences. E-conferences on the other hand, allowed researchers to gradually develop their work, getting feedback from peers and academics. Key managers of YOUTHShare researchers grasped this opportunity and paid for it for enabling the submission of papers and the PhD work's progress.

Partially, the pandemic impacted upon completion of the PhDs. Even more so, since PhD work needs usually more than three years to be concluded with submission and acceptance of the thesis. This was not taken into consideration when the proposal was drafted. This has been a flaw of the project's original design.

Overall, changes occurred either due to exogenous or endogenous factors. Some of the key changes are presented in table 1 below. All these challenged the managerial and research activities.

Table 4.1: Overall presentation of changes/adjustments in research work<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> YOUTHShare (2021 ) Progress of WP1, Sixth Interim Period 01.04.2021 – 30.09.2021

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

<b>Research work</b>	<b>Activities/tasks planned</b>	<b>Evidence of adjustment/diversification /change</b>	<b>Justification of change</b>
	3 Transnational Reports	<p>New research activity was added.</p> <p>This was an online dashboard for regional statistics for COVID-19 and produce a relevant Newsletter about regional changes in employment.</p> <p>As lockdowns imposed difficulties online transnational Focus groups for conducting research in Greece, Spain, and Germany related to NEETs employability were organized</p>	Pandemic and its social implications and impact on the labour market
	3 papers published in high-impact journals	<p>More than 3 papers were drafted and submitted.</p> <p>Presentation in national and transnational conferences endorsed.</p> <p>More time due to lockdowns spend on writing papers</p>	<p>Revisions and changes were needed as the review was not always so positive</p> <p>Participation in conferences helps the ideas to be further developed and evaluated</p>
	3 PhD works produced and disseminated	<p>Not yet finalized.</p> <p>No evidence of a transnational character or cooperation</p>	The Pandemic had partially impacted delivering PhD work.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment



**Evaluation question package 2: What were the key barriers /obstacles in managing this WP activity/task? What have actions been taken for ensuring performance? What were the success factors or key persons in ensuring the process of the WP activities/tasks?**

The transnational character has been an obstacle to organizing research work during a pandemic. Lack of face-to-face communication maybe influenced the ability of researchers to trust each other and work together. Still, common working paper activities have been crucial for building this transnational research cooperation. Whenever, the senior researchers, academics, and earlier researchers worked together the results were better.

The Project Manager (PM) had in the early beginning noted the key barriers (related to COVID -19 and more), that threatened the project's performance and key actions were endorsed quite early. These key actions were:

- a) Delegate a role to a person for leading the work of early researchers and for enhancing their collaboration (a senior researcher helps them to understand the perks and challenges in translational research with monthly meetings)
- b) Organise focus groups for collecting and analyzing primary data about NEETs in Spain, Greece, and Germany and thus helping early researchers
- c) Funding the participation of early researchers in academic conferences
- d) Setting common standards for working on research papers
- e) Motivating researchers to deal with the impact of the pandemic on national labour market policies.

Some of these actions were successful, some were not. For the positive ones, we should comment on the '*COVID-19 Regional Labour Team*'. In April 2020, in response to Covid-19 Pandemic, the YOUTHShare project established the '*COVID-19 Regional Labour Team*' providing its dashboard with real-time regional statistics on the expansion of the pandemic and the contraction of employment. This was a positive change relating to the impact of the pandemic as it has motivated YOUTHShare researchers to analyze data about pandemics and their impact on the Regional Labor Market and NEETs. **This dashboard nowadays has expanded and evolved into a separate project, the *ResLab-Observatory* run by the UoA<sup>6</sup>.**

---

<sup>6</sup> <https://reslab.aegean.gr/observatory/>

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

Secondly, it was evident that the submission of papers in high-impact journals would prove more challenging. Research papers are supposed to evolve through participation in academic conferences either nationally or transnationally. During the Covid19 pandemic this was not feasible and led to a delay in the submission of the articles.

The role of the designated person was a key positive factor in ensuring the continuity and quality of the work produced. He was able to organise monthly meetings to develop the compelling direction required for effective cross-country teamwork<sup>7</sup>. He and the PM made the relevant tasks and the goals associated with them clear, promoting internal rewards such as the satisfaction of academic observation.

However, this process was quite problematic. Different values, different expectations of rewards and different understandings of the YOUTHShare research objectives prevailed or, in some cases, the different resources and skills of the relatively allocated research staff. As repeatedly mentioned by two key persons, the necessary '**common mindset**' at transnational level was not developed. At the national level in some cases, as was the case with the UoA research team, this common mindset flourished as shared information, common goals and common identity became more apparent.

#### 4.2.2 The work and deliverables of Employment Centers and Key Account Managers (WP2).

The work and outcomes of YOUTHShare's transnational employment centres have been the main cornerstones of the YOUTHShare project in terms of its intended impact on NEET employment. These transnational employment centres have adopted, adapted and further developed the new practises for vocational inclusion based on the "Ripples in the Water" methodology of the Norwegian Business Association NHO. Based on this methodology, YOUTHShare employment centres and their staff have adopted a person-centred and skills-based approach to effectively match job seekers with potential employers.

The **Key Account Manager (KAM)** is the cornerstone of YOUTHShare's transnational employment department. Their work is still of vital importance! They are the ones who identify employers' needs and help them find the right person for the right job. KAMs act as employment brokers and are the link between employers and unemployed and disaffected NEETs. Therefore, everyone who participates in the

---

<sup>7</sup> Haas, M. & Mortensen, M (2016), The Secrets of teamwork in Harvard Business Review, June 2016 available at <https://hbr.org/2016/06/the-secrets-of-great-teamwork>

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

project admits that the KAMs are the main ones responsible for the great impact of the YOUTHShare activities in terms of employment goals. In addition, both KAMs and Employment Centres feature as a “good practice” example either nationally or at the EU level<sup>8</sup>

**Evaluation question package 1: How have deliverables been produced? How did the pandemic impact this process? How did changes occur?**

Through studying the reporting notes, both negative and positive impacts on the employment centres and Key Account’s Manager work were illuminated.

As for the negative effects, the lockdowns led to difficulties in the implementation of the well-developed action work plan KAM. First of all, even though the KAMs followed the KAM manual from the beginning of their tenure, it was quite difficult to follow it over time.

The most difficult task for KAM, which was severely affected by the pandemic, was the strategy of outreach work.

The first of these proposed strategies was to organize various formalized awareness-raising events (e.g., focus groups) to let relevant stakeholders know what they were doing and what they were aiming for. In this way, key stakeholders could be reached and the needs of NEETs could be captured from different perspectives. In addition, KAM could be used to explore and analyze the business environment related to the social and sharing economy.

However, as the pandemic broke out, no face-to-face meetings could be organized. In some countries, **virtual focus groups** were organized instead to avoid the cancellation of scheduled tasks.

While this approach seemed to work quite well, several problems arose (Internet stability, distraction by background noise, and technical difficulties because participants had limited knowledge of using ZOOM ). The moderator also needed expertise and ongoing technical support to moderate the meetings optimally.

The KAMs also needed a lot of technical support to do things differently, i.e., facilitating a virtual event was not always the same as facilitating an in-person focus group. Ultimately, in most cases, in-person focus groups could have been chosen if

---

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/neets/resources/transnational-employment-youthshare-centre-greek-branch>.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

that had been possible. If in-person meetings were chosen after the closures, KAMs had to comply with their country's strict health and safety regulations. Nevertheless, **hybrid events** lent themselves to the focus group method as a way to capture NEETS' views of stakeholders.

On the same token, the memoranda of understanding (MoU) approach for establishing formal cooperation with key stakeholders was somehow put on hold as face-to-face meetings were not conducted. Some MoUs were signed, but more could be concluded if fear of the pandemic weren't the top priority of all key stakeholders. Nevertheless, informal collaboration and networking among all partners seemed to work quite well if we acknowledged the results of the activities carried out.

Overall, communication plans and outreach strategies as originally intended (printed brochures, organization of face-to-face meetings) were only partially implemented due to the pandemic and closures. **Digital communication plans** took place as a substitute. Digital banners, digital brochures, digital promotional content, and social media campaigns were developed, increasing their share of the communication plan.

Broaden your knowledge  
and understanding on  
**online marketing**  
and **crowdfunding**.



One of our digitalization content is produced by CARDET for social media campaigns.

*"LinkedIn and Facebook groups have been an effective way to disseminate our KAM's work on YOUTHShare"* as someone mentioned. But more important, KAMs rely more on **personal networks and mouth-to-mouth power than ever before**.

Another negative impact of the pandemic was the actual work done by KAMs, i.e. career coaching and counselling, which had to be done via online tools and procedures.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

All the tasks and tools proposed by KAM’s manual have been related with face to face coaching sessions and meetings (although some hints on adopting digital tools were there). The lockdown was imposed when KAMs were supposed to start their work.

The pandemic forced global career coaching to be organized virtually. As a substitute for YOUTHShare’s face-to-face meetings, virtual tools were adopted for offering **virtual career coaching services** i.e. Viber meetings, zoom meetings, and skype meetings were the day-to-day reality of KAMs. Some of the key coaching tools such as the expression of interest and the Vocational profile were digitalized through google forms offering online versions whenever was needed.

Still, these imposed changes also had positive aspects. Instead of scheduled and fixed meetings, virtual services were provided whenever the beneficiary requested (sometimes outside of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. work hours), using shared resources such as resumes or other valuable resources, e.g., information about online job postings or tools for using social media to build professional networks, etc. At the same time, KAMs received training and updated digital skills, so that overall they had new skills to provide virtual career and coaching services.

We could say that there was a change in the way we carried out the planned activities (see table 5.3)

Table: 4.2. Evidence of changing tasks due to pandemic

<b>Employment Centre and KAMs</b>	<b>Activities as planned</b>	<b>Evidence of adjustment/diversification /change</b>	<b>Justification of change</b>
	4 employment branches	Remote access of services via social media, VIBER, phone calls, Branch Monitoring exercise /	Lockdowns imposed by pandemic
	4 KAMs	KAM’s training by FAFO, KAM’s involvement in all WP meetings, KAMs’ meetings for transnational cooperation /coaching /mentoring online	Lockdowns imposed by pandemic
	Outreaching strategy	stakeholders’ interaction was not in-person/ digital events organized/digital banners produced /digital campaigns	Lockdowns imposed by pandemic

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

**Evaluation question package 2: What were the key barriers /obstacles in managing this WP activity/task? What have actions been taken for ensuring performance? What were the success factors or key persons in ensuring the process of the WP activities/tasks?**

Some important tasks of the Employment Centres were not carried out as planned due to the impact of the pandemic. The lack of face-to-face communication may be influenced to some extent by the way in which tasks were performed and the transnational nature of the cooperation between employment centres, but not by their actual results and performance. Instead, the challenges of the pandemic and closures were successfully met because important actions were taken quite early or key people were involved in this work process. These included the ability of the WP2 leader to have a contingency plan at hand, his ability to communicate a lot, to share information, to communicate to them their key role in the project, and the ability of almost all partners to adopt the required virtual approach. Specifically, the following key actions were taken:

- a) A comprehensive process for selecting KAMs and administrators of the Employment Centres, based on the requested mix of skills.
- b) Delegating the leadership role to the KAMs themselves (each KAM was responsible for organising the rest of the group for a few months) with the goal of developing a common mindset through increased information and knowledge sharing, understanding their key role, and creating a shared identity for the work of KAM.
- c) Promoting constant communication and meetings among KAMs, either between them and the WP2 leader or even with the PM, to motivate them and improve their cooperation and teamwork.
- d) Promoting Virtual training of KAMs by FAFO so that they understand their role as "knowledge brokers" and how to reach out to employers.
- e) Regular monitoring of the work done by employment offices
- f) Motivating KAMs to engage with the positive impact of the pandemic while relying more on their reputation and personal contacts as a strategy to spread their work.
- g) Finally, emphasising the value of the services provided rather than the number of resumes or professional profiles produced.

If we need to summarize the key enabling factors for ensuring these high standards, these could be the following: **“adaptation”**, **“shared information”** and **“motivation”**.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

The PM and the Leader of WP2 were the key persons in ensuring this process. Both of them were able to build up the enabling conditions of this dispersed, digital team, and thus the diverging personalities, attitudes and behavioural styles of them were there but did not prevail<sup>9</sup>. Instead, these two key persons were able:

- a) to giving concrete, compelling direction by making KAM's understand what they are supposed to do, challenging them to find a solution to any problem that may come up with concrete instructions, and sharing information almost constantly.
- b) to gradually building a concrete team structure between the KAMs (KAMs leaders), the KAMs and their role with the rest of the WP2 partners, the KAMs and the steering group meetings. KAM the role and tasks of the KAMs were (in most cases) quite specific, but at the same time they were given the necessary autonomy to manage them from start to finish. Nevertheless, the PM and WP leaders or other members of SC were there to give them feedback when something seemed difficult or did not work.
- c) to provide the right support by either training them, setting up a shared database of materials and information that all KAMs needed in a shared Google drive, and assisting them with the materials as needed in their work (in some cases, they provided them with laptops, headsets, and phones to work from home).

Overall, the KAMs formed a distinct team in the project process. This team was united despite changes in personnel during the project, helping each other and sharing information and tools between them. Overall, everyone on this team eventually learned to see things through a different lens and to be willing to adapt to any obstacle that arose in order to propose a solution.

#### 4.2.3 The toolkits produced for outreach and training activities (WP3)

Through collaboration between researchers and educators, training toolkits and manuals were developed specifically for NEETs. After studying their social profile in Greece, Cyprus, Italy, and Spain, the trainee manuals and the instructor manuals were designed to introduce former NEETs to economic niche sectors.

**Evaluation question package 1: How have deliverables been produced? How did the pandemic impact this process? How did changes occur?**

<sup>9</sup> Haas, M. & Mortensen, M (2016), The Secrets of teamwork in Harvard Business Review, June 2016 available at <https://hbr.org/2016/06/the-secrets-of-great-teamwork>.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

The study of notes of partners in the EGREG system and the interviews conducted with key persons stated that:

a) the delivered outputs were produced

**but**

b) delays and problems arose from the start in delivering the WP3 activities and tasks.

There is some evidence of minor changes, not in the actual activities carried out as planned, but in the addition or diversification of their role in the project for various reasons related to either internal or external factors, such as the outbreak of a pandemic. While the pandemic did not have a direct impact on the implementation of the activities, as it had not yet broken out, some of these tools were still quite useful (e.g., the e-learning platform), while others could not be fully used (e.g., the manual KAM).

Overall, the results obtained were much better than expected, both in quantitative and qualitative terms, as all partners agreed (both the interviewees and the other partners' team members).

*Table 4.3: Overall presentation of toolkits of WP3 and how they had been enriched /adjusted to the project's changing scope*

<b>Activities as planned</b>	<b>Evidence of adjustment/diversification /change</b>	<b>Justification of change</b>
KAMs Manual	<p>KAM's manual is enriched with templates of proposed tools to be used for career coaching and counselling.</p> <p>KAM's Action Work Plan template was produced as well</p> <p>Evidence of the different roles of contributing partners.</p> <p>NESC had a leading role while other partners contribute less or not at all.</p>	<p>Take a more practical approach</p> <p>Personal motivations and interests of key persons</p>
Training Platform	YOUTHShare E-learning platform standards re-drafted a lot	Due to its extended and sole use in some cases during lockdowns

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment



	<p>Enriched by user guides for NEETs and trainers on how to enrol and how to use different tools of the e-learning platform</p> <p>The E-learning platform is still open. It is promoted as an asynchronous learning experience and still delivers certificates</p>	
Educational Manual	<p>Trainees Handbook and Educators were developed by following key strict academic criteria, common standards, and length of documents</p> <p>The soft Skills module was drafted as an extra training material</p>	<p>A higher standard of training material is produced based on the personal interest and motivation of the NUP and UoA researchers considering its viability and usage after the end of the project.</p>

Source: Key topics derived from interviews and notes of partners

**Evaluation question package 2: What were the key barriers /obstacles in managing this WP activity/task? What have actions been taken for ensuring performance? What were the success factors or key persons in ensuring the process of the WP activities/tasks?**

The main obstacles in managing this work package, as mentioned earlier, were lack of coordination, lack of experience with transnational projects, and lack of guidance in decision making, which led to slow progress in implementation, at least at the beginning of implementation.

It was odd enough that this WP3 had a partner responsible for leading this activity. However, this partner was not involved in the materials produced (e.g. training manuals, e-learning platform), suggesting a low level of interest (the motivational factor was very important) in the quality of the outputs produced. The design, development and delivery of WP3 outputs showed delays, lack of guidance, lack of common quality criteria and lack of commitment and interest from partners at the beginning of the activities, as mentioned in all interviews.

The reasons were twofold:

- a) The **vagueness of the proposal description**. This vagueness contributed to a lack of shared understanding of the quality required and the sustainability of the results. The partners who were committed (for organizational/personal reasons) to the successful implementation of the project urged PL for more

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

detailed design, criteria for deliverables, and stronger monitoring and coordination.

- b) The appointed responsible person's **lack of good project management skills**. The appointed person lacked a critical capacity for managing this WP3 package, namely language skills to communicate effectively and directly with the other partners. Moreover, he/she was not a 'good' cooperation coordinator as he/she could not demonstrate such skills, either due to lack of previous experience or due to lack of personal interest and commitment to the project. This was also noted by the other partners who complained to the project manager. The project manager somehow managed to minimize the conflict and assigned the role of coordinating these WP3 activities to another key person.

Despite these shortcomings, overall the project managed to ensure the high standards of the produced materials, mostly due to the following reasons:

- c) The **personal motivation and commitment** of key individuals, i.e., academics from NUP and UoA. These academics, for their own interest, wanted this work to be recognized and to continue after the end of the project. To some extent, the project manager was able to give them a reason to be proud of their work and themselves, gave them the space they needed, and really recognized their role and skills in the results they achieved. Yet, these individuals were burned out during the process as the project manager and other partners kept contacting them with any questions they had about the work project at hand. The recognition and good feeling affected their work-life balance, which they later complained about to the project manager.
- d) The development of **detailed guidelines, schedules (roadmap), and instructions** on how to perform tasks by the key people who managed the WP3 activities. Specific tasks and common quality criteria encouraged both partners to perform better, and managers had tools to monitor project progress and track results. When you know that someone notices you are behind, you do your best to correct that backlog.

#### 4.2.4 The training and the internship/mobility process and implementation across partner countries (WP4).

Both training activities and internships were completed as planned, with all partners managing to meet the targets set by the project. Outcomes were over-achieved, with 132% of the original training target for NEETs and other NEET categories by March 2022. This is due to the partners' decision to set up an operational training platform that provides training in asynchronous mode and issues certificates.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

By March 2022, more than 697 users were registered on the YOUTHShare e-learning platform, while the total number of certificates issued was 397. Internships were also completed, benefiting more than 180 people. The success of the project is reflected in the employment contracts signed after the completion of the project activities (50 people).

It is not surprising that after the adoption of the extended period, the partners decided on a new strategy and objective.

By and large, WP4 activities were successfully completed despite the pandemic and its challenges, despite some important deviations, which are described below..

**Evaluation question package 1: How have deliverables been produced? How did the pandemic impact this process? How did changes occur?**

The study of notes of partners in the EGREG system indicate that:

- a) the delivered outputs were produced successfully

**despite**

- b) delays and deviations related to the foreseen drafted tasks.

There is some evidence of minor changes, not in the actual activities performed as planned, but in the addition or diversification of various tasks and the manner in which they were performed. Some of these deviations were due to the pandemic; others were made because key staff felt they actually had a positive impact on the project's outputs and outcomes.

First, the pandemic had a huge impact on the way learning and teaching took place, as almost all YOUTHShare partner countries switched from face-to-face to an online zoom format. YOUTHShare instructors had to be trained in ZOOM and adapt YOUTHShare training materials to Zoom classes. Likewise, YOUTHShare beneficiaries had to be familiarised with how to participate in Zoom classes and group spaces for group dialogues and exercises. This was not as easy as it sounds.

Not only the trainers and the training materials, but also the beneficiaries had to learn how to participate in this zoo learning experience.

The working group leader and partners decided to develop guidelines for using Zoom, organize and conduct introductory courses, and in some cases even conduct tutorials in the form of one-on-one conversations via Viber or Whats-up. The help of KAMs was crucial to this process, as they organized webinars for mentoring migrants and

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

refugees or took measures to ensure that NEETs understood how to use different e-learning tools.

Despite all these measures, in some cases there were delays and even deviations from the actual programming measures. For example, the Italian partners preferred to organize three cycles of training instead of two with smaller groups. They also created content more appealing to Italian beneficiaries and they invited a lot of expert speakers for presenting key topics.

The Cypriot and Greek partners, having understood the specificities of the migrant/refugee beneficiary groups, explored a bit the learning barriers of migrants in e-learning activities, while they worked with the other partners to approve key optimizing adaptations (i.e. merge sessions together, use of interactive online tools, participation of invited speakers e.c.t).

In the Greek case, the validation of training was further developed. This deviation was not imposed by external pressure or challenge, but by the conviction of the Greek key staff that validated training would have added value for the NEETs in the long term. Thus, in the case of the Greek partner, NEET trainees received two certificates. One was delivered by the YOUTHShare e-learning platform while the second, was delivered by the UoA Lifelong Learning Centre following an approved methodology and criteria for awarding them. The methodology imposed and the process may have been more standardised than in other countries, but PM believed that this process was beneficial to the project. However, the same belief was not adopted by other partners.

Another key added task was the organization and implementation of communication activities related to training. These were:

- a) **Transnational presentations of key invited trainers or invited speakers** in other partners' countries for enhancing the transnational character of the project.
- b) **Digital award ceremonies** (i.e in Greece) with a positive impact on how NEETs think about training.

*Table 4.4: Overall presentation of WP4 activities and how they had been enriched /adjusted to the project's changing scope*

<b>WP4</b>	<b>Activities as planned</b>	<b>Evidence of adjustment/diversification /change</b>	<b>Justification of change</b>
	Organising/delivering training activities in 2 cycles for 336 NEETs and more through	The number of migrants/asylum seekers was less than envisaged.	

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

	asynchronous learning via the YOUTHShare e-learning platform	Validated training of UoA following ECVET criteria  Online or blended training endorsed  Organising training for trainers  Digital award ceremonies	Lockdowns imposed by pandemic
	Organising /delivering Internships for 183 NEETs so far	Internship approach endorsed  Remote internship and work placement endorsed  Formalised Standards of Internships drafted by revised due to employers' difficulty to accept all of this bureaucracy	Lockdowns imposed by pandemic
	Organising mobility schemes	Remote mobility	Lockdowns imposed by pandemic

In the traineeship process, the pandemic affected the way in which the traineeships were carried out, in particular the mobility system for the traineeships. Ultimately, remote or online internships were explored with their advantages and disadvantages and were introduced into the project quite early on. This divergence, we believed, was key to the actual performance of the mobility system delivery.

Finally, despite a well drafted document on internship and mobility standards with key methods and tools on how to organise them and how to monitor and evaluate them, this was amended during implementation.

Evidence on the process of matching employers with NEETs in key countries showed that the standards were too much for employers.

Again, driven by a desire to achieve results in difficult times, once again partners decided to have at least some mandatory documents (e.g. learning agreement and daily diary) to monitor the traineeship period and not follow everything outlined in the standards.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

**Evaluation question package 2: What were the key barriers /obstacles in managing this WP activity/task? What have actions been taken for ensuring performance? What were the success factors or key persons in ensuring the process of the WP activities/tasks?**

If we have to summarize the main obstacles in the management of this WP, we could argue that these were mainly related either to the outcome of the pandemic. Nevertheless, some problems arose due to the tasks foreseen and described by the proposal of this WP (e.g. the duration of the internship process or the order and organisation of training and internship). With regard to the former, in addition to language barriers, social distance and cultural differences created obstacles to the communication with the targeted groups: refugees and migrants were far from being reached during the pandemic. For the same reason, employers did not have time to focus on the internship for 21 days.

The project manager (PM) from the very beginning identified the key barriers (related to COVID -19 and others) that threatened the performance of these activities and key actions were approved quite early. These key actions were:

- a) Continuous communication and ongoing meetings of the WP4 leader, with trainers, KAMs or other partners either in groups or bilateral meetings to motivate, train in ZOOM techniques and enhance their cooperation and teamwork.
- b) Periodic follow-up exercises to follow up on the work carried out either for training or internship. Tools for this structured coordination and monitoring of tasks were a commonly agreed Google drive, a reporting template on the training approach, a Google form for monitoring of training activities by the WP leader, a common Excel tracking file initially for the participants in the training cycles and the delivered certificates and later for the progress of the internship/apprenticeship.
- c) Encourage everyone to use more interactive training techniques, to train relatively many times, to think differently and act as a team and all try to find solutions to common problems.
- d) Using a compelling direction with specific objectives, scope of tasks and procedures more prominently than other WP activities.
- e) The PM and WP leader taking a proactive role and always worked on their contingency plans on key obstacles/problems that arose.
- f) Finding solutions beyond the scope of the project to ensure the participation of vulnerable groups (PM and WP leader provided vouchers for free mobile

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

phones, organized seminars, gave access to their premises and devices purchased by the project to use them, employed part-time if needed and a longer-term approach to the internship).

The key enabling factors for ensuring the results of this activity were “**proactive management and thinking**”, “**strong compelling direction**” and “**motivation to act differently**”.

PM, CM, and Leader of WP2 and WP4 were the key persons in ensuring this process. All of them were able to collaborate successfully to build up the “**conditions**” needed for the organisation, which were delivered quite successfully. These conditions refer to:

- a) the endorsement of a **proactive management thinking**<sup>10</sup> through providing careful risk management analysis ahead for any problems that may arise, employing risk management analysis, and deciding on steps to minimize different potential damage. By doing so, all PMs were able to inspire their trainers, and empower them by upskilling (all trainers trained in ZOOM techniques and key guidelines produced on how to include in their training participatory e-tools).
- b) a strong **controlled compelling direction** by enabling all partners to understand what they should do, following sometimes bureaucratic and austere guidelines aiming at the project's output.
- c) the provision of the necessary **support** to beneficiaries by **motivating all actors** to act differently. For example, young people were trained not only in digital skills but also in personal resilience skills (social-emotional learning, coping with difficulties, social empathy). The partners organised and delivered several life coaching sessions and motivational workshops (online) to empower NEETs by talking to them, and thus were able to give them back their hope in times of social withdrawal and during a pandemic.

Overall, the high impact of these WP activities was related to the actual impact on the lives of NEETs. The communication, the knowledge that they had something to do during the lockdown, the fact that they were motivated and were assisted in finding new ways to communicate.

However, some problems have not been overcome. These were related to deep-rooted differences and perceptions between academics and business thinking about learning and training in the workplace. In summary, once again, the key success factor

---

<sup>10</sup> Public administration design theory reflects more on this concept (see [Wood and Bohte 2004](#)).

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

behind the results that emerged was the personal commitment, perseverance and motivation of key leaders. They despite some key flaws were able to persuade or 'force' anyone to deliver effectively at least.

## 4.3 Developmental evaluation

### 4.3.1 Introduction

The second stage of the current evaluation serves a developmental perspective (Milley et al., 2018), in which results are integrated into dynamic and ongoing action. Patton was the first to introduce this term, highlighting that developmental evaluation processes:

"support programme, project, product, personnel and/or organizational development [where] the evaluator is part of a team whose members collaborate to conceptualize, design, and test new approaches in a ... process of continuous improvement, adaptation, and intentional change". (Patton, 1994, 317).

Such an approach follows the need for a "satisfactory hybrid between the current [exogenous] evaluation and more endogenously grounded approaches to evaluation" (High and Nemes, 2007, 114). The current approach hence integrates the top-down monitoring with a bottom-up framing, thus addressing the problem of achieving those local desiderata "while simultaneously helping hard-nosed funding agencies to judge whether they have received value for money" (Moseley, 2003, 215).

Along these lines, the following analytical description assesses the performance of the local partners in an integrated manner, by taking into consideration:

- the selection and job matching of NEETs,
- their training and apprenticeship and
- the establishment of new entrepreneurship.

This presentation of best practices contains a full descriptive guide to all stages of the procedure and, as such, comprises an approach to the employability of NEETs, which can be fully replicated.

UCAM synthesised the best practices to enhance the target groups' employability through competence-oriented training, drawing on research, innovation, and the transfer of knowledge during the project.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment



### 4.3.2 Methodology

To assess best practises related to the YOUTHShare project in relation to its key stakeholders, we conducted a series of interviews with key stakeholders, which were then analysed to understand participants' views of the project. The interview format was chosen based on a semi-structured questionnaire, which allowed us to gather qualitative information through more open-ended responses and to obtain more detailed views of the project from key stakeholders.

The semi-structured developmental assessment interviews were conducted over a seven-week period, either via Skype or Viber, or face-to-face when possible. Prior to the organized interviews, the NESC researcher had done preliminary work by identifying evidence of a discrepancy between the planned and actual tasks for each of the above topics by studying the records of reporting results. This was also the main starting point for the interview process. Interviews took place between November 2021 and January 2022 with various managers and key personnel in all partner countries. The analysis of the documents and the linkage with the results from SSI lasted the whole of February 2022. Interviews were analysed using thematic analysis (Clarke and Braun, 2013; Attride-Stirling, 2001).

The chosen sample consisted of a total of sixteen people: four local managers, one from each participating country (Greece, Cyprus, Italy and Spain); four researchers, one from each country; and eight NEETs, two from each country. The different roles of the interviewees made up a comprehensive sample that gave us a representative picture of the impact of the project.

In more detail, the local managers were the YOUTHShare project managers in each of the employment promotion-related centres located in Greece, Cyprus, Italy and Spain. The researchers were assigned the role of defining the profile of NEETs and describing the skills and competences needed to find and obtain employment. As defined by the terms of the YOUTHShare programme, NEETs were young people aged up to 30 years who were neither studying nor working during the programme period. More specifically, NEETs eligible to participate in the programme were migrant refugees and women.

The list of the interviewees in each country and their affiliation are presented as follows:

In Greece:

- Local Manager → Nektaria Marava (Network for Employment and Social Care - NESC)
- Researcher → Effie Emmanouil and Athina Avagianou (University of the Aegean - UAegean)

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

- NEETs → Elena Founargiotaki and Eleni Tsagouri

In Cyprus:

- Local Manager → Markella Papanikolaou (Centre for the Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology LTD - CARDET)
- Researcher → Ioannis Pissourios (Neapolis University Pafos – NUP)
- NEETs → Elena Petrou and Abdoul Karim Camara

In Italy:

- Local Manager → Nicola Vita (GAL La Cittadella del Sapere srl – GAL)
- Researcher → Carlos Alonso
- NEETs → Valeria Lavano and Claudia Caggiano

In Spain:

- Local Manager → José Ángel Vidal
- Researcher → Práxedes Muñoz (Catholic University of Murcia – UCAM)
- NEETs → Danitza Matos Rojas and William Vallejo

This chapter summarises the main takeaways from the semi-structured interviews, classifying the responses into four groups: a) problems encountered, b) benefits acquired, c) what the interviewees would keep, and d) what the interviewees would change in regards to the program planning implementation. We consider these four areas as the more meaningful aspects of the project, and those that can help us determine the vision of the Key Actors and their experiences during the project.

### 4.3.3 Insights from the interviews

#### Local Managers

##### Problems encountered

One of the major problems faced by local managers is the withdrawal of partners. Due to unexpected withdrawals from the project, some of the managers had to take over activities that they had not started themselves. Getting everything organized and in order without delays was also a challenge. They had problems with people leaving the project, not getting the help they expected in organising outreach events and other minor frustrations like these.

During any project, there are always various unforeseen situations and the managers had to make the important decision to choose a team, think about who helps them and who doesn't and look for the most suitable profiles. This is why some of the local

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

managers were not sure how the project would develop when they were assigned to it. There was also some tension between the different stakeholders: some of the managers said that there were too many partners and that this was a problem in terms of cooperation and interaction, which would be easier to achieve if the project involved fewer partners.

As regards NEETs, the managers had difficulty in achieving the required number of trained NEETs. They believed that they were given a very limited target group (migrants, refugees and women) and that, from their point of view, it would have been better to expand the target groups because some of the migrants were already participating in other programmes. Also, due to their different culture, there were some problems in completing the training. Overall, the NEETs needed more support and constant reminders.

The Covid-19 pandemic was also an important issue that had a strong impact on the tasks of the local partners when organising the training. Some of the local staff were pessimistic and went through periods of stress. Due to the health crisis, daily contact with the team was even more critical. As the work progressed, it became easier, but at first it was very stressful because the managers were facing a new situation and were not well prepared.

## Benefits

For local managers, the best part of the project was the great impact it had on their community. What was rewarding for most of them was that these young NEETs, who sometimes did not have opportunities or even residency permits, were extremely grateful for their participation in this training. There were cases, in which the NEETs completed their placements and the companies that hosted their apprenticeships gave them contracts of employment. Seeing this development was a great satisfaction for the managers, as for NEETs the opportunity to work meant a better quality of life. For those who had zero hope of getting a job, it was satisfying to see how their lives changed drastically.

From the managers' point of view, being a project manager on such a large project with such an impact was considered very rewarding. By setting an important precedent, YOUTHShare brought many benefits to their organisations in terms of experience gained and skills cultivated, as well as the recognition of being involved in a highly regarded research project..

## What would they change?

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

It is a common view that research projects are somehow abstract and theoretical from a practitioner's viewpoint. The same perception seemed to permeate the local YOUTHshare local managers. They often stressed that the ideas and intentions might be good, but sometimes they did not correspond to reality, as some things were not as simple in reality as they were on the drawing board.

Local managers consented on the argument that they probably had too many partners and that some of them were not working as much as others. They also believed that there was a high frequency of meetings, which added to their workload. However, they agreed that it was a key process of the project.

For the trainings, the local managers underlined that they would increase the length and make the training easier, especially since some of the migrants did not even speak the language of their host country. They would also change the target group, since there were also men interested in the project who were not allowed to take part. They suggested that a group consisting of 60% women and 40% men would be a better alternative.

### What would they keep?

For them, the satisfaction of young people with low self-esteem was one of the main achievements of the project.

They would keep the practical work, the activities that were not theoretical, as this was something that meant working with people. They would also keep the research activities. Regarding the transnational employment centre, some of them thought that more emphasis should be placed on finding a way to institutionalise the centres.

Overall, their experience was quite positive. They felt very happy to be involved in this project and hoped to be able to extend it and participate in a second stage. This had to do with a widespread feeling that there was still a lot to be done, related to the project's aims and objective.

### Researchers

#### Problems encountered

In the beginning, some of the researchers needed some time to understand what was expected. They also thought there were too many skype meetings held too often. As to language, it was not a problem, but a challenge.

Among the problems encountered throughout the project, the researchers highlight the lack of experience in project management. They note that there have been some

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

frictions between partners, caused by different cultures and ways of communicating, which led to strong discussions. Moreover, they stated that some partners were not able to deliver some of their tasks on time and this resulted in more stress and pressure for those who did deliver.

## Benefits

The researchers, by assessing all the new information and collecting the research the data, they discovered some logics that they were previously unaware of. The teaching experience was also new - and welcome - for some of them. As the lessons were conducted in English, they further had the opportunity to speak and practice in a different language.

In addition, they were satisfied as they met new people and believe they gained a lot from it. For example, they talked about seeing the differences between those who were from their country and those who were not, as well as getting to know their interests. Both on a professional and a personal level, the exposure of them to other cultures and the opportunity to meet new people helped them a lot.

The second part of the training was of particular interest to them. They did not expect to see the NEETs' widespread satisfaction with the programme and were sad to see it ending. It was at this point that the researchers noticed the NEETs' satisfaction with the courses and with the project in general.

In a similar vein, researches described there was always something within the multifaceted project that they could not see at first sight; over time they got to know people's profiles and discovered contradictory reasons and lack of trust in institutions, a view that later changed for the better.

## What would they change?

Nearly all the researchers agreed on the facilitation of a more concrete and organised initial partner search.

After seeing the workload for certain activities, they highlighted that they would change the budget. In addition, they would also change some of the activities and add others that were not included in the initial planning and budget proposal. However, they added that it seemed normal for the initial planning and the budget proposal to slightly change during the implementation of the project.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

Not least, some of the researchers stressed that they would like to have closer contacts with all partners. They also noted that the NEETs needed further support for entrepreneurship, which they saw as the ultimate goal of the project.

### What would they keep?

All researchers converged on the view that NEETs learned to act as a team and that helped them with developing their soft skills and adjusting to work environments.

A similar team ethic was also very important for the researchers per se, as they learnt to collectively plan and develop research plans. This also mitigated the feeling of isolation that the researchers had during the Covid-19 pandemic. Due to this fruitful collaboration between some partners, several of the researchers underlined that they were willing to contact other actors to work together on future projects.

Not least, all the knowledge that came out of the project was a useful arsenal for them since they uncovered new and unexpected information, which will help them in their future careers.

### NEETs

#### Problems encountered

According to their views, some NEETs felt some pressure during their placements because there was no specialisation to their training, so they felt some pressure to keep up with the “mainstream” beneficiaries.

In the same vein, they stressed that they would prefer a more flexible timetable for the course, as this would make things easier and they would not miss some classes.

In addition, they did not like spending all those hours online and sometimes found the training boring because of this; however, they understood that this was not the fault of the project, but a condition imposed by the pandemic emergency.

#### Benefits

The NEETs considered the YOUTHShare project as an encouraging process with a great supervising team. Their work was supported and they always had a feeling of pride. Furthermore, they had a really good time during the training, in which they did a lot of group exercises, collaborating, and discussing and it was really fun but also intensive for them.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

The feeling that they belonged to a community was very important, as well as the chance to learn for free, because, as they said, many of them could not afford to study. They pointed out that the teachers were very good, and it was nice to share ideas with them. Finally, they had meetings with international partners. They found this convenient because everyone could talk and share their experience.

Most importantly, they thought of the internships as the most significant part of the project, because it was a possibility for finding a job. That is why they enjoyed it when some entrepreneurs were invited to share their experiences, their current entrepreneurial activities, and their need for internships.

Some of the NEETs highlighted that YOUTHShare was the best platform they have joined so far because it allowed them to do an internship and get their first job. They thanked the local managers for their help, as they played a great role in the process and were always concerned about them.

### What would they change?

Some of NEETs stressed said they would not change anything in the project and that everything was great. Other NEETs found the training quite interesting, however, there were a lot of different topics and some of them were not 100% of their interest. One of their suggestions was that more individual exercises as well as group ones with more interaction could be added, in order to make the trainings more interesting.

A widespread opinion was that they would like to have a longer internship, perhaps a three-month internship. They believed that internships are a great opportunity for people like them to get a job, but they believed that the actual internship should be longer than 21 days to give them time to adjust and find real job opportunities.

They also suggested including people who speak French because many people wanted to participate but could not because of the language barrier.

### What would they keep?

The NEETs enjoyed the training; they said they were not just someone reading a text. In addition, they liked the methodology of the training because there was a lot of teamwork and the topics were very interesting. Both the theory and the structure of the course were ideal for them, especially as it was an online course and it becomes more complicated to do the training activities. It was also an opportunity to learn from

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

each other and get more involved; after that, they felt more engaged and that they had met people.

The general opinion of the trainers was positive; NEETs described the trainers as people who knew what they were talking about, polite, available and nice. All the tutors, as well as the organisation of the course, were seen as genuinely polite. They said that the teachers seemed to love their jobs and that this is the most important thing in any field: to love your job.

They all agreed with the fact that they enjoyed meeting new people, very kind people, and especially the opportunity to be together and exchange ideas. They found it very difficult to find people to discuss these problems, such as climate change. Also, NEETs stress that they learned new things, such as social skills, not to be so emotional, to control emotions and to deal with unpredictable situations. In addition, YOUTHShare was also a great opportunity to gain working experience for them.

#### 4.4 Conclusions

Several responses were repeated in each Key Actor group, which allowed us to identify some clear patterns and to draw valuable insights. We summarise these suggestions as starting points for an update of the project and, above all, a better adaptation to the needs of the Key Actors: local managers, researchers and NEETs.

- Several local managers suggested that the **profile of NEETs** should be changed and not only limited to migrants or refugees and women. Accordingly, one of the biggest difficulties encountered during YOUTHShare was meeting the defined objectives of the NEETs participants due to this very specific profile. They also pointed out that there was a high volume of meetings, especially in the initial phase of the project.
- Local managers and Key Actors who were in direct contact with NEETs, valued above all the sight of the results. They felt great satisfaction in seeing the NEETs feeling satisfied or finding work and, therefore, seeing their own goal and the goal of the project being achieved. In addition, they saw in the field the **practical results** of the whole process.
- Most of the researchers agreed that there were **too many partners**. According to them, it would be ideal if a more exhaustive selection of partners was made in the planning phase of the project. This was done in order to reduce the group, as, according to the researchers, the workload was not evenly distributed.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment



- With regard to NEETs, the project's protagonists, one of the most recurring requests was that the part dedicated to the internship should be designed differently. They asked for an **internship agreement that lasts longer** than the 21 days that was in place. They felt that this period was too short to adapt to the company, improve their professional skills and competences, gain relevant work experience and, at best, have a real chance of being hired.
- Regarding the other parts of the project, NEETs were very satisfied with YOUTHShare, both with the training part and the internship part. They believed that this project was **essential for their professional and personal development** and appreciated the fact that, thanks to the training, they were able to have social contacts during the pandemic.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

## Chapter 5 Discussion and policy recommendations

### 5.1 Introduction

A system of support services that are accessible to young people is necessary for the development and delivery of an integrated policy response to fulfil the needs of detached youth. Two service delivery models predominate in this regard<sup>11</sup>.

1. **One-stop shops:** When several services—like work, social assistance, welfare, health care, and housing—are combined under one roof, it's more likely to spot young people who aren't linked. Still, this paradigm takes a largely passive approach, with service delivery being initiated by client requests for help or by channels for service provider referrals. Even though consolidating the operations of different public service providers under one roof may be useful for organizing interventions and improving service delivery, it can be expensive to set up and does not address the problem of reaching out to those who are the most disconnected from society and may not be aware of or willing to use public services.
2. **Partnership network:** The goal of this is to link up—and in some cases, expand—current services and programs, including the informal networks created by non-governmental and community-based organizations. Such networking arrangements are commonly referred a socially innovative governance (Chatzichristos and Hennebry, 2022), or governance-beyond-the-state (Swyngedouw, 2005). It typically operates through public servants from a municipality, labor office, school, social work office, or another organization that take the initiative in reaching out to disengaged young people as the initial point of contact. As a research project, the YOUTHShare project was based from the outset on this methodology for creating networking partnerships.

The common denominator of both approaches is a four steps, generic process which differs in its multiple manifestations: identifying disengaged and inactive young people; contact, engage and bring young people to services; design and deliver individualised reintegration programmes; monitor and adjust (See figure 5.1)

---

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/documents/publication/wcms\\_544350.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_544350.pdf)

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

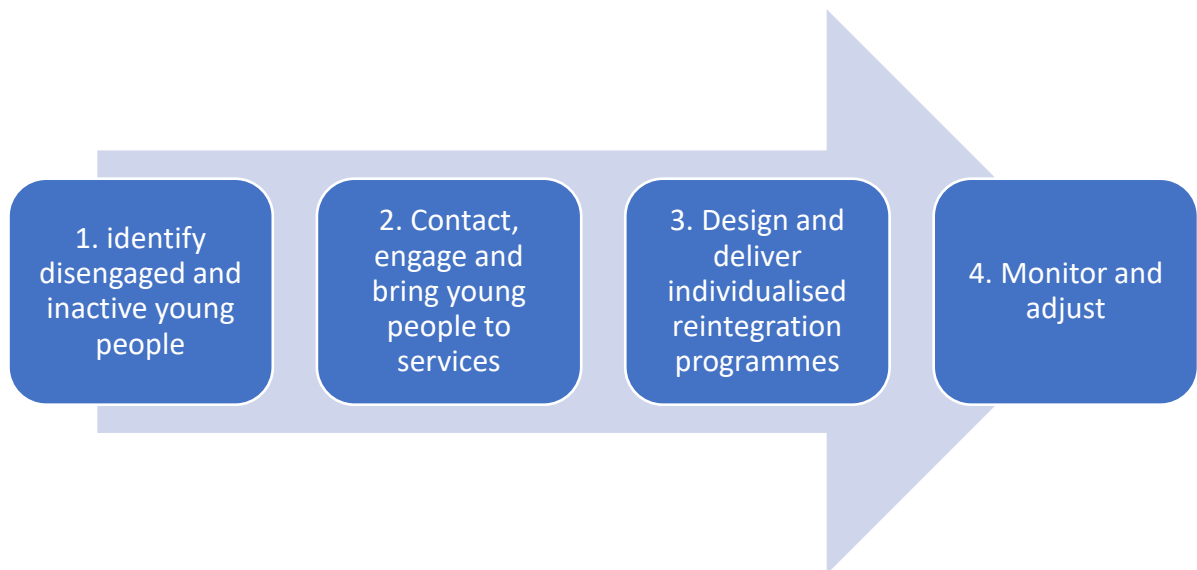


Figure 5.1. source

[https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/ed\\_emp/documents/publication/wcms\\_544350.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_544350.pdf)

The current discussion on policy recommendations links these four steps to the YOUTHShare work packages, from which it draws valuable information on each stage of the outreach mechanisms.

## 5.2 Identify disengaged and inactive young people

The first stage of identifying NEETs is mainly related to the **Transnational Research Network and YOUTHShare researchers' work (WP1)**. In this regard, the preparatory research activities of the YOUTHShare project need to be brought under the spotlight.

Once more, the Covid-19 pandemic has proved rather challenging in that manner: the challenges posed by the isolation of researchers and the lack of face-to-face collaboration were compounded by many others already associated with cross-border research, such as programming, culture, language and technological shortcomings. It soon became quite apparent that research and field exploration take time. During the pandemic, researchers were able to spend more time doing desk research, writing articles, and participating in conferences and online workshops. On the other hand, physical communication and field research was unfeasible. In order to address the lockouts, virtual communication between groups of senior and junior researchers, even professors, was much more numerous. The need to chat and collaborate with each other was more acute than ever. This collaboration led to alternative communication solutions, which in some cases proved to be more advanced.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

However, in this context it was quite difficult to develop a common mindset through digital communication alone, which led to difficulties in creating a common identity and understanding.

Overall, these circumstances led to delays in the initial stage of the YOUTHShare project, mostly related to developing common codes of communication between the heterogenous partners. Once a common understanding was acquired the identification of NEETs became quite smooth. The **YOUTHShare Transnational Research Network (WP1)** was developed against these backdrops and was the output of a long-term process of communication and mutual understanding.

Policy recommendations for identifying NEETs could be summarised as follows:



- ✓ Developing innovative approaches for tracking and data exchange between different partners.
- ✓ Developing partnership strategies that draw on wide networks and include numerous governmental and non-governmental groups.
- ✓ Engaging and hiring outreach employees or hiring outreach services for the identification of outreach NEETs.

From a project-planning perspective, the key lessons that were drawn from the initial stage of identifying disengaged and inactive young people could be summarised as follows.

1

*Developing an integrated and long-term approach for mapping the field of intervention*

2

*Developing partnerships between heterogenous partners and multi-scale networks which allow wider tracking and data exchange methods.*

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

3

*Developing innovative tools for triggering common communication codes and a common understanding between the partners.*

### 5.3 Contact, engage and bring young people to services

The second stage of the outreach method was mostly associated with the work and deliverables of the **Employment Centers and Key Account Managers (WP2)**. The new practices for vocational inclusion based on the "Ripples in the Water" was used by YOUTHShare employment centers and their employees to develop a person-centered and skills-based approach to matching job seekers with potential employers.

WP 2 tasks' implementation was challenged once again as the pandemic burst. Still, these challenges imposed by the pandemic were counterbalanced by contingency management, great teamwork, endorsement of quick adaptation measures, information sharing, and training. All the above were manifested into networking and establishing connections and partnerships with a wide range of institutions, agencies and organizations (local governments, employers and employers' organizations, trade unions, youth organizations).

PM leaders were able to understand that the "performance loop" approach of managing YOUTHShare was not sufficient in times of crisis. Instead, "a **learning process**" was required to be adaptive to it (Thiry, 2000). They decided on a single strategy to deal with this emerging external pressure after discussions with every WP2 member, and especially with KAMs. Every time an issue arose, a list of viable solutions was provided and chosen through conversation, information sharing, and discussion. For this "learning loop" to work, information sharing and a motivated environment were essential. Leaders were able to go above and beyond expectations and take full advantage of chances by inspiring everyone to emphasize the importance of the duties.

One crucial aspect of this readjusted position was the provision of a single point of contact for young people, offering real support at the micro level, thus resembling a more personalised one-stop-shop concept. This approach integrated information, resources and guidance relating to employment, education, training and welfare services and options. Through this integration it proved personalised career guidance and information services.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

In these circumstances, constant support and reminders from the PM leaders as well as a special emphasis on the cultural and discourse differences (both in training and in internships) highlighted the high level of contingency planning, excellent collaboration, support for quick-response actions, information exchange, and training. Against this background, policy recommendations for engaging NEETs could be summarised as follows:



- ✓ Promote face-to-face, one-on-one contacts by outreach, youth, or street workers. This is the most commonly used to strategy for building trust and common understanding between the providers and the beneficiaries.
- ✓ Develop contacts with public services, primarily social work centres, which have the resources to reach a wider NEETs population.
- ✓ Include Youth organizations to providing outreach work on behalf of organizations.
- ✓ Promote the idea of **young ambassadors**: former NEETs who are taught to provide peer-to-peer support to current NEETs.
- ✓ Engaging and hiring outreach employees or hiring outreach services for the identification of outreach NEETs.

From a project-planning perspective, the key lessons that were drawn from the stage of contacting and engaging disengaged and inactive young people could be summarised as follows.

4

*Adapting planning and implementation and inhibit a problem-solving approach, especially during turbulent times.*

5

*Adopt a motivational management which can inspire partners and the wider network.*

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

6

*Approach the implementation as a developmental process in which learning and training is equally crucial for the service providers.*

## 5.4 Design and deliver individualised reintegration programmes

The third stage of the outreach process was related to the **Toolkits produced for outreach and training activities (WP3)** and the **training and the internship/mobility process and implementation across partner countries (WP4)**. The toolkits can be separated to those that concern trainings and those that refer to entrepreneurship.

In terms of training, it became quite obvious that any planned activity for vulnerable, non-integrated NEETs should consider adding several life coaching and motivational sessions with them, alongside personal tutorials and one-to-one motivational discussions. In addition, the process of matching NEETs with employers proved to be time-consuming, longer than the project envisaged. KAMs were crucial to this project as they are the ones who help both employers to understand the background and disadvantages of NEETs and to prepare NEETs for interviews. In this sense, the involvement of KAMs in a longer-term integration process seemed quite critical.

The time dimension was also quite important in terms of the design and implementation of the internship and mobility, as it was often pointed out that they should have a longer time horizon. Even distance internships could be a longer-term, sustainable solution to the resource constraints that physical internships may have.

In terms of entrepreneurship, encouraging entrepreneurship and self-employment proved to be quite crucial, especially for NEETs living in rural areas, in order to reduce the outflow of young people from the countryside. For this to happen, a prerequisite is the cultivation of the managerial and entrepreneurial skills needed to start a business. On the support side, financial support is undoubtedly quite important, especially for the start-up phases of entrepreneurship and for NEETs who lack the financial resources. Microfinance is a well-documented strategy that seems to work in these start-up phases and penetrates the social economy sector. Consequently, a specialized training in social entrepreneurship could further cultivate the entrepreneurial skills of NEETs and provide them with access to additional financial instruments related to social enterprises. No less importantly, business incubators or even business networking groups could share expertise, facilities, resources and ideas.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

Against this background, policy recommendations for engaging NEETs could be summarised as follows:



- ✓ Counselling and direction on several life elements for the young person,
- ✓ Single point services or one-stop-shops can offer inactive young people a consistent source of information and assistance.
- ✓ Individualized needs assessment, also known as profiling, aimed to gather information about the young person.
- ✓ Financial support for early stages of entrepreneurship
- ✓ Micro-financing for early stages of entrepreneurship
- ✓ Promoting social entrepreneurship as a collective and more ethical way of doing business.
- ✓ Engage business incubators.

From a project-planning perspective, the key lessons that were drawn from the stage of designing and delivering individualised reintegration programmes could be summarised as follows.



*Create multi-faceted networks that can provide various resources, such as training, administrative, business and social resources.*



*Promoting autonomy between the partners by delegating responsibilities but at the same time bridging those responsibilities.*

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment



## 5.5 Monitor and adjust

The final stage of the outreach process has to do with continuous monitoring and adjustment of the programme. These (mostly) managerial challenges build on the necessity to serve a developmental perspective of the program (Milley et al., 2018), in which results are integrated into dynamic and ongoing action. As has already been noted, following a set of specified objectives and activities in a program is frequently ineffective, as it prevents adaptation to a changing environment (Preskill and Beer, 2012). Program planning and evaluation must back up a developmental viewpoint (Milley et al., 2018). The assessment of this report (See chapter 4) as well as the ongoing debate and policy recommendations serve this developmental purpose by adapting the program objectives and activities to real-life challenges.

During the implementation period, these challenges had mostly to do with the Covid-19 pandemic. Overall, the management challenges imposed by the pandemic have been overcome. The key persons chosen to lead these WP activities and the team created by them motivated everyone to deliver.

In addition, it is commonly highlighted that, given that NEETs may not always be ready to enter employment, school or training while making progress towards this end goal, traditional performance monitoring indicators may underestimate the results of outreach activities. This once again makes it imperative to adopt a developmental perspective to which monitoring indicators are constantly adapted and strengthened.

Against this background, there are specific planning lessons that have to be brought to the fore:

- Developing coherent partnerships which are flexible.
- Keep meetings short and to the point- coordination & preparation
- Hire an experienced project manager
- Build collaborative networks
- Develop good communication with all the partners and trust-building mechanisms.
- Anticipate changes in budget, partners and tasks.
- Anticipate exogenous crisis, such as the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Follow a developmental evaluation and monitoring

Overall, the main managerial key lessons for facilitating the monitoring and the adjustment of the program are as follows:

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

9

*Follow a developmental evaluation perspective*

10

*Build trust-building mechanisms within the partnerships to adjust to exogenous crises and unexpected circumstances*

## 5.6 Conclusions

The YOUTHShare project still is going on and the WP5 activities are still carried out. Several policy recommendations and planning suggestions will be drawn for this WP as well. More or less, the lessons derived from this WP will relate either to managerial aspects of it or the project proposals' intricacies as well. Once more, these lessons will probably give us insights into personal perceptions, motivations and actions, the role of key stakeholders and the difficulties of adopting the same approach at transnational level.

The insights from YOUTHShare highlight the need to design various strategies to address the needs of very diverse subgroups of young NEETs, the significance of combining preventive and curative strategies, and, most importantly, the need to develop customized support plans to address the various barriers to entry into the labor market faced by difficult-to-reach young people and encourage them to participate in an employment, education, or training program.

In personal terms, we (the YOUTHShare team) believe that through the YOUTHShare experience we acknowledged more than ever before that ***program management requires more than just a performing process; it requires a learning process.*** Against this background, all partners involved should act in the same ground so the program could exceed expectations and maximize opportunities<sup>12</sup>. Whenever, this common ground was not built, problems arose, and project activities were threatened. In these

---

<sup>12</sup> Thiry, M. (2000). A learning loop for successful program management. Paper presented at Project Management Institute Annual Seminars & Symposium, Houston, TX. Newtown Square, PA: Project Management Institute.

Implemented By







YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

circumstances, the project leader's role was pivotal, while the personal commitment, the persistence and motivation of certain key persons were equally important. In any case, being constantly proactive helped partners deal with the exogenous unexpected impacts of the pandemic. In these circumstances, knowledge-sharing and training in all scales helped all partners maintain their focus and align to the program's objectives.

More than management and empowerment courses, YOUTHShare tested our expertise on how to engage, motivate and educate vulnerable groups in difficult times. Again, the key word has been support at different levels. The extended networking, personal relationships and trust-building mechanisms have been all pivotal to achieving the project's objectives during turbulent times.

Summing up, the list of design and implementation lessons that the YOUTHShare team learned are as follows:

-  *Developing an integrated and long-term approach for mapping the field of intervention*
-  *Developing partnerships between heterogenous partners and multi-scale networks which allow wider tracking and data exchange methods.*
-  *Developing innovative tools for triggering common communication codes and a common understanding between the partners.*
-  *Adapting planning and implementation and inhibit a problem-solving approach, especially during turbulent times.*

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

5

*Adopt a motivational management which can inspire partners and the wider network.*

6

*Approach the implementation as a developmental process in which learning and training is equally crucial for the service providers.*

7

*Create multi-faceted networks that can provide various resources, such as training, administrative, business and social resources.*

8

*Promoting autonomy between the partners by delegating responsibilities but at the same time bridging those responsibilities.*

9

*Follow a developmental evaluation perspective*

10

*Build trust-building mechanisms within the partnerships to adjust to exogenous crises and unexpected circumstances*

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

## References

- Apostolides, A. (2015). *Stakeholders map of Social and Solidarity Economy Networks—Cyprus Document for SSEDAS (Sustainable and Solidarity Economy (SUSY) Project)*. <https://docplayer.gr/30061451-Stakeholders-map-of-social-and-solidarity-economy-networks-cyprus-document-for-ssedas-by-local-researcher-alexander-apostolides.html>
- Artner, A. (2013). Is Youth Unemployment Really the Major Worry? *Debatte: Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe*, 21(2–3), 183–205. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0965156X.2013.863998>
- Attride-Stirling, J. (2001). Thematic networks: an analytic tool for qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 1(3), 385–405. <https://doi.org/10.1177/146879410100100307>
- Borzaga, C., Galera, G., Franchini, B., Chiomento, S., Nogales, R., Carini, C., European Commission, & Directorate-General for Employment, S. A. and I. (2020). *Social enterprises and their ecosystems in Europe: Comparative synthesis report*. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2767/567551>
- CEPES. (2020). *La Economía Social en España 2020*. Confederación Empresarial Española de Economía Social (CEPES). <https://docs.google.com/viewerng/viewer?url=https://www.cepes.es/files/publicaciones/120.pdf>
- Chatzichristos, G. & Hennebry, B. (2021). Social innovation in rural governance: a comparative case study across the marginalised rural Europe. *Journal of Rural Studies*. Epub ahead of print doi: 10.1016/j.jrurstud.2021.06.004
- Chaves, R., & Monzón, J. L. (2012). Beyond the crisis: The social economy, prop of a new model of sustainable economic development. *Service Business*, 6(1), 5–26. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11628-011-0125-7>
- Clarke, V. & Braun, V. (2013) Teaching thematic analysis: Overcoming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning. *The Psychologist*, 26(2), 120-123
- High, C. and Nemes, G. 2007. Social learning in LEADER: exogenous, endogenous and hybrid evaluation in rural development. *Sociologia Ruralis* 47(2), 103–119
- [Cypriot Law] N. 104(I)/2017 [on Associations, Foundations & Clubs], (2017).
- [Cypriot Law] N. 207(I)/2020 [on Social Enterprises], (2020).
- Emmanouil, E., Gialis, S., & Papageorgiou, I. (2020). *Transnational Report on the impact of employment policies on young NEETs: Tackling youth disengagement*

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

- through understanding the flexibilization-regional resilience nexus* (YOUTHShare Project). University of the Aegean.  
[http://youthshare.aegean.gr/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Transnational\\_Report\\_NEETs.pdf](http://youthshare.aegean.gr/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Transnational_Report_NEETs.pdf)
- Elorriaga, A. M. (2005). Capital social y cooperativas: La experiencia en el País Vasco. *EKONOMIAZ. Revista Vasca de Economía*, 59(2), 284–305.
- ENRD Contact Point (2017), LEADER Transnational Cooperation Guidance available online at [https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/leader\\_tnc-guidance.pdf](https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/leader_tnc-guidance.pdf).
- Eurofound, Mascherini, M., & Ledermaier, S. (2016). *Exploring the diversity of NEETs*. Publications Office of the European Union.
- Eurofound, Mascherini, M., Salvatore, L., Meierkord, A., & Jungblut, J.-M. (2012). *NEETs, young people not in employment, education or training :characteristics, costs and policy responses in Europe*. Publications Office of the European Union. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2806/41578>
- European Commission (2005). *Communication from the Commission to the Council on European policies concerning youth. Addressing the concerns of young people in Europe – implementing the European Youth Pact and promoting active citizenship*. COM (2005) 206. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2005:0206:FIN:EN:PDF>
- European Commission (2008). *Communication from the Commission to the European Council—A European Economic Recovery Plan*. COM (2008) 800. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52008DC0800>
- European Commission (2010). *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Youth on the Move. An initiative to unleash the potential of young people to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in the European Union*. COM (2010) 477. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0477:FIN:EN:PDF>
- European Commission (2011). *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Youth Opportunities Initiative*. COM (2011) 933. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52011DC0933&from=NL>
- European Commission (2012a). *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Towards a job-rich recovery*. COM (2012) 173. <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=7619&langId=en>

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

European Commission (2012b). *Youth employment: Commission proposes package of measures*.

[https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP\\_12\\_1311](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_12_1311)

European Commission (2012c). *Youth employment: Commission proposes package of measures – frequently asked questions*.

[https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/MEMO\\_12\\_938](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/MEMO_12_938)

European Commission (2015). *Guidance on Evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative*.

<https://ec.europa.eu/social/search.jsp?advSearchKey=evaluation+yei&mode=advancedSubmit&langId=en>

European Commission (2020). *Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy 2021*.

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0575>

European Commission (2020). *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Empty. Europe's moment: Repair and Prepare for the Next Generation*. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2020:456:FIN>

European Commission, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (2013). *Social Europe: Current challenges and the way forward: annual report of the Social Protection Committee (2012)*. Publications Office.

<https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2767/86088>

European Commission, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (2020a). *Social enterprises and their ecosystems in Europe: Country report : Italy*. Publications Office. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2767/173023>

European Commission, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (2020b). *Social enterprises and their ecosystems in Europe: Country report : Spain*. Publications Office. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2767/730936>

European Council (2005). Council Decision of 12 July 2005 on Guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States. 2005/601/EC. [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L\\_.2005.205.01.0021.01.ENG](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2005.205.01.0021.01.ENG)

European Council (2013). *Conclusions. (Multiannual Financial Framework). EUCO 37/13*. <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-37-2013-INIT/en/pdf>

European Council (2020). *Council Recommendation of 30 October 2020 on A Bridge to Jobs – Reinforcing the Youth Guarantee and replacing the Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee*. 2020/C 372/01. Official Journal of the European Union. <https://eur->

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

lex.europa.eu/legal-  
content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32020H1104(01)&from=EN

European Parliament (2018). *European Parliament resolution of 18 January 2018 on the implementation of the Youth Employment Initiative in the Member States (2017/2039(INI))*. Official Journal of the European Union. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018IP0018&rid=6>

European Parliament, Directorate General for Internal Policies of the Union (2022). *Social economy in Spain: Briefing paper for EMPL delegation to Madrid, 21-23 February 2022*. Publications Office. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2861/648509>

European Parliament (2008). Lifelong learning for knowledge, creativity and innovation—‘Education and Training 2010 work programme’. *Official Journal of the European Union, Document 52008IP0625*, 33–39.

European Village, & Social Enterprise UK (2017). *Greece. Social and Solidarity Economy Report*. British Council. <https://www.britishcouncil.org/society/social-enterprise/greece-social-and-solidarity-economy-report>

Eurostat (2022). *Annual enterprise statistics by size class for special aggregates of activities (NACE Rev. 2)*. [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/SBS\\_SC\\_SCA\\_R2\\_\\_custom\\_2067614/default/table?lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/SBS_SC_SCA_R2__custom_2067614/default/table?lang=en)

Eurostat (2022a, April). *Employment—Annual statistics*. Eurostat. Statistics Explained. [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Employment\\_-\\_annual\\_statistics#Impact\\_of\\_the\\_COVID-19\\_pandemic\\_and\\_recovery](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Employment_-_annual_statistics#Impact_of_the_COVID-19_pandemic_and_recovery)

Eurostat (2022b, May). *Statistics on young people neither in employment nor in education or training*. Eurostat. [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Statistics\\_on\\_young\\_people\\_neither\\_in\\_employment\\_nor\\_in\\_education\\_or\\_training#The\\_NEET\\_rate\\_within\\_the\\_EU\\_and\\_its\\_Member\\_States\\_2021](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Statistics_on_young_people_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_or_training#The_NEET_rate_within_the_EU_and_its_Member_States_2021)

Fialho, J. S., Soares, M. C., Gama, P., Almeida, S., Vieira, V., & Mendes, V. (2018). State of the art: Good practices of social inclusion (through work based learning strategies) targeted at young people in the partners’ countries: Portugal. Centro de Formação Profissional para o Comércio e Afins. [https://neetsinaction.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/IO1\\_PORTUGAL\\_FINAL-VERSION.pdf](https://neetsinaction.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/IO1_PORTUGAL_FINAL-VERSION.pdf)

Gosling, P. (2019, February 13). The slow death of the Cyprus Co-op Bank. *Co-Op News*. <https://www.thenews.coop/135627/sector/banking-and-insurance/slow-death-cyprus-co-op-bank/>

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment



- Great Britain, Social Exclusion Unit, Great Britain, & Prime Minister. (1999). *Bridging the gap: New opportunities for 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training*. Stationery Office.
- [Greek Law] N. 4019/2011 [on Social Economy and Social Cooperative Enterprise] (FEK A' 216/30.9.2011), Pub. L. No. 4019 (2011).
- [Greek Law] N. 4430/2016 [on Social and Solidarity Economy, regulating the development of its actors and introducing other provisions] (FEK A' 205/31.10.2016), (2016).
- Haas, M. & Mortensen, M (2016). The Secrets of teamwork in Harvard Business Review, June 2016 available at <https://hbr.org/2016/06/the-secrets-of-great-teamwork>.
- High, C. and Nemes, G. (2007). Social learning in LEADER: exogenous, endogenous and hybrid evaluation in rural development. *Sociologia Ruralis* 47(2), 103–119
- ICF Consulting Services, Manoudi, A., Balourdos, D., & Marini, F. (2014). *A map of social enterprises and their eco-systems in Europe. Country Report: Greece*. European Commission.  
<https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=13303&langId=en>
- [Italian Law] L. 328/2000 Legge quadro per la realizzazione del sistema integrato di interventi e servizi sociali, (2000).
- [Italian Law] L. 381/1991 Disciplina delle cooperative sociali, (1991).
- Kioupkiolis, A., & Karyotis, T. (2015). Self-managing the Commons in Contemporary Greece. In D. Azzellini (Ed.), *An Alternative Labour History: Worker Control and Workplace Democracy* (pp. 298–328). Zed Books.  
<https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350218451>
- Martínez-Campillo, A., Fernández-Santos, Y., & del Pilar Sierra-Fernández, M. (2018). How Well Have Social Economy Financial Institutions Performed During the Crisis Period? Exploring Financial and Social Efficiency in Spanish Credit Unions. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 151(2), 319–336. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-016-3192-9>
- McBride, J., Cyprus NGO Initiative on Law Reform, & Office of the Commissioner for Volunteerism and Non Governmental Organizations. (2015). *Civil society in Cyprus: Building for the future*. <https://rm.coe.int/16806ac992>
- Milley, P., Szijarto, B., Svensson, K & Cousins, J. B. (2018). The evaluation of social innovation: A review and integration of the current empirical knowledge base. *Evaluation* 24(2), 237-258.
- Moseley, M., J. (2003). *Rural Development: Principles and practice*. London: Sage Publications.

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

- Nasioulas, I. (2011). *Greek Social Economy at the crossroads. Law 4019/2011 and the institutionalization challenge*. 3rd International CIRIEC Research Conference on the Social Economy, Valladolid (Spain).
- NGO Support Centre. (n.d.). Retrieved 26 March 2022, from <https://ngo-sc.org/>
- O'Higgins, N. (2001). *Youth unemployment and employment policy: A global perspective*. International Labour Organization.
- Paabort, H., & Beilmann, M. (2021). State level agreed-upon factors contributing to more effective policymaking for public sector services for effective local-level work with NEETs. *Revista Calitatea Vieții*, 32(4).  
<https://doi.org/10.46841/RCV.2021.04.04>
- Papadaki, M., & Kalogeraki, S. (2018). Exploring social and solidarity economy (SSE) during the Greek economic crisis. *Partecipazione e Conflitto*, 11(1), 38–69.
- Patton, M. (1994). Developmental evaluation. *American Journal of Evaluation* 15, 311–319.
- Patton, M. (2011). *Developmental Evaluation: Applying Complexity Concepts to Enhance Innovation and Use*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Pemberton, S. (2008). Tackling the NEET Generation and the Ability of Policy to Generate a 'NEET' Solution—Evidence from the UK. *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, 26(1), 243–259. <https://doi.org/10.1068/c0654>
- Pérez-Sanz, F. J., Gargallo-Castel, A. F., & Esteban-Salvador, M. L. (2019). Prácticas de RSE en cooperativas. Experiencias y resultados mediante el estudio de casos. *CIRIEC-España, Revista de Economía Pública, Social y Cooperativa*, 97, 137. <https://doi.org/10.7203/CIRIEC-E.97.11043>
- Pfeilstetter, R., & Gómez-Carrasco, I. (2016). *Social Enterprises in Spain, Country Report Social Enterprises on the Move" (FAB-MOVE) project*.  
[https://fabmove.eu/country\\_report/social-enterprises-in-spain/](https://fabmove.eu/country_report/social-enterprises-in-spain/)
- Pissourios, I. A., Anastasi, N. R., & Gialis, S. (2021). Employment Opportunities for NEETs in Short-Term Rentals Operated Through Sharing Platforms: A Case Study Across Spain, Italy, Greece and Cyprus. *Management Studies*, 9(5).  
<https://doi.org/10.17265/2328-2185/2021.05.001>
- Preskill, H. & Beer, T. (2012). Evaluating social innovation. Washington: FSG and the Centre for Evaluation Innovation. available at:  
<http://www.evaluationinnovation.org/sites/default/files/EvaluatingSocialInnovation.pdf> (accessed 5 July 2016).
- Quintano, C., Mazzocchi, P., & Rocca, A. (2018). The determinants of Italian NEETs and the effects of the economic crisis. *Genus*, 74(1), 5.  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s41118-018-0031-0>

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

- Society Profits*. (n.d.). Retrieved 13 April 2022, from <https://www.societyprofits.eu/social-enterprises/social-enterprises-from-greece/>
- [Spanish Law] L. 5/2011, de 29 de marzo, de Economía Social, (2011).
- [Spanish Law] L. 31/1990, de 27 de diciembre, de Presupuestos Generales del Estado para 1991, (1990).
- Swyngedouw, E., (2005). Governance Innovation and the Citizen: The Janus Face of Governance-beyond-the-State. *Urban Studies* 42 (11), 1991–2006.
- Thiry, M. (2000). A learning loop for successful program management. Paper presented at Project Management Institute Annual Seminars & Symposium, Houston, TX. Newtown Square, PA: Project Management Institute.
- Vancea, M., & Utzet, M. (2018). School-to-work transition: The case of Spanish NEETs. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 21(7), 869–887.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2017.1421313>
- YOUTHShare (2019), Annex V, WP3 Outputs, Reporting Period: 01.04.2019 – 30.09.2019.
- YOUTHShare (2019), Annex 1 (b) SC Meetings, Reporting Period: 01.04.2019 – 30.09.2019.  
[.https://www.egregsystem.info/fundforyouthemployment/uploads/reports\\_annexes/2017-1-345/2/2017-1-45\\_1572471106\\_Annex%20\(b\)%20SC%20Meetings%20Minutes.pdf](https://www.egregsystem.info/fundforyouthemployment/uploads/reports_annexes/2017-1-345/2/2017-1-45_1572471106_Annex%20(b)%20SC%20Meetings%20Minutes.pdf)
- YOUTHShare (2020) Training Manual for the KEY ACCOUNT MANAGERS (KAM's Manual ), Output of WP3.
- YOUTHShare (2022) Report of WP4 Activities, Reporting Period: 1/10/2021-31/03/2022
- Wallström, H., Ridderheim, Y., Pålson, E., Åkesson, E., & Landgren, H. (2012). Motivational triggers in projects: a comparative study of the construction and consulting industries. Paper presented at PMI® Research and Education Conference, Limerick, Munster, Ireland. Newtown Square, PA: Project Management Institute.
- [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/ed\\_emp/documents/publication/wcms544350.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms544350.pdf)
- [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/ed\\_emp/documents/publication/wcms544350.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms544350.pdf)

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment

## Annex 1: Interview scripts with key actors of the project

The organized work and the script of the semi-structured interview have as follows, adjusting to each one of the topics discussed:

*How have deliverables been produced? According to your view what has changed between in what planned vs what happened in X work package? How did the pandemic impact this process? Why have things changed and what are the lessons learned for you?*

*Through studying the notes of reporting a table of the following format will be produced.*

<b>Research work / Toolkits</b>	<b>Activities/tasks as designed</b>	<b>Evidence of adjustment/ diversification/ change</b>	<b>Justification of change</b>

*Having identified the key crucial activities, and their related changing or leading tasks, interviews take place to understand them and their role in the progress of work. By interviewing the lead person, NESC's team elaborates on "What were the factors, barriers, problems, obstacles, motivations and solutions /actions are taken for ensuring the progress, performance, and quality)? What were the success factors or key persons in ensuring the process of the WP activities?"*

*Script of short interview:*

<b>Person:</b>	<b>Work Package Leader or Key Person</b>
<b>Questions</b>	
<b>Key barriers /obstacles/problems</b>	
<b>Solutions proposed and by whom</b>	
<b>Actions are taken for ensuring performance</b>	
<b>Final Remarks and comments</b>	

Implemented By



YOUTHShare project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment