

Boosting entrepreneurship education for youth employment in the mountains

Many rural and mountainous areas face the outmigration of young people, who leave to seek employment in urban areas. In order to face the employment challenge and to improve the image of mountain work, the YESpecialists project focuses on youth entrepreneurship by creating adequate entrepreneurial ecosystems and changing mindsets about mountain employment.

The lack of attractive jobs drives young people out of the mountains

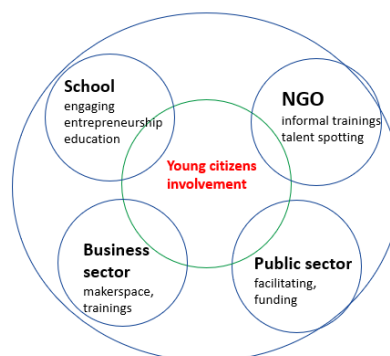
Many mountain areas suffer from a lack of attractiveness and depopulation. The shortage of attractive jobs in mountain areas often causes young people to leave their territory to find better opportunities elsewhere.

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In this context of depopulation combined with a lack of promotion of existing opportunities in rural areas, entrepreneurship becomes a key element to build an adversity-safe future of Europe and a tool to find alternative ways to deal with labour market challenges. Yet, to further support entrepreneurship in mountain areas, support schemes must be developed, especially towards less experienced people such as youth.

Bringing local actors together to improve entrepreneurship ecosystems

6 territories across Europe collaborate in the YESpecialists project to build local youth entrepreneurship ecosystems. All relevant stakeholders are involved, such as regional and local authorities, businesses, NGOs and Vocational Education and Training schools. The objective is to develop an innovative approach to entrepreneurship education, by bridging the formal and non-formal sectors, and involving young people in the development of their local community. In schools, activities can, for example, include business simulation games with students or accounts of successful local entrepreneurs to create role models for the entrepreneurs of the future.



Credits: YESpecialists project

YESpecialists build on partner knowledge and exchange of experiences to also explore how coaching and incubation programmes, co-working spaces, Smart Villages, promotion of entrepreneurship in high schools' programmes among others can help boost youth entrepreneurship in mountain regions.



Credits: YESpecialists project

Boosting the entrepreneurial spirit of young mountain people

YESpecialists will boost youth entrepreneurship in mountain areas in 6 territories. It will help develop an entrepreneurial spirit among mountain youth and encourage them to envisage an entrepreneurial future. Moreover, a repository of initiatives that actively involve youth in local ecosystems, guidelines for building up regional ecosystems to promote youth entrepreneurship, and training materials on entrepreneurial competences will be developed for the use of teachers and youth workers.

Resources and governance

YESpecialists will run from 2020 to 2023 and is co-funded by the Erasmus+ Youth programme of the European Union. The project is coordinated by Vestland County Council (Norway) and involves the Provincia Autonoma di Trento, Principality of Asturias – Department of Education, Ringkøbing-Skjern Kommune, Tuscany Region, Varazdin County Council and EARLALL.

YESpecialists was presented at the [XII European Mountain Convention](#) on Smart Mountains. You can find this project and other good practices in the event's brochure of initiatives, available in [English](#), [French](#) and [Italian](#).



Innovative aspect

Supporting youth entrepreneurship creates job opportunities for young people and encourages them to stay and live in mountain areas, thus also paving the way for a more positive future for mountain territories. Moreover, the bottom-up approach adopted contributes to building smarter mountains, where local communities play an active role in their local socio-economic development.

