



OSS aims at improving policies for SMEs competitiveness by enhancing advisory support services for first time entrepreneurs. One Stop Shop project wants to build a complete ecosystem for an entrepreneur starting a new business.

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Action Plan

OSS – One Stop Shop towards competitive SMEs, focusing on the ecosystem for the first line service system



Møre and Romsdal
County Council



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Part I – General information

Project: OSS

Partner organization: Møre and Romsdal County Council

Other partner organisations involved (if relevant): n/a

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NUTS2 region: Vestlandet

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About the Project

According to statistical data, Europe has a lower percentage of start-ups compared to other parts of the world. This circumstance emphasizes the need to create and offer attractive jobs and living places for young people. Real conditions mean that many young people are leaving our regions in the hope of a better life. With this project, we want to create an attractive, tailor-made ecosystem for start-ups. Its aim is to improve SME development, entrepreneur skills and overcome specific barriers. Project partners defined that commitment and willingness to invest in long-term policy are important to increasing the number and quality of start-ups in their region.

The main goal of OSS: One Stop Shop for Competitive SMEs, ecosystem focus for frontline service system design, is to improve existing SME competitiveness policies by enhancing advisory support services for new entrepreneurs. As a result, OSS aims to build a complete ecosystem for entrepreneurs starting a new business.

To achieve this, each partner has contributed with their knowledge and best practices from the First Line Service System within the chosen topics; ecosystem for start-ups, digital solutions and capabilities, mentoring solutions, cooperation between different levels of governance, access to capital (crowdfunding in particular) and coworking solutions (such as incubators) to enhance the cooperation between business and start-ups. The main result of the OSS initiative is the development of a toolkit of experience and knowledge, consisting of Good Practices on policy instruments related to the different topics. The Partnership wants to strengthen the advisory support service tailored to the needs of entrepreneurs. Having a strong understanding of national policies and engaging stakeholders from different spheres of competence to support efforts to influence policy related to the main objective of the project, the OSS partnership has the ambition to improve advisory services in different regions.



About the development of this Action Plan

Action Plan is a document providing details on how the lessons learnt from the cooperation will be implemented in order to improve the policy instrument that is addressed within the region. In particular the Action Plan specify the content of the actions to be implemented, their timeframe, the players involved, the cost and funding sources. The plan consists of a detailed description of 2 key actions and guidance for their practical integration to the policy instrument addressed.

To develop this Action Plan the partnership delivered takeaways after each study visit. In these takeaways the partners discussed with their participating stakeholders, and answered the following questions:

- Which ideas and Good Practice can you bring home?
- Actions to take in your region – how to engage stakeholders?
- When to start – short term/longterm?
- Who will be responsible?

This particular methodology prepared all partners for the selection of the actions and Good Practices to bring in to the Action Plan for monitoring and implementation in phase 2

About hoppid.no – First line service system for entrepreneurs in Møre and Romsdal

The first line service for start-ups were established in 2006, after performing an analysis of the current situation in the region. This analysis showed a fragmented service where it was difficult to find precise help for the entrepreneurs. As a result, hoppid.no was established, and the region went from a fragmented service to a one-door-policy with hoppid.no offices in all municipalities in the County. Today this service consist of 26 hoppid.no offices, and approx. 50 start-up advisors.

The work and collaboration in hoppid.no is based on a Partnership Agreement (PA). The PA is between the different levels of regional governance and the municipalities. The PA points out who are responsible for what, and regulates the cooperation as a whole. This agreement is the platform for the work in the first line service system, hoppid.no. For the County Council, the main deliverance is giving the advisors different tools to develop their first line service, such as different courses, competence and network. Recently the County Council developed and implemented the Digital Tool for Start-ups, as a direct deliverance in this agreement.

In addition to the agreement, the municipality, define their unique responsibility in an defined Annex. This annex is adopted to the local service, and it state the details of the formalities at local level. This includes:

- Who in the municipality (department) or which organisation is responsible for the service
- Opening hours of the office
- Either: Work percentage performed by the defined department at the municipality
- Or: Agreement between the municipality and partner organisation
- What is included in the service provided to the entrepreneur
- A description of how the brand hoppid.no is visible and how they will market the brand to the entrepreneur

This agreement formalize the work between the different parties, and all parties have one joint goal, to make the journey of the entrepreneur less fragmented and easier to understand. The entrepreneur is the main stakeholder of the work.



Short summary of all study visits implemented

Kick off meeting – Ålesund, Norway, June 2018 - hosted by Møre and Romsdal County Council, first meeting was an introduction to the project implementation: presentation of first line service system hoppid.no and services in the different partner regions. An analysis of current state of first line service for start-ups was implemented amongst the different partners. Good Practices shared and discussed; takeaways were produced by all partners.

Thematic meeting "Digitalization of start-up services", January 2019, hosted by partners from UK partner in Aldeshot Enterprise center, Hampshire. Good Practices on digital solutions and capabilities were presented and discussed. For Møre and Romsdal County Council Action 1 is in relation to the Good Practice from this workshop

Thematic meeting "Mentoring and facilitating the contact of start-ups with relevant businesses by region", September 17-18, 2019, hosted by ARED-Vratsa (study visits to Vratsa Software Society and Tech Park-Sofia). Good Practices on mentoring presented. Important workshop for this Action Plan, because of the presented mentoring scheme Seed Slovenia.

Thematic meeting "Management of ecosystems for initial services for start-ups by sectors", hosted by the District Administration of Granada, Spain; 15.5. 2020. Moved online due to the pandemic restrictions. Two partners presented their Good Practice, the Spanish and Norwegian partner. Online discussions and takeaways produced.

Thematic meeting "Financial instruments to support initial start-up services" (microfunding and crowdfunding) - hosted by the Regional Development Agency, Kranj, Slovenia, 17-18.11. 2020-on-line. Several GPs presented, several from the host and one per partner.

Thematic meeting "Business incubation, physical space for new enterprises, an important part of the start-up support system", hosted by the Regional Development Agency, Rzeszow, Poland – 8 - 9th of June 2021, online. Still heavy restrictions due to the pandemic. Inspiring online workshop where GPs about different coworking solutions were presented.

Part II – Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact:

- Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
- European Territorial Cooperation programme
- Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument addressed: County Strategy Møre and Romsdal 2017 – 2020; Action Plan for Competence and Value creation.

Priority axis 2 An international competitive business environment for SMEs, Measure 2.1: a) To operate the first line service system hoppid.no in the municipalities, distribute low-risk funding for entrepreneurs, certify advisors and implement a program for increased competence. b) To develop a digital tool for start-ups to increase entrepreneurial skills.

The Møre and Romsdal County regional masterplan "Sustainable county 2021-2024":

Goal 1: The Cooperative County: Møre and Romsdal will be a pioneer county for collaboration.

- Goal 1.2: Coordinate public resources and skills to meet the need for all people; elderly, children and youth, immigrants and people with disabilities and special needs.

Goal 3: Møre and Romsdal shall be an attractive and diverse County where people choose to live their lives.

- Goal 3.4: Møre and Romsdal shall provide education and competence that meet the needs in society and leads to inclusion, integration, value creation, innovation and learning.

Goal 4: The value creation County: Møre and Romsdal will have a leading business community and an innovative public sector"

- Goal 4.2: Create more start-ups and promote companies with potential for growth and internationalization.

The County Strategy Møre and Romsdal 2017 – 2020; Action Plan for Competence and Value creation, and Møre and Romsdal County regional masterplan (MRCRM) "Sustainability county 2021-2024" is the two policy instruments for the Action Plan presented in this document.

The priorities in the new OP have been defined and approved by the politicians in the County Council, and they are similar to the previous OP; MRCRM 2017-2020. The MRCRM 2021-2024 is build on lessons learned in the previous period.

Based on Møre and Romsdal County regional masterplan "Sustainable county 2021-2024": there were identified the following needs to improve: There shall be international and competitive businesses in the Møre and Romsdal area. Related specific objective is to mobilize for more entrepreneurs in the region. It is going to be achieved through the entrepreneurial program hoppid.no.

The First Line Service system hoppid.no has been operating for more than 10 years in the region. After that time, we find that the quality of services for startups is different, depending on the location in the county. We have learnt that the existing services don't meet all needs of the entrepreneur. To make our ecosystem better, we think it is necessary to revitalize and target our policy for start-ups.

The Action Plan consist of two actions:

- Action 1: Mend the GAP – inspiring start-ups and mentoring immigrant start-ups, consist of two actions; "Start-up training for immigrants" and "Mentor and Trainee schemes".
- Action 2: Peer-Peer Mentoring for entrepreneurial groups, and shall deliver peer-peer mentoring for entrepreneur support service delivered by the advisor in the first line system

Goal 1 in the new OP is of relevance for both actions, since the overall goal for these two actions are linked to the First Line Service system hoppid.no, and the need to deliver services for start-ups which are more adapted to the entrepreneurial needs. hoppid.no is based on a partnership between different levels of governance thus are directly linked to Goal 1, "The Cooperative County".

The first action is implemented in semester 2, and the following semesters. This action is thus implemented in the first OP, and further developments and implementation of this activity will be in the new OP. In the new OP it is Goal 3 (3.4) and especially goal 4 (4.2) that is addressed; "Møre and Romsdal will have an international leading business community and an innovative public sector" and in particular goal 4.2; Create more start-ups and promote companies with potential for growth and internationalization. The goal for Action 1 is to influence the list of eligible activities for Goal 4.2 in the policy instrument.

The second action will be implemented entirely in the new OP and is connected especially to Goal 4, 4.2. By establishing a new approach for mentoring activities with implementing mentoring in groups instead of 1:1 mentoring as it is offered today, we want to improve and implement a new mentoring service as part of the toolkit in our first line service system (hoppid.no), to create a sustainable service towards mentoring. We want the new way of performing mentoring services, if proven successful, to be a permanent activity in our eco system for start-ups. We expect this new service to be more efficient and adapted to the needs of the entrepreneur. This can only be done by improving the Policy Instrument.

We included in the Action Plan, that there is a need to develop startups competences. That activity relates to the subject of entrepreneurship using first line services. We think that there is a need to revitalize and develop equal services regardless of location in the county. Another need is to strengthen advisor's competences.

We want our Action Plan to be more adapted to startups needs. We also want to make the governance more effective through implementation of digital solutions. This might bring us two main benefits;

1. Simplify the interaction between involved service providers in the partnership and make experts more accessible for entrepreneurs.
2. Our financial instruments will be more based on the different start-ups needs.

The first action in the Action Plan is about mending the gap in the ecosystem for immigrant start-ups. The second action in the action plan is about boost entrepreneurs to growth, survival and sustainable by peer-peer mentoring after the first year(s) they have established their company.

In both actions the developed "Digital tool for supporting Start-ups" is crucial to achieve the goals defined for the actions.

Part III – Details of the actions envisaged

ACTION 1 – Mend the GAP – inspiring start-ups and mentoring immigrant start-ups

1. The background

The County Council is responsible for facilitating that immigrants can establish businesses and that professionally educated, and highly qualified migrants are included in the working life. Møre and Romsdal County Council delivers this service through the first line service system hoppid.no. The County Council has capitalized on the good work done in the OSS project in the past three years through examination of good practice presented by other partners and stakeholders in interregional meetings, study visits and workshops.

After the thematic interregional workshop in UK, held in Fareham, 17th January 2019, semester2, a project consisting of different services for immigrant start-up talents and immigrant talent for the labour-market have been implemented during phase one. During this event, the Project Partner from UK presented their program for unemployed - "Inspiring Enterprise program". We got inspired by how Hampshire region has succeeded in supporting unemployed women to establish their own company. In the project we have learnt from UK - Inspiring Enterprise.

The program from Fareham, WSX enterprise (UK-partner) is about supporting unemployed people to build business & social enterprises. Inspiring Enterprise provides specialist support, helping people that are not earning to set up their own business or become self-employed. To achieve this Inspiring Enterprise work with organisations that deal with unemployed people such as Job Centres and Job Clubs, single parent's hubs and mental health organisations. The organisations is the recruitment arena for

reaching the target group. It is of interest for Møre and Romsdal how this practice reaches its objectives and target groups and how it is implemented. UK have throughout the past 12 years helped more than 1200 people each year progress from unemployment to start and grow their own business or community enterprise. For Møre and Romsdal this actions can be transferred directly to how we approach our immigrant entrepreneurs, and formed a backbone to the partnership established with the Immigration Service in Molde and the first line service (hoppid.no) for start-ups in Molde and Kristiansund. We also work close together with our unemployment service in the region, called NAV (national unemployment service). GP: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/3739/inspiring-enterprise-programme/>

Among the question we asked - after the visit in UK semester 2:

Inclusive entrepreneurship. Who to create a successful founder in your municipalities? Do immigrants start businesses out of necessity? Will covid19 lead to more start-ups? Young people, with and without migration background, will have difficulties getting into the labour market? People with a migrant background will be more affected by the downturn caused by COVID-19?

Unfortunately, many make mistakes when they found their company, and we see that immigrants struggle more. The findings are relevant to the service provided through this policy change.

Lone star. Too many migrant founders try to start their businesses alone. Establishment of sole proprietorship. To save money, the entrepreneur establishes a sole proprietorship giving her unlimited liability. It makes it risky to hire people, and in the end, the entrepreneur can lose their capital. Also, we see that the immigrant lone founders tend to start a sole proprietorship without an accountant. We need to act so immigrant entrepreneurs work more team related.

It is easier to succeed with a team: Co-founders are key. The entrepreneur is looking for a co-founder. It is difficult to build a business alone, so it is good to have a partner. The founders find an accountant who helps them to set up a limited company. The accountant can advise the entrepreneur on how to apply for grants and set up a business plan. The entrepreneurs get started and makes no unnecessary formal mistakes. As the business grows, they can hire without taking personal risks. If it succeeds, they can attract investors.

The four secrets of success, and background for the actions in Action 1:

Knowledge of the business culture: Every region/country has a business culture. The entrepreneur needs that knowledge to get customers, networks and investments.

Capital Entrepreneurs with limited companies, tidy accounts, with a local network, and a couple of customers have an easier time receiving loan approvals from banks and to get external investments.

First customers will "test the product and price". If they are satisfied, the first customer will often be a good ambassador for the business and get more customers.

Network In all cities, there are different networks such as trade associations, and networks related to industry. For migrant entrepreneurs, it is especially important to get into these networks to gain knowledge of business culture, get mentors and find customers.

We also have the difference with the different levels of sectors, in particular public and private sector.

Private sector: The biggest challenge for most new businesses is to find the first customer. The first customer is nearly always either a private company, or a consumer. To get to this customer the founder needs a network in the private sector, and to know how the business ecosystem in the city works.



Public sector: Many entrepreneurs make mistakes dealing with the public sector, such as taxes related to workforce, merchandise and so on. The public sector can give insight into tax issues and regulations. The public sector also knows a lot about local culture. Getting this knowledge is therefore helpful for entrepreneurs with backgrounds from foreign countries. Many municipalities and regions have grants for entrepreneurs. Information usually flows well within one sector. Communication between the two sectors is often lacking.

To support thriving businesses in different communities we need to know the answer to these questions: Who discovers talents in your municipality? Do the job centre, schools or voluntary sector look for potential entrepreneurs and do they know who can help them grow their talents? Who can help entrepreneurs get it right in the beginning and point them in the direction of networks and other players who can help with growth? Who can help local businesses grow? Are there mentoring services, incubators or chambers of commerce? We need to create a valid system for support of immigrant entrepreneurs, by providing information to the target group. This is the aim of the new policy instrument.

We have also included learning in this particular project from the Good Practice the tutor system in Spain “Entrepreneurs Mentoring and Tutoring”, especially linked to “Mentor and Trainee schemes”. In this GP the different levels and needs of mentoring was presented. Following main levels in this mentoring scheme was: 1. Idea or seed period of the project. 2. Mid-phase of the project. 3. It may happen that the business project is developed or requires only information or help in an exceptional manner. This inspired us to develop our project further and we connected students and entrepreneurs together with mentors from the industry and finance sector to test a tutor, mentoring system for entrepreneurs. GP: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/4293/entrepreneurs-mentoring-tutoring/>

Important finding and learning from all project partners through discussion and conversation in Fareham and later study-visits, are that potential migrant founders find it hard to enter the business ecosystem. With the described actions we want to make it easier for immigrants to start their own business, based on the background described above.

2. Action description - Mend the GAP – inspiring start-ups and mentoring migrant

There are two actions that both already are implemented, “Start-up training for immigrants” and “Mentor and Trainee schemes” in semester 2 and the following semesters, and these actions will be implemented further in the hoppid.no system through the new policy, The Møre and Romsdal County regional masterplan “Sustainable county 2021-2024”. When this new policy instrument occurred and were approved by JS, it was linked to the policy “County Strategy for Møre and Romsdal 2017 - 2020; Action Plan for Competence and Value Creation». The new period of OP is founded and developed on the basis of the old policy. To implement this policy change in Møre and Romsdal County, hoppid.no established a new partnership with the Immigration Service in Molde and the first line service (hoppid.no) for start-ups in Molde and Kristiansund.

The actions are “Start-up training for immigrants” and “Mentor and Trainee schemes”.

Start-up training for immigrants is aimed at immigrants who want to establish themselves as self-employed, where women with an immigrant background as a priority target group. The first line system in the municipalities and county as well as companies and organizations in the private and public sector with professional expertise in start-up training will be able to apply to participate in the training. “Starting business in Norway” has been carried out and implemented and will also be implemented

further. Important content in this course, keywords: Verify the talents and the idea • who has the "entrepreneurial gene"? • which business ideas are actually good? • Match-make talents with each other • Help build a network • Find first customer. Scaling • incubators • chambers of commerce • mentoring programs Møre and Romsdal already has an ecosystem for refining and scaling business. The challenge is to uncover the talents, and give migrants access to this ecosystem.

The ideas from the workshop about digital start up support presented by WSX Enterprise and Inspiring Enterprise helped us to define the project, especially regarding recruiting immigrant participants. The digital communication, mindset and passion about helping people from being out of work into self-employment, training or help them to find a job inspired the partnership to apply in a national call funded by IMDI, The Directorate of Integration and Diversity, with deadline February 2019. The project got approved. Value of new project EUR 80 000. National funding (IMDi): EUR 40 000. Regional funding (County Council): EUR 40 000.

Møre and Romsdal County Council started the implementation in March 2019. Pre-course in March to recruit participants. Info-night on 23rd and 24th September, after work. First actual course in the project in week 41 (8 - 9th October 2019).

Mentor and trainee schemes are aimed at immigrants with vocational education or with higher education from universities or colleges in Norway or abroad and who need access to working life where they can use their (entrepreneurial) skills. This should help to increase the possibility of including professionally educated and highly qualified immigrants in working life, so that they can use their qualifications. The department of immigration in the municipality of Molde, has also participated in a course to learn to use the digital tool for start-ups in hoppid.no, to be closer connected as mentors for the immigrants who want to start their own business. This provides a more complete ecosystem for immigrant start-ups.

3. Players involved

Immigrant service Molde Municipality and hoppid.no service in Molde and Kristiansund Cities.
hoppid.no service in Molde: Protomore - <https://www.protomore.no/> - First line service provider in Municipality of Molde
hoppid.no service in Kristiansund: Vindel - <https://vindel.no/> - First line service provider in the Municipality of Kristiansund
Immigration service Molde - <https://www.molde.kommune.no/innvandring-og-integrering/flyktningtjenesten/> - service provider for immigrants in the Municipality of Molde
Møre and Romsdal County Council - <https://mrfylke.no/hoppid.no> - programme owner and operator hoppid.no

4. Timeframe

2019 – 2024 (from start semester 2 throughout OP period)

5. Costs

50 000 EUR yearly

6. Funding sources:

Through the operational program The Møre and Romsdal County regional masterplan "Sustainable county 2021-2024" and budget for training and courses in hoppid.no

ACTION 2 – Peer-Peer Mentoring for entrepreneurial groups

1. The background

The County Council is responsible for the educational program for start-ups and a certification-program for the advisors in the first line service hoppid.no.

After we got knowledge-based information and insight in Good Practice from the Slovenian partner Ceed Slovenia, that illuminate opportunities and specific challenges in peer-peer mentoring program for entrepreneurs in groups, we are in position to improve and implement the policy instrument. Based on this learning we applied for a Pilot Action through Interreg Europe, and this Pilot Action is approved and will be implemented. This gives us the opportunity to be more confident that we have developed a program that meets the start-ups needs and ensures satisfied participants. Møre and Romsdal County has capitalized on the good work done so far in the OSS project in the past three years through examination of good practice present by partners and stakeholders in interregional meetings, study visits and workshops.

After the 4th Interregional thematic workshop “mentoring and collaboration between start-ups and business” organized in September 2019 in the framework of OSS-One stop shop in Vratsa & Sofia (Bulgaria) we learned about an example on a more sustainable and successful model for mentoring and got inspired to implement something similar in our region. The local stakeholder from Slovenia (Ceed Network) presented a peer-peer mentoring model for groups of entrepreneurs.

Why did we find this Good Practice interesting? The Norwegian way of mentoring 1:1 is expensive and does not give enough added value for the entrepreneurs that need different mentoring to solve a lot of challenges that they face in their start-ups, such as finance, networking, dealing with governance, to mention just a few. Together with our stakeholders in Bulgaria we were inspired and discussed further in our regional stakeholder meeting when we got back to our region, that we need to test the idea for a peer-peer group-mentoring for entrepreneurs – based on the model from Slovenia in context of the business-culture in Møre and Romsdal. The action is deriving from the cooperation and the purpose is to implement a Pilot Action with a limited number of municipalities and start-ups, and then do a scaleup to include all municipalities as a service linked to the first line service system hoppid.no. All this based on lessons learnt from the 4th Study Visit.

Why Ceed Slovenia is a good practice for Møre and Romsdal County Council:

- Stability – The Peer – peer groups of entrepreneurs are independent and not a part of a short-lived project.
- Vulnerability – The groups are organized in peer-peer form – professional mentors and advisor are not allowed to be a part of the group.
- High Rank – A highly respected and trusted brand (Ceed). Create a business network - with other companies.

Also, there is a lack of support and network for entrepreneurs in rural areas. The entrepreneurs do not have the access to co-working spaces and business network with expertise in the clusters. The geographic distance to relevant advisors, help and relevant network is a barrier for the entrepreneurs. It is not a culture for start-ups to discuss challenges with other companies. It is not common that first time entrepreneurs in rural areas have access to a trusted network of entrepreneurs.

This solution and Good Practice can be a good and sustainable solution for how to mentor entrepreneurs in our region, and to provide crucial and much needed network. It delivers concrete

results that answer some of the obstacles we have found with existing solutions in our region. Also, it delivers what the start-ups need, network and team.

As mentioned above there will be a pilot action implemented before we have established the framework for this policy instrument. We will use the period of the pilot action to establish and adapt a model to what we expect we will learn during the pilot. This model will then be scaled up and included in the hoppid.no first line service for start-ups.

About the Good Practice from Ceed Network (Slovenia): Peer-peer mentoring program in entrepreneurial groups business mentorship. <https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/3460/ceed-grow-program/>

2. Action description – Peer-Peer Mentoring for entrepreneurial groups

Action 2 is a peer-peer mentoring for entrepreneur support service delivered by the advisor in the first line system, after getting knowledge and training through practical training and courses, delivered from a suitable supplier after procurement.

Entrepreneurs can, by using Peer mentoring, help each other to achieve key-knowledge and increase their skills for making right decisions in the company through exchange of experiences and good practices with other entrepreneurs. How? A group of entrepreneurs with similar challenges meet in a closed circle of up to 10 members every month with the aim of sharing good practices and exchanging experiences. Topics are selected by the group based on concrete challenges.

Example on how we see the set-up might be; 1 guest on special subject - 10 entrepreneurs – 1 moderator once a month for 2 hours.

Typical content in Peer mentoring:

- Setting up an organizational structure in a growing company
- Enable strategic thinking for busy entrepreneurs
- Development from a successful sales team
- Deepened in marketing to improve result
- Attracting, developing and retaining employees
- Motivation, culture and reward systems
- Monitoring the company through indicators
- Long-term profitability and stability
- From Processes to efficiency

In this action, we want to develop and implement a certification education-program for the advisors in mentoring and facilitation. We want to develop and implement a process-tool for the advisors in the municipalities so they can implement peer-peer mentoring for entrepreneurs in groups. There will also be established a digital peer-peer mentoring for entrepreneurs, based on the digital tool for start-ups. This will make the service system even better adapted to the entrepreneurial needs, and to the possible future events like the pandemic Covid-19.

The peer-peer mentor program for entrepreneurs from Slovenia aims to improve the quality of the local advisors by building a stronger ecosystem to support the entrepreneurs in rural areas. By testing via Pilot Action, we set Møre and Romsdal County Council and hoppid.no in a better position to succeed and scale up a mentor-program that increase the chance of surviving the first 3 – 5 years of business. To achieve this, it is essential to improve the quality of the ecosystems and advisory services for first time entrepreneurs. Through learning and discussions with partners in phase 1, and through

analyzes during this period we have learnt that one of our weakest links in our ecosystem is accessibility to highly qualified advisors in rural municipalities.

There will be two stages of implementing this action:

Stage 1 - Pilot action: The pilot action for Møre and Romsdal County is dedicated to testing the feasibility and sustainability of introducing the Slovenian good practice “Ceed Pro”, a mentoring program for peer-peer entrepreneurial groups to take the business to the next level, as a new tool/feature under the first line service in Møre and Romsdal County (hoppid.no). The aim is to test whether a new approach with group mentoring is sustainable, provides added value, solve and overcome various entrepreneurial challenges in the first line support system for first time entrepreneurs in Møre and Romsdal. Application approved by Monitoring Committee. Summed actions in the Pilot Action:

- Pre – test with training for advisors and study visit Slovenia
- Implementation test. Two mentoring courses for start-ups, led by 6 advisors. One physical course and one digital course on the basis on digital tool for start-ups.
- Evaluate and make recommendation for implementation and development in the hoppid.no service system

Stage 2 - Implementation and further development, make this service available for the entire region.

Post Pilot is about implementation of the results of the Pilot Action. We want to enable hoppid.no advisors to improve their qualifications for facilitating a peer-peer mentoring program for groups with different skills. In accordance with the procedures, we will do a public procurement to engage a supplier in the fields for facilitating and coaching the trainers in the process of mentoring of business groups. We are planning to launch this new start-up service as a permanent tool in hoppid.no in the end of 2022.

- Include this action as mandatory service in the hoppid.no first line service system, with budget allocated in the OP.
- Further training and implementation in the municipalities which did not participate in the Pilot Action.
- Implement this as a part of the eco-system for entrepreneurs in our region of Møre and Romsdal.

3. Players involved

- Møre and Romsdal County Council – owner of the policy and programme operator hoppid.no
- 26 Municipalities with advisors in hoppid.no – advisory service system – operators on the municipal level
- Start-ups in the region, will be recruited through chosen advisors in hoppid.no
- Supplier digital tool for start-ups – Entrepreneurdy

4. Timeframe

Testing new Pilot 2021 – 2022

Implement policy instrument as described 2022 - 2024

5. Costs

100 000EUR

6. Funding sources

Through the operational program The Møre and Romsdal County regional masterplan “Sustainable county 2021-2024” and allocated budget for training and courses in hoppid.no





Measures envisaged to ensure its durability and/or generalization in case of success

Action 1:

In general, the policy instrument and connected action should strengthen and develop the ordinary and permanent offer of start-up training so that it can better facilitate start-up activities for immigrants and thereby create increased employment and growth. All this is based upon the described background and learning from semester 2.

Action 2:

In terms of durability, if the test is successful, the “peer-peer mentoring for entrepreneurial groups in rural areas”, this solution could achieve financial support from the yearly financial plan for Møre and Romsdal County Council. To achieve this, it is crucial to implement the test to prove durability. In terms of durability, if the Pilot Action is a success – the advisor could get funded a certification as a hoppid.no facilitator and a mentor-coordinator. If successful, the program can be scaled up in the municipalities and become a product in the tool-box for the first line service support in hoppid.no.

If the testing is successful the advisors and entrepreneurs that are involved in the test will be familiar with mentoring support program in peer-peer group and they could be ambassadors and mentors for new entrepreneurs. Continued learning and evaluation is a part of the pilot action and improve the output and added value for the entrepreneurs and advisors in the program.

Endorsement

<p>ACTION 1 Mend the GAP – inspiring start-ups and mentoring migrant ACTION 2 Peer-Peer Mentoring for entrepreneurial groups</p> <p>I declare that the content of this Action Plan is validated and approved by legal representative.</p> <p>Place/date:</p> <p>Molde – 30/8 - 2021</p> <p>Signature/title:</p> <p><i>Hilde Aspås</i></p> <p>Hilde Aspås – Director Department Business Development</p> <p>Stamp of the organisation (if available):</p> 
