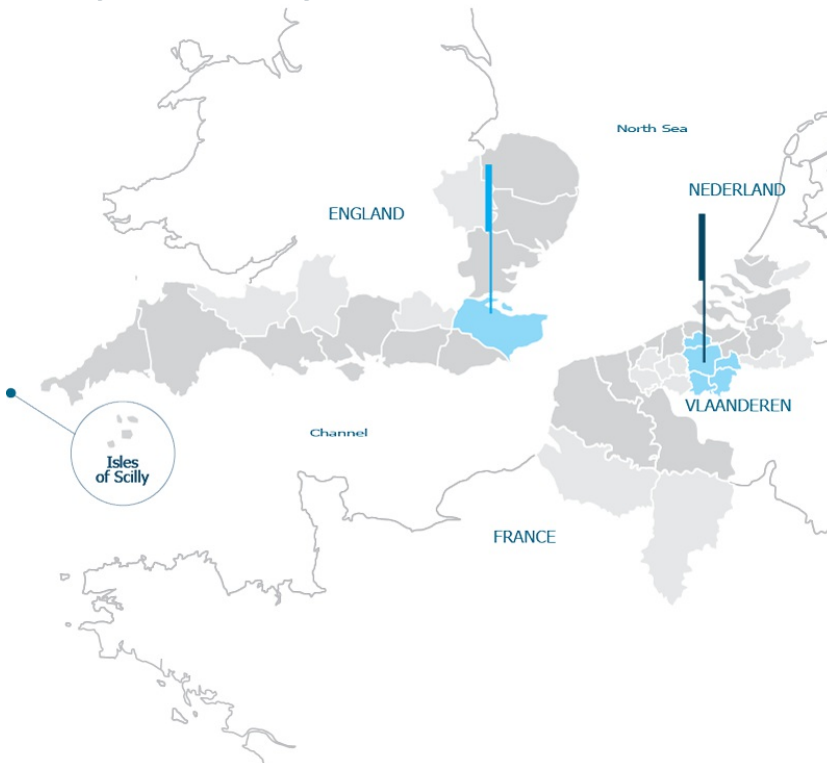


BPPE

Developing Best Practice in Promoting Enterprise (BPPE)



■ Project summary



The main aim of BPPE is to develop an enterprise culture and promote entrepreneurship in disadvantaged areas so that individuals can earn a living, gain self respect and grow the work ethic within their communities. Achieving this entrepreneurial spirit will mean creating the conditions and attitudes to be developed so that individuals can gain access to support and success in starting businesses. The project partners, support organisations with different social groups, will help these disadvantaged communities by intervening in schools and other training establishments, both in rural areas and coastal towns of the partner regions. The crossborder

aim is to affect the regional policies in this field, benefiting both citizens and regional economies by bringing together the best practical experience from the different partners. By increasing the availability and quality of entrepreneurship education and training, and not just focusing on business start up support, the project hopes to promote a culture in which all citizens in all regions will have the confidence to take risks in their lives as well as in business.

■ Activities

What was the project trying to achieve?

The primary aim of BPPE was to facilitate cross border co-operation to promote, identify and transfer best practice in fostering an enterprise culture, particularly amongst hard to reach groups. A second aim was to create an inventory of cross border projects which would help assess methods to trial. Cross border learning raised levels of knowledge and resulted in capacity building of both partner and other organisations through networking which can shape future economic development in partner countries. The aims were achieved though some will take longer to implement. An enterprise culture has been kick-started however to realise a

lasting, wider reach it will take longer to create a positive feeling about self-employment. Voka achieved regional buy in for the programme involving over 45's with their job centre and the prison trial resulted in interest across Flanders. Though BSK-CIC have achieved good results from some of their trials, the infrastructure of national business support has changed significantly since the start of BPPE and though new structures are being formed this will take some time to achieve. Currently UK partners have to rely on local support rather than regional or national. Objectives have been met with success in terms of raising awareness and developing an enterprise culture within the target groups. Some of the programmes have the added benefit of being self-sustaining. Being able to adapt and enhance products ensured that partners were able to meet new markets and gain invaluable market research at the same time.

What were the activities implemented?

Research Creation of an inventory of best practice - both partners completed a full inventory of enterprise related projects across Kent and East Flanders Completion of a swot gap analysis - to review and understand where any gaps in our knowledge and expertise were, allowing us to take this into account when choosing our trials. These first two actions were vital in providing a solid picture of enterprise and formed the basis of the BPPE project. The partners not only chose projects that fitted with their ethos but also with needs. Identifying appropriate action Site visits and review sessions were undertaken to understand the breadth of projects on offer thereby intensifying the knowledge and skills of each partner. Partners had more in depth access to partner programmes and material which they used to promote enterprise. Workshops were organised by each partner enabling detailed exploration of the projects which had been identified as possibilities for project trials. A mentor/learning network was established to assess demand for new networks. Mentor programmes were reviewed in the UK and Belgium providing data on methodology and content of partners' activities. BSK created a mentoring report detailing current state of play across the South East. The adaptation and translation of cross border enterprise materials was a vital step to accessing all documentation necessary for delivering a programme from start to end. Partners had access to trainers and to gauge usefulness for their local areas. Partners reviewed the material and talked to external partners prior to pilot delivery. Delivery and test of pilots - including recruitment workshops Full programmes were translated and adapted for local use. Common paperwork was designed and used where applicable. External partners were engaged and motivated to take part in BPPE and to communicate results and impact when completed. Recruitment was organised where applicable. The project carries out 16 trials involving 341 beneficiaries and resulted in 14 start ups with a further 3 potential start-ups in the pipeline. Throughout each stage evaluation took place which fed into development of the toolkit. Communication of the project both as a whole and as individual pilots was undertaken throughout the lifetime of the project to interested parties. An app was designed and developed to continue the theme of best practice in promoting enterprise.

■ Results

What were the key results of the project?

Through research and the swot, partners learned about gaps in knowledge and expertise.

Meeting partners and their respective network of business support brought even wider knowledge and potential for partnering on other projects. The value of enterprise portfolios was assessed bringing a catalogue of projects to consider. The project created a pool of common documents for use throughout the programme, based on best practice from each other. Partners met with trainers and designers and took external suggestions for changes in the future into consideration. Partners translated and adapted materials for use elsewhere. Marketing campaigns and recruitment sessions were completed and delivered throughout for all pilots trialled. Where a pilot was a success, partners tried to deliver it again to a different target group to gauge its flexibility. Evaluations were produced throughout - not just on the pilots but also on the progress of BPPE as a whole. A closing event was held for BPPE where results and lessons learned were disseminated. The project also launched the app at this event. A project transferred to Belgium was picked up by the Job Agency in Flanders (VDAB) who have incorporated part of the programme into a national one for older workers. There was interest in the prison programme and the inspirational events to encourage more women to take up self-employment - neither of these had been explored before. A programme taken to Kent has produced a self-sustaining legacy for promotion of enterprise to university students and requests for further pilots are still being received.

Did all partners and territories benefit from the results?

All partners benefitted from the exchanges of experience, the research, SWOT and identification of gaps in expertise as well as shared resources. As the swot analysis identified gaps in provision external partner organisations have also been able to review their future strategies. The Ambassadors pilot will continue as a self-sustaining project, picked up by a local university group to reach out to the younger generations. VDAB have also picked up part of the Shape Your future programme to enhance their national start up programme. Certain pilots which have been trialled in both the UK and Flanders have been successful and will be maintained in some form. Lessons learned from the pilots will be capitalised and used within new projects or introduced as a mainstream product and incorporated into ongoing business support. The UK programme for older workers for example has been incorporated into a mainstream national programme by VDAB in Flanders. The University students who have been trained to deliver talks to students in schools have applied for funding from local education to continue this in schools across the East Kent area. Lessons learned have also been incorporated into a new project - Fusion where both partners will work together again alongside others.

What were the effects / outcomes for the territories involved?

The learning from BPPE will help to shape future projects and strategies across the South East and Flanders. Learning has already been disseminated and there is a wider pool of workshops and programmes to use in the development of new content. It has provided us all with an extended knowledge of support and cultural differences. It has also allowed us to see how innovative we can be by adapting tried and tested material in different groups. The wider impact of BPPE in the territories should result in increased interest in enterprise culture and self-employment which is particularly important during this economic downturn. More people starting businesses should result in more local jobs which has a positive effect on the local supply chain. It could also inspire others to start up.

■ Distinctiveness

What was the real added-value of doing this cross-border project?

One aspect of this project has been to try and replicate a programme running in one country to see if it would translate and adapt to running in another with very different cultural attributes. It was up to us to use that knowledge to adapt its use with a different target market either geographically or demographically. Partners and staff have benefited from cross border exchange both in relationships and knowledge base. This has led to capacity building within both organisations internally as well as with partners externally. It has given us a pool of additional tools and experience to add to our portfolios which we are able to build on in the future. The project provided us with additional ways of promoting enterprise awareness and generating an interest in minority groups. This has all been particularly useful in today's ever changing economic situation.

Have any synergies been developed with other projects or networks?

Partners have already started working on Fusion and have recently been awarded another project funded by LDV about Internationalisation where we are both partners along with others. Fusion looks at sustainable start up and involves both BSK and VOKA as well as other partners and capitalises on some of the lessons learned both from BPPE and from ECOMIND. COMP INT looks at internationalisation from a training angle and will include the creation of an online training tool to help companies who want to trade in Europe. Two very different projects involving different expertise from our two companies showing the wealth of experience we both have internally. Rather than concentrate on one area we have both moved seamlessly into other competencies using the relationships that have been built up to introduce staff to each other. It was intended to work with AiMER (an Interreg 4A 2 seas project) trying to promote English lessons to first and second generation migrants in the area. Agreement had been reached to refer people from our Atlas programme to this one if necessary but unfortunately the uptake on this was not strong enough to continue with it. We expect to continue introducing each other to potential partners and useful contacts so that when an opportunity arises we have a network already in place to provide us with the expertise required.

What are the key messages , key lessons learned you would like to share?

There is always something that you can learn from others. Always be open minded and listen carefully to what's being said as you may think that your product or service is the best but it can always be improved and others may have found a new or better way of approaching a solution. EU projects give you the chance to absorb new information so make sure that you make the most of it. Talking to others is vital and reading evaluation material from other projects could help you to shape your current or future offers. Think outside the box! if a project is presented to you and it works with one target group think about how you could adapt it to meet your local needs. Don't get disheartened if the impact is not as powerful as anticipated as it could take time to embed and create results.

■ Project Information

Title	Developing Best Practice in Promoting Enterprise (BPPE)
Total project budget	€ 1 131 293
ERDF	€ 565 646
Priority & objective	Priority 1 e. Promote entrepreneurship and facilitate the development of employment and human capital
Timeframe	2008-01-02 - 2011-09-30
Lead partner	Business Support Kent Community Interest Company
Project Coordinator	Champney Adrian(adrian.champney@businesslinkkent.co.uk)

