



Regional Action Plan

Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen



Groningen, May 2021

Part I – General information

Project

E-COOL – Entrepreneurial and Intrapreneurial Mindset in Young People through the Dynamisation of Competences, Teaching Methodologies and Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

Partner organisation:

Hanze University of Applied sciences Groningen

Other partner organisations involved (if relevant):

Alfa-college

Country:

The Netherlands

NUTS2 region:

Groningen

Contact person:

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Part II – Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact:

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

Name of the policy instrument addressed: O2LAB

O2LAB is a program from the National Organisation to promote Entrepreneurship (RVO) part of the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy. The goal of O2LAB is to enhance more and better entrepreneurship in education. That is what O2LAB is working on together with entrepreneurs, teachers and students. O2 stands for Entrepreneurship and Education. Enterprising people are more likely to take control of their work and career themselves. They see opportunities, take up new ideas and thus know how to create value for themselves and others. Society is increasingly demanding this mindset and skills.

The aim of the O2LAB program is to strengthen and anchor entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship. We do this by:

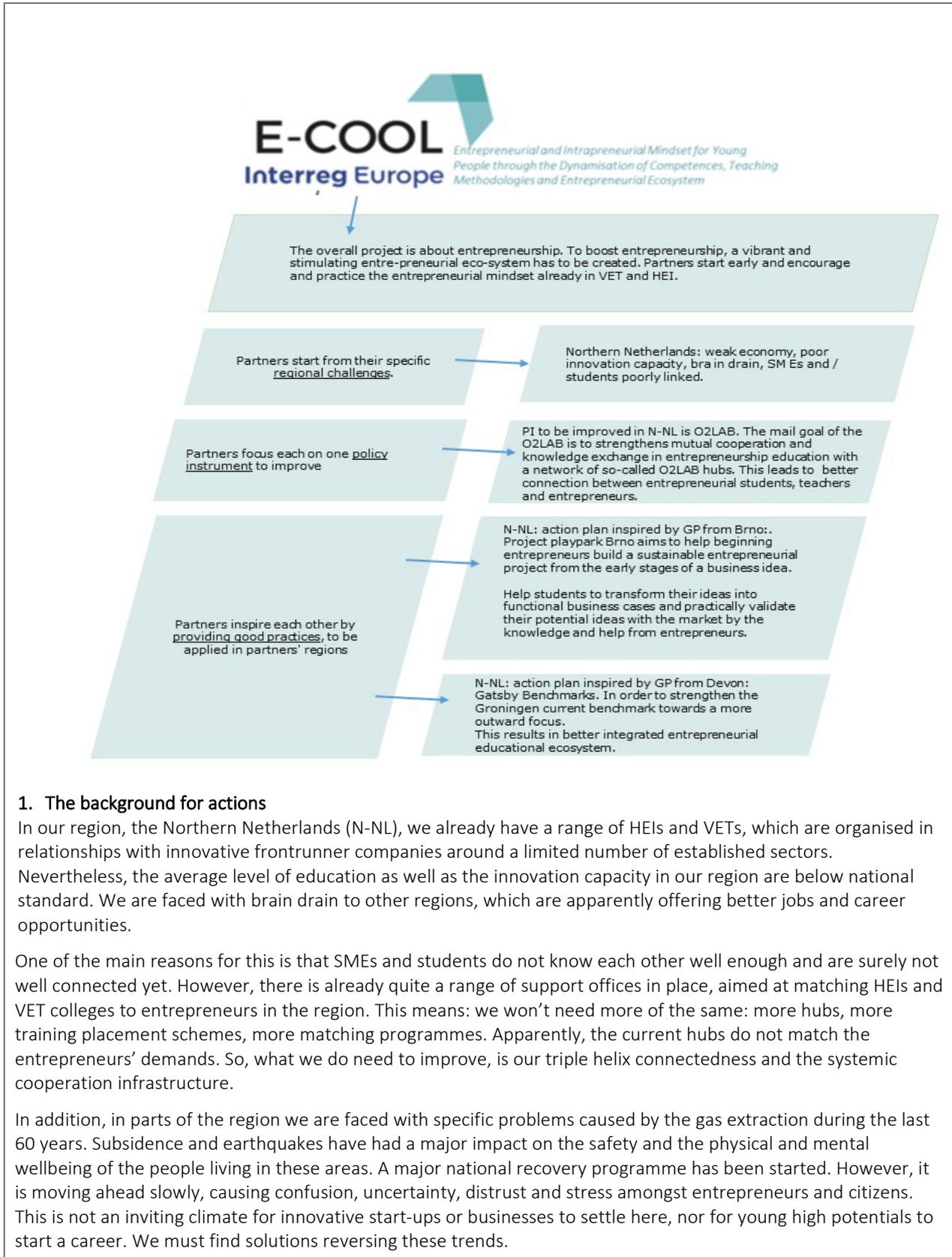
- to demand permanent attention for entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship in education;
- to contribute to a good anchoring of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship in education; and
- to strengthen the synergy between the many good initiatives and to share knowledge.

O2LAB Hubs in the region

O2LAB strengthens mutual cooperation and knowledge exchange in entrepreneurship education with a network of so-called O2LAB hubs. Both between educational institutions and with the business community. There is a need for more exchange and cooperation so that entrepreneurship education is in line with practice and is attractive and accessible to everyone.

The hubs are making very practical use of this objective with activities aimed at improving mutual cooperation between professional education, bachelor education and master. In order to create a better connection between the educational offer and the issues of entrepreneurs and with knowledge sharing. The hubs build on years of experience and good connections with the business community. The first 3 O2LAB hubs were launched at the beginning of 2021. ~~One is located in the Groningen region; this one is called O2LAB North.~~ **The Northern region has its own branch of O2LAB; the O2LAB North. The first O2LAB North policy programme has started in 2021 January (O2LAB North 1.0) and the second O2LAB North policy programme (O2LAB North 2.0) will start in January 2022.** The proposed actions in this plan are focussed to integrate the learned lessons in the policy plans ~~from O2LAB North.~~ **for O2LAB North 2.0 policy programme in January 2022.**

Part III – Details of the actions envisaged



1. The background for actions

In our region, the Northern Netherlands (N-NL), we already have a range of HEIs and VETs, which are organised in relationships with innovative frontrunner companies around a limited number of established sectors. Nevertheless, the average level of education as well as the innovation capacity in our region are below national standard. We are faced with brain drain to other regions, which are apparently offering better jobs and career opportunities.

One of the main reasons for this is that SMEs and students do not know each other well enough and are surely not well connected yet. However, there is already quite a range of support offices in place, aimed at matching HEIs and VET colleges to entrepreneurs in the region. This means: we won't need more of the same: more hubs, more training placement schemes, more matching programmes. Apparently, the current hubs do not match the entrepreneurs' demands. So, what we do need to improve, is our triple helix connectedness and the systemic cooperation infrastructure.

In addition, in parts of the region we are faced with specific problems caused by the gas extraction during the last 60 years. Subsidence and earthquakes have had a major impact on the safety and the physical and mental wellbeing of the people living in these areas. A major national recovery programme has been started. However, it is moving ahead slowly, causing confusion, uncertainty, distrust and stress amongst entrepreneurs and citizens. This is not an inviting climate for innovative start-ups or businesses to settle here, nor for young high potentials to start a career. We must find solutions reversing these trends.

Action 1: Extending the network

Action 1 is related directly to the learning drawn from Brno **and intends to inspire stakeholders from O2LAB North to incorporate ideas into the O2LAB North 2.0 policy period.**

Partner: PP02 The South Moravian Region

Project Playpark Brno aims to help beginning entrepreneurs build a sustainable entrepreneurial project from the early stages of a business idea.

The students from Vocational training centres and University of applied sciences work together with professional entrepreneurs who help them transform their ideas into functional business cases and then practically validate their idea's potential with the market. Workshops delivered by businessmen having practical experience in running their own companies. While some of them deal with practical aspects of running a project or a company, others go through the process of building a business project from an idea:

8 workshops are aimed at:

1. Entrepreneurial mindset
 2. Minimum viable product and lean canvas
 3. Validation of the problem and advisors
 4. Validation of the solution and finances
 5. Discussion, reflection and presentation
 6. Dragon's den and feedback from skilled entrepreneur
 7. Self-reflection, mentors and creating actionable steps from feedback
 8. Early-stage business law and the next steps after the course
- + Other workshops related to a variety of business topics.

After the course, the most promising projects are chosen to participate in startup competitions.

The Brno team has presented to the stakeholders team (steering committee) from O2LAB North. The stakeholders afterwards have advised the educational team active in O2LAB North to integrate the Brno ideas and **have reserved funding for the policy period O2LAB North 2.0.**

The O2LAB North entrepreneurial/educational already will start in autumn 2020 with experiments and gather feedback from the partners and the students. At the end of each of the course and will share this with the Groningen E-Cool team in order to keep the methodology updated and improved to meet the needs of early-stage entrepreneur and non-entrepreneurs.

The entrepreneurial/educational team will start the courses in September 2021

25 students in school year 2021-2022

50 students in school year 2022-2023

10 entrepreneurs involved in schoolyear 2021 – 2022

20 entrepreneurs involved in schoolyear 2022- 2023

Result

At the end of the programme, the participating students are able to use the knowledge they have gained to be enterprising in their further careers. Both as an employee and as an entrepreneur for their own profit and loss. Through their entrepreneurial attitude, they contribute to the vitalisation of our region. **It also creates awareness for future directions.**

2. Players involved

Resources needed:

- Businesses: entrepreneurs, decision makers, employees
- O2LAB North stakeholders and **entrepreneurial/educational team**
- Educational institutions Alfa-college, Hanze University of applied sciences: directors project managers, lectures, researchers, evaluation committee experts and marketing experts and students
- Public authorities at local and regional levels: VNO-NCW (Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers) governors, policy officers and executive staff

- Interest groups; depending on the themes and issues to be worked on
- Financial resources: For the first 2 years grant from Hanze university and Alfa-college

3. Timeframe

September 2021 – May 2023 (and beyond)

4. Costs

Indicated costs: 100,000 p/y (for Action 1)

5. Funding sources:

How will the policy improvement be funded?

- O2LAB North 2.0 funds 2022-2023
- Through contribution from educational institutes (in kind funding)
- Through contribution of local businesses (in kind funding)
- Through the workplaces and innovation labs (in kind funding)

ACTION 2: Monitoring quality of the network

1. The background

See above actionplan 1 in this regard for details.

2. Monitoring quality of the network

Action 2 is related directly to the learning drawn from Devon and will fuel the O2LAB 2.0 ideas regarding monitoring and building networks.

Partner: PP05 Devon County Council

Together with the national/regional employer VNO; Hanze University offers a benchmark for Entrepreneurship. This benchmark is targeted at Educational institutions in the Northern Region and a great number of schools have received the benchmark. Goals of the benchmark is to activate networks. However, after evaluation it appeared that the benchmark is experienced as very useful, but also as a “paper tiger”, too internally focused and too static. In order to overcome this deficit. We are inspired by the good practice from Devon. In Devon the Gatsby Benchmarks provide a quality framework for CEIAG. Schools self assess their programme against 8 Quality statements, and plan improvements which improve their Gatsby score. Appealing is the role of so called Enterprise Advisor. Perhaps a missing link in the current program in Groningen.

The stakeholders from the regional O2LAB North have also noticed this gap and stated that to shift the Groningen benchmark towards a more outreach approach. This will create awareness among the partners and will stress an outward view. They also expressed an interests in funding the development and involved a project team in its development.

In Devon it is described as follows.

The Careers Hub supports schools in the achievement of their Gatsby Benchmarks via a team of Enterprise Co-ordinators who link each school with a senior manager from a local business (An Enterprise Advisor). These Advisors work closely with their school at a strategic level to plan a programme of changes which will improve the school’s score against the Gatsby Benchmarks, and hence deliver better CEIAG to students.

The main stakeholders are:

- The Careers and Enterprise Company
- The Local Authorities within the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership area
- Employers and employer representative bodies
- Schools and colleges

To realise this action, The Groningen E-Cool team and the Devon Careers Hub team will meet the O2LAB North development team and discuss the potential following steps:

- Connect to learning and innovation communities of entrepreneurs, students, hubs, researchers and other

relevant stakeholders to discuss possible changes

- To activate the design process with a local design academy; during this process the lessons from Devon will be integrated in the “new version”
- To activate a teach the teacher project in which best practices are worked out.
- Observe and monitor the learning practice and transfer the findings.
- To organise a series of meetings to explore the options for a teach the teacher program for vocational schools in the Northern region.
- End up by embedding the new practices in our curricula and in regional governance structure.

The programme starts in September 2021

20 students / 3 teachers / 3 entrepreneurs in school year 2021-2022

1 educational unit/hub in the region year 2021-2022

80 students / 10 teachers / 8 entrepreneurs in school year 2022-2023

3 educational units/hubs in the region year 2022-2023

Result

Students develop an entrepreneurial mindset.

Institutions learn to work with new methods for monitoring **and building networks**.

3. Players involved

Resources needed:

- Businesses: entrepreneurs, decision makers, employees
- Financial support from O2LAB North 2.0
- Commitment from O2LAB North stakeholders and project groups
- Educational institutions Alfa-college, Hanze University of applied sciences: directors project managers, lectures, researchers, evaluation committee experts and marketing experts and students
- Public authorities at local and regional levels: VNO-NCW (Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers) governors, policy officers and executive staff
- Interest groups; depending on the themes and issues to be worked on
- Financial resources: For the first 2 years grant from Hanze university, O2LAB North and Alfa-college

4. Timeframe

September 2021 – May 2023 (and beyond)

5. Costs

Indicated costs: 100,000 p/y (for Action 2)

6. Funding sources (if relevant):

How will the policy improvement be funded?

- **O2LAB North 2.0 funds 2022-2023**
- **Through contribution from educational institutes (in kind funding)**
- **Through contribution of local businesses (in kind funding)**
- **Through the workplaces and innovation labs (in kind funding)**

Date: September 20, 2021

Signature: H. Velthuisen, Managing director Marian van Os Centre of Expertise Entrepreneurship



Stamp of the organisation (if available): x