



The IARS
International Institute

Community-led solutions for a fairer society

Country Report and Good Practices: Franceska

Vilnius Staff Training Event - 3 -7
September



Intro to IARS

Our mission: "To give everyone a chance to forge a safer, fairer and more inclusive society".

We do this by producing evidence-based solutions to current social problems, sharing best practice, and by supporting young people and the community to shape decision-making from the bottom-up.



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Social Enterprise in UK

We conducted one focus group with social enterprises, local government enterprise initiatives and youth workers. Later, we consulted with our own youth trainers, and the young people they work with. In addition, we visited a state-of-the-art enterprise hub in London and met with the trainers there who work with more established young social entrepreneurs.



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Report findings: What skills are required to make a good entrepreneur?

It was discussed by attendees that there were several key hard and soft skills:

Hard skills:

IT Skills

Accounting/finance

Trade knowledge

Soft Skills:

Negotiation/networking skills

Professional skills (such as interviewing/HR)

Time management

Planning

Communication

Resource use

Maturity – conflict resolution skills



Young people lacking qualifications

The group reflected that in essence, young people aiming to become entrepreneurs need to be or have access to a supportive adult. This was because there are too many business boundaries for early school leavers to overcome before they turn 18 and as a result entrepreneurship may not be a suitable stop-gap as an alternative career path. For instance, you cannot open a business bank account before you are 18 and it is impossible to start a business or get a loan without one.

The hard skills they might lack were pretty much the same as any entrepreneur starting out but that without basic maths and English they might find themselves at more of a disadvantage when studying large documents.



What other barriers/support might young people face or need?

Accessibility was a big talking point. If we were to offer training, it may be necessary to supplement transport costs – or bring the training into people’s homes where they may not be able to leave (i.e. because of caring responsibilities). Some members of the group felt that young people should be willing to commit to a certain period in order to prove their commitment to the programme and that this was not unreasonable.

E-learning was broadly advocated for, although some members thought that this should be combined with face-to-face training as young people risked increased isolation. It was felt that young people might actually be less willing to engage in online training.

Most important was accreditation. It was important to use an established and well known accreditation scheme in order to ensure that young people got the most out of the project. Ideas like referencing through LinkedIn would help to raise young people’s networking profiles.



NatWest SkillUp

SkillUp is funded by the Natwest Skills & Opportunities Fund and seeks to engage young people in social entrepreneurship.

It is a youth-led project that will design, pilot and disseminate widely an educational, training and skills development programme on a topic that has never been addressed before. The aim of the project will be to encourage young people to become social entrepreneurs as an alternative path to self-sustainability in the social sector. It will draw on models of best practice to train 100 young people via the e-course, to receive accreditation and be ready to become social entrepreneurs. As part of this project we have developed training to help individuals get an overview of how to be a social entrepreneur!



Project background

According to EC 2013 figures, social entrepreneurship has increased from 6% to 6.5% of total European paid employment creating from 11 million to 14.5 million jobs. UK stats also indicate that social entrepreneurship is expected to provide viable and sustainable alternatives to the ever widening gap between demand and supply for health and social care services for vulnerable groups. Having completed a pan-European scoping exercise, we concluded that an evidence-based package focusing on unlocking on the one hand the untapped potential of youth outside the labour market and on the other the impetus of the social economy sector in order to meet societal needs in the sectors of health and social care does not exist.

We will also work with young people to become Ambassadors in the local community and help promote, engage and encourage local stakeholders to link in with them. The outcome will be that some of these young people will report going on to be seen as more employable by local businesses, or have started their own business.



Project update

The project has already engaged with young people across the borough to provide face to face training and supported them to begin their journey into entrepreneurship. From the feedback and learning these courses have given us, we have created an [online course](#) which anyone can take to build their skills in business management and entrepreneurship. Thanks to the support of NatWest bank, many elements of this course have been able to link into their learning and are supported by the team there too. Those who complete the course gain access to the online hub where they can share ideas and discuss the challenges they are facing in building their businesses.



Thank you
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