



# ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNITIES

## JOBS, JOBS AND MORE JOBS ... WHERE DO THEY COME FROM AND WHO CREATES THEM

Inspired by the European Entrepreneurial Regions (EER) project of the Committee of the Regions, the ETF's project aims to capture the elements of success of community level partnerships that use their strengths to create more and better jobs and ultimately local economic growth and development. Such entrepreneurial communities analyse and exploit available assets, and improve the local labour market by identifying skills needs and supply, pooling resources to develop skills, stimulating entrepreneurial talent, etc. They are dynamic and forward thinking. Capturing what drives these entrepreneurial communities: how they have managed to create jobs and foster social cohesion, how they coordinate and cooperate with community stakeholders and national authorities to inform policy - will determine the economic vitality of the communities of tomorrow.

### WHAT ARE ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNITIES?

Entrepreneurial communities are forward-thinking, innovative, and locally-based partnerships. Entrepreneurial communities come together in community-based partnerships to generate effective and sustainable employment by developing their human capital. Building on community-level partnerships, entrepreneurial communities stimulate talent and entrepreneurship in an innovative way. By thinking outside the box, entrepreneurial communities can help to unleash entrepreneurial potential and stimulate community-level learning and job creation.

There is no one size fits all in being or becoming an entrepreneurial community. Entrepreneurial communities are systemic territorial approaches by communities who are entrepreneurial in organising their resources and forming partnerships with community stakeholders. They are strategic and driven. They have vision, goals and take action that fits their specific context:

- Entrepreneurial communities build on synergies of a community thereby responding to manifold interrelations. They play to their existing strengths and plan for the future.
- Entrepreneurial communities coordinate and cooperate vertically (with central authorities) and have their voices heard and acted on, resulting in positive policy changes that empower and enable them to nurture their potential and flourish.
- Active horizontal (community level) collaboration with partners from the public sector, employers and educational institutions is key for entrepreneurial communities to enhance matching the supply and demand of skills, and stimulate community level job creation.
- Entrepreneurial communities are acutely aware of the opportunities and talent of the community, actively work towards retaining and attracting innovative creative talents.
- Developing expertise and skills for entrepreneur-focused growth, expanding the entrepreneurial base by unleashing entrepreneurship, and mobilising an underground entrepreneurial surge are all at the core of entrepreneurial communities. Entrepreneurs are supported and specialisation is explored.

### Entrepreneurial communities are:

- Aggregated territorial entities
- United through shared vision and goals, pulling in one direction
- Asset and value-based
- Dynamic
- Strong
- Daring
- Built on human capital
- Inclusive and accessible community networks and partnerships
- Entrepreneurial in attitude
- Able to inform national policy debate



## WHAT IS THE PROJECT ABOUT?

The ETF project aims to identify entrepreneurial communities to make their successes known. It is about learning from good practice, big or small, to shape the economic future of the society of tomorrow. Elements of success in a number of forward-thinking communities will be identified and analysed so as to gain an in-depth understanding of the process and structures that drive the creation of dynamic entrepreneurial communities. The progressive entrepreneurial spirit, innovative governance arrangements and the skills contribution to successful entrepreneurial communities will be analysed along with attitudes that have allowed for the communities to embrace change. The aim is to:

### Identify good practice in entrepreneurial communities – with ultimately a more pragmatic than theoretical approach e.g.:

- Divergent models and strategies evident in emerging entrepreneurial communities;
- Roles of community leaders;
- Attitudes that allow change to be embraced and driven;
- Inclusive approaches to good and effective governance;
- Causes for communities lagging despite strong assets (skilled workers, capital investment);
- Obstacles that slow down the development of an entrepreneurial community;
- Drivers that guide the creation of networks/partnerships;
- Factors that enable entrepreneurial communities to move forward and remain sustainable.

### Inform national policy debate on fostering entrepreneurial communities:

In this context, best community practices will be identified e.g.:

- Skills alliances;
- Territorial pacts for community development;
- Any other innovative practices aiming at community-level job creation:
  - encouraging and attracting innovative creative talents within and to the community
  - engaging young people and retaining young talent (preventing brain drain) in the community
  - enhancing the matching of skills supply and demand
  - enterprise/SMEs growth
  - mobilising an underground entrepreneurial surge
  - identifying drivers that guide networking and partnership creation
  - identifying and building on synergies of a community thereby responding to manifold interrelations within a community
  - entrepreneurial learning and start-ups

## HOW?

The ETF posted a call for participation on the ETF website on 22 November 2013. The call for participation will be open to communities in the partner countries of South Eastern Europe and Turkey, the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean and Eastern Europe.

The proposals will be screened on the basis of a pre-defined set of criteria (to be included in the call for proposals).

The selected proposals will be reviewed on the basis of a predefined methodology developed by ETF so as to identify the key success factors for supporting entrepreneurial communities.

The results will be analysed to inform policy making at national level.

The outcomes will be broadly disseminated through publications, a video documentary, the ETF website, social media and events targeting regional, national and international actors as well as a dedicated international conference which will be held in Turin, Italy in November 2014.

## KEY PARTNERS

For the purposes of the project the ETF has established an Advisory Board with representatives from the Committee of the Regions (COR), the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM), the Conference of the Regional and Local Authorities for the Eastern Partnership (CORLEAP), the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), European Vocational Training Association (EVTA), the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), and Eurochambers. In addition, on rotational basis, the Advisory Board includes three representatives of ETF partner countries engaged in the Small Business Act assessment.

The Advisory Board advises the ETF on:

- the definition of the steps in the selection process and criteria for successful applicants, and
- the development of the methodology for the review of the entrepreneurial communities.
- The review process of the entrepreneurial communities

Members of the Advisory Board will also act as a jury to screen the good entrepreneurial practices to be analysed within the project.

For further information, see the ETF website:  
[www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/entrepreneurial\\_communities](http://www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/entrepreneurial_communities)

