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Coming events

• **Adjustment and improvement of training programme**

The main aims are to adjust, improve and adapt the existing training programme in Entrepreneurship to the needs of the the 50+ entrepreneurs and to make the training programme attractive for the target group.

• **Internet-based platform**

The aims are to establish a website which will be used as a platform for Entrepreneurs, providers of the training and other followers. The platform will be available in different languages and will contain cases, tools and information regarding Entrepreneurship and how to become self-employed, news and information about different national and international Entrepreneurships events and networks, discussion room for establishing an Entrepreneurship network between older workers in Europe and guidelines for future entrepreneurs, etc.

• **Pilot projects in participating countries**

The aim of the pilot projects is to try the elements of the training programme and the internet-based platform in the participating countries with a view to improve the model and make the necessary preparations for the implementation in the VET system.

• **Guidelines for future entrepreneurs**

The aim is to make some Guidelines, containing best practice, cases and tools for older workers who are interested in establishing their own businesses.

TOWER - Training of older workers in entrepreneurship

CONTENT

Launching TOWER s.1

Project aims and outcomes s.1

Project partners s. 2

Research s.2

Kick-off meeting s.3

Coming events s.4



Project aims

- Integrate the program as a permanent training opportunity in vocational and adult education institutions
- Create new jobs through entrepreneurship and innovation
- Encourage people with long working experience to utilize their ideas and establish their own business

Main outcomes

- Research report about the existing situation and support for entrepreneurs in participating countries;
- Internet-based platform for entrepreneurs;
- Adjusted training programme for entrepreneurs;
- Guideline for future entrepreneurs in English;
- Evaluation report;
- Dissemination Report.

Launching TOWER project

The Governments are struggling to find ways to enhance job creation and fuel growth after the global economic crisis. There is a growing acknowledgement among policy makers that entrepreneurship plays a key role in innovative societies, and that entrepreneurship is an important driver of wealth creation and economic recovery. The development of entrepreneurship activities in societies and the provision of favorable environments and framework conditions for starting and growing new businesses will be crucial drivers for economic growth in the coming years.

To ensure the future job creation and new entrepreneurs we will through our project develop an efficient training programme for groups of potential entrepreneurs in the age of 50 and older. The target group has important resources from their long working experiences which can be utilized more systematically by encourage them to use them in Entrepreneurship. While Entrepreneurship is getting part in regular secondary and higher education's it's not provided in a large scale for people older than 50.

Several researches have showed that the projects target group position on the labor market is different from others in some ways. Firstly, if they get dismissed they are more likely to be unemployed for longer time. Secondly, the group is less likely to use the lifelong learning education system as well as they are not as mobile on the labor market. The Training Programme have to be attractive offer which support the projects target group to be active on the labor market for a longer time.

Every firm that is established can have multiple effects on job creation. The age group 50+ is least likely to take the step to start own business. By assisting, encouraging and training them to do so, new jobs will be created; work mobility will increase with positive effects both economically and socially. Every participant in this program will also be a role model and encourage others who are interested in taking the step.

Project partners

The consortium of the project is made of specialists in the field of education and training, research and ICT-based learning, with relevant experience in working with EU projects. The European co-operation will have a positive impact on the geographical areas by facilitation the dialogue and co-operation between providers of training programmes for entrepreneurs.

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Are 50+ willing and able to start own business?

An European research on Entrepreneurship (2012) shows that 37% of the European population 15+ would prefer to be self-employed. However there are differences between countries. The percentage is 22% in Sweden, 23% in Norway, 28% in Denmark, 44% in Iceland and 49% in Latvia.

The TOWER consortium did a research to see if the interest of the age group 50+ regarding starting own business differs from other age groups. In Iceland a quantitative research was done while in Sweden, Denmark and Latvia, the research was in form of interviews and focus groups among different stakeholders.

Overall there seems not to be a much difference between age groups regarding the wish to start own companies, the main challenges and kind of assistance needed. However, according to the Icelandic research, more independency is a stronger motivator among older groups (they would rather do their business full time) while better earnings are stronger motivator among younger groups.

The age groups 45-54 and 55+ see communication skills as main strength regarding starting own company. However this is lower than among other age groups. The older groups do not perceive their sales skills, and social network as strong as other age groups. They are also less likely to have a good business idea. On the other hand they see their business knowledge to be better than younger groups.

Research

Research in the participating countries on the framework of entrepreneurship in participating countries, available training for entrepreneurs, training needs for the project target group.

Financing the biggest barrier

All age groups mentioned lack of knowledge and skills regarding financing as the biggest barrier. This is though a stronger barrier among younger groups and the same is the case regarding general knowledge about establishing and running companies. Finance was also defined as the biggest barrier for starting up a business among interviewed employed and unemployed people 50+. One of the suggested solutions is to establish a platform where people who have an idea and investors are brought together. The existing form of such platform can become more efficient and more open for ideas. Another idea is to offer more information about funds and help regarding how to apply for funds.

Training needs

The training needs often mentioned are: business knowledge, making a business plan, sales skills and leadership. Barriers that are especially relevant for the unemployed group are: lack of self-confidence and age. A course especially designed for 50+ people is considered as a positive supplement for this area.

The focus group and interviews in Denmark among companies show that the companies do not have special policies for 50+ employees, mainly because of lack of resources. They also show that most of the companies are willing to help some of their "key-employees", and they normally find special solutions from time to time. The companies are aware of the fact that they will need some special programs for the seniors in the future due to an increasing number of older employees.



Kick-off meeting in Reykjavik

On 29th and 30th of October the Kick-off meeting for launching the TOWER project was held in Reykjavik, Iceland.

Partners from 4 different countries and 6 organizations participated. The future work in the project was planned and we made sure that all partners had common understanding of all the aims and objectives of the project. The project's 10 work packages were presented and the timeframe was discussed.



The structure of the 1st work package was presented and tasks given to partners. The 1st work package contained a research work in each participating country with interviews and focus groups among target groups. The aim of the research work was to find out the interest, motivation and barriers among older people in the participating countries. The results will be used to improve the training course for older entrepreneurs.

Credits

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More information

If you want to know more about the Project, activities and events, you can go through the different sections on the website: www.tower50plus.eu



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