

UNTAPPED

Building Economic Autonomy for Young People with Fewer Opportunities

Erasmus+ Youth Exchange - Short Concept Note

Location	Isverna, Mehedinți County, Romania
Duration	8 activity days + 2 travel days
Target group	Young people, with at least 80% facing fewer opportunities
Programme	Erasmus+ Youth Exchange (KA152-YOU)

THE IDEA

Many young people have valuable skills without recognising their potential.

They may know how to cook, repair things, take photographs, create digital content, organise activities, make handmade products, work with children, use technology or possess knowledge and abilities developed through their families, hobbies and communities.

However, especially for young people with fewer opportunities, there can be a significant gap between having a skill and being able to transform it into an economic opportunity.

UNTAPPED aims to help young people discover their personal resources, understand the value they can create for others and explore realistic ways of transforming their skills, knowledge and passions into sources of income.

The project is not a traditional entrepreneurship course and does not assume that every participant should create a company.

Instead, it starts with a simple question:

What do I have, what can I do with it, and how could it become economically valuable?

The project approaches entrepreneurship as a possible tool for economic autonomy and social inclusion.

WHO DO WE WANT TO INVOLVE?

At least 80% of participants will be young people facing fewer opportunities, particularly:

- young people experiencing economic difficulties or coming from low-income households;
- young people from rural areas, small towns, peripheral or geographically isolated communities;
- young people with limited access to professional networks, mentorship, career guidance or economic education;
- young people whose access to education, employment or economic opportunities is affected by social exclusion, marginalisation or discrimination.

We are particularly interested in cumulative barriers. A young person may simultaneously live in a rural area, have limited financial resources, lack transportation and have no access to professional networks. The project will therefore focus not simply on categories of disadvantage, but on the barriers preventing young people from turning their capabilities into real opportunities.

THE LEARNING JOURNEY

The 8 activity days will follow one continuous educational process:

Day 1 - WE BECOME A GROUP Building trust, exploring expectations, introducing Youthpass and understanding how unequal access to resources can create unequal opportunities.

Day 2 - WHAT DO I HAVE? Self-knowledge and discovery of skills, passions, experiences and especially hidden competences developed outside formal education.

Day 3 - WHAT IS MY VALUE? Connecting personal skills with real needs: skill → need → value → beneficiary/customer.

Day 4 - PASSION TO INCOME STORIES: ISVERNA Participants explore the local community and meet people who have transformed skills, passions, professions or local resources into income-generating activities. They investigate how each person's journey developed from a competence to their first customer and income.

Day 5 - FROM VALUE TO MONEY Practical simulations around products and services, customers, pricing, costs, revenue, profit, offers and negotiation.

Day 6 - MAKE IT REAL & LEGAL What actually happens when someone wants to pay you? Participants explore contracts, invoices, self-employment/freelancing, copyright-based income, companies, taxes and personal versus business money, while comparing how these mechanisms work in their countries.

Day 7 - MY FIRST €100 Each participant develops a realistic My First €100 Plan, identifying how one real competence could potentially generate their first €100 legally: what they could offer, to whom, at what price, what they need, what barriers they face and what their first step could be.

Day 8 - I CAN START FROM HERE Finalising the plans, peer feedback, Youthpass reflection, evaluation and identifying concrete actions participants can take after returning home.

WHY ISVERNA?

The project will take place in Isverna, a small rural community in Romania, and this is a deliberate methodological choice.

Economic opportunity and entrepreneurship are often associated with large cities, universities, startup ecosystems and professional networks. We want to challenge this perspective.

During the mobility, Isverna itself will become a learning environment. Participants will interact with local people and explore how skills, services, crafts, local knowledge and community resources can become sources of income.

Economic value does not exist only in large cities, and entrepreneurship does not have to begin with a startup. It can begin with something a person already knows how to do.

WHAT DO WE WANT PARTICIPANTS TO LEAVE WITH?

By the end of the Youth Exchange, participants should be better able to recognise their own competences, identify skills with potential economic value, understand basic concepts such as price, cost, revenue and profit, understand the purpose of contracts and invoices, identify legal ways of generating income in their countries and recognise the barriers and resources affecting their own economic opportunities.

Most importantly, every participant will leave Isverna with a personal and realistic:

MY FIRST €100 PLAN

Success will not be measured by how many participants start companies. It will be measured by whether young people leave the project better able to recognise what they have, understand the value they can create and identify a realistic first step towards greater economic autonomy.

THE PROJECT IN ONE SENTENCE

UNTAPPED is an Erasmus+ Youth Exchange supporting young people with fewer opportunities in recognising the economic value of their existing skills and developing the confidence, knowledge and practical tools needed to transform those capabilities into realistic and legal income-generating opportunities.