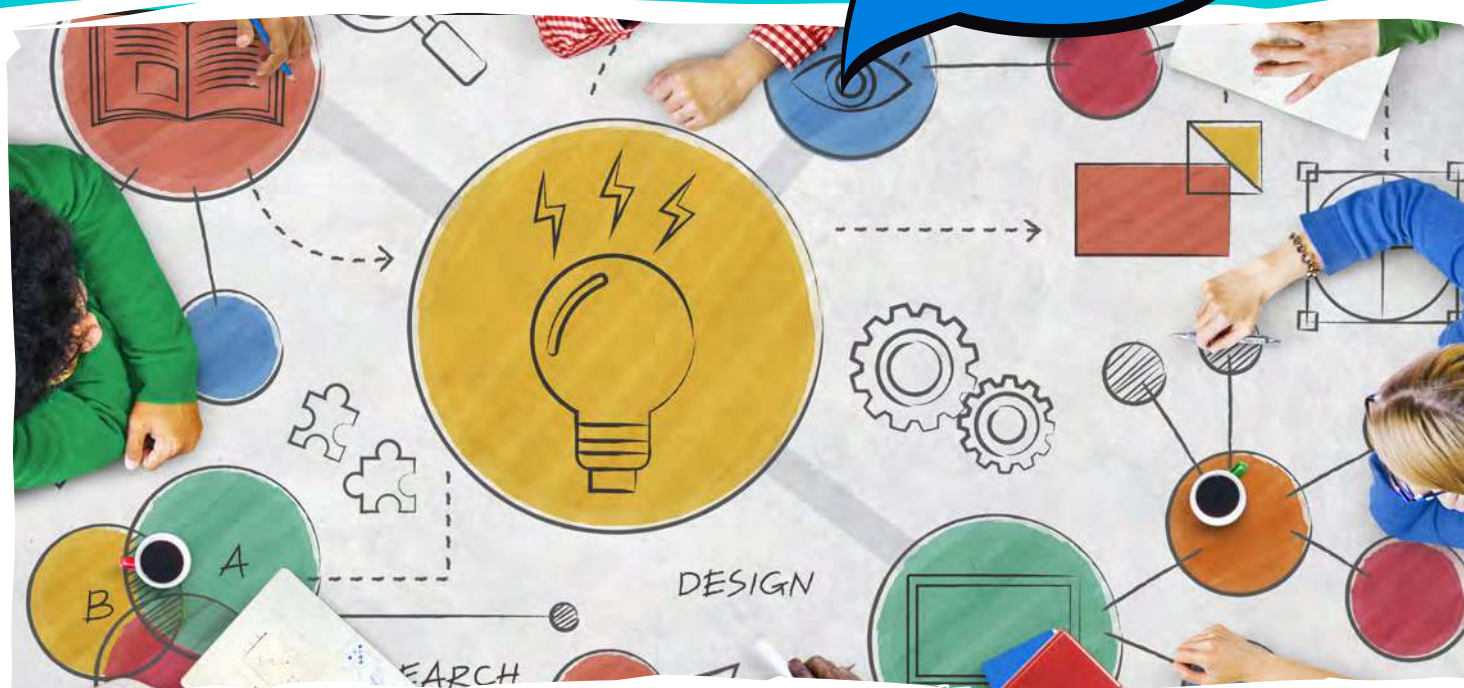**Greece**

Impact Assessment Report 2022 (3)

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#YoungEntrepreneursSucceed

Young Entrepreneurs Succeed
Impact Assessment Report 2022(3): Greece

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1 Introduction

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 Greek organization Development Agency of Karditsa (AN.KA) to help young 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 the cooperation of eight partners, the project aims to improve the employment situation of 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 targeted a sample population of 1,600 NEETs spread across four European countries (Greece, Italy, Poland, and Spain) over three and a half years (2018-2022). The project got re-financed for another one and half year period (April 2022 – September 2023), targeting additional 970 NEETs across the same regions. This follows the impacts and success stories recorded by the current interventions. 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 into 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 describes 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 results, section 7 presents the conclusion, while section 8 facilitated the lessons learned from the findings which can be translated into practice for the project's partners.

2 Impact assessment framework

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. The conceptual framework guiding outcomes and impact assessment is adapted from McNeil, Reeder, and Rich (2012).
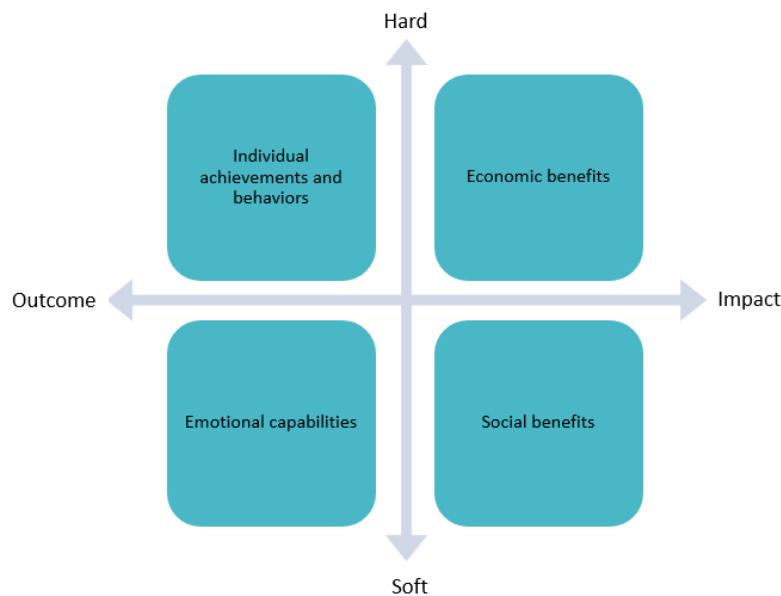
The categories in the two quadrants on the left-hand side of Figure 1 represent the outcomes (the effects of the project on the target group) whereas the two sections on the right-hand sight refer to the impact (the effects of the project on society). The framework also distinguishes between the "soft" and "hard" categories. While the soft outcomes and impact are valued by and relate the 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 detect 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

3 Interventions

As of 31.05.2022, 37 training courses for a total of 1850 hours were delivered and coordinated by the Development Agency of Karditsa (AN.KA). The organization provides technical assistance to local authority organizations, state associations, municipalities, communities, and small and medium-sized businesses to develop productive, innovative, and entrepreneurship systems across the Karditsa region and other areas in Greece. Apart from its focus on capacity building and empowerment of the local population, a number of projects related to vulnerable social groups are also supported by the organization including ROMA communities, reintegration of refugees and asylum seekers, women entrepreneurs, and other minority groups. 764 individuals participated in the training courses offered by AN.KA. Table 2 summarizes the primary information for all training courses.

ANKA coordinated and delivered different types of training courses, categorized under the following headings: 1. Make-up sector, 2. Wine-making sector, 3. PC and MS Office, 4. Programming languages (JavaScript, Python, PHP, HTML, and CSS), and Web Development, 5. Social media and digital marketing, 6. Greek language integration courses (Basic and advanced), and 7. Social economy and social enterprises.

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

Training courses	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	~13	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	~13	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
T8	6 weeks	02.10.2020	12.11.2020	Training of refugees in professional integration (for advanced Greek-speaking refugees)	Offline	8	50	14
T9	6 weeks	02.10.2020	14.11.2020	Training of refugees in professional integration (for basic Greek-speaking refugees)	Offline	8	50	12
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	~13	50	18
T14	3 weeks	01.12.2020	23.12.2020	Learning JavaScript programming language	Online	~17	50	24

T15	3 weeks	04.01.2021	27.01.2021	Training on Python 4	Online	~17	50	28
T16	3 weeks	04.01.2021	27.01.2021	Training on HTML 1	Online	~17	50	22
T17	3 weeks	07.01.2021	29.01.2021	Training on Social Economy	Online	~17	50	13
T18	3 weeks	01.02.201	23.02.2022	Training on Python 5	Online	~17	50	29
T19	3 weeks	01.02.201	23.02.2022	Training on HTML 2	Online	~17	50	27
T20	3 weeks	01.03.2021	23.03.2021	Training on Python 6	Online	~17	50	32
T21	3 weeks	01.03.2021	24.03.2021	Training on JavaScript 3	Online	~17	50	29
T22	3 weeks	01.04.2021	23.04.2021	Training on Python 7	Online	~17	50	30
T23	3 weeks	01.04.2021	23.04.2021	Training on HTML 3	Online	~17	50	29
T24	3 weeks	05.05.2021	28.05.2021	Training on Python 8	Online	~17	50	30
T25	3 weeks	05.05.2021	28.05.2021	Training on JavaScript 4	Online	~17	50	17
T26	3 weeks	02.06.2021	25.06.2021	Training on Python 9	Online	~17	50	21
T27	3 weeks	02.06.2021	25.06.2021	Training on HTML/CSS 4	Online	~17	50	12
T28	3 weeks	08.09.2021	30.09.2021	Training on Python 10	Online	~17	50	25
T29	3 weeks	13.09.2021	05.10.2021	Training on JavaScript 5	Online	~17	50	11
T30	3 weeks	6.10.2021	01.11.2021	Training on Python 11	Online	~17	50	26
T31	3 weeks	11.10.2021	04.11.2021	Training on HTML 5	Online	~17	50	16

T32	3 weeks	03.11.2021	25.11.2021	Training on Python 12	Online	~17	50	27
T33	3 weeks	15.11.2021	09.12.2021	Training on JavaScript 6	Online	~17	50	19
T34	3 weeks	01.12.2021	23.12.2021	Training on Python 13	Online	~17	50	17
T35	3 weeks	10.02.2021	18.03.2021	Training on Python 14	Online	~17	50	32
T36	3 weeks	16.03.2022	23.05.2022	Training on HTML/CSS 6	Online	~16	50	27
T37	3 weeks	01.04.2022	13.05.2022	Training on Python 15	Online	~16	50	18
						Total	1850	764

3.1 Make-up training course

A total of eight individuals were trained through a four-week training course (T1), whose objective was to provide ROMA women with professional guidance and employment prospects in the professional make-up sector. The course lasted 50 hours, and it was 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 was to provide the NEETs with professional guidance and employment prospects in the wine-making sector. The course lasted 50 hours, and it was delivered offline. The curriculum comprised the following training sections: 1. theoretical part (cultivation and winemaking cycle, funding opportunities, wine marketing, packaging, enology), 2. practical part (site visit to vineyards and winemaking units), and 3. experiential part (wine tasting, participation in the winemaking process).

3.3 Greek language training courses

A total of 26 individuals were trained through six-week language courses (T8 and T9). In collaboration with the People's University of Social Solidarity Economy (UNIVSSE coop), the training aimed to help reintegrate the refugee community into Greek society. The courses lasted 50 hours each and were delivered offline. The curriculum comprised the following modules: introduction to Greek language proficiency, understanding the use of the Greek language for activities and to access the labor market, techniques for job identification, and ways of seeking a job as an employee/self-employed person or member of a social enterprise.

3.4 PC and MS Office training course

A total of 12 individuals were trained through a four-week training course (T3), whose objective was to provide the NEETS and refugees with skill development in the use of PC and MS Office basic applications as the knowledge of PC use and MS Office is a commonly required skill by many employers. The course lasted 50 hours, and the mode of delivery was offline. The curriculum comprised the following training modules: basic IT terms, basic PC tasks/ browsing on 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.

3.5 Programming language training courses

A total of 663 individuals were trained through programming language courses on JavaScript, Python, PHP, HTML, and CSS. The objectives of these courses were to develop the skills of NEETs in using the

various professional programming tools required by many employers in various sectors, especially in IT professions. All the courses lasted 50 hours each through online delivery mode via Zoom. The JavaScript course curriculum contained the following modules: 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. The Python course curriculum contained the following modules: 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. The PHP course curriculum contained the following modules: 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. The HTML course curriculum contained the following modules: introduction to website, creation of web structure, Introduction, and management of graphics on website, HTML typography, tables, list, and hyperlink. The CSS course curriculum contained the following modules: understanding hierarchy, Selectors, Box model, Float, Flexbox, Animations, Preparing the implementation of HTML5 & CSS3 in the labor market, Familiarization and preparation of the working environment, and Next steps.

3.6 Social entrepreneurship training course

A total of 19 individuals were trained through three-week training courses (T10 and T17), whose objective was to provide the NEETs with professional guidance on employment prospects or entrepreneurship in the social economy. The course lasted 50 hours through online delivery mode 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.

3.7 Social media and digital marketing training course

A total of 10 individuals were trained through a five-week training course (T12), whose objective was to provide the NEETs with capacity building in the professional management of social media. Social media management is a top-ranked skill requested by employers, mainly in marketing professions. The course lasted 50 hours through online delivery mode 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 Website development training course

A total of 18 individuals were trained through a four-week training course (T13), whose objective was to provide the NEETs with web development skills. Learning how to build and maintain websites is a commonly required skill by employers, mainly in the IT and marketing professions. Social media management is a top-ranked skill requested by employers, mainly in marketing professions. The course lasted 50 hours through online delivery mode 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, Plesk and Host Panel.

4 Methodology

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 the 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.

The questionnaire was developed by the research staff involved in the project, and it contained 46 questions (see 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 about 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 31.05.2022. During this time, all participants in the training courses were asked to fill out the same questionnaire on the day the intervention started, and the day it ended. Of the 764 beneficiaries, 649 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 compare the two sets of scores 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 pre-and post-intervention differences. Finally, an independent-samples t-test was used to check if the means of the variables were reliably different from each other at baseline and, therefore, post-intervention results could be compared between the two groups.

5 Results

5 Results

5.1 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics of the pre-and post-observations samples are presented. Table 3 presents the overall data, while gender-disaggregated data and data by type of intervention activities are presented in Table 4 and Table 5. Table 6 presents the results from economic data.

As presented in Table 3, from the total sample of beneficiaries that participated in the intervention, more than half of the participants 431 (66.4%) were between the ages of 25 – 29 years old, and the remaining participants 218 (33.6%) were below 25 years old. Female participants 359 (55.3%) constituted more than half of the total beneficiaries who participated in the intervention, while the rest 288 (44.4%) were male. 2 participants (0.3%) did not respond to the question. With regard to education, more than half of the participants 423 (65.2%) completed tertiary education, 132 participants (20.3%) completed post-grad education (Ph.D), 77 participants (11.9%) completed upper secondary education, 7 participants (1.1%) completed lower secondary education, and four participants (0.6%) completed primary education. 6 participants (0.9%) did not respond to the question.

Presented in Table 4 is the demographic information disaggregated by gender. Of the 359 female participants, 215 (59.1%) were between the ages of 25 – 29 years old, and 144 participants (40.9%) were less than 25 years old. Among the 288 male participants, 214 (74.3%) were between the ages of 25 – 29 years old, and 74 participants (25.7%) were below 25 years old. With regards to education, 242 (67.4%) of the female participants completed tertiary education, 81 participants (22.6%) completed post-grad education (Ph.D), 24 participants (6.7%) completed upper secondary education, and 3 participants (0.9%) completed both lower secondary education and primary education respectively. 6 participants (1.7%) did not respond to the question. Among the male participants, 180 participants (62.5%) completed tertiary education, 53 participants (18.4%) completed both upper secondary education, 50 participants (17.4%) completed post-grad education (Ph.D), 4 participants (1.4%) completed lower secondary education and one participant (0.3%) completed primary education.

Presented in Table 5 is the demographic information with regard to the type of intervention. 576 participants (88.8%) took part in the training program alone, while 73 participants (11.2%) took part in either coaching or mentoring, or both. Among the participants that took part in training alone, 378 participants (65.6%) were between the ages of 25 – 29 years old, and 198 participants (34.4%) were below 25 years old. A little more than half of the participants who took part in training alone were female 315 (54.7%), while 259 participants (45.0%) were male. Two participants (0.3%) did not respond to the question. With regards to education, among participants who took part in training alone, 379 participants (65.8%) completed tertiary education, 113 participants (19.6%) completed post-grad

education (Ph.D), 68 participants (11.8%) completed upper secondary education, 6 participants (1.0%) completed lower secondary education, and four participants (0.7%) completed primary education. 6 participants (1.0%) did not respond to the question.

Among the participants who took part in either coaching or mentoring or both, 44 participants (60.3%) were below 25 years old, and 29 participants (30.7%) were between the ages of 25 – 29 years old. More than half of the participants 53 (72.6%) were female, while 20 participants (27.4%) were male. With regards to education, 44 participants (60.3%) completed tertiary education, 19 participants (26%) completed post-grad education (Ph.D), 9 participants (12.3%) completed upper secondary education, and one participants (1.4%) completed lower secondary education.

Presented in Table 6 is the pre-and post-comparison of the economic data. The pre-test result of labor status revealed a majority of the participants 563 (86.7%) were not in employment or education, while 82 participants (12.6%) were either self-employed or students. 4 participants (0.6%) did not respond to the question. Post-intervention data on the other hand revealed 469 participants (72.3%) were not in employment or education, while 177 participants (27.3%) were either self-employed or students. 3 participants (0.4%) did not respond to the question.

Pre-intervention data on unemployment benefits revealed that 513 participants (79%) were not receiving unemployment benefits, while 136 participants (21%) were receiving unemployment benefits. Post-intervention data on the other hand revealed that 532 participants (82%) were not receiving unemployment benefits while 116 participants (17.9%) were receiving unemployment benefits. One participant (0.1%) did not respond to the question.

The pre-intervention data on the net income of participants revealed that 573 participants (88.3%) earned less than 600 euros per month, while 69 participants (10.6%) earned 600 euros and above per month. 7 participants (1.1%) provided no information regarding their monthly earnings. Post-intervention data on the other hand revealed that 551 participants (84.9%) earned less than 600 euros per month, while 96 participants (14.6%) earned 600 euros and above per month. 3 participants (0.5%) provided no information regarding their earnings.

Table 3. Table Descriptive statistics

Age group	N	%
≤ 24 years old	218	33.6
25-29 years old	431	66.4
Total	649	100
Gender	N	%
Female	359	55.3
Male	288	44.4
Non-response	2	0.3
Total	649	100
Education	N	%
Primary education	4	0.6
Lower secondary education	7	1.1
Upper secondary education	77	11.9
Tertiary education	423	65.2
PhD	132	20.3
Non-response	6	0.9
Total	649	100

Table 4. Descriptive statistics, disaggregated data by gender

Age group	Female		Male	
	N	%	N	%
≤ 24 years old	144	40.9	74	25.7
25-29 years old	215	59.1	214	74.3
Total	359 (55.5%)	100	288 (44.5%)	100
Education	N	%	N	%
Primary education	3	0.8	1	0.3
Lower secondary education	3	0.8	4	1.4
Upper secondary education	24	6.7	53	18.4
Tertiary education	242	67.4	180	62.5
Master/PhD	81	22.6	50	17.4
Non-response	6	1.7	0	0.0
Total	359 (55.3%)	100	288 (44.5%)	100

Note: 2 respondents did not report their gender

Table 5. Descriptive statistics, disaggregated data by type of intervention

Demographic information	Training		Coaching/Mentoring	
Age group	N	%	N	%
≤ 24 years old	198	34.4	44	60.3
25-29 years old	378	65.6	29	30.7
Total	576 (88.8)	100	73 (11.2)	100
Gender	N	%	N	%
Female	315	54.7	20	27.4
Male	259	45.0	53	72.6
Non-response	2	0.3	0	0.0
Total	576 (88.8)	100	73 (11.2)	100
Education	N	%	N	%
Primary education	4	0.7	0	0
Lower secondary education	6	1.0	1	1.4
Upper secondary education	68	11.8	9	12.3
Tertiary education	379	65.8	44	60.3
PhD	113	19.6	19	26.0
Non-response	6	1.0	0	0.0
Total	576 (88.8)	100	73 (11.2)	100

Table 6. Descriptive statistics of economic variables

Labor Status	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
	N	%	N	%
Self/employed, student	82	12.6	177	27.3
Not in employment or education	563	86.7	469	72.3
Non-response	4	0.6	3	0.4
Total	649	100	649	100
Unemployment benefits	N	%	N	%
No	513	79.0	532	82.0
Yes	136	21.0	116	17.9
Non-response	0	0.0	1	0.1
Total	649	100	649	100
Net Income	N	%	N	%
Less than 600 EUR	573	88.3	551	84.9
More than 600 EUR	69	10.6	95	14.6
Non-response	7	1.1	3	0.5
Total	649	100	649	100

5.2 Statistical evaluation of soft outcome and impact variables

Some of the pre-and post-observation soft outcomes variables were statistically significant as shown in Table 7. A paired-sample t-test was conducted to compare the soft outcome of pre-and post-intervention and to verify if the differences found were significant. The positive mean differences between pre-and post-intervention of proactivity (0.017) and search-goals (0.000) were statistically

significant at 5% significance level. The mean difference between pre-and post-observation of self-efficacy (0.142) and resilience (0.551) were statistically insignificant.

Table 7. Test of significance difference between pre and post-intervention

Soft outcomes	Mean value (Pre-intervention)	Mean Value (Post-intervention)	p-value
Self-efficacy	3.9351	3.9622	0.142
Proactivity	3.8535	3.8951	0.017
Search-goals	4.5551	4.4757	0.000
Resilience	4.1317	4.1171	0.551

Presented in Table 8 is the summary of the statistical evaluation of pre-and post-intervention differences of the soft impact variables. The mean difference in social responsibility was found significant (0.005) at 5% level of significance. Other variables, social trust (0.103) and institutional trust (0.174) were found insignificant.

Table 8. Test of significance of pre and post-intervention of soft impact variables

Soft impact	Mean value (Pre-intervention)	Mean Value (Post-intervention)	p-value
Social trust	2.7017	2.7353	0.103
Social responsibility	3.7468	3.6988	0.005
Institutional trust	2.2581	2.2958	0.174

Presented in Table 9 is the summary of the statistical evaluation based on the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. The observed differences between post-and pre-observation impact variables of self-efficacy, proactivity, search-goals, and social responsibility were found significant at a 5% level of significance. The resulting significance values are: proactivity (Z = -3.059, P = 0.002), search-goals (Z = -4.095, P = 0.000), and social responsibility (Z = -2.428, P = 0.015). The pre-and post-intervention difference in self-efficacy (Z = -1.592, P = 0.111), resilience (Z = -0.413, P = 0.679), social trust (Z = -1.146, P = 0.425) and institutional trust (Z = -0.554, P = 0.580) were insignificant.

Table 9. Wilcoxon test statistics for soft outcome and impact variables

	Self-efficacy post-pre	Resilience post-pre	Proactivity post-pre	Search Goals post-pre	Social responsibility post-pre	Social trust post-pre	Institutional trust post-pre
Z	-1.592[b]	-0.413[c]	-3.059[b]	-4.095[c]	-2.428[c]	-1.146[b]	-0.554[b]
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.111	0.679	0.002	0.000	0.015	0.525	0.580
b. Based on negative ranks							
c. Based on positive ranks							

5.3 Hard impacts: statistical evaluation of hard impact variables

Presented in Table 10 is the statistical analysis of hard impact variables (labor status, lifetime cost, and disposable income). A McNemar test was conducted to determine if the differences found between the pre-and post-intervention variables were significant. All variables (Labor status, lifetime cost and disposable income) contributed significantly (0.000, 0.008, and 0.008) at 5% significant to improving the economic situations of the participants.

Table 10. Test of significance of hard impact (pre/post) variables.

Hard impact	N	Chi-Square value	p-value
Labor status	642	73.30	0.000
Lifetime cost	648	6.94	0.008
Disposable income	639	6.94	0.008

5.4 Summary of results

Figure 3 shows a summary of the contributions of all variables considered in the intervention. All the variables considered (including outcome and impact variables) contributed to improving the emotional capabilities of the beneficiaries. Although not all the contributions were significant, proactivity, search goals, social responsibility, labor status, lifetime cost and disposable income contributed significantly to the development of the emotional capabilities of the beneficiaries involved in the intervention. The contributions of the following variables were found to be insignificant: self-efficacy, resilience, social trust and institutional trust. However, proactivity, self-efficacy, social trust and institutional trust contributed negative changes to the intervention. On the other hand, search goals, social responsibility, labor status, lifetime cost, and disposable income contributed positive changes to the intervention.

Figure 3. Summary of results
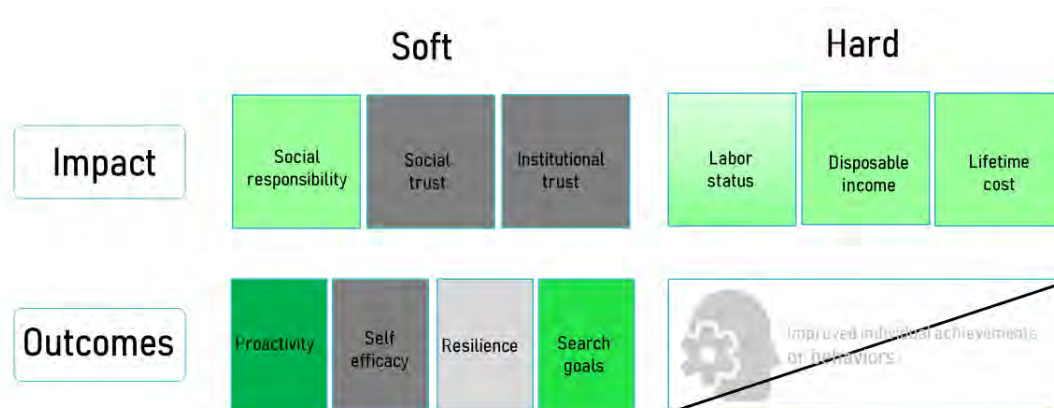
The rectangles represent the significant changes in pre/post variables

■ = negative significant change, ■ = positive significant change, ■ = negative insignificant change, ■ = positive insignificant change

6 Discussion

6 Discussion

The findings from this final impact assessment report revealed some improved facts in comparison with the previous evaluation report. This could potentially be useful to the representatives of AN.KA in the design and planning of future projects and interventions. Although the absence of control groups impedes the establishment of a scientifically causal link between the project's activities and results, the outcomes and impact recorded are likely to be attributed to the longer duration of some of the interventions. While some of the outcomes presented in this final evaluation are similar to the previous evaluation reports, some improvements were observed in this round of assessment. Demographic data revealed that female participants and people in the age group 25-29 years old benefitted more from the interventions compared to other groups. People with tertiary and post-grad education constituted the majority of the participants who benefited from the interventions. These results are consistent with the previous findings.

Some significant improvement in the economic situation of the NEETs considered in the intervention was demonstrated by the results of the final evaluation in comparison to the previous report. These changes can be attributed to the quality of training programs the participants received during the interventions, which proved the interventions were effective in nudging youth toward free and independent decision-making and self-initiated behaviors. All the economic variables contributed positive significant changes to the intervention in this round of assessment in comparison to the previous assessment where only labor status contributed significantly to the intervention. In fact, approximately 3.4% of NEETs transition to either self-employment, gainful employment, or enrolled in formal education. Improvements were equally observed regarding the disposable income of participants and the recipient of unemployment benefits. In comparison to the previous report.

Changes were also observed regarding the soft impact variables in comparison to the previous report. Proactivity and search goals contributed significantly to the intervention but in opposite directions in this report. While proactivity had a negative contribution, search goals contributed to a positive change in the intervention. This is in contrast to the previous report where both variables contributed positive significant changes to the intervention. On the other hand, self-efficacy and resilience contributed insignificantly to the intervention, with both variables contributing negative and positive changes respectively.

Social responsibility is the only soft impact variable that had positive and significant contribution to the intervention in this round of assessment. Social trust and institutional trust contributed insignificantly, with both variables contributing negative and positive changes respectively. This is in contrast to the previous report where social trust and social responsibility contributed significantly, with negative and positive changes to the intervention. Institutional trust in the previous report had a positive contribution to the intervention but the contribution was insignificant.

Even though the improvements recorded in this final round of evaluation differs slightly from the previous round of evaluation, the improvements observed are likely attributable to the quality of interventions that was organized and provided to the beneficiaries by the representatives of AN.KA. The training which were tailored to meet the needs of the beneficiaries. Also, the diverse expertise of the experienced mentors and coaches that were engaged to provide coaching and mentoring services to the beneficiaries could have played a significant role in this regard. Another point worth mentioning is the duration of the intervention which allowed the beneficiaries enough time to internalize the skills and lessons learned through coaching and mentoring sessions. Other external factors also could have contributed to the observed improvements. For instance, the effect of the global pandemic on younger population is still visible in every sector of the economy. Although economic activities are gradually getting back to the pre-covid era which encourages youths to find employment or other income generating activities to remain engaged in the labor market.

7 Concluding remarks

7 Concluding remarks

The short- and long-term effects of young people not in education, employment, or training (NEET) suggest a negative impact with regard to their physical, mental, and psychological well-being, socioeconomic status, and generally at risk of social exclusion. Interventions such as training, counseling in form of coaching/mentoring, internships, financial incentives, and case management, to mention a few have been identified to help NEETs on their transition journey to becoming self-employed, gainfully employed in a formal job, or enrolling in formal education.

In general, organizations working with NEETs face a large number of challenges. In the context of AN.KA, some beneficiaries tend to leave during the mentoring sessions feeling confident they have a job or business opportunity, only to reappear a few weeks or months later after realizing things are not as expected. Additionally, some of the volunteer mentors would rather prefer to be remunerated for their services, while others are discouraged to shorten the proposed period of mentoring which contradicts the initial agreement reached with the organization before they embark on the mentoring services. This however resulted in the loss of enthusiasm for both the mentors and the beneficiaries.

Generally, the evaluation is faced with some limitations. Firstly, the pretest/posttest design impedes the drawing rigorous causal inferences between the project's activities and its results. Secondly, the lack of control groups also restricted the researchers' ability to control for other external factors such as the effect of the pandemic and global recession which happened at the time the delivery of the interventions. Finally, it would be useful to collect and integrate qualitative data (such as interviews and focus groups) to validate and explore the quantitative findings of this evaluation. Furthermore, it is expected that the subsequent rounds of impact assessment will also capture the developments in NEETs lives, and more specifically their labor status which, in this research, is only measured right after the completion of each intervention, and may thus underestimate the actual outcomes of interventions.

8 Lessons learned

8 Lessons learned

The situation of NEETs in Greece represents an interesting case and poses several challenges to the AN.KA team. Firstly, the pandemic (Covid-19) had a great effect on the outcomes of the intervention. This caused a feeling of fatigue, which resulted in a decrease in appetite, and the zest for participating in the online delivery of services. Although the switch to an online training medium made it possible to reach more participants across the country, offline trainings are only appealing to a limited number of participants due to geographical location and restrictions. The use of social media outlets, email communication, and person-to-person outreach approaches was adopted to recruit beneficiaries. The latter outreach mechanism proved more efficient in engaging persons from underserved communities and networking.

Engagement of NEETs in training and mentoring during holiday periods such as the summer holidays can be challenging. Due to personal travels or vacation plans of both the personnel working with NEETs and the beneficiaries, participation in the interventions during this period tends to be low and discouraging. It is also important to mention that post Covid-19 era makes it possible for some organizations to resumed in-person recruitment exercises. This however had an effect in recruiting potential beneficiaries into the interventions since some of them have already identified jobs or business opportunities.

At the commencement of the YES! Interventions, other state-sponsored programs were also ongoing. These programs also targeted the same group of beneficiaries (NEETs) and offered the beneficiaries several incentives for participating in the programs, including remuneration. This made it difficult for AN.KA to recruit more beneficiaries into the program. Furthermore, what could have motivated more participants into the program would have been the ability of AN.KA to issue institutional/educational based certificates. AN.KA as an organization is only allowed to issue a certificate of participation to each beneficiary upon exit from the intervention. However, the organization is currently in the process of regularization to meet the formal obligation.

9 References

9 References

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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?

Iceland
Liechtenstein
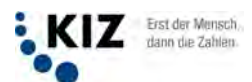Norway grants

Norway
grants

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The Scaling trust-based partnership models to recharge youth entrepreneurship: Supporting underserved communities with innovative entrepreneurship support instruments (TPM-RYE) project, benefits from €3,3M 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.