

THE BETTER ENTREPRENEURSHIP POLICY TOOL

INCLUSIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

SUPPORTING ALL UNDER-REPRESENTED AND DISADVANTAGED GROUPS



Fostering an inclusive entrepreneurial culture



Strengthening the design and delivery of inclusive entrepreneurship support



Building a supportive regulatory environment



Building entrepreneurship skills and capacities for inclusive entrepreneurship

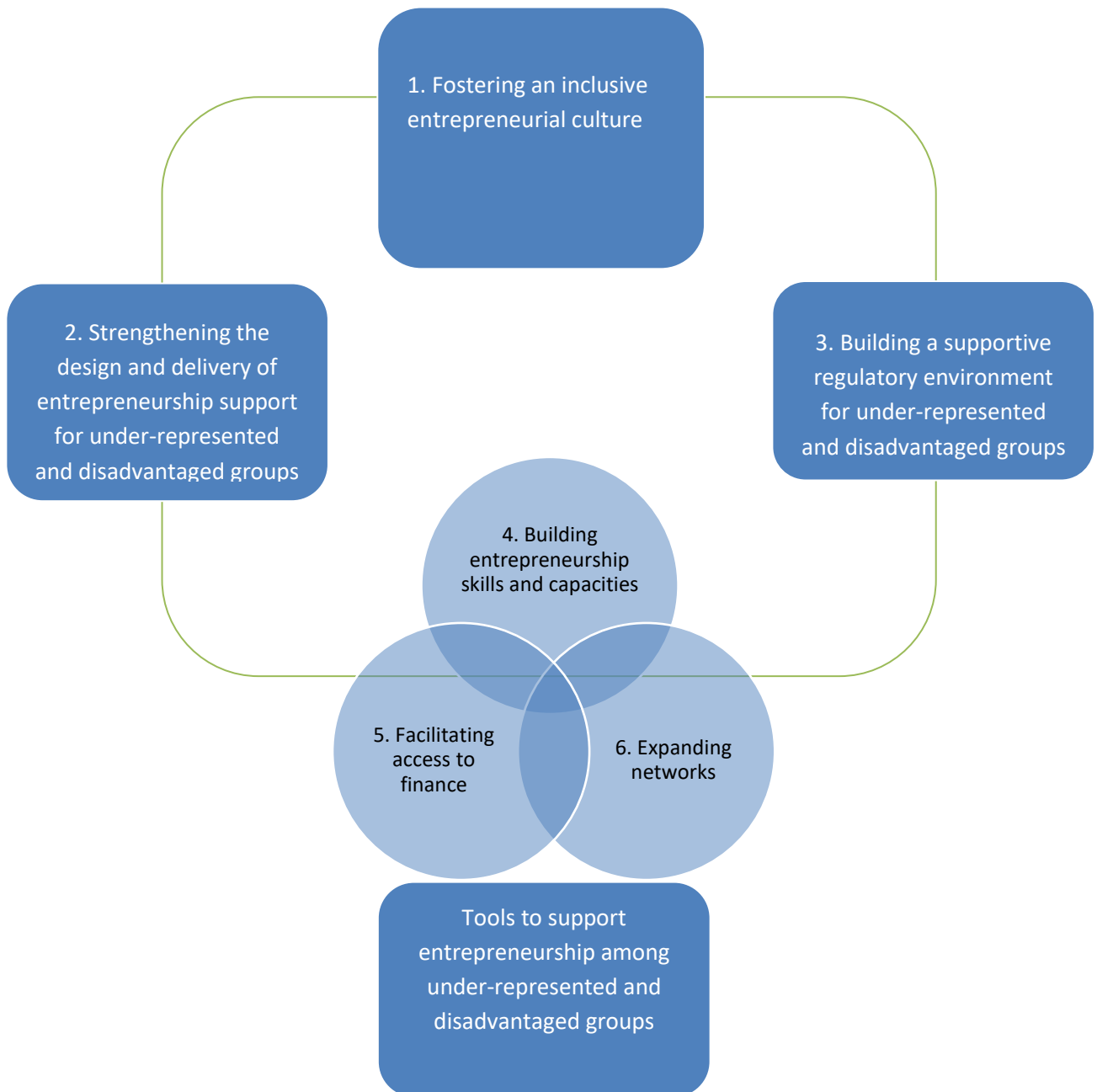


Facilitating access to business finance for inclusive entrepreneurship



Expanding networks for inclusive entrepreneurship

Inclusive Entrepreneurship Policy: Supporting all under-represented and disadvantaged groups



This questionnaire was designed to let you assess the environment for inclusive entrepreneurship in your country, region, or city, focusing on tailored support offered, i.e. dedicated support that specifically addresses the needs of specific groups rather than general support measures that seek to reach everyone.

The questionnaire was designed to be flexible and can be used in several ways. First, it can be used to reflect on how dedicated policies and programmes reach and support all people from under-represented groups overall, e.g. are women, youth, migrants and the unemployed sufficiently supported by the current suite of tailored entrepreneurship policies and programmes?

Second, it can be used to reflect on a specific population group that is not currently covered by a dedicated exercise on this site. In this case, you can replace the phrase “under-represented and disadvantaged groups” by the group of your choice (e.g. entrepreneurs with disabilities, Roma population) when filling out the questionnaire. Please note that dedicated questionnaires are available to assess support to women, youth, the unemployed, immigrants and seniors in entrepreneurship.

* Each statement is assessed on a scale from 0 to 10. You also have the option to “No answer” if you do not have an answer or the question is not relevant to your context. This leaves the response out of the average calculation. Visit www.betterentrepreneurship.eu to carry out the online self-assessment.

CULTURE



Action Area 1: Fostering an Inclusive Entrepreneurial Culture

Increasing awareness about the potential of entrepreneurship as an alternative to dependent employment is the first step to opening up entrepreneurship to all. This module covers promotion methods such as targeted awareness campaigns, education and the use of role models.



1.1. Entrepreneurship is promoted widely in society.

A high score includes:

- Entrepreneurship is promoted as a viable activity for a wide range of people (e.g. various genders, ages, ethnicities, disability statuses) including under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
- A positive image of the entrepreneurial potential among under-represented and disadvantaged groups is created.
- The economic impact of entrepreneurship driven by under-represented and disadvantaged groups is communicated.
- Success stories, role models and entrepreneurship awards are used to showcase entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
- Active labour market measures include business creation support measures for under-represented and disadvantaged groups.



1.2. Entrepreneurship is promoted to different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- Campaigns, success stories, role models and entrepreneurship awards are used to inspire people from under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
- Messages are tailored for different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups, for example, women, recent immigrants, Roma, people with disabilities, younger and older people.
- Appropriate messages are used to inform about the role of risk in entrepreneurship.
- Appropriate media and online channels are used to reach different under-represented and disadvantaged groups.



1.3. Targeted campaigns promote entrepreneurship by under-represented and disadvantaged groups to key role models.

A high score includes:

- Targeted campaigns inform career counsellors, public employment services and unions about the potential of entrepreneurship for people with diverse profiles, including under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
- A positive image of entrepreneurship by people from under-represented and disadvantaged groups is created.
- Appropriate media and online channels are used to reach key role models for potential entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups.



1.4. Formal education builds positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship.

A high score includes:

- Entrepreneurship is presented positively in the mandatory curricula in schooling.
- Entrepreneurship education covers a wide variety of entrepreneurship activities and models (e.g. part-time entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship) and showcases a diverse range of entrepreneurs (i.e. different genders, ethnic background, age, disability status, etc.).
- Teachers receive training on delivering the entrepreneurship curricula.
- Students are encouraged to consider entrepreneurship as a career path.



1.5. Monitoring and evaluation are used to assess the impact of entrepreneurship promotion activities for under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- Measurable targets are set for outreach to different under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
 - Monitoring and mid-term evaluations are undertaken to ensure that promotional activities are on-track to reach their targets and objectives for different under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
 - Promotional activities are adjusted to account for monitoring and mid-term evaluation results.
 - *Ex post* evaluations are undertaken to measure the impact of entrepreneurship promotion activities aimed at under-represented and disadvantaged groups, and results are reported widely.
 - Monitoring and evaluation results are reported widely and used to improve awareness campaigns.
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STRATEGIES



Action Area 2: Strengthening the design and delivery of inclusive entrepreneurship support

The successful delivery of inclusive entrepreneurship schemes often depends on effective partnerships across public actors, and with non-government organisations. It is also important to engage with the targeted entrepreneurs that stand to benefit from public support measures. This module covers different approaches to designing and delivering inclusive entrepreneurship programmes and outreach methods.



2.1. Policy objectives and targets for promoting and supporting entrepreneurship for under-represented and disadvantaged groups have been defined.

A high score includes:

- A strategic plan is publicly available for different under-represented and disadvantaged groups, either as a stand-alone document (e.g. women's entrepreneurship strategy) or as part of a broader policy strategy (e.g. self-employment strategy for under-represented and disadvantaged groups).
- Entrepreneurship policy objectives are linked to broader employment, economic and social policy objectives.
- Key stakeholders were engaged early in the development of policy objectives and targets for promoting and supporting entrepreneurship for under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
- Indicators of success and data collection processes have been defined for different under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
- A public sector actor is responsible for achieving entrepreneurship policy objectives for under-represented and disadvantaged groups, either as a whole or for specific groups (e.g. women, people with disabilities, youth, etc.).



2.2. There is an action plan to mobilise public sector actors and other relevant stakeholders to achieve entrepreneurship policy objectives for under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- Concrete actions to achieve the entrepreneurship policy objectives for different under-represented and disadvantaged groups are identified.
- There is a clear leader in the public sector for entrepreneurship support targeted at different under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
- Responsibility for actions is specified.
- Timelines for the concrete actions are identified.

- An action plan is available publicly.



2.3. Appropriate financial resources have been allocated to implement entrepreneurship support for under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- Sufficient financial resources have been earmarked to implement entrepreneurship support for all under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
- Funding sources have been identified.
- A tracking system is in place to manage and report on public expenditures related to entrepreneurship support for under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
- There is an appropriate balance between investment in policy and programme development and operational expenditures.
- There is budget for monitoring and evaluation.



2.4. Effective co-ordination mechanisms are in place to facilitate collaboration among public sector actors involved in designing and delivering entrepreneurship policies and programmes for under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- Horizontal co-ordination mechanisms are in-place, e.g. inter-ministerial working group.
- Vertical co-ordination mechanisms are in-place, e.g. working groups with policy makers and delivery agencies.
- There is co-ordination between programmes tailored at under-represented and disadvantaged groups and entrepreneurship promotion programmes that have a generic focus.
- Information on entrepreneurship schemes for under-represented and disadvantaged groups is shared regularly across public sector actors and with other relevant stakeholders.
- Data and statistics on the take-up and impact of entrepreneurship schemes targeting for under-represented and disadvantaged groups are shared regularly across public sector actors and with other relevant stakeholders.
- Informal communication is regular and ongoing between all relevant actors.



2.5. Outreach methods are tailored to different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups to inform them about the range of available entrepreneurship support offers.

A high score includes:

- Promotion is done through appropriate media, which are chosen to best meet the habits of different under-represented and disadvantaged groups (e.g. traditional media such as magazines,

television, street advertisement campaigns, new media such as social media platforms and other online channels).

- Organisations that work with under-represented and disadvantaged groups are used to promote support offers.
- Relevant role models for different groups are used in outreach.



2.6. Entrepreneurship support providers are equipped to work with different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- Support providers have experience in working with people from under-represented and disadvantaged groups with different backgrounds and with diverse experiences and objectives.
- Front line staff are diverse and include staff who have similar backgrounds to those in the under-represented and disadvantaged groups that they are seeking to support to enhance trust and communication.
- Front line staff understand the unique challenges faced by different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups (e.g. access to relevant professional and business networks) and are aware of the main complementary support available to different groups (e.g. subsidies for people with disabilities, tax incentives for the unemployed, etc.).
- Front line staff receive communication training to work effectively with different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups.



2.7. Monitoring and evaluation are used to measure progress against the strategic objectives and targets for supporting under-represented and disadvantaged groups in entrepreneurship.

A high score includes:

- *Ex ante* evaluations are used to identify areas where policy action is needed, assess the consistency of proposed policy actions with ongoing interventions, identify linkages with other policy actions, and ensure that proposed actions are coherent with strategic objectives.
 - Monitoring and mid-term evaluations are undertaken to ensure that entrepreneurship schemes for under-represented and disadvantaged groups are on-track to reach their targets and objectives.
 - *Ex post* evaluations are undertaken to measure the impact of entrepreneurship policies for under-represented and disadvantaged groups and the results are publicly reported.
 - Monitoring and evaluation of generic entrepreneurship policies include data disaggregated by gender, age, and other characteristics.
 - Results of monitoring and evaluation are publicly reported and fed back into the policy development process.
 - Schemes are adjusted to account for monitoring and evaluation results.
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REGULATIONS



Action Area 3: Building a supportive regulatory environment

Lengthy and costly administrative procedures can be a barrier to business creation. This is especially true for those from under-represented and disadvantaged groups who have greater difficulty navigating the institutional environment and understanding regulatory obligations. This module covers actions to improve the regulatory environment, including simplifying administrative requirements for business creation, as well as other regulatory incentives for entrepreneurship, such as temporary relief from social security contributions, and measures to address challenges like childcare and eldercare.



3.1. Business start-up regulations and procedures do not pose undue difficulties for under-represented and disadvantaged groups aspiring to enter entrepreneurship.

A high score includes:

- The business registration process requires few procedures.
 - Regulations have been checked to ensure that potential entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups are treated positively.
 - Regulations have been checked to ensure that there are no undue disincentives to entrepreneurship and self-employments for beneficiaries of social benefits (e.g. disability benefits, unemployment benefits, retirement pensions) that may be caused by abrupt ending of benefits, incompatibilities or difficulties re-accessing previous benefits after business failure.
 - Electronic business registration and other business-related e-services exist and are accessible (e.g. compatible with screen readers)
 - Information on administrative procedures is available in clear language and accessible for different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
 - Licensing and certification schemes do not impede entrepreneurship by under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
 - People from under-represented and disadvantaged groups can easily obtain individual assistance when dealing with administrative regulations and start-up procedures, e.g. by telephone, in-person or online.
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3.2. Tailored information on business creation is available and accessible for different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- Different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups have been considered in the development of information products (e.g. websites, brochures) on business creation.
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- Guidance materials on business creation use easily understood language, are available on accessible supports and are relevant for the types of businesses that those from under-represented and disadvantaged groups aspire to create.
- Guidance materials on business creation highlight any specific incentives for which people from under-represented and disadvantaged groups may be eligible (e.g. tax reductions for the unemployed or youth) and where to get information on group specific administrative tasks (e.g. transition from being a benefits recipient to entrepreneurship).
- Information related to business creation is made available to all under-represented and disadvantaged groups through relevant channels (e.g. community organisations, online platforms).
- Relevant stakeholders were consulted in the development of guidance materials and help disseminate it.



3.3. Social security systems contain incentives for entrepreneurship for all under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- Entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups are eligible for coverage in all social security schemes, e.g. health insurance, pension schemes, maternity pay, unemployment insurance.
- Welfare bridges and other similar measures are in place and promoted directly to under-represented and disadvantaged groups to encourage business creation.
- There are incentives for business creation for potential entrepreneurs starting from for under-represented and disadvantaged groups, e.g. tax credits, temporary reductions in social security contributions.
- Temporary incentives are phased-out rather than ending abruptly.
- Entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups can access social security benefits after a business exit.



3.4. Monitoring and evaluation are used to assess problems in the regulatory environment for entrepreneurship among under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- *Ex ante* evaluations are used to identify areas where policy action is needed, assess the consistency of proposed policy actions with ongoing interventions, identify linkages with other policy actions, and ensure that proposed actions are coherent with strategic objectives. *Ex ante* evaluations systematically consider the needs of different under-represented and disadvantaged groups and the potential impacts of new regulations for different groups.

- Monitoring and mid-term evaluations are undertaken to ensure that regulatory measures that support potential entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups are on-track to reach their targets and objectives.
 - Regulatory measures are adjusted to account for monitoring and mid-term evaluation results.
 - *Ex post* evaluations are undertaken to measure the impact of regulatory measures on entrepreneurship for under-represented and disadvantaged groups, and results are reported widely.
 - Results of monitoring and evaluation are publicly reported.
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SKILLS



Action Area 4: Building entrepreneurship skills and capacities for inclusive entrepreneurship

Evidence suggests that businesses that access professional business support and guidance are more likely to be sustainable than those who do not. Business support is particularly important for entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups since they typically have lower levels of human and social capital. This module covers public policy approaches to supporting the acquisition of entrepreneurship skills, including entrepreneurship training, coaching and mentoring, and business consultancy and advisory services.



4.1. Needs assessments are used to identify the policy supports needed to strengthen entrepreneurship skills for various profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- Needs assessments are used in the design of policies and programmes that support the development of entrepreneurship skills for all under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
 - Under-represented and disadvantaged groups, and community organisations supporting them, are consulted to identify how policy can support the development of their entrepreneurship skills.
 - The needs of different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups are considered when designing and implementing policies and programmes that develop entrepreneurship skills.
 - Background research is conducted to provide a solid evidence base for policy interventions.
 - Benchmarking and meta-evaluations are used when designing initiatives that aim to develop entrepreneurship skills.
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4.2. Entrepreneurship training is offered to all under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- Dedicated entrepreneurship training is available for under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
 - Training covers the needs at different points of business development, i.e. pre start-up, start-up, growth.
 - Risk management and financial literacy are included in training programmes.
 - Hands-on and interactive methods are used in training, e.g. role playing, simulations.
 - Trainers are trained to work with diverse profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
 - Entrepreneurship training for under-represented and disadvantaged groups has linkages with other entrepreneurship supports, e.g. coaching, mentoring and business financing programmes.
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- The scale of dedicated entrepreneurship training for under-represented and disadvantaged groups is appropriate.



4.3. Entrepreneurship coaching and mentoring are offered to under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- Dedicated entrepreneurship coaching and mentoring programmes for under-represented and disadvantaged groups are available.
- Objectives for coaching and mentoring relationships are defined by the potential entrepreneur and their coach or mentor.
- There is a matching mechanism to ensure that there is a “good fit” between the entrepreneur and their coach or mentor.
- Entrepreneurship coaches and mentors receive training on working with diverse profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
- Mentors have diverse profiles, including mentors who have similar backgrounds to those in the under-represented and disadvantaged groups that they are mentoring to enhance trust and communication.
- Coaching and mentoring relationships are established for a limited period to avoid creating dependence.
- The scale of tailored entrepreneurship coaching and mentoring for under-represented and disadvantaged groups is appropriate.



4.4. Business development services are offered for under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- Tailored business consultancy and advisory services are available for under-represented and disadvantaged groups from diverse backgrounds.
- Business consultancy and advisory services are integrated with other entrepreneurship supports for under-represented and disadvantaged groups, e.g. start-up financing.
- There is a system of allocating business consultancy and advisory services to people from under-represented and disadvantaged groups with the greatest potential.
- Business incubators and accelerators are accessible for under-represented and disadvantaged groups, e.g. through dedicated outreach efforts or participation targets or quotas.
- Business trainers and counsellors are trained to work with people from under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
- The scale of tailored business development services for under-represented and disadvantaged groups is appropriate.



4.5. Entrepreneurship skills development initiatives for under-represented and disadvantaged groups have strong linkages with business financing supports.

A high score includes:

- Tailored entrepreneurship support for under-represented and disadvantaged groups is offered in integrated packages.
- Different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups are informed about the range of options for receiving financing and other supports.
- Entrepreneurship training, coaching and mentoring initiatives refer potential entrepreneurs to appropriate sources of finance.



4.6. Entrepreneurship skills development initiatives for under-represented and disadvantaged groups are delivered through appropriate channels.

A high score includes:

- Entrepreneurship training, coaching and mentoring, and business development services for under-represented and disadvantaged groups are delivered by agencies or organisations that have appropriate experience and expertise in working with these groups.
- Support is provided in a flexible manner, including different formats, locations and schedules.



4.7. Entrepreneurship skills development initiatives are tailored for different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- Entrepreneurship training, coaching and mentoring, and business development services are developed to meet the needs of different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups, e.g. older people, people with disabilities, people in disadvantaged areas, long-term unemployed.
- Outreach methods are adapted to different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
- Different service delivery models are used to effectively support diverse profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups.



4.8. Monitoring and evaluation are used to measure the impact, effectiveness and efficiency of dedicated entrepreneurship training, coaching and mentoring, and business development services for under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- *Ex ante* evaluations are used to identify areas where policy action is needed, assess the consistency of proposed policy actions with ongoing interventions, identify linkages with other policy actions, and ensure that proposed actions are coherent with strategic objectives. *Ex ante* evaluations systematically consider the needs of different under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
 - Monitoring and mid-term evaluations are undertaken to ensure that entrepreneurship schemes for under-represented and disadvantaged groups are on-track to reach their targets and objectives.
 - Schemes are adjusted to account for monitoring and mid-term evaluation results.
 - *Ex post* evaluations are undertaken to measure the impact of entrepreneurship policies targeting under-represented and disadvantaged groups, and the results are reported widely.
 - Monitoring and evaluation of generic policies and programmes offering skills development and business development support include data that is disaggregated by gender, age and other characteristics.
 - Deadweight loss and displacement effects are measured and reported.
 - Results of monitoring and evaluation are publicly reported and used to improve entrepreneurship training, coaching and mentoring and business development services.
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FINANCE



Action Area 5: Facilitating Access to Business Finance for under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

Accessing start-up finance poses a major challenge to all entrepreneurs, but entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups face even greater barriers as they typically have lower levels of savings and collateral, and can face discrimination in financial markets. This module covers both demand and supply issues. Its scope includes public instruments such as grants, credit guarantees, microfinance and non-bank financing instruments, as well as schemes that improve financial literacy.



5.1. Needs assessments are used to identify how policy can address gaps in the availability and accessibility of business financing for under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- Needs assessments are used to design policies and programmes that facilitate access to business finance for the different under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
- Under-represented and disadvantaged groups, and community organisations supporting them, are consulted to identify how policy support can address gaps in the availability and accessibility of business finance.
- The needs of different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups are considered when designing and implementing policies and programmes that facilitate access to business finance.
- Background research is conducted to provide a solid evidence base for policy interventions.
- Benchmarking and meta-evaluations are used when designing finance measures.



5.2. The current suite of *business start-up* financing offers is appropriate for various profiles of people from under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- A range of financial instruments is used to support under-represented and disadvantaged groups in business start-up, e.g. loan guarantees, microfinance, risk capital.
- Different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups can access start-up financing offers.
- The private sector is involved in the selection of business ideas that receive financing.
- Crowdfunding and peer-to-peer lending platforms for under-represented and disadvantaged groups are promoted and supported.

- Only business ideas with a reasonable chance of success are supported.
- Innovative (but not necessarily technology-related) business ideas are favoured for support.
- The scale of financing support offered is appropriate.



5.3. The current suite of *business development and growth* financing offers is appropriate for various profiles of entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- A range of tailored financial instruments is available to support the development and growth of businesses started by under-represented and disadvantaged groups, e.g. loan guarantees, microfinance, risk capital.
- Different profiles of entrepreneurs can access appropriate finance for business development and growth (e.g. women, youth, entrepreneurs with disabilities and immigrants).
- Lending laws and financial sector regulations ensure sufficient investor protection and transparency on business projects.
- The private sector is involved in the design or management of financing mechanisms. The scale of business development and *growth* financing support offered to diverse profiles of entrepreneurs is appropriate.



5.4. The current suite of business financing offers for *high-growth potential firms* is appropriate for entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- Business angel networks dedicated to investing in ventures started by entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups are supported and encouraged, e.g. tax incentives, subsidised operating costs, public co-investment.
 - There is a range of potential investors that matches the variety of entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups (e.g. people with disabilities, traveller groups, women) and diversity in the investment sector is promoted.
 - The private sector is involved in the design or management of financing mechanisms.
 - Training is offered to investors on the potential of entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups and to address potential biases in lending and investing decisions.
 - Training is offered to entrepreneurs starting from under-represented and disadvantaged groups to improve investor readiness.
 - Public infrastructure to improve matchmaking between entrepreneurs and investors exists.
 - The scale of support for risk capital measures and business angel networks is appropriate.
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5.5. Business financing initiatives for under-represented and disadvantaged groups have strong linkages with non-financial supports.

A high score includes:

- Tailored entrepreneurship support for under-represented and disadvantaged groups is offered in integrated packages.
- Entrepreneurs receiving financial support are informed about the range of options for developing entrepreneurship, financial and management skills.
- Financing measures for people from under-represented and disadvantaged groups refer entrepreneurs to appropriate training, coaching and mentoring, and business counselling.



5.6. Business financing support for different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups is delivered through appropriate channels.

A high score includes:

- Business financing offers for under-represented and disadvantaged groups are delivered by agencies or organisations that have appropriate experience or expertise in working with the target groups.
- Support measures are clearly marketed and are accessible (e.g. location or timing of support offer) to under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
- A database of financing programmes and opportunities is available to entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups.



5.7. Monitoring and evaluation are used to measure the impact, effectiveness and efficiency of business financing schemes for different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- *Ex ante* evaluations are used to identify areas where policy action is needed, assess the consistency of proposed policy actions with ongoing interventions, identify linkages with other policy actions, and ensure that proposed actions are coherent with strategic objectives. *Ex ante* evaluations systematically consider the needs of different under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
 - Monitoring and mid-term evaluations are undertaken to ensure that entrepreneurship schemes for under-represented and disadvantaged groups are on-track to reach their targets and objectives.
 - Schemes are adjusted to account for monitoring and mid-term evaluation results.
 - *Ex post* evaluations are undertaken to measure the impact of entrepreneurship policies targeting under-represented and disadvantaged groups, and the results are reported widely.
 - Monitoring and evaluation of generic business financing schemes include data that is disaggregated by gender, age and other characteristics.
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- Deadweight loss and displacement effects are measured and reported.
 - Results of monitoring and evaluation are publicly reported and used to improve start-up financing offers.
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NETWORKS



Action Area 6: Expanding Business Networks for under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

Entrepreneurship networks can have a profound impact on the development of individual entrepreneurial intentions and play a major role in the ability of individuals to identify business opportunities and access resources (e.g. finance, entrepreneurship skills). Public policy can support the development of entrepreneurial networks with targeted initiatives that link entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups with each other and with mainstream business organisations and support programmes. This module covers different approaches to building entrepreneurial networks for specific under-represented and disadvantaged groups (e.g. women, recent migrants, people with disabilities, traveller groups or the unemployed) and key success factors.



6.1. Needs assessments are used to identify how policy can address gaps in business networks for potential entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- Needs assessments are used to design policies and programmes that support the development of entrepreneurship networks for the different under-represented and disadvantaged groups (e.g. recent immigrants, women, people with disabilities, traveller groups and the unemployed).
- Aspiring entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups, and community organisations supporting them, are consulted to identify how policy support can address gaps in business networks for these groups.
- The needs of different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups are considered when designing and implementing policies and programmes that build entrepreneurship networks.
- Background research is conducted to provide a solid evidence base for policy initiatives.
- Benchmarking and meta-evaluations are used when designing networking initiatives for entrepreneurs who start out from under-represented and disadvantaged groups.



6.2. Public networking initiatives are promoted to build connections between aspiring and existing entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups, other entrepreneurs and mainstream business networks.

A high score includes:

- There is awareness about entrepreneurs starting from under-represented and disadvantaged groups among mainstream business networks.
 - There are public initiatives that link potential entrepreneurs starting from for under-represented and disadvantaged groups with relevant mainstream business networks, organisations and associations to expand their networks.
 - Referrals to networks consider the needs, objectives and profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups from diverse backgrounds.
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6.3. Public entrepreneurship networking initiatives for aspiring entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups build connections with entrepreneurship support organisations.

A high score includes:

- Publicly supported entrepreneurship networks for aspiring entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups (e.g. women, people with disabilities, traveller groups and the unemployed) raise awareness about available entrepreneurship supports.
 - Networks members are referred to a wide range of entrepreneurship support services.
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6.4. Public networks for entrepreneurs for under-represented and disadvantaged groups are actively animated.

A high score includes:

- A person is responsible for engaging network members.
 - Network members feel a sense of ownership over the network and actively contribute to network activities.
 - There are regular opportunities for face-to-face and online interactions.
 - Newsletters are used to maintain regular contact with network members.
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6.5. Public networking initiatives offer opportunities for entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups to interact with other entrepreneurs through online platforms.

A high score includes:

- Online platforms are used to expand the reach of the entrepreneurship networks for under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
 - Online platforms and communities connect experienced entrepreneurs with potential entrepreneurs from similar backgrounds.
 - Appropriate matching mechanisms are used to connect the entrepreneurs from under-represented and disadvantaged groups with more experience entrepreneurs.
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- Use of online networking platforms is monitored to verify take-up among under-represented and disadvantaged groups who aspire to create a business.



6.6. Monitoring and evaluation are used to measure the impact, effectiveness and efficiency of public entrepreneurship networking initiatives for different profiles of under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

A high score includes:

- *Ex ante* evaluations are used to identify areas where policy action is needed, assess the consistency of proposed policy actions with ongoing interventions, identify linkages with other policy actions, and ensure that proposed actions are coherent with strategic objectives.
 - Monitoring and mid-term evaluations are undertaken to ensure that entrepreneurship schemes for under-represented and disadvantaged groups are on-track to reach their targets and objectives.
 - Schemes are adjusted to account for monitoring and mid-term evaluation results.
 - *Ex post* evaluations are undertaken to measure the impact of entrepreneurship policies targeting under-represented and disadvantaged groups, and the results are reported widely.
 - Monitoring and evaluation of generic and tailored public networks include data that is disaggregated by gender, age and other characteristics.
 - Results of monitoring and evaluation are publicly reported and used to improve networking initiatives.
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