



Unlocking the entrepreneurial talent of EPGs (2015-2016)

Social Start Ups is a project led by TAMAT (Italy) and funded by the EU Erasmus+ KA2 Programme. The project partners are the Norwich Business School (University of East Anglia, United Kingdom), the Parco Tecnologico 3-A (Italy), the Municipality of Brtonigla (Croatia) and Amsed (France).

Through using Ethical Purchasing Groups (EPGs) as real laboratories, the project will develop, test and validate a learning methodology for the acquisition of key entrepreneurial competencies by adult learners. The Social Start Ups model and approach is embedded in a hands-on 'learning by doing' process that includes the direct involvement of adult learners in the start-up and management of EPGs.

By adopting a participatory approach, the project will also define a sustainable model of EPGs that meets the needs of both producers and consumers. The project partners, Parco Tecnologico 3-A and Norwich Business School will contribute to defining this model and will provide state-of-the-art technical support during the piloting phase to the implementing partners Amsed, the Municipality of Brtonigla and Tamat, respectively in France, Croatia and Italy.

The Social Start Ups model and approach will be developed and achieved through a 2 stage process underlined by a series of meetings, discussions and analyses by the project partners. The first stage includes a contextual mapping of EPGs and small local producers in the three contexts where the project will be implemented. This will be followed by a series of focus groups analyzing the current state, mechanisms, and strengths and weaknesses that characterize EPGs. The focus groups will be organized and facilitated by Amsed, Municipality of Brtonigla and Tamat. In each location, the focus group participants will include members of existing EPGs, local producers, and other stakeholders involved in EPGs locally such as members of local associations and funding organisations. The results of these fact finding methods will contribute to the creation of an interactive map which will be shared with a network of EU EPGs and small producers, and will also be available on the Social Start Ups website.

Beginning in December 2015 with a duration of 12 months, the second stage of the process involves piloting the developing the Social Start Ups model and approach. This will involve Amsed, Municipality of Brtonigla and Tamat implementing the developing approach for starting up and managing EPGs, designed by the Norwich Business School partner, with the participants in the three locations. Following the evaluation of the piloting, the Norwich Business School will create a practical guide and accompanying tools, to facilitate the replication of the finalized model and approach in other contexts beyond those involved in the Social Start Ups project.