

Mind the Skills Gap

Enterprise Education for Groups Vulnerable to Social Exclusion





ELIE

employability: learning through
international entrepreneurship

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An important problem with much work on entrepreneurship, unemployment and economic growth is the tendency to 'neglect on-going structures of social relations' (Granovetter, 1985, p.481)

Key findings

Reluctant or necessity-driven entrepreneurs amongst groups vulnerable to social exclusion

Notions of entrepreneurship acted as a barrier to both enterprise and enterprise development

Soft-skills shortfalls acted as a barrier to enterprise development

Therefore, are soft skill shortfalls a barrier to entrepreneurship?

INVISIBLE BARRIERS

The people who sit in darkness.

Tol Eliemental



- Groups under-represented in SME start-ups
- What is the relationship between soft-skills shortfalls and various groups vulnerable to social exclusion?
- Co-development of enterprise education to address identified shortfalls
- Piloting (from March 2015)

Defining Social Exclusion

- ‘Groups that experience a higher risk of poverty and social exclusion than the general population. Ethnic minorities, migrants, disabled people, the homeless, those struggling with substance abuse, isolated elderly people and children all often face difficulties that can lead to further social exclusion, such as low levels of education and unemployment or underemployment’ (di Nardo, Cortese and McAnaney, 2010).



Elemental

- Identifying Socio-cultural barriers to enterprise and employability
- Target groups
 - NEETS
 - Older women out of the labour force
 - Minority ethnic groups including Roma
 - Recovering substance misusers
 - Long-term health problems
 - Long-term unemployed

Work Package 4

Identification of social and cultural barriers to employment and enterprise amongst our target groups in order to identify the soft-skills gaps of a very diverse group of people who are defined under the umbrella term of vulnerable to social exclusion.



Identify Socio-cultural barriers to enterprise and employability

NEETS

Older women out of the labour force

Minority ethnic groups including Roma

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Entrepreneurial socialisation

WP 4

- Working with groups vulnerable to social exclusion to explore the socio-cultural barriers to enterprise
 - Soft skills, attitudes, self-efficacy, intentions
- 2-phases WP, total duration 12 months
 - Phase 1: Quantitative scoping study
 - Phase 2: Qualitative (PAR methodology)
- Integrated with WP5 (CAPS)



Questionnaire

- Linan and Chen (2009), Linan (2008), and McGee et al. (2009)
- Five-point continuous scale
 - Soft skills, including the capacities, knowledge and skills needed to start and maintain an enterprise
 - Resilience
 - Attitudes towards entrepreneurship
 - Self-efficacy to start a business
 - Perceived social support for entrepreneurial activity
 - Demographic characteristics, including age, gender, and education status.



	UK	Poland	Greece*	Romania	Totals
Number in sample	N=53	N=34	N=25	N=30	142
Males	60%	38%	NIL	37%	
Females	40%	62%	100%	63%	
Ethnic Origin White	92%	94%	100%	100%	
Ethnic Origin BME	8%	6%	NA	NA	
Higher Education	34%	20%	44%	7%	
Higher vocational education	NIL	NIL	32%	40%	
Level 2/3 Education	56%	73%	24%	53%**	
Level 1 or no education level stated	10%	7%	NIL	**	
Previous enterprise experience	22%	3%	68%	13%	
Relative with enterprise experience	41%	32%	62%	20%	

Psychosocial correlates of Entrepreneurial Intention

- See hand-out but for example
 - UK
 - problem-solving and planning, creativity, openness and social cognitive variables correlate significantly with entrepreneurial intentions
 - Poland
 - only the social cognitive variables correlate significantly with entrepreneurial intentions



Qualitative Data

- Working with volunteer co-researchers
- Interview matrix based upon findings of questionnaire (co-developed)
- A sample of 40 (ten per country) were selected and interviewed
- Content analysis of interviews
- Co-researchers provided significant additional data
- 24 case studies were prepared



Workshops with Co-researchers



Confidence / Resilience

- Lacking confidence in self and others present

‘Polish don’t take me seriously, only other Somali’s ’

‘No one from round here is self-employed, they work on the side – everyone does if they can, going legit is risky’

You need a job round here and there aren’t jobs. It’s difficult to get out for work [talking about working off the estate] when they see your address they won’t employ you.

– Socially im



Personal Accountability / Work Ethic

- The desire to work (or at least ambitions for a better life) is found in all cases.
 - Often people do not know how to achieve their ambition (linking back to confidence) or only have a partial idea of what they should do.
 - ‘I came here (Greece) for a better life, I am determined to succeed but I need help to work out the systems’
- Where challenges to achieving the ambition appear these seem insurmountable, there is an inability to break challenges into manageable chunks.
 - Failure to move close to a goal leads to goals being abandoned (lack of resilience). ‘My ambition would be a bit, what’s the word? ‘Pie- in- the- sky’, ‘I get disheartened’



Ability to Collaborate / Interpersonal skills

- A need for 'people skills' was identified by participants and by those working with our vulnerable groups (Links to interpersonal skills)
- Amongst some participants ability to collaborate is hindered by lack of language skills (both Poland and UK)
- This links to networks and confidence
 - 'It would be wonderful if you could just be guided through'



Future Planning

- Ambition acts as a proxy for this soft skill.
- Participants were able to set out long-term goals and these were often entrepreneurial (if not directly linked to enterprise, illegal economy predominated).
- Key issues preventing action were:
 - Ideas about entrepreneurs (not people like me)
 - Worries about area where they live
 - Worries about prejudice
 - Lack of supportive environment/social isolation
 - Disabilities often seen as insurmountable difficulty for employability of enterprise – shortage of role models, particularly where mental health issues are concerned



Critical Observation Skills

- Lack of ability at identifying obvious skills they possess
- Unable to identify opportunities in their local area
- Unable to link their skills with opportunities (skills mapping needed)
 - For example interviewee with severe schizophrenia is excellent at maths and accounts, but does not identify this as a skill that could help him collaborate with someone in enterprise



Negotiation / Conflict Resolution skills

- Significant numbers of our interviewees have experienced bullying, discrimination and victimisation of various sorts.
- This is perhaps the most significant socio-cultural barrier to progress for those individuals.
- More generally, negotiation skills are particularly lacking amongst older women, ethnic minorities and those experiencing mental illness



Adaptability and Flexibility

- These skills were sometimes obviously present in our interviewees, more often in younger people than older, and more often amongst women than men.
 - ‘I’ve moved about, lived in different places, left an abusive partner and started again, I always manage’



Enterprise Education

- Problems with extant models for our target groups
 - Accessibility
 - Focus on business planning
 - Confidence levels of target group



Stratification of our Target Group

- Enterprise education for soft skills (see hand out)
 - Group A – most needs, around 40% of participants
 - Group B – moderate needs, around 35% of participants
 - Group C – minor needs, around 25%



Co-development Learning Materials

- Starting points
 - Working with NCFE
 - Issues with levels
 - ECVET
 - Online .v. Offline materials
- Working with Stakeholders
 - Employability group PHE
 - Remploy
 - End users



Working with CAPS (1)



Working with CAPS (2)



Working with CAPS (3)

- Some CAPS can share **facilities** with target group
 - Computing, telephone, copying printing
 - Equipment for children, for DIY or for carers
- CAPS have also agreed to provide **mentors** for people in our target groups, and supported our project with **advice**



Developing Learning Resources

- Closing the skills gap
- Accessibility
- Relevance
- Accreditation
- Employability



Topic Area

- Employability through enterprise
- Enterprise traits
- Skills audit
- Creative thinking
- Your business
- Enterprising people
- Planning for your business
- Managing time
- Target setting and Action planning
- Working in a team
- Your team
- Problem solving
- Barriers
- Learner reflection

Further Support

- CAPs
 - Support and training
- Mentors
 - Support and training
 - Triple-stage model?
- Co-operative models





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