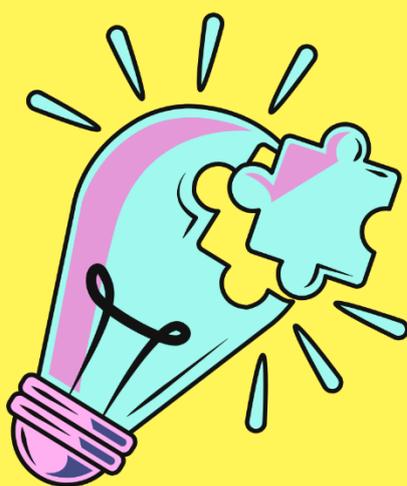# Youth Crisispreneurs



## [ Entrepreneurship in Crisis: Thriving in Challenging Times ]

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proacting
Associação para a Promoção do Empreendedorismo e Empregabilidade

YOUTH HORIZONS

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Agência Nacional
Erasmus+ Juventude/Desporto
Corpo Europeu de Solidariedade

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# 1. ABOUT THE MANUAL AND THE YOUTH CRISISPRENEURS PROJECT

The Youth Crisispreneurs project, funded under the Erasmus+ Programme (KA220-YOU), is a collaborative initiative that brings together organisations from Portugal, Greece, North Macedonia, Sweden, and Ukraine. Its main goal is to strengthen the role of youth workers and educators in supporting young people to become resilient and entrepreneurial in times of crisis.

Through this manual, the consortium offers practical tools, theoretical frameworks, and real-life examples designed to help youth workers foster entrepreneurial thinking, resilience, and creativity among young people. Each chapter builds upon the Erasmus+ values of inclusion, participation, and non-formal education, providing both conceptual understanding and actionable resources. The manual is part of a broader blended learning strategy, supported by a MOOC platform, to encourage experiential learning and international cooperation.

# 2. CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION TO THE MANUAL

## 2.1. Introduction to the chapter

The Youth Crisispreneurs project is a transnational initiative funded by the Erasmus+ programme and the project aims to equip young people with the skills and resilience necessary to navigate complex global challenges, such as pandemics, conflicts, and other crises that destabilize societies. Through collaboration, the project brings together youth workers and organisations from five partner countries - Portugal, Greece, North Macedonia, Sweden, and Ukraine - to share expertise, build capacity, and foster cooperation within the youth sector.

The focus is on supporting youth inclusion, particularly in complex and challenging contexts, by empowering the youth sector to engage effectively with young people. This is achieved through quality and inclusive digital learning opportunities that help young people develop key competences, including entrepreneurial skills. The aim is to raise awareness within both the youth sector and the broader community about the challenges faced by young people, especially those in difficult contexts, and to emphasize their vital role in rebuilding communities and countries. Through these efforts, the goal is to enable young people to become active participants in shaping their futures and contributing to societal progress.

## 2.2. Theoretical framework

The world is facing an increasing number of crises such as economic, environmental, social, and political, that disproportionately affect young people. In such uncertain times, entrepreneurship emerges as a powerful tool for resilience, innovation, and economic empowerment.

This manual has been developed to provide youth workers, educators, and mentors with a comprehensive and practical resource to support young people in navigating crisis contexts through entrepreneurship. It is designed to equip youth workers with knowledge on entrepreneurship and resilience, offer practical tools and methodologies for teaching entrepreneurial skills, and provide a structured yet flexible framework for empowering young people to act.

By integrating theoretical knowledge with hands-on approaches, the manual bridges the gap between concepts and real-world applications, ensuring that youth workers can engage, educate, and inspire the next generation of entrepreneurs.

(a) The role of youth workers: facilitators, mentors, and connectors in entrepreneurship

Youth workers play a pivotal role in supporting young entrepreneurs, particularly in crisis contexts. As facilitators, mentors, and connectors, youth workers help young people navigate the often complex and challenging journey of entrepreneurship.

They provide guidance, encouragement, and resources needed to inspire confidence and self-reliance.

As facilitators, youth workers create learning environments that foster creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving. They guide young people through hands-on learning experiences that help them understand business concepts and apply them in real-world contexts. As mentors, they offer personalized support, helping young entrepreneurs overcome obstacles, refine ideas, and build resilience. Finally, as connectors, youth workers help young people build valuable networks, facilitating access to resources, funding opportunities, and support systems that can accelerate their entrepreneurial journey. (Blank & Dorf, 2012)

(b) Target audience

This manual is primarily designed for youth workers, who play a key role in supporting young people's personal and professional development, as well as educators and trainers teaching entrepreneurship or resilience-related topics. It also serves mentors and community leaders guiding young entrepreneurs and policymakers and programme developers involved in designing entrepreneurship-related initiatives. While the manual is particularly aimed at youth workers with varying levels of expertise, it remains accessible to anyone passionate about fostering entrepreneurial mindsets in young people.

(c) How to use this manual

This manual is divided into thematic chapters, each focusing on different aspects of youth entrepreneurship in crisis contexts. Each chapter provides a blend of theoretical content, practical strategies, and hands-on activities designed to engage young people in the learning process.

- Chapter 2: Entrepreneurship as a Tool for Resilience explores how entrepreneurship can be used to overcome challenges and create opportunities in times of crisis.
- Chapter 3: Young People and Challenges in Crisis Contexts focuses on the specific challenges young people face in crisis situations and how entrepreneurship can address these issues.
- Chapter 4: Developing Entrepreneurial Competences introduces key entrepreneurial skills and frameworks such as the EntreComp framework, helping youth workers develop strategies to support young entrepreneurs.
- Chapter 5: Pedagogical Methods and Approaches for Youth Workers provide practical tools and approaches for teaching entrepreneurship using non-formal education methods, mentoring, coaching, gamification, and storytelling.

Additionally, this manual is designed to be used alongside an online learning platform (MOOC), where youth workers and young people can access

supplementary materials, interact with other learners, and deepen their understanding of the content. The integration of the MOOC allows for a blended learning experience, where participants can apply what they've learned in practical, real-world contexts.

## 2.3. References

Blank, S., & Dorf, B. (2012). The Startup Owner's Manual: The Step-By-Step Guide for Building a Great Company. K&S Ranch.

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# 3. CHAPTER 2 - ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A TOOL FOR RESILIENCE

## 3.1. Introduction to the chapter

In times of crisis - whether economic, social, or cultural - individuals and communities are often forced to rethink their ways of life, sources of income, and survival strategies. In this context, entrepreneurship emerges as a viable alternative for creating new opportunities and as a powerful tool for resilience. This chapter explores how, in the face of adversity, many entrepreneurs identify opportunities where others see only obstacles, reinventing business models and creating innovative solutions and projects. Throughout this analysis, real-life examples, adaptation strategies, and the factors that make entrepreneurship a key driver of resilience and recovery in times of crisis will be discussed.

In this sense, this Chapter focuses on the following objectives:

- Define entrepreneurship as a tool for resilience and crisis response.
- Explore how entrepreneurship benefits young people beyond employment.
- Introduce different types of entrepreneurships (intrapreneurship, social, green, digital).

## 3.2. Theoretical framework

(a) What is entrepreneurship and how is it connected to resilience?

Within the EntreComp Framework, entrepreneurship is defined as a key competence that enables individuals and groups to actively participate in society, manage their own lives and careers, and initiate value-creating endeavors. This competence entails acting upon opportunities and ideas to create value for others, which can manifest in financial, cultural, or social forms across private, public, or third sectors (FEE-YE, 2012 in Bacigalupo, et al., 2016). The framework emphasizes the process of value creation over the specific type of value, its context, or domain. Entrepreneurship is thus regarded as a competence applicable to all spheres of life. Its conceptual model comprises two main dimensions: three interrelated competence areas (Ideas and Opportunities', 'Resources', and 'Into Action') and 15 competences that collectively form the building blocks of entrepreneurship as a competence for all citizens (Bacigalupo, et al., 2016).

Despite not being a competence itself within the EntreComp Framework, resilience is acknowledged as an essential component of the 'Motivation and Perseverance' competence, which falls under the 'Resources' area. This competence underscores the importance of managing pressure and temporary failure, coping with unexpected changes and setbacks and overcoming adversities (Ibid.).

Beyond motivation and perseverance, resilience fosters self-efficacy and adaptive performance, allowing individuals to manage stress, respond innovatively to challenges, and sustain a strong entrepreneurial identity. Such capacity is particularly critical in dynamic business environments, where entrepreneurs must continuously manage financial risks, market volatility, and operational challenges (Baggen & Kaffka, 2022). In fact, it is a key driver in business sustainability, as it facilitates an entrepreneur's ability to transform setbacks into learning opportunities and strategic adjustments.

Furthermore, resilience in the context of entrepreneurship is closely linked to lifelong learning and employability, as it fosters the mindset required to face the complexities of an evolving labour market and economic instability (Lilischkis et al., 2021). Research suggests that individuals who develop resilience through entrepreneurial experiences demonstrate greater adaptability and problem-solving skills, positioning them for long-term professional success (Bullough & Renko, 2013). The EntreComp Framework also reinforces this perspective by emphasizing that entrepreneurial resilience requires both individual perseverance and strategic flexibility, enabling entrepreneurs to remain motivated while continuously refining their business models and approaches to align with evolving market conditions (Bacigalupo et al., 2016).

All in all, the symbiotic relationship between entrepreneurship and resilience is crucial for fostering sustainable economic development and individual empowerment. Entrepreneurship serves as a conducive way for individuals to transform challenges into opportunities, thereby improving their capacity to adapt and thrive in dynamic environments. Such adaptability is integral to resilience, as it equips individuals with the skills necessary to navigate uncertainties and recover from setbacks. Conversely, resilience fortifies entrepreneurial endeavors by enabling individuals to persist through adversity, maintain motivation, and continuously innovate. This reciprocal reinforcement underscores the necessity of integrating resilience-building strategies within entrepreneurial education and practice, as it not only bolsters individual success but also contributes to broader socio-economic stability and growth.

(b) Opportunities for youth in crisis contexts

When young people engage in entrepreneurial activities, they can create their own employment opportunities, foster innovation, and contribute to social, cultural and economic development. This proactive approach also promotes personal development, as it equips youth with essential skills such as adaptability, problem-solving, and perseverance. Thus, fostering entrepreneurship among youth is essential for building a resilient and dynamic workforce capable of navigating the complexities of a rapidly changing global economy.

- Encouraging self-reliance and opportunity creation

Engaging in entrepreneurial activities allows youth to take control of their professional destinies, reducing dependence on traditional employment markets. In fact, when identifying opportunities and developing innovative solutions, young entrepreneurs can create sustainable businesses that not only provide personal employment but also generate jobs for others, a proactive approach that enhances problem-solving skills and fosters a sense of autonomy. According to Future Potential – a GEM perspective on youth entrepreneurship 2015, youth exhibit higher levels of entrepreneurial intention compared to adults, indicating a strong desire among young people to pursue entrepreneurship as a viable career path - a trend that is exacerbated by financial crises and global economic downturns (GEM, 2015).

- Promoting economic independence and economic

Entrepreneurship provides youth with an alternative pathway to economic independence by enabling them to establish ventures that generate sustained income, thereby reducing reliance on traditional employment. This transition to business ownership not only fosters individual economic stability but also contributes to broader economic development (that is often connected to cultural and social development). Youth-led enterprises stimulate market competition, enhance productivity, and drive innovation, all of which are essential components of a dynamic economy; in fact, according to the World Bank, young entrepreneurs are often more responsive to new economic opportunities and trends, positioning them as catalysts for economic development (The World Bank, 2008).

- Actively contributing to cultural, social and community development

Youth entrepreneurship also contributes to (and encourages) social impact and community development by bringing fresh perspectives and ideas into the way the societal challenges are addressed. With concerns related to social inclusion, active citizenship and employment, young entrepreneurs often tackle pressing issues such as poverty, education disparities, and environmental sustainability through innovative approaches and business models, thereby advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The United Nations' World Youth Report emphasizes that youth social entrepreneurship not only supports individual development but also accelerates the implementation of the SDGs, as it offers employment opportunities and enhances youth participation, empowering young people to become agents of change within their communities (United Nations, 2020).

- Nurturing personal development

Engaging in entrepreneurship fosters personal growth among young individuals by providing opportunities to develop a diverse set of skills and attributes essential for their ventures' success. These competences include self-discipline, time management, self-motivation, leadership, and teamwork, aligning with the skills highlighted in the EntreComp Framework.
Moreover, entrepreneurship exposes youth to real-world challenges, enhancing their capacity for resilience and adaptability. Such experiences teach them to

navigate uncertainties, recover from setbacks, and persist in the face of adversity, thereby strengthening their overall personal development.

(c) Types of entrepreneurship

In today's rapidly evolving world, entrepreneurship takes on many forms, each with its unique focus and impact. Understanding the diverse types of entrepreneurship can open doors to new opportunities and foster resilience in their professional and personal lives. The EntreComp framework highlights several key categories of entrepreneurship, including intrapreneurship, social entrepreneurship, green entrepreneurship, and digital entrepreneurship. These categories reflect the varied ways in which entrepreneurship manifests, depending on the context and the goals of the individuals involved.

Intrapreneurship refers to the practice of fostering entrepreneurial skills and behaviours within established organisations - or, in other words, "entrepreneurship inside an organization" (Bacigalupo, et al., 2016). This internal entrepreneurship encourages existing organisations to innovate and drive change, thereby enhancing their adaptability and competitiveness. For the youth who are already involved in entrepreneurial ventures, engaging in intrapreneurial activities offers a platform to develop critical competences such as creativity, problem-solving, and leadership within a structured environment, thereby strengthening their resilience in the professional sphere and, at the same time, promoting the development of the organisation.

Social Entrepreneurship has gained increasing global prominence during the last few decades. However, it lacks a universally accepted definition, largely due to the significant influence of diverse contextual factors on its activities. A fundamental aspect common to all interpretations of social entrepreneurship is the deliberate aim to effect social change or create social value, rather than focusing solely on profit generation (Dees, 1998 in United Nation, 2020). At its core, social entrepreneurship endeavours to generate positive societal impact by providing products or services that address mate needs or by devising innovative solutions to social challenges (United Nation, 2020). It is often viewed as a mechanism to rectify inequities that lead to exclusion, marginalization, or hardship among societal segments lacking the means to alter these conditions independently. Its primary beneficiaries are typically marginalized or disadvantaged individuals and communities with limited financial resources (Ibid.).

Green Entrepreneurship, also known as 'ecopreneurship', 'eco-entrepreneurship' or 'environmental entrepreneurship', refers to ventures that integrate environmental sustainability into their core business models. These enterprises aim to address ecological challenges by improving energy and resource efficiency, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, minimizing waste and pollution, protecting or restoring ecosystems, promoting local culture, and supporting communities. Green entrepreneurs exhibit three main characteristics: 1) They identify and pursue business opportunities that involve risk and have the potential for growth into viable

enterprises, 2) Their business practices positively impact the environment, operating on principles that avoid harm and aim for a neutral or beneficial ecological footprint, and 3) Driven by personal values, green entrepreneurs intentionally adopt environmentally conscious practices, reflecting a deep-seated commitment to ecological sustainability (Young GREENtrepreneurs, n.a.).

Digital Entrepreneurship refers to the creation of new business ventures and the transformation of existing businesses through the integration and utilization of digital technologies. Unlike traditional entrepreneurship, digital entrepreneurship capitalizes on digital tools and platforms to create new business models, market opportunities, and revenue streams - a shift that leverages technological advancements such as cloud computing, data analytics, mobile applications, social media, and artificial intelligence to enhance business operations, optimize service delivery, and engage with stakeholders more effectively. According to the European Commission, digital entrepreneurship is a key driver of economic growth, increasing productivity, fostering business innovation, and enabling small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to scale more efficiently in the digital economy (European Commission, 2014).

## 3.3. Real-life case studies/examples

The Refood project was born on 9 March 2011 in Lisbon, when Hunter Halder, an American citizen living in Portugal, decided to tackle food waste and hunger within his local community. This innovative movement is based on the mobilisation of volunteers who, through a solidarity-based circular economy, recover edible surplus food that would otherwise be discarded and transform it into meals for those in need. Refood stands out for its entrepreneurial spirit by actively involving the local community, creating a network of solidarity that promotes both environmental and social sustainability while fighting hunger and food waste. Today, Refood operates through more than 60 local centres across Portugal, functioning entirely on a voluntary basis, without remuneration, and mobilising around 7.500 volunteers who recover tonnes of food daily, serving approximately 6.800 beneficiaries.

Know the project here > https://re-food.org/.

## 3.4. Resources for further exploration

EntreComp: The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework: https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC101581.

Sustainable Development Goals: https://sdgs.un.org/goals.

How to start up a social enterprise in 10 steps: https://www.the-sse.org/resources/starting/start-social-enterprise-10-steps/.

Policies to Support Green Entrepreneurship: https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/policies-to-support-green-entrepreneurship_e92b1946-en.html.

Digital entrepreneurship: how to start your online business in 5 steps [guide]: https://joeducation.eu/digital-entrepreneurship-online-company-in-5-steps/.

## 3.5. Key takeaways

Entrepreneurship enables individuals and communities to adapt and recover from crises by identifying opportunities where others see only obstacles. It drives innovation and helps entrepreneurs create new solutions and business models in response to challenges.

Through entrepreneurial ventures, young people can create their own employment opportunities, gain economic independence, and contribute to social and community development. It equips them with valuable skills such as adaptability, problem-solving, and perseverance.

The EntreComp framework highlights different forms of entrepreneurship, such as intrapreneurship, social entrepreneurship, green entrepreneurship, and digital entrepreneurship. Each type offers unique opportunities for personal and professional growth, fostering resilience in different ways.

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# 4. CHAPTER 3 - DEVELOPING & VALIDATING BUSINESS IDEAS

## 4.1. Introduction to the chapter

This chapter aims to support youth workers and anyone working with young people aged 13–30 in recognising the challenges they face during crises, whether environmental, political, social, economic, or personal. It explores how such events impact youth across key areas like mental health, education, and social participation, and provides practical strategies to foster resilience, autonomy, and personal development. Drawing on the EntreComp Framework, the chapter also offers tools to empower young people to transform adversity into meaningful growth.

## 4.2. Theoretical framework

(a) Understanding crisis contexts and their impact on youth

Young people today are growing up in a world shaped by uncertainty. From pandemics and armed conflicts to economic instability and personal trauma, crises have become a frequent part of their lives. The COVID-19 pandemic, for instance, disrupted education, employment, and mental health on an unprecedented scale (United Nations, 2020; WHO, 2020). Studies have long shown that exposure to stress and disruption during adolescence can have long-term effects on personal development (Garmezy, Masten & Tellegen, 1984; Masten, 2001).

A crisis can be defined as any situation or event—sudden or prolonged—that disrupts daily life and creates a sense of vulnerability and instability. For young people, who are still shaping their identities, relationships, and future, these disruptions can be especially challenging (Youth Worker Alliance, 2017).

- Types of crises affecting young people
  - Natural Disasters: Earthquakes, floods, and other natural events can force young people out of their homes, disrupt their education, and lead to feelings of insecurity and trauma.
  - Conflicts and Displacement: War, political instability, and displacement disrupt the lives of young people, leading to emotional, physical, and social challenges.
  - Economic Crises: Economic downturns or unemployment can cause stress for young people entering the job market or those struggling with financial insecurity.
  - Health Pandemics: Health crises like COVID-19 can lead to physical isolation, disruption of education, mental health challenges, and economic uncertainty.

- o Personal issues: mental health issues, divorce or family issues can lead to founding or quitting one's own business.

Crises challenge young people's emotional and cognitive resilience but also offer opportunities to develop key competences such as adaptability, initiative, and self-awareness, outlined in the EntreComp Framework (European Commission, 2016). EntreComp presents entrepreneurship as life-wide competence, essential in business and in responding proactively to social, civic, and personal challenges.

(b) The impact of crises on young people
- Mental health struggles

Crises often take a serious toll on young people's mental health, leading to higher levels of anxiety, depression, stress, and even PTSD. During the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 64% of young people in Europe said they experienced at least one mental health challenge, like feeling anxious or lonely (OECD, 2021). The European Youth Forum (2021) also reported that nearly one in five young Europeans felt their mental health had gotten much worse because of the pandemic. These struggles tend to be even more intense when young people go through traumatic events like violence, loss, or major disruptions to their everyday lives.

- Educational and employment setbacks

The pandemic threw education off track for over 100 million young people across Europe. In some EU countries, more students started leaving school or training early (Eurostat, 2021), and over 40% said the quality of their education dropped during lockdowns (European Commission, 2020). Youth unemployment also rose sharply, jumping from 15.1% in 2019 to 18.2% in 2020 (Eurostat, 2021), making it harder for young people to start or build their careers.

- Social isolation and disrupted relationships

Social distancing and lockdowns made many young people feel more isolated than ever. According to the European Youth Forum (2021), over 75% said they felt less connected to their friends, and more than half felt a weaker sense of belonging during the pandemic. This was especially tough for teenagers and young adults, who depend on peer relationships for emotional support and personal growth.

- Physical health and safety

Crises do not just affect mental well-being - they also put young people's physical health and safety at risk. In places facing humanitarian emergencies, like parts of Europe and its borders, thousands of young refugees are living in overcrowded shelters without proper sanitation or healthcare (UNHCR, 2022). Save the Children (2021) found that one in three refugee youth in Europe did not have regular access to medical care, leaving them even more vulnerable in already difficult conditions.

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(c) Building resilience in youth during crises

Resilience refers to the ability to adapt, recover, and grow in the face of challenges. It is not a fixed trait but a set of skills and attitudes that can be learned and strengthened. According to the European Commission (2015), building resilience helps young people maintain well-being, stay socially connected, and navigate change more effectively. Learning these skills during adolescence contributes to long-term mental health and success (OECD, 2021).

Youth workers play a central role in creating environments that support resilience. The Council of Europe (2017) emphasises the importance of safe spaces, trust-based relationships, and mentoring in youth development. Youth work fosters social-emotional learning, builds confidence, and provides tools for coping with uncertainty.

The EntreComp Framework (European Commission, 2016) complements resilience-building by promoting a broad set of entrepreneurial competences that empower young people to turn challenges into opportunities. These competences are grouped into three areas:

- Ideas and Opportunities: nurturing creativity, spotting opportunities, and valuing ideas.
- Resources: developing self-awareness, mobilising resources, and building motivation.
- Into Action: taking initiative, working with others, and managing uncertainty and risk.

EntreComp fosters a growth mindset, adaptability, and proactive behaviour qualities that align strongly with psychological resilience. By encouraging youth to recognise their own agency and act despite uncertainty, EntreComp reinforces key protective factors for mental health and long-term development.

(d) Practical strategies for building resilience
- Building emotional support systems: Encouraging young people to talk openly and honestly about their feelings is essential. Safe spaces where they can express themselves, supported by caring youth workers, can make a big difference during uncertain times (Council of Europe, 2017).
- Access to mental health resources: Ensuring young people know where and how to get professional help when needed is vital. Encouraging mindfulness, journaling, or relaxation techniques can also help them manage stress and build emotional strength (OECD, 2021).
- Facilitating social connections: Staying connected matters, especially during crises. Creating peer support groups or online communities helps young people feel less alone. It strengthens their sense of belonging - something the European Youth Forum (2021) identifies as a key buffer against mental health issues.

- Promoting skill development and learning: Even in a crisis, keeping young people engaged and growing is essential. Offering workshops, creative projects, or virtual learning opportunities gives them a sense of purpose and control over their future (European Commission, 2015).

## 4.3. Real-life case studies or examples

Youth workers act as mentors and trusted adults whom young people can admire. By offering guidance and leading by example, they help young people make better decisions and build the confidence they need to bounce back from adversity (Council of Europe, 2017).

(a) Case 1: Yuliia and the Sustainability Project

Yuliia, a 20-year-old university student, had been struggling with financial stress and uncertainty about her academic path. Although she regularly visited the university's youth centre, she often felt disconnected and lacked a clear sense of direction. In response to the growing needs of its students - and to support its own sustainability - the youth centre launched a student-led social enterprise. The project focused on producing and selling eco-friendly products such as reusable bags, beeswax wraps, and upcycled tote bags on campus and at local markets. It was both a creative response to financial challenges and a meaningful opportunity for student engagement.

Yuliia joined the team and quickly immersed herself in learning skills ranging from sewing and design to marketing and budgeting. Working with purpose and seeing tangible results gave her a renewed sense of agency. As part of a team, she formed new friendships and began to feel truly connected for the first time in a long while. The centre offered not only technical guidance but also emotional support through regular informal check-ins. Mentors, including youth workers and alumni entrepreneurs, shared their experiences and inspired Yuliia to think beyond her immediate struggles. The profits from the project helped fund new initiatives at the youth centre, including mental health workshops and creative sessions. Through her involvement, Yuliia discovered a passion for sustainability and social entrepreneurship. She took on more responsibility and began outlining plans for her own green business. The project not only helped her find purpose but also contributed to making the youth centre more self-reliant.

(b) Case 2: Artur and the School Café

At 15, Artur was nearing the end of high school but felt increasingly disconnected and unmotivated. School had become routine and uninspiring. With few trusted relationships and rising stress, he often withdrew, uncertain about his future. Things began to change when his school introduced a new initiative: student-run projects designed to improve daily school life. Supported by teachers and youth workers, the

programme aimed to give students more ownership of their environment while helping them build practical and interpersonal skills.

Artur hesitantly joined a group working at a student café offering healthy snacks and a space for relaxation and connection. He quickly discovered an unexpected enthusiasm for the work - designing menus, managing budgets, creating promotional materials, and reaching out to local businesses for support. These tasks revealed strengths he hadn't recognised in himself. Through collaboration, Artur forged new friendships and began feeling more integrated into school life. Weekly meetings served not only to coordinate the café but also to provide a space where students could reflect and support each other emotionally. For the first time, Artur felt heard. Recognising his potential, both a teacher and a youth worker began assigning him more leadership responsibilities. As the café generated revenue, students chose how to reinvest it - buying beanbags and books for a new relaxation corner and launching peer support activities. Artur saw first-hand that he could help shape a better school experience for himself and others. Over time, his confidence, motivation, and academic performance improved. He stepped into a leadership role and began exploring pathways in business and community work. Most importantly, he found a sense of belonging - and left a lasting impact on his school.

## 4.4. Resources for further exploration

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European Youth Forum.

## 4.5. Key takeaways

- Crises like pandemics, armed conflict, or forced displacement tend to hit young people especially hard, affecting their mental health, education, relationships, and physical safety.

- Recent data from European and global sources clearly show how events like the COVID-19 pandemic have seriously and far-reachingly impacted young people's well-being and development.
- Building resilience is one of the most effective ways to support young people during and after a crisis. This includes helping them develop coping strategies, emotional awareness, a sense of optimism, and the ability to adapt.
- Youth workers have a key role - they provide safe and supportive spaces, act as mentors, and help young people stay connected and access the help they need.
- Offering early and consistent support can reduce long-term adverse effects and give young people the tools to bounce back and thrive, even in the face of adversity.

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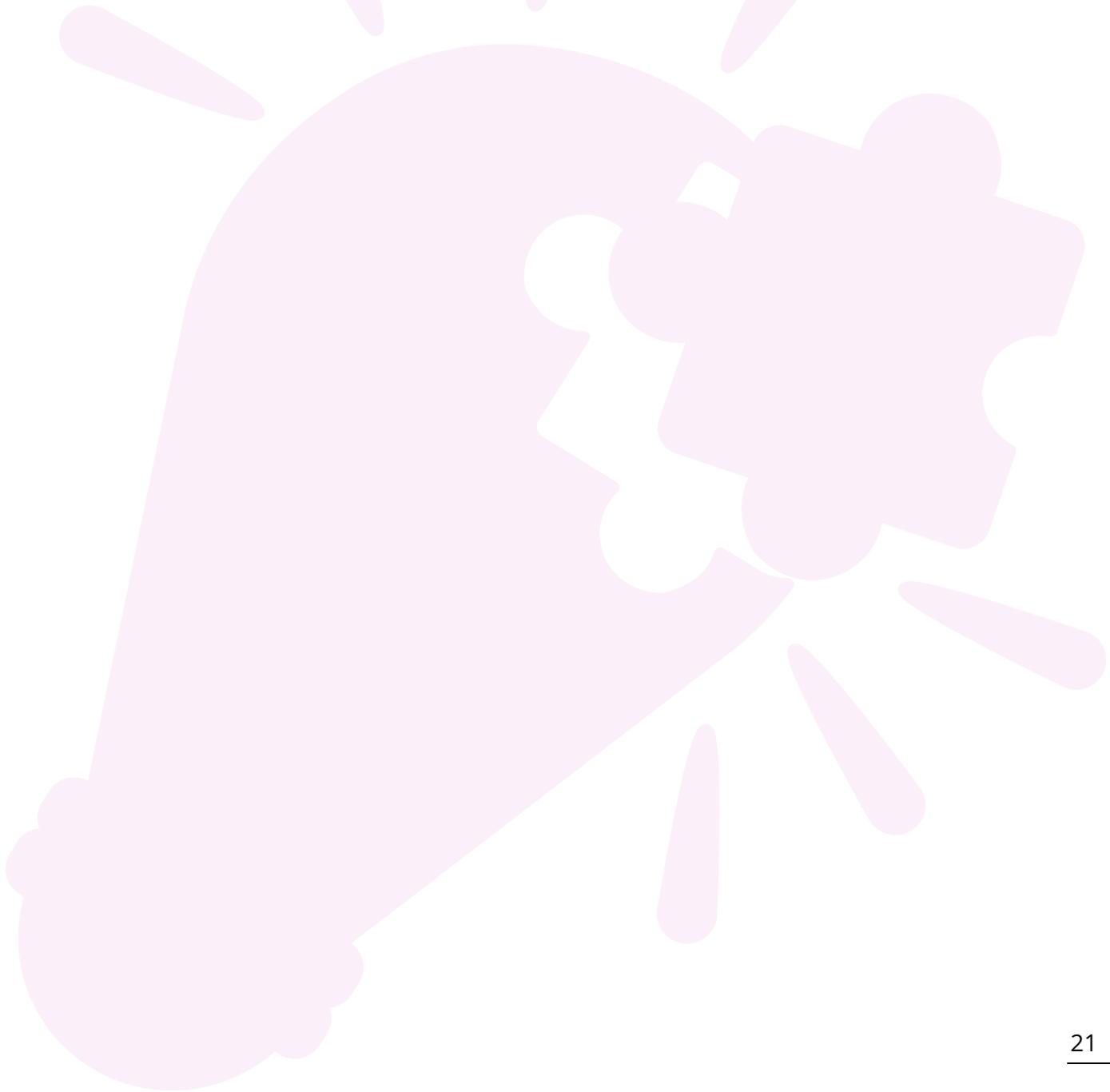
# 5. CHAPTER 4: DEVELOPING ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPETENCES

## 5.1. Introduction to the chapter

This chapter focuses on developing essential entrepreneurial competences that are crucial for young entrepreneurs, especially in times of crisis. The EntreComp framework will be introduced as a guiding tool to build these competences, and we will explore key skills such as resilience, creativity, risk management, adaptability, and innovation. These competences are particularly important during crises, when young entrepreneurs face unpredictable challenges that test their ability to adapt, recover, and innovate. Additionally, this chapter will provide practical strategies to help young people develop and enhance these skills, enabling them to thrive even under challenging circumstances.

## 5.2. Theoretical framework

(a) EntreComp and its relevance to crisis entrepreneurship

EntreComp is a comprehensive framework developed by the European Commission to define and structure the skills necessary for entrepreneurial action. It identifies 15 competences across three core areas: "Ideas and Opportunities," "Resources," and "Into Action." These competences are designed to help individuals not only start and run businesses but also to identify opportunities, mobilize resources, and execute plans effectively (Bacigalupo, Kampylis, Punie, & Van den Brande, 2016).

The framework has been widely adopted across Europe, particularly in educational and training settings, as it offers a clear, adaptable approach to fostering entrepreneurial skills. It is relevant to youth work because it provides a structured, accessible way to equip young people with the knowledge and tools they need to become successful entrepreneurs, especially in times of crisis. In periods of uncertainty, such as financial crises or global disruptions, EntreComp becomes a valuable tool for youth entrepreneurship, as it emphasizes qualities like resilience, creativity, and adaptability.

In a crisis, entrepreneurs face a unique set of challenges: fluctuating markets, reduced resources, changing customer needs, and increased risk. The EntreComp framework helps young entrepreneurs address these issues by focusing on key competences that promote innovation, strategic thinking, and resourcefulness. For example, resilience allows entrepreneurs to recover from setbacks, creativity enables them to think of new ways to solve problems, and adaptability helps them pivot their business strategies when necessary. These qualities are critical not only for survival but also for thriving in volatile and difficult environments.

(b) Key competences for youth entrepreneurship

In today's rapidly changing world, the ability to think and act entrepreneurially is crucial, especially for young people looking to create successful ventures in challenging times. Key competences for youth entrepreneurship are the foundational skills and mindsets that enable young individuals to identify opportunities, take risks, and manage uncertainty effectively. These competences are not only vital for launching and running a business but also for navigating crises, where flexibility, creativity, and resilience become critical (Bacigalupo, Kampylis, Punie, & Van den Brande, 2016). By focusing on key competences such as resilience, creativity, risk management and adaptability, young entrepreneurs are better equipped to respond to market shifts, overcome obstacles, and find sustainable solutions. In this chapter, we will explore these essential competences in depth and provide practical strategies to help young people develop and hone these skills, preparing them to thrive even in the most unpredictable environments (Cedefop, 2023):

- Resilience

Resilience, as the ability to bounce back from failure or setbacks, is one of the most vital competences for any entrepreneur. In times of crisis, young entrepreneurs are often confronted with challenges that test their perseverance. Whether it is a sudden market collapse, the loss of key customers, or a disruption in the supply chain, crises can shake the foundations of a young business. Resilient entrepreneurs are able to stay focused and maintain their commitment to their goals, even in the face of failure or adversity (Lee, Kim, Mah, & Karr, 2023).
Developing resilience involves learning how to recover from difficulties and continuing to move forward. For young people, resilience can be nurtured through experiences that push them outside their comfort zones. Encouraging young entrepreneurs to embrace failure as a learning opportunity, rather than a defeat, is an essential part of building this competence. Additionally, fostering mental well-being and stress management techniques plays a crucial role in resilience. Having access to emotional support, whether through mentors, peer networks, or family, can provide young entrepreneurs with the encouragement they need to keep going despite setbacks. In a crisis, this support is invaluable (Cedefop, 2023).

- Creativity

Creativity is another core competence for young entrepreneurs, particularly in the context of crisis entrepreneurship. The ability to generate innovative solutions, think outside the box, and approach problems from new angles is what sets successful entrepreneurs apart from those who struggle to adapt. During a crisis, the need for creative problem-solving becomes even more urgent. Markets may shift rapidly, customer needs may evolve, and new challenges may emerge unexpectedly. In such an environment, creative thinking helps entrepreneurs identify opportunities where others see only obstacles. Developing creativity involves fostering an environment that encourages experimentation and new ideas. Young entrepreneurs can benefit from activities like brainstorming sessions, where they are encouraged to come up

with as many solutions as possible, without worrying about feasibility at first. It also involves encouraging a growth mindset, where young people are open to learning from mistakes and are willing to explore unconventional ideas. By cultivating a creative approach to business, entrepreneurs are better equipped to pivot their business models, develop new products or services, and stay ahead of the curve during crises (Lee, Kim, Mah, & Karr, 2023).

- Risk management

Risk management is crucial for entrepreneurs, especially in uncertain times. In a crisis, risks are heightened, and young entrepreneurs must be able to assess potential threats and decide how best to mitigate them. Risk management is not about avoiding risk entirely - entrepreneurship inherently involves taking risks - but about understanding and controlling those risks to minimize their negative impacts. Whether it's financial risks, market risks, or operational risks, young entrepreneurs must learn to navigate these challenges with caution and foresight (Bacigalupo, Kampylis, Punie, & Van den Brande, 2016).

To develop strong risk management skills, young entrepreneurs need to be taught how to identify and evaluate risks. This involves understanding the probability of different outcomes and considering the potential impact of each risk on the business. Scenario planning is one effective strategy that can be used to prepare for different crisis situations. By creating "what-if" scenarios, young entrepreneurs can develop contingency plans and be ready to act swiftly when unexpected challenges arise. Moreover, managing risk also involves knowing when to take calculated risks, particularly in innovation and expansion, as well as understanding when it might be wise to pull back and minimize exposure.

- Adaptability

Adaptability is perhaps the most important competence in times of crisis. The ability to adjust to new circumstances, change plans when necessary, and quickly pivot strategies is critical for entrepreneurs facing unpredictable challenges. Crises often require businesses to change their operations, target markets, or business models on the fly. Entrepreneurs who are adaptable can respond effectively to these changes, often seizing new opportunities in the process (Frederick & F. Kuratko, 2009).

Developing adaptability involves fostering a mindset that is open to change and fluid in its approach. One strategy for building adaptability is teaching young entrepreneurs' agile methodologies, which allow them to adapt their business strategies quickly based on real-time feedback and changes in the environment. Encouraging continuous learning is another key strategy, as it keeps entrepreneurs open to new information, technologies, and market trends. By staying flexible and proactive, young entrepreneurs can not only survive a crisis but can thrive by taking advantage of emerging opportunities that others might overlook.

## 5.3. Real-life case studies or examples

Airbnb, the global online marketplace for short-term lodging, faced a near-total collapse in bookings during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. With travel restrictions in place and widespread uncertainty, Airbnb's business model was severely impacted. However, instead of succumbing to the crisis, the company displayed exceptional creativity and risk management.

Airbnb quickly pivoted its business model by launching new services such as "Online Experiences," where hosts could offer virtual tours, cooking classes, or fitness sessions to people around the world. This innovative response allowed the company to maintain a connection with its users and generate revenue, despite the challenges posed by the pandemic. Furthermore, Airbnb utilized risk management strategies by introducing enhanced safety protocols and offering flexible booking options to rebuild consumer trust.

Through creativity and careful risk management, Airbnb not only survived the crisis but also demonstrated how adaptability in times of uncertainty can lead to new opportunities for growth.

## 5.4. Resources for further exploration

Entrepreneurship education and the role of universities in entrepreneurship: Introduction to the special issue
(PDF) The Quest for Resilience
Entrepreneurship competence in vocational education and training | CEDEFOP

## 5.5. Key takeaways

- Entrepreneurial competences are crucial in crisis: key competences like resilience, creativity, risk management, and adaptability are essential for young entrepreneurs during crises. These skills help entrepreneurs not only survive but also find new opportunities and adjust to changing environments.
- The EntreComp Framework: the EntreComp framework provides a structured way to develop entrepreneurial skills, focusing on ideas, resources, and execution. It serves as a valuable tool for guiding youth entrepreneurship, especially in challenging times.
- Resilience, creativity, risk management, and adaptability: these interrelated competences are vital in crisis situations. Resilience helps entrepreneurs recover from setbacks, creativity drives innovation, risk management enables informed decision-making, and adaptability allows quick adjustments to changing conditions. Together, they form the foundation for navigating challenges and sustaining business growth.

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# 6. CHAPTER 5: PEDAGOGICAL METHODS AND APPROACHES FOR YOUTH WORKERS

## 6.1. Introduction to the chapter

Entrepreneurship education is a powerful tool for equipping young people with the skills and mindset needed to navigate the challenges of starting and running a business. Traditional classroom-based learning, while valuable, often fails to capture the dynamic and experiential nature of entrepreneurship. As a result, Non-Formal Education (NFE) methods, mentoring and coaching, gamification and storytelling have emerged as effective approaches for teaching entrepreneurship in a more engaging, practical, and impactful way. These methods help young entrepreneurs develop creativity, problem-solving skills, resilience, and confidence - key qualities needed for success in the business world (Grivokostopoulou et al., 2019).

Entrepreneurship involves creativity, problem-solving, risk-taking, and innovation. While traditional education provides theoretical knowledge, it often lacks the hands-on experience necessary for aspiring entrepreneurs to thrive, and this is where NFE becomes essential. Unlike formal education, which follows a structured curriculum within schools and universities, NFE occurs outside traditional academic settings and is designed to be flexible, experiential, and learner centred. It emphasizes practical learning, collaboration, and real-world application, making it an effective method for teaching entrepreneurship (Shah et al., 2023).

Through NFE, young entrepreneurs gain essential business skills, confidence, and adaptability, since they learn how to develop business ideas, manage risks, and build sustainable enterprises through interactive, engaging, and problem-solving activities. This article explores the most effective NFE methods for teaching entrepreneurship and how they help young people turn ideas into reality (Grivokostopoulou et al., 2019).

## 6.2. Theoretical framework

(a) Strategies for youth entrepreneurship

Mentoring and coaching play a crucial role in developing young entrepreneurs by providing personal guidance, building essential skills, and boosting confidence to help them navigate the challenges of starting and growing a business. Unlike traditional education, mentoring offers tailored support that addresses the specific needs of each entrepreneur. Effective mentoring and coaching require structured approaches and the use of practical tools and techniques that foster meaningful learning and growth.

One of the most valuable tools for mentoring is one-on-one mentorship sessions. These personalized meetings allow for direct communication between a mentor and a young entrepreneur, providing a platform to discuss business ideas, challenges,

and strategies for success. To make these sessions more effective, mentors can use goal-setting frameworks like SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) to help mentees create clear objectives. Active listening techniques ensure that mentees feel heard and valued, while reflection journals allow them to document their progress, challenges, and lessons learned. This structured approach creates a safe space for problem-solving, helping mentees gain confidence and clarity as they refine their entrepreneurial path (Memon et al., 2015). Another powerful tool in coaching is the Business Model Canvas (BMC), a visual framework that helps entrepreneurs map out their business models in a structured way. The BMC is particularly useful for young entrepreneurs who are in the process of refining their business ideas. Mentors can guide mentees through key areas such as value propositions, revenue streams, customer relationships, and key activities. By encouraging visual thinking and using tools like sticky notes or digital platforms like Miro or Canva, mentors make the process interactive. Additionally, the iterative nature of the BMC encourages mentees to refine their business models continuously based on feedback and testing, helping them clarify their concepts, identify gaps, and strategize effectively (C. Austin, 2020).

Building a strong network is also vital for entrepreneurial success, and mentors can assist young entrepreneurs in expanding their professional circles. Networking opportunities can be facilitated through platforms like LinkedIn, professional groups, and entrepreneurial meetups or conferences, such as startup pitch nights and business forums. Additionally, mentors can create mastermind groups, where small groups of entrepreneurs support and challenge one another, fostering a collaborative learning environment. This network of connections opens doors to new opportunities, partnerships, and mentorship, helping young entrepreneurs gain valuable insights from experienced business leaders (Riaz et al., 2022).

Public speaking coaching is another essential tool in an entrepreneur's development. Effective communication and the ability to pitch a business idea are critical skills that can help entrepreneurs secure funding, attract customers, and build credibility. Mentors can use various methods to improve pitching and communication, such as teaching mentees to craft a clear and concise elevator pitch, encouraging participation in public speaking workshops like Toastmasters, and having mentees record and review their pitches to identify areas for improvement. These practices enhance entrepreneurs' confidence and ability to communicate their ideas persuasively (Shah et al., 2023).

In addition to these traditional tools, exploring gamification and storytelling can further enrich the learning process. Gamification uses game-like elements such as points, levels, and rewards to engage young entrepreneurs, making learning more interactive and motivating. Storytelling, on the other hand, enhances learning retention by allowing mentees to connect emotionally with business concepts through narratives, case studies, and personal testimonials. By incorporating these innovative methods, mentoring and coaching become even more effective, making entrepreneurship education engaging, memorable, and impactful.

(b) Engagement tools

In the world of education and training, two of the most effective and engaging methods for enhancing learning experiences are gamification and storytelling. These approaches go beyond traditional lectures and memorization techniques, creating immersive environments where learners actively participate, explore, and absorb knowledge in a more meaningful way. By integrating these methods, educators and trainers can significantly increase motivation, engagement, and retention of information.

(c) Gamification

Gamification is the process of incorporating game elements into non-game settings, such as education and training. It involves using features like points, levels, challenges, rewards, and leaderboards to make learning more interactive and goal oriented. The idea behind gamification is to tap into the natural human desire for achievement, competition, and recognition. When learners feel that they are progressing through levels, earning rewards, or competing in a friendly challenge, they become more invested in the learning process.

In educational settings, gamification can be implemented in numerous ways. For instance, a teacher might design a point system where students earn rewards for completing assignments, participating in discussions, or solving problems. A corporate trainer could create a simulation game where employees must navigate real-world challenges related to their industry. Online learning platforms use gamification techniques such as badges, progress bars, and interactive quizzes to keep learners engaged.

The psychological foundation of gamification lies in its ability to trigger intrinsic motivation. When people play games, they experience a sense of autonomy, mastery, and purpose. These same principles apply to learning when learners feel in control of their progress and see tangible results, they are more likely to persist and enjoy the process. Gamification also provides immediate feedback, allowing learners to recognize their mistakes and adjust their approach without fear of failure. This encourages an experimental mindset, which is particularly valuable in fields like entrepreneurship, problem-solving, and innovation.

To successfully implement gamification in a learning environment, it is important to first define clear objectives. Learning goals should align with the game elements so that progress in the game translates to actual knowledge and skill development. Creating a narrative around the game mechanics enhances the experience, making learning feel like an exciting adventure rather than a chore (Grivokostopoulou et al., 2019).

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(d) Storytelling

At its core, storytelling as a learning method is about presenting knowledge in the form of a structured narrative. It involves characters, settings, conflicts, and

resolutions, making learning more relatable and easier to remember. Research has shown that when information is embedded within a story, the brain processes it more effectively than when it is presented as isolated facts. This is because stories activate multiple parts of the brain, including those responsible for emotions and sensory experiences, leading to stronger retention and deeper understanding.

The use of storytelling in learning can take many forms, depending on the context and the subject being taught. One of the most common ways to integrate storytelling is through case studies, where real-life or fictional scenarios are used to illustrate key concepts. In business education, for example, a case study about a struggling startup can help students understand risk management, innovation, and problem-solving in ways that a theoretical lecture never could. By following the journey of the business, students become emotionally invested, making it easier for them to analyse the situation critically and apply their knowledge.

Another powerful way to use storytelling is through personal narratives and testimonials. In fields such as social sciences, health, and leadership training, sharing real-life stories of individuals who have faced challenges and overcome them can be incredibly inspiring. Hearing about a young entrepreneur who built a business from the ground up despite adversity can motivate students to pursue their own ideas with confidence. Personal stories create emotional connections, helping learners relate to the subject matter on a deeper level (Key & Duening, 2020).

NFE aligns with EntreComp's emphasis on fostering creativity, problem-solving, and taking initiative, as it encourages hands-on learning, real-world application, and adaptability—key aspects of the "Ideas and Opportunities" competence area. Mentoring and coaching directly support the "Resources" dimension of EntreComp, helping young entrepreneurs develop financial literacy, mobilize resources, and build self-awareness through goal-setting, networking, and personalized guidance. The BMC enhances the "Into Action" competence area by providing a structured approach to planning and executing business ideas, encouraging strategic thinking and iteration. Furthermore, public speaking coaching strengthens "Mobilizing Others" by equipping young entrepreneurs with the communication skills necessary to pitch ideas, attract support, and inspire stakeholders. Gamification and storytelling contribute to the EntreComp framework by enhancing engagement, motivation, and learning retention, making complex concepts more accessible and reinforcing entrepreneurial mindsets. By integrating these methods within the EntreComp framework, youth workers can create dynamic and impactful learning experiences that empower young people to develop entrepreneurial competences and turn their ideas into reality.

## 6.3. Real-life case studies or examples

The Young Entrepreneurs Programme by the Prince's Trust in the UK is an excellent example of how mentoring, coaching, and experiential learning can empower young entrepreneurs. The programme offers personalized one-on-one mentoring

sessions, where mentors help participants refine their business ideas, set SMART goals, and track progress through reflection journals. Mentors also guide mentees through the Business Model Canvas, helping them structure their business models and iterate based on feedback.

Networking opportunities are provided through startup pitch nights and business forums, allowing participants to connect with industry professionals and peers. Public speaking coaching is also a key component, where entrepreneurs practice and refine their elevator pitches to improve their communication skills and boost confidence.

Additionally, the programme integrates gamification and storytelling. By using rewards and real-life success stories, the programme keeps participants engaged and motivated. This holistic approach helps young entrepreneurs develop the essential skills needed to start and grow successful businesses.

## 6.4. Resources for further exploration

Strategic Entrepreneurial Storytelling: An Applied Framework for Better Pitches | Contemporary Management Research

Mentoring an Entrepreneur: Guide for a Mentor - Jamshed Memon, M. Z. A. Rozan, Kamariah Ismail, Mueen Uddin, DzurllKanian Daud, 2015

GREEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP: LITERATURE REVIEW AND AGENDA FOR FUTURE RESEARCH | International Journal of Entrepreneurial Knowledge

## 6.5. Key takeaways

- Non-formal Education is a powerful tool for teaching entrepreneurship, fostering creativity, problem-solving, resilience, and confidence - key qualities for business success. It provides hands-on, learner-centred experiences that encourage active learning.
- Mentoring and Coaching enhance entrepreneurial learning by offering personalized support. Tools like goal-setting frameworks, the BMC, networking opportunities, and public speaking coaching help young entrepreneurs refine their ideas, connect with others, and develop strong communication skills.
- Gamification increases engagement and motivation by incorporating game elements such as points, levels, and rewards. This approach encourages an experimental mindset and makes learning more interactive and enjoyable.
- Storytelling strengthens learning retention by presenting concepts through narratives, case studies, and personal testimonials. This emotional connection helps learners apply knowledge to real-world situations.
- By combining NFE, mentoring, gamification, and storytelling, entrepreneurship education becomes more practical, engaging, and impactful, equipping young people with the skills and mindset needed to succeed in business.

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# 7. CHAPTER 6 - INTRODUCTION TO THE YOUTH CRISISPRENEURS MOOC

## 7.1. Introduction to the chapter

The Youth Crisispreneurs MOOC was created to empower young people (aged 13–30) to navigate uncertainty and turn challenges into opportunities through entrepreneurship. In times of global crises - economic, social, environmental, or personal - young people often face instability in employment, education, and wellbeing. Yet, these very conditions also spark innovation, creativity, and new ways of contributing to their communities.

This chapter introduces youth workers to the MOOC's vision, structure, and methods. It explains how to guide participants as they develop an entrepreneurial mindset that blends resilience, creativity, and social responsibility. Youth workers play a crucial role as mentors, facilitators, and motivators throughout the learning journey.

Learning objectives for youth workers:

- Understand the overall purpose, goals, and flow of the Youth Crisispreneurs MOOC.
- Learn how each module connects to building youth entrepreneurship in uncertain times.
- Explore strategies for supporting and motivating young learners.
- Become familiar with the blended learning approach (self-paced online content + guided group activities).

## 7.2. Guidelines

(a) Guidelines for youth workers

Your Role: youth workers act as bridge-builders - helping young participants connect online learning to real-world experience. You don't have to be a business expert; your task is to inspire curiosity, guide reflection, and encourage practical experimentation.

Before the MOOC begins:

- Familiarize yourself with all 10 modules of the MOOC and their learning outcomes.
- Identify local examples or stories of youth entrepreneurship to make the content relatable.
- Set up communication channels (e.g., WhatsApp, Discord, or an online forum) for group support.

During the MOOC:

- Facilitate weekly group sessions to discuss insights, answer questions, and reflect on progress.
- Encourage participants to share experiences and collaborate on challenges.
- Help learners connect the MOOC lessons to their personal goals or community contexts.
- Keep the tone supportive and positive - uncertainty is a shared experience, not a weakness.

After the MOOC:

- Support participants in turning their capstone projects into real initiatives.
- Maintain alumni connections and celebrate their ongoing development as young "crisispreneurs."

## 7.3. Activities and exercises

(a) Activity 1: "The World We're In" - Understanding Uncertainty

Objective: help participants reflect on the challenges and opportunities they face in today's world.
Instructions:

- In small groups, ask participants to brainstorm current crises or uncertainties affecting young people (e.g., climate change, digital overload, social inequality).
- For each, identify at least one opportunity that could arise from the crisis (e.g., green innovation, mental health services, sustainable fashion).
- Discuss how entrepreneurship can be a tool for change in these contexts.

(b) Activity 2: MOOC Exploration Map

Objective: familiarize youth workers and participants with the MOOC structure.
Instructions:

- Draw or project a large roadmap of the 10 MOOC modules.
- Briefly discuss what each module focuses on and how they connect:
  - Modules 1–3: Building entrepreneurial thinking and idea validation.
  - Modules 4–5: Mobilizing resources and planning for action.
  - Modules 6–7: Thriving during crises and building a digital presence.
  - Modules 8–10: Focusing on social impact, ethics, and collaboration.
- Ask participants to mark which topics excite them most or where they feel less confident.

(c) Activity 3: "My Entrepreneurial Journey Starts Here"

Objective: Set a personal learning intention for the MOOC.
Instructions:

- Ask each participant to write a short reflection:
  - What does entrepreneurship mean to me?
  - What kind of change would I like to create in uncertain times?
- Encourage them to revisit these reflections at the end of the MOOC to measure personal growth.

## 7.4. Key takeaways

- The Youth Crisispreneurs MOOC empower young people to turn uncertainty into opportunity through creativity and entrepreneurship.
- Youth workers are facilitators of growth - they guide, motivate, and connect learners.
- The 10 modules form a progressive learning journey, from basic entrepreneurship to sustainability and collaboration.
- The goal is not only to create entrepreneurs, but resilient changemakers who can contribute to their communities.
- Reflective, participatory, and peer-based learning are key to the MOOC's success.

# 8. CHAPTER 7 - PLANNING LEARNING ACTIVITIES WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

## 8.1. Introduction to the chapter

In times of crisis, young people face rapidly changing realities that demand creativity, adaptability, and resilience. For youth workers, this presents both a challenge and an opportunity: to design learning experiences that go beyond theory - cultivating the entrepreneurial mindset and competences necessary for young people to navigate uncertainty and lead positive change in their communities.

This chapter serves as a practical roadmap for planning and implementing entrepreneurship learning activities that are relevant, inclusive, and dynamic. It bridges the gap between conceptual frameworks such as EntreComp and real-world youth work practice.

By focusing on participatory approaches and flexible design, youth workers can create safe and empowering spaces where young people can test ideas, collaborate, and learn through doing, even in the face of disruption.

The chapter also emphasizes strategic alignment with local contexts, continuous feedback, and co-creation, ensuring that activities remain meaningful and sustainable in diverse crisis scenarios.

## 8.2. Guidelines

### (a) The role of strategic planning

Strategic planning is at the heart of effective entrepreneurship education for young people. It ensures that learning experiences are a coherent, intentional process that connects knowledge, experience, and reflection.

In crisis contexts, planning becomes even more essential, as both the needs and resources of young people can change quickly. Youth workers must therefore act as facilitators of adaptability, ensuring that learning remains relevant and empowering even in unstable conditions.

Good planning links the educational purpose of each activity to clear outcomes - developing competences, confidence, and community engagement - while leaving room for creativity and change.

### (b) Understanding youth needs and contexts

Before designing any activity, it is vital to understand who the learners are and what environment they live in. Young people facing unemployment, displacement, or psychological stress will have very different needs from those seeking to grow an existing business idea.

Youth workers should:

- Conduct context analyses or short surveys to understand participants' motivations, learning styles, and challenges.
- Identify barriers to participation, such as limited internet access, caregiving responsibilities, or mobility issues.
- Use this information to adapt the scale, tone, and methods of the activities.
- This ensures that learning experiences are inclusive, achievable, and truly youth-centred.

(c) Setting learning objectives and competences

A well-planned activity begins with clear and measurable learning objectives. These should be directly linked to the EntreComp competences, ensuring that each activity helps participants develop both entrepreneurial and personal resilience.
For example:

- Activities focusing on idea generation can strengthen creativity and spotting opportunities.
- Group challenges or simulations can build collaboration and work with others.
- Reflection and storytelling exercises can develop learning through experience and coping with uncertainty.
- By defining which competences are targeted, youth workers can design activities that are focused, coherent, and easy to evaluate.

(d) Designing the learning process

Activity design should follow a logical and experiential flow, allowing participants to move from awareness to application. A useful structure includes four main phases:

- Introduction: setting the context, clarifying objectives, and connecting the topic to real-life challenges.
- Action: implementing interactive or hands-on exercises where young people experiment and collaborate.
- Reflection: facilitating guided discussions where participants analyse what they learned and how they felt.
- Evaluation and Follow-Up: collecting feedback, recognizing achievements, and identifying next steps.
- This cyclical design - experience, reflect, act, improve - reinforces long-term learning and mirrors the entrepreneurial mindset itself.

(e) Flexibility and adaptation in crisis contexts

Crisis situations require high adaptability from youth workers and participants alike. Effective planning must therefore include strategies for flexibility and continuity. Some best practices include:

- Designing modular sessions that can be delivered independently or rearranged if time or resources change.
- Preparing hybrid delivery options (in-person, online, or blended) to ensure accessibility for all.
- Using low-cost and locally available materials to reduce dependency on external funding.
- Including asynchronous options, such as video materials or discussion boards, for learners with limited internet or unstable schedules.
- Integrating emotional well-being components, such as mindfulness exercises or peer support groups, to help youth cope with uncertainty.
- In short, flexible planning means being ready to adapt quickly while preserving educational integrity.

(f) Encouraging participation and co-design

Young people are more engaged when they have a say in their learning process. Co-design transforms them from passive learners into active creators of their educational journey.
Youth workers can promote participation by:

- Organizing co-creation workshops where youth contribute ideas for future activities.
- Using collaborative tools (such as digital whiteboards, polls, or brainstorming sessions) to gather input.
- Forming youth advisory groups to provide feedback and help refine activity design.
- This participatory approach builds ownership, motivation, and leadership - qualities that are central to entrepreneurial thinking.

(g) Integrating emotional and social dimensions

Entrepreneurship education in crisis contexts is not only about business or innovation, but it is also about personal growth and well-being. Emotional resilience is a critical foundation for learning and creativity.
Youth workers should therefore integrate:

- Well-being check-ins at the start or end of sessions.
- Peer-sharing circles to exchange experiences and mutual support.
- Stress management activities, such as journaling, relaxation techniques, or group discussions about coping strategies.

- These moments help participants feel supported and valued, increasing their confidence and capacity to take initiative.

(h) Embedding reflection and continuous evaluation

Effective planning does not end when an activity is implemented. Continuous reflection and feedback are essential for learning improvement and impact measurement.
Youth workers can:

- Use reflection journals or short surveys after each session to capture insights.
- Facilitate group discussions where participants share what they learned and how they will apply it.
- Review this feedback regularly and adjust future sessions accordingly.
- This ongoing process of plan - act - reflect - adapt ensures that the programme remains relevant, effective, and responsive to the realities of young people's lives.

## 8.3. Activities and exercises

The following activities and templates are designed to help youth workers plan, implement, and evaluate entrepreneurship learning experiences that are relevant, flexible, and youth-centred. Each exercise can be adapted for different contexts - including in-person, online, or blended formats - and should be connected to the EntreComp Framework to ensure a focus on competence development.

(a) Co-design workshop template

Purpose: to engage young people as co-creators of their learning journey, ensuring that activities reflect their interests, contexts, and aspirations.
Description: facilitate structured co-creation sessions where participants identify their learning needs, preferred formats, and local challenges. Encourage open brainstorming and group prioritisation of topics.
Steps:

- Begin with a warm-up activity to build trust and creativity.
- Use prompts or digital tools (e.g., whiteboards, sticky notes, polls) to collect ideas.
- Group similar themes and develop shared priorities.
- Co-create a shortlist of activity ideas to be developed in later sessions.

Outcomes:

- Increased ownership and motivation.
- Better alignment between activities and youth needs.

- Strengthened collaboration and creative thinking.
- EntreComp link: Mobilising others, Creativity, Working with others.

(b) Detailed activity planning template

Purpose: to provide a structured framework for designing coherent and outcome-oriented learning activities.

Description: youth workers use this template to define key elements such as objectives, time, materials, roles, evaluation methods, and contingency options.

Template Sections:

- Activity title and description.
- Target group and context.
- Learning objectives (linked to EntreComp competences).
- Time and materials required.
- Roles and responsibilities.
- Step-by-step methodology.
- Evaluation and reflection methods.
- Contingency or adaptation plan.

Outcomes:

- Improved planning quality and consistency.
- Activities directly aligned with competence development.
- Greater flexibility and preparedness for change.
- EntreComp link: Planning and management, Taking the initiative.

(c) Hybrid learning schedule

Purpose: to ensure flexibility and accessibility in learning, especially in crisis or resource-limited contexts.

Description: design a blended learning schedule that combines synchronous (real-time) sessions with asynchronous (self-paced) components.

Implementation Example:

- Week 1: Online introduction and goal-setting.
- Week 2: Individual research and video reflections.
- Week 3: In-person group project and feedback session.

Outcomes:

- Accessible and inclusive participation.
- Continuous learning regardless of circumstances.
- Development of digital and self-management skills.
- EntreComp link: Digital competence, Learning through experience, Motivation and perseverance.

(d)  Local resource mapping exercise

Purpose: to help young people identify and mobilise resources, both physical and digital, that can support their entrepreneurial or community initiatives.
Description: facilitate small-group mapping activities where participants list local assets such as community spaces, mentors, funding opportunities, and online tools.
Steps:

- Brainstorm all available resources within the community or online.
- Categorise them (people, spaces, funding, knowledge, networks).
- Discuss how each resource can support upcoming activities or projects.

Outcomes:

- Strengthened problem-solving and resourcefulness.
- Greater awareness of community and digital ecosystems.
- Enhanced collaboration among participants.
- EntreComp link: Mobilising resources, Spotting opportunities.

(e)  Feedback loops protocol

Purpose: to embed reflection and continuous improvement into every stage of the learning process.
Description: establish a simple but consistent system for collecting participant feedback after each session and using it to adjust future plans.
Examples of Feedback Tools:

- Quick online or paper surveys.
- Reflection journals.
- Group discussions or "What worked / What to improve" sessions.

Outcomes:

- Stronger connection between learners and facilitators.
- Rapid identification of challenges and opportunities.
- Iterative improvement of the programme.
- EntreComp link: Learning through experience, Coping with uncertainty.

(f)  Peer-led case study sharing

Purpose: to promote peer learning, reflection, and recognition through real-life examples of entrepreneurship and community action.
Description: organise regular sessions where participants present their projects, share lessons learned, and discuss challenges encountered. Encourage constructive feedback and collective problem-solving.

Steps:

- Invite participants to prepare short presentations or storytelling videos.
- Facilitate discussion on success factors, barriers, and learning moments.
- Summarise insights to inform future activity design.

Outcomes:

- Strengthened communication and reflection skills.
- Increased sense of community and shared learning.
- Recognition of effort and peer mentorship.
- EntreComp link: Learning through experience, Communication and collaboration.

## 8.4. Key takeaways

- Strategic planning transforms youth entrepreneurship education from isolated events into coherent learning journeys that foster resilience and creativity.
- Understanding youth needs and local contexts ensures that learning activities are inclusive, relevant, and grounded in real challenges.
- Clearly defined learning objectives and EntreComp competences guide the design of purposeful and measurable learning experiences.
- Effective learning follows a cyclical flow - experience, reflection, action, and improvement - mirroring entrepreneurial thinking.
- Flexibility and adaptability are essential in crisis contexts, allowing programs to continue meaningfully despite uncertainty.
- Co-design and participation empower young people as active creators of their own learning, building motivation, ownership, and leadership.
- Integrating emotional and social well-being supports holistic development and enhances learners' ability to cope with challenges.
- Ongoing reflection and feedback enable continuous improvement, ensuring that activities remain relevant and impactful.
- Ultimately, well-planned and participatory learning activities cultivate the entrepreneurial mindset young people need to thrive in times of crisis and change.

# 9. CHAPTER 8: FACILITATING THE MOOC MODULES

## 9.1. Introduction to the chapter

The Facilitating MOOC Modules course is designed to help educators, trainers, and learning professionals develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence required to successfully facilitate Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). In an era where digital learning continues to transform education, the role of a facilitator has become essential in ensuring that online learners remain engaged, motivated, and supported throughout their learning journey. This introductory section provides an overview of what MOOC facilitation entails, its importance in modern education, and how you can effectively guide learners through large-scale online learning environments.

A MOOC, or Massive Open Online Course, is a digital learning format that allows thousands of participants from around the world to access educational content freely or at low cost. MOOCs have revolutionized access to education by removing geographical and financial barriers, but they also present unique challenges for learners and facilitators alike. Unlike traditional classrooms, MOOCs rely heavily on self-directed learning and online interaction. Facilitators play a crucial role in bridging the gap between learners and the course content, fostering a sense of community, and maintaining active engagement across a diverse group of participants.

This module introduces the core principles and practices of MOOC facilitation, beginning with an exploration of the facilitator's role. Unlike an instructor or lecturer, a facilitator acts as a guide and mentor who encourages learners to participate actively in discussions, collaborate with peers, and apply new knowledge in meaningful ways. Effective facilitation requires not only a strong understanding of the subject matter but also empathy, communication skills, and the ability to create a welcoming and inclusive learning atmosphere.

Throughout this module, you will learn strategies for engaging learners in a virtual environment. This includes techniques for initiating and sustaining discussions in online forums, responding constructively to learner inquiries, and promoting peer-to-peer interaction. You will also explore methods for encouraging reflective learning, providing feedback, and motivating participants who may struggle with self-discipline or time management—common challenges in MOOCs. Additionally, the module highlights the importance of using data and analytics to monitor learner progress, identify at-risk participants, and adapt facilitation strategies to improve learner outcomes.

Another key focus of this module is communication in online learning environments. Since MOOCs attract learners from different cultures, languages, and backgrounds, facilitators must communicate clearly and respectfully while being sensitive to diversity. You will gain insights into using inclusive language, setting a positive tone in discussions, and managing conflicts or misunderstandings that may arise in

online interactions. By mastering these communication strategies, facilitators can help build a supportive and respectful online learning community where every participant feels valued and heard.

The module also introduces a range of digital tools and platforms commonly used in MOOC facilitation. From discussion boards and video conferencing tools to collaborative workspaces and assessment systems, technology plays a central role in creating an interactive and dynamic online learning experience. You will learn how to use these tools effectively to foster engagement, provide timely support, and encourage collaborative learning. Moreover, the module emphasizes the importance of balancing technology with human connection—reminding facilitators that behind every screen is a learner seeking guidance, encouragement, and inspiration.

## 9.2. Guidelines

The main objective of facilitating the MOOC modules is to create an interactive and supportive online learning environment where participants can actively engage with the course materials, reflect on their experiences, and apply their knowledge in real-life contexts. The facilitator plays a key role in transforming a traditional online course into a participatory learning journey that aligns with the principles of non-formal education and youth work.

A specific objective is to guide participants through the different modules by clearly presenting the learning goals, structure, and expectations. The facilitator helps learners understand how each topic connects to their personal and professional development, encouraging them to take responsibility for their learning. Another important objective is to stimulate interaction and collaboration among participants. This involves creating spaces for discussion, sharing experiences, and exchanging ideas in an open and inclusive way. Through guided dialogue, learners develop critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills that are essential in youth work.

An additional objective is to provide ongoing support and motivation. The facilitator ensures that participants remain engaged by offering regular feedback, celebrating achievements, and addressing challenges that may appear during the course. This includes recognizing diverse learning styles and providing encouragement to less active learners. The goal is to maintain a sense of community and belonging throughout the learning process.

Furthermore, facilitation aims to connect online learning with practical application. The facilitator encourages participants to use the knowledge gained from the MOOC in their local contexts, projects, and youth initiatives. By linking theory to action, learners see the real impact of their learning and strengthen their professional competences.

Lastly, an important objective is to ensure inclusion and accessibility. The facilitator creates a safe learning space where all participants regardless of background, ability, or language can fully participate. This reflects the core values of non-formal

education: equality, respect, participation, and empowerment. Facilitating the MOOC modules aims to support meaningful learning by combining guidance, interaction, motivation, and reflection. It turns online education into a shared, human-centred experience that empowers participants to grow both personally and professionally.

The content of the "Facilitating the MOOC Modules" focuses on developing the competences and practical skills needed to guide and support learners in an online, interactive, and inclusive way. It introduces participants to the principles of facilitation within Massive Open Online Courses and connects these principles with non-formal education methods and youth work practices. The content helps future facilitators understand not only the technical aspects of online learning but also the human and social dimensions that make a MOOC successful.

The first part of the content introduces the concept of facilitation and explains the difference between teaching, tutoring, and facilitating. It highlights the facilitator's role as a guide, motivator, and connector who supports participants' learning journeys rather than delivering traditional lectures. Learners explore how to build a positive and inclusive online environment, establish group dynamics, and create a sense of community in virtual spaces.

The second part focuses on communication and interaction. It includes strategies for engaging learners through online discussions, live sessions, reflective questions, and collaborative tasks. Participants learn how to encourage dialogue, manage different opinions respectfully, and use digital tools that promote participation, creativity, and peer learning.

The next section explores feedback and motivation techniques. It shows how to provide constructive feedback, celebrate progress, and maintain learners' interest throughout the course. The content also addresses how to support participants who struggle with motivation or technical difficulties.

Another important element is linking online learning to real-life applications. Facilitators learn to design reflective activities and local challenges that encourage participants to put their knowledge into practice within their communities or youth projects.

Finally, the content covers inclusion and accessibility in MOOCs. It offers guidance on adapting content for different learning needs, using simple and clear communication, and ensuring equal opportunities for all learners. Through these topics, participants gain the knowledge and confidence to facilitate MOOC modules effectively, turning digital learning into a collaborative, empowering, and meaningful educational experience.

## 9.3. Activities and exercises

Facilitating a MOOC requires more than technical knowledge; it demands a thoughtful and human-centred approach that keeps learners engaged, connected, and motivated throughout the course. The following practical suggestions aim to

support facilitators in creating meaningful, inclusive, and interactive online learning experiences rooted in the principles of non-formal education and youth work.

Begin by establishing a strong start to the course. Welcome participants with an introductory message or short video to present yourself, the learning goals, and the structure of the MOOC. Use warm, accessible language and encourage participants to introduce themselves in discussion forums or group spaces. This first step helps create a sense of community and belonging, which is essential for keeping learners active in an online environment.

Ensure clarity and guidance from the beginning. Before each module, provide a short overview that explains what participants will learn, why it matters, and how it connects to previous topics. Share clear instructions for all tasks and include examples whenever possible. Learners are more confident and motivated when they know exactly what is expected of them and how their work contributes to their learning progress.

Maintain active and supportive communication. Log in regularly to monitor discussions, reply to comments, and provide guidance. A short, encouraging response can make a big difference to learners who may feel unsure or isolated. When possible, schedule short live sessions or Q&A webinars to allow real-time interaction. These sessions can help clarify doubts, inspire reflection, and strengthen community ties.

Encourage participation through active learning techniques. Use open-ended questions that invite learners to share their opinions, ideas, and personal experiences. Create small challenges, polls, or group tasks that promote collaboration. Encourage learners to connect course content to their local contexts and youth projects. This approach reflects non-formal learning values by turning theory into experience and promoting learning through doing.

Provide continuous motivation and constructive feedback. Recognize effort, not only success, by acknowledging each learner's progress. Share positive comments publicly in forums to motivate others. For learners who are less active, send a personal message offering support or encouragement. Feedback should be clear, specific, and empowering helping participants see their strengths and potential areas for improvement.

Integrate reflection into each module. End every topic with short reflective questions that help participants connect learning to their personal and professional development. For example, ask them how the topic can be applied in their youth work practice or what new skills they developed during the module. Reflection transforms online participation into deeper learning.

Foster peer learning and collaboration. Encourage participants to comment on each other's work, share experiences, and support one another. You can organize online working groups or pair learners for peer mentoring. These interactions strengthen social bonds and build confidence among participants, replicating the supportive environment of non-formal education.

Always ensure inclusivity and accessibility. Use simple and inclusive language, add subtitles or transcripts to videos, and consider different time zones when scheduling

live activities. Be sensitive to diverse learning styles, backgrounds, and digital access. Inclusivity builds trust and ensures equal opportunities for everyone to succeed.

Finally, connect online learning with real-world action. Encourage learners to apply what they have learned by developing small projects, organizing workshops, or sharing insights with their local communities. This practical link between learning and action reflects the heart of youth work and gives participants a sense of purpose beyond the online platform.

By following these suggestions, facilitators can transform MOOCs into vibrant spaces for interaction, reflection, and empowerment. The facilitator becomes a guide who inspires participants to learn with curiosity, collaborate with empathy, and act with confidence in their own educational and community contexts.

## 9.4. Key takeaways

- Facilitation transforms online learning into a community experience. Effective facilitators create a welcoming and supportive digital space where participants feel valued, connected, and empowered to contribute actively.
- Clear structure and guidance build confidence. Providing transparent goals, clear instructions, and accessible explanations helps learners navigate complex content and stay engaged throughout the modules.
- Interaction and participation are central to learning. Using discussion forums, live sessions, and peer activities encourages dialogue, creativity, and collaboration — reflecting the principles of non-formal education and youth work.
- Feedback and motivation sustain engagement. Regular, constructive, and personalised feedback reinforces learners' efforts, while recognition and encouragement help maintain motivation and perseverance.
- Reflection deepens understanding. Incorporating reflective questions and self-assessment activities allows participants to connect theory with personal and professional growth, fostering deeper learning and self-awareness.
- Inclusion ensures equity and belonging. Facilitators must communicate in clear, respectful, and inclusive ways, adapting content and schedules to diverse needs, learning styles, and access levels.
- Linking online learning with real-life action strengthens impact. Encouraging learners to apply MOOC knowledge within their communities, projects, or youth work initiatives turns digital learning into tangible, positive change.

# 10. CHAPTER 9: MONITORING AND EVALUATING PROGRESS

## 10.1. Introduction to the chapter

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are critical elements of every learning and entrepreneurial process, especially in crisis contexts where conditions change rapidly and adaptability is essential. In youth entrepreneurship education, M&E ensures that learning activities are not only implemented but also achieve meaningful impact on participants, organisations, and communities.

For youth workers and trainers, M&E provides a structured way to track progress, assess outcomes, and improve programmes continuously. It connects practice with reflection - helping facilitators understand what works, what needs to change, and how to make future learning more effective.

This chapter explores practical tools and strategies for monitoring and evaluating entrepreneurship learning experiences, whether delivered through workshops, mentoring, or MOOCs. It aims to make M&E simple, participatory, and empowering for both facilitators and young learners.

## 10.2. Guidelines

(a) Purpose of monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are not just administrative tasks but integral parts of learning.

Monitoring means observing and documenting activities as they unfold - tracking participation, engagement, and progress toward learning objectives.

Evaluation means analysing evidence after implementation to determine effectiveness, outcomes, and impact.

Together, they help youth workers:

- Verify that activities align with the EntreComp competences and project objectives.
- Recognize achievements and growth among participants.
- Adjust methods, timing, or materials based on real data.
- Ensure transparency and accountability toward partners, funders, and participants.

(b) Principles of effective M&E in youth work
- Participatory: Involve young people in defining success indicators and reflecting on results.

- Continuous: Integrate evaluation before, during, and after activities—not only at the end.
- Developmental: Use findings to improve future sessions, not to judge or rank.
- Contextualized: Adapt tools and criteria to each local or crisis setting.
- Transparent: Share outcomes openly with participants and partners.

(c) What to monitor and evaluate

Monitoring and evaluation should focus on three interconnected levels:

- Level
- Focus
- Possible Indicators
- Learning Process
- Participation, engagement, group dynamics, inclusivity
- Attendance, feedback forms, self-reflection notes
- Competence Development
- Growth in entrepreneurial competences (EntreComp)
- Self-assessment scales, peer reviews, mentor observations
- Impact and Sustainability
- Behavioural change, application of skills, community initiatives
- Number of follow-up projects, new ideas implemented, testimonials

(d) Planning the M&E process

A structured approach to monitoring and evaluation should include the following stages:

- Define objectives and indicators
  - Link to learning goals (e.g., "participants will demonstrate creativity by generating at least three business ideas").
  - Use both quantitative indicators (attendance, task completion) and qualitative ones (motivation, confidence, collaboration).
- Select tools and methods
  - Surveys, interviews, reflection journals, observation checklists, digital polls, or analytics (for online courses).
  - Use low-cost, accessible formats to ensure inclusivity.
- Collect and analyse data
  - Gather data continuously during and after activities.
  - Summarise results visually (charts, dashboards, mood meters) to make them understandable to all stakeholders.
- Interpret and reflect
  - Involve participants in analysing results ("What worked best for you?" "What could we improve?").

- o Use group reflection sessions to translate findings into concrete improvements.
- Report and share
  - o Summarise findings in short, visual reports for partners and participants.
  - o Highlight lessons learned and proposed changes for future sessions.

(e) Linking M&E to EntreComp

Monitoring and evaluation should directly measure progress across the three EntreComp competence areas:

| EntreComp Area | Sample Competence | Example of Evidence to Collect |
|---|---|---|
| *Ideas & Opportunities* | Creativity, spotting opportunities | Brainstorming outputs, new project ideas |
| *Resources* | Motivation, financial literacy, self-awareness | Reflection journals, peer feedback, budgeting tasks |
| *Into Action* | Taking initiative, learning through experience, coping with uncertainty | Participation logs, group projects, resilience stories |

By connecting M&E to EntreComp, youth workers ensure that each activity contributes tangibly to long-term entrepreneurial growth.

(f) Integrating M&E in crisis contexts

In times of crisis, traditional evaluation systems may not work due to limited access, unstable schedules, or emotional strain. To adapt:

- Use short, mobile-friendly surveys instead of lengthy forms.
- Prioritize story-based reflection (video, audio, or written).
- Schedule mini check-ins instead of single large evaluations.
- Measure well-being and empowerment alongside competence gains.
- Value qualitative insights (stories, observations) as much as quantitative data.

## 10.3. Activities and exercises

(a) Activity 1: Personal learning tracker

Purpose: Encourage participants to monitor their own progress during an entrepreneurship programme or MOOC.

Steps:

- Provide a simple digital or paper log divided into weeks or sessions.
- Include columns for "Key takeaway," "Skill I practiced," "Challenge I faced," "Next action."
- Ask participants to complete it at the end of each session.
- Outcome: Builds self-awareness and motivation; supports individual evaluation.
- EntreComp link: Learning through experience, Motivation and perseverance.

(b) Activity 2: Peer reflection circles

Purpose: Promote peer-based evaluation and collective learning.
Steps:

- Form small groups (4–6 participants).
- Each shares one personal success, one challenge, and one learning point.
- Others provide constructive feedback and encouragement.
- Outcome: Improves communication and collaboration; builds a culture of feedback.
- EntreComp link: Working with others, Mobilising others.

(c) Activity 3: Competence radar

Purpose: Visualise growth across key EntreComp competences.
Steps:

- Provide participants with a spider diagram listing selected competences (creativity, risk management, adaptability, etc.).
- Ask them to rate themselves 1–5 before and after the activity cycle.
- Compare and discuss progress.
- Outcome: Tangible measurement of growth; supports self-assessment and discussion.
- EntreComp link: Self-awareness and self-efficacy.

(d) Activity 4: Feedback carousel

Purpose: Gather quick, diverse feedback on programme elements.
Steps:

- Set up stations (either physical flipcharts or online forms) for topics such as "Facilitation," "Content," "Activities," and "Tools."
- Participants rotate, adding comments or emojis.
- Summarise findings collectively at the end.

- Outcome: Immediate insights for facilitators; participatory evaluation.
- EntreComp link: Learning through experience, Coping with uncertainty.

(e) Activity 5: Digital analytics review (for MOOCs)

Purpose: Use platform analytics to monitor engagement and completion.
Steps:

- Track login frequency, discussion participation, and quiz results.
- Compare engagement trends between modules.
- Combine with qualitative learner feedback to interpret data.
- Outcome: Evidence-based adjustments for online facilitation.
- EntreComp link: Planning and management, Taking the initiative.

## 10.4. Key takeaways

- Monitoring and evaluation are learning processes, not administrative add-ons. They empower both youth workers and participants to reflect and grow.
- EntreComp provides the framework for linking M&E directly to competence development in entrepreneurship.
- Participatory and continuous feedback ensures that learning stays relevant, inclusive, and adaptive—especially in times of crisis.
- Quantitative and qualitative tools complement each other, combining measurable outcomes with stories of transformation.
- Reflection and adaptability are the final steps of the learning cycle, ensuring that every session, project, or MOOC informs and improves the next.

# 11. CHAPTER 10: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND NEXT STEPS

## 11.1. Introduction to the chapter

This final chapter concludes the Youth Crisispreneurs journey by bringing together the central ideas, frameworks, and practices explored throughout the manual and the MOOC. It encourages youth workers to extend their learning beyond the course, deepen their engagement with entrepreneurial education, and strengthen networks that foster sustainable youth development.

The goal is to consolidate knowledge and to inspire a long-term commitment to empowering young entrepreneurs in crisis contexts. Through continued learning, collaboration, and mentorship, youth workers can ensure that the impact of this programme extends far beyond its formal completion.

## 11.2. Guidelines

(a) Consolidating learning and reflection

Before moving forward, youth workers are encouraged to reflect on the entire learning journey. Each chapter has introduced specific tools, from resilience-building (Chapter 2) to mentorship and facilitation strategies (Chapters 5 - 8). Reviewing these sections and identifying personal takeaways helps to reinforce professional growth and practical application.

Revisit notes, activity outcomes, and learners' feedback collected throughout the course.

Reflect on which pedagogical methods and frameworks were most effective in engaging young people.

Identify areas for further learning such as digital entrepreneurship, social innovation, or sustainable business models.

(b) Supplementary learning materials

Continued professional development relies on curiosity and openness to new insights. Youth workers can enhance their practice by consulting a variety of materials that expand on the manual's key themes:

- Books and articles on entrepreneurship, social innovation, and youth empowerment.
- Podcasts and videos that share real-world entrepreneurial stories and strategies.

- EntreComp resources and alternative competence frameworks, which help link entrepreneurial learning to broader employability and civic engagement goals.
- Online open courses and webinars offered by international organisations, NGOs, or educational platforms that focus on entrepreneurship education and youth leadership.

(c) Platforms and networks for collaboration

Collaboration is essential to sustaining momentum and keeping ideas alive beyond the project. Youth workers should engage actively in digital and physical communities of practice:

- Join online entrepreneurship networks where professionals share methodologies, tools, and success stories.
- Connect with incubators and mentorship programmes that can support young entrepreneurs in developing viable projects.
- Participate in European and international youth networks, such as Erasmus+ communities, to exchange practices and create cross-border initiatives.
- Encourage young people to become members of entrepreneurial ecosystems - local hubs, innovation labs, and co-working spaces that promote collaboration and creativity.

(d) Continuing support for young entrepreneurs

Sustained impact depends on long-term engagement. Youth workers should design follow-up strategies to maintain relationships and monitor young people's entrepreneurial growth after completing the course:

- Establish mentorship circles where alumni and new participants can exchange experiences and guidance.
- Create peer-learning networks to promote collaboration between young entrepreneurs from different cohorts.
- Organise periodic check-ins or networking events to review progress, celebrate milestones, and identify new opportunities for development.
- Support youth-led initiatives in accessing funding opportunities, partnerships, and social recognition within their communities.

(e) Professional and ethical commitment

Finally, sustaining entrepreneurial learning also means upholding a professional and ethical standard. Youth workers should act as facilitators of opportunity and

inclusion, ensuring that all young people, regardless of background, can benefit from equitable access to resources, mentorship, and support.

## 11.3. Activities and exercises

(a) Personal development roadmap

Reflect on your learning from the manual and MOOC. Create a personal action plan outlining the next three professional development steps you aim to take as a youth worker in entrepreneurship education.

(b) Networking challenge

Identify and join at least one online entrepreneurship or youth work community. Share a summary of what you learned from engaging with peers and how it might inform your future work.

(c) Mentorship continuity plan

Develop a plan to stay in contact with at least two young entrepreneurs you have mentored. Include ideas for follow-up sessions, progress tracking, and collaborative opportunities.

(d) Resource exchange session

Organise a peer session where each participant presents one valuable resource (book, article, platform, or tool) that supports entrepreneurial education. Compile all resources into a shared database for future reference.

## 11.4. Key takeaways

As this final chapter concludes the Youth Crisispreneurs manual, it is important to pause and reflect on the path travelled so far. Throughout the preceding chapters, youth workers have explored the many dimensions of entrepreneurship in crisis contexts, from understanding its social relevance and developing entrepreneurial competences, to applying effective pedagogical strategies and facilitating digital learning through the MOOC.