

YOUTH COOPS c1

Training course: Soft skills training for young coop-starters

The module aims to encourage youth workers to develop the attitudes and skills that are needed to run a cooperative. Leading founders of social co-operatives are social entrepreneurs that act as key change makers by collectively pursuing a social aim.

The success of a social cooperative business depends on the interest, ability and capacity of people to bring about desired change, using their sense of initiative and entrepreneurship to turn ideas into action while cooperating together.

Learning objectives

Participants learned how to:

- develop interpersonal skills to interact within the group;
- detect (and bring out) their members' entrepreneurial skills;
- apply co-operative principles and values in their planned businesses;
- turn ideas into action through group decision making;
- use of all the information and materials of the training in their every-day work and with the people they work.

Contents

Each day was finished with reflection sessions, and foreseen final evaluation session at the end of the course.

- 1) Interpersonal skills and group dynamics;
- 2) Means of informal learning;
- 3) Communication, cooperation, teamwork;
- 4) Competency passport;
- 5) Definition of a Social Co-operative, its values and good governance;
- 6) 7 Key Skills of Successful Social Entrepreneurs

Expected outcomes:

- 1) Foster the improvement of soft skills for young entrepreneurs such as creativity, innovation and risk taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects together in order to achieve objectives;
- 2) Equip participants with the necessary skills to transfer the acquired knowledge to young people and to aspiring youth entrepreneurs in general in their daily work through the E-Portal.

DAY 1- PRESENTATION AND INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

The first day of the training was mainly focused on team building and group cohesion in order to create a positive and comfortable atmosphere to work efficiently in groups as well as to starting strengthening or creating positive bonds.

MORNING ACTIVITY

Presentation and ice breaking games were developed in order to strengthen ties and create a trustful and comfortable atmosphere to be able to openly express not only our thoughts but also our feelings and impressions, namely:

1. The Balloon Game (Complimentary Game)

People were asked to throw the balloon to somebody and introduce themselves and add: “I don’t know you yet, however I guess you ...”. The task was to guess about the other person, what activity they are good at or what strong skills they have.



2. Names and personal adjectives



This activity helped the participants to learn the names of the other participants in a more dynamic way. The trainer gave indications to the participants to make a circle.

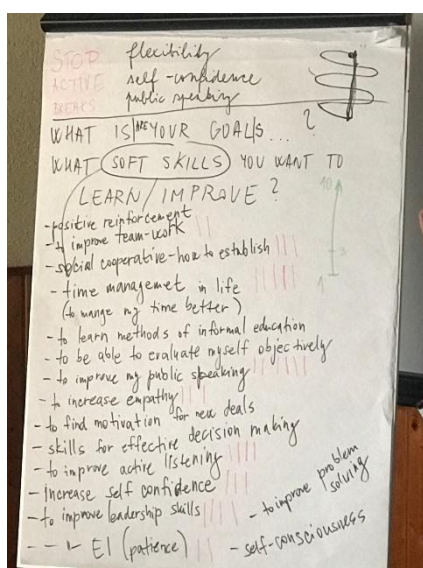
First the trainer started to say her name and an adjective that starts with the same letter and describes herself. The next person had to repeat the previous person name and adjective, and to follow with her/his name and adjective. The rest of the participant had to do the same, always repeating the names and adjectives of the people before them.

3. What Is Your Goal?

Trainer asked the group to prepare their answers for the following questions:

1. What is your goal for this training?
2. What soft skills do you wish to learn or improve?

After some time for reflection on their own, participants share their goals with the group. Trainer writes the goals on the flipchart. Through the week the trainer reflects on the requests the participants had on Monday and emphasizes them in the learning process.



Objective of this activity was for the participants to realize, what it is they need to work on skills wise, what they want to improve and think about the week training ahead to concentrate on the key objectives for each of them. This activity is essential for any training to start with.

4. Activity: Me, Myself and I

This activity creates the space for the participants to share information about themselves to the other participants, while they also reflect on themselves personally.

Tool I: My flag

- The trainer distributed paper to each participant;



- Asked them to divide the paper in 6 sections: My strengths, My weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats, My role models, My dreams;
- Gave the task to the participants to fill all sections. They can complete it in their own way, using their creativity;
- Divided the participants in groups of 3 participants and ask them to present and share their flag in the group.

Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard worker • Organized • Idea person • Initiative and motivation • Independent worker 	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize objective • Active listening
Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My experience • Great team • Good time: youngsters are open to mobility, entrepreneurship, associations • Vuca environment 	Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not getting out of the box • Burocracy • Chosing the wrong staff
My role models <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some of my students have taught me great lessons 	My dreams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Break the wall of inertia • Free myself • To get to know myself better and find the strengths to change

AFTERNOON ACTIVITY

Off-site visit to a raw cake company.

DAY 2

During the second day of the training we continued working on establishing a good atmosphere for team work as well as determining the common objectives to learn. The whole day was planned around the goals the team had set for themselves on the first day.

MORNING ACTIVITY

Reflection on Day 1.

The first half an hour was dedicated to reflecting on what the participants have learned from the first day of the training and from the off-site visit in the afternoon.

Social cooperative definition (workshop)

In order to be able to better adapt the contents to the needs of the participants, we developed an activity aiming at having a better understanding of the expectations, aims and contributions of the participants.



Objective

To define the Social Cooperative – to create a common definition of a social cooperative.

Aims

Participants worked in groups of 4 – 5. Every group had a captain, who was senior in social cooperative knowledge (had more or less experience). Captains stayed at the same table throughout the exercise and other participants rotated. The aim was to use soft skills (such as active listening, empathy, etc) in discussing the social cooperative definition.



My skills

Objective

The participants will get to know one each other better and started to get to know other people's characteristics. Moreover, they reflected on their own existing skills and abilities and areas for potential development.

Description

The participants were given an A4 paper and they were asked to write their names clearly on it in the header. They got 5 minutes to reflect on their own skills and competences and asked them to write 3 of them in a visible way under their name. Two of the competences were real, while one was false.

The next step was to attach the paper on their chest and go around the room and stop randomly to chat in couples, trying to guess the false skill on the participants they are talking with. As soon as they guessed it, it was time to change and search to talk with another person.

Energizer – “Values exercise”

The group was asked to write 10 “values” (important things, activities, etc.) in their lives, each on one paper. Next step was to choose only five they will keep (throw away 5 least important). Then next step is to throw away 2 more. They were left with 3 most important values. The next instruction was: prioritize them from 1 to 3. Conclusion: If you have tasks or goals in your life that are connected with these values, you reach the goal with certain ease. However, on the other hand, if you want to achieve something and it is not in line with your values, it might be hard to achieve it.

Objective

Aim of this exercise was to look at priorities in participants life and realize, how our goals are connected with the values.

Coaching approach – a new way to develop people’s skills

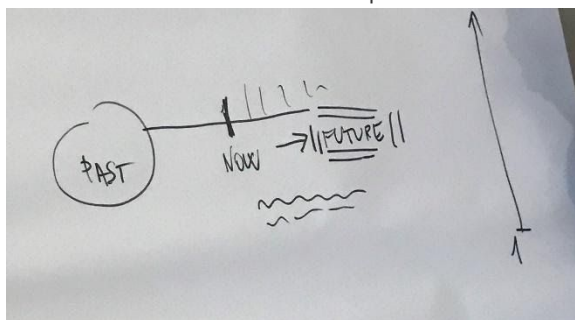
During the afternoon session we have covered the topic of coaching basics: coaching approach, coaching principles by Milton Erickson and powerful questions.

Five principles of coaching

1. People are ok.
2. People already have all resources.
3. People make the best decisions.
4. Every behaviour has positive intention.
5. Change is inevitable.

We need to focus in the present and the desired future not in the past.

- Positive formulation.
- What you focus on, that grows.
- Solution doesn't care how the problem was created.



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- When do we go deeper in the past?
- To find positive resources.

Powerful questions which make us think

Tips to ask the right questions. Questions about:

- Goals or aims.
- Solution: ways, options.
- Coping: How do you cope/deal in/with the situation? who can help you? what will help you to deal with?
- Scale/measure: when was the situation
- Past: positive resources.

The questions about the goal should follow the SMART

Exercise – Practise creating powerful questions

Participants were given ‘problems’ and their task was to write down 10 powerful coaching questions.



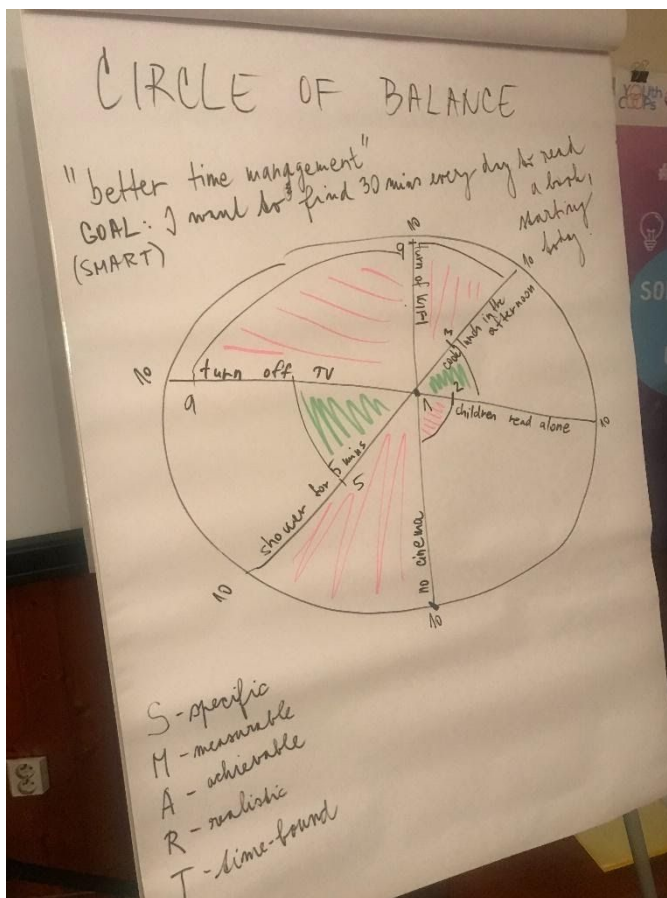
Circle of Balance – coaching tool

The trainer introduced a powerful coaching tool for anyone who needs to solve an issue or think about their topic in a different way.

Choose (Your topic) what you want to work on.

Action plan

1. What is the first step you can do to reach your goal?
2. When will you do it?
3. How certain are you? 90% p.e.
4. What benefits will you get?
5. If you do it, what will be different?



DAY 3

MORNING ACTIVITY

Pantomime – occupations

Every participants chooses a paper with an occupation written on and his/her task is to describe it to the group without using words and sounds.

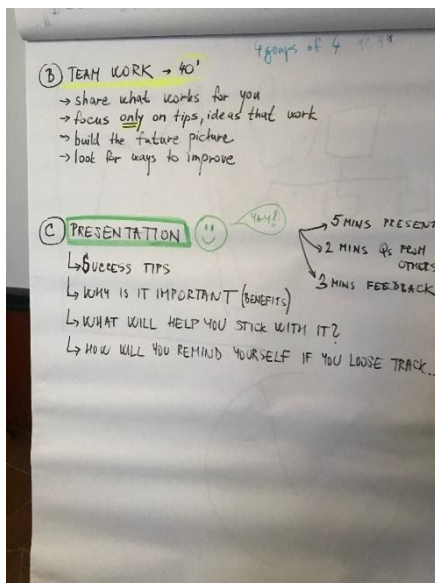
Best practices for time management

Type of activity: brainstorming, presentations, group work.

A. Brainstorming – whole group together – participants wrote key topics/phrases on the flipchart (3 mins)

B. Groups of 4 – share what works for you, build a future picture, look for ways to improve, bring examples of success, WHY is a good time management important for you? Prepare presentation about your groups tips.

C. Presentation – whole group presents



Debrief with the whole group – how helpful was this exercise, give feedback to your colleagues.

AFTERNOON ACTIVITY

On-site visit - Entrepreneur Architect Juraj



DAY 4

Reflection on Day 3

What did you learn, what will you do in your life and when?

What inspired you on Juraj's story as a young entrepreneur?

MORNING ACTIVITY

Mood indicator

Participants were asked to choose an adjective that described their current state of mind/mood/energy. Firstly just for themselves, then in a circle.

My self-confidence

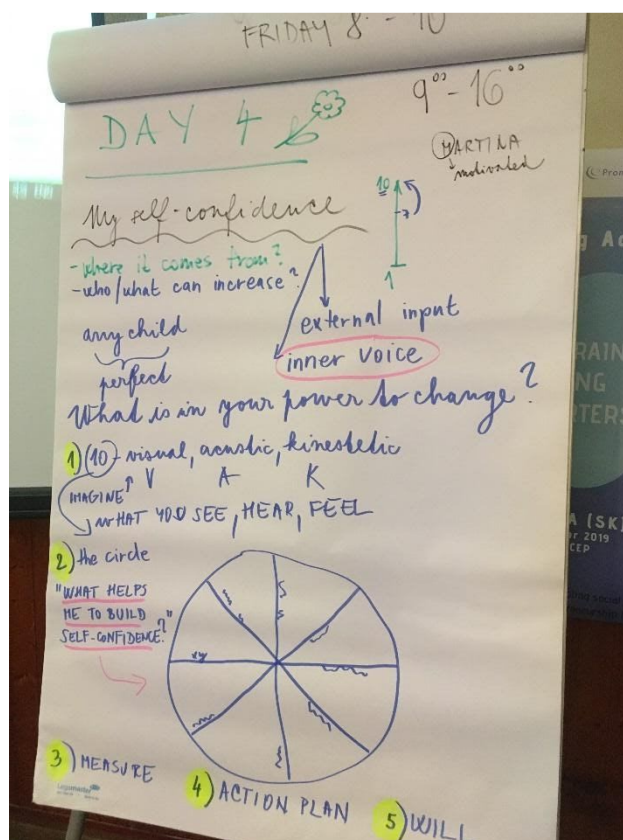
Discussion for 20mins, whole group: Where it comes from? Who/what can increase?

Objective: using circle of balance to look at your own resources, what helps you feel self-confident.

Energizer – Drawing exercise

Situation No 1: One person stands in front of a group and describes the picture he gets. The group can only listen, no questioning allowed. The person with the picture is supposed to describe the picture as clearly as possible. Debrief with the group: how did you feel, when refused the right to ask Qs?

Situation No 2: The same (or another) person stands in front of a group and describes the picture he gets. The group is allowed to ask as many Qs as possible (depending on the time the trainer decides for the activity) Debrief – compare the two situations and discuss what the effective communication means.



AFTERNOON ACTIVITY

Competency Passport

The Competency Passport will allow the participants to get familiar with the main competences relevant for social entrepreneurship and organization management, as well as to identify the ones they need to develop.

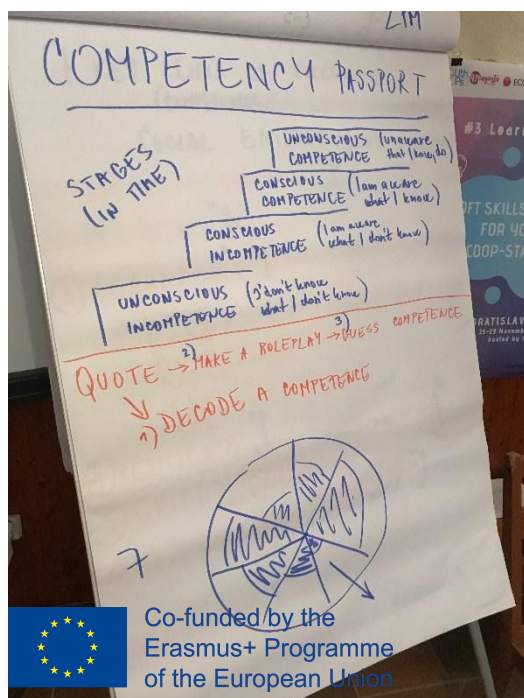
For the aim of the training session, this activity will be developed in two parts:

- The first one will be developed on exploring the main competences needed for social entrepreneurship;
- The second one will allow the participants to dedicate more and reflect on their own competences.

At the beginning the trainers need to explain the concept of competence, as well as the social and civic competences as one of the seven key competences, as defined by the European Commission.

In the second part, the participants are divided in groups of 3 or 4 participants. Each group will receive card with a written social competence, as well as some information with regards to it (definition, example, explanation). Afterwards, each group will prepare small sketch that represents the given competence in 3 minutes, and will decide on a famous quote to be used if necessary.

The rest of the participants have to identify the presented competence. If needed, the famous quote will be used in order to facilitate the identification.



After the plays, will follow discussion that will explain the following arguments:

- The competences will be explained and discussed;
- The relation of the competence with social entrepreneurship and organization management will be explored;
- Ways to enhance and develop the given competence will be also discussed.

After understanding the essential competences for entrepreneurship, the participants will reflect about their own competences they have and the one they need to develop. This process will be facilitated by set of questions prepared by the trainers and deliver to them. The participants will be regrouped once again, and will share their answers within the group.

7 key skills of successful social entrepreneurs

- Quote "If you always do, what you always did, you will always get, what you always got. Albert Einstein
- Creativity and innovation
Quote "Every day gives man a hope for a new tomorrow." "Some people see the glass half empty; I see it half full"
- Optimism
Quote "A good leader inspires people to have confidence in the leader, a great leader inspires people to have confidence in themselves." Eleanor Roosevelt
- Leadership Leader: Listening; Energy+; Actions; Done (finishes); Effective; Responsible.
Quote "Resilience in my opinion is falling 9 times and getting up 10 times"
- Resilience
Quote "Over time, grit is what separates fruitful lives from aimlessness". "Consistency of effort over the long run is everything." "There are no shortcuts to excellence."
- Grit (perseverance+endurance+passion+hard work)
Quote "It is not the triumph of heart over head - it is the unique intersection of both. "Knowledge comes from learning. Wisdom comes from living." "The ability to create a balance between knowing what you don't know and that what you do know can be improved." It is the state when you realize, it's not all about you.
- Emotional and social intelligence
Quote "Be somebody, who makes everybody feel like a somebody." "There are two types of people - those who come into a room and say "well, here am I" and those who come in and say "Ah, there you are".
- Empathy

Persistence over intensity is the best way to improve soft skills

DAY 5 – REFLECTION ON PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS, FINAL EVALUATION

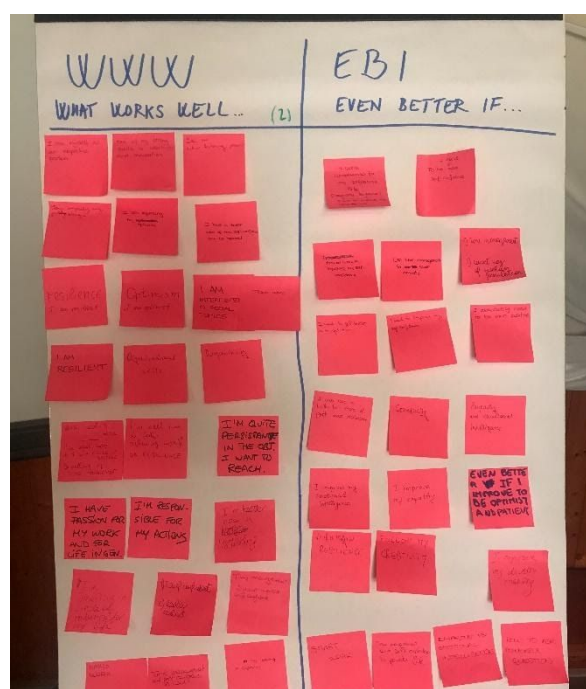
The last day of the training was aimed at closing the event.

Activity – WWW (What Works Well), EBI (Even Better If)

Participants received post it notes and were asked to evaluate their own soft skills development for the past week. They had to write down 2 things, that already work well and 2 things that could be improved.



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EVALUATION AND FAREWELL GOODBYE

At the end of the training week we did a circle, thanking everybody and appreciating their input during the training.

