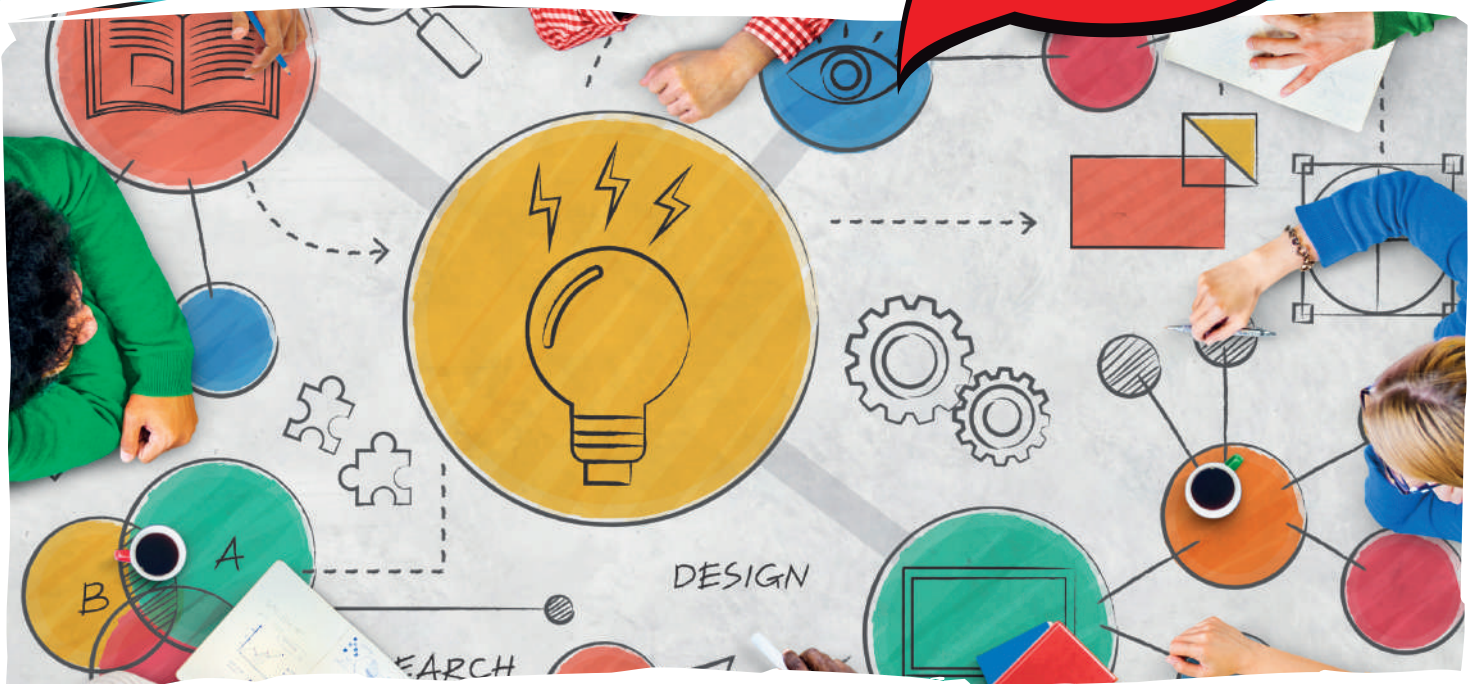


Poland



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 Polish organization Youth Business Poland to help unemployed 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 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.

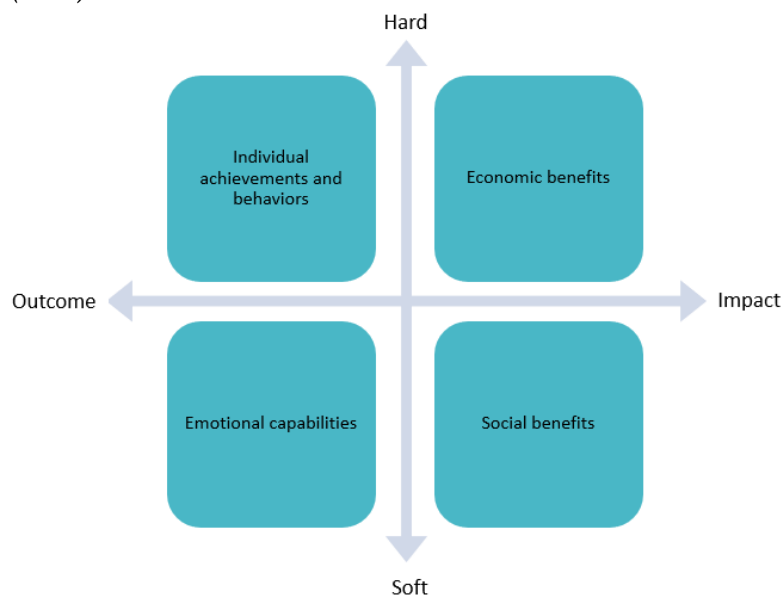
In total, the project targets a sample population of 1,600 unemployed young adults spread across four European countries (Greece, Italy, Poland, and Spain) over three and a half years (2018-2022). This report is to be read in the context of the project's "Impact Management Work Package", representing 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 side 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, three training courses (YES! I, II and III) for a total of 152 hours were delivered and coordinated through Youth Business Poland by Fundacja Inkubator Technologiczny (Technological Incubator Foundation), an organization established for the development of entrepreneurship in Poland. Youth Business Poland's mission is to develop entrepreneurship and provide comprehensive support to young people so that they can fully develop their potential, create stable businesses and new jobs. In total, 53 individuals participated in the training courses offered by Youth Business Poland. Table 2 summarizes the primary information for all training courses.

All three were intensive monthly entrepreneurship development courses filled with the practical knowledge needed to develop a company. This type of course aims to provide comprehensive support to young people aged 18-29 that are unemployed and not in education, and who would like to develop their business idea. The course program helps participants acquire basic business skills and understand business management strategies. Thanks to practical workshops, participants can build their business idea, create a vision for themselves, their company, and the goals they want to achieve. Additionally, they learn how to undertake marketing activities and how to sell effectively. The courses are also designed to provide participants with knowledge about planning the company's budget and expertise in raising funds or acquiring loans for its operations.

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

Training course	Duration	Start date	End date	Content	Mode of delivery	Hours per week	Hours in total	Number of participants
YES! I	6 weeks	23.04.2020	28.05.2020	Entrepreneurship, fundraising, and career guidance	Online	~8	48	17
YES! II	7 weeks	17.09.2020	09.11.2010	Entrepreneurship, fundraising, and career guidance	Online	~7	52	19
YES! III	5 weeks	17.11.2020	14.12.2020	Entrepreneurship, fundraising, and career guidance	Online	~10	52	17
Total							152	53

The curriculum was the same for all three courses, and it comprised the following training modules:

- Specify your idea and create a business model
- Customer Development - customer orientation
- Lean startup
- Effective sales in the company

- Digital marketing
- Co-financing and subsidies - funds to start a company
- Planning of the company's budget
- How to promote your company on Facebook and Instagram

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
- employed whose income does not allow for self-support
- self-employed
- self-employed whose income does not allow for self-support
- 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. All 53 beneficiaries 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 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. 31 people in the sample analyzed were women (58.49%), while 22 (41.51%) were men. The majority of the individuals in the sample (46 people, 86.79%) were between 25 and 29 years old. Younger and older individuals constituted the remaining sample: 7 people (13.21%) were less than 25 old. With regard to education, the majority of the people in the sample (35 people, 66.04%) had a university degree, 15 people (28.30%) had completed high school, two people (3.77%) finished lower secondary education, and only one person (1.89%) held a PhD.

The majority of the people (28 people, 52.83%) were self/employed or student at the start of the intervention, while 25 (47.17%) were not in self/employment nor education. Although employed or self-employed, these young adults lamented an income earned through precarious and irregular jobs that did not allow for self-support. The biggest share of the sample (37 people, 69.81%) had a disposable income of less than 600 EUR/month when they started the training course and only 16 people (30.19%) had a disposable income higher than 600 EUR/month. Finally, the biggest share of the sample (50 people, 94.34%) did not rely on unemployment benefits at the start of the intervention, while 3 (5.66%) did.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics.

Demographics		
Gender	n	%
Female	31	58.49
Male	22	41.51
Age		
≤ 24 years old	7	13.21
25-29 years old	46	86.79
Education		
Primary education	0	0.00
Lower secondary education	2	3.77
Upper secondary education	15	28.30
Tertiary education	35	66.04
PhD	1	1.89
Labor status, disposable income and lifetime cost		
Labor status		

Self/employed, student ¹	28	52.83
Not in employment nor education	25	47.17
Disposable income		
Less than 600 EUR/month	37	69.81
More than 600 EUR/month	16	30.19
Lifetime cost, Unemployment benefits		
Yes	3	5.66
No	50	94.34

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	3.91	4.22	3.83	4.17
Self-efficacy	4.03	4.28	4.00	4.50
Resilience	4.00	4.26	4.00	4.30
Search-goals	4.61	4.70	4.67	5.00
Social responsibility	4.04	3.95	4.00	4.00
Social trust	2.94	2.85	3.00	2.80
Institutional trust	2.51	2.40	2.75	2.50

A Wilcoxon signed rank test showed that there was a significant positive difference in proactivity ($Z = -4.197$, $p < 0.05$), self-efficacy ($Z = -3.600$, $p < 0.05$) and resilience ($Z = -1.418$, $p < 0.05$) between post- and pre-observations.

¹ This group of people work in irregular and/or precarious jobs with incomes that do not allow for self-support.

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	-4.197 ^b	-3.600 ^b	-2.677 ^b	-1.418 ^b	-1.563 ^c	-1.373 ^c	-1.168 ^c
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.007	.156	.118	.170	0.243
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=31, men=33). 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	3.86	3.98	4.12	4.36	3.83	4.00	4.17	4.50
Self-efficacy	4.00	4.07	4.26	4.32	4.00	4.00	4.50	4.50
Resilience	3.99	4.01	4.14	4.44	4.10	4.00	4.20	4.60
Search-goals	4.59	4.64	4.64	4.79	4.67	4.84	5.00	5.00
Social responsibility	4.14	3.89	4.05	3.81	4.13	3.82	4.13	3.88
Social trust	2.99	2.88	2.96	2.70	3.00	2.90	3.00	2.70
Institutional trust	2.64	2.33	2.54	2.20	2.75	2.38	2.50	2.25

As reported in Table 7, a Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed that there was a significant positive difference in proactivity ($Z = -2.638$, $p < 0.05$), self-efficacy ($Z = -2.601$, $p < 0.05$) and resilience ($Z = -2.220$, $p < 0.05$) between post- and pre-observation of female participants.

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

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	-2.638 ^b	-2.601 ^b	-2.220 ^b	-.543 ^b	-1.229 ^c	-.277 ^c	-.578 ^c
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.008	0.009	0.026	0.587	0.219	0.782	0.563
a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test							
b. Based on negative ranks.							
c. Based on positive ranks.							

For male participants, a Wilcoxon signed-rank test revealed that there was a significant positive difference in proactivity ($Z = -3.325$, $p < 0.05$) and in self-efficacy ($Z = -2.432$, $p < 0.05$) between post- and pre-observation as shown in Table 8. However, there was a significant negative difference in social trust between post- and pre-observations ($Z = -2.105$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 8. Wilcoxon test statistics table for soft outcome and impact variables by gender (male).

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	-3.325 ^b	-2.432 ^b	-1.511 ^b	-1.490 ^b	-.961 ^c	-2.105 ^c	-1.258 ^c
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0.015	0.131	0.136	0.337	0.035	0.208
a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test							
b. Based on negative ranks.							
c. Based on positive 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=36) and without (n=17) a university degree. The results are presented, using both the mean and the median for each soft outcome and impact variable, in Table 9.

Table 9. Pre/post mean and median for soft outcome and impact variables by education.

Variables	Mean (Pre)		Mean (Post)		Median (Pre)		Median (Post)	
	Without university degree	With university degree	Without university degree	With university degree	Without university degree	With university degree	Without university degree	With university degree
Proactivity	3.93	3.89	4.10	4.28	4.00	3.83	4.00	4.17
Self-efficacy	3.76	4.15	3.91	4.46	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.50
Resilience	3.92	4.03	4.16	4.31	4.00	4.10	4.10	4.40
Search-goals	4.61	4.61	4.53	4.78	5.00	4.67	4.67	5.00
Social responsibility	3.80	4.15	3.77	4.04	3.75	4.07	3.75	4.00
Social trust	2.71	3.06	2.67	2.94	2.80	3.00	2.60	2.90
Institutional trust	2.34	2.59	2.19	2.50	2.50	2.75	2.00	2.63

As reported in Table 10, a Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed that there was a significant positive difference in proactivity ($Z = -3.867$, $p < 0.05$), self-efficacy ($Z = -3.881$, $p < 0.05$), resilience ($Z = -2.834$, $p < 0.05$) and search-goals ($Z = -1.981$, $p < 0.05$) between post- and pre-observation of participants with a university degree. The pre-and post-intervention differences for social responsibility were also significant ($Z = -2.044$, $p < 0.05$). This change, however, was negative.

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

	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	-3.867 ^b	-3.881 ^b	-2.834 ^b	-1.981 ^b	-2.044 ^c	-1.395 ^c	-.744 ^c
p	0.000	0.000	0.005	0.048	0.041	0.163	0.457
a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test							
b. Based on negative ranks.							
c. Based on positive ranks.							

For participants with lower educational attainment (without university degree), all the differences presented in Table 9 were non-significant.

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 three sub-groups: individuals up to 24 years old (n=7), people between 25 and 29 years old (n=46). 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	4.12	3.87	4.31	4.21	4.00	3.83	4.17	4.17
Self-efficacy	3.93	4.04	4.07	4.32	4.00	4.00	4.50	4.50
Resilience	4.04	3.99	4.29	4.26	4.20	4.00	4.20	4.40
Search-goals	4.71	4.59	4.76	4.69	5.00	4.67	4.67	5.00
Social responsibility	4.18	4.02	4.00	3.95	4.25	4.00	4.13	3.94
Social trust	2.69	2.98	2.94	2.84	2.80	3.00	2.80	2.80
Institutional trust	2.32	2.54	2.25	2.42	2.25	2.75	2.00	2.50

As reported in Table 12, a Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed that there was a significant positive difference in proactivity ($Z = 4.050$, $p < 0.05$), self-efficacy ($Z = 3.467$, $p < 0.05$), and resilience ($Z = 2.573$, $p < 0.05$) between post- and pre-observation of participants between 25 and 29 years old. The pre-and post-intervention differences for the variable social trust were also significant ($Z = 2.029$, $p < 0.05$). This change, however, was negative.

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	-4.050 ^b	-3.467 ^b	-2.573 ^b	-1.316 ^c	-1.271 ^c	-2.029 ^c	-1.174 ^c
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.001	0.010	0.188	0.204	0.042	0.241
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 shown in Table 14.

Table 14. Pre/post proportions for hard impact variables.

Labor status, disposable income and lifetime cost				
Labor status	Pre-intervention		Post-intervention	
	n	%	n	%
Self/employed, student	28	52.83	34	64.15
Not in employment nor education	25	47.17	19	35.85
Disposable income				
Less than 600 EUR/month	37	69.81	28	52.83
More than 600 EUR/month	16	30.19	25	47.17
Lifetime cost, Unemployment benefits				
Yes	3	5.66	3	5.66
No	50	94.34	50	94.34

As reported in Table 15, a McNemar's test determined that there was a statistically significant difference in the proportion of low-earners pre- and post-intervention, $p = .012$ (2 sided). The other differences found are non-significant.

Table 15. 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 post-test
N	53	53	53
Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	.109 ^b	1.000 ^b	.012 ^b
a. McNemar Test			
b. Binomial distribution used.			

As for evaluating soft outcomes and impact variables, we then proceeded to segment the results of the impact assessment by gender, education, and age. We report below the findings by education since no difference was found between the two gender categories and within the three age subgroups.

5.3.1 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 16 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 16. Pre/post hard impact variables by education.

Labor status, disposable income, and lifetime cost				
	With university degree (Pre)	With university degree (Post)	Without university degree (Pre)	Without university degree (Post)
Labor status				
Self/employed, student	18	26	10	8
Not in employment nor education	18	10	7	9
Disposable income				
Less than 600 EUR/month	24	17	13	11
More than 600 EUR/month	12	19	4	6
Lifetime cost, Unemployment benefits				
Yes	3	1	0	2
No	33	35	17	15

Table 17 presents the statistically significant differences found in the sample of people with a university degree: labor status and disposable income. For people with higher educational attainment, the proportion of people who are self/employed or students and high-income earners is greater post-intervention.

Table 17. 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	36	36	36
Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	.008 ^b	.625 ^b	.039 ^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 two representatives of Youth Business Poland. 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. In light of this, the results show that the interventions were partly effective in developing the young individuals' emotional capabilities and bringing economic benefits to society. However, none of the training courses contributed to generate social impact at this point in time and the sense described in this exercise.

The overall results of the evaluation recorded an increase in proactivity, self-efficacy, resilience and net income for the sample analyzed. Regarding soft outcomes, the positive effects on proactivity and self-efficacy were statistically significant for people with a university degree and participants between 25 and 29 years old at the start of the intervention. Gender did not seem to play a role in this regard, as both men and women reported higher levels of proactivity and self-efficacy at the end of the intervention. Additionally, an increase in resilience was recorded for women, people aged 25-29 and young adults who completed university. The latter group was also the only one to report higher search-goal levels at the end of the intervention.

The data analysis revealed a few negative changes in the difference between post- and pre-observation concerning soft impact. More specifically, social responsibility dropped for individuals with higher educational attainment and social trust decreased for men and people between 25 and 29 years old. Finally, a positive change regarding hard impact was recorded for people with a university degree. The latter group reported higher levels of income and a positive change in labor status at the end of the interventions, with a statistically significant number of people moving from unemployment to self/employment or formal education.

In general, we believe the negative results recorded for social responsibility and social trust to be potentially connected to the current crisis. This time of severe economic downturn might have triggered a more selfish focus. The decrease in social responsibility might be attributable to the fact that individualist values are often indirectly promoted in the context of entrepreneurial activity (Liñán, Moriano, & Jaén, 2016). Therefore, entrepreneurship training courses could benefit from additional social and civic ethics modules to foster youth's understanding of their role in society.

An interesting result is that the only group to record an increase in income and a positive change in labor status during this time are young adults with a university degree. In light of these findings, it appears this group is more resilient than others to the negative effect of the corona outbreak on the economy and the labor market. Finally, regarding labor status, Youth Business Poland's representatives pointed out that some young adults who are not in employment or education might be reluctant to declare themselves due to the social stigma of unemployed people. The item 'student' especially might have been misinterpreted as there is a possibility that some participants' interpretation of the term includes informal education too, rather than enrollment in a formal education institution. Additionally, people who declare to be employed might be working in temporary and precarious jobs with irregular incomes that do not allow for self-support.

7 Concluding remarks

The evaluation had 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 when the training courses were delivered. Finally, it would be helpful 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 in 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 Youth Business Poland are doing.

This evaluation shows that entrepreneurship training courses can support NEETs by accompanying them on the staircase to employment or self-employment depicted in Figure 2. The generation of economic impact, such as a change in labor status or acquisition of financial autonomy, might be feasible for some NEETs sub-groups, for example, those with higher educational attainment, especially when one considers the adverse effects of the current crisis.

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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 is 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?

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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 €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.