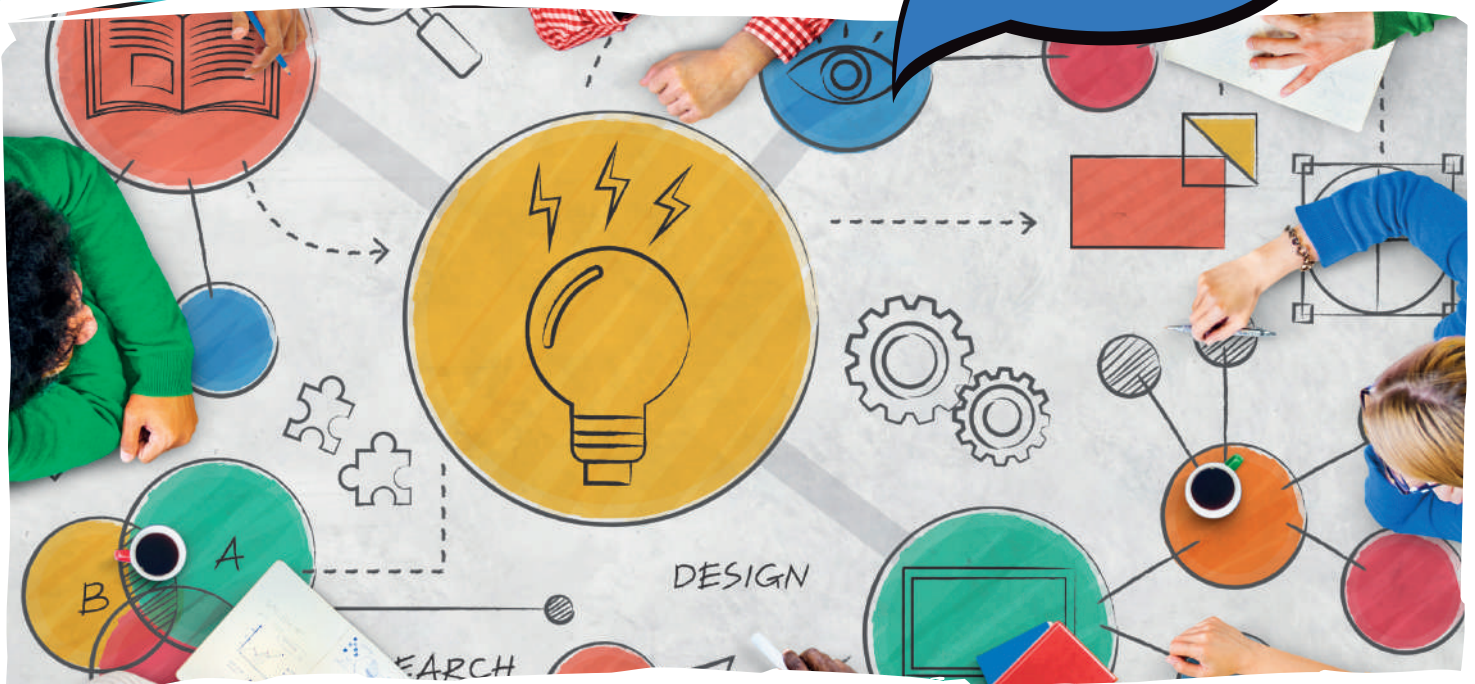Greece

Impact Assessment Report 2021 (1)

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#YoungEntrepreneursSucceed

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1 Introduction

This report presents the findings of the impact evaluation carried out to assess the effectiveness of a series of interventions undertaken by the by the Greek organization Development Agency of Karditsa (ANKA) to help young unemployed people develop their emotional capabilities, improve their achievements and behaviors, and, ultimately support them to enter employment or self-employment. The interventions were delivered in the context of the project Young Entrepreneurs Succeed! (YES!) funded by the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment. Coordinated through a cooperation of eight partners, the project aims at improving the employment situation of unemployed youth between 20 and 29 yrs old, with a strong emphasis on young people neither in employment nor in education and training (NEETs) through innovative approaches and the partners' transnational cooperation on labor market issues.

In total, the project targets a sample population of 1,600 unemployed young adults spread across four European countries (Greece, Italy, Poland, and Spain) over three and a half years (2018-2022). This report is to be read in the context of the project's "Impact Management Work Package", representing a systematic effort to provide credible evidence on the causal impact of interventions meant to integrate young adults in the labor market. The Work Package encompasses a series of activities, including establishing clear project objectives, developing an impact assessment framework, creating periodic impact evaluations, and learning to inform decision-making within and among the organizations involved.

This report proceeds as follows. After a brief introduction provided in Section 1, Section 2 explains the impact assessment framework in use. Section 3 provides a description of the interventions. In Section 4, the report moves its focus on detailing the methodology used to conduct the evaluation. Section 5 presents the results, while Section 6 interprets them and discusses the lessons learned to facilitate the translation of findings into practice for the project's partners. The last section concludes and generalizes on potential implications for employment services providers outside the project context.

2 Impact assessment framework

On a general level, the choice of variables for the assessment of outcomes and impact was guided by the conceptual framework by McNeil, Reeder, and Rich (2012), which revolves around four primary areas of evaluation as shown in Figure 1: soft outcomes, hard outcomes, soft impact, and hard impact.

Figure 1. Conceptual framework guiding outcomes and impact assessment adapted from McNeil, Reeder, and Rich (2012).
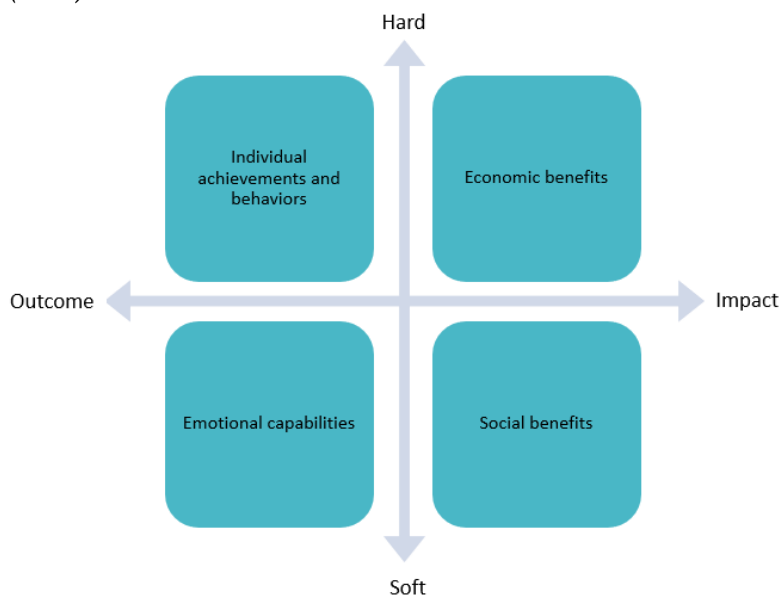
The categories in the two quadrants on the left-hand side of Figure 1 represent the outcomes (the effects of the project on the target group) whereas the two sections on the right-hand sight refer to the impact (the effects of the project on society). The framework also distinguishes between "soft" and "hard" categories. While soft outcomes and impact are valued by and relate to participants to the project and rely on self-assessment measures, hard outcomes and impact can usually be measured more objectively by other people such as researchers and trainers. Drawing on the conceptual framework described above, during the project workshop in Offenbach in March 2019, evaluators of the project and implementation partners defined the objectives of the planned interventions and discussed potential variables in the four different categories.

Table 1 provides an overview of the variables all partners agreed on to assess the effectiveness of their interventions. Since the activities foreseen by the four organizations responsible for the implementation of the project were partly different due to the diverse local contexts, the category "Individual achievements and behaviors" has been left empty as the choice of hard outcomes variables and the consequent evaluation were left at the discretion of each implementing organization.

Partners, however, agreed on the ultimate purpose of the project and decided to measure the progress in the development of beneficiaries and its effects on society using common variables in the remaining three categories.

Table 1. Overview of outcome and impact variables.

	Outcome	Impact
Hard	/	labor status, lifetime cost, disposable income
Soft	proactivity, self-efficacy, resilience, search-goals	social responsibility, social trust, institutional trust

All project partners agreed that the assessment of "Emotional capabilities" should include evaluations of self-worth and self-belief, personal skills, attitudes, and aspirations. Therefore, on an individual level, four variables were selected: proactivity, self-efficacy, resilience, and search goals. The variables chosen in this category represent different steps of a staircase to employment or self-employment. The assessment of each step on the staircase has a twofold purpose: 1) thoroughly detecting advancement via small steps of progress, 2) to avoid evaluating a complex issue in black and white, for instance, by measuring only a key variable such as labor status before and after the intervention.

Therefore, different steps in Figure 2 below correspond to the different outcome variables selected, namely proactivity ("I want to do it"), resilience ("I'll try to do it"), self-efficacy ("I can do it"), and search-goals ("I will do it"). On a social level, all project partners agreed that the evaluation of impact should comprise both a social and an economic dimension. To measure progress in building pro-sociality and social capital, partners selected the variables social responsibility, social trust, and institutional trust in the category "Social benefits." Regarding the "Economic benefits" that the intervention could potentially bring to society, variables selected include labor status (specifically, a transition from NEET status to education, employment, or self-employment), lifetime cost, and disposable income.

Figure 2. Staircase to employment or self-employment.
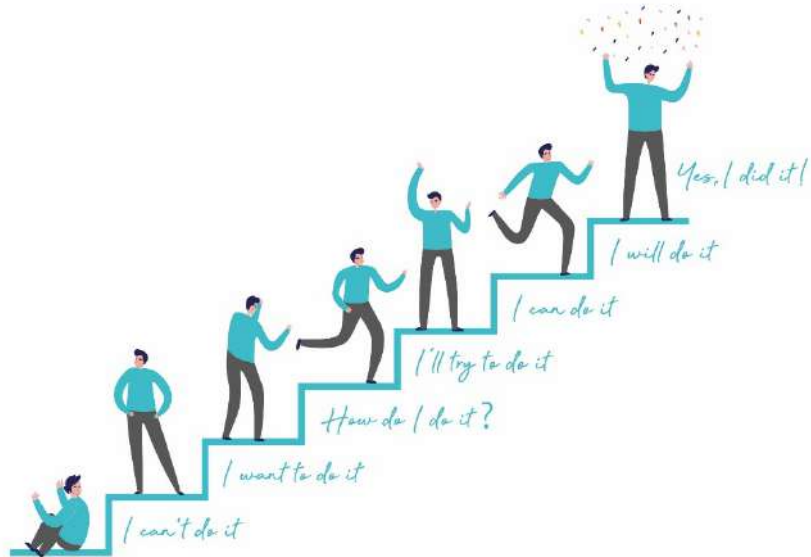
3 Interventions

As of 15.01.2021, 14 training courses for a total of 600 hours delivered were coordinated by the Development Agency of Karditsa. ANKA's mission is to help develop, manage, maintain, protect and make the best use of natural resources, introduce innovation and entrepreneurship in the productive system, increase the use of renewable energy sources, support and develop new collective structures, and contribute to the social development of Karditsa and other areas in Greece. ANKA focuses on the capacity building and empowerment of the local population, especially disadvantaged groups such as NEETs in ROMA communities. 201 individuals participated in the training courses offered by ANKA. Table 2 summarizes the primary information for all training courses.

ANKA coordinated and delivered nine types of training courses: 1. Make-up sector, 2. Wine-making sector, 3. PC and MS Office, 4. JavaScript, 5. Python, 6. PHP, 7. Social entrepreneurship, 8. Social media and digital marketing, and 9. Website development.

Table 2. Summary of primary information for all training courses.

Training course	Duration	Start date	End date	Content	Mode of delivery	Average hours per week	Hours in total	Number of participants
T1	4 weeks	20.11.2019	17.12.2019	Professional guidance/employment prospects in the make-up sector	Offline	12,5	50	8
T2	6 weeks	16.12.2019	30.01.2020	Professional guidance/employment prospects in the wine-making sector	Offline	8	50	8
T3	4 weeks	03.02.2020	28.02.2020	Practice in basic use of PC and MS Office applications	Offline	12,5	50	12
T4	5 weeks	21.05.2020	25.06.2020	Learning JavaScript programming language	Online	8	50	18
T5	3 weeks	29.06.2020	22.07.2020	Learning Python programming language	Online	16	50	22
T6	3 weeks	03.09.2020	25.09.2020	Learning Python programming language	Online	16	50	24
T7	3 weeks	01.10.2020	23.10.2020	Learning PHP programming language	Online	16	50	20

T10	3 weeks	14.10.2020	06.11.2020	Professional guidance/employment prospects in the social economy and social enterprises	Online	16	50	6
T11	3 weeks	02.11.2020	24.11.2020	Learning Python programming language	Online	16	50	31
T12	5 weeks	18.11.2020	21.12.2020	Professional guidance/employment prospects in social media professional management and digital marketing	Online	10	50	10
T13	4 weeks	26.11.2020	22.12.2020	Learning website development	Online	12,5	50	18
T14	3 weeks	01.12.2020	23.12.2020	Learning JavaScript programming language	Online	12,5	50	24
						Total	600	201

3.1 Make-up training course

A total of eight individuals were trained through a four-week training course (T1), whose objective were providing ROMA women with professional guidance and employment prospects in the professional make-up sector. The course lasted 50 hours that were delivered offline. The curriculum comprised the following training modules: make-up products/tools/working environment, make-up process phases, colors and shadows, horizontal and vertical makeup process, make-up for social events, special make-up for each face zone, customer management, and professional prospects.

3.2 Wine making training course

A total of eight individuals were trained through a six-week training course (T2), whose objective were providing NEETs with professional guidance and employment prospects in the wine making sector. The course lasted 50 hours that were delivered offline. The curriculum comprised the following training sections: 1. theoretical part (cultivation and winemaking cycle, funding opportunities, wine marketing, packaging, oenology), 2. practical part (site visit to vineyards and winemaking units), and 3. experiential part (wine tasting, participation in the winemaking process).

3.3 PC and MS Office training course

A total of 12 individuals were trained through a four-week training course (T3), whose objective were providing developing the skills of NEET refugees in the use of PC and MS Office basic applications as the knowledge of PC use and MS Office is a common required skill by many employers. The course lasted 50 hours that were delivered offline. The curriculum comprised the following training modules: basic IT terms, basic PC tasks/ browsing in PC, use of basic PC applications, use of MS Word, basic email tasks/use of MS Outlook, use of MS Excel, and use of the Internet.

3.4 JavaScript training courses

A total of 42 individuals were trained through two training courses (T4 and T14), whose objective were developing the skills of NEETs in using JavaScript programming language as a professional tool as the knowledge of JavaScript is a common required skill by many employers, especially in IT professions. Both courses lasted 50 hours that were delivered online via Zoom. The curriculum comprised the following topics: types, operators, arrays, loops, conditions, functions, classes, recursion, AJAX, objects, prototyping, promises, async await, error handling, local and session storage, date, basic Jquery, basic NodeJS, modules, NPM, and basic expressJS.

3.5 Python training courses

A total of 77 individuals were trained through three training courses (T5, T6 and T11), whose objective were developing the skills of NEETs in using Python programming language as a professional tool as the knowledge of Python is a common required skill by many employers, especially in IT professions. All three courses lasted 50 hours that were delivered online via Zoom. The curriculum comprised the following topics: introduction, types, operators, arrays, loops, conditions, functions, lists and tuples, dictionaries, alphabetical, time management, JSON, generators, sets, modules, files and management, error handling, classes, regular expression, database, Tkinter, and FLASK.

3.6 PHP training course

A total of 20 individuals were trained through a three-week training course (T7), whose objective were providing developing the skills of NEETs in using PHP programming language as a professional tool as the knowledge of PHP is a common required skill by many employers, especially in IT professions. The course lasted 50 hours that were delivered online via Zoom. The curriculum comprised the following topics: introduction, types, operators, arrays-associative arrays, loops,

conditions, functions, time management, requests handling, GET/POSTS, SESSION/COOKIES, files and management, error handling, classes, regular expression, database-MySQL, and JSON.

3.7 Social entrepreneurship training course

A total of 20 individuals were trained through a three-week training course (T10), whose objective were providing NEETs with professional guidance to employment prospects or entrepreneurship in the social economy. The course lasted 50 hours that were delivered online via Zoom. The curriculum comprised the following modules: introduction to the social economy and social entrepreneurship, strategic planning, social impact assessment, social enterprises, marketing of a social enterprise, financial viability, successful management, leadership of a social enterprise, communication campaign, review and feedback.

3.8 Social media and digital marketing training course

A total of 10 individuals were trained through a five-week training course (T12), whose objective were providing NEETs with capacity building in the professional management of social media. Social media management is top-ranked skill requested by employers, mainly in marketing professions. The course lasted 50 hours that were delivered online via Zoom. The curriculum comprised the following modules: introduction to the social economy and social entrepreneurship, strategic planning, social impact assessment, social enterprises, marketing of a social enterprise, financial viability, successful management, leadership of a social enterprise, communication campaign, review and feedback.

3.9 Website development training course

A total of 18 individuals were trained through a four-week training course (T13), whose objective were providing NEETs with web development skills. Learning how to build and maintain websites is a common required skill by employers, mainly in IT and marketing professions. Social media management is top-ranked skill requested by employers, mainly in marketing professions. The course lasted 50 hours that were delivered online via Zoom. The curriculum comprised the following topics: reviewing and creating blogs, Google Forms, Signal – Telegram, e-mail marketing & mail chimp, Jitsi and YouTube, Facebook groups, local host machines, WordPress, SSL, page builders, SEO, e-shopping, and Plesk and Host Panel.

4 Methodology

4.1 Evaluation design

This research relies on a pre-experimental design. Specifically, the evaluation follows a pre-test/post-test design. Data was collected from the participants twice: once before the beneficiaries took part in the intervention (baseline information) and immediately after they finished the training courses. Although this type of design is often criticized because of weakness in establishing a causal link between project activities and outcomes, the pre-test/post-test design is the most useful in demonstrating the immediate impact of short-term interventions (Monsen, 2018). This design might prove less valid for long-term interventions because a higher amount of circumstances outside the project may arise and interfere with the effects of the project's activities over a more extended period of time.

The questionnaire was developed by the research staff involved in the project, and it contained 46 questions (see the Appendix). Five questions were used to collect demographic information (identification code, gender, age, education, and place of residence), while the remaining 41 questions were used to measure the variables listed in Table 1. Participants answered using a five-point Likert-type scale (ranging from 1 to 5) according to their level of agreement with the presented item.

4.2 Measures

4.2.1 Emotional capabilities

Proactivity is a personality trait and attitude to be fostered as proactive individuals "are more likely to engage in career management activities such as seeking out job and organizational information, obtaining sponsorship and career support, conducting career planning, and persisting in the face of career obstacles" (Seibert, Crant & Kraimer, 1999, p. 417). To measure proactivity, we chose to administer Seibert et al. (1999) 10-item version of Bateman and Crant's scale (1993).

Self-efficacy is defined by Bandura (1977) as one's belief about the ability to execute a specific task. Self-efficacy beliefs "determine how much effort people will expend and how long they will persist in the face of obstacles and aversive experience" (Bandura, 1977, p. 194). Therefore, they have proven to be a reliable outcome measure when predicting an individual's behavior in several fields, including job search (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1994). We employed a short form (six items) of the well-known General Self-efficacy Scale (GSE) by Romppel and colleagues (2013).

Resilience is a personal skill "that enables one to thrive in the face of adversity" (Connor & Davidson, 2003, p. 77), and it is, therefore, a significant asset to have when coping with unemployment and job-search. We measured resilience using the two-item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC 2).

Search goals refer to the level of aspiration that people have concerning employment that is rewarding and satisfying rather than merely settling for whatever employment might be available (Rich & Delgado, 2010). We used the Work Aspiration subscale by Rich and Delgado (2010) to measure search goals, as suggested by Dahling, Melloy, and Thompson (2013).

4.2.2 Social benefits

Social responsibility indicates an obligation to behave in a way that benefits society. To measure social responsibility, we used the 8-item scale developed by Berkowitz & Lutterman (1968).

Social or generalized trust represents the most prominent element of social capital (Putnam, 1993). It can be defined as a general "faith in people", including individuals we do not know personally. In this report, generalized trust was measured using the five-item trust scale by Yamagishi (1986).

Institutional trust is an "evaluative, performance-based orientation toward political actors and institutions" (Hakhverdian & Mayne, 2012, p. 2). This variable was measured with the four-item subscale (trust in government in general) developed by Grimmelikhuijsen and Meijer (2014).

4.2.3 Economic benefits

Labor status was measured by asking participants their current employment situation; possible answers were:

- employed
- self-employed
- unemployed and currently looking for work
- unemployed and currently not looking for work
- enrolled in a formal educational institution

Disposable income was measured by asking participants to select one answer from the following:

- Less than 600 EUR
- 600-1,300 EUR
- 1,300-2,000 EUR
- 2,000-2,700 EUR

- More than 2,700 EUR

The aggregate lifetime public finance costs (from now on **lifetime costs**) are usually estimated using three main elements: benefits, tax loss (both loss of direct and indirect taxes), and national insurance (Coles, Godfrey, Keung, Parrott, & Bradshaw, 2010). In the context of this research, an estimation of the total lifetime cost was not conducted, and this variable was assessed by measuring a change in the proportions of participants that receive unemployment benefits pre/post-intervention.

4.3 Data collection and analysis

Data was collected from 30.09.2019 until 15.01.2021. During this time, all participants in the training courses were asked to fill the same questionnaire on the day the intervention started, and the day it ended. Of the 201 beneficiaries, 93 completed pre/post-intervention questionnaires and the data they provided was used for subsequent analysis. A non-parametric test (Wilcoxon signed-rank test) was used to compared the two sets of scores that come from the same participants for all ordinal variables. To compare paired proportions related to the hard impact variables, a McNemar test was used to assess the significance of the differences pre- and post-interventions.

5 Results

5.1 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics of the pre- post-observations related to the sample are presented in Table 3. 49 people in the sample analyzed were men (52.69%), while 43 (46.24%) were women. One person (1.07%) chose "Other" when enquired about gender. More than half of the individuals in the sample (79 people, 84.95%) were between 25 and 29 years old. Younger individuals constituted the remaining sample: 14 people (15.05%) were less than 25 old. With regard to education, halfof the people in the sample (50 individuals, 53.75%) had a Bachelor degree, 24 people (25.80%) held a Master or PhD degree, 14 individuals (15,06%) had completed high school, two people (2.16%) finished lower secondary education, and three people (3.23 %) had an educational attainment at the primary level.

The majority of the people (85 individuals, 91.40%) were not in self/employment nor education at the start of the intervention, while 8 (8.60%) were self/employed or students[1]. The biggest share of the sample (85 individuals, 91.40%) had a disposable income of less than 600 EUR/month when they started the training courses and only 8 people (8.60 %) had a disposable income higher than 600 EUR/month. Finally, the biggest share of the sample (65 people, 69.89%) did not rely on unemployment benefits at the start of the intervention, while 28 (30.11%) did.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics.

Demographics		
Gender	n	%
Female	43	46.24
Male	49	52.69
Other	1	1.07
Age		
≤ 24 years old	14	15.05
25-29 years old	79	84.95
Education		
Primary education	3	3.23
Lower secondary education	2	2.16
Upper secondary education	14	15.06
Tertiary education	50	53.75
Master's Degree or PhD	24	25.80
Labor status, disposable income and lifetime cost		

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[1] *This group of people work in irregular and/or precarious jobs and often rely on illegal employment to make a living.*

	Pre-intervention	
Labor status	n	%
Self/employed, student	8	8.60
Not in employment nor education	85	91.40
Disposable income		
Less than 600 EUR/month	85	91.40
More than 600 EUR/month	8	8.60
Lifetime cost, Unemployment benefits		
Yes	28	30.11
No	65	69.89

5.2 Soft outcomes and impact: evaluation of emotional capabilities and social benefits

An analysis of the results indicated a non-normal distribution of scores for some of the variables under study, therefore the results are presented using both the mean and the median for each variable.

Table 4. Pre/post mean and median for soft outcome and impact variables.

Variables	Mean (Pre)	Mean (Post)	Median (Pre)	Median (Post)
Proactivity	3.77	3.89	3.83	4.00
Self-efficacy	4.09	4.09	4.00	4.00
Resilience	3.84	3.82	3.90	3.80
Search-goals	4.45	4.39	4.67	4.67
Social responsibility	3.72	3.71	3.75	3.75
Social trust	2.65	2.69	2.60	2.60
Institutional trust	2.40	2.49	2.25	2.50

A Wilcoxon signed rank test showed that there was a significant positive difference in self-efficacy (Z = -2.555, p<0.05) between post- and pre-observations.

Table 5. Wilcoxon test statistics table for soft outcome and impact variables.

Test Statistics[a]							
	Proactivity post-test – Proactivity pre-test	Self-efficacy post-test - Self-efficacy pre-test	Resilience post-test - Resilience pre-test	Search-goals post-test - Search-goals pre-test	Social responsibility post-test - Social responsibility pre-test	Social trust post-test -Social trust pre-test	Institutional trust post-test - Institutional trust pre-test
Z	-.561[b]	-2.555[b]	-.036[b]	-.121[c]	-.066[c]	-.698[b]	-.964[b]
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.575	**0.011**	0.971	0.903	0.947	0.485	0.335
a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test							
b. Based on negative ranks.							
c. Based on positive ranks.							

5.2.1 Soft outcomes and impact by gender

To assess if the pre-and post-observations were significantly different for specific NEET sub-groups, results were controlled by gender (women=43, men=49). The results are presented in Table 6 using both the mean and the median for each variable.

Table 6. Pre/post mean and median for soft outcome and impact variables by gender.

Variables	Mean (Pre)		Mean (Post)		Median (Pre)		Median (Post)	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Proactivity	3.69	3.82	4.00	3.80	3.83	3.83	4.00	4.00
Self-efficacy	4.08	4.09	4.19	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4,00
Resilience	3.82	3.85	3.90	3.76	3.80	3.90	3.90	3.80
Search-goals	4.47	4.42	4.53	4.28	4.67	4.67	5.00	4.33
Social responsibility	3.85	3.60	3.85	3.60	3.88	3.63	3.88	3.63
Social trust	2.73	2.58	2.83	2.59	2.80	2.60	2.80	2.60
Institutional trust	2.49	2.34	2.54	2.47	2.25	2.25	2.50	2.25

As reported in Table 7, a Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed that there was a significant positive difference in self-efficacy (Z = -3.373, p<0.05) between post- and pre-observation of female participants. For male participants, there are no statistically significant differences to report.

Table 7. Wilcoxon test statistics table for soft outcome and impact variables by gender (female).

	Proactivity post-test – Proactivity pre-test	Self-efficacy post-test - Self-efficacy pre-test	Resilience post-test - Resilience pre-test	Search-goals post-test - Search-goals pre-test	Social responsibility post-test - Social responsibility pre-test	Social trust post-test - Social trust pre-test	Institutional trust post-test - Institutional trust pre-test
Test Statistics[a]							
Z	-1.251[b]	-3.373[b]	-1.109[b]	-1.326[b]	-.061[b]	-1.034[b]	-.738[b]
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.211	**0.001**	0.267	0.185	0.952	0.301	0.461
a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test							
b. Based on negative ranks.							

5.2.2 Soft outcomes and impact by education

At this point, the authors segmented the evaluation results by education to assess if the pre-and post-observations were significantly different for two sub-groups: individuals with (n=74) and without (n=19) a university degree. The results are presented, using both the mean and the median for each soft outcome and impact variable, in Table 8.

Table 8. Pre/post mean and median for soft outcome and impact variables by education.

Variables	Mean (Pre)		Mean (Post)		Median (Pre)		Median (Post)	
	Without a university degree	With a university degree	Without a university degree	With a university degree	Without a university degree	With a university degree	Without a university degree	With a university degree
Proactivity	3.68	3.79	3.79	3.91	4.00	3.75	4.00	4.00
Self-efficacy	4.00	4.11	4.00	4.11	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Resilience	3.97	3.81	3.84	3.82	4.10	3.80	4.00	3.80
Search-goals	4.28	4.49	4.16	4.45	4.67	4.67	4.67	4.67
Social responsibility	3.47	3.78	3.50	3.76	3.50	3.75	3.50	3.75
Social trust	2.74	2.63	2.86	2.65	3.00	2.60	2.60	2.60
Institutional trust	2.57	2.36	2.17	2.58	3.00	2.25	2.25	2.50

As reported in Table 9, a Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed that there was a significant negative difference in institutional trust (Z = -2.535, p<0.05) for people without a university degree.

Table 9. Wilcoxon test statistics table for soft outcome and impact variables by education (without university degree).

Test Statistics[a]							
	Self-efficacy post-test - Self-efficacy pre-test	Resilience post-test - Resilience pre-test	Proactivity post-test – Proactivity pre-test	Search-goals post-test - Search-goals pre-test	Social responsibility post-test - Social responsibility pre-test	Social trust post-test - Social trust pre-test	Institutional trust post-test - Institutional trust pre-test
Z	-.704[b]	-.092[c]	-.599[c]	-.190[b]	-.228[b]	-.523[b]	-2.535[c]
p (2-tailed)	0.481	0.927	0.549	0.85	0.819	0.601	**0.011**
a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test							
b. Based on negative ranks.							
c. Based on positive ranks.							

For people with a higher educational attainment, a Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed that there was a significant positive difference in self-efficacy (Z = -2.530, p<0.05) and institutional trust (Z = -2.582, p<0.05) between post- and pre-observation of participants with a university degree, as reported in Table 10.

Table 10. Wilcoxon test statistics table for soft outcome and impact variables by education (with a university degree).

Test Statistics[a]							
	Proactivity post-test – Proactivity pre-test	Self-efficacy post-test - Self-efficacy pre-test	Resilience post-test - Resilience pre-test	Search-goals post-test - Search-goals pre-test	Social responsibility post-test - Social responsibility pre-test	Social trust post-test - Social trust pre-test	Institutional trust post-test - Institutional trust pre-test
Z	-.873[b]	-2.530[b]	-.082[b]	-.363[c]	-.206[c]	-.520[b]	-2.582[b]
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.382	**0.011**	0.934	0.717	0.837	0.603	**0.010**
a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test							
b. Based on negative ranks.							
c. Based on positive ranks.							

5.2.3 Soft outcomes and impact by age

Finally, the results of the soft outcomes and impact evaluation were controlled by age to assess if the pre-and post-observations were significantly different for two sub-groups: individuals up to 24 years old (n=14), people between 25 and 29 years old (n=79). The results are presented, using both the mean and the median for each soft outcome and impact variable, in Table 11.

Table 11. Pre/post mean and median for soft outcome and impact variables by age.

Variables	Mean (Pre)		Mean (Pre)		Median (Pre)		Median (Post)	
	≤ 24	25-29	≤ 24	25-29	≤ 24	25-29	≤ 24	25-29
Proactivity	4.00	3.73	3.93	3.88	4.00	3.83	4.09	4.00
Self-efficacy	4.11	4.09	4.07	4.09	4.00	4.00	4.25	4.00
Resilience	4.01	3.81	3.77	3.83	4.00	3.80	4.00	3.80
Search-goals	4.67	4.41	4.31	4.41	4.67	4.67	4.67	4.67
Social responsibility	3.76	3.71	3.71	3.71	3.82	3.75	3.75	3.75
Social trust	2.70	2.64	2.99	2.64	2.80	2.60	3.00	2.60
Institutional trust	2.79	2.33	2.66	2.47	3.00	2.25	3.00	2.50

As reported in Table 12, a Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed that there was a significant positive difference in self-efficacy ($Z = 2.659$, $p<0.05$) in post- and pre-observation of participants between 25 and 29 years old.

Table 12. Wilcoxon test statistics table for soft outcome and impact variables by age (25-29 years old).

Test Statistics[a]							
	Proactivity post-test – Proactivity pre-test	Self-efficacy post-test - Self-efficacy pre-test	Resilience post-test - Resilience pre-test	Search-goals post-test - Search-goals pre-test	Social responsibility post-test - Social responsibility pre-test	Social trust post-test - Social trust pre-test	Institutional trust post-test - Institutional trust pre-test
Z	-.830[b]	-2.659[b]	-.124[b]	-.140[b]	-.065[b]	-.128[b]	-1.292[b]
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.406	**0.008**	0.901	0.889	0.948	0.898	0.196
a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test							
b. Based on negative ranks.							
c. Based on positive ranks.							

5.3 Hard impact: evaluation of economic benefits

The pre- and post-intervention proportions of individuals who were not in employment nor education (versus self/employed, student), low-income earners (versus high), and receivers of unemployment benefits (versus non-receivers) are sown in Table 13.

Table 13. Pre/post proportions for hard impact variables.

Labor status, disposable income and lifetime cost				
	Pre-intervention		Post-intervention	
Labor status	n	%	n	%
Self/employed, student	8	8.60	18	19.40
Not in employment nor education	85	91.40	75	80.60
Disposable income				
Less than 600 EUR/month	85	91.40	89	95.70
More than 600 EUR/month	8	8.60	4	4.30
Lifetime cost, Unemployment benefits				
Yes	28	30.11	28	30.11
No	65	69.89	66	59.89

As reported in Table 14, a McNemar's test determined that there was a statistically significant difference in labor status pre- and post-intervention, p = .012 (2 sided). The other differences found were not statistically significant.

Table 14. McNemar test statistics for hard impact variables.

Test Statistics[a]			
	Labor status pre-test & Labor status post-test	Lifetime cost pre-test & Lifetime cost post-test	Disposable income pre-test & Disposable income last month post-test
N	93	93	93
Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002[b]	1.000[b]	0.219[b]
a. McNemar Test			
b. Binomial distribution used.			

5.3.1 Hard impact by gender

A McNemar test was conducted for both gender sub-samples to determine if the pre-and post-intervention differences found and reported in Table 15 were significant. For women, however, the

change in the proportions of people not in employment nor education (versus self/employed, student), receivers of unemployment benefits (versus non-receivers), low-income earners (versus high), pre-and post-intervention was not statistically significant.

Table 15. Pre/post hard impact variables by gender.

Labor status, disposable income, and lifetime cost				
	Female (Pre)	Female (Post)	Male (Pre)	Male (Post)
Labor status				
Self/employed, student	2	5	6	13
Not in employment nor education	41	38	43	36
Disposable income				
Less than 600 EUR/month	39	41	45	47
More than 600 EUR/month	4	2	4	2
Lifetime cost, Unemployment benefits				
Yes	10	12	18	16
No	33	31	31	33

Table 16 presents the only statistically significant difference found in the male sample: labor status. For men, the proportion of people who are self/employed or students is greater post-intervention.

Table 16. McNemar test statistics for hard impact variables by gender (male).

Test Statistics[a]			
	Labor status pre-test & Labor status post-test	Lifetime cost pre-test & Lifetime cost post-test	Disposable income pre-test & Disposable income post-test
N	49	49	49
Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	.016[b]	.687[b]	.625[b]
a. McNemar Test			
b. Binomial distribution used.			

5.3.2 Hard impact by education

A McNemar test was conducted for both education sub-samples to determine if the pre-and post-intervention differences found and reported in Table 17 were significant. For people without a university degree, however, the change in the proportions of people not in employment nor education (versus self/employed, student), receivers of unemployment benefits (versus non-receivers), low-income earners (versus high), pre-and post-intervention was not statistically significant.

Table 17. Pre/post hard impact variables by education.

Labor status, disposable income, and lifetime cost				
	Without a university degree (Pre)	Without a university degree (Post)	With a university degree (Pre)	With a university degree (Post)
Labor status				
Self/employed, student	1	2	7	16
Not in employment nor education	18	17	67	58
Disposable income				
Less than 600 EUR/month	19	19	66	70
More than 600 EUR/month	0	0	8	4
Lifetime cost, Unemployment benefits				
Yes	11	8	20	20
No	8	11	54	54

Table 18 presents the only statistically significant difference found in the sample of individuals with a university degree: labor status. For people with higher educational attainment, the proportion of people who are self/employed or students is greater post-intervention.

Table 18. McNemar test statistics for hard impact variables by education (with university degree).

Test Statistics[a]			
	Labor status pre-test & Labor status post-test	Lifetime cost pre-test & Lifetime cost post-test	Disposable income pre-test & Disposable income post-test
N	74	74	74
Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	**.004**[b]	1.000[b]	.219[b]
a. McNemar Test			
b. Binomial distribution used.			

5.3.3 Hard impact by age

Finally, a McNemar test was conducted for the three age sub-samples to determine if the pre-and post-intervention differences found and reported in Table 19 were significant. For people younger than 25, however, the change in the proportions of people not in employment nor education (versus self/employed, student), receivers of unemployment benefits (versus non-receivers), low-income earners (versus high), pre-and post-intervention was not statistically significant.

Table 19. Pre/post hard impact variables by age.

Labor status, disposable income, and lifetime cost				
	≤ 24 (Pre)	25-29 (Pre)	≤ 24 (Post)	25-29 (Post)
Labor status				
Self/employed, student	1	7	1	17
Not in employment nor education	13	72	13	62
Disposable income				
Less than 600 EUR/month	14	71	14	75
More than 600 EUR/month	0	8	0	4
Lifetime cost, Unemployment benefits				
Yes	5	23	5	23
No	9	56	9	56

Table 20 presents the only statistically significant difference found in the sample of individuals between 25 and 29 years old: labor status. For this age group, the proportion of people who are self/employed or students is greater post-intervention.

Table 20. McNemar test statistics for hard impact variables by age (25-29 years old).

Test Statistics[a]			
	Labor status pre-test & Labor status post-test	Lifetime cost pre-test & Lifetime cost post-test	Disposable income pre-test & Disposable income post-test
N	79	79	79
Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	**.002**[b]	1.000[b]	.219[b]
a. McNemar Test			
b. Binomial distribution used.			

6 Discussion

This evaluation reveals some interesting insights that could potentially help the project's partners planning future waves of training courses in the following months and were therefore discussed with a representative of ANKA. Although the absence of control groups prevents establishing a scientifically rigorous causal link between the project's activities and results, the interventions were short-term, suggesting that the outcomes and impact observed are likely to be attributable to the interventions. The overall results show that the interventions were partly effective in developing the young individuals' emotional capabilities in terms of self-efficacy and generated positive economic impact by facilitating youth movement into employment or self-employment.

The positive effects on self-efficacy were statistically significant for women, people with a university degree, and participants that were between 25 and 29 years old at the start of the intervention. Concerning soft impact, the data analysis revealed a positive change in the difference between post- and pre-observation regarding institutional trust for people who completed tertiary education. Finally, concerning hard impact, a positive change in labor status was statistically significant for men, people holding a university degree, and participants in the middle age group (25- 29 years old).

The only adverse effect the analysis revealed was a reduction of institutional trust for participants without a university degree. In general, we believe the negative results recorded for institutional trust to be potentially connected to the current crisis. In the light of this interpretation, data suggest that the decline in institutional trust for participants without a university degree could be explained by the fact that they have been most dramatically affected. Young people without a university degree tend to occupy unskilled and low-skilled informal labor positions in the accommodation and food sectors, and these have been hit the hardest.

Finally, descriptive statistics emphasized minor criticalities in the process of data collection. In particular regarding labor status, 8.60% of the participant in the assessment declared to be self-employed, employed, or students at the beginning of the intervention. ANKA's representative pointed out that these young adults might hold occasional informal jobs that do not allow for self-support in the long run. Additionally, they might be reluctant to declare themselves unemployed due to the stigma that this term entails.

7 Concluding remarks

The evaluation has several limitations. Firstly, the pre-test/post-test design impedes drawing rigorous causal inference between the project's activities and its results. Secondly, the lack of control groups also restricted the researchers' ability to control for other influential events such as the COVID-19 outbreak happening at the time the training courses were delivered. Finally, it would be useful to collect and integrate qualitative data (such as interviews and focus groups) to validate and explore further the quantitative findings of this evaluation.

In general, organizations working with NEETs face a large number of challenges. For example, the mere engagement of NEETs into training courses cannot be taken for granted, especially if we consider particularly vulnerable groups in this population. With this report, researchers wanted to avoid judging such a complex issue in black and white and provide a more nuanced view of the work organizations like ANKA are doing. This evaluation gives evidence that ANKA's training courses were effective in increasing participants' self-efficacy. Additionally, the project has generated positive economic impact in the areas of ANKA's interventions by facilitating youth movement into employment or self-employment.

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Appendix

YES! Young Entrepreneurs Succeed
Questionnaire

In the context of this project, we are conducting research on employment and entrepreneurship. The survey should only take 10 minutes. Thank you for agreeing to take part in it. We really appreciate your input!

Using a scale from 1 to 5 please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements (1= strongly disagree 2= disagree 3= neither agree nor disagree 4= agree 5= strongly agree).

* 1. Please, indicate your registration number:

2. If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

3. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

4. Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

5. I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

6. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

7. I can usually handle whatever comes my way.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

8. I am able to adapt when changes occur.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

9. I tend to bounce back after illness, injury, illness or other hardships.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

10. I am constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve my life.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

11. Wherever I have been, I have been a powerful force for constructive change.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

12. Nothing is more exciting than seeing my ideas turn into reality.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

13. If I see something I don't like, I fix it.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

14. No matter what the odds, if I believe in something I will make it happen.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

15. I love being a champion for my ideas, even against others' opposition.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

16. I excel at identifying opportunities.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

17. I am always looking for better ways to do things.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

18. If I believe in an idea, no obstacle will prevent me from making it happen.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

19. I can spot a good opportunity long before others can.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

20. I will work hard to improve my work situation.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

21. I am willing to put in effort to have a job I enjoy.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

22. Having a good job is important to my sense of well-being.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

23. It is no use worrying about current events or public affairs, I can't do anything about them anyways.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

24. Every person should give some of his time for the good of his town or country.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

25. Our country would be a lot better off if we didn't have so many elections and people didn't have to vote so often.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

26. Letting your friends down is not so bad because you can't do good all the time for everybody.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

27. It the duty of each person to do his job the very best he can.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

28. People would be very better off if they could live far away from other people and never have to do anything for them.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

29. When I was at school, I usually volunteered for special projects.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

30. I feel bad when I have failed to finish a job I promised I would do.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

31. Most people tell a lie when they can benefit by doing so.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

32. Those devoted to unselfish causes are often exploited by others.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

33. Some people do not cooperate because they pursue only their own short-term self-interest. Thus, things that can be done well if people cooperate often fail because of these people.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

34. Most people are basically honest.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

35. There will be more people who will not work if the social security system is developed further.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

36. Generally, our public administration operates effectively.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

37. In general, our public administration is capable of carrying out its policies.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

38. Generally, our public administration cares about citizens' well-being.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

39. In general, our public administration honors its commitments.

strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
★	★	★	★	★

40. In what year were you born?

41. What is your gender?

○ Female

○ Male

○ Other

42. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?

○ Primary education

○ Lower secondary education

○ Upper secondary education (high school degree)

○ Tertiary education (university degree)

○ PhD

43. What is your current labour status?

○ employed

○ self-employed

○ unemployed and currently looking for work

○ unemployed and not currently looking for work

○ enrolled in a formal education institution

44. Are you currently receiving unemployment benefits of other types of social benefits?

○ Yes

○ No

45. What was your net income last month?

○ Less than 600 EUR

○ 600-1300 EUR

○ 1300-2000 EUR

○ 2000-2700 EUR

○ More than 2700 EUR

46. What is the postal code of the place where you live?

#YoungEntrepreneursSucceed

https://youngentrepreneurssucceed.com/

The Scaling trust-based partnership models to recharge youth entrepreneurship: Supporting underserved communities with innovative entrepreneurship support instruments (TPM-RYE) project, benefits from €2,3M grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment. The aim of the programme is to activate unemployed youth to access the labour market and promote entrepreneurship.